

Published by
the Party History Institute of the Central Committee
of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party

CORVINA PRESS

History of the
**Revolutionary
Workers
Movement
in Hungary**

1944-1962

Third volume of the original Hungarian book published under the title
"A magyar forradalmi munkásmozgalom története",
Kossuth Kiadó, Budapest, 1972.

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Introduction

This volume presents that phase of the Hungarian revolutionary workers' movement which extends from 1944 to 1962. The origins of the Hungarian workers' movement, however, reach back to the middle of the nineteenth century. The history of events concerning the movement beginning in 1848 was published in Hungarian, under the auspices of the Party History Institute, by the Kossuth Publishers between 1966 and 1972. After earlier publications in 1966, 1967 and 1970, the latest edition appeared in 1972.

Editorial work was directed by a board headed by Academician Dezső Nemes.

The first phase of the history of the revolutionary workers' movement of Hungary comprises the period between 1848 and 1919. It surveys the development of capitalism in Hungary, the working-class movement in relation to the 1848 bourgeois revolution and national war of independence; the revolutionary stand taken by the working class, together with its limitations and weaknesses, which was due to the backwardness of capitalist development. A discussion of the beginnings of socialist organization follows. The reader becomes acquainted with the formation of the first socialist organization in Hungary, the General Workers' Association (1868), and then the founding of the General Workers' Party of Hungary (1880) and the Hungarian Social Democratic Party (1890). The first socialist party programmes are discussed and appraised and the reader is given a picture of the large-scale movements of the workers and poor peasants in the last years of the nineteenth century, and of the development of the trade unions.

A separate chapter deals with the development of imperialism in Hungary and the great role of foreign (especially Austrian) capital in it, as well as the characteristics apparent in the intertwining of the big landowning class with the emerging financial oligarchy. Speaking of the period of the turn of the century, several chapters discuss the development and the policy of the Social Democratic Party. We obtain a picture of the party's programme of 1903 and the positive features of the SDP's activities; the organization of the working masses, the spread of Marxist ideas, participation in political struggle and the mass demonstrations to obtain a universal, secret suffrage. The party, however, did not recognize the immediate importance of the historical tasks of the bourgeois democratic transformation. The book also discusses the spread of reformism, the over-estimation of parliamentary franchise, and the failure to recognize the significance of the agrarian question and the national question. A realistic summary is made of the work of the left wing of the Social Democrats—its results and limitations.

The period of the First World War was a turning-point in the history of the Hungarian workers' movement. In 1914 the Social Democratic Party abandoned its pacifist position and following the example of the leading parties of the Second International, joined the social-chauvinist trend. In the last years of the war, when the situation on the battlefield grew unfavourable from the standpoint of the Central Powers, the SDP strove towards the conclusion of peace on the basis of the 1914 *status quo*. The reformist political line of the party leadership came more and more into conflict with the mood of the workers who were growing revolutionary under the impact of the war and the sharpening class contradictions. The revolutionary development was given tremendous impetus by the example of the proletariat of Russia, the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution. In its wake the Social Democratic opposition began to grow in strength, and among the one hundred thousand former Hungarian prisoners of war in Russia who took part in the armed defence of Soviet power the first grouping of Hungarian Communists began to take shape. The book discusses in detail the disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and the October 1918 bourgeois democratic revolution in Hungary. After this comes a section

on the founding of the new type of revolutionary workers' party, the Communist Party of Hungary (24 November 1918).

A substantial section of the book deals with the struggle which the Communists fought for the development of the bourgeois democratic revolution into a socialist revolution, for the establishment of workers' power. This struggle was successful; the bourgeois democratic government's foreign and domestic policy ended in bankruptcy and as the result of the efforts of the Communists, under a revolutionary basis the fusion of the Social Democratic Party and the Communist Party came about: on 21 March 1919 the Republic of Councils was declared.

The history of the Hungarian Republic of Councils receives a fitting place in the book. The reader becomes acquainted with the international and Hungarian factors of the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat and of the circumstances which made it possible in Hungary to avoid civil war. (These included the unity of the working class, the division and enervated condition of the bourgeoisie, etc.) The following chapters deal with the launching of socialist construction, the organization of revolutionary national defence, the June 1919 party and Council congresses and the foreign intervention against the Republic of Councils. A separate chapter discusses the historical significance and lessons of the Republic of Councils. This chapter notes: "The lessons, the successes and mistakes of the Republic of Councils enriched the experiences of struggle of the international workers' movement. They helped to expose reformism and centrism more fully and contributed to the development of the revolutionary wing of the workers' movement into an independent force, into independent parties. The heritage and experience of struggle of the Republic of Councils enriched above all the Hungarian workers' movement and the Communist Party of Hungary as it embarked on its struggle for the new socialist revolution."

The second section of the party history discusses the struggle of the Hungarian revolutionary workers' movement between 1919 and 1945. In this period the movement worked amidst extremely difficult circumstances. Following the crushing of the Republic of Councils—with the support of the Entente Powers—a counter-revolutionary regime came to power. It used the weapons of terror to attack the workers' movement

and even the bourgeois advocates of progress. In counter-revolutionary Hungary the most consistently revolutionary, anti-fascist force was the Communist Party.

The book gives an account of the reorganization and activities of the underground Communist Party after 1919 with a host of data. It recalls the victims of White Terror and traces the results of their heroic steadfastness. It points out that in the 1920s the left-wing opposition grew strong within the Social Democratic Party and the trade unions. It outlines the provisional programme adopted at the First Congress of the Communist Party of Hungary (1925), appraises the theoretical and political development of the communist movement and describes the application of illegal and legal methods of struggle. A many-sided analysis is made of the events of the world economic crisis from 1929 to 1933. We are offered a survey of the European situation, as well as the impact of the world crisis on Hungary. In this connection large-scale mass movements arose in Hungary, culminating in the workers' demonstration in Budapest on 1 September 1930. Whereas the right-wing Social Democratic leaders compromised with the rulers of the regime at the expense of the workers, the Communist Party of Hungary waged a consistent anti-fascist struggle. This struggle had its martyrs and the reader will encounter in the section some of the heroic steadfast Communist revolutionaries.

In dealing with the Second Congress of the Communist Party of Hungary (February 1930), the book shows the party's fruitful work, but also the retarding factors. From the middle of the 1930s—as the volume emphasizes—the Communist Party of Hungary struggled amidst exceptionally difficult circumstances. Following the spread of fascism in Europe and Hitler's assumption of power, the Horthy régime made repeated attempts to introduce a total fascist dictatorship. Although these attempts did not achieve complete success, the socialist workers' movement was suppressed with increasing ruthlessness. In the years preceding the Second World War, following the Seventh Congress of the Comintern, the Communist Party of Hungary worked to organize an anti-fascist people's front. This work, however, as the consequence partly of unfavourable circumstances and partly of the attitude of rejection

adopted by the reformist Social Democratic leaders, did not lead to the desired result, yet it contributed to the growth of opposition to the Horthyite policy. After the attack on the Soviet Union by Hitler and his allies, the Communist Party of Hungary was the only political party which consistently fought for withdrawal from the war and for a free, independent and democratic Hungary. In this struggle it worked with the anti-Hitler, anti-fascist, democratic bourgeois, peasant and intellectual forces.

In its concluding section the book deals in detail with the history of the period after the German occupation of Hungary (March 1944). The reader is acquainted with the Hungarian resistance movement and with the activities of the Hungarian Front which was founded in May 1944 on the initiative of the Communists. This alliance consisted of the Communists, the Social Democratic Party, the Smallholders Party, the anti-Hitler bourgeois forces and of the National Peasant Party which joined it later. The Front set as its goal the establishment of peace and democratic conditions. The book ends with the presentation of the Manifesto of the Communist Party at the end of September 1944 which projected the special nature of freedom struggle against the Hitlerites and their allies. The Manifesto said the struggle "has a twofold character and the two are inseparable from each other: Struggle, by driving out the invading German imperialist power, for an independent Hungary! Struggle, with the overthrow of Hungarian reaction, for the establishment of a democratic Hungary!"

The present volume constitutes the third and concluding section of the said book.

The Publisher

The Liberation of Hungary and Democratic National Rebirth

October 1944–April 1945

The autumn of 1944 represented a major turning-point in the history of the Hungarian people: in its victorious advance, the Red Army of the Soviet Union crossed the borders of the country and began the liberation of Hungary. Thus, assistance from the East, which the workers and poor peasants, who had been tormented by the counter-revolution and fascist dictatorship, had for a quarter of a century expected, arrived.

The Hitlerite general staff aimed to retain Hungary at any cost, in order to exploit its resources to a maximum for the defence of the Nazi Reich, and were determined that the German troops should devastate Hungary during their retreat if they again failed to stop the Soviet armed forces.

To avert this threat, the Communist Party called on all the anti-Hitlerite forces to join in the struggle. At the end of September, it issued a manifesto demanding the resignation of the Lakatos government, the formation of a Hungarian Front government, an immediate move against the German invaders and joining forthwith the coalition of the anti-Hitler powers. This was the only possibility to enable the liberating Red Army, with the co-operation of the Hungarian army, to rapidly clear the country of the German invaders.

The victories of the Soviet armed forces permanently frustrated any plan of the Hungarian ruling classes to check the advance of the Red Army with German assistance until the arrival of British and American troops. Those who cherished such hopes were disappointed, and many of them came to understand that Hungary could rid itself of the concomitant atrocities of the agonizing fascist beast only with the assistance of the Red Army.

At the time, the ruling circles feared that if they supported the nazis to the very end, the power of the Hungarian landlords and capitalists would also be eliminated after the German invaders had been driven out. They not only had to realize that the defeat of Germany was unavoidable, but also had to recognize that their hopes of peace, based on a compromise between the British and Americans on the one hand, and the Germans on the other, were false. The very last moment came when the Horthyite leading circles, who had often been deceived and humiliated by Hitler's government and the German general staff, could still take the step of assisting Hungary to join the anti-Hitler coalition. The only way to do this was to ask the Soviet Union without delay for an armistice, thus ensuring that Hungarian soldiers no longer aided the German conquerors, and that the Hungarian army would become a force of national liberation and an ally of the liberating Soviet troops. This was urged in the memorandum sent to Horthy on 20 September by the Hungarian Front. It demanded that a new government should be formed of representatives of the Hungarian Front and the Hungarian army, which opposed the nazis—a government ready to arrange the switch-over of the country to the side of the anti-fascist coalition.

After considerable hesitation, at the end of September, when Soviet troops crossed the Hungarian border in the vicinity of Makó, the Horthyite leading circles, following the advice of the British and the Americans, sent a delegation to Moscow requesting a suspension of hostilities. Lieutenant-General Gábor Faragho, the former Hungarian military attaché in Moscow, was commissioned to head the delegation. However, it was still hoped that eventually British and American troops would also arrive in Hungary and would help to save the régime of the capitalists and landowners against the actions expected from the revolutionary forces of the people now being liberated.

The politicians of the ruling-classes were aware of the probability that even with the presence of British and American troops a new government would have to replace the old one. Various groups were formed under an anti-German banner in an attempt to retain the leadership or at least gain participation in the inevitable political changes. Part of the government party rallied around István Bethlen and favoured a rapid

dissociation from Germany; the royalists and the representatives of Rassay's bourgeois conservative opposition also urged Hungary's extrication from the war.

The Horthy clique also had to take into consideration the fact that it could not change sides without the assistance of the Hungarian Front and for this reason established contact with it. Early in October, it received another memorandum from the Hungarian Front which urged the speedy arming of the workers and repeatedly suggested that the army and the people should jointly rise against the German invaders. However, the Hungarian leading circles could only with great difficulty come to the decision to begin negotiations with the representatives of the Hungarian Front, but hesitated to accept its proposals.

Faragho and his delegation arrived in Moscow to conclude an armistice on 1 October. At the same time, however, the Horthy clique delayed the acceptance of the conditions laid down by the Soviet government. They still hoped that the Anglo-American forces would at least drop parachute units in Hungary.

**Beginning of the Military Operations in Hungary
The Half-hearted Attempt by the Horthy Clique
to Quit the Axis
The Communist Party and Social Democratic Party
Agree on a United Front**

When the Red Army began its operations in Hungary, three German and three Hungarian armies were stationed in the area of the Carpathian Ukraine, North Transylvania and in the region east of the Tisza. Two German army groups joined their front to the south: one attempted to halt the Soviet troops in Yugoslavia, and the other was withdrawn by the German military command from Greece and Albania in order to reinforce German positions in Yugoslavia. The German general staff had at their disposal bigger military forces in the area between the Carpathians and Albania than in both the West European and Italian theatres of war. This explains why the Horthy clique hoped that, with

German assistance, they could hold back the Red Army until the arrival of the Anglo-American forces, and that was why they hesitated until the last minute to ask for an armistice. They wasted the last days and missed the opportunity to accept the terms of the Soviet government and conclude and implement a cease-fire agreement before the new Soviet offensive was launched.

Had the conditions laid down by the Soviet government been fulfilled it would have enabled Hungary to bring the war considerably closer to an end, and at the same time would have facilitated clearing the country of the German invaders.

The first point of the Soviet conditions declared that Hungary would remain an independent state administering its internal affairs without outside interference. The second point laid down the obligation of the Hungarian government to turn its army against the German invaders and for the Hungarian army to participate on the side of the Soviet forces in the liberation of the country and the annihilation of the Nazi Reich.

On the eve of the Soviet offensive, the First Hungarian Army was positioned in the Carpathians; the Second Army, hurriedly brought up to strength during the months of German occupation, was in North Transylvania; and the Third Army, also hastily organized, was stationed on the East-of-the-Tisza front—each of them subordinate to the German army-group command. The combined strength of the Hungarian forces in the theatre of war totalled about 450,000 men. This represented a significant force and its transfer to the side of the Soviet army should have been arranged unhesitatingly with the elimination of the Arrow Cross officers. The Hungarian general staff had another quarter of a million armed troops in Budapest and other districts available to disarm the German invaders. The Hungarian Front was ready to provide all assistance to this end.

However, the Horthy clique preferred an armistice agreement that did not commit Hungary to turn its troops against the Germans, but which would have made it possible for them to freely retreat. Hungarian leading circles derived some hope from the landing of British troops in Greece on 4 October. The British forces were not concentrated on pursuing the

German troops retreating from Greece, but attempted to prevent the Greek people and the ELAS, their partisan army, from assuming power and help the monarchists returning from emigration in London to continue their reign. Before the new Soviet offensive was launched, the Horthy clique still hesitated to accept the Soviet armistice terms.

The new offensive of the Red Army started on 6 October 1944 and the Soviet troops began their campaign to liberate Hungary.

That very day, in another leaflet the Communist Party urged an immediate cease-fire and castigated those who were hesitating and delaying its conclusion. This included those who were "waiting with folded arms until the Red Army drives the Germans out, eliminates exploitation and establishes socialism. Such people forget that the Soviet Union crushes the international peril of fascism, but does not intervene in the internal affairs of other peoples. They forget that German guns are trained upon the capital from the Buda hills, and that the Horthy clique whispers against the Germans, but fights on the side of the Germans." The Communist Party urged the organization of the defence of Budapest against the German-Arrow Cross putsch that was in the offing, and repeatedly demanded the arming of the workers. The leaflet called on the people to prevent the Germans from using the walls of Budapest buildings for cover against the onslaught of the Red artillery and air force. It appealed to Hungarian soldiers: "Join forces with the Red Army in the struggle against fascist barbarism!"

On the initiative of the Communist Party, the Hungarian Front issued an appeal to the officers of the army: "Our criminally irresponsible government, which ignores the interests of the Hungarian people . . . is delaying under mendacious pretexts the only decision which could save our country and our national army from complete destruction. This decision is: an immediate armistice with the Red Army and armed struggle against the German invaders." It called on the Hungarian officers not to wait for the "initiative of a government that plays a tactical game, that is only concerned about its own interests and is determined to prolong its rule at any price". Immediate action was needed. "With your units, join the liberating Red Army at the front, make the way free for them and turn your arms against the Germans." It called upon

the officers of the garrisons to supply arms, ammunition and explosives to the workers and peasants and the anti-German intelligentsia, and assist them in their struggle. "There is no time for further hesitation and long preparations. Act now!" This leaflet, printed by the Communist Party press, was primarily distributed by Communists among the officers.

The majority of the Hungarian officers were well aware that the fascists had lost the war, but they waited for orders from Horthy and did not heed the appeal of the Hungarian Front. The army under their leadership was largely demoralized and embittered, but remained on the side of the Germans when the Soviet troops began to liberate the country.

The operations of the Red Army in Hungary started with an attack by the troops of the Second Ukrainian Front, commanded by Marshal Malinovsky. This Soviet army group consisted of three armoured and two mechanized corps, three mixed mechanized and equestrian corps, forty divisions and the Fifth Air Force, as well as the Rumanian army, that by that time had changed sides.

Simultaneously, the troops of the Third Ukrainian Front, commanded by Marshal Tolbukhin, were fighting in Yugoslavia. Units of the Yugoslav army of liberation fought shoulder to shoulder with this Soviet army group, together with some troops of the Bulgarian army which had joined the Soviet side. The Fourth Ukrainian Front launched an attack in the Carpathian area under the command of Army General Petrov.

In the first days of the campaign in the region east of the Tisza, the troops of Marshal Malinovsky dealt heavy blows on the German troops and the Hungarian army. In three days they reached the Tisza River, occupied the entire stretch of the river south of Csongrád, encircling and on 11 October liberating the town of Szeged. Other units of the Second Ukrainian Front, together with the Rumanian army, pushed on through Northern Transylvania and liberated Kolozsvár (Cluj) also on 11 October.

The Hungarian ruling circles were prepared to accept the Soviet terms only when the units of the Red Army had already crossed the Tisza River. The preliminary cease-fire agreement was signed by Faragho in Moscow on 11 October.

At the same time, the Horthy clique failed to take the necessary military steps to fulfil the agreement, and the preparations did not go very far beyond setting up a "quit-the-war office", to rally under its own leadership the political groups that were pressing for an Anglo-American orientation. It was intended that this bloc should include the Smallholders Party and the Social Democratic Party and in this way it was hoped that they would precipitate a break in the Hungarian Front. This was considered more important than the implementation of the necessary military arrangements to prevent the impending German-Arrow Cross putsch.

Horthy summoned Árpád Szakasits and Zoltán Tildy for talks on 11 October, when he discussed the developments that could be expected and at the same time he endeavoured to persuade them that their parties should give up their co-operation with the Communist Party. However, Tildy and Szakasits parried the proposals for causing a break in the Hungarian Front. After this, Major-General István Újszászy, on behalf of the Horthyite leading circles, met a representative of the Communist Party.

The negotiations with Újszászy were conducted by László Rajk on behalf of the Communist Party. When he was released from prison in September 1944, Rajk joined the work of the Central Committee of the Party and became the secretary of the Central Committee. During the talks with Újszászy, he pressed for the arming of the workers, pledging that the armed units of the workers would act together with the Hungarian army against the German invaders and Arrow Cross detachments. Újszászy, who was one of the organizers of Anglo-American contacts for the Horthyite leading circles, endeavoured to find out where the Communist Party stood, the force of its organization and the deployment of its groups, in order to inform his commissioners. He was not empowered to conclude or suggest any kind of an agreement with the Communist Party.

The Social Democratic Party also pressed for the arming of the workers, but the leaders of the Smallholders Party did not support the idea. The Horthyite leading circles rejected this demand, and merely suggested that the workers perhaps should support their measures with a general

strike. By discussing the question they gave the impression that they were really determined to fight against the Germans, although in reality they still hesitated.

During these days fraught with danger, the Hungarian Front grew stronger. A contributing factor to this growth was that as a result of extensive talks, the Communist Party and the Social Democratic Party had concluded an agreement for a united front. The agreement ensured large-scale co-operation by the two parties and obstructed the attempts to disrupt the Hungarian Front.

The document on the united front—which was finalized on 10 October 1944—emphasized that only “the militant and revolutionary unity, determination and leadership of the working class” could ensure the success of the Hungarian people’s struggle for the rapid conclusion of the war and for the creation of a new democratic Hungary. Socialism was the aim of both parties. This was an aim “the Hungarian working class and Hungarian working society can achieve through the immediate conclusion of the war and the creation of a free, independent and democratic Hungary”. The document also stated that after the war “a united and single revolutionary socialist workers’ party” was to be created through the unification of the two parties.

The agreement supported trade union unity and thereby rejected earlier decisions to expel the left-wing elements. It stated that the trade unions should rally all workers, regardless of their party affiliation or political ideology.

The united front document was signed by Gyula Kállai on behalf of the Communist Party and by Árpád Szakasits for the Social Democratic Party. It was also agreed that both parties would publish the document. The Communist Party published the document in the special October issue of *Szabad Nép*. The Social Democratic Party did not publish it because its leaders were not united on the question of co-operation with the Communist Party. Lajos Kabók, the president of the Ironworkers’ Trade Union, and other leading officials of the Social Democratic Party—representing the policy of Peyer—hesitated to accept the agreement. It was a matter of unifying the revolutionary forces in the struggle to save the nation. However, the Kabók group hoped that if the Horthy

clique succeeded in pulling out of the war, the trade union monopoly of the Social Democratic Party could be preserved or restored. On the other hand, the Social Democratic workers who heard about the united front agreement unanimously welcomed it.

The October 1944 agreement for co-operation between the Communist Party and the Social Democratic Party was a fruitful outcome of the policy of united revolutionary action and was an outstanding event in the history of the Hungarian working-class movement and of the anti-fascist national independence struggle. Its significance went far beyond the direct tasks of furthering national resistance. The common position emphasized the leading role of the working class in the democratic national front. It pledged support for an independent proletarian class policy and rejected the policy of Peyer which doomed the Social Democratic Party to the role of serving as lackeys to the bourgeois parties. The common stand with regard to a merger between the two parties to be effected later, strengthened the united action for national independence and democracy, and subsequently in the struggle for socialism, and signified that this was to lead to the creation of the unified revolutionary party of the working class.

In the struggle to save the nation, the two workers’ parties were ready to join forces with all those who were willing to take an effective stand against the nazis. However the Horthy clique sabotaged the fulfilment of the military conditions for the armistice, which right from the beginning doomed to failure its attempt to pull out from the war.

Unperturbed, the Hitlerite general staff were able to make their preparations for the Arrow Cross coup, and they concentrated about three divisions of German forces in the area of Budapest. On the morning of 15 October, they sent an instruction, tantamount to an ultimatum, to the Hungarian general staff forbidding Hungarian commands to issue any order without the authorization of German commands. The time for hesitation had passed.

At noon on 15 October, Horthy announced the cease-fire over the radio, after first informing the Germans of the step he was about to take. He also made this fact known in his proclamation: “I informed the local

representative of the German Reich that we were concluding a preliminary cease-fire with our enemies.”

The Hungarian Front had not been informed in advance of the announcement of the cease-fire, whereas the Germans had been given prior notice. And the commanders of the Hungarian armies at the front had not been given any advance instruction to contact the Soviet commands and turn the Hungarian armies against the German troops.

The Lakatos government was unwilling to fight against the Germans, and left the decision to the Hitlerite general staff whether they would acknowledge the Hungarian request for an armistice and quickly withdraw their troops from Hungary, or set aside Horthy and his government and create the rule of an Arrow Cross puppet government. The German general staff was prepared for the latter alternative. The Horthy clique was well aware of this, nevertheless, it failed to take any measure required to avert the German–Arrow Cross coup.

The Germans thrust the Lakatos government aside and persuaded Horthy to withdraw his proclamation and resign as head of state in favour of Ferenc Szálasi, the Arrow Cross leader. On the demand of the Germans, Horthy issued a statement on 16 October that declared his proclamation of the previous day to be null and void, and called on the Hungarian army to continue the war against the Soviet Union. This was the culmination of his betrayal of the nation.

All those who had been confident that relying on the Hungarian army, the proximity of the Red Army and the help of the democratic forces, the ruling circles would at the last moment actively turn against the German invaders received a major shock. Horthy and his associates pulled out, but they did so leaving the country, without any resistance, in the hands of the German invaders and their Arrow Cross agents.

The entire political activity of the Horthy régime had been marked by a dread of the revolutionary forces of the people. Its ruling circles were immeasurably afraid that the working classes would overthrow the régime of the capitalists and landowners, and would call them to account for their war crimes and crimes against the people. This was the main reason why they did not dare to join forces with the democratic forces of the country, even when it was late enough for any further delay in

calling for an armistice. They missed the last opportunity to reduce their serious responsibility for participation in the Hitlerite predatory war. They signed the preliminary armistice agreement, but they were unwilling to fight alongside the Soviet Union against Nazi Germany, preferring to submit the country to the Arrow Cross bandits who were backed by German bayonets.

The Struggle against the Reign of Terror of the Germans and the Arrow Cross The October Appeal of the Communist Party The Development of National Resistance

Fulfilling the commands of the invaders, the Szálasi clique ordered “total mobilization”. It made military service compulsory from the age of 17—and later from 16—up to 52, and labour service compulsory for everyone from 14 to 70. The people were driven to help build the fortifications and carry out all other work ordered by the German fascists. They made it possible for the German commanders to continue to utilize the remaining parts of the Horthyite army, attaching regiments and battalions to the German troops. A manhunt was organized for military deserters, whose numbers had rapidly increased after 15 October. By conscription and by organizing new units, they also tried to replace the losses in numbers of the Hungarian formations.

The Szálasi clique helped to loot and destroy the country. Orders were given for the transportation to Germany of the stock of machines in factories, the gold reserves of the National Bank, wagons and locomotives, and all types of raw materials and all movable assets. They mined most of the factories, bridges and public buildings and ordered the evacuation of the “imperilled areas”. The majority of the political prisoners was handed over to the Germans, who then carried them off to Nazi extermination camps. The Jewish inhabitants of Budapest were concentrated in a sealed ghetto and almost a hundred thousand Jews were handed over to the Germans for forced labour. Those caught hiding during their regular raids were put to death. The Szálasi gang and the Gestapo

introduced a total reign of terror and threatened to slaughter anyone who opposed their commands.

The Arrow Cross men continued to act as the lackeys of the Nazi Reich and helped in the anti-Soviet predatory war, marching along the fatal road on which Horthy and his associates had carried the country. Those who had completely committed themselves to Nazi Germany were willing also to serve the Szálasi régime. The majority of those who before 15 October had entertained hopes of a pull-out by the Horthy clique, who had all their hopes crushed after the collapse of this attempt, were also ready to continue serving the German invaders.

Directly after the Arrow Cross coup, the Communist Party issued another appeal to the Hungarian people, which stated that "as it had been a fatal mistake to confidently wait for Horthy to act, it would be just as fatal an error to passively wait for liberation by the Red Army". It again emphasized that only all-out national resistance against the German invaders and their Arrow Cross accomplices, and aid for the Red Army could accelerate the liberation of the country and prevent the retreating fascists from completely looting and devastating it. It urged the formation of armed resistance groups and the rapid development of a partisan struggle, and stressed that national resistance should be organized in factories, villages and offices, and among the Hungarian troops. On the battlefield it should be arranged that the Hungarian soldiers should "lay down their arms whenever a favourable situation offers itself; open up the front, or launch a surprise attack on the rear or flanks of the German troops".

The appeal stressed the importance of the planned preparations for saving Budapest. It called on the workers to organize resistance committees everywhere and to get ready to defend the factories and Budapest. It especially appealed to the Social Democratic Party and the trade unions to act in union with the Communist Party, in accordance with the united front agreement between the Communist and Social Democratic Parties on 10 October. In this appeal, the Central Committee instructed the members of the Party to "support everywhere their Social Democratic fellow workers and pass on the experience they had gained

in underground battle, in order to enable the Social Democratic Party, by extending its own illegal organizational network, to help to mobilize the working class for the decisive battles".

The appeal called on the people of the villages to organize guards to prevent fascist looting. Office workers were also called on to form resistance committees: "Szálasi's puppet government and its state machinery should be destroyed with sabotage, the non-fulfilment of orders and the complete paralyzation of public administration."

The appeal stated that the historical responsibility to organize a general national resistance falls to the parties rallied in the Hungarian Front. At the same time, it asked every member of Hungarian society: Where do you belong, to the Nazi front or the Hungarian Front? Whoever belongs to the Hungarian Front "acts and organizes the national resistance".

Before the 15 October attempt to extricate the country from the war the Communist Party was the only party in Hungary that organized armed resistance. The Budapest action guards—groups of 4 to 8 people directed by Lajos Fehér, a member of the Military Committee of the Party—already operated. On 6 October one of these groups, the Marót group, blew up the statue of Gyula Gömbös, regarded as a symbol of Hungarian fascism. In other activities of these groups actions of a military character predominated: German motor vehicles and guns were destroyed, railway tracks around Budapest were repeatedly blown up, hand-grenade and sub-machine-gun attacks were launched against German and Arrow Cross headquarters and guards, and communication lines were damaged. The military significance of these actions was modest, but their moral impact was considerable. They encouraged resistance and increased the feeling of uncertainty within the Arrow Cross camp and power apparatus, thus speeding up their collapse. The fighting groups carried out additional actions of a definitely political and moral character. For instance, early in December an Arrow Cross mass meeting in the Budapest Municipal Theatre was blasted, causing the flight in panic of those present.

After 15 October larger Communist partisan groups of from 30 to 80 members were formed in the outlying districts of Budapest. During their

activity they contacted the anti-nazi officers of several Hungarian military units and with their help acquired arms, ammunition and uniforms, and some of their groups were disguised as military detachments. Anti-nazi groups were specially formed within the Kiska or auxiliary armed detachments of the Angyalföld and Zugló districts to assist the partisans. The partisans also established contact with resistance groups in the factories which organized the defence of the plants and sabotaged the dismantling of the machines and the removal of supplies to Germany. Among the suburban groups the armed activities of the Újpest and Kőbánya-Kispest partisans were significant. They killed nearly one hundred Arrow Cross and SS members. The Újpest partisans blew up the local Arrow Cross headquarters from which they had previously released 48 prisoners, prevented the destruction of the Újpest water-tower and carried out other minor actions.

Armed resistance groups were formed and successful military actions were also carried out at Miskolc, Salgótarján, Karcag, Sárísáp and in the region of the Mecsek and Börzsöny mountains, and elsewhere. Groups of the "Mokan Committee" were active at Miskolc and Diósgyőr, and they played a significant role in frustrating the evacuation attempts and in saving factory equipment. They established contact with the Soviet troops who had reached the vicinity of the town and provided them with information about the fascist forces. With the front approaching, the partisans of Sárísáp and other resistance groups also made contacts with the Soviet troops as it became possible and effectively assisted them in their reconnaissance activity.

The partisan parachute groups—formed with the co-operation and under the leadership of Hungarian Communist emigrants living in the Soviet Union—carried out successful armed actions in the Carpathian Ukraine and in the area of northern Hungary. The activity of the Rákóczi partisan unit in the Carpathian Ukraine was particularly effective as it blew up seven military trains, caused nearly 800 casualties among the enemy and captured about 300 prisoners. The Petőfi partisan unit carried out very valuable actions in southern Slovakia, blowing up military trains, cutting communication lines, disarming patrols and battling with small enemy detachments.

The Nógrádi partisan group was organized within the area of Slovakia and when it moved to the Salgótarján coal basin in Hungary, it was joined by some small miners' resistance groups. Its activity intensified the anti-fascist resistance among the inhabitants of the entire district and persuaded everyone to refuse to respond to the call-up ordered by the Arrow Cross. The local peasants drove their animals into the woods to prevent the evacuating detachments from taking them away. The miners hid to avoid being taken to Germany; led by Communists, some of them went down the pits to prevent the destruction of the mines. The confusion grew among the retreating German troops. At the end of December, the Nógrádi group engaged a retreating German detachment of superior strength.

The partisan units and the small resistance groups that came from the Soviet Union or were formed at home together caused a total of over 3,000 casualties—dead, wounded and prisoners—to the fascist troops and their auxiliary detachments. The blowing up of military supplies, the damage caused to communication lines and the capture of arms inflicted direct military losses on the Hitlerite forces. Compared to the Soviet, French and Yugoslav partisan struggles, or the uprising in Slovakia, the partisan movement in Hungary was of modest dimensions. Nevertheless, its significance went far beyond its direct military impact, because it encouraged the growth of other forms of national resistance.

In addition to armed resistance, the Communist Party also stimulated and organized other forms of national resistance. Its leaflets urged the population and the Hungarian soldiers to refuse to obey the call for military service and to save the towns and villages. The Kossuth Radio addressed similar appeals to the people of the country, to the army and to all the anti-Hitler strata of society.

After the failure of the attempt to extricate the country from the war on 15 October 1944 the anti-fascist national resistance developed more vigorously. The Horthyite army was rapidly disintegrating. Despite the threats of slaughter made by the Arrow Cross puppet government and the anti-Soviet propaganda of intimidation, increasing numbers of soldiers went over to the Soviet troops. It frequently occurred that entire military formations, platoons, companies and battalions, together with

their officers, sought an opportunity to quit the nazis and cross over to the Red Army to lay down their arms.

The about-face of Béla Dálnoki Miklós, the commander of the First Hungarian Army, who went over to the Soviet troops, together with a group of the staff officers, was politically the most significant. This occurred on 18 October, but because of their hesitation, Dálnoki Miklós and his group were unable to turn the army under their command against the German troops. Nevertheless, they refused to continue to fight on the German side and fled over to the Red Army. The significance of this move was increased when Dálnoki Miklós appealed to the Hungarian troops to change sides. Within a few days, ten thousand soldiers and officers of the First Hungarian Army crossed over to the Soviet troops.

With the assistance of the still subservient Hungarian officers—and the majority of the Horthyite officers were subservient—the German general staff was even then able to throw most of the Hungarians into battle, exposing them to further heavy losses. However, desertions were the order of the day during the attacks of the Red Army. Out of the three Hungarian armies, three incomplete regiments, 12 battalions and several smaller units together with their officers, laid down their arms to the Soviet troops by the end of November. The number of those who deserted their units individually or in small groups was larger than the number of men in the formations which changed side.

After the pitiful failure of the attempt to withdraw from the war on 15 October, various political groups sought to contact the Hungarian Front, in order to co-operate with it in the organization of national resistance. They were motivated partially by the wish to actively join in the resistance, but many of them only aimed to gain some influence in the post-liberation reorganization of state and political life. They endeavoured to bring into existence a political alliance that would include the parties of the Hungarian Front, but at the same time ensure a majority for the representatives of a bourgeois orientation.

Among those seeking contacts with the Hungarian Front, was a group of Horthyite officers who were willing to participate in the armed resist-

ance and sought comrades-in-arms among the armed units of the workers. This group of officers was led by Lieutenant-General János Kiss.

The Communist Party stood for co-operation between the various political groups, inasmuch as this co-operation strengthened national resistance, extended the anti-Hitler front, promoted the disintegration of the power organizations of the Arrow Cross puppet government and gave an impetus to the armed struggle. With the support of the other parties of the Hungarian Front, a broader front emerged early in November, with the formation of a joint body named the Liberation Committee of the Hungarian National Uprising. Endre Bajcsy-Zsilinszky of the Smallholders Party was the chairman; Gyula Kállai, representing the Communist Party, and Árpád Szakasits, representing the Social Democratic Party, were members of the Committee.

Young Communists had an important role in the resistance movement. They composed the action guards of Budapest and many of them were active in other partisan groups. They were the most militant distributors of leaflets, organized the defence of the factories and enthusiastically and courageously carried out all kinds of assignments. During the talks on co-operation between the Communist Party and the Social Democratic Party, the Communist representatives recommended that in order to more effectively rally the revolutionary forces of youth, the two working-class parties should set up a joint youth league. This proposal received support among the leaders of the Social Democratic Party, and the draft of the agreement contained the relevant points. According to these, “regardless of the time of the unification of the two Parties and their present or future relationship . . .” “the only and united organization” of Social Democratic and Communist youth, “the League of Young Socialists”, had to be formed immediately. The object of this proposal was that the National Youth Committee and its groups should be jointly reorganized—as the official joint youth organization of the two workers’ parties—and its activities should be rapidly expanded. However, this point was left out of the agreement on co-operation finalized on 10 October, because the leaders of the Social Democratic Party failed to reach an agreement on this. The Social Democratic Party did not make an attempt to revive its youth organization while the Germans and

the Arrow Cross were in power. On the other hand, many Social Democrats thought that in the situation following the liberation, it would not be in the interest of the Social Democratic Party to give up its own youth league.

After the proposal to set up a joint youth league had been rejected, the Central Committee of the Communist Party decided to reorganize the Young Communist League.

The appeal of the Young Communist League appeared at the end of October announcing the reorganization of the League and its action programme. The appeal stressed the extreme importance of more vigorous organization and action. With regard to the immediate tasks, it primarily emphasized the need to defend the capital. It designated the main tasks of the League to organize and mobilize armed troupes of working-class youth and to increase their participation in the national resistance, together with other youth organizations.

Groups of the Young Communist League were formed at Angyalföld, Újpest, Csepel, Pesterzsébet, Kispest, Kőbánya and Zugló, among the gymnasts of the Ironworkers Club and the students of the Györfly College. Encouraged by the appeal, Communist youth groups were also set up elsewhere that did not establish direct contact with the provisional leading body of the Young Communist League. The young Communists participated in the distribution of the leaflets of the Communist Party and the Hungarian Front, circulating them in a number of factories and army units. In November, they organized some additional armed action guards and participated in other forms of resistance.

The group of Communist students at the Györfly College established contact with anti-nazi groups of students at two other colleges and at the Universities of Technology and Economics. On their initiative, these groups formed a joint organization called the Freedom Front of Hungarian Students, and their anti-nazi propaganda activities were particularly successful.

The Young Communist League also initiated a broad youth coalition that was formed in November under the name of the Freedom Front of Hungarian Youth. It consisted of the Young Communist League, the Freedom Front of Hungarian Students and a peasant party youth group.

Some representatives of the religious youth organizations also joined the developing anti-nazi youth front. Within the framework of this front was organized the Görgey battalion consisting of 100 to 120 students and young workers the groups of which operated first in Budapest, later in the area of Vámosmikola. The Freedom Front of Hungarian Youth also participated in the activity of the Liberation Committee of the Hungarian National Uprising.

On the instruction of the Liberation Committee of the Hungarian National Uprising, a military staff was set up under the leadership of Lieutenant-General János Kiss, with the aim of organizing an uprising with the participation of the Hungarian military units that could be persuaded to resist, and the armed workers' detachments. The plan was to open up a gap in the Hitlerite front, which would enable the advancing Red Army to rapidly enter Budapest. However, János Kiss and his companions were arrested by the Gestapo on 22 November, and Bajcsy-Zsilinszky also fell into their clutches. They were court-martialled in December and executed by the Arrow Cross forces. Endre Bajcsy-Zsilinszky, János Kiss and their companions became comrades-in-arms of the workers in the struggle against the Hitlerite invaders, and they gave their lives for the national liberation.

With the arrest of the Bajcsy-Zsilinszky group, the Liberation Committee of the Hungarian National Uprising fell apart. The Hungarian Front continued in existence, but did not set up a new joint military staff. The military committee of the Communist Party continued its activity, and the military actions of the partisan groups organized and led by Communists increased in intensity. The Communist Party made the greatest efforts to disrupt the power organizations of the Arrow Cross government, helping those who were persecuted and organizing resistance against the evacuation measures. The other parties of the Hungarian Front and other groups also participated in these forms of national resistance.

There was especially widespread national resistance against the evacuation measures. The fascist troops forced to retreat, the German invaders and the Arrow Cross agencies endeavoured to take away everything they could lay their hands on in the areas they evacuated, wherever this

was not prevented by the resistance of the Hungarian people or the advance of the Soviet troops. Those who feared the anger of the people on the threshold of liberation, fled together with the invaders and helped them to remove the goods, drive away the livestock, and carry off the people and adolescent boys, and actively participated in the devastation of the evacuated areas. And the people mobilized their forces against these moves. They saved some of the factories from destruction and prevented the equipment from being dismantled, hid to avoid being carried off to the West and helped the persecuted. All this developed into a national movement in the form of both organized and spontaneous actions.

The actions carried out to undermine the evacuation orders and save the factory equipment at Miskolc, Ózd, Salgótarján, Pécs and Csepel, and in the Tata and Dorog coal basins were especially significant and successful. The resistance of the peasants also assumed national proportions; they concealed their produce, made efforts to drive the livestock to safety and refused to leave their villages. When the population was ordered to work on fascist fortifications, sabotage became general. In Budapest, most of those ordered to carry out this type of work did not report at the designated points, and those who were forcibly taken to such sites soon stopped work, as they did not want to strengthen the fascist positions. Many people helped the persecuted Jews, which was also a form of anti-fascist resistance.

The approach of the Soviet Army gave an impetus to the resistance of the Hungarian people.

More than half of the country had been liberated by the last months of the year. Debrecen was free on 19 October, and ten days later, Marshal Malinovsky's forces met up at Csap with the troops of Army General Petrov, who had liberated the Carpathian Ukraine. The Budapest campaign started the same day with the participation of the troops of the Second and Third Ukrainian Fronts. Marshal Malinovsky's forces liberated Kecskemét on 31 October, Cegléd on 3 November, Hatvan on 20 November and Vác on 5 December. Marshal Tolbukhin's troops crossed the Danube south of Baja on 10 November, liberated Pécs on 29 November and drove the fascist forces from the areas south of Lake Balaton by

7 December. After this, they broke through the fortified defence line of the Germans between Lake Balaton and the Danube and bypassed Budapest from the west. Marshal Malinovsky's troops encircled the Budapest area from the north and joined Marshal Tolbukhin's forces at Esztergom on 26 December. The fascist army in the area of the capital was trapped.

The Soviet forces reached the outskirts of Budapest on 29 December. With an offer of humane terms, the Soviet army command called on the encircled troops to stop fighting, in order to avoid further bloodshed and save Budapest and the inhabitants from the ordeal of a siege. However, the command of the fascist forces rejected the offer. They were confident that the Hitlerite general staff will deploy large forces to break through the besieging ring and thus save them; they shot and killed the unarmed Soviet Captains Steinmetz and Ostapenko, who carried the truce terms.

The siege of Budapest began.

At the same time, a new power came into being in the liberated parts of the country: the democratic power of the Hungarian people.

The Communist Programme of Democratic National Revival The Birth of the People's Power

The democratic and socialist movement had long traditions in the liberated areas east of the Tisza River. This was the area where the people of the "Stormy Corner" lived, who had always provided a firm basis for the struggle against the reactionary rule of the capitalists and landlords, alongside the workers of Budapest and other industrial centres. The new life of the country, liberated by the Red Army, began here and spread from here.

The workers' organizations realigned their forces. For the first time after 25 years underground, the Communist Party began to freely operate and it was the first to begin the work of reconstruction and the creation of a new power. The trade unions started to revive and the Social Democratic Party began its activities. Later on, local groups of the National

Peasant Party and the Independent Smallholders Party came into being, in several localities with Communist encouragement and assistance.

There was a considerable amount of work to be carried out. Public order had to be ensured, basic food supplies had to be made available in the towns, public institutions and factories had to be put into operation again, and work in preparation of the approaching winter had to be performed on the estates of the absent landlords who had fled and on the heavily damaged peasant farms, most of which had been deprived of draught animals.

On the initiative and under the leadership of the Communists, people's organizations that operated under various names developed in the liberated localities and took over the administration of public affairs. Local administration came under their control and was reorganized, they played a role in organizing supplies and helped launch the autumn work in the villages. In this way national committees came into being during the first few weeks. Parallel with this an emergency police force was also organized on Communist initiative and under Communist leadership, from which the new democratic police soon evolved. Its leaders mainly came from among the organized workers and partisans.

The workers started to put the ravaged factories and power plants into working order. Factory committees were formed to organize and lead this work—usually in the absence of the owners and managers who had fled or gone into hiding—and so partial production was rapidly started in the factories. A beginning was made to reconstruct the destroyed railway lines and the thousands of demolished bridges. All this work has ensured at the same time the supply lines of the Soviet troops and helped the activities that were necessary to support the front, for the war still continued and vast armies were locked in battle on Hungarian soil.

The great cause of national reconstruction and joining in the war against the nazis required the creation of a new central power, a new Hungarian state. A clear-cut programme had to be drawn up to rally the national forces and rebuild the country. The Communist Party issued such a programme for a democratic national rebirth published on 30 November 1944 in the Debrecen newspaper *Néplap*.

This document stated: "Our country is experiencing the most disastrous catastrophe in its history. The leaders of Hungary, hiring themselves out to the Germans, plunged Hungary into the Hitlerite imperialist war of plunder against the Soviet Union and the other free nations. They aligned themselves with the German fascists, because with such help they intended to subjugate the neighbouring peoples and ruthlessly suppress the Hungarian people within the country and keep them in slavery. The country is suffering under the fatal consequences of this criminal policy. Despite this, the Communist Party proclaims that there will be a Hungarian rebirth!" Hungary could be saved and reborn, if the nation ruthlessly settled accounts with those who had plunged the country into disaster, if "all honest Hungarians rally to the Hungarian National Independence Front to build a new, vigorous, democratic Hungary, if the people take the leadership of the country into their own hands".

The most urgent national task in the first point of the programme called for the nation to turn against nazi Germany and support the Red Army.

Other points demanded that the traitors and war criminals should be called to account for their deeds before a people's tribunal. Other important tasks included the disbanding of all fascist organizations and preventing their revival, and the removal of anti-social elements from the administrative bodies, the courts, the army and emergency police force.

The programme also contained provisions to ensure democratic liberties and called for the removal of fascist poison, racial and nationalist hatred from public life, education and culture, and supported the freedom of religion.

One of the main demands was the land reform which was to be carried out "within the shortest possible time and with the participation of land claimants". Hundreds of thousands of landless peasants and strip-plot farmers were to be given land.

The programme also contained points to limit the acquisition of profits by big capital, with provisions for the state control of cartels and big banks, and the nationalization of mines, mineral oil wells and electric power plants, and insurance companies. At the same time, support was to be given to private enterprise that served the interests of the people;

such companies were to be helped to resume industrial production and trade.

The programme stated that wages were to be raised in proportion to the high prices. The eight-hour working day and protection of women and children in employment were to be legally ensured. To avoid the danger of unemployment, work opportunities had to be ensured, or state relief should be provided for the unemployed. The programme called for the restitution of the independent administration of the National Institute for Social Security and urged that the Institute's facilities should be extended to cover agricultural workers.

The foreign policy part of the programme urged the establishment of good neighbourly relations and sincere co-operation with "all the neighbouring countries", with Britain and the United States, and for "close friendship with the powerful Soviet Union the defender of the freedom and independence of the peoples".

The programme called for the rapid formation of national committees in the towns and villages, consisting of representatives of the democratic parties, and it was proposed that these national committees should be the local political bodies of the Independence Front—not identical with the administrative authorities, but controlling and guiding their activities.

The programme also recommended the convening of the Constitutional National Assembly as soon as possible and the setting up of the Provisional Government as the government of the Independence Front. It called on the Smallholders Party, the Social Democratic Party, the Peasant Party, the trade unions, the Peasant Alliance and the partisan units and on "every Hungarian patriot, regardless of party affiliation, to support the programme submitted by the Communist Party to the Hungarian people as a platform of national solidarity and national revival".

In this programme the Communist Party repeatedly stated that it considered the democratic transformation of the country as its immediate aim; socialist reorganization was a later task. This reiteration was meant to emphasize the fact that a social transformation could be realized only to the extent the need for this was understood and its realization supported by the majority of the people. The creation of a new democratic power, the land reform and the limitation of capitalist monopolies were

aims which immediately met with the support of the majority of the people.

With regard to the land reform, the programme set forth did not designate how much land should be left in the possession of the landlords and what size of estate could be accepted as a maximum. The fixing of this was the subject of a debate among the parties of the Independence Front, and decision on this issue was left to the period after the creation of the new power, which was to be brought into being with collective effort.

The draft programme did not include the demand to introduce control by the workers, a point which could also become a matter of contention with the liberal and conservative forces. However, with the setting up of factory committees under Communist leadership workers' control was realized in practice.

This programme of democratic national revival was drafted in a situation when the country was still a theatre of war, with half of its territory and the capital still in the hands of the German invaders; but in the liberated areas the revolutionary forces that had been suppressed in the past quickly arose and began to reorganize life, under the leadership of the Communist Party. The revolutionary forces—workers, poor peasants and the intellectuals campaigning with them—rapidly acquired such a degree of organization and political influence and power through their activities, that it was no longer possible to create a new state, a new government without them and against them. At the same time, the interest of the country demanded that a broad national front should be formed to carry out the major task of political and economic reconstruction. This front should be joined even by the strata which would be willing to accept only moderate changes in social relations, who were conservative in their attitude, but were willing to co-operate with the working class in the struggle against the Germans and were ready to acknowledge the participation of the revolutionary forces in the leadership of the new state.

The bourgeois forces that were afraid of a socialist revolution and waited in vain for the arrival of the British and Americans fell into a temporary lethargy as a result of the victory of the Soviet Army. Yet

these forces were in existence, and petty-bourgeois millions were under their ideological and political influence. When these bourgeois forces realized that the social changes were really considered an affair of the Hungarian people by the Soviet troops, they began to come to life again and started to reorganize politically. It was desirable and possible to get even these bourgeois forces to encourage the petty-bourgeois millions under their influence to work for reconstruction. Whether such co-operation would provide bigger advantages for the revolutionary or conservative forces, and whether the country would be built for the people or for the restoration of capitalist power, were issues that were to be decided in the political arena, in the course of reconstruction.

The Communist Party organizations active in the liberated areas were directed by a committee that consisted of the leaders of the Hungarian Communists who had emigrated to the Soviet Union, and who had now returned to Hungary. The members of the committee which filled the role of the Provisional Central Committee of the Party in the liberated areas included Ernő Gerő, József Révai, Mihály Farkas and Imre Nagy. They arrived in Szeged early in November and in December moved to Debrecen, which became the headquarters of the Provisional Central Committee.

The members of the Central Committee of the Party that operated in Budapest and directed the national resistance in the occupied areas, included László Rajk, Antal Apró, Márton Horvát, Károly Kiss and István Kovács. Following the arrest at the end of November of the Bajcsy-Zsilinszky group, László Rajk was also taken into custody and carried off to Germany from where he was able to return only after the war. Towards the end of November, János Kádár again joined the work of the Central Committee. He was captured in April 1944, and as his identity was not established, he was regarded as a deserter from the army; he managed to escape after the Arrow Cross coup.

Early in December István Kossa, the representative of the Provisional Central Committee in Debrecen, arrived in Budapest to contact the Central Committee. Kossa, formerly the Social Democratic Secretary of the Tramway Workers Union, had been taken to the Eastern front in a

special punishment company, from where he managed to escape and went over to the Soviet troops. He joined the anti-fascist movement among the prisoners of war and became a Communist. He also arrived in the liberated area in November. With the assistance of Soviet soldiers, he was able to cross the front line and establish contact with the Central Committee in Budapest. Afterwards, on behalf of the Central Committee, Antal Apró crossed the front line and reached Debrecen, to establish relations with the Provisional Central Committee operating there. Contact was established between the two leading bodies and they were able to inform each other of their respective activities. However, until the liberation of the capital this relationship remained loose.

On the initiative of the Hungarian Communist Party—the official name of the Party since autumn 1944—the political alliance of the parties of the Hungarian Front was reorganized under the name Hungarian National Independence Front. At their Szeged conference on 2 December, the representatives of the Social Democratic Party, the Smallholders Party and the Peasant Party accepted the Communist Party's programme of national reconstruction which in this way became the platform of the Independence Front.

The formation of the Independence Front was announced at a mass meeting organized by the National Committee in Szeged on 3 December. József Révai spoke on behalf of the Hungarian Communist Party and stated in his speech: "Hungarians are experiencing difficult times. Our soil has been ravaged by war. Our soldiers are still shedding blood on the side of our own oppressors. We have become the only country in Europe that is still unable to break away from Hitler's Germany." He pointed out that in this difficult situation it was impermissible to mislead the nation with reckless promises. "Our lot will be poverty, and in fact want, as long as we have not rebuilt the ruined country, but we promise not to spare either work or sacrifice in order to rebuild it . . ."

The Independent Smallholders Party was represented at the mass meeting by István Balogh, a priest of Szeged, the Social Democratic Party by Ágoston Valentiny, a lawyer, president of the Social Democratic Party organization in Szeged, and the National Peasant Party by Ferenc Erdei, a national leader of his party. In their addresses they announced

that their parties would share in carrying out the reconstruction programme.

The reorganization of the Independence Front and the acceptance of the draft programme of the HCP represented a major political success for the Party, for it had made it obvious that apart from the Communist Party there was no other organization to point out the road leading to the speedy reconstruction of the country.

The Independence Front was also joined by the trade unions and the Bourgeois Democratic Party, a newly formed party of the urban middle class.

Following an appeal by the Independence Front, in a few days time the national committees organized the election of the town and village deputies, in order to convene the Provisional National Assembly as soon as possible. The reconstruction programme, the re-establishment of the Independence Front and the election of deputies to the National Assembly enhanced the political activity of the people and helped to overcome the discouragement engendered by the devastations of the war. There was rising confidence that the new power coming into being would make it possible to build a better world.

The Provisional National Assembly was convened in Debrecen on 21 December 1944.

The National Assembly in Debrecen was the embodiment of the new state power and a firm political foundation for the democratic Hungary that was coming into being. When it first met, the Communist and Social Democratic delegates, together with the representatives of the trade unions made up a majority. With the members of the Peasant Party and the more radical wing of the Smallholders Party, the democratic forces represented an overwhelming majority in the new legislative body.

The National Assembly at Debrecen had 230 members. The representatives of the Hungarian Communist Party numbered 71, the Smallholders Party 55, the Social Democratic Party 38, the Peasant Party 16 and the Bourgeois Democratic Party 12. In addition, the National Assembly included 19 trade unionists and 19 deputies who joined the Independence Front without being committed to any party. The large majority of the trade union representatives were Communists. Some of

those without any party affiliation sympathized with the Communist Party, but their majority had bourgeois-liberal or conservative attitudes and included representatives of Horthyite groups, who had opposed the Germans.

With over 80 members, the Communist representatives were the biggest group in the National Assembly. This reflected the fact that the Communist Party was the most purposeful and most active party. Through their selfless struggle against fascism and their policy in support of the interests of the people, as proved by events, the Communists had gained the increasing confidence of the masses. This explains why the Communist Party became the recognized leader of the revolutionary changes. The other parties became active only after some delay and partly through Communist encouragement. As the new power began to take shape and opportunities increased for gaining positions of power, the other parties also became more active.

The National Assembly unanimously adopted the programme of the Independence Front and on 22 December elected the provisional government of the country. With regard to the composition of the government, a joint proposal based on inter-party negotiations was submitted to the National Assembly and approved by it. The members of Faragho's Horthyite delegation who went to Moscow to ask for an armistice and had returned in the meantime, also attended these preliminary talks, and were given seats in the new government.

Béla Dálnoki Miklós became Prime Minister. The Communist Party received three, the Social Democratic Party two, the Smallholders Party two portfolios, and the Peasant Party one. The non-party conservative group acquired three ministerial portfolios, in addition to Dálnoki Miklós's post as head of the government.

The representatives of the Hungarian Communist Party included Imre Nagy as Minister of Agriculture and Erik Molnár as Minister of People's Welfare. The Foreign Minister was János Gyöngyösi (Independent Smallholders Party), the Minister of the Interior, Ferenc Erdei (National Peasant Party), and the Minister of Justice, Ágoston Valentiny (Social Democratic Party).

The political composition of the National Assembly was much more

favourable than that of the government. Although the "non-party" group of former Horthyites was the smallest in the National Assembly, at the same time it was the most heavily represented in the government; three of their group of four were generals, including Dálnoki Miklós, who had gained prestige with his about-face after 15 October. Another was János Vörös—Minister of National Defence in the new government—the former chief of staff of the Horthyite army, who had participated in the preparations for quitting the Axis, and, escaping from the Germans, had gone over to the Soviet troops early in November. The third general was Gábor Faragho, who was given the portfolio of Public Supplies. Count Géza Teleky, the fourth representative of the Horthyites in the government, had been a member of the Faragho delegation that asked for an armistice; he became Minister of Public Education.

This composition of the government reflected the effort to bring about the widest possible national coalescence. One aim was that the new government should receive recognition as soon as possible, not only from the Soviet Union, but also from the Western Powers; another objective was that in the areas still occupied, even the Horthy supporters should be encouraged to turn against the German-Arrow Cross rule and speed up the disintegration of the Hungarian troops still on Hitler's side.

At the same time, the fact that the former Horthyites had received positions in the government created some justified incomprehension among the revolutionary forces. As a matter of fact, the Budapest Central Committee of the Party was also of the opinion that too large a concession had been made to the conservative forces. The memorandum the Hungarian Front sent to Horthy on 20 September 1944 had expressed the willingness of the parties of the Hungarian Front to form a government together with representatives of the army, if the latter were willing to turn the army against the German invaders. At that time, the Horthyite generals still controlled the army and had the possibility to take it over to the other side. However, they failed to do this, and the generals who had changed sides had been left without an army. Therefore it was with reason that the Central Committee regarded the number of Horthyites, who had broken with the nazis at the very last moment, included in the government as excessive.

Nevertheless, in the assessment of the Budapest Central Committee as well, what really mattered was that the National Assembly had been convened, and the new Hungarian government had come into being. This was a cause for general rejoicing and brought about a feeling of confidence in the future among the people both in the liberated areas and in the occupied territories of the country, and gave a fresh impetus to the disintegration of the Hungarian military formations still fighting on Hitler's side.

The Independence Front was a political alliance of the classes prepared to join the war of liberation and participate in the reconstruction of the country bringing about the rebirth of the nation. Its main strength was the working class and the working peasants; participating in the alliance were the urban petty bourgeoisie, the anti-fascist intelligentsia as well as the political representatives of the urban bourgeoisie and the kulaks who turned against the nazis. This was evident also in the balance of the parties and the social composition of the Debrecen National Assembly. Over 80 of the 230 members of the Assembly were workers and poor peasants; about 40 were middle peasants and fairly well-to-do farmers; the same number were artisans, tradesmen and merchants; and almost 60 were intellectuals. Among the remainder there were 7 clergymen, 5 army officers etc.

The need to urgently reconstruct the country prompted the revolutionary forces to call on the bourgeois forces who had turned against the nazis to co-operate—although on the basis of a programme aimed at extensive social changes. The slowly reorganizing bourgeois forces that were ready to accept only moderate changes, realized that the acceptance of the radical programme of the Independence Front was the essential precondition for participation in the formation of the new power. For the time being, they were willing to co-operate with the revolutionary forces, because it was senseless for them even to attempt to establish their own exclusive power. The international constellation, or more precisely the war alliance of the Soviet Union and the Western Powers, also encouraged the various parties of the anti-Hitler front to coalesce.

The implementation of the reconstruction programme could only be ensured if the new power enforced the will of the working class and the

peasants allied with it. And this meant that it had to crush the remnants of fascism, thwart any counter-revolutionary attempts by the reactionary forces and enable the people to decide what direction the reconstruction and the further development of the country should take. In other words, the democratic dictatorship of the workers and working peasants, which would repel the reactionary forces and guarantee the people's democratic development of the country, had to be ensured.

It was mainly to the credit of the Communist Party that this was the way it happened.

The Liberation of Budapest
The Hungarian Communist Party and the Social Democratic
Party Fighting for the Reconstruction Programme
The Agrarian Revolution

A few days after the National Assembly was convened in Debrecen the Red Army completely encircled Budapest and the siege of the capital started. The Soviet troops had closed the pincers around a fascist force of 180,000 mainly consisting of SS troops commanded by SS General Wildenbruch, but including the remnants of the Third Hungarian Army, the units of the Budapest garrison and anti-aircraft, engineering and police formations. Also enclosed in the trap were five battalions of gendarmes, auxiliary police units organized from the older age-groups, the armed detachments of the Arrow Cross Party and various fragmentary groups.

The siege lasted for six weeks. Completely unconcerned with the city and its population, the fascists also used apartment blocks as strong-points. The population was forced to take to the basements of the houses; they were hungry and cold, and their homes were exposed to looting and the ravages of war.

The Soviet troops advanced from house to house and from district to district. They had already liberated a number of towns and had become skilled in street fighting. The Hitlerites blew up every single bridge across the Danube in Budapest as they were completely driven out from the Pest side of the city. They dug in among the Buda hills in order to hold

their continually shrinking positions, desperately hoping that the German troops in Transdanubia would succeed in their attempts at a breakthrough and would release them from the pincer-trap.

The Pest side of the Hungarian capital was completely liberated on 18 January 1945. Pushed back to their final strongholds on the Castle Hill in Buda the last German units in the city gave up the fight on 13 February.

In the battles in and around Budapest also the Hungarian formations were assigned to and dispersed among the German units and suffered recurring heavy losses. They were affected by growing despair and many of the depleted units together with their officers, crossed over to the Soviet side and laid down their arms whenever they could. During the operations of the Red Army in Budapest, it became increasingly frequent that whole units together with their officers joined the Soviet troops in order to fight on their side—against the Germans. The most significant Hungarian unit of this kind was the Buda Volunteer Regiment, commanded by Colonel Oszkár Variházi. This force of 2,500 men fought with distinction and participated in the battles around the huge field of the Vérmező and on Castle Hill. It suffered 600 casualties in dead and wounded. In a similar manner to the Buda Volunteer Regiment, but in smaller units of platoons and companies, another 2,500 Hungarian soldiers fought alongside the Soviet troops in the liberation struggles in Hungary. In addition, Hungarian engineering corps of several thousand men, mainly railway construction units, assisted the military operations of the Red Army; these units were organized early in 1945 from the volunteers among the Hungarian prisoners of war.

During the siege of Budapest, the German general staff deployed additional forces to the area of the Transdanubian battle front. They were intent on breaking through the ring of besiegers at any cost, in order to regain Buda and recapture the whole of Transdanubia.

On the Western front there was a transitional consolidation of the German positions. As late as the second half of December and early in January, the German forces mounted a successful counter-attack in the Ardennes region disrupting and pushing back the British and American forces. However, they were unable to exploit this success, for in January

1945 the Red Army launched a big new offensive in the area of Poland and the Baltic; consequently the Germans halted their operations in the Ardennes. In the hope that they could strengthen their defence line along the Danube, they deployed part of the forces withdrawn from the Western front in the Transdanubian area. A plan was also entertained to build a last fortified area in the Austrian Alps, and hold out there while waiting for the break-up of the alliance between the Soviet Union and the Western Powers, which they still anticipated. The Hungarian area of Transdanubia would have served as the defence outpost of this "Alpine fortress" if they had succeeded in retaining the region.

In their attempts to break through in Transdanubia, the German general staff also utilized the four divisions of Szálasi's Hungarian army which consisted of the remnants of the defeated divisions. Other Hungarian formations, mainly the units of the First Hungarian Army, which had remained under German and Arrow Cross control, had been driven into Slovakia together with the Germans; because of the heavy losses and the desertions their numbers quickly dwindled, but they still formed a force of about two or three divisions of incomplete strength. Through the total mobilization programme, in other words through unbridled terror and demagoguery, the Arrow Cross had also set up four new "Hungarist" divisions, which they had placed at the disposal of the German general staff.

In the days following the failure of the German attempts to break through in Transdanubia, a major conference of the anti-Hitler Great Powers was held in the Crimea, when Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill met in Yalta. The conference lasted from 5 to 13 February. By that time, the Soviet troops had entered German territory; on 6 February they crossed the Oder River in the vicinity of Breslau (Wrocław) and on 8 February they captured Königsberg (Kaliningrad). During the same period, British and American troops launched an attack against the German forces in the Netherlands on 8 February. By the time the Yalta Conference had been concluded, the liberation of the Hungarian capital had also been accomplished.

At the Yalta Conference, the Allied Powers co-ordinated their plans for further military operations. They agreed to annihilate fascism com-

pletely, to prevent its revival in any form, and to demilitarize Germany. They also agreed to help the peoples liberated from under Nazi rule, guaranteeing them the right to establish democratic institutions according to their own will. With regard to the type of assistance to be rendered to the liberated peoples, the contracting parties held widely divergent views and ideas. The Western Powers had demonstrated their interpretation of assistance in Greece, when they started armed actions against the troops of the ELAS resistance forces, which seemed to be their only way of forcing the Greek people to accept the rule of the monarchists brought back from emigration.

At the Yalta Conference, the Allied Powers agreed on united action against Japanese imperialism and also with regard to the Far Eastern issues. The Soviet state was not indifferent to how the war was to be concluded in the Far East, where it had to ensure its own security. At the same time, in the given situation the Anglo-American Powers considered it very important that the Soviet Union join the war in the Far East as they expected from this move the annihilation of the Japanese army in Manchuria. It was agreed therefore that after a predetermined interval following the crushing of the Nazi Reich, the Soviet Union will declare war on Japan. The Far Eastern interests of the Anglo-American Powers played a considerable role in the fact that in spite of its inner contradictions the anti-Hitler coalition survived even in the final stage of the war.

At the Yalta Conference the British and American leading circles pledged to co-ordinate their military activities with the Soviet Union until the complete annihilation of the Nazi Reich, and also agreed on political co-operation following the war. The conclusion of the Yalta agreements was a significant event in the continuation of the war against Hitler, an event which had completely thwarted all German imperialist hopes of a separate peace with the Western Powers. The agreements contributed to the final victory over the fascist bloc.

The initial period of the activities of the government in Debrecen was marked in the international situation by the new major victories of the Red Army and the political strengthening of the anti-Hitler alliance.

These were the international circumstances under which the rebirth of Hungary began.

The Independence Front and its government regarded the conclusion of an armistice agreement with the anti-Hitler powers as a most urgent task. The Soviet Union provided extensive aid to the reviving Hungarian democratic forces to bring the new power—the new Hungarian state—into being as soon as possible. But the armistice had to be concluded together with her allies, the Western Powers. It had been decided at the Teheran Conference that the Allies would only jointly sign an armistice or peace with the countries in a state of war with them. Consequently, a foreign political precondition for concluding the armistice was the approval of Britain and the United States.

On the basis of a mandate approved by the National Assembly, the Provisional Government declared war on Germany on 28 December, and also proclaimed Hungary's readiness to militarily join in the war of liberation and set up a new democratic army for this end. The armistice delegation of the Debrecen government left for Moscow at the end of December. As a result of the talks held there, the Soviet Union, the United States and Britain concluded an armistice agreement with Hungary on 20 January 1945. The Hungarian delegation, led by Foreign Minister János Gyöngyösi, included Minister of National Defence János Vörös and István Balogh, Under-Secretary of State of the Prime Minister's Office, and it signed the armistice agreement on behalf of Hungary.

The armistice agreement declared the "Vienna Awards" of Hitler and Co. to be null and void, because the anti-Hitler powers refused to recognize any territorial acquisition in compensation for services rendered to the Nazi Reich. The Allied Powers acknowledged that Hungary had broken with Nazi Germany and declared war on it. Hungary was given the opportunity and undertook the obligation to join in the anti-Hitler war and set up eight army divisions for this purpose.

As a result of its participation in the Hitlerite war Hungary's international position was very grave. However, its military participation in the anti-fascist war provided the opportunity to ensure that it should not be regarded by the peoples as the last lackey of the Nazi Reich, but should be able to become a comrade-in-arms of the countries fighting to

annihilate fascism. However, the Debrecen government was able to avail itself of the opportunities provided by the armistice agreement only to a limited extent.

The organization of the new Hungarian army started. The soldiers, officers and partisans who had been active participants in the armed resistance volunteered for service, mainly on the inspiration of the Communist Party. However, the majority of the former Horthyite officers, who rallied around János Vörös and were in the first place counted on to assist in the organization of the army, were only interested in preserving their own positions and sabotaged the efforts to join the war against Hitler. It was not without a wrangle with the János Vörös group that those veteran officers who really wanted to fight, and especially the soldiers of the partisan units that reached Debrecen, could gain appropriate positions in the newly organized democratic army. Only two of the pledged eight divisions were set up, but even these could not participate in the liberation of Hungary. Their activities were limited to mopping-up operations behind the front in Austria.

The hope that the co-operation of the Horthyite generals in the Debrecen government would speed up the formation of the new Hungarian democratic army and thus enable it to join in the war of liberation, proved to be vain. The very opposite occurred, and considerably impaired Hungary's international prestige and interests.

Certainly no credit was due to the János Vörös group for the fact that after all there was some Hungarian armed resistance against the German invaders and the Arrow Cross puppet régime even if on a moderate scale. More than 7,000 people participated in the activities of the partisan units in Hungary, in the armed resistance groups, the Buda Volunteer Regiment and in the small Hungarian units that went over to the Soviet troops and turned their arms against the fascists.

Several thousand Hungarians also fought in the armed freedom struggles of other peoples. Hundreds of Hungarian Communists who emigrated to the Soviet Union became soldiers of the Red Army, and several hundred Hungarian soldiers and members of forced labour battalions escaped to the other side and joined in the ranks of Soviet

partisan units. A special Hungarian unit, the Petöfi Brigade, was formed in the partisan forces in Yugoslavia, with two thousand fighting men. Hungarians also fought in other Yugoslav partisan units—most of them Hungarians living in Yugoslavia, but also some hundreds of people from Hungary. At the time of the anti-fascist national uprising in Slovakia, several thousand men of the Hungarian units who were then in Slovakia, mainly Hungarians from Southern Slovakia, Hungary and the Carpathian Ukraine, joined in the uprising. Over three thousand Hungarian volunteers joined the French army and several hundred Hungarians were active in the French underground movement. Hungarians, and primarily Communists, living abroad also fought in the liberation struggles of other nations.

The freedom struggle of the peoples produced many heroes. For the nations of Europe the revolutionary working-class movement contributed the largest number of heroes and martyrs who gave their lives for the freedom of their country and of Europe. Three million members of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union fell in the Great Patriotic War. But their places were taken by others. During the years of the war, the Soviet Communist Party admitted five million new members. The French Communist Party lost 75,000 of its members in the four-year struggle against the fascist invaders. Tens of thousands of Yugoslav, Italian, Greek, Polish, Bulgarian and other Communist fighters augmented the long list of European freedom heroes who sacrificed their lives to defeat fascist barbarism. The Communist Parties had been steeled in the struggle and became the leading parties of the anti-fascist transformation and in a number of countries the strongest party of the nation.

This was also the case in Hungary. The Communists had most consistently fought against the quarter century rule of the counter-revolution, they suffered the heaviest blows from reaction, but were also the most resolute warriors in the fight against the German invaders. They were not motivated in their actions by the idea of "survival", but by the aim of developing national resistance against fascism. Already in the struggle before the armed resistance the Party had had a large number of martyrs. Hundreds of its fighters were killed in the special punishment companies, including Ferenc Földes, a schoolmaster, who was one of the organizers

of the Historical Memorial Committee in 1942, and journalists János Antal and György Bálint. Hundreds perished in the Nazi extermination camps, including Lajos Honti, one of the leaders of the National Federation of Hungarian Building Workers, the secretary of the building workers' Communist group, Ernő Némety, the General Secretary of the Textile Workers' Union and head of the Communist Party group in the organization, Ferenc Simon, a leader of the Leather Workers' Union and secretary of the leather workers' Communist group, Gyula Kulich, former secretary of the National Youth Committee; György Goldmann, a sculptor, and Rudolf Golub, who led the Miners' Committee of the Party in 1943 and 1944. Many of the Party's fighters were killed in prisons and internment camps at home. This was the fate of István Pataki and Róbert Kreutz, outstanding members of the ironworkers' youth movement, Barnabás Pesti, a chemical engineer, Éva Braun, a prominent fighter in the Communist youth movement, and Béla Józsa, a leader of the North Transylvanian Communists. With the growth of the partisan movement, the number of those increased who became martyrs as volunteers in the liberation struggle.

Resisting capture with a gun in his hand, Endre Ságvári was killed in Budapest in July, 1944. After being released from prison in 1939, György Kilián and Richárd Rózsa went to the Soviet Union, and when they parachuted down as partisans, they were killed in action together with their comrades. Ferenc Pataki, a Hungarian Internationalist, and the commander of a partisan group that came from the Soviet Union, successfully fought with his unit for five months and then, with several of his comrades, gave his life for liberty. Márton Szőnyi, a junior officer in the Horthy air force, who became a Communist in the anti-fascist movement of the prisoners of war and volunteered as a partisan, was dropped together with 12 others in the area of the Bükk mountains in August 1944. Subsequently, most of the group, including Márton Szőnyi the commander, and farm-labourer János Ősz-Szabó, the political commissar, were killed. Nine members of the Red Brigade, a resistance group formed within one of the Kiska auxiliary armed detachments including László Füredi, also perished. Other martyrs included members of the Budapest action guards, the Újpest and Kőbánya partisan groups,

the Rákóczi unit, the Nógrádi group and other partisan formations who fell in the struggle for the liberation of the country. Hundreds of Communist fighters became martyrs in the armed resistance struggle of the Hungarian people. In addition, hundreds of Hungarian Communists who were engaged in the local anti-fascist struggles for the freedom of the nations, and for the Hungarian people, also fell in the various countries of Europe during the Second World War.

Although to a lesser extent, patriots of other party affiliations also participated in the armed resistance, voluntarily accepting the risk of death. Their political activities differed and although each has to be assessed according to its merits, it has to be remembered that there are no party differences in martyrdom. All of them were martyrs of the nation, and with their heroism they are all equally entitled to the tribute of the people, for whose freedom they gave their lives.

Soon after the formation of the Debrecen government conflicts between the left and right wings of the coalition emerged, not only with regard to the organization of the new Hungarian army, but also on other questions. Ernő Gerő and József Révai informed Mátyás Rákosi about the situation in a letter. After fifteen years in prison, when he was released by the Hungarian government, Mátyás Rákosi went to the Soviet Union and at the end of 1940 he became the representative of the Party of the Hungarian Communists in the Comintern, and later the head of the Party's group in Moscow. In his letter of 7 January 1945, Gerő mentioned the conflicts within the government. He wrote that these were "indications of the fact that the struggle is sharpening against reaction. We knew this in advance and although we do not wish to artificially speed up the process, we shall begin to increase the pressure in the next few days, both from above and from below, to drive the government forward".

One of the questions of influencing the trends in power was the distribution of the leading functions in the administrative apparatus among the parties. An agreement was arrived at with regard to the appointments of the lord lieutenants of the first eleven liberated counties. The new chief administrative officers in four counties, namely in Baranya,

Békés, Borsod and Csongrád, were Communists, in three counties they belonged to the Smallholders Party, in two counties they were members of the Social Democratic Party and in another two of the Peasant Party. In the meantime, conflicts arose with regard to matters concerning the revision of the old corps of officials and the purging of the administrative apparatus.

The greater part of the former civil servants fled or hid from the approaching Soviet troops and waited for further developments. A small number of those who stayed at their posts—mainly in lower positions—supported the popular forces who had come into power; the remainder adopted a neutral attitude. Nevertheless, many continued emotionally to side with reaction, hoping for its revival. The right wing of the coalition endeavoured to utilize the latter and also those who were neutral for its own ends, and for similar reasons also protected those fascists who had slowly seeped back and now called themselves "democrats". The lord lieutenants of the Smallholders Party in the counties of Szabolcs, Hajdú and Heves were especially active along this line, and the local right-wing reactionary elements such as lawyers, clergymen, administrative officers, well-to-do craftsmen, landlords and merchants who had joined the Smallholders Party, also swung into action.

The left wing of the coalition, and primarily the Communist Party, urged the radical purging of the public administration. The national committees, especially in the region east of the Tisza, supported these Communist initiatives and removed a large number of reactionary officials or prevented their return. The conservative group in the coalition would have liked to dissolve the national committees under the pretext that, since the National Assembly and the Provisional Government had come into existence, they were no longer needed. They wanted the control over local authorities to be the sole responsibility of the government. However, the left wing of the coalition managed to avert this attempt to liquidate the national committees.

Early in January, the Central Committee of the Hungarian Communist Party in Debrecen decided to launch the campaign for land reform. It conferred with the leaders of the Peasant Party on the draft of the land reform and came to an agreement with them. Ferenc Erdei and

his associates adopted the Communist suggestion and agreed that the *Néplap* newspaper in Debrecen should publish it on 14 January, as the proposal of the National Peasant Party. And this is how it actually happened. Formally, the Communist Party had launched and led the struggle for the land reform as the endorser of the Peasant Party proposal. The idea was that with the Peasant Party in the foreground, the opponents of the radical land reform would be more easily isolated. At the same time the formal passing over of the initiative to the Peasant Party gave it significant political support at a time when the already vigorously activating right-wing elements in the Smallholders Party would have liked to push the Peasant Party into the background as much as possible.

The land reform proposal of the Communist and Peasant Parties was aimed at terminating the feudal system of large estates and carrying out a really democratic agrarian revolution. It demanded the full confiscation of all landed estates over 1,000 *hold** and leave no more than 100 *hold* to the estates of the landed gentry between 100 and 1,000 *hold*. The upper limit in the size of big peasant estates was fixed at 200 *hold* and thus the estates of the kulaks were untouched by the proposal. This was to promote kulak neutrality with regard to the appropriation of the estates of the large landowners, and to prevent the kulaks from becoming allies of the landowners.

The proposal urged the government to issue at once the land reform decree and begin its immediate implementation, relying in this action on the popular bodies of the land-claiming committees to be set up by the village poor.

In fact the Hungarian Communist Party began to mobilize the village poor forthwith. The Central Committee in Debrecen and the municipal party committees sent canvassers and organizers to the villages.

Led by Communists, a number of peasant delegations arrived in Debrecen at the end of January and the beginning of February, to urge the publication of the land reform decree based on the proposal of the Communist and Peasant Parties. The representatives of the local Small-

* 1 *hold* equals 1.42 acres.

holders Party organizations also participated in these delegations, pressing the leaders of their own party to support the land reform proposal and back the immediate publication of the decree. In some areas, the landless and poor peasants began to distribute the abandoned estates of the former landlords to ensure they would be cultivated and also to give greater support to the land-distribution movement. The establishment of the land-claiming committees began. The committees started to register the land-claimants, to take stock of the land to be distributed, and to draft the local plans of land distribution. All this was linked with preparations for springtime farm work.

Budapest was liberated at the time the land reform movement was developing. The liberation of the capital was not only an outstanding event in the liberation of the country, but also a considerable gain in strength of the people's democratic forces and the left wing of the Independence Front. At that time, almost two-thirds of the Hungarian manufacturing industry was concentrated in Budapest and its vicinity, together with the main forces of the Hungarian proletariat. Of course, it is also true that the capital contained the bulk of the Hungarian bourgeoisie. This was where the majority of civil servants and privately employed clerks lived, and this was where the urban petty bourgeoisie was concentrated. The right wing of the coalition attached extensive hopes to drawing the middle classes under its influence. However, the right-wing forces in Budapest had fallen apart, whereas the working class quickly recovered, it became organized and played a decisive role in the city reviving after the siege.

At that time, the Budapest organization of the Smallholders Party was still weak, and its local leaders co-operated with the workers' parties. In February, when they could no longer delay taking a stand, the leaders of the Smallholders Party in the capital (at the same time the national leaders of the party) were prompted to accede—although with reservations—to the land reform proposal put forward by the Communist and Peasant Parties. After some hesitation, the leaders of the Social Democratic Party also supported it.

However, the debate and procrastinations over the land reform plan continued. Its opponents objected to the haste: they wanted to gain

time and to delay the commencement of the land reform, at least until the autumn and to prolong its implementation for years. They also bargained about the maximum extent of the holdings: the leaders of the Smallholders Party would have preferred a 400-500 *hold* ceiling on private estates. The kulaks and the middle peasants would have liked to see a land reform which would have given them, i.e. farmers in possession of "expertise" and suitable equipment, the opportunity to easily extend their landed property. They disapproved of the fact that the land reform was to be carried out by land-claiming committees, and would have given the job only to "specialists", surveyors etc. However, no force could stand in the way of the Communist and Peasant Party land reform movement. The right wing of the coalition retreated. Only Count Géza Teleki protested, but even he was aware of the futility of his opposition. On 17 March, on the basis of a preliminary inter-party agreement, the Debrecen government passed the land reform decree.

Reaction endeavoured to thwart the land reform through stirring up wide-spread confusion. They tried to intimidate the village poor and persuade them not to claim land, saying that the landlords would eventually settle accounts with the Communists and take revenge on the recipients for the appropriation of the land as well. Nevertheless, it was impossible to stop the revolutionary impetus.

The agrarian revolution, which eliminated the system of large feudal estates, and removed the class of big landlords in Hungary, gathered momentum in March and April. With its estates appropriated, this class was deprived of its subsistence and lost its social role for good. Land-claiming committees were formed in more than 3,000 villages with about 35,000 members. The determination of the hundreds of thousands of land-claimants who rallied behind these popular bodies, and the revolutionary stand taken by the working class, broke all the machinations of the opponents of the land reform.

From the Catholic Church, the biggest landowner of gentry Hungary, 825,000 *hold* of land, largely belonging to the bishoprics, were appropriated. Among the secular landlords, Duke Pál Eszterházy possessed the biggest estate, 223,000 *hold*; it was completely appropriated by the

land reform. The other estates of a thousand or ten thousand *hold* or more were similarly taken in their entirety. Under the reform the agricultural lands of the banks and other capitalist companies were also taken over. The properties of many Volksbundist Swabian peasants, mainly kulaks, were confiscated as a political reprisal for the support the Volksbund gave to the Hitlerite invaders.

In a number of cases, the land-claiming committees went beyond the stipulations of the decree, and where not much land was available, left less than 100 *hold* in the possession of the owners. In some localities, especially in the region east of the Tisza, they distributed the parts of kulak farms in excess of 100 *hold*.

The land reform was carried out at a fast pace, and by May and June it was concluded in the western counties as well.

As much as 5.6 million *hold* of land, that is 35 per cent of the entire fertile area of the country, were appropriated. Out of this 3.3 million *hold* were distributed among 660,000 claimants, largely ploughland and in a smaller part gardens, vineyards and orchards. Some 2.3 million *hold* of woodlands, meadows and pastures passed into state or community ownership.

Land was given to 371,000 landless peasants, 214,000 peasants with dwarf holdings and an other 75,000 farmers with a little more land. Some of the village clergymen also received land, a total of almost 20,000 *hold*. In addition, 350,000 people, most of them rural, but some of them urban, were given plots to build houses.

The land reform had a major political impact. It was a crushing blow for reaction, from which it never recovered: its ancient pillars, one of the exploiting classes, the big land-owning class, had been destroyed. The reform increased the prestige of the Communist Party, the leader of the agrarian revolution, it strengthened the alliance of the workers and peasants, and augmented the influence of the people's democratic forces.

During the land reform, the villages acquired a new look. The majority of the rural landless peasants acquired land, and so the class composition of the owners of agricultural land underwent a substantial change. This is evident from a comparison of the data from 1941 and 1949.

Size of estates	Number of estates	
	in 1941	in 1949
from 1 to 5 <i>hold</i>	305,500	457,400
from 5 to 10 <i>hold</i>	171,100	365,000
from 10 to 20 <i>hold</i>	129,000	176,000
from 20 to 100 <i>hold</i>	77,600	59,900
above 100 <i>hold</i>	7,100	1,100

The 1949 situation was not entirely identical with what developed directly after the land reform, because some changes occurred during the four years. A small part did not keep the land they received as a result of which the category of landholders between 10 to 20 *hold* increased. However, this had hardly any effect on the fundamental changes. The class of big landlords—the holders of over 100 *hold* of land in the 1941 column—dissolved, and the holdings of the working peasants increased. In addition to the land they received for private ownership, the availability of meadows and pastures, which had become community property, also helped to improve their position.

While the agrarian revolution was gathering momentum, great efforts had to be made to overcome famine in the industrial regions. To save the inhabitants in the capital and the surrounding area, in the citadel of the Hungarian proletariat, was an especially difficult task.

Fighting still continued in Buda, when at the summons of the Communists the inhabitants began to come up from the cellars in liberated Pest and began to clear away the rubble. The local organizations of the Hungarian Communist Party were formed, and the network of local and regional basic organizations in the factories and the administrative districts could at last be built legally. On the initiative of Communists the factories started to be put in operating order, and some workshops went into production again as a result of the activities of the quickly formed factory committees. The Soviet engineering corps helped by removing mines and explosives from the factories, and the local Soviet commands provided assistance by making fuel available to start production. The workers joined in the work required by the Red Army;

their hatred of fascism, their gratitude to the liberators and their hope in the new world that was being created inspired them in their work. The Soviet military command sent food to the factories, and in this way assisted production and the struggle against famine. The Communists started to reorganize the work of the magistrates offices and put the public institutions into operation to create a new life in the long-suffering Hungarian capital.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party in Budapest established contact with the leaders of the other parties of the Hungarian Front who were in the city, and on its recommendation the Budapest National Committee was formed on 23 January, in a provisional composition. Under an inter-party agreement, the national committee appointed János Csorba of the Smallholders Party as the new mayor of Budapest, and a few days later named one Communist and one Social Democrat as deputy mayors.

The principal problems facing the new leadership of the capital were to save the inhabitants from famine and the threat of typhoid, repair the ruined homes and put the public utilities back into operation. Food had to be requested from the rural areas, and it was the task of the Ministry of Public Supplies to organize nation-wide assistance. However, headed by Gábor Faragho, this Ministry was more concerned with protecting the former Horthyite officials than dealing with the plight of the people of Budapest. Using the actually existing major difficulties as a cover, they were in fact engaged in sabotage. The lack of bread was the most seriously felt by the poor strata of the people, the revolutionary forces, and the Faragho clique was not particularly interested in supplying the workers who had assumed power. It was easier for the richer people, those who had not fled to the West, to obtain food in rural areas. Black marketeers also appeared, who profited from the hunger.

In this situation, the Hungarian Communist Party took control of the arrangements for providing aid for Budapest. Earlier on, the Party had started a relief campaign for the northern Hungarian industrial region. On 5 January, the Central Committee in Debrecen decided that even before "the proper government measures are taken", they would organize a relief movement. It addressed an appeal to the population of the Great

Plain, to the democratic parties, the trade unions, the national committees and local authorities and asked them to urgently collect food. Aid for Budapest was a more difficult problem, and appropriate government measures were slow in coming. The Party mobilized its provincial organizations and, through the Communist lord lieutenants and with the co-operation of the national committees, the local authorities collected food and sent it to the capital. A movement was also started to temporarily move Budapest children to rural areas.

The state of affairs demanded more energetic action from the leader of the capital than the new Office of the Mayor was able to take. Since the relief drive won increasing confidence for the Communists in this matter, under an inter-party agreement the Council of Ministers appointed a Communist as the Food Commissioner of Budapest in February. Zoltán Vas was appointed to this post. After fifteen years in prison, at the end of 1940, Vas was released together with Rákosi and went to the Soviet Union. He returned to Hungary in the autumn of 1944, to join in the work in the liberated areas.

As a result of the food collection drive, Budapest received 1952 wagon-loads of food—flour, wheat, potatoes and legumes—from 7 February to 7 March. This was very little and the inhabitants had only limited resources. The despatch of the food to Budapest was mainly arranged by the Ministry of Public Supplies, but very slowly. A Budapest mass meeting of the Hungarian Communist Party, held on 25 February, expressed dissatisfaction with “the operation of the Ministry of Public Supplies, because it can be charged with grave negligence in providing for the famine-stricken people of Budapest”.

In this very grave situation Hungary received assistance from the Soviet Union. Although the Soviet people suffered serious shortages resulting from the looting and destruction caused by the fascist armies and the immense burdens of four years of war, the Soviet government nevertheless found ways to provide food for the people in the liberated cities and industrial centres. At the end of March, the Soviet Union sent 1,500 wagons of cereals, 300 wagons of meat and 200 wagons of sugar to Hungary as loan. This helped the people to survive during the worst weeks. This prompt loan of food was at the same time political

aid for strengthening the revolutionary forces of the country. It helped to frustrate the despicable hopes that reaction attached to the famine in Budapest.

The Central Committee of the Hungarian Communist Party operating in Budapest and the Central Committee in Debrecen were able to develop closer contacts after the liberation of the Pest side of the capital, and the policy of these two leading bodies was co-ordinated on the basis of the identical line that they followed previously. An important aspect of this policy was to strengthen co-operation between the two workers' parties.

The leadership of the Social Democratic organizations operating in the liberated areas was formed in Debrecen on 21 December 1944, on 21 January 1945, the leading bodies of the HCP and the SDP in Debrecen concluded an agreement which emphasized that the two parties were marching together in the struggle against reaction and for the realization of democracy.

In liberated Pest, the leaders of the Social Democratic Party who were in the capital formed a provisional Executive Committee on 18 January. The Budapest Central Committee of the HCP and the Provisional Executive Committee in Budapest of the SDP concluded an agreement on 25 January similar to that concluded in Debrecen; it stated that they “regard the closest co-operation of the two parties as indispensably necessary in the interests of the working class, the Hungarian National Independence Front and for an independent, democratic Hungary”.

In this way, the HCP and the SDP confirmed the united front agreement they concluded under German occupation on 10 October 1944, which they now wanted to enforce in the new situation in the struggle to build a democratic Hungary. Liaison committees between the two parties were formed both in Debrecen and Budapest.

In the second half of February, both the Hungarian Communist Party and the Social Democratic Party organized their unified national leaderships. The Budapest and Debrecen executive organizations of the Hungarian Communist Party merged into a unified Central Committee. The merger was proclaimed by the joint Budapest meeting of the two bodies

on 23 February. At the same time, Mátyás Rákosi, who had arrived in the capital somewhat earlier, was elected General Secretary.

The leadership of the Social Democratic Party was reorganized on 19 February from the members of the former executive organization present in Budapest; this body was supplemented by those who were among the founders of the Provisional Executive Committee in Budapest but who had not been members of the leadership in the past. Such members of long standing as Károly Peyer, who was absent at the time, were also co-opted into the leadership. Árpád Szakasits headed the executive, and the members included Antal Bán, György Marosán, István Ries, Anna Kéthly and Imre Szélig. The SDP centre in Debrecen functioned until the end of April.

The Provisional Executive Committee in Budapest of the Social Democratic Party had more closely identified itself with the policy of a united workers' front than the Debrecen leadership. The representatives of the right wing had also appeared on the scene in Pest, but they had not yet come out against the united front for they realized that co-operation with the Hungarian Communist Party was essential; although they regarded this as a temporary necessity which arose, in their opinion, from the fact that the British and American troops failed to arrive whereas the Soviet troops had moved in. The right-wing elements endeavoured to loosen such co-operation from the very beginning.

The fact that many Communists also viewed the united front policy with antipathy also caused considerable problems. This was the case with regard to those comrades who found it difficult to understand why the dictatorship of the proletariat could not be directly established, and with those who understood that a democratic transformation was the order of the day, but were not confident that the former Peyerist policy of the Social Democratic Party had actually changed. They were slow to understand that a united front by the two workers' parties was the principal precondition for the victory of the people's democratic forces in Hungary, that for the Hungarian Communist Party the united front was not a transitory manoeuvre, but a road to establishing closer ties with the Social Democratic Party which eventually would lead to creating the conditions for unification.

Although there were many problems concerning the co-operation between the two parties, the decisive factors were the fundamental interests of the working class and the existence of the people's democracy, which made close collaboration between the Hungarian Communist Party and the Social Democratic Party imperative. For this reason, both parties had to make joint efforts to overcome the difficulties and conflicts which arose in this process.

The fact was that apart from their political solidarity, the two parties were rivals, both for mass influence and positions of power. They found it easier to arrive at an understanding on joint action against the right wing of the coalition, to jointly strengthen then positions of power of the working class. Things were more difficult when the rivalry between the parties occurred within the working-class movement. For this reason, an important part of the activities of the liaison committee of the two parties from the very beginning aimed at moderating the frictions caused by party rivalry.

Through the co-operation of the two parties, the reorganization of the trade unions started in January. The new provisional executive committees of the various trade federations were formed and the trade union movement rapidly began to develop. In establishing the new leading bodies an attempt was made, particularly on the insistence of the Peyerists that in the interests of the Social Democratic Party those former leaders should be reinstated in their old positions who had led the anti-Communist witch-hunt in the trade union movement. The Hungarian Communist Party rejected the simple re-institution of the leading bodies which had come into being under the authority of the Peyer clique and the supervision of the Horthyite police. It urged that new central bodies be formed through co-operation between the two parties. The organization of these bodies started forthwith. Since most of the former Social Democratic trade union activists had joined the Hungarian Communist Party, Communist majorities were established in the provisional executive committees of most of the trade unions.

However, the trade union positions of the Social Democratic Party were still strong. In Budapest, the Party trade unionists were the quickest to become active again. The majority of the earlier non-party workers

joined the Social Democratic Party, which received them with open arms. The Hungarian Communist Party was still inexperienced in recruiting members under legal conditions, and moreover, most of their former cadres were occupied by the many responsibilities posed by reconstruction and the building of new organs of power. Part of their concern was to keep questionable elements out the Party, for such people applied in large numbers to every party of the Independence Front. The Hungarian Communist Party was late in making use of the improved opportunities for the large-scale augmentation of its ranks. However, the majority of the old activists of the organized workers, who knew the veteran Communists, immediately found their way to the Hungarian Communist Party, for them the doors were open. In this way, the Communist Party became the leading party of the reviving trade union movement.

The national centre of the trade unions, the Council of Hungarian Trade Unions, was formed anew early in February. Under an inter-party agreement, Ödön Kisházi, a Social Democrat, became the president and István Kossa, a member of Parliament for the Hungarian Communist Party, was made the General Secretary.

The Budapest liaison committee of the two parties was generally able to settle the conflicts that arose out of party rivalry. Stronger Communist positions in the trade unions limited Peyerist opportunities for subversive activities against the united front and helped to smooth away the frictions between the two parties so as to strengthen the position of the left wing, of the adherents of the united front, within the Social Democratic Party. In fact, the HCP made concessions concerning positions to the Social Democratic Party, but as far as possible only when such concessions strengthened the adherents of the united front, rather than the Peyerists within the Social Democratic Party.

The questions of a united struggle against reaction began to receive greater emphasis in February. It was agreed that the two parties should jointly urge the creation of a people's tribunal to try war criminals and jointly demand the setting up of political screening committees in order to purge the civil service and the staffs of private firms and companies of fascists. The People's Tribunal consisting of a professional judge and

the representatives of the parties of the Independence Front, was set up in Budapest in February. The screening committees performing the removal of fascists from public or private employment were also formed with the representatives of the parties in the Independence Front.

The two parties jointly pushed through a government decree which was passed in February for the recognition of the activities and jurisdiction of the factory committees. The factory committees were officially authorized to take control of production as well as the trade activities of the industrial companies, and could play an active role in the regulation of labour relations and the administration of companies. Control by the workers in factories and mines was established as soon as they started to operate, but pressure had to be exerted on the right wing of the coalition to give government approval to this practice. The right wing considered this a forced concession. At the same time they emphasized the capitalist ownership of the factories, in order to be able to limit later the jurisdiction of the factory committees to the settlement of labour disputes. However, the factory committees were power positions of the working class which strengthened the government's influence among the workers and at the same time reduced capitalist exploitation.

In March the two workers' parties agreed to take joint action to increase the influence of the workers in the management of the capital. As a result, the Budapest National Committee was reorganized on 28 March on the basis of an inter-party agreement arrived at previously; Árpád Szakasits was elected Chairman and Gyula Kállai Secretary.

The revolutionary forces became consolidated in the capital. With closer co-operation between Communists and Social Democrats the influence of the proletariat grew stronger in political life and helped to shape the life of the country.

The Full Liberation of the Country The Achievements of the Democratic Revolution

The Red Army continued its advance on several fronts at the same time, in the area reaching from the Baltic to the Dráva River. After the liberation of Budapest, there were also major battles in Transdanubia (western Hungary), where the Hitlerite general staff endeavoured to make another break-through. The aim was to push forward at any cost the defence line to the Danube and consolidate it there. New forces, including the Sixth SS Armoured Division, were thrown into the battle from the Western front. However, the German offensive launched on 6 March collapsed in ten days and the major part of the fascist forces were shattered by the Soviet troops.

After the failure of the last Transdanubian attack by the Hitlerite forces, the troops of the Second and Third Ukrainian Fronts immediately started a joint counter-attack. The Vienna campaign of the Red Army developed and, in its first phase, the entire area of Western Hungary was cleared of the German invaders.

The Vienna operation started on 16 March. The Hungarian front extended from the Dráva to the Danube, and the Slovak front from the Danube to the Carpathians. Győr was liberated on 28 March, Szombathely and Zalaegerszeg on 29 March, and finally the last units of the German occupiers were driven from the territory of Hungary on 4 April. Bratislava was liberated that same day, and the Red Army occupied Vienna on 13 April.

4 April, the day of the complete liberation of the country, has become the greatest national day of the Hungarian people. It symbolizes the great historic turning-point which was reached with the liberation of the country and with the coming into birth of the people's democratic power.

4 April is at the same time a festive day of the victory of the Red Army. It commemorates the fact that many sons of the Soviet people shed their blood and sacrificed their lives to set Hungary free. 4 April is also a symbol of the friendship and fraternity of the Hungarian and Soviet peoples, sealed in ties of blood.

On the anniversary of the liberation, the Hungarian people dip the red banner of the working-class movement and the national tricolour to commemorate all those who sacrificed their lives in the long struggle for the liberation of the working people, a struggle which took a heavy toll. Due to the steadfastness and vigour of its heroes, the Hungarian people were able to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the liberation, and the collaboration of the working class and the peasantry could carry the democratic revolution to victory.

During the six months of its liberation, Hungary took major strides forward. It was a difficult road, because the worst disasters of the war had to be overcome. But the work could be carried out in a radically changed situation, and the new tasks could be tackled under new and more favourable political circumstances.

The basic changes were the following:

As a result of the victories of Soviet arms, Hungary was liberated from the rule of the Hitlerite invaders, and the fascist state of the Hungarian capitalists and landowners was liquidated.

The revolutionary forces of the Hungarian people created a new, democratic state. The new power was built on a broad national front, within which the workers and the peasants represented the decisive force. The agrarian revolution approached completion. The distribution of land still continued in the western part of the country, but by that time even there the land no longer belonged to the landlords, but to those who tilled it. The class of large landowners, that ancient pillar of Hungarian reaction, was economically destroyed and removed from political power.

Control by the workers, brought about by the revolutionary activity of the workers of the factories and mines, gained ground in the reorganized industry.

The main forces of the Hungarian proletariat were organized in Budapest, and the left wing of the national front became consolidated and increased its leading influence in the government of the country.

These major changes occurred in the midst of conflicts and antagonisms between the classes and parties which had decided to co-operate in the Independence Front. The will of the people prevailed in the major issues of the social transformation, but power was still not entirely in the hands

of the people's democratic forces. That part of the kulaks and urban bourgeoisie which had turned against the nazis, also belonged to the Independence Front and held considerable positions of power within it.

The entire right wing of the coalition displayed its disinterest in joining the war of liberation. They regarded with antipathy and anxiety the reconstruction programme of the Independence Front and the penetrating social changes which were emerging. After unsuccessful delaying moves and fruitless bargaining, they finally accepted the land reform, because they did not have the strength to prevent it. They also accepted the workers' control that had been implemented in the factories and mines, because they were unable to do anything to stop it, but wherever they had the opportunity, they slowed down the progress and in fact attempted to obstruct the left in the national committees and in the local organizations of power.

The democratic police was organized under the leadership of the Communists, who had been the first to ensure public order. However, when it came to filling the leading positions in the police, including the appointment of the commissioners of police, each party demanded the maximum number of high-ranking positions, and the right wing joined in this rivalry with all its force. The Hungarian Communist Party had to wage an unyielding struggle to retain its leading role in the control of the democratic police and to reach an agreement with the other parties to prevent infiltration by reactionary elements. Nevertheless, in some places, mainly with the assistance of the Smallholders Party, the right wing was able to put some of the old reactionary officers back into the new police organization.

The right wing of the coalition was very active in the struggle for administrative positions and managed to clear a number of fascists for such positions. The former administrative officials soon started to infiltrate the Smallholders Party and in many places the reactionaries who had become "Smallholders Party members" supplied certificates for each other in the defascization committees. The democratic forces ousted part of the reactionaries from public positions, but many retained their places or smuggled themselves back.

Public administration had not yet been completely cleansed. One of the issues permanently on the agenda of communist meetings was the purification of public administrative posts. The resolution of the Budapest mass meeting of 25 February stated that the reactionary elements were shamelessly in evidence in Budapest and throughout the country, and urged the People's Courts and defascization committees to start work immediately. Under the resolution of the national committees of Szeged and Budapest, the first People's Courts were set up preceding the government decree for their establishment, and by that time defascization committees were also active, although not with the desired results. What the resolution emphasized at the 25 March mass meeting at Salgótarján was a country-wide phenomenon, namely that "the hated officials of former reaction are still present in many public offices or have already come back, and they are carrying on their activities against the people. For this reason the mass meeting demands stricter defascization procedures and a re-examination of the officials who have already been approved by the committees".

The capitalist entrepreneurs also started to reorganize their own bodies. The National Federation of Manufacturers had recovered some of its strength and started to organize a factory-owners' front in February. In a short time it had achieved close co-operation with the "non-party" conservatives, the Bourgeois Democratic Party, the right wing of the Smallholders Party and the right-wing elements in the Social Democratic Party. The revival of the Federation also provided a new impetus for the bankers. The main organization of finance capital, the Association of Savings Organizations and Banks was reorganized. The wholesale merchants also became active. The reactionary church dignitaries and other mouthpieces for the former landlords started to mobilize, and also contacted the right wing of the Independence Front.

While the village poor, led by the Communists, carried the agrarian revolution to victory, the bourgeoisie endeavoured to make up for lost time. The representatives of the right wing again pretended to act as the defenders of "national interests" and tried to glorify Horthy and his associates—the same clique who had sold the country out to the nazis—as anti-nazis. However, they were no longer interested in Horthy who

had utterly discredited himself, but in the Horthyite administrative apparatus and the Horthyite police and gendarmes, and whatever they could use to weaken the positions of power of the democratic forces. Anti-communist propaganda and agitation against the liberating Soviet forces and the disruption of the democratic camp were the political tactics used to increase the power and influence of the right wing and to gain ground for further attacks.

Although the superior power of democratic people's forces and their great victory in the battle of the land reform somewhat dimmed the peril of the reactionary preparations, many signs indicated their existence. It became imperative to rally the democratic forces even more massively, in order to defend the achievements of the revolution.

The National Assembly was one of the factors that indicated the superior power of the people's forces. After the liberation of Budapest the question of enlarging the Provisional National Assembly with the inclusion of representatives from the capital and its vicinity and later also with members from Transdanubia was put on the agenda. On 2 April, the mass meeting of the Budapest National Committee approved the joint proposal of the parties and sent 108 representatives to the National Assembly on behalf of the capital and the suburbs. Of these 26 represented the Hungarian Communist Party, 26 the Social Democratic Party, 22 the trade unions (half of them Communists and half Social Democrats), 16 the Smallholders Party, 6 the Bourgeois Democratic Party and 4 the Peasant Party. In addition, eight well-known personalities, including Mihály Károlyi and Béla Bartók, both of them *in absentia*, were elected as members.

In the National Assembly, which had 338 members after its enlargement with the representatives from Budapest and the suburbs, the Communist M.P.s numbered 130 and the Social Democrats 75, that is, the two of them together retained an absolute majority. Most of the other representatives also belonged to the democratic camp.

Control by the workers in the manufacturing and mining industry and the institutionalization of the system of factory committees enhanced the influence of the workers' parties in the government. The posts held in the county and local organizations of power signified further important

bases: the Hungarian Communist Party and the Social Democratic Party effectively participated in the leadership of the county authorities and the local magistracies and had considerable influence in the national committees.

The representatives of the two workers' parties and the trade unions together constituted a majority in the Budapest National Committee, and in this way the prevalence of the democratic forces in this politically important body was ensured. The democratic forces also held a majority in the national committees of the counties, although in these bodies the right wing of the Independence Front also represented a significant force and had started attempts to organize an anti-communist bloc. There were similar activities in the towns and in some places in the village national committees, especially in Transdanubia. All this revealed the growing activation of the bourgeoisie, the reactionary church circles and other right-wing forces.

Early in April the government moved its headquarters from Debrecen to Budapest. The working class of the capital hoped that in this city they could exert greater influence on the government and could achieve a shift to the left, both in the activity and in the composition of the government. On the other hand, the bourgeoisie—which was by that time organizing in earnest in the capital—pressed for more vigorous support from their representatives in the government. They demanded the curtailing of the jurisdiction of the factory committees and the lessening the role of the trade unions in public life. Béla Dálnoki Miklós's group made several attempts to this end, and endeavoured to issue a decree to this effect, but they were forced to retreat. The political struggle became sharper and the contradictions increased within the Independence Front itself.

At that time, the arrival of British and American representatives in Budapest became a new factor in the development of political antagonisms. Their arrival was connected with the fact that, when the armistice was concluded, the Soviet Union, the United States and Britain set up an Allied Control Commission to supervise the implementation of the armistice agreement. Marshal Voroshilov, the representative of the USSR, was the chairman of the ACC. During military operations in

Hungary, the ACC had its headquarters in Debrecen, where the British and American representatives were just barely active in its work. Early in April, the Allied Control Commission moved to Budapest. At that time, the British and American missions, with 150 members each, assumed significance as participants in the ACC.

The Soviet representatives parried the attempts of the British and American missions to provide assistance for the organizational activities of reaction through ACC measures. However, the British and American missions developed relations with various political circles independently of the ACC, and also contacted the National Federation of Manufacturers and other capitalist bodies. The right-wing political groups attached far-reaching hopes to the activities of the Western missions. They expected that considerable pressure would be exerted on the Hungarian government to precipitate a shift to the right. On the other hand, the British and American missions encouraged the bourgeois forces to become more active.

To defend and develop further the achievements of the democratic revolution, these right-wing counter-actions had to be averted and the newly organized reaction had to be repulsed and smashed. An important prerequisite of this was that the power positions of the democratic forces should be supported by the mass influence and organized force of the workers' parties. Both the Hungarian Communist Party and the Social Democratic Party strengthened their organizations in the factories and in the residential areas. This was when the SDP first set up party organizations in the factories, following the example of the HCP.

To expedite national organization, the Central Committee of the Hungarian Communist Party established regional secretariats. The North Hungarian secretariat was located at Miskolc, the South Hungarian in Szeged, the East Hungarian in Debrecen, the South Transdanubian in Pécs and the North Transdanubian in Győr, while a secretariat was also organized for Greater Budapest. The principal task of the regional secretariats was to assist the county party committees, which at that time still lacked adequate experience in their work. Under conditions, when there were no regular railway services and very few vehicles, it was very difficult to maintain contact with the more distant counties. For this

reason, the regional secretariats for a while played an important function in maintaining liaison between the Central Committee and the county party committees. Later on, when the Party's county committees had grown stronger and their direct contact with the Central Committee had been ensured, the regional secretariats became redundant and ceased to exist.

The leadership of the Social Democratic Party set up a Provincial Secretariat attached to the Party Executive to support national organization. The Social Democratic Party lagged behind the Hungarian Communist Party in the efficacy of its provincial organizations, but the membership of its Budapest and Budapest-vicinity organizations increased more rapidly than that of the HCP.

The trade unions served as most important props for both workers' parties to gain mass influence. The parties' co-operation was hampered from the very beginning by rivalry, but the competition also had a positive side in that it stimulated both parties to strengthen the trade unions and increase their role in public life.

The campaign to win over the young people was an important part of the struggle between the revolutionary forces and the bourgeois right wing. It was necessary for the democratic parties to join hands also in this work. The Communists had already worked for rallying the democratic youth during the German-Arrow Cross reign. In the liberated areas they immediately started to organize the youth movement. The organizations of the Young Communist League (KISZ) were formed at Szeged. However, the Central Committee of the Hungarian Communist Party in Debrecen proposed that the parties of the Independence Front should give up having their own youth organizations and instead should form a united democratic youth league with joint effort. The aim of this recommendation was to prevent party rivalry in the youth movement, and with closer co-operation of the coalition parties to speed up the democratic re-education of young people and get them to participate more effectively in the reconstruction of the country. The Young Communist League organizations already in operation identified themselves with the position of the Central Committee and established contacts with young people of other party affiliations, mainly those belonging to the Peasant Party, in order to set up a joint youth league.

In December 1944, the Hungarian Democratic Youth Federation (MADISZ) was formed at Debrecen. The Peasant Party joined in the organization of the MADISZ, but the Social Democratic Party and the Smallholders Party delayed the taking of a definite stand.

After the amalgamation of the Debrecen and Budapest executives of the Hungarian Communist Party, the Central Committee once again declared itself for the establishment of a unified youth federation in February 1945. The organization of the MADISZ started also in Budapest. However, the leadership of the Social Democratic Party decided to form a separate Social Democratic Youth League. A similar stand was taken afterwards by the Smallholders Party as well. The Peasant Party continued for a while to give its support to the MADISZ, but later, because of more acute rivalry with the Smallholders Party, it also set up a separate youth organization. Consequently, in practice, the MADISZ operated as the youth organization of the Hungarian Communist Party.

The efforts to create a unified democratic youth federation failed, and thus the struggle to win over young people became more complicated.

In connection with the organization of the women's movement, the question again arose as to whether the parties of the Independence Front were to establish their own separate women's organizations or a unified women's federation. The Hungarian Communist Party leadership proposed the establishment of a unified democratic women's organization. The Peasant Party accepted the proposal and for a time the leaderships of the Smallholders Party and the Social Democratic Party also refrained from taking a stand against the proposition. The first organizations of the Democratic Federation of Hungarian Women (MNDSZ) were formed in Debrecen and Szeged in December 1944. After the liberation of Budapest, the leadership of the Social Democratic Party, upon the demand of Kéthly and her associates, decided to set up a separate women's organization. The executive of the Smallholders Party also decided to form a separate women's organization—however, leaving their representatives in the MNDSZ. The Peasant Party adhered to its earlier resolution with regard to the women's movement and worked together with the Hungarian Communist Party to develop the MNDSZ. There were also a small number of Social Democratic women who,

despite the stand of their party, supported the MNDSZ. Thus the MNDSZ was partially successful in creating inter-party cohesion. The communist women took the forefront in developing its activities.

The independent people's democratic Hungary came into existence as the forces of the liberated people rallied to it. This occurred under conditions when the revolutionary working class became the vanguard, the inspirer and leader of the national revival. The solidarity of the two workers' parties—based on political guidelines that were aimed at the democratic transformation of the country and through this gave a green light for later socialist development—played an important part in this process.

By establishing democratic power the revolutionary forces scored a great victory. The carrying out of the agrarian revolution, the economic liquidation of the class of big landlords and the strengthening of the alliance of workers and peasants were also significant victories of the people, and so was the introduction of workers' control in the factories and mines, a feat which helped to consolidate their position of power.

However, in the last months of the six-month process of transformation, reorganization and re-grouping of the forces of the bourgeoisie also took place. The right-wing elements of various shades rallied within the national coalition and outside it, in order to stop and turn back the democratic development of the country and obstruct the revolutionary forces. The class antagonisms were becoming increasingly acute. However, the working class continued its struggle to safeguard and develop the revolutionary achievements as a participant of power.

The Struggle to Safeguard Democratic Achievements, Rebuild the Country and Carry the Socialist Revolution to Victory

1945-1948

After the liberation of Hungary, the war in Europe lasted for five additional weeks. Pushing forward the Soviet armies and the British and American troops met on 25 April at the Elbe River where the soldiers of the Eastern and Western fronts shook hands as comrades-in-arms.

By that time, the Red Army had encircled and largely occupied Berlin; the Hitlerite power lived its last hours. In North Italy, an extensive armed uprising eliminated fascist rule, and the nazi military forces were collapsing in Italy; there was no longer anything to prevent the Anglo-American troops from occupying the northern part of Italy. On 28 April, Hitler handed over power to a group of his deputies and then poisoned himself. On 8 May, the representatives of the German general staff signed an unconditional surrender in Berlin, which had been occupied by the Soviet troops. The Soviet troops smashed the last units of the Hitlerite forces in the area of Prague on 9 May.

The war had come to an end in Europe.

Conclusion of the Second World War Advances by the Revolutionary Forces and Losses by the Imperialist World

For the second time, German imperialism, whose military forces had unleashed two world wars, suffered defeat. The nazi Reich was annihilated. The Allied Powers, the people fighting against fascism, had scored a historic victory.

The Soviet Union had a lion's share in winning this victory. The Red Army had dealt the decisive blow at the fascist forces, and the Soviet people made the greatest sacrifices for victory and for the freedom of their own country and the whole of Europe. At the same time, the Soviet Union concluded the war in Europe as the strongest continental military power. The liquidation of the nazi Reich and the fact that the strength and influence of the Soviet Union had increased brought about a radical change in the international balance of power.

In the last phase of the war in Europe, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Albania, Bulgaria, Rumania and Hungary had broken away from the imperialist world. Revolutionary changes had occurred in these countries and in each of them a people's democratic system was created. These changes resulted in a further significant shift in international power relations for the benefit of the forces of progress.

The people's forces also made advances in the other European countries liberated from under the fascist yoke, but there the development of social relations took the direction of bringing about a consolidation for the capitalist system and for the positions of imperialism. The presence of the British-American troops and the penetration of American capital which soon started, played an essential role in this. In those countries, the bourgeoisie acted either as a willing or a compelled partner to American big capital, because it needed armed support by the United States to retain political power and it required American credit to achieve economic strength.

Democratic freedom rights, however, were restored also in these countries, and it became possible to guarantee more political rights for the people than they had possessed before fascism came to power or the nazis occupied the country. The parties and trade unions of the workers took a most vigorous and unified stand for constitutional guarantees for the rights of the people and for their enforcement in practice. They achieved significant results especially in the countries where the influence of the Communist parties had substantially increased and where the Communist parties succeeded in establishing closer co-operation with the Social Democratic Party. In France, Italy and in several other Western European countries the representatives of the Communist Party were also

included in the coalition governments which came into being after the liberation. The difficult position of these countries and the increased political strength of the working class persuaded the bourgeois parties to accept, for the time being, Communist participation in the government.

The existence of anti-fascist coalitions favoured a united front policy, and co-operation among the workers' parties increased during the war years. A vigorous campaign also developed for international unity in the trade union movement. At the end of 1944, a British-Soviet trade union committee, and in January 1945, a French-Soviet trade union committee was formed, each of which took a stand for the establishment of a unified international trade union federation. At that time, two big trade union federations, the CIO and the AFL were active in the United States. The CIO supported the establishment of a unified international federation, but the AFL opposed it and carried on an uninhibited anti-communist campaign. The representatives of the former international trade union centre in Amsterdam, which had been under right-wing Social Democratic leadership, pressed for the reinstatement of their old federation, but the European trade union movement, which was becoming reorganized on the basis of working-class unity, frustrated this attempt.

In February 1945, the trade union representatives of 40 countries met in conference in London which represented the spirit of anti-fascist solidarity. It resolved to bring into birth a unified international federation and demanded the complete crushing of fascism and the guarantee of democratic rights for the peoples. The representatives of Germany and the countries which were allied to the nazi Reich did not participate in the conference. By that time, the trade unions of these latter countries had become reorganized, but a group of the Western right-wing trade union leaders demanded that for the time being they should not be admitted into the world federation, which was to be organized. The reason for this opposition was that these trade unions had resumed their activities under left-wing leadership. Nevertheless, the conference decided that the new international federation should also be open to these countries.

The trade union conference in London was one of the expressions of the reorganization and increased social significance of the European workers' movement. The position taken by the conference on various issues assisted the struggle of the progressive forces for the complete crushing of the nazi Reich and thwarting any attempt to reach an agreement with the nazis.

In the concluding phase of the European war, co-operation continued in the anti-fascist coalition, but the conflicts were maturing. The British and American imperialist circles plotted new plans to repress the European influence of the Soviet Union and to force those countries that had chosen people's democratic form of government to return to the system of imperialism. These schemes included the moderation of the measures to liquidate fascism, extensive support for reactionaries who turned "liberals" and the restriction of the power positions of the working class at any cost.

The plans made by the leading circles of the Western Powers also included the idea of arming the German soldiers in British or American captivity and using them for British and American power ambitions. These plans urged among others by Churchill were impossible to carry out. The unparalleled war efforts of the Soviet people and the victories of the Red Army had won such deep respect for them among the peoples of Western Europe, and these people hated the German army so bitterly that it was politically impossible to use new military units organized from German prisoners of war to attain such goals.

The acts of the Western Powers were also influenced by the fact that the war was still continuing in the Far East. The vastly superior naval and air forces of the British and Americans were still insufficient to compel Japan to surrender unconditionally. Large-scale land operations were also needed and the Anglo-American powers were not very eager to shoulder the main burden of this campaign. They waited for the Soviet Union to join in the war against Japan.

As a result of all these factors, the anti-Hitler powers continued to co-operate. The leaders of the Soviet Union, the United States and Britain held another conference, in Potsdam between 17 July and 2 August 1945.

The Soviet delegation to the conference was again headed by Stalin, and Truman was the leader of the American delegation. Roosevelt, one of the founders of the anti-fascist coalition, died in April 1945, and his place was taken by the Vice-President who was notorious for his anti-Soviet sentiments. During the first part of the conference, Churchill, and in the second half, Attlee, the head of the Labour Party, were in charge of the British delegation, for in the meantime the Conservative Party suffered a defeat at the Parliamentary elections in Britain due to the shift to the left of the masses, and a new Cabinet was formed by the Labour Party headed by Attlee.

The Potsdam Conference decided to implement the agreements reached in the Crimea. The three powers reiterated their stand for the full disarmament and demilitarization of Germany, and proclaimed the need to "prevent, once and for all, the reorganization of German militarism and nazism". They agreed to establish a temporary occupation system in Germany to promote the complete liquidation of fascism and assist democratic progress.

Democratic progress had already started in East Germany, which was the Soviet occupied zone. First of all, the revolutionary forces of the working class were reorganizing, and hand in hand with the other democratic parties coming into existence and co-operating with the Soviet occupation authorities, they began to rearrange life to overcome the major difficulties caused by the ravages of war, and to combat fascist contamination.

In Western Germany, which consisted of the British, American and French occupation zones, a process was started in which the fascist elements were changed into "friends" of the Western Powers. American capital began to flow into the shattered economic life of Western Germany. The democratic forces were also beginning to revive, but this was a slow and difficult process. The Western occupation authorities hampered the revolutionary forces of the working class in their efforts to reorganize, because they wanted West Germany to become a basis for their own imperialist plans. They sought and found German collaborators for this plan, and their policy immediately opened up the way for the revival and re-grouping of the reactionary German forces.

The Potsdam Conference had preserved co-operation by the anti-Hitler powers. It was agreed to jointly prepare the peace treaties to be concluded with the former allies of the nazi Reich. However, there was good reason for the premonition that the settlement of European affairs would progress only amidst sharp political struggles.

A few days after the Potsdam Conference ended, on 8 August, the Soviet Union declared war on Japan in accordance with the agreement concluded with her allies. The Red Army launched a massive attack against the principal land forces of Japan concentrated in Manchuria. On 14 August, Japan announced her unconditional surrender; her Manchurian army continued hopeless resistance against the Soviet troops for a few more days and they laid down their arms. The Red Army liberated all of Manchuria, the larger part of Korea and South Sakhalin and occupied the Kuril Islands.

In that same period, general national uprisings overthrew Japanese rule in Indonesia and Indochina. The Republic of Indonesia was proclaimed on 17 August. The Vietnamese patriots captured Hanoi on 19 August and Saigon on 25 August, and the provisional government of Vietnam was formed, headed by Ho Chi Minh.

At the end of August, the American and British fleets arrived in Tokyo Bay, and American troops landed on the Japanese mainland. The representatives of Japan signed the unconditional surrender on 2 September.

War had also ended in the Pacific area: the Second World War was over.

However, prior to this, a new weapon whose effect could not yet be assessed—the atom-bomb—had appeared on the scene. The first atom-bomb test was carried out in the United States on 16 July directly before the Potsdam Conference, and the Truman government hurriedly dropped the first atom-bomb, on 6 August on Hiroshima and on the 9th on Nagasaki.

By that time, such a step was certainly not needed to shatter the fascist bloc, and the annihilation of peaceful inhabitants was certainly unjustified. However, the leading circles of Washington turned very

soon to a policy of atomic blackmail, hoping that in this way they could intimidate the world and force it to succumb to the will of the United States.

The appearance of the atom-bomb was a serious threat, but did not alter the historic fact that world imperialism emerged in a weakened state from the war it had unleashed.

The second universal conflagration, precipitated by the ambition of the fascist powers to rule the world, had cost the lives of over fifty million people. The immeasurable destruction of material and cultural values also caused exceptionally heavy damage in a series of countries. At the same time, the American capitalist monopolies had accumulated immense wealth through their war deliveries and prepared for a large-scale expansion. They turned to their advantage the annihilation of the Nazi Reich and the Japanese and Italian empires, and also took advantage of the fact that France had become considerably weakened. Britain was at that time the only major rival of the United States in the capitalist world, but even she was up against heavy odds and was in a weakened state compared to the oppressive superiority of America.

That the imperialist world system as a whole had lost ground was indicated by the following facts:

1. The role and influence of the Soviet Union in international life had increased considerably.
2. The European countries that adopted a people's democratic system had broken away from the imperialist world.
3. With the territories liberated by the Soviet Army, the basis of the revolutionary struggle had been considerably extended in China.
4. In the northern part of Korea and in Vietnam, a people's power came into being, and the national forces had overthrown imperialist domination also in Indonesia.
5. The national liberation movement was gathering new momentum in India and in the Arab countries.

At the same time, the international proletariat had become stronger. The working class was playing an increasing role in the leading capitalist countries, and its alliance with the other democratic forces had grown into an important political factor. The imperialist powers made new

plans to push back the people's forces and to regain their lost positions. Nonetheless, the advances of the anti-fascist and anti-imperialist forces and of the progressive movements marked the major trends in the world situation.

Class Alliance and Class Struggle in National Reconstruction The May Conference of the Hungarian Communist Party Elections in the Autumn of 1945

Hungary suffered major losses during the Second World War. As a consequence of its participation in the Hitlerite war and of the fascist terror and deportations, over 600,000 people perished. Material damage exceeded 20,000 million gold pengős, that is nearly 40 per cent of the entire national wealth. About 60 per cent of the livestock was lost—either driven to the West or killed—and the destruction in agricultural machines and equipment was on a similar scale. One-quarter of the equipment of the manufacturing industry had gone and the greater part of the remaining productive capacity was out of order. The majority of the stocks of raw materials and finished goods had been taken to the West and the same had happened to three-quarters of the pool of railway trucks, two-thirds of the operable locomotives and most of the motor vehicles. The value of the goods taken to the West amounted to about 2,000 million dollars. The retreating fascists had made 40 per cent of the rail network unusable and demolished thousands of railway and road bridges. A large part of the buildings were ruined or heavily damaged.

After the end of the war in Europe—as the people's power had come into being and the land reform was accomplished—the immediate tasks facing the Hungarian people were the economic reconstruction of the country, the strengthening of the people's democratic order and the defence and development of the democratic achievements. The energetic activity of the workers had made it possible for the reconstruction to start in the liberated areas, even before the war was completely ended. But strenuous efforts over many years were required to rebuild the

ruined country. The Hungarian Communist Party strived to concentrate the strength of the workers and their allies to this end.

The parade on May Day 1945 was an outstanding event in the political life of the country and at the same time a magnificent expression of working-class unity. This manifestation, in which half a million people participated, demonstrated the rapidly growing organization of the people's democratic forces. The May Day marches and meetings were jointly arranged by the Hungarian Communist Party, the Social Democratic Party and the trade unions. The Budapest mass meeting held at Heroes' Square sent its militant greetings to the village people and declared that "aware of the fact that the ruins can be cleared away and Hungarian economic life can be set back on its feet again only at the cost of sweat and toil and at the cost of heavy sacrifices", the participants of the meeting decided they would "work with stricter discipline and militant determination for the reconstruction of the country".

The workers' parties made considerable efforts to speed up reconstruction, but this was insufficient. More effective measures by the state organizations and strict state control over enterprises were also needed, requirements which were major issues in the struggle between the left and right wings of the coalition. The alliance of the working classes could develop state control only by combating the bourgeois forces.

In that period, there were sharp arguments within the coalition with regard to other questions of power as well. As the establishment of the provisional bodies of self-government was occurring, the Dálnoki Miklós group endeavoured to push the national committees into the background and increase bourgeois representation in these new bodies. The idea was to ensure representation, in addition to the four parties of the Independence Front, for the Bourgeois Democratic Party, and to oust the trade unions. In fact, Dálnoki Miklós issued a government decree to this effect, with the agreement of the leaders of the Smallholders Party. The workers' parties strongly protested against the repression of the public role of the trade unions and, after lengthy arguments the Dálnoki Miklós group was forced to retreat.

In the middle of May, based on an inter-party agreement, the Budapest Provisional Municipal Authority was formed with 30 representatives

from the Hungarian Communist Party, 30 from the Social Democratic Party, 25 from the trade unions, 25 from the Smallholders Party, 10 from the National Peasant Party and 10 from the Bourgeois Democratic Party. Together with the trade union representatives, the workers' parties had an absolute majority in this important organ of power, and they were able to strengthen their leadership in the administration of the capital. Árpád Szakasits was elected the president of the body of representatives, and Zoltán Vas, until then the government commissioner for food supplies, was elected the mayor of Budapest. With this, the role of the Budapest National Committee was reduced in importance, and later a similar process occurred in the provinces.

The Smallholders Party lost the Budapest mayoralty, but received a new government portfolio: the Ministry of Reconstruction was set up with Ferenc Nagy, one of the leaders of the Smallholders Party, as its head. At the same time, József Gábor, the Minister of Trade and Transport, a representative of the Hungarian Communist Party, left the government and his portfolio was taken over by Ernő Gerő.

On 20 May 1945, the National Conference of the Hungarian Communist Party was convened. This was the first legal national conference of the Party since the days of the Republic of Councils. With a membership of 150,000 and 1,500 local branches in operation, the Hungarian Communist Party was by that time the most active and best organized political force in the country.

In a resolution, the May Party Conference, which was attended by 145 delegates, reaffirmed the political line of the Central Committee and stated that as a result of democratic national solidarity, the Hungarian people were able rapidly to begin to lay the foundations of the new democratic Hungary, brought into being the Provisional National Assembly and the Provisional Government, concluded the armistice and carried out the land reform. The Hungarian Communist Party had "reason to be proud of the fact that it has been in the forefront in this epoch-making work".

The resolution of the Party Conference directed the Central Committee to "make the core of its future policy the close co-operation by the

democratic forces. It should intensify and consolidate the united front of the workers and the close co-operation with the Social Democratic Party", and repulse "every attempt directed at disrupting this unity". The resolution also supported further co-operation with the other parties of the Independence Front.

The resolution of the Conference stated that now "reconstruction is the crucible for the young Hungarian democracy, and all the strength of the nation should be concentrated to this end". It stressed that the role of the Party and the working class in the leadership of the country would be proportionate to its performance in reconstruction. It paid considerable attention to the building of the railways because this was a key task in the economic recovery of the country.

The Party Conference declared the need for the state to provide substantial credits for industrial companies and to ensure that such credit policy should achieve its goal and the country should obtain adequate quantities of goods. It demanded stringent measures against all those "who are speculating on the economic chaos to undermine the economic foundations of the young Hungarian democracy". On the other hand, support must be given to the businessmen "who sincerely wished to take a part in helping the country to recover". In addition, the resolution called for the nationalization of the mines, in order to accelerate coal production and improve the coal supplies available for industry and the railways. This policy would shorten the period of deprivation for the working people.

The Conference emphasized that action should be taken against both the right and "left" distortions of Party policy. The fact was that in some places the policy of alliances represented by the Hungarian Communist Party was misunderstood and the Party policy was abandoned for the sake of co-operation and came under the influence of the other parties. All this led to the neglect of the struggle against reaction and reduced the efforts taken to safeguard democracy. Instances of "left" distortion and unwillingness to co-operate with the other parties were also frequent; this was an attitude which resulted in the division of the forces of democracy and in this way favoured reaction. The resolution stated that a "left" sectarian spirit is the principal obstacle to the

further development and consolidation of the Party". The Conference stated that in order to make the principles and policy of the Party better understood, Party education and other forms of propaganda work should be rapidly developed. As a matter of fact, one of the sources of the mistakes was that the large new membership was insufficiently qualified politically.

A separate resolution dealt with the tasks of the trade unions and the work which devolves on the Communists in this respect. By that time, the trade unions had 400,000 members, and in addition to the organizations of the manual workers, the professional unions of teachers, clerks, engineers, physicians and other strata of the intellectual workers that had also joined the Central Council of Trade Union, were quickly developing. The trade unions played an increasing role in the closer cohesion of workers and intellectuals. The position of the unions had radically changed by that time. The resolution pointed out that: "They are no longer organizations of the workers in their economic struggle only, but have developed into a constructive force in the building of the country. They share in the responsibility for the entire national economy and for the present and future lot of the country and of Hungarian democracy."

The Rules of the Hungarian Communist Party were also included on the agenda of the Conference. Its acceptance strengthened the organizational policy of the Party, the guidelines of building a mass party. Finally the Party Conference elected the new Central Committee.

The May Party Conference was an important event in the development of the Hungarian Communist Party and in the further struggle for the victory of the people's democracy. Its resolutions correctly evaluated and pointed out the major tasks.

Nevertheless, the situation was difficult and complicated. The workers' parties and the trade unions called on the workers to intensify production at a time when not even the most essential food supplies were adequately ensured. The factories were in capitalist ownership and their owners were in no particular hurry to rebuild the country. They preferred to invest their capital in speculative business or deposit it abroad, and claimed that they did not have adequate circulating capital and their

enterprises could continue and increase production only if they received state credit. The banks also smuggled their capital stock and other valuables out of the country or hid them at home, and were unwilling to grant credits to industrial companies; all they were willing to do was to participate in the allocation of state credits. At the same time, the monetary resources of the state were very limited and the government covered its expenditure largely by issuing new banknotes. The inflation continued and in fact became worse, and black-marketeering increased.

Both wages and prices had to be fixed to stop the depreciation of money and halt the inflation as soon as possible. The factory owners had to be compelled to help feed the workers and to pay the workers partly in kind, i.e. in food. Factory owners strongly opposed this and they also objected to the state control of prices and wages. This was also a matter of militancy. For that matter, in the first place the factory committees ensured that the people receive the supplies.

All these circumstances and the capitalist manipulations contributed to the mood of demanding the expropriation of capitalist enterprises and an immediate shift to the dictatorship of the proletariat, demands which the Party Conference resolution justly stated that they jeopardized national solidarity. The main source of the mood pressing for the dictatorship of the proletariat was in the antagonisms in the objective situation. However, Rákosi's report primarily explained these harmful phenomena as due to the political backwardness of the veteran comrades, and the resolution also reflected this view. This summary censure of the "veterans of 1919" was unjustified, incorrect and offended those who at the time had fought for the Republic of Councils; this could not be explained away even by the very real need to take action against the sectarian distortions.

The struggle between the working class and the bourgeoisie sharpened in the economic sphere. The right wing of the Smallholders Party, the main political representative of the bourgeoisie, maintained that the reconstruction of the country would be possible only with the help of Western capital and with the complete restoration of the capitalist system. On 1 July, Béla Varga, one of the leaders of the Smallholders Party, declared: "It should be understood that productive work cannot

begin in any field without foreign aid," and such assistance will be forthcoming only if the state provides "security" for capitalist enterprises.

Ferenc Nagy, the Smallholders Party Minister of Reconstruction, in July 1945 requested the National Federation of Manufacturers to inform him under what conditions the manufacturers would be willing to enter more effectively in production. In its reply, the Federation raised energetic objections to the fact that "the control of economic life by the authorities was increasing at an exceptionally fast rate". It rejected the charge that the factory owners were hesitant to actively share in production. The Federation also stated that "repeated suspicions only make serious capital, which is not merely speculating for quick returns, to act with reserve and added that the tendency which "holds out the prospect of the immediate confiscation of private property as a reprisal for supposed or real neglect" held businessmen back from making "serious investments".

The reply of the National Federation of Manufacturers left no doubt whether that "serious capital" did not rely on momentary gains, but made its participation in "serious investments" dependent on the stabilization of capitalist exploitation.

The development of foreign trade relations was essential to effect a recovery in economic life. The Western Powers intended to use the establishment of such relations also as an instrument of political pressure, and in this they found willing partners both among the leaders of the National Federation of Manufacturers and the Ferenc Nagy group. However, in August 1945, the trade delegation of the Hungarian government concluded a significant Hungarian-Soviet trade agreement in Moscow. This agreement provided reciprocal deliveries of goods valued at 30 million dollars for each country and enabled primarily the Hungarian iron and engineering industries and the textile and timber industries to obtain badly needed raw materials. Soon afterwards, the Hungarian-Czechoslovak and the Hungarian-Rumanian trade agreements were also concluded. In this way the foreign trade relations of the country began to be reorganized and the right-wing political speculation concerning the economic isolation of Hungary proved to be incorrect.

In the meantime, two dangerous attacks by the right wing of the coalition had to be averted. One of these was directed against the demo-

cratic police, and the other was aimed at disrupting the workers'-peasants' alliance.

The entire right was continually attacking the democratic police. The right-wing Social Democrats played an intensive role in these actions. They were represented by the Minister of Justice, Valentiny, who at the end of June submitted to the Council of Ministers a surprise proposal to establish a separate "judicial police". The primary aim was to remove political cases from the jurisdiction of the police authorities led by the Communists and to transfer them to another police body to be set up as the armed support for the right wing of the coalition. Valentiny's proposal was opposed even by his Social Democratic fellowminister, Antal Bán, the Minister of Industry, and also by Ferenc Erdei, the Minister of the Interior, but it was approved with the votes of the former Horthyite members of the government and of the Smallholders Party ministers.

Valentiny's action demonstrated the political cohesion existing between the former Horthyites, Smallholders Party members and the right-wing Social Democrats. This was a direct attack against the Communist Party and the Peasant Party and the same time against the united front of the Hungarian Communist Party and the Social Democratic Party. The Social Democratic Party was just then preparing for its Congress and the right wing of the party were strongly organizing.

The Central Committee of the Hungarian Communist Party immediately launched a counter-attack. It arrived at an agreement with the leadership of the Social Democratic Party and, as a result, the latter also took a stand against the setting up of a separate judicial police. Valentiny had to resign. Following the inter-party negotiations, the Smallholders Party executive also retreated. In this way the attack against the democratic police failed. This was at the same time a defeat of the right-wing elements in the Social Democratic Party.

The action against the workers'-peasants' alliance was started by Faragho, the Minister of Public Supplies. Asserting that this was the only way to feed the workers, he wanted to issue a compulsory delivery decree which would have compelled the peasants to hand over practically their entire produce. At that time most part of the arable land

was left fallow as a result of the evacuation orders of the fascists, the removal or destruction of over half of the livestock and farm equipment, and as a consequence of the military operations. The area under grain did not amount to half that of the previous year. The weather had also been unfavourable. Consequently, the villages were in a very difficult position. But, of course, supplying the towns was also a major problem and this served as a good pretext for the Faragho group to issue a decree on the compulsory delivery system, which could easily have incited the peasants against the people's democracy. In addition to this, a land revenue draft was proposed by the Smallholders Party Minister of Finance which would have taxed per *hold* the new farmer with his 4 or 6 *hold* of lands, without draught animals and equipment, struggling with a thousand and one difficulties, at the same rate as the kulaks possessing 40-60 *hold*, who had animals and equipment.

The Hungarian Communist Party joined forces with the Social Democratic Party, the Peasant Party and democratic elements in the Smallholders Party and thwarted these plans. They formulated both the compulsory delivery system and the tax decree so as to reduce the burden on the poorer strata and increase the load on the rich.

The fact that the attacks launched against the democratic police and those aimed at disrupting the workers'-peasants' alliance had been averted, led to changes which reinforced the left in the composition of the government. Together with Valentiny, Faragho also had to leave. The Ministry of Justice was taken over by István Ries and the Ministry of Public Supplies by Sándor Rónai. The ex-Horthyite group lost a portfolio and the Social Democratic Party gained one. As a result, the Hungarian Communist Party, the Social Democratic Party and the Smallholders Party were each represented by three ministers in the government.

Following this, the Social Democratic Party held its congress from 18 to 20 August, which endorsed the policy pursued by the executive Committee up to that time. Even the right wing recognized the need to co-operate with the Communist Party. Even Károly Peyer realized this who joined in the activities of the Party in July 1945. Although they would not take the political risk of rejecting co-operation with the

Hungarian Communist Party, the right wing did all they could to sharpen the rivalry between the two parties. The friction caused by rivalry was exploited to forge the weapons to weaken the united front. Responding to the right-wing actions, Szakasits said: "Co-operation between the two workers' parties cannot be carried out half-heartedly: it has to be a matter of all-out efforts."

At the elections during the congress, the left wing, or those close to the left, gained a majority. Árpád Szakasits remained General Secretary. At the same time, several representatives of the right wing retained their positions in the party executive. Peyer was also on the list submitted by the nominating committee, and in fact received 48 per cent of the valid votes, but this proved insufficient for his election. His ouster was a success for the left. At the same time, his nomination and the large number of votes in his favour, plus the re-election of such representatives of the right wing as Imre Szélig and Anna Kéthly, indicated that the right wing was still strong in the Social Democratic Party. The left-wing majority in the party executive was forced to make compromises with the right-wing fraction and at the same time it had to carry on a stubborn struggle to maintain and further develop the policy of the workers' united front.

Simultaneously with the SDP Congress, on 20 August the enlarged steering committee of the Smallholders Party also met in session. This national conference, very much like a congress, passed a resolution that threatened with an action the peasants would take against the workers. The more well-to-do farmers were dissatisfied because primarily they were compelled to deliver produce. However, their representatives claimed that they were the spokesmen of the entire peasantry and threatened a general boycott of compulsory delivery with the prospect of a "peasant strike".

The bourgeois front, which was already well organized, endeavoured to utilize also this action to blackmail the left wing of the coalition and force political and power concessions. The struggle to gain the support of the millions of peasants intensified between the working class and the bourgeoisie, between the democratic forces and reaction.

The fact that the parties were preparing for elections also played a

role in making the political struggle more acute. The Central Committee of the Hungarian Communist Party proposed that the Budapest municipal elections should already be held in the autumn of 1945, together with national elections. Based on the success of the mass rallies on May Day, the Central Committee assessed the situation as promising a major victory for the workers' parties at the Budapest elections and that afterwards the national elections would also result in the strengthening of the two workers' parties and at the same time the left wing of the national front. The initial successes of reconstruction and primarily the more rapid progress in the rebuilding of the railways than had been expected, as well as the shift to the left in July in the composition of the government, increased the political hopes attached to the autumn elections. The leadership of the Social Democratic Party shared in these hopes and approved the proposal of the Communists. In July, the other parties of the Independence Front and the government also accepted the proposal.

At the same time, reaction speeded up its organizing activities. The major part of the political camp of the capitalists and the former landowners—by that time already closely co-operating with the kulaks—quickly joined the Smallholders Party and prepared their election campaign against the revolutionary forces within the national front. They used the organizational framework and mass influence of the Smallholders Party for their own purposes. The reactionary church leaders, Mindszenty and others, also took part in this action. Through the clergy, the monks, the churches and the church schools, they endeavoured to forge a political weapon from the religious feelings of the believers to support the reaction rallying behind the Smallholders Party.

The workers' parties protested against the fact that the Smallholders Party, in violation of the principles of the Independence Front, had allowed extreme reactionaries to enter its ranks. However, the Hungarian Communist Party and the Social Democratic Party had overestimated their own influence and underestimated the forces of the right.

Some of the Smallholders Party leaders, the representatives of the democratic wing, observed with aversion this influx of reactionaries into the party, but underestimated its inherent danger. Ferenc Nagy, elected

as president at the party conference in August, and his clique—who constituted a majority in the Smallholders Party executive—continued to collaborate with the reactionary forces. At the same time, they also made statements in favour of co-operation with the coalition parties, including the Hungarian Communist Party.

The Budapest elections were held early in October. The two workers' parties campaigned with a joint list. This occurred as a result of a Hungarian Communist Party recommendation which was accepted by the Social Democratic Party executive, despite opposition by the right-wingers. At that time, both parties were still certain that their joint list would win the majority of the votes in Budapest. During the election campaign, the HCP and most of the SDP acted in close co-operation. However, the joint list gained only 45 per cent of the votes.

The right-wing bloc rallying behind the Smallholders Party secured 50.2 per cent of the votes. The Smallholders Party obtained 121 seats in the municipal legislative body of Budapest, the workers' parties 103, the Bourgeois Democratic Party 9, the Peasant Party 5, and the Radical Party 2.

Thus the Budapest municipal elections revealed the large extent to which the reactionary bloc rallied behind the Smallholders Party. The success of the Smallholders Party vote—which was achieved partly with the help of democratic voters and partly of voters under the influence of reaction—encouraged reaction to such a degree that on 8 October, the day after the election, they held a street demonstration in Budapest against the workers' parties and the democratic order. For this, wearing Smallholders Party badges on their coats, even the fascists came out of hiding.

The district organizations of the Hungarian Communist Party immediately arranged a counter-demonstration, and on the next day the workers' demonstrations, with Communist and Social Democratic participation, continued on an even larger scale. "Worker's fist, iron fist, we strike where it fits", "We will not stop halfway, reactionaries will be swept away!" such were the slogans repeated by the tens of thousands of demonstrators. The workers of Budapest were not intimidated by the Smallholders Party election success, and they were determined to repel

the reaction aligned behind the Smallholders Party. The demonstration pledged to defend and strengthen working-class unity.

At that time elections were held also in the 22 suburbs and villages on the outskirts of Budapest and in most of these, including all of the larger localities, the workers' united list was victorious. The workers' list obtained 491 mandates for the 22 communities; that of the Smallholders Party 401, the Peasant Party 10 and the Bourgeois Democratic Party 6 mandates. At Csepel, the workers' list obtained 46 mandates, the Smallholders' 14; at Újpest the workers' 41, the Smallholders' 36; at Kispest the workers' 43 and the Smallholders' 25 mandates.

The workers' party victory in the vicinity of the capital was significant, but did not change the fact that the united right looked forward to the parliamentary elections with greater hopes, as they had been encouraged by the success of the Smallholders Party in Budapest. After all, if it was possible to gain the support of the majority of the petty bourgeoisie, the office workers and other middle strata under a "Smallholders" label, then the situation should have been even more promising for them in the provinces.

The Budapest election victory of the Smallholders Party brought with it a rapid increase in economic speculation. Following the elections, the price level doubled in a week. The sabotaging of the compulsory deliveries—an activity which the Smallholders had sanctified describing it as a "peasant strike"—became entirely shameless. In Szabolcs County, the Smallholders Party Lord Lieutenant assisted in the withholding rather than helping the delivery of potatoes. The kulaks sabotaged the delivery of their produce throughout the country. The police had to wage a consistent struggle against the hoarders. The factory owners endeavoured to make the best of the situation and get around the state decrees. The growth of speculation speeded up the inflationary process, which was at any rate inevitable, and the purchasing power of money and the real value of wages continued to diminish.

In the middle of October, a 100 per cent wage increase was ordered on trade union demands. The workers' parties tried to rally the strength of the nation to control inflation; on the other hand, the bourgeois front based their politics and business plans on the depreciation of

money, on the worsening of the economic troubles and the hope of no excess profits derived from the inflation.

The situation was made even worse by the fact that the election defeat of the workers' parties in Budapest had a stimulating effect on the right wing of the Social Democratic Party, that demanded that the party should reject a joint list for the national elections. The left wing of the SDP also regarded separate lists as being more expedient. As a result, on the recommendation of the party executive, the SDP steering committee decided on 12 October to enter the national elections with a separate list. At that time the party leadership aimed at a "bridge policy" hoping that with this tactics the SDP would be able to become the leading party of the country. "Between the two extremes," Szakasits said in his address, "the Social Democratic Party is the middle link around which pure democracy may crystallize." Their foreign policy also called for a "bridge policy". One of the election slogans of the party was, "A bridge between East and West—the Social Democratic Party". It was a manifestation of the middle-of-the-road policy of the Social Democratic Party that they did not emphasize the friendship with the Soviet Union, but adopted the slogan of "building a bridge" between East and West.

The left wing of the party executive went along with this policy, because in this way they hoped to appease the right wing of the party and strengthen the unity of the Social Democratic Party. However, in the final analysis this policy made things easier for the right wing in their drive against co-operation with the Hungarian Communist Party and made things more difficult for the left wing which wished to continue such co-operation. Separate lists involved an election competition between the two workers' parties. Joining in the anti-communist and anti-Soviet chorus of reaction, the Peyerists endeavoured to sharpen this rivalry as much as possible.

Over 4.7 million voters went to the polls at the national elections. The right-wing bloc was again highly successful as the Smallholders Party secured 57 per cent of the votes. Out of the 409 mandates, 245 went to the representatives of the Smallholders Party. The Hungarian Communist Party obtained 70 seats in the National Assembly, the

Social Democratic Party 69, the National Peasant Party 23, and the Bourgeois Democratic Party, which had entertained hopes of becoming the leading party of the right, obtained only 2 seats.

The national election was a serious test of strength for the Hungarian Communist Party. It had to repulse the attempts of the united reactionary bloc—which had sought cover behind the positions of the National Front—to reduce the Party to a minor party, oust it from power and in that way impede the democratic transformation. The struggle was further complicated by the loosening of co-operation between the two workers' parties and sharp rivalry within the working-class movement.

The Hungarian Communist Party stood the test. It received 800,000 votes, a fact which confirmed that the Party had deep roots among the masses. In Greater Budapest—the capital and its suburbs—the Hungarian Communist Party obtained nearly 180,000 votes and in the provinces over 620,000 votes. The number of votes cast for the Communists was particularly high in the mining districts and in the southeast counties known in the past as the Stormy Corner. And although the Party received only 17 per cent of the votes, it remained the leading party of reconstruction and revolutionary transformation, because it rallied the most active forces of the nation, and because its policy—which was the most representative of the interests of the country—continued to encourage the democratic forces in the other parties to co-operate.

However, the elections taught the lesson that it was imperative to halt the double-dealing of the Smallholders Party. The democratic forces could no longer tolerate that the Smallholders Party should be a participant in the National Front and at the same time act as a base for reactionary elements.

The Social Democratic Party registered election returns similar to those achieved by the Hungarian Communist Party. In Greater Budapest it received 224,000 and in the provinces 597,000 votes. The hopes attached to a middle-of-the-road policy failed to materialize. It was time for the Social Democratic Party to decide whether it would give way to the right-wing bloc or whether it would co-operate more closely with the Hungarian Communist Party against the reactionaries in the Smallholders Party.

The Hungarian Communist Party proposed to the Social Democratic leaders that there should be close collaboration and also called for this among the masses. The workers, including the working-class masses aligned with the Social Democratic Party, urged the consolidation of a united front and united action against reaction. Relying on these manifestations, the left wing of the SDP leadership was able to get the party to carry on the policy of co-operation with the Hungarian Communist Party. The two workers' parties campaigned together against the reactionary wing of the Smallholders Party and demanded honest co-operation and a break with the enemies of democracy from the leaders of the Smallholders Party.

The inner class conflicts in the Smallholders Party rapidly became acute after the elections. The capitalists, former landlords and their various political representatives who had all swarmed into the party, pressed for the liquidation of the democratic coalition and a government based on the Smallholders Party majority, a government which would oust the revolutionary forces from power. However, the leadership of the Smallholders Party was unable to carry this out. The international situation did not favour the disruption of the democratic front; the very presence of the Soviet troops ruled out the possibility of the right-wing forces receiving direct assistance from the Western Powers. At the same time, as a result of the difficult economic conditions, the Smallholders Party leadership was afraid of full governmental responsibility. The united action and the power of the working class and the attraction and appeal of the workers'-peasants' alliance also restrained them from deciding on a break. They were also worried that the open admission of their collaboration with reaction and their withdrawal from the coalition with the workers' parties would immediately precipitate a crisis and cause the democratic wing led by István Dobi and his associates, to break away from the party, a move that could also terminate the parliamentary majority of the Smallholders Party. Thus, for the time being, Ferenc Nagy and his clique endeavoured to strengthen the power positions of the Smallholders Party rather than bring about the outright dissolution of the coalition.

As a result of the inter-party negotiations, the three ex-Horthyites

—Béla Dálnoki Miklós, János Vörös and Count Géza Teleki—were dropped from the government and their places were taken by representatives of the Smallholders Party. Zoltán Tildy, the head of the Smallholders Party who had been elected party leader by the enlarged steering committee, became the new Prime Minister. Mátyás Rákosi, Árpád Szakasits and István Dobi became Ministers of State in the new government. Nine representatives of the Smallholders Party, four of the Communist Party, four of the Social Democratic Party and one of the Peasant Party received seats in the Council of Ministers. Some Smallholders Party ministers represented the left wing of their party, and democratic cohesion was more solid in the new cabinet than it had been in the one led by Béla Dálnoki Miklós.

In this way, the election victory of the Smallholders Party was followed not by a shift to the right, but by a slight shift to the left, as a result of the exclusion of the former Horthyites. This was primarily a result of stronger working-class unity and the stronger voice of the workers'-peasants' alliance. The Hungarian Communist Party took over the post of the Minister of the Interior from the Peasant Party which received the portfolio of education. The leadership of the Ministry of Agriculture, on the other hand, passed into the hands of the Smallholders Party.

**Reactionary Attack against the Land Reform
and Reconstruction
Revolutionary Counter-Attack and the Founding
of the Left Bloc
Monetary Stabilization**

After the formation of the new government, the need to safeguard the democratic achievements continued to receive emphasis, and at the same time the difficulties that resulted from the grave economic situation had to be coped with. The trade unions played an increasingly important part in this struggle on the side of the workers' parties. They helped to implement workers' control, prevented sabotage by the capitalists, launched a campaign to increase work discipline and organized emulation

drives to promote reconstruction. They guided the factory committees and paid great attention to improve the conditions for the workers. They assisted in the political education of the masses and increased their cultural activities. They also organized courses in administration for those workers who had assumed public office.

Their developing international relations added to the prestige of the trade unions. Hungarian delegates attended the constituent congress of the World Federation of Trade Unions in Paris from 25 September to 5 October 1945. This world organization was founded to represent 65 million organized trade union members in 56 countries. The World Federation of Trade Unions was the first international organization of which the new Hungary was a full member.

In November 1945, over fifty unions were affiliated to the Hungarian Trade Union Council and their joint membership amounted to nearly one million. The principal forces of the movement were the old unions: the Iron and Metal Workers' Union with nearly 100,000 members, the Builders with 73,000, Private Employees with 43,000, Textile Workers with 35,000 and Chemical Workers with 28,000 members. At that time, the organization of the agricultural workers, which was reorganized under the name of National Federation of Agricultural Workers and Small Farmers (FÉKOSZ) had the biggest membership, with 160,000 members. Some of the newly organized unions also had memberships of many thousands: the Railway Workers' Union had 68,000 members, the Civil Servants 44,000 and the Urban Employees, who had established their own organization, had 40,000 members. However, most of the trade unions were rather of small membership.

Most of the trade union leaderships had a Communist majority. There was a considerable Communist majority in some of them, including the organizations of the miners, builders, textile workers, chemical workers and leather workers; whereas in other unions, including those of the iron workers and the railway workers, the Communist majority was only a small margin. The Hungarian Communist Party and the Social Democratic Party were represented in equal members in the leaderships of some unions, for instance, in those of the teachers and postal workers.

The Smallholders Party also infiltrated the unions of the intellectuals,

especially after it became obvious that it would not be able to repress the importance of the trade unions in public life. However, in most cases the Communists were able to ensure that the Smallholders Party, Peasant Party or non-party members of the leadership should be people who supported co-operation with the workers' parties. In the teachers', engineers' and physicians' unions, the HCP and the SDP together ensured a workers' party majority.

The Hungarian trade unions held their first free congress on 2 December 1945. They concentrated their attention on reconstruction, the prevention of right-wing endeavours and on improving the situation of the working people.

Supplies for the workers and the wage policy were among the main issues of the congress. For many months, the trade unions had tried to reduce inflation and bridge the gap between prices and wages by moderating their demands for wage increases and augmenting payment in kind. However, after the election victory of the Smallholders Party, the price rises became so sharp that the former wage policy could no longer be pursued. The congress resolution blamed the financial authorities, because "with criminal carelessness they tolerated the old and the new reactionaries, these publicans of the poverty of the nation, to speculate on the depreciation of the pengő and destroy its purchasing power". By the end of November, the free-market purchasing power of the currency was less than one-tenth of its value at the beginning of October. The fixed prices of rationed goods and some of the provisions in kind at workplaces did help to slightly make up for the decline of the real wages, but a moderate wage policy had become illusory. For this reason, the congress resolution favoured the introduction of a sliding wage scale. This was not aimed at moderating the inflation, but was an inevitable consequence of the fact that, for the time being, there was no way to halt the depreciation of the currency.

The congress resolution urged the more careful distribution of the prime necessities by the authorities and demanded that the government "should deprive of public supplies all those who do not participate in productive work". It also pressed for improvements in the provisions supplied at workplaces.

In order to speed up reconstruction, the trade union congress demanded the nationalization of the mines, electric power plants, all places of work employing over a thousand workers, and agricultural machine factories, and "as a first step in the realization of this programme, the state control of the coal mines". In order to help the peasants, it took a stand for the appropriation of the mills and their transfer into public ownership. It also demanded the state control of the banks, regarding this latter point as "one of the most important measures to be taken to curb speculation".

On the recommendation of the Communists, the congress not only called for the nationalization programme included in the platform of the Independence Front, but went further. The demands included the nationalization of all plants employing over a thousand workers, and all agricultural machine factories, regardless of the number of employees. The Central Committee of the Hungarian Communist Party urged the trade union congress to go further than the direct demands of the Party to check capital and gained the support of the Social Democratic Party leadership for this stand.

The trade union congress adopted a united standpoint for workers' unity. However, the taking of this position was preceded by disputes which were the result of party rivalry and had been sharpened by the right wing of the SDP. The majority of the delegates to the congress were Communists. The Hungarian Communist Party had no intention of utilizing this situation to increase the Communist majority in the Trade Union Council, but insisted that it should maintain a minimum margin of majority. On the other hand, the right-wing representatives of the SDP demanded a Social Democratic majority claiming that the SDP was stronger in the factories. In this action the right wing relied on the mood stirred up on the occasion of the national elections. The right-wing members of the Social Democratic Party did not refrain even from demanding a split in the trade union movement, pointing out that in this way the SDP could push back and isolate the HCP. The left-wing or near-left-wing leaders of the Social Democratic Party in their talks with the Communists called for "parity" in the hope that in this way they could avert the right-wing call for a split and at the same time

improve the position of their own party. The Communists were alarmed by the right-wing pressure that gained momentum in the Social Democratic Party and were unwilling to make further concessions as regards their position.

The right wing of the Social Democratic Party insisted on boycotting the trade union congress. On the day of the congress, a statement appeared in the *Népszava*, the newspaper of the SDP, informing all those concerned that the Social Democrats would not participate in the work of the congress and would leave the Trade Union Council. On the morning the statement appeared, the Social Democratic delegates held a conference at their party's headquarters and the supporters and opponents of unity clashed with each other; the result was a small majority of votes in favour of participation at the congress. This decision marked a victory for the advocates of the united front over the right wing of the Social Democratic Party.

After the November election, the reactionary attack was the most dangerous on the economic front, where the influence of the Association of Savings Organizations and Banks, and the National Federation of Manufacturers was the most significant. One of their main aims was to attain price increases that were facilitated by the serious shortages. Speculation by a whole army of small-time black-marketeers promoted their efforts. Their plan was to upset the democratic power through economic bankruptcy, in the hope that the consequences could be utilized for a political shift to the right. The interests of reconstruction and democratic order demanded stricter control over the financial activities of the banks, over the utilization of the credits granted by the state to industry and over trading and the distribution of goods allocated for public supplies.

On the initiative of the Hungarian Communist Party, the new government set up the General Economic Council with the task of co-ordinating the activities of the economic ministries. Under an inter-party agreement, the government appointed a Communist, Zoltán Vas, as the general secretary to head this body. Through the new supreme economic authority, the Hungarian Communist Party, in co-operation with the

Social Democratic Party, strengthened control over the economic ministries, which were under Smallholders Party leadership. Decrees were published on levying higher taxes on the capitalists, on laying an embargo on certain goods and on the regulation of trade transactions.

Another important step was the nationalization of the coal mines. On 6 December the National Assembly passed a resolution instructing the government to submit a bill on the nationalization of the coal mines by the next session and in the meantime to take immediate measures to place the mines under state control. By September, coal production amounted from 57 to 58 per cent of the pre-war figure, but it decreased in October and November. So the nationalization of the mines became urgent.

Parliament unanimously adopted the Communist motion, and even the opponents of nationalization abstained from expressing their views because this would have meant an open break with the Independence Front programme and would have conflicted with the popular mood which demanded the public ownership of the mines. The Hungarian Party pressed for the early implementation of the parliamentary resolution, and as a result the coal mines and the power plants attached to them under state control on 1 January 1946, a measure which was later confirmed by the nationalization act.

The nationalization of the coal mines was an important political step which promoted the increase of coal production. The battle for coal gathered momentum and became an outstanding event in the reconstruction process. By the spring of 1946, coal output amounted to more than two-thirds of the pre-war level, an achievement which involved overcoming serious problems with supplies and many other difficulties. The Communist Party had inspired, organized and led this work. By mobilizing the miners, the miners' union also contributed to this achievement. The Coal Commission, led by Sándor Nógrádi, the Communist Under-Secretary of State for Industry, was in charge of this work on behalf of the government.

The nationalization of the coal mines was the first important nationalization measure taken against the economic power of big capital.

The decrees adopted to regulate economic life could not halt the inflationary process and were only able to temporarily ameliorate the position of the population. Nevertheless, they had greater significance than just that. These steps had shown that despite the rallying of reaction in the Smallholders Party and their infiltration into the Independence Front, the vanguard role in the national revival could not be wrested from the working class and the democratic front it led could not be shaken.

In addition to the struggle that took shape in the economic sphere, a battle also developed on two other fronts. Encouraged by the election success of the Smallholders Party, the ousted landlords launched an attack against the land reform, and the self-confidence and activity of the reactionaries also increased in public administration. Relying on old fascist officials and the right-wing elements in the Smallholders Party, the lawyers of ex-landlords started scores of lawsuits throughout the country, in order to regain the largest possible proportion of the distributed land.

The Hungarian Communist Party launched a counter-attack. Early in January the Greater Budapest party conference and afterwards county party conferences discussed the tasks posed by the situation. The development of a mass movement against reaction was urged as an important task.

The resolution of the Greater Budapest conference pressed for additional government measures to improve the economic situation and demanded immediate action to oust the reactionary civil servants from the public administration. The resolution stated that "The purge of reactionary officials from the state machinery is a major test of Hungarian democracy and precondition of its growth."

The resolution of the Communists of Greater Budapest also demanded that the National Assembly should immediately enact a law declaring Hungary to be a republic. This legislation on a republican form of government was aimed at defending the democratic system and suppressing at the roots any manoeuvre to salvage the institution of monarchy. Primarily clerical reaction, Cardinal Mindszenty and his associates,

attempted to restore the monarchy, in the hope that they could use the parliamentary majority of the Smallholders Party for this end.

The matter of the form of government did not become a major issue among the coalition parties, because even the right-wing elements in the Smallholders Party thought it wiser to avert the attempts of the Mindszenty group to restore the monarchy. The restoration of the kingdom—especially at a time when the ousted landlords were trying to recover the distributed lands through the courts—would have been tantamount to the rejection of democracy which they supposedly supported. This was something not even the monarchist-minded leaders of the Smallholders Party were prepared to risk, and consequently they also took a stand in support of the republic. At the same time they hoped that a representative of their party would become the President of the Republic, thus strengthening their power position. Until then a coalition body, the Supreme National Council elected by Parliament, had exercised power as the head of state.

On 1 February 1946 the National Assembly approved the law which proclaimed Hungary to be a republic. Under an inter-party agreement, Parliament elected Zoltán Tildy as the President of the Republic. Through securing the office of the head of state, the Smallholders Party strengthened its positions, but this did not alter the fact that the proclamation of the Republic was a success for the revolutionary forces. The people of Budapest celebrated the establishment of the Republic at an enthusiastic mass meeting in front of Parliament on 1 February.

However, conflicts quickly developed within the coalition, which was partly explained by the fact that instead of Tildy, Ferenc Nagy became the Prime Minister. He was in closer contact with the right-wing forces and was willing to listen to the demands to “correct” the land reform by claiming back part of the distributed land.

To protect the land reform, the Hungarian Communist Party raised the slogan: “No land is to be returned!”

Popular action along this line started already in January. A succession of new farmers’ delegations followed each other to Budapest, demanding energetic measures against reclaiming land through lawsuits. A peasant delegation of 100 members arrived in Budapest from Cegléd, another of

80 from Áporka, of 60 each from Hajdúszovát and Hajdúszoboszló; 300 peasants representing 150 villages came from Szabolcs County and 300 peasants from the Monor district. In these delegations, apart from the left-wing parties and the representatives of the National Federation of Agricultural Workers and Small Farmers, the local Smallholders Party organizations were occasionally also represented. Once in Budapest, the peasant delegations went directly to the headquarters of the Hungarian Communist Party, because they were well aware that they could expect protection for the land reform primarily from the Communist Party, which had been the vanguard and the leading force of the land distribution. The delegations also called on the Smallholders Party ministers, to protest against the reclaiming of the land under any pretext.

The delegation from Szabolcs County handed a memorandum to Prime Minister Ferenc Nagy. This memorandum—published in its entirety in the 15 February issues of *Szabad Nép*—stated: “The gentlemen who had absconded to the West and have come back or are still sneaking back, are resorting to all sort of devious tricks to take the land away from the poor peasants. They enjoy the help of the fascist bailiffs of the former manors, the reactionary rabble slinking back from the West and—of the Prince Primate of Hungary . . . We are well aware of the fact that if we let the land slide from underfoot, we shall also lose power, and we would find ourselves once again in the beastly world of the gentry.” The memorandum urged the settlement of the lawsuits with decisions favouring the new recipients of the land. It stressed that the government should defend “the just claims of the poor peasants, and if, for any reason, this is not successful, we, the land claimants and the new owners . . . will protect our land by whatever means we regard as suitable.”

The departure and return of the delegations was usually accompanied by community meetings and, in several localities, by bitter demonstrations. In Cegléd, where several thousand acres of newly distributed land were in jeopardy in the vicinity of the town, five thousand people marched to the court-house early in February to protest against the reclaiming of land.

The slogan “No land is to be returned!” activated the party organiza-

tions and all those who co-operated with the Hungarian Communist Party; it encouraged the demonstrations of the poor peasant masses. At the same time, these actions helped the left of the National Front to rally in closer cohesion. On the other hand, in the Smallholders Party the contention around the land reform intensified the conflicts between the democratic and the reactionary wings, and spurred the left-wing forces of the party to close their ranks.

The drive to defend the land reform was linked with demands for the purge of public administration, a movement which received a major impetus from the action of the workers. On 14 February the Budapest National Committee, on the initiative of the two workers' parties, in a resolution urged the immediate removal of reactionaries from public offices. The next day the workers of the capital held a series of meetings to indicate to all concerned that they really meant business.

The Central Committee of the Hungarian Communist Party coordinated its plan of action with the leadership of the Social Democratic Party. On 14 February the liaison committee of the two parties stated that "the parties firmly decided to wage an all-out battle with all their strength and by all the means at their disposal against the provocations of reaction and to do this in the spirit of full working-class unity". The Central Committee of the Hungarian Communist Party also agreed on joint action with the leaders of the Peasant Party.

On 15 February the SDP held a mass meeting in the Municipal Theatre, and the next day the HCP met in the Sports Hall, and both of these rallies were also addressed by a representative from of the other workers' party. The mass meetings enthusiastically welcomed the resolutions of the two parties on the joint struggle against reaction.

In the Sports Hall, Mátyás Rákosi put forward the position of the Central Committee of the Hungarian Communist Party with regard to the most urgent economic tasks and the need to repulse right-wing moves. With a stormy demonstration the mass meeting expressed the determination of the Party to help safeguard the land reform and carry through the purge of public offices. At the same time, it demanded a drastic reduction in the number of public employees as the condition for a balanced budget and a halt to inflation.

The Hungarian Communist Party made public its new immediate demands at the rally at the Sports Hall on 16 February. These called for the immediate nationalization of oil wells, ore mines, and five big factories, the three Ganz Works, the Manfred Weiss Works of Csepel and the Rimamurány-Salgótarján Ironworks.

The popular movements became increasingly active. A number of provincial national committees passed a resolution similar to the views expressed by the Budapest National Committee against the fascists who still concealed themselves in public offices, often naming the persons whose immediate removal was urged. These demands were fulfilled in an increasing number of places. At Nagykőrös, a joint meeting and demonstration of the Hungarian Communist Party, the National Federation of Agricultural Workers and Small Farmers, and the Peasant Party, attended by several thousand people, enforced the dismissal of several reactionary officials, including the mayor, of whom it became known that he was an officer in detachment of the White Terror. In many villages located in various parts of the country the notaries of the old régime, who were hated by the people, were ousted as a result of mass action. There were mass meetings and demonstrations at Miskolc, Szolnok, Hódmezővásárhely, Szeged, Pécs, Győr, Szombathely and other towns, at practically every district seat and in the mining centres. The workers' rallies also continued to take place in Budapest.

Headed by the General Secretary István Kossa, a delegation of the Trade Union Council, accompanied by some ten thousand demonstrators, called on the Prime Minister Ferenc Nagy on 24 February demanding the immediate implementation of the reduction of the staff in the public offices and a voice for the trade union representatives in the selection of the persons to be dismissed.

The nation-wide impetus of the popular movements dealt a blow at reaction and inspired the left of the Independence Front to take further action. On the proposal of the Hungarian Communist Party the two workers' parties, the Peasant Party and the Trade Union Council decided to launch a joint campaign to oust reaction from the coalition. For this purpose the Left Bloc was formed on 5 March.

The Left Bloc—an alliance of the people's democratic forces—was

the people's front within the Independence Front. In its statement the Bloc emphatically declared that it would not co-operate with the reactionary right wing of the Smallholders Party, but would adhere to the alliance with its democratic elements in the future as well. To safeguard the land reform, it was ready to "mobilize the entire mass force of the workers and peasants" and would jointly fight with them against the sabotage activity of big capital.

The statement demanded:

(a) the purge of public administration, and the participation of trade union representatives in the implementation of the purge;

(b) the "implementation of the full nationalization programme" of the Independence Front, that is, over and above the nationalization of the coal mines, the nationalization of the ore mines, oil resources and power plants, as well as the state management of the five key factories, and "the state supervision of the entire business" of the banks.

The statement stressed that the Left Bloc "relying on the Hungarian working people, will wage a joint struggle against economic and political reaction and calls on the democratic elements of the Smallholders Party to contribute their all-out efforts to participate in the struggle to save the nation".

In a statement published in the press, the representatives of the democratic wing of the Smallholders Party declared that they agreed with the "ruthless struggle against reaction" of the Left Bloc and urged the leadership of the Smallholders Party to "immediately launch the struggle against the reactionary group of our Party and in this regard draw the necessary conclusions forthwith". The statement was signed by six peasant and intellectual representatives of the Smallholders Party, including István Dobi and Gyula Ortutay.

On 7 March the Left Bloc held a mass meeting in Budapest's Heroes' Square. This was one of the biggest mass demonstrations since the liberation. Hundreds of thousands shouted the slogan: "Out with the enemies of the people from the coalition!" A sweeping majority of the proletariat living in the capital marched to Heroes' Square, where they were joined by large masses of all the progressive strata of the population; all in all over 300,000 working people participated at the demonstration.

The resolution adopted at the mass meeting stated that the parties defending democracy "are confronting the gathering of the reactionary forces with the power of the organized working masses and are ready fully to eliminate any right-wing actions". In response to the attacks against the land reform, the statement declared: "Not an inch of land is to be returned!" It demanded that the Smallholders Party exclude reactionary elements from its ranks. At the same time, it welcomed the "manifesto of the progressive democrats of the Smallholders Party and welcomed the friendly hand offered in the joint struggle".

The next day, the representatives of the Left Bloc submitted their demands to the leadership of the Smallholders Party and requested an urgent answer. It depended on the reply whether the left-wing parties would maintain the coalition with the Smallholders Party or, joining up with the democratic wing of the party—and possibly with part of its centre—they would create a new national front and a new government coalition.

Four days later, the Smallholders Party executive issued a statement declaring that it accepted the demands and it would exclude twenty right-wing parliamentary representatives from the membership of the party.

The March demands of the Left Bloc became the government programme. This was a significant political victory for the Communist Party and the entire left wing of the National Front. The attempts to reclaim land had come to nothing, the National Landed Property Settlement Council invalidated the anti-peasant court decisions, and the Act on the completion of the land reform reinforced the ownership of the new holders of the land for good. Under the leadership of the Hungarian Communist Party, the left wing of the National Front had defended the land reform and took measures to repress big capital which was engaged in acts of sabotage.

The victory of the Left Bloc started the withdrawal of the democratic peasant and intellectual masses from the Smallholders Party. The political defeat of the Smallholders Party caused confusion and disruption in the reactionary camp. The far-reaching hopes the defeated landowners attached to the autumn election victory of the Smallholders Party were

ruined and their anti-land-reform drive had utterly failed. And by the enforced ousting of their twenty right-wing representatives, the leaders of the Smallholders Party were compelled to admit to all the world that their party had become a reactionary rallying-point and a legal cover for reaction. At the same time, this made it evident that the Smallholders Party did not provide secure cover for the counter-revolutionaries. The left wing of the party was potentially more powerful than had been supposed, especially as the alliance with the Left Bloc had significantly increased its influence.

After being ousted from the Smallholders Party, the right-wing group, headed by Dezső Sulyok, soon formed a separate party that launched a campaign to rally the right-wing forces disappointed in the Smallholders Party.

The leadership of the Smallholders Party endeavoured to strengthen the party by continuing its ambivalent policy: to remain in the Independence Front, but at the same time trying to retain the Smallholders Party as gathering place for the right-wing forces. Their parliamentary group included many more reactionaries than the number they had asked to leave. Ousting the Sulyok group had been a difficult operation which they had to carry out in order to avert a split in the party and retain their government positions. However, this double-dealing policy hinted at further conflicts and entailed new crises for the coalition.

The success of the Left Bloc strengthened the co-operation of the two workers' parties. During the successful joint actions, the Social Democratic Party came much closer to the Hungarian Communist Party ideologically also, and its masses began to have increased confidence in the Communist Party. At the same time, the leading echelon of the Social Democratic Party indicated growing jealousy of the Communist Party. The fact was that the success of the Left Bloc had primarily contributed to the prestige and influence of the Communist Party. The rivalry was especially fanned in the Social Democratic Party by the right wing, but not even the adherents of co-operation were able to avoid its effects.

The process of cutting down employment in the public administration, which started in April, also contributed to the friction that developed

between the workers' parties. Under the government measure, committees of three persons took the decisions concerning the dismissals, one member being delegated by the Prime Minister's Office, one by the competent ministry and one by the Trade Union Council. The national administration and at the same time the majority of the public offices were under the supervision of the Minister of the Interior—at that time László Rajk—who mainly appointed Communists and co-operative Social Democrats to the committees. A similar course was taken by the Trade Union Council, but here the matter gave rise to considerable arguments about "parity"; the Trade Union Council was ready to appoint left-wing Social Democrats for the task of dealing with reductions, but refrained from delegating persons belonging to the right wing of the Social Democratic Party who with the right-wing Smallholders might form a common front against the Communist Party.

The disputes continued throughout the reduction of the administrative apparatus. A large number of civil servants joined the Social Democratic Party because they were worried about being dismissed from their jobs; they hoped that the membership of the SDP would provide some security, because their dismissal could be claimed to be "an affront against the party". These were not matters contested by the masses, but they were still important because the purge and reinforcement of the state apparatus of the democratic power was at stake. However, compromise was needed to reduce friction between the two workers' parties. As a result of this and the debates with the other parties of the coalition and because of a wrangle with the Smallholders Party, the dismissals did not completely achieve the goal that had been set. Nevertheless, the measure taken was a significant step forward in reducing the swollen state apparatus and dismissing reactionary elements. The number of civil servants decreased by about 50,000; some of them were placed on retirement.

The success of the Left Bloc also strengthened the left wing of the Peasant Party, which for many months had carried on a consistent struggle against those tendencies which favoured a shift to the right. The fact was that Imre Kovács, the party's general secretary, had tried to loosen the contacts with the Hungarian Communist Party as early

as in the summer of 1945. After the autumn elections, he championed this trend even more. On the other hand, the left wing of the Peasant Party, headed by Ferenc Erdei and József Darvas, stood for closer co-operation with the Communist Party. The party's chairman, Péter Veres, also regarded the maintenance of close contacts with the Hungarian Communist Party as inevitable to avert right-wing pressure. The attack launched to defend the land reform, the great impact of the popular movements and the formation and victory of the Left Bloc in March had again proved that the policy of solidarity with the Hungarian Communist Party was sound.

It was during those days of success, in the first half of March, that the Peasant Party held its first national congress which endorsed the policy of co-operation with the workers' parties. Péter Veres remained the chairman of the party and two deputy chairmen were elected: Ferenc Erdei and Imre Kovács. Thus, Kovács remained one of the leaders of the party although no longer its General Secretary, a position that was terminated. This was an indication that the right-wing influence was being pushed back.

The March victory of the Left Bloc was followed by another keen struggle that lasted months. The conflict sharpened between the democratic forces that worked for stabilization, and reaction, which counted on a lasting inflation and speculated on a financial crash.

Early in May 1946, the Central Committee of the Hungarian Communist Party published its stabilization plan which called for a stable currency to be introduced by 1 August.

The stabilization plan of the Communist Party was based on the fact that by the spring of 1946 the general level of industrial production had approached half the 1938 output and a further increase was expected by August. The minimum industrial stockpiles, and after the harvest the minimum agricultural accumulation of supplies, that were both essential for stabilization, could be ensured. An important part of the plan was the elaboration of an adequate system of taxation, in order to provide adequate cover for budgetary expenses.

The leaders of the Party held mass meetings in Budapest, in the mining districts and in other parts of the country, to discuss the plan.

This elicited considerable response throughout the nation, it tallied with the hopes and wishes of the entire people. The Hungarian Communist Party submitted its stabilization plan to the people at a time when the value of money was falling every day, when half a million pengős were equal to one pengő of July 1945, when the burden of inflation was becoming less and less bearable, especially for those living on their wages. Compared to payment in kind, the cash portion of wages consisted of enormous sums, but its real value rapidly diminished. The people wanted to know when this state of affairs would come to an end and attached considerable hopes to the Hungarian Communist Party's plan for introducing a stable currency by 1 August.

Other parties also spoke of the need for stabilization and made statements to the effect that perhaps it could be brought about "before the end of the year". However, the Hungarian Communist Party had proposed a well-considered plan that designated an early date for the introduction of stable money.

The Central Committee of the Hungarian Communist Party contacted the leadership of the Social Democratic Party in order to submit the stabilization plan as a joint proposal by the two workers' parties, because this would give greater weight to the presentation and ensure better co-operation in the extraordinary efforts needed to implement it. The liaison committee of the two parties finalized the agreement on 21 May, and the proposal was submitted that same day to the Council of Ministers which endorsed it.

The leaders of the Smallholders Party had doubts and reservations about the stabilization plan of the workers' parties. After the First World War—when the war damage suffered by the country and inflation had been incomparably less than after the Second World War—it had taken five years for the counter-revolutionary government to bring about financial stabilization and then it could be done only with the help of sizable foreign loans. The bourgeoisie did not believe that the democratic system was capable to achieve more. The capitalist circles that speculated on lasting inflation and their consultants declared that stabilization by 1 August was unrealistic. Naturally, they also "approved" the establishment of a stable currency, but only later, "in due course". These capitalist

circles were able to muster considerable economic strength and great skill in financial manœuvres against the stabilization plan of the workers' parties.

However, the bourgeoisie were not united in the matter. Some of them—especially the small-scale manufacturers who operated with their own capital and whose ownership of plants was not affected by the current nationalization demands of the workers' parties—wanted the inflation to end as soon as possible. The peasants, including the kulaks, also urged the introduction of a stable currency, because they hoped that it would enable them to buy industrial products under more settled market conditions and to an increasing extent. Small-scale industry and the retail trade also expected stabilization to bring normal opportunities for development. In this way the stabilization plan put forward by the workers' parties accorded with the wishes of the vast majority of the people, including even a part of the bourgeoisie.

The Ferenc Nagy group, although they doubted the chances of stabilization by 1 August, did not take any counter-actions against it. They reckoned that as the plan was not theirs, they were not responsible for it, and its failure would be a failure for the Hungarian Communist Party, a factor that the bourgeoisie could turn to good use. The right wing of the Peasant Party and of the Social Democrats also expressed reservations. The Hungarian Communist Party was the only party which went all out for the success of the stabilization plan.

The class struggle was extremely acute in the months of June and July 1946, and the main battle front was the economic area. Inflation assumed incredible proportions. The value of one July 1945 pengő was worth about 4 pengős on 1 October 1945, 160 pengős on 1 December, 800 pengős on 1 February 1946, 20,000 pengős on 1 April and half a million pengős on May Day. By 1 June 1946, about 120 million pengős and on 1 July 50,000 million pengős had the same value. In July 1946 the pace of depreciation was inconceivable. By that time the currency had become valueless and senseless paper without any use. In this situation, there were only two alternatives: complete economic collapse or stabilization.

As the currency had become practically non-existent, wages in cash

were completely useless and only payments in kind were worth anything. Subsistence supplies for the working people in the towns were ensured through distributions by the authorities and the provisions at the workplaces. The working people were able to supplement this source only through the direct exchange or barter of commodities—if they had anything to exchange. The factories also acquired what they distributed among their employees partly in the villages through direct barter. On the other hand, speculation in gold and foreign currency assumed unprecedented proportions. The rabble of parasites and black-marketeers, who aimed to make a fortune out of the misery of the masses, had a field-day, a fact which enraged the people.

The right-wing Social Democrats, who endeavoured to capitalize on the discontent of the masses and strengthen their political influence by fomenting strike sentiment and starting strikes in some places of work, only added to these difficulties. Whereas in the years of the war against the Soviet Union they urged the workers to refrain from any kind of work stoppages, now they became the spokesmen for such wage claims the granting of which only would have resulted in accelerating the depreciation of money. They were unconcerned with the fact that this activity assisted the reactionary forces who were eager to prevent stabilization. The capitalists—who wanted the provisions provided by the workplaces to be reduced and the state to assume full responsibility for the supplies—by demanding additional state loans to pay their workers and by inciting strikes, they stood for the continuous nominal increase of the cash part of wages. This was one way to speed up the inflationary process.

The bourgeoisie also made an attempt to launch a new political attack. As soon as the government adopted the stabilization plan put forward by the workers' parties, the Smallholders Party submitted a memorandum to the Left Bloc demanding immediate municipal elections, as well as the re-distribution of the police, lord lieutenancy and other positions of power on the basis of the votes cast for the various parties in the autumn of 1945.

The Left Bloc repulsed this attempt which would have sharpened the struggle among the coalition parties at a time when the maximum

cohesion of the forces working for stabilization was required. With regard to the issue of new municipal elections, the leadership of the Smallholders Party retracted, but—under pressure from the combined right wing—it continued to insist on additional lord lieutenancies, police prefectures and other offices. The Left Bloc however stood united and averted this attempt also, and put forward its own demand: a radical purge of reactionary elements from the Smallholders Party. Without this, it refused to make any concessions of power to the Smallholders Party.

Following the March victory of the Left Bloc, there was a sudden increase in illegal counter-revolutionary plots organized by fascist army officers, reactionary clergymen, monks and other counter-revolutionary elements. Great endeavours were made by these elements to encourage young people who were contaminated by fascist ideology to engage in counter-revolutionary activity. For this end, they utilized the Catholic young men's associations and other "Catholic" and "Christian" right-wing youth organizations, and the Boy Scouts. In several places they also recruited the leaders and members of the Smallholders Party youth groups into their illegal organizations.

With such incitement against democracy and attempts to stir up a mood conducive to fascist pogroms, there was an increase in the number of assassinations, murders and provocations. At Kunmadaras, a former chief instructor in the fascist para-military youth organization provoked, with anti-semitic demagogy, a mass affray on 21 May, during which two people, a Communist and a Social Democrat, were killed and 18 people were injured. A few days later at Karcag, a fatal clash with the police was touched off, when a clerical leader of the Catholic young men's association and a leading member of the local Smallholders Party youth group organized a fascist demonstration in support of a war criminal, against the democratic order. In the middle of June, the Smallholders Party chief notary and the chairman of the local Smallholders Party branch, organized a demonstration against the workers' parties in Nyirtura, and a member of the Hungarian Communist Party was stabbed. A few days later, on the main boulevard of Budapest, fascist assassins ambushed two Soviet officers killing them together with a girl, a young

worker who happened to pass by; several passers-by were wounded. On 31 July, on the eve of the introduction of the stable forint—fascist elements organized an anti-semitic demonstration at Miskolc, taking advantage of the just anger of the people against speculators. Led by provocators, a crowd of people invaded the police building and dragged out two local mill-owners, who had been arrested for black-marketeering, and lynched one of them. Because a group of the lynchers was arrested, another fascist demonstration occurred the next day, when an officer of the democratic police was killed.

The series of counter-revolutionary provocations, particularly the incidents at Miskolc, indicated that the right-wing forces were prepared to resort to any means, and with their underhand methods they tried to turn the bitterness of the people against the democratic order.

The police and the people's courts dealt with the murderers and provocators. They discovered and suppressed a number of fascist conspiracies. The Minister of the Interior in July disbanded the Catholic young men's associations, the Boy Scouts, the Americana student organization and several other right-wing associations because of their anti-democratic activities and their assistance to the fascist conspirators. The parties of the Left Bloc demanded effective measures from the leadership of the Smallholders Party against those who used the organization of the Smallholders Party, including its youth groups, to support the counter-revolutionary plotters.

The workers' parties held a series of mass meetings in Budapest and in the provinces, either as a joint organization or separately; they exposed the reactionary schemes and mobilized the people in defence of the people's democratic order and the stabilization plan. They opposed the strikes and called on the workers to persevere and continue to increase production. And the masses of the workers—furious with the speculators and the right-wing trouble-makers, the provocators and the murderers—stood the test. Confidence in the stabilization plan of the workers' parties gave them strength and creative power to carry out the plan.

The Hungarian working people had to create the material conditions for the financial stabilization with their own efforts. This task would have been easier and the inflation could have been prevented from soar-

ing to such dizzying heights if only the property removed to the West were to be recovered. Most of these had passed into the American occupation zones of Germany and Austria. Only those goods were returned which could be found in the eastern, Soviet occupation zone of Austria. The American occupation authorities did not permit the return of Hungarian goods, worth about two thousand million dollars, consisting of supplies, machinery, installations, railway rolling stock, road vehicles, livestock, etc., but sold them on the spot. At the same time, the American government was willing to offer Hungary credit to an amount of ten million dollars to enable the country to purchase surplus supplies from the US Army stationed in Europe. Instead of returning the assets valued at two thousand million dollars, a loan of ten million dollars for the purchase of American goods! The Hungarian government availed itself of this credit, because in the spring of 1946 it was badly in need of whatever goods it could obtain.

However, one Hungarian claim was finally settled: the gold reserves of the National Bank, worth 28 million dollars which had been removed from the country, were returned to the Hungarian government. The Soviet government emphatically supported the Hungarian call for the return of all the Hungarian property taken to the West, and the American government could hardly refuse to return at least the gold reserves of the National Bank of Hungary.

The raising of production to a level which would make the readjustment of economic life possible and at the same time financially balance the budget were the basic conditions for the success of the stabilization. In the summer of 1946, the monthly level of the total production of all factories and the mining industry attained about 55 to 60 per cent of the annual average for 1938. As a result of a controlled economy, the state succeeded in acquiring a stockpile of industrial products of such proportion which made it possible to put through after the harvest—also relying on the compulsory deliveries of produce—the financial stabilization.

The economists of the two workers' parties elaborated the plans for the continuation of a controlled economy, expanding state distribution and for ensuring the financial balance of the state budget. An important

part of this plan was the taxing of the rich; it involved, for instance, a tax on landlords owning houses—appropriating 80 per cent of all the rents for the state.

On 1 August 1946 financial stabilization became an accomplished fact. The forint, the new stable currency, was introduced.

Never before was financial stabilization effected in any country under such difficult conditions. The introduction of a stable currency was a major victory for the workers' parties—and above all for the Hungarian Communist Party—and at the same time, for the people working for reconstruction. By implementing its stabilization plan, the Communist Party once again demonstrated that it was truly the leading party of the nation.

When the stable currency was introduced, wages were fixed at about 50 to 55 per cent of the pre-war figures—in accordance with the production level of the country. It is true, this was a low level, nevertheless compared to the inflationary situation, it was a step forward that brought considerable relief and gave rise to increased hopes for further progress.

Alongside the manual and intellectual workers, the peasants and the urban petty bourgeoisie were also glad that the inflation had been ended. That part of the bourgeoisie which wanted an early stabilization but did not believe that it could be achieved without massive foreign loans greeted the success of the introduction of the forint with astonishment, yet in a favourable frame of mind.

On the other hand, the big capitalist circles that opposed the stabilization, endeavoured to undermine the forint and restart the inflationary process. The companies affiliated to the National Federation of Manufacturers applied for an additional big state credit and threatened to close down parts of their plants and dismiss some of the workers, unless it was granted. In fact, they began the dismissals and the only reason why extensive lay-offs did not occur was that the factory committees prevented this. The workers' parties saw to it that no state credit should exceed the limits required for the protection of the forint, and at the same time in co-operation with the trade unions they took action against the unjustified dismissals and for further increasing production.

Price policy was another area where the anti-stabilization manoeuvres of the capitalist circles occurred. There were still extensive shortages and the capitalists intended to make the most of them. They demanded high prices from the state price-fixing bodies which included—mainly due to the Smallholders Party—their own experts. In collusion with wholesale merchants and various speculators, they endeavoured to remove the largest possible proportion of their products from the sphere of the controlled economy, in order to sell them on the black market. An additional practice was purchase and concealment of free-market products in order to raise the prices, a practice in which hosts of small-time speculators also participated.

The Communist Party and the Social Democratic Party started a joint counter-campaign to protect the forint. They exposed the right-wing elements who claimed that the introduction of a stable currency was just a farce and attempted to justify the big capitalists' demand for credits and their attempts to increase prices. Through the General Economic Council and other economic state bodies, the workers' parties enforced a strict controlled economy, which under the existing conditions was essential for the protection of the stabilization. The authorities, and especially the economic police, took measures against hoarders.

The workers' parties also mobilized the masses to work for the protection of the forint. They held joint and separate meetings in August and in September to protest against the right-wing manoeuvres to disrupt stabilization and insisted with increasing force: out with reaction from the coalition! Committees to safeguard the forint were formed, which regularly inspected the markets and helped to check the activities of the hoarders and black-marketeers who forced up the prices.

As a result of the success of the stabilization, co-operation between the two workers' parties continued to improve in the protection of the forint, and the Left Bloc also grew stronger. This solidarity considerably helped to repulse the first attacks against the new currency.

The Transition from the Democratic to the Socialist Revolution Gathers Momentum The Third Congress of the Hungarian Communist Party The Three Year Plan—The 1947 Elections

Following stabilization, the struggle for reconstruction and the further limitation of the power of big capital continued under conditions more favourable for the people's democratic forces.

The bourgeois front had been shaken in its confidence in the Smallholders Party, but they knew they could retain their positions of power only through this party. The big capitalists, together with the entire right-wing front, hoped that their position would improve when the Allied Powers concluded the peace treaty with Hungary—and the time for this was approaching. They expected that with the winding-up of the Allied Control Commission they would receive more effective aid from the Western Powers, and the right-wing leaders of the Smallholders Party would also muster up courage to carry out a counter-revolutionary change or to promote it. Until this occurred, they strove to maintain their positions within the coalition. The Ferenc Nagy group displayed willingness to co-operate in this effort, and repeatedly demanded "proportionate adjustment" of the positions of power in the hope that in this way they could halt the disintegration of their party.

The struggle waged by the working class and the bourgeoisie to win the support of the peasants played a primary role in the party conflicts and power struggles.

As early as the summer of 1946, the Communist Party started a village-visiting movement. The mechanics, locksmiths, stonemasons, timber workers, electricians, shoemakers and workers of other trades participating in the village-visiting brigades often spent their Sundays in rural areas to contribute their work to help the poor peasants who were confronted by many problems and difficulties. These groups were accompanied by Communist doctors, social workers and lawyers who assisted the peasants with free medical aid, consultation in the care of children and aid in legal matters and in settling various problems. These village-visitors included experienced party workers who linked practical

aid with political education. The movement had an important role in increasing the influence of the Communist Party in the rural areas.

In the struggle to win over the peasants, the Communist Party initiated the setting up of a new peasant organization, the UFOSZ (National Federation of New Farmers and Beneficiaries of the Land Reform). The first steps towards this were taken right after the March victory of the Left Bloc. The first county, district and village organizations of the UFOSZ were formed in the spring. The process gathered momentum after the stabilization of the currency, and on 15 September, the federation held its first national conference. The aim of the UFOSZ was to rally, irrespective of party affiliation, the 600,000 peasants who received land during the reform and to represent their interests at various forums. The protection of the ownership rights of the land, the shortage of equipment and draught animals and other difficulties justified the special protection of the interests of the new farmers.

Two peasant organizations had been active before the establishment of the UFOSZ. One of them was the Agricultural Labourers' Union which had opened its doors to the smallholders and adopted the name of the National Federation of Agricultural Labourers and Smallholders (FÉKOSZ). By the summer of 1946 its membership exceeded 330,000 with a large part of this, perhaps the half, being new farmers. But this meant less than one quarter of the new farmers and a much smaller fraction of the former holders of land who joined the FÉKOSZ, because they had reservations about joining a common organization with the agricultural labourers.

The other peasant organization was the Peasant Federation revived by the Ferenc Nagy group. The leading role in the federation belonged to the kulaks, although the organization proclaimed that its mission was to protect the interests of the peasantry as a whole. The Peasant Federation was in fact the organization of the reactionary bloc rallying behind the Smallholders Party, a bloc which endeavoured to make the largest possible proportion of the middle and poor peasants allies of the bourgeoisie against the working class.

The leadership of the Smallholders Party also attempted to achieve closer co-operation with the Peasant Party through the use of the Peasant

Federation. On several occasions the Ferenc Nagy group proposed the Peasant Party that they should develop the Peasant Federation into a joint organization of the two peasant parties protecting their common interests, for in this way they hoped to link the Peasant Party to themselves. In fact, Imre Kovács and his clique tried to push this motion through, but their attempt failed and the March congress of the Peasant Party definitely rejected this line. On the other hand, the Peasant Party supported the setting up of the UFOSZ and took part in its formation and leadership.

In 1946-7, about half of the new farmers and new landowners—including the smallholder members of the FÉKOSZ—joined the UFOSZ. Organizationally the UFOSZ was looser than the FÉKOSZ, but became stronger than the Peasant Federation. Its activities contributed to workers'-peasants' solidarity and the cohesion of the people's democratic forces.

The March 1946 victory of the Left Bloc, which brought the crisis in the Smallholders Party to a head, also started the process of disintegration in the Peasant Federation. By different actions this process could still be slowed down, but could no longer be arrested.

The Smallholders Party decided to hold "Peasant Days" in Budapest, on 7-8 September 1946, and a mass meeting as a climax in Heroes' Square. More than 200,000 people had participated at the Miskolc mass meeting of the Communist Party in July to which people arrived even from the neighbouring counties. Many hundreds of thousands participated at the meetings of the Party throughout the country on 20 August. This was what the Smallholders Party leaders hoped to outdo—in Budapest. The right wing hoped to show its force by parading several hundreds of thousands of peasants in the streets of the capital, and force the power demands of the party in this way. They were able to arrange for 60,000 to 70,000 peasants to travel to Budapest and also mobilized their supporters in the capital—over a hundred thousand people in all participated at the mass meeting. Although the peasant march remained far below the expectations of the Smallholders Party, their peasant rally in Budapest were still something to reckon with.

Early in September, the Central Committee of the Communist Party

decided that in connection with the Budapest Peasant Days of the Smallholders Party it would counter the trouble-making plans of the right wing with the policy of the workers'-peasants' alliance. It proposed joint action to the leadership of the Social Democratic Party. Thus, on 6 September, the liaison committee of the two parties published a joint statement which welcomed the peasants arriving in Budapest and informed them that the two workers' parties would "welcome them in the big factories of Budapest". At the same time, it cautioned that no one should try to utilize the Peasant Days for reactionary purpose. The statement went on to say: "The working people of Greater Budapest will not be tricked into concessions by any provocation . . . We wish and hope that the Peasant Days will take place in the spirit of strengthening democracy and increasing workers'-peasants' solidarity."

The workers' parties and the trade unions took a number of peasant groups to worker-peasant meetings at the factories. As a part of this campaign, they popularized the demands of the workers' parties, related to the problems of the peasantry, including the community ownership of the mills; this demand was at that time emphasized by the Communist Party. The leaders of the Smallholders Party were not prepared to take a stand on this matter, because this particular demand divided their ranks: the gentry members rejected the idea, the bourgeois ones were made nervous by it, but the peasants identified themselves with it. The Communist Party did not permit the Ferenc Nagy group to divert attention from this particular demand by general statements on national solidarity and peasant unity, and also took a stand for the community ownership of the mills at the Budapest Peasant Days.

The workers' parties and the democratic forces of the Smallholders Party together thwarted the right-wing plans linked to the Budapest Peasant Days. The mass meeting took place in an orderly manner and was not accompanied by any exceptional events.

The success of the village-visiting movement of the Communist Party, the setting up and strengthening of the UFOSZ, the failure of the right-wing plans attached to the Peasant Days and the weakening of the Peasant Federation all showed that the working class had achieved success in the struggle for winning over the poor and the middle peasants.

This contributed to a very significant degree to the fact that compared to the situation a year earlier, the political balance of forces changed considerably in favour of the workers' parties and the Left Bloc.

The Hungarian Communist Party held its Third Congress from 28 September to 1 October 1946. The delegates who conferred represented a party that had faced up to all the difficulties in the years of fascist oppression and in the post-liberation struggles, a party that undertook any task demanded by the interests of the people.

The entire atmosphere of the Congress was permeated by the splendid consciousness that the Party had carried out an assignment of historic significance.

The Congress summed up the achievements gained so far. The resolution on the position of the country and the tasks of the Party stated: "With the realization of stabilization it has to be decided along which path the country is to progress economically. Stabilization has stopped the pauperization of the working masses, has terminated the ravages of speculation and consolidated the economic foundation of democracy." The working people regarded this "as a starting point for raising their own living standards through increasing production".

The resolution also stated: "We are building the country not for big capital, but for the people." It demanded "state control over production and credits, the state control of the banks and foreign trade, and the implementation of the nationalization programme included in the platform of the democratic parties", and the taking into state ownership of the big factories of all the capitalists who opposed the interests of the people and hampered the development of the country.

The resolution emphasized that "in order to reconstruct and develop our industry, transport and agriculture, the elaboration of a three-year state economic plan" was needed. In other words, it took a stand for the introduction of a planned economy.

The Congress declared that the people's democracy had made it possible for the country to "progress towards socialism without civil war". Progress towards socialism had already been put on the agenda. In the spring of 1946, the Central Committee of the Communist Party decided

to break away from the one-sidedness of agitation for socialism. For a time it had been necessary to emphasize that the Party did not regard socialist transformation as an immediate task. However, in the altered situation it was necessary to put on the agenda the popularization of socialist aims in addition to the protection of democracy. The Central Committee proposed to the leadership of the Social Democratic Party that the joint May declaration of the two parties should also outline these points. The proposal met with the understanding of the leadership of the Social Democratic Party and the May declaration of the two parties proclaimed: "Forward to socialism through ensuring the victory of the Hungarian democracy, through annihilating reaction and through the reconstruction of the country!" The issuing of this slogan—which was given weight by measures and demands aimed at frustrating big capital—increased the determination of the working class to carry on reconstruction even under the oppressive burden of inflation.

After stabilization the problems of socialist development had to be solved and the Third Congress of the Hungarian Communist Party declared: "Forward to socialism, through people's democracy!"

Emphasis on the socialist aims was linked with demands for the further restriction of the power of big capital. The appropriateness and necessity of these demands against capital were factors about which even the masses of the peasants and the petty bourgeoisie could be convinced. The Congress devoted proper attention to linking together the socialist aims and the definite demands against big capital with support for the direct interests of the village and urban petty bourgeoisie. "In contrast to exploitation by the cartels and banks," the resolution stated, "which goes hand in hand with the growing poverty and debasement of large masses of the peasantry, the Hungarian Communist Party wages a struggle to help and strengthen the small peasant farms—and primarily the new farmers—through effective state support for the cooperative movement of the peasants." It worked against the revival of usurious bank rates and demanded the nationalization of the big mills, the community ownership of medium-size mills and the community control of small mills.

All this ensured protection for the working peasants against the danger

of the revival of usury by the cartels and banks and by the millers and supported the small farms of the peasants. The resolution also took a stand to support small-scale industry and small trade. This was again a matter of national interest, as small-scale industry and small trade played an important role in ensuring supplies for the population. Protection for the small peasant farms and the provision of incentives for small-scale industry and small trade at the same time made it more difficult for reaction to turn the peasants and the small traders of the towns against the revolutionary working class by causing fear with the "bogey" of socialism.

The resolution also took a stand on other matters concerning the development of the country. It designated the reform of the public administration and the renewal of the staff of officials from the ranks of the workers and the peasants as important tasks. It specially mentioned the importance of the democratic police. The resolution stated: "The enemies of the people should not be given any place in its ranks," and emphasized that the police had to be given "protection under criminal law" against reactionary slander. The resolution also urged the reorganization of public education, the more rapid development of the eight-grade general schools, the setting up of people's colleges (boarding schools) and "the renewal of our entire culture and education in the people's democratic spirit".

The resolution emphasized that the co-operation of the two workers' parties was to be strengthened. It also stressed the importance of the Left Bloc in the joint struggle for the consolidation of the people's democracy to thwart the right-wing efforts. It called on the democratic section of the Smallholders Party to turn against the right wing and enter into an alliance with the Left Bloc in order to "establish a new and stable government foundation for Hungarian democracy".

The Congress passed a separate resolution on the development of agriculture and the improvement of the position of the peasants. The resolution stated: "After the conclusion of the land reform new tasks now have to be solved: the system of small farms has to be economically consolidated and production has to be made intensive, varied and profitable."

The economic consolidation of the system of small farms was the order of the day, because in the given situation this was the only way to strengthen the workers'-peasants' co-operation, to lead agriculture out of its state of wartime deterioration and to create favourable conditions for its development. The Congress resolution also declared that the desirable reform of production "goes beyond the economic strength and possibilities of the individual landowners" and demanded cohesion, and groupings in co-operatives. At this point, emphasis was placed on the development of purchase and sales co-operatives, forms of co-operation by small producers which could most easily be extended to the majority of the peasant farms. The resolution also stated that "the advantages of large-scale farming for dwarf and small-holding peasants could be ensured only through rallying the small producers in co-operatives". This position had a primary theoretical significance, which indicated that the later advancement of the villages was envisaged through the co-operative farm movement. However, for the time being the conditions for the development of this were lacking.

The Congress adopted the Rules of the Party. The document stated that the Hungarian Communist Party was "the Party of the Hungarian working class which represents the interests of the entire working people and the nation". It carried on the liberation struggles of the Hungarian people, "the progressive national traditions of Hungarian history. It struggled for the complete realization of people's democracy in a free and independent Hungary". Its final aim was the ending of the exploitation of man by man and the establishment of a socialist and communist social order.

The Party Rules ended the system of recommendations for the admission of new members. The Party Conference of May 1945 had prescribed that new members could be admitted only on recommendations by two party members. This condition had become a formality as a result of the membership recruiting competition that had developed due to the rivalry of the parties. The Hungarian Communist Party itself could not avoid joining in the membership recruiting competition although the contest carried the danger of the dissolution of the Party's character of a revolutionary vanguard. Cancelling the requirement of

recommendations, the Third Congress approved a very loose system of admission to the Party and resolved to make this a permanent feature. This was correct, for by that time the Party had a membership of 650,000, its positions of power had become consolidated and its attractive power had increased. Under such conditions, the dangers inherent in the system of competitive party recruiting also increased.

Since the liberation, the organizational structure of the Party was based on the principle of production units and regions principle and this was confirmed by the Congress. The basic organizations of the Party were either factory organizations, or residential (town district and village) party organizations. The intermediary bodies were the municipal district, town, county district and county boards which were headed by the party committees of small membership, elected by the intermediary bodies themselves. Later the boards came to be called the party committees, and the executive bodies were called executive committees. The Congress was declared to be the supreme organ of the Party, which elects the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission.

The Central Committee elects the Political Committee, the Organizing Committee and the General Secretariat from its own ranks. The Political Committee directs the general activity of the Party on the authority granted by the Central Committee, and takes decisions on all major issues during the intervals between the meetings of the Central Committee. The task of the Organizing Committee is to direct the activities of the party apparatus and organizations in the implementation of practical assignments; its important decisions have to be submitted to the Political Committee for approval.

The Congress elected the new Central Committee and the Central Control Commission. Antal Apró, Mihály Farkas, Ernő Gerő, János Kádár, István Kossa, Imre Nagy, László Rajk, Mátyás Rákosi and József Révai were elected to the Political Committee. Mátyás Rákosi became General Secretary and Mihály Farkas and János Kádár Deputy General Secretaries. These three members constituted the General Secretariat.

The Third Congress of the Hungarian Communist Party issued a manifesto in which it outlined to the country the major tasks for the

further development of people's democracy and called on the entire working people to help carry these out. Its deliberations and resolutions marked an outstanding event in the development of the Hungarian revolutionary workers' movement. It confirmed the development of the Party, it demonstrated its cohesion, cohesion achieved on the basis of a correct political line verified by practice. It set the objective of the struggle: forward to socialism on the path of peace, relying on the broad alliance of the working people. As it will be seen later, the Congress had not sufficiently and thoroughly analysed the nature of the changes that were occurring, although it recognized the practical requirements and correctly outlined the direct tasks deriving from the situation and played an important role in the further process of socialist transformation.

After the Third Congress, with the united action of the Left Bloc and with support from the democratic elements of the Smallholders Party, the Communist Party continued its efforts to force the Smallholders Party to purge reactionaries from its organization, to make it possible to oust them from the national coalition and from the organs of power. This political action was linked with further struggle against speculation. The crop was again poor in 1946. The yield of bread grains amounted to only 52 to 53 per cent of the average of the pre-war years, and so increased difficulties could be expected for the spring of 1947 with regard to the food supply. This was something the leading circles of the bourgeoisie had also taken into account as they made further plans against the people's democratic system.

The leadership of the Smallholders Party continued its ambivalent policy, protecting obstinately the reactionaries who were openly active in the party, while it asserted its support of the coalition with the workers' parties. At the same time, it made an attempt to break up the Left Bloc and drive back the Communist Party. In November 1946, the Ferenc Nagy group again negotiated with the leaders of the Peasant Party and recommended that the Smallholders Party and the Peasant Party should merge, creating a "unified peasant party" which would eventually seize leadership from the Communist Party. They tried to make their proposal palatable for the Peasant Party by suggesting that

from the amalgamated peasant party they would be willing to oust a group of the extreme reactionaries that existed in the Smallholders Party. In other words, they intended to swallow up the Peasant Party. In this way they hoped that the dissipation of the Smallholders Party would be halted, the right-wing bloc would become stronger and the Left Bloc would fall apart.

The proposal of the Ferenc Nagy group was supported by Imre Kovács and his associates within the Peasant Party. The Political Committee of the Hungarian Communist Party exposed the counter-revolutionary nature of the proposal, conferred about this with the leadership of the Peasant Party and assisted the left of this party to parry the dangerous manoeuvre. At the end of November 1946, the leadership of the Peasant Party took a stand against unification with the Smallholders Party. Nevertheless, the internal debates continued and to a significant extent tied down the forces of the party. Finally, the right wing was repulsed and in February 1947 Imre Kovács left the Peasant Party. As a result, the leadership of the Peasant Party formed an executive committee of seven members and restored the office of the General Secretary, entrusting the office to Ferenc Erdei. The policy of the workers'-peasants' alliance was confirmed in the party and the role of the left wing was strengthened in the leadership.

Simultaneously with the Smallholders Party attempt to absorb the Peasant Party, a drive was launched in the Social Democratic Party to terminate the close co-operation with the Communist Party. The right-wing leaders of the British Labour Party played an important role in this attempt.

The Labour government of Britain, together with the Washington administration, supported the anti-Soviet elements in the people's democratic countries and expected them to establish a government which would prevent the development of friendly relations with the Soviet state. At the same time, this would have meant the disintegration of the people's democratic order, the full restoration of the capitalist system, and give a green light for encroachment by the Western Powers.

In November 1946, Morgan Phillips, general secretary of the British Labour Party, arrived in Hungary to persuade the leadership of the

Social Democratic Party to loosen relations with the Communist Party and work in the direction of ending co-operation. He soon found out that the left-wing leaders of the party and those close to them, who together played a leading role in guiding the Social Democratic Party, entertained ideas different from his own as regards co-operation of the two workers' parties. However, he also found that Károly Peyer and his associates were ready to start a campaign to shift the line of the Social Democratic Party to the right and at the same time seize the leadership.

On 8 December 1946, two weeks after Morgan Phillips's visit, Peyer and some of his associates, including Imre Györki and Ágoston Valentiny, sent a memorandum to the Social Democratic Party executive in which they demanded a change in the political line of the party. In a similar way to other enemies of the people's democratic order, they also blamed the new democratic government and at the same time the policy of the Social Democratic Party, which participated in the government, for the difficulties which were in fact part of the aftermath of war. Hypocritically, they said that they did not wish to disrupt co-operation between the two workers' parties, but at the same time they tried to prove that such co-operation was not in the interests of the SDP. Putting on a high-and-mighty manner they declared that "all the conditions had existed to enable our party to become the first party of the country", and the only reason why this did not come about was the fact that their policy had not been enforced. They urged the convening of the next congress of the Social Democratic Party and indicated that they would wage a fight there to change the policy of the party leadership. They sent their memorandum to not only the party executive, but also distributed it in the party organizations and sent it to the Western legations.

At the time of this memorandum affair, Morgan Phillips sent a letter of greeting to Árpád Szakasits, which was published in the 13 December 1946 issue of *Népszava*. The letter urged the SDP to become a strong party which would "one day assume power on its own account". In order to encourage it to repress Communist influence more vigorously, it held out a bright prospect for the Social Democratic Party: an all-Social-Democratic government. Such tactics were welcome for the bourgeoisie which was ready to urge them as these would help to repress the

revolutionary forces of the proletariat and strengthen the capitalist system.

Before submitting the memorandum, on behalf of the Peyer faction Imre Györki sought contacts with the leaders of the Communist Party, in order to "explain" the action they were preparing and to ensure that the HCP remain passive in the struggle between the left and the right wings of the Social Democratic Party. During this conversation, Györki stressed that their action was not aimed against co-operation between the two workers' parties, but was merely a move to oust the "corrupt leaders" of the Social Democratic Party. He raised various accusations against Szakasits and his associates, stating that they were not sincere supporters of co-operation, whereas the Peyer faction was.

The Peyer faction sought a confidential contact with the Communist Party because the HCP was the leading party of the country and also they wanted to produce some kind of an alibi before that party when they launched their open offensive to regain the leadership of the Social Democratic Party. The Peyer clique hoped that if they assumed the guise of supporting a united front and slandered the left-wing leaders of the Social Democratic Party, they could get the Communist Party to at least adopt a wait-and-see attitude concerning the conflict within the SDP. However, the Central Committee of the Communist Party rejected the advances of the Peyer faction and informed the Social Democratic Party leadership about the disclosures made by Györki.

The underhand dealings of the Peyer clique was exposed and elicited considerable indignation among the SDP leaders. As a result, Szakasits and his associates were able to persuade the party executive to condemn the right-wing challenge with a unanimous resolution. This resolution declared that Peyer and his associates "consciously or unconsciously not only harmed the Social Democratic labour movement, but were in fact serving alien and hostile interests". The right-wing members of the Party executive, Kéthly and Szélig included, also voted for the resolution; although they were close to Peyer in attitude, in this respect they drew the line between them. However, beyond political censure, the party executive took no action against Peyer and his associates saying that it would be up to the party congress to decide on the matter.

In the last months of 1946, the coalition government had to combat a latent crisis. The continuation of the internal disputes within the Smallholders Party and the sharpened antagonism between the right and left wings of the Peasant and Social Democratic Parties were also concomitant with this crisis. The Communist Party, together with the Social Democratic Party, had to make efforts to get the government to attend to its basic responsibilities, influence the economic trends in accordance with the interests of the people and check counter-revolutionary subversion.

In the meantime, the Communist Party had worked out a three-year plan and published its principal targets on 20 December. It put forward a comprehensive programme, again taking a stand before the people as a front-line fighter for reconstruction.

The proposed plan outlined the perspective that the country could recover from the aftermath of the war in three years. It set the aim that by the end of the Three Year Plan, industrial production as a whole would surpass the 1938 level by 26 per cent and within this, the output of mining and manufacturing would increase by 29 per cent and that of small-scale industry by 10 per cent above the level of the last pre-war year, whereas agriculture would match the average for the pre-war years. During the same period, the wage level which developed in the last months of 1946 would increase by 80 per cent, making it exceed the 1938 standard by a few per cent.

The political effect of the Three Year Plan sponsored by the Communist Party was so considerable that not only the other parties in the Left Bloc, but even the Smallholders Party officially declared itself to be a supporter of planned economy. However, the various experts of the bourgeoisie soon expressed their doubts and reservations. Sándor Knob, the General Director of the National Federation of Manufacturers, quickly declared that a foreign loan of several thousand million forints would be needed to carry out such a plan, and the full recovery of the country would become possible only after such a "blood transfusion".

In addition, the plan proposal of the Communist Party did not receive the undivided support of the Social Democratic Party leadership. The fact was that the right wing again attacked the party executive claiming

that the SDP was again lagging behind the HCP. They urged the SDP to reinforce its positions at the expense of the HCP. They believed that the new factory committee elections, due early in 1947, would provide the opportunity for this. Even the left and close-to-the-left leaders of the SDP hoped to gain reinforcement of their positions from this test of strength.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party recommended that the two workers' parties should take a joint action to delay the factory committee elections. They realized that these elections would inevitably sharpen the rivalry between the two parties, exactly at a time when the political situation made closer cohesion among the workers' forces imperative. The bourgeois front—anticipating the conclusion of the peace treaty—again prepared a new attack, to be launched in the spring. A Horthyite conspiracy was also uncovered in this period, that revealed that plans for an armed uprising were being plotted in the counter-revolutionary camp. Nevertheless, the Social Democratic Party leadership rejected the proposal to postpone the factory committee elections, because they thought that the Communist Party was afraid of the elections and wanted, in the interest of the Party, to retain its positions.

The Communist Party was obliged to submit to the test. Since its proposal for a delay was unsuccessful, the HCP strove to arrange for the elections to be held as soon as possible, in order to cut short the period of intense party rivalry. Some attempts were made to put up joint lists of candidates but most of these attempts failed, because the representatives of the two parties could not agree on the proportion of their respective representations.

The factory committee elections began on 7 January. The number of factory committee members to be elected from the Communist and Social Democratic Parties depended on the relative proportions of votes cast for the individual lists. The first week's observations indicated a push forward by the Communist Party. In the 50 new factory committees elected, the HCP won 408 places compared to the earlier 275, and the SDP only 72 compared to the earlier 146. One of the reasons for this was the loss of hope by the Social Democrats that their list could gain a majority and in a number of places they endeavoured to boycott the

elections to cause confusion and opted for delay. However, the boycott was unsuccessful: the majority of the Social Democratic workers did not understand its purpose and voted for the locally co-ordinated list or the list submitted by the Communists.

The role played by the Communist Party in the implementation and protection of the stabilization, the consistent struggle against reaction and also the general support and confidence with which the three-year plan was anticipated all contributed to increasing the influence of the Party. The idea of the three-year plan was particularly effective among the factory intellectuals. Nine-tenths of the factory committee members elected on the separate lists of the intellectuals were Communists.

The leadership of the Social Democratic Party endeavoured to explain its lack of success with references to various grievances—supposed or justified—but could not conceal the fact that it had incorrectly judged the relations of forces between the two workers' parties. The experience gained during the first week of the factory committee elections also indicated that the sharpening of the party rivalries and the disturbances in the co-operation between the two workers' parties posed a real problem. The bourgeois front attached far-reaching hopes to this danger and the Smallholders Party was quick to suggest that it would also issue a list of candidates for the factory elections. It thus intended to take advantage of the loosening of co-operation between the two workers' parties.

Then the Communist Party again recommended the postponement of the elections and the extension of the operation of the existing factory committees. Now the Social Democratic Party leadership accepted the proposal. On 13 January 1947 the representatives of the two workers' parties and the Trade Union Council agreed that "in order to combat the reactionary plot more effectively and to rally the combined forces of the working people for the struggle against reaction, the factory committee elections should be postponed".

With regard to the elections already held they agreed "in the spirit of working-class unity to correct the mistakes that actually occurred". What was in mind was primarily to increase the representation of the Social Democratic Party in the new factory committees. Parity committees

were delegated to carry out the corrections, which were effected in thirty cases. The number of the Communists on the 50 new factory committees was reduced from 408 to 375, while the number of Social Democrats was increased from 72 to 110. The Communist Party was no longer willing to make concessions to the same extent as in the previous year, when in the interests of the united front it accepted even exaggerated demands of the Social Democratic Party. Now the HCP insisted more definitely on a Communist majority, where the Party's influence justified this. The margin of its majority had in the meantime become wider, because many people transferred from the Social Democratic Party to the Communist Party. This was one of the consequences of the increased prestige of the HCP.

The exposure of the Horthyite conspiracy made headway during January. The conspirators named their organization the "Hungarian Community". Their aim was to overthrow the democratic régime, restore the monarchy, recover the distributed land and re-establish the capitalist system. The "Hungarian Community" even established a military staff whose leadership was entrusted to Lajos Dálnoki Veress, the former chief-of-staff of the Horthyite army. They planned to rally the Horthyite officers, including those still in the army and those already ousted, in an illegal organization. They counted on direct assistance from the Western Powers and on the co-operation of the Hungarian fascist military and gendarme detachments in the camps in West Germany, whose leaders they had contacted. In the meantime, they readily engaged in spying activities for the Western Powers, against the Soviet troops stationed in Hungary.

One of the leading members of the conspiracy was Endre Mistéth, the Smallholders Party Minister of Public Works. It became evident that several Smallholders Party M.P.s and the general secretary of the Smallholders Party youth organization were also engaged in the under-cover plot. The conspirators combined their underground activities with infiltration into legal organizations, primarily in the Smallholders Party and the Peasant Federation, using these legal organizations as a cover. In this way they hoped to ensure a mass basis for implementing their plans.

It transpired that several leaders of the Smallholders Party had known about the activities of these agents in the Smallholders Party and in the Peasant Federation and acted as their cover. The underground organization was still in an early phase and its discovery prevented fuller development.

The detection of the plot and the exposure of its counter-revolutionary aims and methods was a warning for the people's democratic forces to intensify their joint struggle against reaction. The Communist Party utilized the exposure to most emphatically urge the purge of the Smallholders Party of the conspirators and their supporters. This initiative was well received in the Social Democratic Party, the Peasant Party and in the democratic circles of the Smallholders Party.

The congress of the Social Democratic Party met on 31 January. Its resolution declared that the Party continued its struggle "against counter-revolution and against the remnants of reaction and fascism" in a revolutionary spirit. It demanded that the "false coalition which forced the socialist working people into an alliance with big capital, with its paid agents and with counter-revolutionary conspirators" should be ended. It mentioned that relations between the Social Democratic Party and the Smallholders Party could be adjusted "on the basis of the principle which determined the alliance of the two parties during the war", and in this way a "more unified and purer government coalition" could be established. At the same time, another point of the resolution supported the closer solidarity of the workers' parties too.

The elements of two contrary ambitions were present in this resolution. It stated that the economic structure of the country had to be reconstructed and "the banks and big companies placed under the control of the working people". Other material of the congress revealed that this actually meant further nationalization measures, which had been urged by the left wing of the Social Democratic Party and the majority of its members, along with the Communists. This was a demand whose fulfilment could primarily be ensured by the cohesion of the two workers' parties. On the other hand, the Kéthly-Szélig wing vigorously urged closer co-operation between the Social Democratic Party and the Smallholders Party, a return to the agreement concluded in 1943 between the

two parties, i.e. their alliance before the establishment of the Hungarian Front. This endeavour was expressed by the reference to the Social Democratic Party and the Smallholders Party to try to establish in this way a "more unified and purer government coalition".

In this way, on the demand of the Kéthly-Szélig wing, a dangerous "back-door" was built into the Congress resolution, a provision which could have opened the way for a separate agreement between the Social Democratic Party and the Smallholders Party. Among other things, this could have been intended to give added weight to the SDP demands for positions against the Communist Party. However, the Kéthly group was unable to achieve its aim that the SDP should orient itself toward this back-door and withdraw from co-operation with the Communist Party and from the Left Bloc. Relying on its alliance with the HCP, the left wing of the SDP frustrated this scheme.

In the weeks preceding the Congress, the Social Democratic Party leadership worked out its own three-year plan. The Congress endorsed this plan and instructed the party executive to co-ordinate it with the Communist Party, so that the two workers' parties could submit a joint three year plan to the government. It was regarded as politically more advantageous if the SDP did not merely agree to the HCP proposal, but put forward a similar plan of its own, with the very intention of co-ordinating it with the HCP plan and submitting it jointly with the Communists. This would make the joint action of the two workers' parties more effective for the adoption of the Three Year Plan.

The SDP Congress passed a separate resolution in the case of Peyer and his group. It condemned their December action as something "not worthy of conscious socialist and harmful to the most cherished interests of the working class". It instructed the party executive in similar cases to resort immediately to the "strictest and most forceful retaliation". As rapporteur Vilmos Böhm observed that the only proper measure would be to expel the Peyer group from the party, but in order to ensure a unanimous vote, this was not insisted on. What the "unanimity" so arrived at really meant was that the right wing continued to have significant influence among the executive officers of the Social Democratic Party and exerted considerable pressure on the leadership.

All in all, the 1947 Congress of the SDP helped to strengthen the positions of the left wing, further the united front policy, and contribute to the success of the attack against the bourgeois front and of the campaign for the adoption of the Three Year Plan. The new party executive confirmed Árpád Szakasits in his office of General Secretary, and elected György Marosán and István Ries as Deputy General Secretaries.

After the prolonged preparatory talks of the foreign ministers of the Western Powers and the Soviet Union, the peace treaty was concluded in February 1947 in Paris with the former allies of fascist Germany, namely Bulgaria, Finland, Italy, Rumania and Hungary.

The treaty with Hungary definitely invalidated any revision of the boundaries of the country gained by the Horthyite government through acting as a lackey to Hitlerite Germany in the latter's ambitions of conquest. The representatives of democratic Hungary endeavoured to achieve some readjustments in the Hungarian-Rumanian frontier in Hungary's favour, but without success. Because of her role played in the Second World War, Hungary was not in a position to expect any country to support her request for frontier rectification.

The people of Hungary had opposed the Trianon Peace Treaty of 1920, and the Communist Party also repudiated it as an imperialist dictated peace document. At the same time, the Party had persistently fought to prevent the ruling classes from utilizing the Hungarian people's desire for national unification for conquest, for the subjugation and suppression of peoples speaking other tongues. The Communist Party had warned the people, all the parties and the government itself that the alliance with Hitlerite Germany, subservience to German imperialism, attacking the neighbouring states—that defended their independence—in the back, and joining in the anti-Soviet predatory war would make Hungary an object of hatred in the eyes of the peoples fighting against the fascist invaders. It had cautioned the nation that this would lead to Hungary lowering itself to the status of a German colony, and at the same time this action would result in the refusal of all the countries opposing the Hitlerite bloc to consider any claims she might have for the revision of the Trianon frontiers.

The Communist Party had not merely called the attention to all these, but also was willing to face all the perils of opposing the nationalist and chauvinist stream and of fighting against participation in the Hitlerite predatory war. It consistently fought to take Hungary out of the Hitlerite bloc and go over to the side of the anti-Hitlerite coalition, because this was demanded by the interests of the peoples, including the Hungarian people, and their national honour. The poison of chauvinism which was instilled by the Hungarian ruling classes in a large section of the people, prevented all those whose joint efforts alone could have stopped Hungary from becoming the last satellite of Hitlerite Germany from recognizing in time the correctness of the Communist Party position.

The historical responsibility for this rests on the Hungarian ruling classes, the same counter-revolutionary forces which, having asked for armed support from the Entente against the Hungarian Republic of Councils, openly betrayed the nation in 1919, and so had to pay for the restoration of their power by the imposition of the Trianon Treaty. The same dark forces plunged Hungary into the abyss of the Second World War on the side of the fascist Axis powers. It was a consequence of this that Hungary landed in a situation where she was unable to push through even her modest claims for a readjustment of the frontier.

Hungary had to accept the restitution of its boundaries as they were after 1920. Acknowledging and accepting this became an essential prerequisite for the establishment of peace among the countries in the Danube Valley and the development of friendly relations with the neighbouring peoples. The revolutionary forces of Hungary set collaboration with the neighbouring peoples as their aim, which was an important international requirement for the speedy recovery and further development of the country. This would also assist the Hungarians living in the neighbouring countries to contribute as citizens of equal rights to the development of the state in which they resided, and at the same time to promote friendly relations between Hungary and the neighbouring countries. Such type of relations was aimed at which would help to combine the civic loyalty, friendship and national feelings of the various nationalities living in the individual countries. This of course, presupposed respect for the progressive national traditions, national culture and

national feelings inspired by the thousand-and-one bonds of kinship, and took for granted unimpeded progressive social and cultural relations among the friendly countries.

The establishment of such relations depends on the internal development of the individual countries and the trends in the international relations between the countries concerned. For this, substantial obstacles had to be overcome, some of which were the burdensome heritage of the Second World War for some peoples, including the Hungarian people.

In the years of struggle against the fascist invaders, the fraternal collaboration of the peoples fighting for their liberty and sacrificing their blood became stronger, but at the same time the angry cry for revenge also mounted against Hitlerite Germany and its allies. Because of its responsibility for the war, extensive territories were taken from Germany. Several million Germans were resettled from what had been East Prussia, from the western areas of Poland and the Sudetenland of Czechoslovakia. This was a consequence of the fact that most of the German minority in Poland and Czechoslovakia, drugged by fascist and chauvinist propaganda, permitted themselves to become tools for the conquering ambitions of German imperialism before and during the Second World War.

The Hungarians living in Slovakia were also threatened with the danger of relocation. However, this could be objected against as a significant part of them had fought in the anti-fascist movement and thousands of Hungarians participated shoulder to shoulder with the Slovak anti-fascists in the Besztercebánya (Banská Bystrica) uprising which broke out in the summer of 1944. The Hungarian Communist Party consistently fought against the forced repatriation. It took the position that Hungary would accept only voluntary exchanges of population, which was tantamount to promoting the voluntary resettlement of Hungarians living in Slovakia and of Slovaks living in Hungary. In this question the position of the Communist Party was shared by the entire democratic coalition. In the end compulsory repatriation was not included in the peace treaty with Hungary.

The fact that at the May 1946 parliamentary elections in Czechoslovakia the Communist Party obtained 38 per cent and the Social Democratic Party 12.1 per cent of the votes, and thus the workers'

parties attained a majority, helped to remove the idea of the forced resettlement. A few weeks later, Klement Gottwald, the head of the Communist Party, became the Prime Minister of the new Czechoslovak coalition government. The strengthening of the political influence and government leadership of the workers' parties in Czechoslovakia helped to gradually dispel anti-Hungarian feelings. Naturally, the consolidation of the people's democratic forces in Hungary and the loss of ground by Hungarian reactionaries who were hated by the peoples of Czechoslovakia, also played a major part in assisting this development. The two governments concluded an agreement providing for voluntary population exchanges. Hereafter the forced resettlement of Hungarians from Czechoslovakia came to an end. Altogether 73,000 people of Slovak nationality left Hungary for Czechoslovakia and 88,000 people of Hungarian nationality moved from Slovakia to Hungary.

As Germany had been compelled to receive resettled German nationalities, Hungary availed itself of this opportunity. The resettlement of the Swabians, as the Germans living in Hungary were called, started in 1945, and their properties were appropriated for the purpose of the land reform. However, the resettlement of the German-speaking population became an issue between the right and left wings of the coalition. The workers' parties succeeded in ensuring that the Swabian miners should be allowed to stay, and urged that only those should be resettled who had collaborated with reaction: the Swabian kulaks, officials and others who had declared themselves to be "German" during the war and joined the Volksbund. On the other hand, the right wing of the coalition endeavoured to obtain exemption for these very people. Inter-party wrangles and local power positions had an influence on developments in this matter. Finally half of the German-speaking population was able to stay, but for a long time they lived in seclusion, bearing the burden of the general distrust of the Germans.

The peace treaty obliged Hungary to pay reparations for the war damage caused to the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia. The Western Powers also claimed damages for the losses sustained during the war by the Western-owned companies and some of their other property in Hungary. In fact they submitted astronomical claims,

so much so that the sum they demanded almost reached the value of the Hungarian possessions removed to the West. With the aid of the Soviet Union it was possible to cancel this claim, and it was placed on record in the peace treaty that the Hungarian property taken to the West must be returned to Hungary.

The signatories to the peace treaty recognized Hungary's complete sovereignty. The Allied Control Commission—whose bodies directly supervised the fulfilment of the Hungarian obligations undertaken in the armistice agreement—ceased to exist in the autumn of 1947.

The national sentiment of the Hungarian people was deeply wounded by the refusal in the Paris Peace Treaty to consider the Hungarian claims for a revision of the country's national boundaries. Reaction attempted to place the blame for this on democracy, although in actual fact the country had found itself in this unfavourable position because of the war crimes of the reactionary circles. Reaction now continued to incite hatred against the neighbouring peoples and did this once again in a "patriotic" guise; its actual aim was to hinder or even prevent the development of friendly relations with the neighbouring countries. An improvement in the international relations of democratic Hungary was not in the interest of reaction; on the contrary, it preferred the country to remain isolated, at least as long as reaction had not achieved its domestic power ambitions.

The Smallholders Party again pursued an ambivalent policy in this matter. In its official statements it accepted the Paris Peace Treaty—which, by the way, had been signed on behalf of the Hungarian Government by Foreign Minister János Gyöngyösi, a member of the Smallholders Party—but at the same time it provided a cover for the reactionaries active within its ranks, who did their best to utilize the disadvantageous points of the peace treaty—and primarily the issue of the national boundary—for creating incitement and hate-mongering against democracy.

The duty of the revolutionary forces towards the people was to oppose all attempts which would capitalize on national feelings obscuring the realistic situation and misleading the people. The truth had to be told however painful this might be, and caution had to be exercised to avoid

anything that could damage the country. This was the way to ensure that the conclusion of the peace treaty and the full restoration of Hungarian sovereignty should promote the further strengthening of the people's democratic order and the more rapid recovery of the country.

Reaction also endeavoured to take advantage of the war reparation obligations imposed on the country and exploit them for anti-democratic and anti-Soviet incitement. It urged the nation to refuse to fulfil these obligations and alleged that they were the main source of all the economic problems. On the other hand, the revolutionary forces proclaimed that the fulfilment of the reparation obligations was a matter of national honour. The workers' parties openly supported the payment of reparations, although in the meantime, due to the country's difficult situation, they asked for easier terms, which were granted.

The reparation obligations were also imposed on the other countries of the former Hitlerite bloc. The biggest losses to the attacked countries had been caused by the ravages of the invading armies and the organized plunder by the fascist occupiers; to this was added the heavy burden of a long defensive war and the halting of normal progress—in fact outright regression. The material damage caused to the Soviet Union amounted in value to several hundred thousand million dollars. Because of heavy destruction in Germany, the victorious powers fixed the German war reparations at only 20 thousand million dollars, half of which sum was to be paid to the Soviet Union, and half to the remainder of the countries in the anti-fascist coalition. In addition, German property abroad was confiscated and passed into the Allied Powers. Sabotaging the conclusion of the German peace treaty, the Western Powers made it possible for West Germany to avoid fulfilling its reparation obligations to the Soviet Union, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. The war reparation obligations of the other countries in the former Hitlerite coalition were definitely fixed by the peace treaties.

Although it was confronted by exceptional difficulties due to the ravages of the war and its extreme defence efforts, the Soviet Union demanded only very moderate payment from the former allies of Germany, and requested 200 million dollars from Hungary. Hungary had to pay 70 million dollars to Yugoslavia and 30 million dollars to Czecho-

slovakia. These figures were already recorded in the armistice agreement and confirmed by the peace treaty.

Although the compensation required was only a small fraction of the actual damage caused, it imposed a serious burden because of the grave position of the country. Its fulfilment was facilitated by the fact that payment had to be effected largely through deliveries of industrial products and thus orders were placed with the manufacturing industry and primarily with the iron and engineering industry. Under the agreement concluded in 1945, Hungary had to fulfil its reparation obligations toward the Soviet Union in six years. In the first year Hungary delivered goods valued at 10 million dollars in compensation. In the spring of 1946, on Hungarian request the Soviet government extended the amortization deadline to eight years. For the fiscal year of 1946-7, Hungary had to pay a reparation of 21.8 million dollars, but a major part of this obligation was settled by the Soviet Union taking shares in the Petroszény coal mines—that represented 12 million dollars—which had earlier passed into Hungarian state ownership. In 1948, the Soviet Union released Hungary from the obligation of paying half of the amount that was still outstanding.

The fact that under the Potsdam Agreements the German companies and other concerns in Hungary passed into Soviet ownership was advantageous for the people's democratic system. As a result, there was a significant reduction in the influence of Western capital in Hungarian economic life. Twenty-eight iron, metal and engineering companies, 22 textile plants, 23 chemical factories, several trade companies and a few dozens of large or small firms were taken over by the Soviet Union. In addition, a number of companies that had been partly in German hands consequently became joint Hungarian-Soviet companies. A large part of the Hungarian reparation deliveries served to replace equipment in the plants in Hungary which had passed into Soviet ownership. At the same time the output of these companies also contributed to the implementation and protection of Hungarian stabilization. After the victory of the socialist revolution, at the time of the First Five Year Plan, the joint companies were liquidated and all the Soviet companies in the country came into the possession of the Hungarian state.

In the spring of 1947, the struggle was intensified between the people's democratic front and the bourgeois counter-revolutionary front. The Three Year Plan was an important ideological and political weapon for the workers' parties, and they fought for its acceptance. The plan anticipated the further development of state influence and control over large-scale industry, securing the interestedness of the small-scale producers and primarily the mobilization of the working masses for the realization of the desired goals.

The plan appropriated 6,300 million forints for investments. The Communist Party intended to raise this sum primarily through heavier levies on the rich: partly by a tax on capital, running parallel with the full confiscation of property deriving from war and inflationary profits, and partly through sharply progressive income tax. The Social Democratic Party had similar ideas on meeting investment costs. "Let the rich pay!" was the slogan which became the motto of the struggle for the ratification and implementation of the Three Year Plan.

Early in May 1947, a conference of the coalition parties approved the co-ordinated three-year plan and agreement was reached with regard to the idea that the investment expenditure should be covered by levying taxes on the rich. However an open debate ensued on the control of credits, or more precisely on the question of the nationalization of the banks.

The Communist Party regarded as necessary the nationalization of the four biggest banks: the National Bank, the Credit Bank, the Commercial Bank and the Discount Bank. The Ferenc Nagy group—which was in close contact with the Association of Savings Organizations and Banks and the National Federation of Manufacturers—was sharply opposed to nationalization and recommended some kind of state control as an alternative. The Peasant Party supported the Communist view and urged the nationalization of the four big banks. On the other hand, the Social Democratic Party recommended the state supervision of all banks.

The Communist Party insisted on the nationalization of the four big banks which played a key role in credit activities and publicized this demand at the Angyalföld mass meeting of the Party on 9 May. Together with the further publicity of the Three Year Plan, the Party launched an

all-out campaign for the nationalization of the banks. It held a series of meetings where hundreds of thousands of workers and peasants expressed their agreement with this demand.

The Social Democratic Party leadership was of the opinion that the long-drawn-out issue of the state control of the banks should be urgently settled and some body established to handle the financial aspect of the Three Year Plan through assistance from the private monetary institutions. It intended to set up this body within the Central Corporation of Banking Companies, an institution dealing with the administration of credit banks. This standpoint was published in *Népszava* on 11 May. The Central Corporation of Banking Companies was under Social Democratic leadership and consequently the proposal was in harmony with the interests of the Social Democratic Party. During further discussions, the party executive took the position that it would support "the complete nationalization of all credit activities or their full state control", not believing that partial nationalization would be expedient. This was published in *Népszava* on 25 May.

On the other hand, the Political Committee of the Communist Party stated that it most energetically opposed any proposal which would replace the nationalization of the big banks by extending state supervision over the credit organizations and the banks. At the same time it naturally regarded the extension of state control over the non-nationalized private banks and financial institutions as necessary and it supported all proposals to this end. It regretted that in this respect the Social Democratic Party "maintained an either-or position: demanding either the nationalization of the entire credit organization or their national control". In the case the Social Democratic Party "would unequivocally adopt the position of nationalizing the entire credit organization and would launch a struggle for the realization of this view, the HCP would be ready to give it full support provided that the nationalization of the majority of the banks would be accomplished by 1 August". This statement was carried by the *Szabad Nép* on 28 May.

The same day the General Economic Council passed a resolution on extending state control over the earlier mentioned four big banks and an additional nine, and sent ministerial commissioners to each of them.

This measure was intended to pave the way for nationalization. Overcoming resistance by the right wing of the party, the SDP executive welcomed this step and expressed its readiness to work together with the Communist Party for the nationalization of the entire credit organization. The two workers' parties arrived at a unified standpoint on this basis.

In the meantime, the unravelling of the threads of the fascist conspiracy continued. During this exposure, the Communist Party demanded with increasing emphasis that a number of leaders of the Smallholders Party, including Ferenc Nagy, should be brought to account for having permitted the party to become a cover for conspiracy. In fact, the suspicion arose that Ferenc Nagy himself might have participated in the plot. He had previously gone to Switzerland under the pretext of taking a vacation. On the proposal of the Communist Party, the Council of Ministers instructed him on 28 May to return home immediately and to clear himself of the charges brought against him. This instruction was sent to him on the day that the General Economic Council reached its decision to place 13 banks under state control. The two workers' parties issued a separate statement demanding among other things the immediate resignation of Ferenc Nagy.

Ferenc Nagy announced his resignation in a statement on 30 May and refused to come home. The fact that he absconded, provided an additional impetus for the disintegration of the Smallholders Party. Several leading politicians of the party followed suit and absconded from the country. Various right-wing groups detached themselves from the party and joined the Sulyok party, or began to form new parties. The reactionary bloc that had organized behind the Smallholders Party in the summer and autumn of 1945 began to fall to pieces.

The representative of the democratic wing tried to halt the full disintegration of the Smallholders Party through more definite co-operation with the Left Bloc. A new leadership, headed by István Dobi, took over the party.

Under an agreement reached between the coalition parties, Lajos Dinnyés became the new Prime Minister. He was one of the veteran, pre-liberation representatives of the Smallholders Party and had joined the left wing of the party during the coalition struggles. In March 1947,

when the Minister of Home Defence had to leave because he supported the conspirators, Dinnyés took over the Ministry of Home Defence and now he took up the post of Prime Minister. The Smallholders Party had seven representatives in the Dinnyés Government, four of whom belonged to the party's left wing. As before, the Communist Party and the Social Democratic Party was represented by four members each in the government, and Péter Veres accepted a portfolio on behalf of the Peasant Party.

The Dinnyés Government submitted the bill on the Three Year Plan to Parliament, and it was enacted by the National Assembly early in July. The implementation of the plan began on 1 August 1947. The Planning Office was set up. Under an inter-party agreement, Imre Vajda, a representative of the Social Democratic Party, was elected its chairman, and Andor Berei, a representative of the Hungarian Communist Party, was elected its general secretary.

The launching of the Three Year Plan was an important political success for the two workers' parties and primarily for the Communist Party. The HCP had played a leading role in the elaboration of the plan. It had the qualifications to carry out this task, and its work was facilitated by the fact that it was able to utilize the experiences of Soviet economic planning. Similar initiatives by other people's democracies also had an encouraging effect; Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia had started a planned economy early in 1947, and Poland switched over to it on 1 July 1947.

It soon became obvious that under the appropriate political conditions the introduction of a planned economy could be a powerful weapon for socialist transformation.

After parliamentary approval of the Three Year Plan, the announcement of new elections was the next item on the agenda. The Communist Party had already raised the need for this in the spring and the move had received the support of the other parties of the Left Bloc. The Political Committee of the HCP had originally envisaged elections in the autumn, but when Ferenc Nagy and some of his associates absconded and the disintegration of the Smallholders Party began, the pace of

events increased. At an inter-party conference on 12 July, agreement was reached on the dissolution of the National Assembly and on the announcement of new elections.

In the meantime, the struggle continued with the disintegrating right-wing forces. The Sulyok party and other right-wing party groups in Parliament openly rejected the Three Year Plan and everything that would assist the socialist transformation of the country, but their parliamentary resistance proved to be futile. In their anger over the loss of their positions of power, some reactionary groups went as far as to resort to the criminal path of arson and other acts of sabotage. Fire broke out in the foundry of the Hofherr Factory on 14 June, at the Kispest depot of the Budapest Tramway Company on 4 July, at the Ganz Shipyards on 10 July and another one at the Neményi Paper Mill on 21 July.

The revolutionary forces prepared for the implementation of the Three Year Plan, whereas the counter-revolutionary bandits responded with sabotage and arson. And the politicians of the Sulyok party and other reactionary groups applauded the arsonists and encouraging them to commit further crimes. This gave rise to profound indignation on the part of the people who demanded a ruthless reckoning with the saboteurs and their patrons. At the same time, the workers reinforced the guards at the factories and began to repair the damaged plants as rapidly as possible.

The Sulyok party became seriously compromised in these struggles and after the announcement of the elections it dissolved with its leader defecting the country. The right-wing forces organized new parties in order to campaign in the elections. Under the leadership of Zoltán Pfeiffer, a lawyer ousted from the Smallholders Party, a party was formed which subscribed to the ignominious cause of neo-fascism. István Barankovics, a conservative politician, organized a clerical party, and there was a party, headed by Margit Schlachta, which received support from the various orders of nuns. Father István Balogh, a former leader of the Smallholders Party, also organized a new party. In addition, the Bourgeois Democratic Party and the Radical Party contested in the elections as they had in 1945.

In order to reduce rivalry among the coalition parties, the Communist Party recommended that the four parties of the coalition should "conclude an election alliance, reviving the Hungarian National Independence Front in the spirit of the common struggle against reaction and fascism, and for sharing in the great country-building task of the Three Year Plan". They had in mind an election alliance in which the participants would enter with separate lists and gain mandates in proportion to the votes received. This election alliance came into being, expressing the joint opposition of the democratic forces against those of reaction. However, this did not end the election rivalry, only acted as a brake on it.

The expected intensification of the rivalry between the Communist Party and the Social Democratic Party was quite a problem. In order to reduce it, the Political Committee of the HCP recommended to the SDP leadership the publication of a joint statement; the suggestion was accepted. The statement declared that the elections should be "fought in the spirit of workers' unity, not against each other, but against the common enemy, overcoming and eliminating the friction which is often inevitable in an election campaign". The statement was only partially able to normalize the election contest which occurred between these two parties also. In some places HCP members and in others SDP members violated the agreement. From the very beginning the right-wing elements of the SDP ignored the agreement and their campaigning was primarily directed against the HCP and the Soviet Union.

The leadership of the Social Democratic Party entertained far-reaching hopes with regard to the possible outcome of the elections. The right wing, the centre and even some of the left-wing members were of the opinion that the masses which had turned away from the Smallholders Party would mainly vote for the Social Democratic Party, enabling the latter to become the leading party in the country. These hopes were nourished by the fact that some of those who had left the Smallholders Party—especially white-collar workers—had indeed joined the Social Democratic Party.

The position of the left wing of the Social Democratic Party was made more difficult by the influx of the former Smallholders Party members into the party as part of their search for a new shelter. It caused a further

problem for the SDP that part of its membership—largely people from among the supporters of the left wing—joined the Communist Party. This was one of the consequences of the experiences gained in the political struggle and also of the growing influence of the HCP. The joining the HCP reflected a very important factor of the revolutionary progress, namely that most of the working-class members and officials of the Social Democratic Party were gradually coming ideologically closer to the Communist Party. This strengthened the mass base of the left wing of the Social Democratic Party, despite many joining the HCP.

The activities of the Peyer clique caused serious harm to the authority of the Social Democratic Party. Although the party executive had rejected the clique's attacks against the policy of the united front, it could not bring itself to decide on their ouster. The Kéthly-Szélig wing and even the centre led by Antal Bán, considered it as being in the interest of the party to capitalize in their election campaign on the anti-communist activities of the Peyer group. On the other hand, even the Kéthly group was shocked when Peyer announced immediately before the elections that he would leave the Social Democratic Party and enter the elections on the list of the Radical Party. The SDP leadership condemned this step as a betrayal of the party and the working class, affirming that the Peyer group had "ousted itself from the ranks of the proletariat". The Peyer case, which had been a bone of contention between the two workers' parties on more occasions than one, was thus closed once and for all as an issue for the workers' movement.

The elections took place on 31 August. Five million citizens—90 per cent of the eligible voters—went to the polls.

The Communist Party had made considerable gains. It received 22.2 per cent of the votes cast and 100 mandates—compared to 17 per cent of the votes and 70 mandates in the autumn of 1945. In Greater Budapest, 27.5 per cent of the votes were cast for the HCP. The HCP became the biggest party of the country and the capital, and the leading party in the National Assembly. Its election success was a result of the persistent struggle carried on to defend the land reform, establish financial stabilization, drive back big capital, gain support for the Three Year Plan and crush the bourgeois counter-revolutionary bloc.

The Social Democratic Party suffered a setback, receiving 14.6 per cent of the votes. The masses who had turned away from the Smallholders Party did not vote for the SDP. What happened was that the Communist Party won over significant strata of the workers from the SDP. The anti-Communist and anti-Soviet incitement by the right-wing elements of the SDP helped to detach additional groups of workers from it. Thus, the hope of turning the Social Democratic Party into the leading party of the country vanished.

The Smallholders Party shrank, receiving only 15.1 per cent of the votes in comparison to the earlier 57 per cent. Although the cleansing of the party had not so far been completed, the majority of those who had voted for it strengthened the people's democratic camp.

The Peasant Party had increased its representation, receiving 8.7 per cent of the votes compared to the earlier 7 per cent. It had gained some peasant and intellectual votes from the Smallholders Party. Its election success was a gain for the left of the party, because it proved that the policy of close co-operation with the HCP was correct.

The four coalition parties received 60.8 per cent of all the votes and 66 per cent of all the mandates. The excess of mandates was a result of the provision of the election law according to which if any party or alliance of parties won 60 per cent of the votes, it would gain a somewhat higher number of mandates, in order to assure a stronger parliamentary majority. The four parties shared in the surplus mandates that were jointly obtained in the proportion to the votes received.

The organizations of the big capital such as the Association of Savings Organizations and Banks and the National Federation of Manufacturers, Church reaction and the various fascist groups primarily supported the Barankovics party and the Pfeiffer party. With their assistance the Barankovics party gained 16 per cent of the votes and the Pfeiffer party 14.2 per cent. With a mere 1.3 per cent of the votes, the Schlachta party was in a minor position. Altogether, this group of parties secured significant parliamentary representation, but was ousted from any government positions.

The Barankovics and the Pfeiffer parties profited from the rivalry of the coalition parties. Anti-communism gained some ground in the

election propaganda of the Smallholders Party, the Social Democratic Party and occasionally even of the Peasant Party, which was to the benefit of the counter-revolutionary parties. One of the main reasons for these election returns was that Horthyite and other fascist ideologies still exerted influence over significant masses of the petty bourgeoisie and the peasantry. In addition, clerical reaction was rather successful in using its influence over believers to gain political support for the counter-revolutionary parties, although not to the extent they had managed to do in the autumn of 1945. A growing proportion of the lower clergy avoided giving political assistance to the counter-revolutionary forces, because they believed they would be doing a disservice to the nation and in fact endangering the interests of the Church.

The Balogh party received 5 per cent of the votes, the Radical Party and the Bourgeois Democratic Party together received less than 3 per cent. These parties had no positions in the government, but delimited themselves from the counter-revolutionary camp. Loyalty towards the government coalition and the people's democratic power increased and gradually became a dominant factor in their ranks.

After the elections, the efforts to oust reaction from positions of power became more vigorous and the socialist transformation of the country gathered momentum. This was accompanied by heated political clashes, but the progress of the people's democratic forces could no longer be checked.

The Victory of the Socialist Revolution in Hungary

The revolutionary forces gained ground in Hungary under circumstances when the struggle of the working class for the victory of the socialist revolution was also progressing in the other people's democratic countries. In cohesion with the Soviet Union and each other, the socialist countries developed into a community: socialism was becoming a world system.

Simultaneously, the liberation struggle of the peoples against the colonizing powers received a new impetus, especially in Asia.

The development of the people's democratic countries and the energetic liberation struggles of the peoples of Asia also improved the international conditions for the workers' struggle in the capitalist countries to diminish the power of the monopolies. On the other hand, the presence of American and British troops ensured extensive support for the reactionary circles of the West European countries. Consequently, the struggle was a complicated one and its progress was determined by the maintenance, or renewed disruption, of the militant unity of the working class.

The United States, the leading power of the capitalist world, launched an all-out campaign to strengthen the positions of imperialism. In the spring of 1947 it started the Marshall Plan, an aid programme under which loans of hundreds of millions of dollars were promised for the economic rehabilitation of the countries which had landed in a difficult position as a result of the war. The aim of the American ruling circles was to strengthen the political power of the bourgeoisie and to create favourable opportunities for the increased penetration of American capital into Europe. They pressed for the liquidation of the national anti-fascist coalitions formed in 1944-45 and for the removal of the Communist parties from the governments. The British Labour government was also in favour of this latter objective. Although it was anxious about the fact that American capital primarily aimed to assist the West German economy to recovery, in order to utilize it for its own purposes, it joined the anti-communist campaign in close co-operation with American imperialism, which strove to dominate the world.

In France, with British and American support and with the collaboration of the French Socialist Party, the right-wing forces in May 1947 overthrew the anti-fascist national coalition and ousted the Communist Party from the government. Prior to this, the French colonial army launched a campaign in Vietnam, to once again force that country under the yoke of French imperialism. The chief supporter of this war was American imperialism, which intended to penetrate Indochina on the French colonizers' bandwagon and then seize control of it. At the same time, the war in Vietnam became one of the principal means of subverting French working-class unity. The Socialist Party supported this "dirty war" whereas the Communist Party struggled against it.

In Italy, the national anti-fascist coalition was also outvoted in May 1947. There the Socialist Party maintained co-operation with the Communist Party. However the right wing of the party started a campaign against co-operation with the Communists and when it was unable to enforce its will, it caused a split in the party and a separate Social Democratic Party was formed.

The monarchy forced upon the Greek people had enjoyed military support from British and American intervention earlier also. With British military assistance the Greek National Army of Liberation (ELAS) had been disbanded in 1945, and efforts were made to build up an army of the monarchists returning from emigration and completely liquidate the popular forces. Under the leadership of the Communist Party, a new people's army, the Greek Democratic Army, was organized at the end of 1946; for three years it fought heroically against the monarcho-fascist army which gained considerable superiority in strength through American and British help.

In Indonesia, shortly after the proclamation of the Republic of Indonesia, British and Dutch colonizers launched their dirty war to restore colonial rule. In China, in the summer of 1946 the Chiang Kai-shek government launched a general offensive with powerful US support against the areas liberated by the revolutionary forces.

The Anglo-American powers also attempted to interfere in the affairs of the European people's democracies. Their legations established extensive relations with the local reactionary circles, including the right-wing groups operating in the coalition parties. As the "defenders of democracy" in diplomatic notes they protested against the arrest of counter-revolutionary conspirators and the ousting of right-wing politicians from the government. However, their intervention made it easier for the Communists to expose the contacts between the Anglo-American powers and the reactionary circles, including the plotters.

British-American intervention achieved successes in the West European countries and in Greece. But their attempts to interfere with the domestic affairs of the European people's democracies failed and they suffered serious defeats in Asia also.

In China, under the leadership of the Communist Party, the revolu-

tionary army launched a counter-offensive in the spring of 1947, and the anti-feudal and anti-imperialist revolution gathered tremendous momentum. The increasing aid of the American imperialists proved to be futile. The Chiang Kai-shek system was no longer able to hold back the large-scale and well-organized revolutionary campaign. Large territories were liberated one after the other and people's rule was established in them.

Under Communist leadership, the peoples of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia embarked upon an armed freedom struggle against the French colonizers and their American supporters. The struggle continued for many years, illustrating to the world the heroism and magnificent fighting ability of these peoples, and confirmed that the imperialists were no longer able to restore their former colonial power.

In Indonesia, in addition to military intervention, the colonizers extensively relied on the conflicts between the wealthy classes on the right wing of the anti-imperialist front and the revolutionary forces led by the Communists. The position of the anti-imperialist national front was made exceptionally difficult by the fact that in 1948 the Indonesian right wing decided to liquidate the Communists and to arrive at an agreement with the imperialists. Nevertheless, it was impossible to restore the old-style colonial rule, and in 1949, in return for agreements disadvantageous to Indonesia, the independence of the country was recognized. Later, as its national cohesion strengthened, Indonesia invalidated the agreements imposed upon the country, and declared its full independence.

The independence movement also received a new impetus in India. After lengthy bargaining, the British ruling circles endeavoured to retain their control over their largest colony by means of a compromise. To this end, in the summer of 1947 they granted India the status of a dominion, with extensive self-government, but at the same time divided it. They detached Pakistan and thus triggered off bloody conflicts between India and Pakistan. Both countries became separate dominions. However, in 1948, both India and Pakistan declared their complete independence in which Britain was compelled to acquiesce. Burma also became a sovereign state.

It was the strength and growing international authority of the Soviet Union which provided the largest assistance for the peoples fighting to

shake off the imperialist yoke. In addition, the victories of the revolutionary forces of the European people's democracies also provided and still provide new inspiration for the liberation movements.

The changes in the world situation posed a dilemma for the West European Social Democratic parties. The interests of the working class demanded that the workers' parties maintain and improve the co-operation which had developed between them in the struggle against fascist barbarism and against the ambitions of German imperialism to rule the world. However, the right-wing leaders of the West European Social Democratic parties started a campaign against co-operation with the Communist parties. The British Labour Party strove to co-ordinate and direct the international actions of the right-wing Social Democrats. Under its leadership the information bureau of the Social Democratic parties, later named "Socinform" was brought into being. The left-wing forces of the Social Democratic parties were opposed to these disruptive tendencies. However, Attlee and his associates managed to push through their policy in the Socinform, and did their best also to divert the Social Democratic parties of the people's democratic countries to an anti-communist direction. All this increased the antagonism between the Socinform and the Social Democratic parties in the people's democracies.

In Hungary, the Social Democratic Party had worked in close association with the Communist Party to uncover and foil the Horthyite conspiracy, but the British Labour government stabbed even the SDP in back when—in league with the Washington administration—it went to the aid of the plotters. For this reason the SDP found it difficult to make use of the international prestige of the British Labour Party. Similarly, the exploitation of the relations with the French Socialist Party was also made difficult by the latter's participation in the overthrow of the national anti-fascist coalition and its complicity in the war in Vietnam. The Italian Socialist Party dissociated itself from the right-wing parties in the Socinform and continued to co-operate with the Italian Communist Party, an attitude which the SDP, and especially its left wing, found helpful.

The Social Democratic parties, which had decided to promote the policy of the anti-communist bloc, disrupted the anti-fascist workers' unity at a time when the British and American imperialists organized a new war bloc against the Soviet Union, the people's democratic countries and the peoples fighting for their liberation.

In the changed situation the Communist parties were confronted with new tasks. To cope with them, at the end of September 1947 nine European Communist parties—namely the Bulgarian, Czechoslovak, French, Hungarian, Italian, Polish, Rumanian, Soviet and Yugoslav parties—met in conference in Poland, where they adopted a declaration with regard to the international situation.

The declaration stated that since the end of the Second World War, two antagonistic political tendencies had developed in international life; on the one hand, "the policy of the Soviet Union and the democratic countries aimed at undermining imperialism and consolidating democracy, and on the other hand, the policy of the United States and Britain, oriented to strengthen imperialism and to suppress democracy". The imperialist camp, led by the United States, was very active both militarily and in the sphere of economic expansion and ideological warfare. "America is preparing the aggressors of yesterday—the capitalist lords of Germany and Japan—to play a new role, to become the tools of US policy in Europe and Asia."

The declaration also noted that "utilizing the treacherous policy of the right-wing Social Democrats has a special function" in the implementation of imperialist policy. It stressed the role of Attlee and his associates in Britain, and of similar characters in other countries.

With regard to the threat of war, the declaration pointed out: "There is a vast difference between the desire of the imperialists to unleash a new war and the possibility of organizing such a war. The peoples of the world do not want war. The forces favouring peace are so significant and so powerful that if these forces are firm in their defence of peace, if they show consistency and resolution, the plans of the aggressors are bound to fail completely." For the working class, "the greatest danger now lies in the underestimation of their own strength and the overestima-

tion of the forces of the imperialist camp". The anti-imperialist and democratic forces should rally against the policy of aggression.

The declaration also drew attention to the safeguarding of national sovereignty. It regarded the work for the solidarity of the forces protecting national independence against the growing peril of imperialist infiltration as an important task of the Communist parties.

The American government's promise of economic relief raised illusions, whereas its economic blackmail and the threat of its nuclear monopoly position developed a feeling of defeatism and uncertainty in West European public opinion. The right-wing Social Democratic leaders also were under the influence of American pressure and the illusions attached to American aid. They represented and spread defeatism in the struggle against the imperialists and preached submission to the American aggressors; to justify their policy they participated with increasing energy in disseminating the fabrications about the "danger of a Soviet attack" and general anti-communist propaganda.

To combat the propaganda of the imperialists and their allies, it was very important to make the people aware of the fact that the American ruling circles were also jeopardizing the sovereignty of the West European countries. It had to be brought home to the people that despite the American nuclear monopoly, the forces of peace had the upper hand over the forces of war and could thwart the plans of the aggressors. The Communist parties should fight for the protection of national sovereignty and for rallying the forces of the workers against the policy of betrayal and disruption pursued by the right-wing Social Democrats. It was to the credit of the declaration that it drew the attention of Communists and of the entire international working-class movement to the need for this.

On the other hand, it was a shortcoming of the declaration that, while it emphasized the importance of the struggle against the right-wing Social Democrats, it failed to stress the need to work for the return of the Social Democratic parties to the road of co-operation with the Communist parties. In the situation that had developed, there was a renewed danger that the justified anger against the Social Democratic parties pursuing a policy of anti-communist blocs might again divert the Com-

munists to a sectarian policy of "a united front—but only from below", the damaging effects of which had already been pointed out by the Seventh Congress of the Comintern in 1935.

The conference of the nine European fraternal parties recognized the need for a regular exchange of experiences and for the voluntary co-ordination of their activities. The increasing complexity of the international situation made this imperative. Accordingly, it was decided that the nine parties would set up a joint Information Bureau consisting of two representatives from each party. The Information Bureau—which later became known also as the Cominform—published a periodical entitled *For a Lasting Peace, for People's Democracy*.

The outcome of the elections in 1947 in Hungary, the success of the Communist Party at the polls, strengthened the position of the revolutionary forces. At the same time, the election returns caused a temporary political shock in the Social Democratic Party and in the Smallholders Party.

The right-wing forces tried to capitalize on this shock by making another attempt to break up the people's democratic national coalition and precipitate a right-wing coup. The neo-fascist Pfeiffer party and the right wing still active in the Smallholders Party joined hands in this attempt. They hoped to include the Balogh party in the implementation of their plans and counted on effective co-operation with right-wing groups within the Social Democratic Party.

Directly after the elections, the right wing and centre of the SDP launched a joint attack against the left-wing leaders of the party. The right wing urged withdrawal from the government and the shattering of the coalition, in the hope that it was possible to establish an anti-communist bloc. The centre felt reluctant to join such an attempt as it was worried by the possibility of a reactionary bloc, but it agreed that the party executive should raise the threat of leaving the coalition, unless the Communist Party was willing to meet the Social Democratic demands. In fact they held the Communist Party responsible for the frustration of the overambitious hopes they had attached to the elections. They blamed the Communist Party that in the election campaign it had

popularized the idea of the unification of the two parties, as opposed to the anti-communist and anti-united front agitation of the right-wing Social Democrats.

Amidst the massive reproaches against the Communist Party, the *Népszava* explained that the Social Democratic Party's bad showing at the elections was due among other things to the fact that when anti-democratic elements were disfranchised, thousands of SDP members were left out of the election register. In actual fact, in the interest of promoting co-operation between the two parties, the Political Committee of the Communist Party instructed Communists to facilitate the registration of all those persons whom the Social Democratic Party wished to have included, whatever the political past of the person concerned. The newspaper *Szabad Nép* refuted the attacks of *Népszava* and mentioned definite examples when in some of the election districts the SDP received fewer votes than the number of names put back into the register as SDP members from among those originally left out. It mentioned such examples also when the loss of votes by the Social Democratic Party was two or three times as much as the total figure of those left out from the voters' list. The Communist Party repeatedly warned all concerned that instead of inciting against each other, the two parties should collaborate to jointly solve the tasks that confronted them.

It was up to the Social Democratic Party to make the choice: would it continue the struggle together with the Communist Party for the Three Year Plan, for the nationalization of the banks and for the triumph of socialism, or would it give up this work, preferring to go over into opposition or help in building some anti-communist bloc. It was only with considerable difficulty that the left-wing leaders of the party succeeded in making it understood that quitting the coalition and giving up their positions of power would lead to the decline and disintegration of the party. However, at the same time, they also raised certain demands to the Communist Party, claiming a bigger share in the positions of power in return for further co-operation. The leadership of the Social Democratic Party gave added weight to these demands by the fact that early in September the Social Democratic ministers stayed away from their offices and did not attend the meetings of the Council of Ministers.

The Communist Party held a mass meeting in Budapest on 6 September, which urged the earliest possible formation of a new government, "a government of work". Three hundred thousand people marched to Heroes' Square enthusiastically celebrating the election victory of the HCP. "Let us start building!", "Down with reaction!" and "Long live the unity of the workers!" were the slogans of the crowds. This rally in which thousands of Social Democratic workers also participated, expressed the mood of the overwhelming majority of the working people in the capital, who demanded joint action by all constructive forces and the frustration of the reactionary manœuvres.

The Communist Party centred its political struggle on the consolidation of workers' unity and the Independence Front, the speedy formation of the new government and a ruthless fight against the neo-fascist Pfeiffer party. As the strongest party in the country and Parliament, it put forward its government programme to cope with the most pressing tasks. The first point dealt with the nationalization of the banks.

In the meantime, on the initiative of the Communist Party the liaison committee of the two workers' parties held negotiations on further co-operation. The Communist Party, although it was the strongest party in Parliament, did not demand the post of Prime Minister, but wanted to increase if moderately its positions in the government, and at the same time it also supported some of the claims put forward by the Social Democratic Party. As a result of repeated talks, co-operation was resumed between the two parties. In connection with this, the *Szabad Nép* wrote on 11 September: "Without us, no one will crush Hungarian reaction which sold itself to foreign reaction and is still strong, and no one will win over the misled masses. Without us, no one will elaborate and implement the government programme of building the country, a programme to overcome considerable economic difficulties and a moral purge of Hungarian democracy. Without us, no one will realize the big Three Year Plan for healing the wounds of war, increasing the welfare of the people and bringing about a national rebirth. Without us, no one will transform Hungary into the guardian and mainstay of good-neighbourly friendship, of world peace in the Danube Valley. This is why the unity of the workers is needed. This is why we will have workers' unity!"

With regard to further tasks, the Communist Party also arrived at an understanding with the Peasant Party. It carried on negotiations with the Smallholders Party too, but these, if only for a brief period, were disrupted by the attempted putsch of the right wing.

The reactionaries in the Smallholders Party were encouraged by the election success of the Barankovics party and the Pfeiffer party and by the attempted rebellion of the right-wing of the Social Democratic Party. They organized a putsch to seize the leadership of their party and then attempt a merger with the Pfeiffer party and the Balogh party. Through this merger the Smallholders Party would have become the strongest party in Parliament, a party which—as the plotters of the coup hoped—would, in coalition with the Barankovics party and the right wing of the SDP, ensure a parliamentary majority for a turn to the right.

On 11 September, the enlarged steering committee of the Smallholders Party elected a new executive and the right-wing list gained a small majority. The Communist Party was unwilling to give the green light for these right-wing elements to return to their positions in the government and instead took measures to preserve and strengthen co-operation with the left of the Smallholders Party. This was facilitated by the fact that the success of the putschists elicited strong protests from the democratic forces in the Smallholders Party, so much so that new elections were held on that same day. As a result, the leadership elected to head the party identified itself with the policy of maintaining the people's democratic coalition.

There was now even less opportunity for the bourgeois counter-revolutionary plan to succeed—which even the big Smallholders Party was unable to bring about—because the overwhelming majority of the workers supported the Communist Party and the policy of solidarity with the HCP, the majority of the peasants were aligned behind the people's democracy, and the bourgeoisie—with its forces divided and continually disintegrating—had suffered a decisive defeat.

The new government was formed on 23 September as a result of inter-party negotiations. Lajos Dinnyés remained the Prime Minister, and in addition there were three more Smallholders Party ministers in the government. The number of the Communist members of the Council of

Ministers increased to five, with the HCP having taken over the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The four representatives of the Social Democratic Party retained their seats and the Peasant Party received two portfolios. During further inter-party talks the distribution of the lord lieutenancies was decided on. As a result, the number of Communist lord lieutenants increased from six to ten, the Social Democrats from five to seven and the Peasant Party members from three to four, whereas the number of top county administrative posts held by the Smallholders Party decreased from 14 to 7. Agreements were arrived at with regard to filling other power positions as well.

The new government was a people's front-like coalition for accelerating socialist transformation, a government for the direct transition to the dictatorship of the proletariat. Its programme included the implementation of the Three Year Plan, the nationalization of the banks and the disintegration of the still existing strongholds of reaction.

Early in October the four coalition parties and the non-coalition Bourgeois Democratic Party issued a petition in which it attacked the parliamentary mandates of the neo-fascist Pfeiffer party alleging that there had been election frauds. During the negotiations concerning this petition, the police uncovered the conspiratory and espionage activities of the Pfeiffer group. This promoted the political elimination of this counter-revolutionary party and its removal from Parliament. Pfeiffer and some of his associates absconded from the country and their party began to disintegrate even before the election court pronounced judgement with regard to their mandates.

In the meantime, the people's democracy dealt another blow at the economic positions of big capital. On 24 October the Council of Ministers approved a bill covering the nationalization of the major banks and the bill was enacted by Parliament on 20 November. Public opinion was so much in favour of the bill that even the Barankovics party M.P.s voted for its acceptance. At this same meeting, Parliament approved the judgement of the election court with regard to cancelling the mandates of the Pfeiffer party and supported the dissolution of this neo-fascist party.

The nationalization of the big banks was a revolutionary measure which the people's democratic state enacted as a result of the struggle of the

working class, under the leadership of the Communist Party. The entire wealth of the nationalized banks became the property of the nation. As a result, the state sector of the national economy increased significantly and the country took a giant step forward towards socialist transformation.

The nationalized banks had partly or totally owned a number of industrial, transport, commercial and other companies, all of which now passed into state ownership. Hereby, more than half of the mining and manufacturing industry and about 80 per cent of heavy industry had come under direct state control.

As the commercial companies which had been bank concerns came into state ownership, state trade came into being. The state-owned trading companies transacted a significant proportion of wholesale business and one-third of foreign trade.

With the nationalization of the big banks, most of the capital held in reserve in these financial institutions was taken into state control. The state regulation of credit became stronger.

The nationalization of the big banks and the companies which had been their concerns signified a most important change in the structure of the Hungarian national economy. The state sector—already of a socialist character—which employed about 60 per cent of the mining and manufacturing employees, increased and obtained a leading role in the mining and manufacturing industries. A large proportion of the remainder of the manufacturing industry constituted a state-capitalist sector. It included the private companies under direct state control. When the state took over the former bank concerns, it became the co-owner of a significant proportion of these private enterprises; this marked an essential change in the nature of the state-capitalist sector.

Following the nationalization of the big banks a debate ensued in the Central Committee of the Communist Party with regard to the assessment of the nature of the state sector. Imre Nagy held the view that if nationalization was carried out by the people's power led by the working class this "made it democratic", nevertheless this did not change the capitalist character of the mode of production. His views expressed a doubt whether the country was in fact progressing towards socialist

transformation or becoming bogged down at the borders of state capitalism.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party rejected Imre Nagy's position and stated that there were four different kinds of socio-economic formations: (1) ordinary small-scale producer, (2) capitalist, (3) state-capitalist and (4) socialist sectors. Out of these four, the socialist sector "was the most important in size and significance, a sector which had already left its imprint on the Hungarian national economy as a whole. This meant that the Hungarian national economy had left the capitalist road, and, in constant, uninterrupted struggle with a still significant capitalist sector, it would gradually advance towards the realization of socialist production relations".

The theoretical clarification of the nature of these changes had not taken place in advance, it only followed the actual transformation. However, for the time being, only the development taking place in the economic structure of society received theoretical evaluation. The changes in the character of the political system remained theoretically unexplained.

The nationalization of the major banks and their various companies was still not tantamount to the complete appropriation of big capital, but it was an extensive and revolutionary measure, a decisive victory of the socialist revolution. The people's power led by the working class, which had carried out this revolutionary task and had broken the resistance of the counter-revolutionary forces, had solved a historic task of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Thus, with the revolutionary expropriation of the banks and their concerns, the people's democratic power developed into a proletarian dictatorship.

The democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants guaranteed a decisive voice in political power to the working classes, it confiscated the estates of the landowners and distributed them among the landless and poor peasants, and paved the way for the further progress of the revolution. The democratic dictatorship did not terminate capitalist ownership and did not liquidate capitalist exploitation, but this was limited from the very beginning by the influential power of the working class and its leading role in the government. The expropriation of the

wealth of the capitalist class and the liquidation of capitalist exploitation were tasks of the socialist revolution. The implementation of this and the creation of a new socialist society could be ensured only by the dictatorship of the proletariat.

In 1944-6 it was correct for the Communist Party to regard the propagation of the dictatorship of the proletariat as politically inexpedient and harmful. The reason for this was the well-justified standpoint that the creation of the dictatorship of the proletariat was not the order of the day at that time. However, during the transition to the socialist revolution a new and incorrect theoretical explanation was put forward for upholding the stand against the dictatorship of the proletariat. According to this reasoning the people's democracy was "a road to socialism without the dictatorship of the proletariat". In this view the liquidation of the capitalist system and the revolutionary expropriation of the wealth of the strong Hungarian bourgeoisie was possible without a proletarian dictatorship. Even when refuted by practice, this mistaken view was still effective and hindered the theoretical clarification of the change which occurred in the character of political power, and also obstructed a penetrating analysis of the specific and highly instructive lessons which could be learned from these changes, in other words, that the people's democracy could fulfil the functions of the dictatorship of the proletariat. In fact, the people's democratic system had developed into a variety of proletarian dictatorship. However, the recognition of this fact was delayed because of theoretical retardation. The negative consequence of this delay mainly appeared later.

In the meantime, socialist transformation continued at a rapid pace. In January 1948, the taking into public ownership of the enterprises appropriated through the nationalization of the banks was completed and in March the people's democratic power dealt another blow at the economic positions of big capital when it nationalized the enterprises employing over a hundred workers.

The March nationalization had been initiated and prepared by the Central Committee of the Communist Party. The Party had submitted the draft bill to the Council of Ministers on 25 March, with the proposal that the government should order the immediate take-over of the com-

panies concerned. Under a preliminary inter-party agreement, the Council of Ministers approved the proposal.

The first announcement of this highly significant decision was made that same day at the headquarters of the Ironworkers Union, where those Communist and Social Democratic activists of the working-class movement were called together who had been chosen as enterprise managers. The new managers received the authorization from the government to take over the factories to be expropriated, on behalf of the Hungarian state. The social sector of industry gained six hundred additional enterprises, making more complete the victory of the socialist revolution. The dictatorship of the proletariat again prevailed over the bourgeoisie in the March nationalization.

In April, Parliament approved the revolutionary measures carried out under the government decree. The National Federation of Manufacturers, once a powerful organization, was dissolved as there was no longer a place for it in the country heading towards socialism.

By that time the socialist sector of the national economy included almost the entire mining industry, four-fifths of the manufacturing industry, all public transport, and its ratio rapidly increased in wholesale trade and approached a majority in foreign trade.

Nationalization did not extend to the firms and companies owned by foreigners. The factories belonging to Western capitalist concerns employed at that time 5.6 per cent of the personnel of the manufacturing industry, and the private firms employing fewer than one hundred workers engaged 12.7 per cent of industrial workers. Accordingly, the socialist sector became dominant in industry, moreover, state control became more extensive over the private sector of the manufacturing industry.

With the nationalization of the banks in November and the industrial nationalization measures in March the foundations for a planned economy became firmer and the economic development of the country quickened. By 1947, the mining industry exceeded the 1938 production level, and by 1948 the production value of the manufacturing industry also reached, and in fact slightly exceeded the 1938 level, although it was still below the highest war-time standard.

The development of the democratic revolution into a socialist revolution had occurred with the mobilization and large-scale participation of the masses and by overcoming the opposition of the counter-revolutionary forces, in a peaceful way. It was the revolutionary policy of the Communist Party and the collaboration of the two workers' parties that enabled the working class to peacefully carry the socialist revolution to triumph in Hungary in co-operation with the democratic parties of the other labouring classes and strata and exerting an increased influence on their political development. In the struggle to expropriate big capital and nationalize the banks and industrial enterprises the revolutionary working class succeeded in gaining the alliance of the decisive majority of the people: the poor peasants and also a large segment of the middle peasants, the intelligentsia and the urban petty bourgeoisie. At the same time other groups in these middle strata could be neutralized. In this way, the forces of the bourgeois counter-revolution had become isolated. In its struggles, the working class also availed itself of parliamentary means for ensuring the peaceful road of the socialist revolution.

The international conditions were favourable for this. The imperialist powers were unable to impede this development. Their attempts at interference were successfully averted by the people's democratic power with the assistance of the Soviet Union.

The progress in Hungary was an integral part of the new world socialist system. In Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and Poland the socialist transformation occurred more rapidly. This was illustrated by the rate and extent of the expropriation of big capital. In Czechoslovakia, the banks and the enterprises employing over five hundred workers were nationalized in October 1945, and the companies employing more than fifty employees were also nationalized on 10 March 1948. In Poland, the banks and the enterprises whose personnel exceeded 50 were nationalized in January 1946. In the Democratic People's Republic of Korea the banks, the mining and engineering industry and transport were taken into state ownership in August 1946. Yugoslavia expropriated both the banks and the mining and manufacturing industries in December 1946, and Bulgaria in December 1947. Rumania nationalized the National Bank in December 1946 and expropriated the other banks, the

industrial companies, mines and the then still privately owned railways in June 1948.

The people's democratic countries had successfully detached themselves from the capitalist world. The socialist world revolution scored additional great victories.

The Unification of the Two Workers' Parties The Founding of the Hungarian Working People's Party

As a result of the acceleration of revolutionary progress, the members and officials of the Social Democratic Party came still closer in ideology to the Communist Party. It was increasingly recognized that the fusion of the two parties should not be delayed too long. The number of those who went over to the Communist Party was also increasing. The right-wing elements in the Social Democratic Party were considerably upset by these events and fought against them, because further revolutionary transformations and the unification of the two parties would be tantamount to a complete political defeat for them.

The unification of the two workers' parties was also suggested elsewhere; in fact, in East Germany it was actually effected in April 1946. In Germany both the Communist Party and the Social Democratic Party had experienced many years of ruthless persecution under Hitlerite rule, and in East Germany the two parties together undertook the liquidation of the fascist remnants and the creation of a new democratic people's régime. After barely one year of successful joint struggle, the situation in that country was already mature for the unification of the two parties and there was indeed no force which could have prevented this. The Socialist Unity Party of Germany was formed. In Rumania, the merger occurred in the autumn of 1947. It was proposed by the Communist Party, the congress of the Social Democratic Party approved it on 9 October and shortly afterwards the two parties united under the name of the Rumanian Workers' Party. These examples also enhanced support for the unification of the two parties in the Hungarian workers' movement.

The right wing of the Social Democratic Party in Hungary launched a campaign to induce the party executive to take more vigorous action against any efforts to unite the two parties. On 15 October a memorandum signed by 34 officials of the party organizations of 16 factories in Budapest and its vicinity and of three district party organizations was submitted to the party leadership. In it they expressed their dissatisfaction with the policy of the party executive, but did not openly express their own political line. They did not touch on a single issue of reconstruction or the struggle against reaction either. The principal topic of their petition was to proclaim the "party interests" and position ambitions of the Social Democratic Party. They reproached the party executive for failing to fight against the Communist party with sufficient vigour to protect and increase the Social Democratic positions. They demanded the removal of the left-wing activists from the Party centre and their replacement with their own people. As befits persons who were having the ground swept away from under their feet they raised the idea that if their demands were not satisfied, it would be better for the SDP to dissolve of its own accord. Events progressed towards the unification of the two workers' parties, but those who submitted this memorandum preferred the dissolution of the party to any possible unification with the Communist Party.

The leadership of the Social Democratic Party considered the internal situation of the party and the memorandum submitted on 18 October. Antal Bán observed that some were expecting an American-Soviet war and an American victory, and wanted to see a pro-American policy. He rejected this. The war expectations he referred to were based in no small measure on the hopes attached to the American monopoly of the atom-bomb. During the debates in the party leadership, Imre Szélig, in a similar way to the memorandum, demanded the removal of the left-wing functionaries from the party centre. Szakasits objected and emphasized that the disintegration of the party should be stopped "not with the execution of people but rather by collaborating with them".

However, it was impossible to bring about any collaboration between those who were opposed to the revolutionary transformation and those who were taking an active part in this transformation. The rapid process

of transformation further deepened the antagonism between the left and right wings of the SDP. The open organization and further attacks by the right-wing faction induced the leading groups of the left to go over to an open counter-attack.

The executive committee of the Budapest organization of the Social Democratic Party with the support of the left-wing members of the party executive held an enlarged party meeting on 9 December, at which the regional and factory organizations also participated. At that time a powerful strike movement was taking place in France during which the socialist members of the government played the inglorious role of protectors of capitalist interests. The enlarged Social Democratic Party meeting in the Sports Hall of Budapest sent its felicitations to the French workers to encourage them in their struggle. The participants supported the workers' unity and expressed their anxiety over the fact that "the Social Democrats in certain Western countries, in the first place the ministers of the French party, acting against the noble interests of the working class, are facilitating imperialist conquests in Europe". They condemned such an attitude saying that from it "serious danger arises not only for the French, but for all European Social Democracy". They requested the party executive to send warning to the leaders of the West European Social Democratic parties and at home to enforce the policy of workers unity with a strong hand and "no longer tolerate the attempts of class-alien elements to disrupt the firmest foundation of Hungarian democracy, the co-operation of the workers' parties".

The Budapest executive committee of the Social Democratic Party held an emergency meeting on 31 December, which again dealt with the internal position of the party. In its resolution it once again condemned the policy of the West European right-wing Social Democrats. It took a stand for supporting closer links between the SDP and those parties "which build their own policy on the united action of the working class, thus in the first place with the Polish and Italian socialist parties". With reference to the situation within the party, the meeting stated that unity based on compromises did not strengthen, but undermined the party, and for this reason it was against all suggestions of compromise. It expressed complete mistrust of Imre Szélig who was fomenting and protecting

the right-wing activities that endangered the party. The resolution, which after a lengthy dispute was carried by *Népszava* in its 4 January 1948 issue put an end to the situation in the Social Democratic Party in which the party in its official statements tried to cover up the existence and activities of the right-wing faction.

At this point the left-wing leaders of the Social Democratic Party did not yet stand up for the unification of the two workers' parties; they believed that their action against the right would be more successful if they did not permit them operate under the slogan of independence. For this reason, the resolution of the Budapest executive committee stressed that the independence and sovereignty of the SDP was protected not by the people who "reiterated these slogans as empty phrases", but by the revolutionary socialists who "want to, and can, make the party even more socialist in spirit and are determined to ruthlessly fight against everything and everyone who is trying to prevent this".

Those who were trying to prevent it immediately appeared on the scene. Szélig's group held a leading position in the SDP executive committee for the area around Budapest, and this body passed a counter-resolution on 7 January 1948. This resolution omitted to take a stand with regard to the domestic issues of the revolutionary transformation and was silent about the treachery of the socialist ministers in France, but on the other hand it "condemned with profound indignation the action of the Budapest executive committee". *Népszava* also found room for this resolution.

In this open clash between the two regional executive committees, the Social Democratic Party leadership took the position that it was up to the party congress to decide the contested issues, and until then everyone should follow the resolutions of the previous congress. The left pressed for the urgent convocation of the congress and the party leadership convened it for March.

The right-wing groups of the Social Democratic Party blatantly voiced the eloquent slogans of the need to preserve the positions of the party in a situation when, with the nationalization of the big banks and their companies, the workers' parties had to assume a large number of new key posts in order to ensure the implementation of the revolutionary regulations. The positions of the Social Democratic Party were also

expanding, although this involved political difficulties. In the hope of preserving party unity, the Social Democratic Party leadership endeavoured to give important posts also to right-wing elements; this action provoked stern resistance from the Communist Party. Some of the right-wing elements who were given such positions worked quietly, but others conspired with reactionary elements and declared that they would not "serve the Communists" and impeded the measures to promote the revolutionary transformation.

The left-wing leaders of the Social Democratic Party were justified in emphasizing that the right-wing faction was placing the Social Democratic positions in jeopardy, because it set their party against the revolutionary interests of the working class which had at last achieved power. In the meantime, an increasing number of people left the Social Democratic Party, which was losing its prestige, and joined the Communist Party, which was gaining prestige. By January and February 1948, this transfer of allegiance was assuming the proportions of a landslide. At the same time even more people simply quit the party. The leading echelon of the Social Democratic Party occupied highly important posts in state and social organizations. Parallel with this the party membership and the party's mass influence were rapidly diminishing.

It was then that the left-wing leaders of the Social Democratic Party—György Marosán, Ferenc Révész, Sándor Rónai and others—recognized: unification must not be delayed any longer and all opponents of this move should be energetically countered. The interests of both the European and the Hungarian working-class movement demanded that the restoration of the political unity of the working class should take place in Hungary with the active collaboration of the Social Democratic Party, rather than at the cost of its disintegration. This however made it imperative that the party should be cleansed of anti-communist elements.

In mid-February, there was an open break between the representatives of the left and right wings in the leadership of the Social Democratic Party. Anna Kéthly, Imre Szélig and their associates, together with the centrists who joined them, including Antal Bán, were forced to abdicate their leading positions in the party. Following this, several right-wing and centre members of the party executive also resigned, some of them

because they opposed the SDP's support of the merger and others because they did not want to hamper unification and expected to facilitate its preparation and implementation by standing aside.

The Budapest executive committee of the Social Democratic Party held a plenary meeting for Greater Budapest in the Sports Hall on 18 February. This meeting was attended by the leading members of the district and factory party committees and also by the representatives of several provincial organizations. György Marosán reported on the situation which had developed in the party; he condemned the activities of the right wing and announced the withdrawal of the Kéthly clique from the party executive. His speech was broadcast over the radio. It soon became known throughout the country and beyond the borders that the open break had started with the right wing within the Social Democratic Party.

The resolution of the plenary meeting of the leadership in the Sports Hall emphasized that it was the responsibility of the Social Democratic Party "internationally to strengthen the peace camp led by the Soviet Union against the forces of imperialist monopoly capital, and within the country to suppress all remnants of the rightist views, reaction and counter-revolution, including any attempts for their revival". It stated that the unity of the workers "is becoming ever closer in the joint struggles and through the establishment of the necessary preconditions is heading in the direction of the development of a unified revolutionary workers' party". The resolution called on the "party congress which is to be convened soon to approve the changes which have come about because of the volition and for the interest of the working masses", and to elect a party executive the composition of which would ensure the continuation of the socialist policy.

The Communist Party viewed with considerable sympathy and aided extensively the development of the attack by the Social Democratic left, and it strengthened its co-operation with the factory and regional organizations of the Social Democratic Party. Co-operation between the Budapest committee of the Communist Party and the Budapest executive committee of the Social Democratic Party, had been developing for some time and had become very significant. This contributed to the self-

assurance of the Budapest executive committee of the SDP in its action against the right.

The general attack by the left surprised the right of the Social Democratic Party, which was unable to effectively counter the energetic policy that relied on the victory of the revolution; it became confused on the impact of the open attack and its ranks began to disintegrate.

The SDP congress, where the left reaped complete victory over the right, was held from 6 to 8 March. The congress approved the measures taken in order to cleanse the party and instructed the new party executive to "carry on with maximum vigour the cleansing campaign that has been started, and to rid the party of any remnants of right-wing influence". It also stressed the importance of the party through its agitational work "contributing to the unity of the working class in ideology, policy and action". It empowered the party executive to "immediately begin negotiations with the leadership of the Hungarian Communist Party, in order to create the ideological, political and organizational conditions required for the formation of the united workers' party".

This congress of outstanding importance decided upon the turn of the Social Democratic Party towards merger with the Communist Party. This was one of the manifestations of the victory of the socialist revolution of which the left-wing Social Democrats took their ample share—amidst many bitter disputes with the right wing, occasionally wavering themselves, still supporting and defending the unity of the workers throughout.

In its resolution of 11 March the Political Committee of the Communist Party welcomed the position taken by the SDP congress which made it possible "to terminate the split in the Hungarian working-class movement caused by the treachery of international and Hungarian right-wing Social Democrats". Now a new stage was reached in the relationship between the two workers' parties which also concerned the matter of SDP members joining the Communist Party. "In accordance with this, with regard to the Social Democratic Party organizations," the resolution stated, "the aim is not to bring over as many members from the Social Democratic Party to the Communist Party as is only possible,

but primarily to ensure the political and organizational prerequisites for the sound implementation of the merger."

An agreement in principle had been arrived at between the Political Committee of the Communist Party and the leadership of the Social Democratic Party already before the SDP congress, on the question of the unification of the two parties. Under it, on the suggestion of the left-wing leaders of the SDP the Central Committee of the HCP issued a ban on new admissions to membership in the party from 21 February to 15 March. This resolution halted the mass movement of the SDP members to join the HCP and created calmer conditions for convening and holding the SDP Congress. On 15 March the admission of new members to the HCP was resumed.

A joint political committee and joint organizing committee was set up on 10 March, for the direct preparation of the union of the two parties and for the unified direction of the policy of the two parties. The members of the former were: Mihály Farkas, Ernő Gerő, László Rajk, Mátyás Rákosi and József Révai for the Communist Party, and György Marosán, Sándor Rónai, Árpád Szakasits and Imre Vajda for the Social Democratic Party. In the joint organizing committee the Communist Party was represented by Antal Apró, Mihály Farkas, János Kádár and István Kovács, and the Social Democratic Party by József Harustyák, György Marosán and Ferenc Révész.

This marked the beginning of the unification of the two workers' parties and its effects were immediately felt in the political life of the country. One of the major results was that the nationalization of enterprises employing over a hundred workers was immediately put on the agenda. The nationalization of industry in March marked a major victory for the cause of the unification of the two parties, and probably more than anything else, disarmed the opponents of unification.

Based on a resolution of the joint directing bodies, factory and regional unity committees were set up to carry out the merger. Their task was to direct the activities of both party organizations during the period of transition and to prepare and carry out the fusion. It was part of their responsibility "to oust the right-wing elements from the Social Democratic Party, and the alien, hostile and corrupt elements which have

penetrated both parties". Two-thirds of the unity committees were made up of representatives of the Communist Party and the proportion of representatives of the Social Democratic Party was one-third. Unification started in the basic party organizations and continued on an intermediary level. The process took place in the months of April and May. The unification congress of the two parties was convened for 12 June.

What was the party like that came into being with the fusion of the Communist Party and the Social Democratic Party?

This was determined by the ideological foundation it identified itself with and the political line it pursued. The unification of the two parties came about on the basis of Marxism-Leninism, in adherence to the Leninist policy. The united party which came into being was a Marxist-Leninist party.

It was an important question to what extent the vanguard character of the party would prevail—not only in its role in the life of society, but also in its organizational composition; in addition to the genuine vanguard, to what extent would it rally the sympathizers, in other words the people who supported the policy of the party, but did not come up yet to the requirements of party membership.

It is a universal experience that a legal revolutionary party when it becomes a mass party inevitably includes in its ranks, side by side with the vanguard, a part of the sympathizing masses, who constitute a constant source for refilling and strengthening the party. This also happened to the Communist Party, a large number of sympathizers were persuaded to join—but in exaggerated proportions. This was one of the results of party rivalry, of a situation when even the number of the registered members of each party figured in the struggle for positions. Consequently, there were many formal admissions to membership, the sort of "joining" which did not mean more for the entrant than a single act, which was not even followed by the payment of the monthly membership dues. This kind of formal membership was even more extensive in the Social Democratic Party.

By the end of 1947, the Communist Party had 864,000 registered members. The Central Committee decided that the control of the membership was necessary and for this reason it called for an exchange of

membership cards. This took place in the first quarter of 1948. During the membership-card exchange it became evident that the number of effective members was 150,000 less than the registered figure. In the meantime, up to the ban on admissions, nearly 40,000 people had entered the Party—largely from the Social Democratic Party—so that in April 1948, the membership of the Communist Party amounted to 753,000. After this, the number of those joining the Party continued to increase, and by early June the membership figure reached 883,000. Most of the new members were from the Social Democratic Party, mainly people whose joining had been halted by the ban on new admissions in February.

The Social Democratic Party estimated its membership at about 750,000 to 780,000 in the middle of 1947. After the elections there was a decrease which became more rapid after January 1948. About 100,000 went over to the Communist Party and a larger number quit the party without joining another one. As a result of the merger, 241,000 SDP members entered the new party. They included many tens of thousands of militant workers, in the main organized workers of long standing, who had accepted and supported the policy of the Communist Party for some time, but were emotionally tied to the party in which they had been members for many years or even decades; they were unwilling to quit their party because they wanted to unite with the Communist Party through their own party. During the unification about 25,000 members were excluded from the Social Democratic Party as a result of their right-wing attitudes or for other reasons.

With the unification of the two parties, essential changes also occurred in the women's movement and youth movement. In April, both the Social Democratic and the already strongly diminished Smallholders Party women's organization joined the Democratic Federation of Hungarian Women (MNDSZ), which thus became the unified federation of the Hungarian women's movement. The coalition parties also agreed to dissolve their separate youth organizations.

In March, the MADISZ and the SZIM declared their unification with the SZIT, which then continued to develop as the unified organization of working-class youth. A unified federation of peasant youth was also

formed: the National Federation of United Peasant Youth (EPOSZ). On 22 March the SZIT, the EPOSZ and the unions of college and secondary-school students formed the Popular Federation of Hungarian Youth (MINSZ). The MINSZ was a federation which gathered together the organizations of the different strata of youth. After the formation of the Hungarian Working People's Party, the organizations of the different strata began to come closer to each other politically. Later, on the initiative of the Hungarian Working People's Party, the MINSZ was replaced in 1950 by the unified Federation of Working Youth (DISZ) as the youth organization of the Party.

The process of unification between the two workers' parties was coupled with another highly significant political action in May: the struggle for the nationalization of the church schools was launched and it quickly gathered momentum. In the sphere of general education two-thirds of the schools, and in secondary education about half of the institutes were in the hands of the churches, although the maintenance costs were mainly borne by the state. Among the lay masters working in these schools, and especially among the lower-grade school-teachers, there was an increasing desire to escape from supervision by the clergy and secure a position for themselves similar to that of their colleagues in the state schools. All those who championed the cause of popular education gave these teachers their enthusiastic support. And the entire movement accorded with the general interests of the people's democracy. One of the basic demands of the cultural revolution was put forward, that would bring about the development of a unified, democratic and socialist public education on a scientific basis.

The Teachers' Union, whose activities were guided by the Party, considerably and successfully contributed to the school nationalization campaign. Following the movement by the teachers, in May the Council of Ministers decided to submit the bill on the nationalization of the church schools to Parliament. Similarly, it decided to try to arrive at an agreement on this matter with the churches. In fact the agreement was soon concluded with the Calvinist Church, but not with the Catholic Church, for Mindszenty and his followers rejected such an agreement. However, their resistance could not obstruct the victory of the people's democ-

cracy in its struggle for the schools. The School Nationalization Act was passed by Parliament a few days after the unification congress of the workers' parties.

12 June 1948 was recorded as a noteworthy date in the history of the Hungarian workers' movement. That was the day that the 4th Congress of the Hungarian Communist Party met in the Parliament building and the 37th Congress of the Social Democratic Party was convened in the main auditorium of the Budapest City Hall for the final discussion for the fusion of the two parties.

Aware of the historical significance of the event, both congresses took a unanimous stand in favour of unification. The Communist Party Congress extended greetings to those left-wing Social Democratic comrades who had fought together with the Communists against the right-wing Social Democrats. It stated that with the latter's "political and organizational defeat, the main obstacle in the path of the unification of the workers' parties has been removed". The resolution of the Congress stated that it is a fact of great significance that "the principles for which the Party had fought for thirty years, with its foremost members giving their lives for them, the teachings of Marxism-Leninism have come to triumph in the Hungarian working-class movement and will provide the foundation of the theory and practice of the unified party".

The 37th Congress of the Social Democratic Party endorsed the measures taken during the unification of the two parties. It stated that the decision of the March congress on unification had immediately made its fertilizing influence felt in the development of the country, it had considerably contributed to the nationalization in industry in March, and also made possible "the struggle which is now so successfully progressing for the nationalization of the schools". It sent fraternal greetings to the 4th Congress of the Communist Party, confident that together they would endorse the agreement "on the basis on which unification has in effect already taken place".

The congresses of both the Communist Party and the Social Democratic Party concluded in the morning of 12 June. In the afternoon of the same day, the First Congress of the Hungarian Working People's Party, the unified party, was convened.

This Congress cemented the unification of the two workers' parties. What had been pre-indicated by the 10 October 1944 agreement of the two parties was finally accomplished: in the struggle for a democratic transformation and later for socialist goals, the united front had matured the conditions for the establishment of a united revolutionary party of the workers.

The Congress affirmed that Marxism-Leninism—which had also emerged victorious from the struggle against reformism in Hungary—led the “party which has come into being through unification, in its programme, in its policy, in its organizational structure and in its entire work”. Ideological victory was combined with the second victory of the socialist revolution.

Hungary, a country of the new world socialist system that had been established, rose to the vanguard of social progress and entered the path for socialist construction. The unified force of the working class and its close alliance with the other labouring classes had created political conditions in which the acceleration of the socialist development of the country was made possible.

Upswing in Socialist Construction The Results of the Three and the Five Year Plans Distortions in the Policy of the HWPP

June 1948–July 1956

The period of socialist construction until 1956 brought about considerable results in the development of the country. As a result of the Three and the Five Year Plans industrial production trebled over the pre-war figure. The socialist relations of production became victorious in industry and the capitalist sector was eliminated. All the wholesale trade passed into state management. The co-operative farm movement was started. However, disproportions and other distortions developed in the national economy and the progress of agriculture came to a sudden halt. The rise in living standards stopped and in fact living standards diminished between 1951 and 1953.

Cultural advancement was very rapid, particularly in the spheres of public education and higher education. Most significant achievements were made in public health and in other areas of social life. But the troubles that developed in the national economy slowed down development in these spheres as well. The main source of the shortcomings lay in the distortions in the policy of the Central Committee of the Hungarian Working People's Party, which affected the whole of public life.

The First Congress of the Hungarian Working People's Party correctly assessed the achievements and realistically determined the immediate tasks. This was also reflected in the HWPP's programme, which the Congress adopted. As a result of the political victories and economic successes, the Party enjoyed great respect among the masses. However, international influences and internal tendencies which distorted the policy approved by the Congress, soon came into the foreground, the relations of the Party with the masses deteriorated, and all this caused considerable damage to the cause of socialism.

The HWPP Programme of Socialist Construction

The programme of the Hungarian Working People's Party focused the principal attention on the tasks of socialist construction. It stated that power was in the hands of the working class and the peasants allied with it, and the working class was the leading class of society. It was a major achievement of social transformation that through the nationalization measures, the socialist sector became dominant in the mining and manufacturing industries and in transport. At the same time, the capitalist sector was still significant above all in trade and agriculture, and there were also "big capitalist and in fact feudal and fascist remnants in economic, political and cultural life, in the state apparatus and in general thinking".

The capitalist sector was still dominant in wholesale trade and in the category of enterprises employing ten to a hundred people. However, the decisive change in power relations, as the programme stated, made possible "the control and limitation" of these capitalist enterprises and "the ouster of the capitalist elements".

In agriculture, about 60,000 kulak farms—less than 4 per cent of all the farms—made up the capitalist sector in 1948. They held nearly one-fifth of the ploughlands, and most of them farmed rented land as well. About 20 per cent of the grain sold derived from the kulak farms. They owned about 10 to 12 per cent of the livestock and the majority of the threshing machines and of the more than 14,000 tractors. The objective of "control and limitation" also applied with regard to the kulaks, but the time has not yet come for the "ouster"; that is, the expropriation of the big peasant holdings, and the liquidation of the kulaks as a class. The programme did not mention this among the tasks.

The party programme stated that the land reform of 1945 defended the individual farms of the poor and middle peasants against the pressure of the big landowners, and the nationalization of the banks and the manufacturing industry would also protect them from exploitation by big capital. "The next task is to safeguard to a greater extent the working peasants against the exploiters of the village." The many-sided develop-

ment of agricultural production should be assisted, together with the development of "the agricultural co-operatives based on full voluntarism". An important task was the mechanization of agriculture and to promote this "a wide network of agricultural machine stations" was to be set up.

With regard to the activities of the small craftsmen and retail traders, the programme stated that alongside the protection of the interests of the people's democracy, their work should also be "utilized for the benefit of the entire national economy; for this reason the people's democracy would not touch their means of production, their workshops and stores".

In the programme the Party set the further increase of the living standards of the people as one of its aims which is to be achieved through developing the forces of production, increasing productivity and "through the further reduction and ending of incomes derived from exploitation". It took a stand for the "speedy realization of the Three Year Plan" and designated as an immediate objective the elaboration of the Five Year Plan for further development.

To sum up, the programme designated the acceleration of socialist industrialization, the further restriction and liquidation of the capitalist sector in industry and in the wholesale trade, the assistance of the small-peasant farms and co-operatives and limitations on the kulaks in agriculture as the immediate tasks.

Assistance for small-scale peasant commodity production and ensuring the activity of small-scale industry and retail trade—whose importance was registered in the party programme—were in the general interest of the national economy and were indispensable requisites for strengthening the alliance of the working class with the working peasants and with the urban petty bourgeoisie. With regard to the policy of alliances, this line was approved by the HWPP programme.

The programme devoted considerable attention to cultural development. The treasures of culture "should be made accessible to the broadest strata of the working people, putting an end to the cultural monopoly of the rich". Another objective was the improved protection of people's health and as an important part of this "the gradual extension of social

security to cover all strata of the working people". The programme emphasized that to implement all these aims, the necessary material resources had to be made available. The reform of public administration was designated as an important task. In the course of this reform, "the largest possible number of workers and peasants are to be involved in central and local public administration, and professional standards have to be steadily raised". This is the condition for ousting the reactionary elements from public offices.

In the field of foreign affairs, the programme emphasized the alliance with the Soviet Union and the people's democracies. In addition, the Party "proclaims the need for regular and peaceful economic and political relations with all countries unless they interfere in our domestic affairs and support the enemies of our democratic order".

Together with the other countries of the world socialist system, people's democratic Hungary adhered to the principle of peaceful co-existence among countries with differing social systems. However, it did not close its eyes to imperialist ambitions of subversion and war schemes and thus paid attention to the improvement of its national defence.

The programme advocated closer co-operation among the people's democratic forces, in order to speed up the progress of the country. Instead of the "more or less loose coalition" which existed until then, it took a stand for establishing the "political mass organization of the people's unity". It stated that the system of loose coalition between competing parties "was favourable to the anti-popular forces, which took advantage of party rivalry for infiltrating the democratic parties and thereby hindered democratic co-operation and construction".

What was actually in mind was the further development of the alliance of the socialist and democratic forces, and primarily the consolidation of the alliance of the working class with the individually working peasants whom they wanted to assist in the formation of large-scale co-operative farms. The alliance of the working class and intellectuals was also to progress within the framework of the new people's front, winning over for the socialist goals an ever larger part of the intellectuals.

The programme stated that the new people's front should be a mass organization headed by the Hungarian Working People's Party. The allied parties, the trade unions, co-operatives and the organizations of women and youth would take part in the people's front.

It remained an open question whether the other coalition parties would continue their separate activities apart from the organizations of the people's front, or whether they would be fully assimilated into the people's front. Would the new people's front provide new possibilities for the long-term political development of the coalition parties, patiently bringing them closer to socialist goals and helping them to cleanse their ranks of reactionary elements, or would it lead to the rapid dissolution of these parties?

The aim was clear: to end the party rivalry which resulted in a considerable waste of energy, and create close co-operation among the people's democratic forces. However it was not clear how this aim should be implemented and what should be the future role of the allied parties and the organizational character of the people's front.

The programme was adopted at a time when tension was increasing in the international situation. The tension continued to mount in the next few years. The international class struggle was becoming sharper and the liberation struggle was strengthened in many areas of the world. The peoples scored important new victories over imperialism. On the other hand, the capitalist powers endeavoured to halt and turn back this historic process. The development of each socialist country was occurring in interaction with international events and amidst the sharpening of the international class struggle.

Competition between the Two World Systems and the International Situation from 1948 to 1955. Combating the Danger of a New World War

The shock caused by the Second World War and by the considerable increase in the revolutionary struggles continued to have an impact on the imperialist world also after 1948. The socialist world revolution

scored new victories, the colonial system of imperialism was beginning to disintegrate and a new anti-imperialist zone of the countries which had gained their independence was taking shape.

The economic supremacy of the capitalist countries was still very considerable. In 1948, the USA, Western Europe and Japan produced 72 per cent of the industrial output of the world, whereas the production of the socialist countries together amounted to only 16 per cent. Nevertheless, the leading capitalist powers introduced extensive restrictions in their trade with the socialist countries, because they believed that in this way they could obstruct the economic development of the socialist world.

Through a series of military actions the imperialist powers tried to throw back the liberation struggles of the colonial and semi-colonial peoples. Parallel with these attempts, they prepared for an all-out war against the socialist countries. They proclaimed the need for a preventive war and in order to ideologically pave the way for this, they spread fabrications about the alleged danger of a "Soviet attack". In April 1949 they established their aggressive military bloc, the NATO, with the participation of the USA, Canada, Britain, France, Italy, Portugal, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, Denmark and Norway, and joined by Greece and Turkey in 1952.

This situation forced the socialist countries to divert a considerable part of their national resources to the improvement of their national defence. The Soviet Union made especially great efforts in this field as well and rapidly developed its nuclear and rocket industry. The American ruling circles calculated that it would take a long time for the Soviet state to develop its atomic weapons because it was still obliged to spend a large part of its resources on repairing war damage. However, their calculation proved to be incorrect and in 1949 they were shocked to find that the Soviet atom-bomb was a reality and the USA no longer held a monopoly of nuclear power.

In the meantime, the historic victory of the Chinese revolution was another powerful blow to imperialism. In 1949, practically the entire continental area of that vast country was liberated and the People's Republic of China was proclaimed on 1 October. With the victory of

the Chinese revolution, the most populous country of the world broke away from the imperialist system. The Chinese workers and peasants, in alliance with other anti-imperialist forces, overthrew the power of the feudal landowning classes and of the big capitalist strata interwoven with the imperialists. With the help of the Soviet Union, revolutionary China soon set out on the path to socialist progress.

It was a significant event in European developments that the German Democratic Republic, the first German state of workers and peasants, came into existence in October 1949, as a result of democratic progress. The GDR faced directly the revanchist-militarist forces of the monopolies of big capital which had been revived in West Germany.

The capitalist powers feared the new increase in the strength of the socialist world. The American imperialists occupied the island of Taiwan, extending their protection to the Chiang Kai-shek forces which had fled there. They turned South Korea into a military spring-board and started a war against North Korea in June 1950. Their aim was to overthrow the people's power there and to press forward to the Chinese and Soviet borders. Other NATO countries and the troops of the South Korean puppet régime under American supervision also took part in this aggression, but the principal military force was American.

The Korean war lasted for three years and ended with the failure of the American imperialists. With the aid of the fraternal socialist countries, people's Korea defended her freedom and independence. This was a major victory for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and for the entire socialist world over the imperialist camp and its leading power, the United States of America.

During the war, the position of the Truman Administration was weakened and Truman failed to be re-elected at the US presidential elections in 1952. General Eisenhower, who campaigned under the slogan of "Peace for Korea", became president. The armistice agreement in Korea was concluded in July 1953.

The war in Vietnam started by French imperialism in December 1946 still continued. The Vietnamese freedom-fighters dealt a decisive blow at the enemy by encircling and taking the fortress of Dien Bien Phu in May 1954. Following this, the French government was compelled to

make peace based on compromise and to recognize the people's power, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, in the northern part of the country. South Vietnam however was penetrated by the American imperialists. They ousted their French allies, set up their own puppet government and established their military bases.

After 1954, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam carried out social reforms, distributed the estates of the landowners among the peasants and then started on the path to socialist development. This represented a new addition to the world socialist system.

The independence struggle of the Arab peoples gathered momentum. In Egypt the monarchist rule that enjoyed British support was overthrown in 1952 and a republic was proclaimed. Britain was obliged to withdraw its troops by 1956. Early in 1956 Britain was also forced to recognize the independence of the Sudan.

In 1954, an armed freedom struggle broke out against the French colonizers in Algeria and the independence movement also received a new impetus in Morocco and Tunisia. France recognized Moroccan and Tunisian independence in the spring of 1956, but continued its colonial war in Algeria, for it intended to keep that country, rich in raw materials, at any cost.

The European colonizing powers were very much worried about the independence movement of the Arab peoples. At the same time, the American monopolies endeavoured to take advantage of the situation to increase their own influence. They helped to oppress the Arab nationalist movements, if in return they could share in the exploitation of the suppressed countries with the European imperialists. They also acted as open or secret supporters of the independence ambitions of the national bourgeoisie if such an attitude offered better opportunities for economic penetration. The disintegration of the colonial system was accompanied by increasing differences in interests among the imperialist powers. The struggle for Arab oil was especially sharp.

These were the international conditions under which the socialist countries developed in the first phase of the competition between the two world systems. By 1955 the world socialist system consisted of

13 countries, and over one-third of the world population lived in this new world. Nearly 700 million people lived in the other countries that had gained their independence; these people strove to loosen or cut their ties of economic dependence on the imperialist powers and to make up for their grave backwardness as soon as possible. In this they were able to rely on the assistance of the socialist countries.

In the economic competition between the two world systems, the socialist countries achieved major results primarily in the sphere of industry. In 1955, their combined industrial output was 2.8 times as high as in 1948 and their share in the industrial production of the world increased from 16 to 27 per cent. From 1948 to 1955 the industrial production of the USA, Western Europe and Japan together increased by about 55 per cent, but their share in world production decreased from 72 to 63 per cent.

Co-operation was one of the factors which promoted the rapid industrial development of the socialist countries. In 1949 the Soviet Union and seven European people's democratic countries brought into existence the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, their organization for economic co-operation. The CMEA (also known as Comecon) played an important role primarily in the development of trade among the member countries. It also promoted the exchange of technical and scientific results and the co-ordination of the national economic plans of the member countries. At the same time it became an effective means in combating the imperialist powers' policy of economic boycott.

Yet, the opportunities of co-operation among the CMEA countries are more extensive than this. The shift from small-scale production to more economical large-scale production—which small countries can solve separately only to a very limited extent—was to be facilitated by co-operation in production. However, the evolution of such collaboration is a slow process, often hampered by ambitions of autarchy. Despite these limitations, co-operation was of great significance and created the conditions for further development.

Industrialization in the socialist countries simultaneously progressed with large-scale urbanization and a rapid increase in consumer requirements. However, difficulties arose in meeting these demands. The manu-

facture of means of production rose rapidly but the production of commodities for public consumption progressed sluggishly and fell behind the growing demand. In particular the development of agriculture was much slower than needed. The fact that the repairing of serious war damage was slower in agriculture and that small-scale production by peasants—whose opportunities of growth were limited—was still dominant in the people's democracies, contributed to this. However, the principal factor was that the appropriate emphasis placed on the importance of industry was coupled with a certain underestimation of the importance of agriculture and inadequate consideration of growing consumer demands. In 1953, efforts were started to remedy the backwardness resulting from these factors.

The competition between the two world systems occurred amidst irreconcilable ideological differences and sharp political struggle. The imperialist countries set up special institutions and organizations solely designed to create ideological and political confusion in the socialist countries. Dozens of Western radio stations were utilized for this aim. They described the capitalist world—where the capitalists freely exploit the workers and the imperialists freely incite war hysteria—as “the free world”, and they referred to the socialist countries—which took the banks and factories into state ownership, gave the land to those who tilled it, and fought to preserve world peace—as the “captive nations”. Beginning 1951, 100 million dollars were openly appropriated in the state budget of the United States for subversive activities against the socialist countries, and this sum was later increased.

In contrast to the cold war policy of the Western Powers, the socialist countries worked for lasting peace. Proclaiming the peaceful co-existence of states with differing social systems, they acted to promote mutually advantageous economic and other relations. At the same time, they were ready to assist any fraternal country which was attacked to repel the aggressor. And this was what they did during the Korean war.

In the autumn of 1954, the imperialist powers set up SEATO, another aggressive bloc. Its members included the three principal NATO coun-

tries: the USA, Britain and France, as well as Pakistan, Australia, New Zealand, Thailand and the Philippines. In 1955, the imperialists concluded the Baghdad Pact. The members of the pact included two NATO countries, Britain and Turkey, as well as Iraq, Iran and Pakistan, with the US as outside patron. India, Indonesia, Egypt, Syria and the other independent Southeast Asian and Arab countries refused to participate in the imperialists blocs.

The admission of the Federal Republic of Germany into NATO in February 1955 was a particularly dangerous move in the war preparations of the Western Powers. The British, American and French occupation zones of West Germany had earlier been unified on American insistence, and in September 1949, the Federal Republic of Germany was created and a few years later a green light was given for the rearmament of German imperialism. This move had many opponents even among the leading circles of the West European countries, especially in France. However, after prolonged resistance the French ruling circles also gave way to American pressure, hoping that in return they would receive more effective NATO assistance for the preservation of their colonial empire. The Western Powers treacherously violated the Potsdam Agreement which forbade the revival of German imperialism and the reorganization of its military forces, and thereby endangered European and world peace.

The new situation compelled the socialist countries to increase their defences. In May 1955, the Soviet Union and seven European people's democratic countries concluded the Warsaw Treaty to ensure the coordinated and integrated defence of the countries in the alliance. At the same time, the socialist countries continued to persistently struggle for the peaceful settlement of disputed issues. An important event along these lines was that on the initiative of the Soviet government, an agreement was reached in Moscow in May 1955 to restore Austrian independence and the Austrian State Treaty was concluded. The Republic of Austria pledged to remain neutral, and the four victorious powers—the Soviet Union, the USA, Britain and France—terminated their occupation and withdrew their troops from Austria. However, it remained an open question as to what extent Austria would abide by its neutrality

obligation and whether it would in fact close its territory to the cold war organizations and activities of the imperialist powers, including the West German revanchists.

With the emergence of the world socialist system, the bases of the international revolutionary movement became much wider and the international conditions became much more favourable for the struggle of the workers in the capitalist countries. In the years of economic boom the movements for higher wages and the strikes for improved living conditions became stronger. The bourgeoisie was under pressure from the intensified activity of the proletariat at home and it also felt the revolutionizing influence of the existence and development of the socialist countries. This double pressure often compelled the capitalists to make concessions which they had been unwilling to agree to in the past.

The bourgeoisie naturally endeavoured to reduce the revolutionizing influence of the socialist countries. The means it resorted to for this end included slandering the socialist world, the negation or at least the belittlement of their development. In their propaganda, the imperialists fully exploited the growing pains of the young world socialist system, the shortcomings that came to the fore and any indication of domestic trouble caused by reactionary elements, largely on the encouragement of the imperialists.

The revolutionary trend of the working-class movement endeavoured to utilize the actions aimed at gaining a higher living standard to improve the political consciousness of the workers. On the other hand, the reformists capitalized on any economic improvement to enhance the illusions entertained concerning the capitalist system. West German, Austrian and other reformist leaders suggested that the proletariat and the bourgeoisie should become understanding "social partners", and the working-class movement should maximally adjust itself to the capitalist system, to the bourgeois state and to its anti-communist policy. The West German right-wing Social Democrats were well aware of the fact that the existence of the German Democratic Republic made easier the economic struggles of the working people in the Federal Republic of Germany—in fact, many of the trade union leaders deliberately

utilized this factor in the actions of the trade unions—but nevertheless, they supported the campaign of their own bourgeoisie against the GDR.

However, the existence and development of the socialist countries had a noticeable impact even in the Social Democratic parties. The traditions of the anti-fascist united front which developed in the war years survived within their ranks. These feelings were nurtured by the peace policy of the socialist countries and by the frequent collaboration of Communists and Social Democrats in economic struggles. Its effect was reduced by anti-communist propaganda, but could not be eliminated.

However, the right wing predominated in the leadership of the West European Social Democratic parties, and served the cold war policy of the NATO powers. A split in the trade union movement they caused in France at the end of 1947 and in Italy in 1948, and minority trade unions of reformist leadership were set up. In 1949—soon after the establishment of NATO—the Western trade unions under right-wing leadership left the World Federation of Free Trade Unions.

During the years of the Korean and the Vietnam wars the imperialists carried on an especially fierce campaign against the socialist countries and the Communist parties. The Social Democratic parties which supported NATO policy took an extensive part in this campaign. The antagonism between the Communist and Social Democratic parties continued to deepen. The NATO powers went on with their preparations for a general attack against the socialist countries. They declared the peace policy and the peaceful competition to be a "Communist manoeuvre", a tactic of the socialist countries to gain time, and rejected it. As a matter of fact, time was working for the socialist countries. Nevertheless, the proclamation of peaceful competition was not a time-gaining tactic, but an essential strategy for averting a new world war. Those who repudiated the peaceful co-existence of states with differing social systems were in fact warmongers, no matter how much lip-service they paid to their "desire for peace".

The development of the international peace movement was an imperative demand of the time.

On the initiative of the Communists and with the co-operation of many outstanding representatives of cultural life, the delegates of the inter-

national peace movement held a world congress in April 1949. Over 2,000 representatives from 72 countries gathered in Paris to raise their voice against the war propaganda and military preparations of the imperialists. The participants included a large number of renowned personalities, among them Frédéric Joliot-Curie, one of the pioneers of nuclear science, a front-line fighter of the struggle for banning the atom-bomb and for the defence of peace, became one of the organizers of the world congress.

The world peace congress in Paris condemned NATO and adopted an appeal which called on the peoples to develop a vigorous peace movement. The appeal stated: "Irresistible pressure must be placed on the warmongers to make them see that the peoples are able to achieve peace." It demanded a ban on war propaganda, the prohibition of atomic weapons and urged disarmament.

The world peace congress of Paris set up a standing committee. Later the World Council of Peace was established and the standing committee continued to operate within this body.

The international peace movement primarily relied on the socialist countries pursuing a policy of peace, countries which utilized the strength of their peoples and state for the defence of their own peace and the safeguarding of world peace. In the capitalist countries the Communist parties and the democratic mass organizations represented the main strength of the anti-war struggle. The work of the World Council of Peace was supported by the World Federation of Trade Unions, which rallied at that time 78 million organized workers in 56 countries, the International Democratic Federation of Women, the World Federation of Democratic Youth, the World Federation of Scientific Workers and a number of other international organizations.

The Social Democratic parties which had been misguided by their right-wing leaders onto a path of supporting NATO policy, refused to participate in the work of the World Council of Peace and prevented the development of a unified peace movement in their respective countries. Although they paid lip-service to peace, they actually defended NATO and helped to spread the fabrications about the "danger of a Soviet attack".

The situation of the international workers' movement was made even more complicated by the fact that serious trouble arose within the world Communist movement. A deep conflict occurred between the eight parties of the Cominform and the ninth, the Yugoslav Party. The differences in opinion evolved with regard to important questions of building a socialist society. In June 1948, the Cominform met to discuss the contested issues. The leadership of the Yugoslav Party, although extensively using the right to criticize other parties at the previous meeting of the Cominform, protested against any discussion of criticism of the policy of the Yugoslav Party. They did not send their representatives to the conference. In its resolution, the Cominform condemned the Yugoslav party leadership for underestimating the role of the party, neglecting the co-operative farm movement, for permitting the appearance of nationalist views and other questions.

This resolution criticized the leadership of a party which had gained general recognition and respect for its role in the anti-fascist war of liberation in the eyes of the Yugoslav peoples. The Yugoslav Party rejected the stand taken and a torrent of mutual accusations was let loose. During this, the eight parties of the Cominform committed the graver errors, going so far that in the November 1949 resolution the Cominform charged the Yugoslav party leadership with the betrayal of the cause of socialism and with the restoration of capitalism.

The conflict with the Yugoslav Party became very grave under the impact of the Stalinist cult of personality. Stalin enjoyed great prestige in the world Communist movement and in international public opinion as a whole. Since the death of Lenin in January 1924, until March 1953 when he died, he had headed the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and from 1941 of the Soviet government as well. His role of leadership was firmly established in the theoretical and political struggle waged by the majority of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in the 1920s against those who denied that the Soviet Union could build a socialist society by itself. Stalin led the Communist Party of the Soviet Union while the Soviet Union carried out the first five-year plans and the former backward peasant country became the foremost industrial power of Europe. He

was at the helm of the Soviet state during the frightful years of the Second World War, and the tremendous Soviet exertions and victories, which also assisted peoples in other countries to become liberated, were linked with his name. He guided the policy of the Soviet Union and at the same time the struggle against American nuclear blackmail after the war. His famous statement "peace will be maintained and lasting if the peoples take the cause of peace into their own hands and uphold it to the end" became known throughout the world. The leaders of the people's democratic countries honoured him as the leader of the socialist world and regarded his opinion and advice as incontestable.

However, despite his great merits, Stalin had committed grave theoretical and practical errors in several questions. One of his erroneous doctrines was the assertion according to which the victory of the working class and the liquidation of the exploiting classes elicited ever more aggressive resistance on the part of hostile elements, and consequently the class struggle will sharpen not only in certain periods, but incessantly. This thesis of the constant intensification of the class struggle considered only the fact that certain elements of the former exploiting classes, having lost their mass influence, but being encouraged by the imperialists, enter the road of committing crimes against the socialist state. On the other hand, it ignored the circumstance that an ever growing proportion of the hostile elements give up the struggle as they became politically isolated and many of them seek possibilities of fitting into the new system. Moreover, it was a mistake to underestimate the ability of socialist society to re-educate even former exploiters.

The doctrine of the constant intensification of the class struggle came into being under circumstances when capitalism had recovered from the great world economic crisis of 1929-33, Hitlerite Germany had accelerated rearmament and was openly speaking in favour of an anti-Soviet war, and the Western Powers were encouraging Germany, Japan and other countries to attack the Soviet Union as soon as possible. The imperialist world incited the former exploiters living in Soviet society, those nostalgic for the old world and other elements who could be bought, to resist and carry out acts of sabotage. Vigilance against all anti-socialist attempts was important and hostile activities had to be

crushed. The thesis of the constant sharpening of the class struggle may seem suitable for stressing the need for vigilance. However, it failed to sufficiently consider the effect of achievements in internal development. Despite pressure by the entire capitalist world, relying on the sympathy of the international proletariat and taking advantage also of the differences existing among the imperialist powers, Soviet society had laid the foundations of socialism and had scored great victories in building a new society.

The thesis of the constant sharpening of the class struggle distorted the tasks and attempted to justify an extraordinarily harmful practice. The more so, as this incorrect thesis was supplemented by another incorrect assertion of Stalin, according to which under the conditions of the proletarian dictatorship the enemy primarily attempted to infiltrate the Communist Party in order to gain important positions there for its subversive activities. For this reason, the enemy had to be primarily sought in the Party. The attempts of the bourgeoisie to smuggle their agents into revolutionary parties go back to the distant past. It continued to resort to such methods even after the working class had come to power. Vigilance in the face of this danger was therefore justified. However, Stalin had exaggerated this danger to such an extent that he spread in the ranks of the party an atmosphere of suspicion and a lack of confidence.

With the extension of this distrust, it occurred with growing frequency that even well-grounded opposition views were declared as suspicious and supposed or actual mistakes committed during work were stigmatized as deliberate subversion. Stalin was inclined to suppress counter-opinions by administrative means and to consider those who argued with him as agents of the enemy. The Stalinist cult of personality gradually developed and he became immersed in the myth of the "infallible sage". A dogmatic and subjective approach became prevalent and it distorted the political atmosphere and paralyzed the development of theory. Such an atmosphere favoured unprincipled careerist elements and the subversive work of the enemy against the system. In the second half of the thirties, the imperialist agencies provoked suspicion against several well-known personalities of Soviet society and several

generals of the Red Army who then became the victims of staged trials.

During the controversies with the Yugoslav Party, it was again this atmosphere of distrust which was revived and extremely aggravated the situation. Since the Yugoslav leaders countered the views adopted by Stalin, they were declared traitors. This provided the impetus for the spread of mistrust in the ranks of other parties, including the Hungarian Working People's Party, causing great harm to the cause of socialism.

Criticism of the Stalinist cult of personality and the remedying of its aftermath started in 1953, after the death of Stalin. It was during the theoretical and practical liquidation of the cult of personality that the grave violations of the law, the sentences passed on the basis of trumped-up charges to which Communists and other citizens fell victims, were revealed. The energetic termination of the Stalinist cult was initiated in 1954 by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union under the leadership of its First Secretary, N. S. Khrushchev.

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union also took the initiative to adjust its relations with the Yugoslav Party. In the summer of 1955, a Soviet party and government delegation visited Yugoslavia and as a result of a comradely exchange of ideas relations were restored. Following this, the other parties of the Cominform also normalized their relations with the Yugoslav Party. Differences in views continue to exist in several questions of importance, but it is recognized that Yugoslavia is progressing on a socialist road.

The disputes with the Yugoslav Party and especially their deterioration weakened the prestige of the Cominform. The Cominform became unsuitable for the task for which it had been created and it was dissolved in 1956. Bilateral relations came to the fore in the maintenance of co-operation among the Communist parties. Multilateral exchanges mainly occur at the party congresses.

The Results of the Three Year Plan and the Social Changes The People's Independence Front The Reign of Dogmatism in the Policy of the Hungarian Working People's Party and Its First Consequences

The unification of the Hungarian Communist Party and the Social Democratic Party, the aims expressed in the programme of the Hungarian Working People's Party and the achievements of reconstruction gave a new impetus to constructive work. The inspiring awareness that the country was progressing on the path of socialist construction and the building of a society without exploitation, continued to increase the creative power of the working class and its sense of responsibility for what was occurring in the country. At the same time, the successes of the socialist planned economy increased the confidence of the other labouring classes and strata in the workers' power. The disintegration of the reactionary forces continued.

It was a concomitant of the people's democratic development that thousands of workers were chosen for the central and local bodies of state administration, were given jobs in company management and placed in positions in the staff of the reorganized army and other fields. Increasing numbers of the representatives of the working peasants and progressive intelligentsia also became involved in such organs and bodies of power. This was a very important requirement for the consolidation of people's power.

At the same time, the fact that thousands of politically educated workers left the factories caused some problems: the workers concerned were confronted with the difficulties involved in solving new tasks, and the factories were confronted with the problem of finding replacements for them. Tens of thousands of people came to work in the factories and at building sites from strata outside the working class, especially from rural areas—men and women whose development into class-conscious workers had to be assisted with more intensive political and ideological education. Increasing numbers of class-alien elements, former industrialists and landowners, officials discharged because of their reactionary attitudes, ex-officers from the gendarmerie, police and army and

their like also found their way to the industrial enterprises. This circumstance posed yet another problem for the political work done in the factories.

At first the party, trade union and youth organizations of the factories coped with this task. The vigorous development of the country and the successes of party policy accelerated the development of new factory activists and in political work replacements were found without any special difficulty for those who had moved to other areas.

The growth of the emulation drive was one of the manifestations of the sense of responsibility and enthusiasm felt by the working class. Its significance not only lay in accelerating the rise in productivity, but also in contributing to the moral appreciation of work and to the socialist re-education of the working class. The work competition was stimulated by the understanding of the fact that only the development of production could provide a material basis for the improvement of living standards and the realization of other aims outlined in the Three Year Plan.

The Three Year Plan, whose implementation began in August 1947, was actually fulfilled in two years and five months, i.e. it was in fact overfulfilled by the end of 1949.

In the summer of 1947, the total output of Hungarian industry attained two-thirds of the 1938 level. The goal of the plan was to complete the repair of war damage in industry in three years and ensure that production exceed the 1938 level by 8 to 10 per cent. In fact in 1949 the output of industry as a whole was 28 per cent higher than in 1938; the manufacturing and mining industries were 37 per cent above the 1938 figures and, with the development of the state building industry, the building industry was also considerably ahead of the 1938 figures. Small-scale industry attained, and even slightly exceeded the pre-war level.

In 1949, the total production of agriculture approached the average for the years from 1934 to 1938. Although the total value of agriculture was only four-fifths of this, animal husbandry almost reached the 1938 level. The fact that the network of state machine stations began to be developed considerably contributed to the consolidation of agriculture.

By the end of 1949, 220 machine stations with about 6,000 tractors were in operation.

The restoration of the railways had been completed and in 1949 the rolling stock was on par with and the number of locomotives slightly exceeded the 1938 level. At the same time, passenger traffic rose to nearly double the 1938 figure and goods traffic to almost one and a half times that level.

The termination of unemployment—which between the two world wars was a constant threat to the poor—was one of the major results of the Three Year Plan. During the war years, the army and war production absorbed the otherwise redundant manpower. However, in the aftermath of war this threat again arose and was a source of serious concern. Its termination was primarily a result of the growth of the industrial labour force. The number of those engaged in the mining and manufacturing industries and in the state building industry increased by over 100,000 and the number of administrative workers also increased, their combined number surpassing the 540,000 mark.

Parallel with the termination of unemployment real wages and the fringe benefits available for workers and employees increased. The average real wage of workers was a few per cents higher than the 1938 level. The earnings of those workers who were the lowest paid prior to the war, increased more than the average, whereas the wages of the better-paid rose less. The real wages for intellectuals also considerably improved compared to the 1946–7 figures, but still fell short of the 1938 level.

There was also considerable improvement in the position of the peasants. Most of the old peasant farms had recovered from their war losses and had grown stronger, and some of them had been supplemented in area as a result of the 1945 land reform. However, the new farmers were still confronted with a number of difficulties and for this reason the machine stations which came into being primarily gave assistance to them. The kulak farms also became consolidated, although the biggest of them lost some of their land during the land reform in 1945. With the liquidation of the class of landowners the kulaks had become the richest stratum in the countryside.

Electrification played an important part in the development of the villages in Hungary. In the decades before the liberation, only two-fifths of the villages were supplied with electricity. During the Three Year Plan, that is in two and a half years, 400 villages were linked up with the national electric network, which at the same time meant that the people could have radios and go to the cinema. However, half the villages were still without electricity.

Public health facilities and social security significantly advanced during the Three Year Plan. The number of hospital beds increased from 38,000 in 1947 to 50,000, which was 3,000 more than in 1938. The number of social security beneficiaries was by one million more than the 1938 figure reaching, with the family members included 3.8 million, i.e. 41 per cent of the population. The total sum paid out for sickness benefits also increased considerably.

Great changes occurred in cultural life too. With the nationalization of the schools, there was an accelerated development in the eight-grade general schools (primary schools) and the secondary schools. Whereas in 1938 only 34,000 pupils completed eight grades, in 1949 almost 69,000 completed general school. In 1938 only 11,000 students completed secondary school by taking matriculation examinations, in 1949 the figure was 15,000. The total number of students attending the four high grades of secondary school increased from 52,000 in 1938 to 94,000 in 1949. The secondary schools were opened to the children of workers and poor peasants. In addition, thousands and thousands of adults anxious to study enrolled in the evening courses that were developing at this time; these schools also had an important role in the development of the cultural revolution.

Development was also becoming more rapid in higher education. In 1938 the number of students in the colleges and universities was less than 12,000 and in 1949 it was already nearly double that figure. Over two-fifths of the students were the children of workers and poor peasants. The system of state scholarships and students' hostels provided extensive assistance and encouragement for their studies.

New democratic and socialist forces came forward in literature, the arts and sciences and the cultural assets were made accessible for the

broad masses of the workers and peasants. With the overthrowing of the power of the exploiters, the cultural monopoly of the former ruling classes ended.

The achievements of socialist construction, the greater than expected success of reconstruction and cultural progress brought ever broader masses of the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois intelligentsia closer to the socialist aims of the working class. Communist intelligentsia carried on especially significant work in their ranks. At the same time, the people's democratic state created the conditions that were necessary to ensure that the talented children of workers and peasants should be able to find their places in an ever increasing number among the new intelligentsia.

By the end of the Three Year Plan period further changes occurred in the social structure and class composition of the country. In December 1949 additional nationalizations took place as a result of which capitalist ownership was completely abolished in the mining and manufacturing industries and in transport and the wholesale trade. Thus the domination of the socialist sector of the national economy significantly increased in economic life.

Nationalization was extended to dozens of companies which had been partly or wholly in Western capitalist ownership—including the Standard Telephone Factory (today the Beloiannis Telecommunications Factory), some large and several small textile mills etc.—employing altogether 22,000 workers. In addition every industrial, transport and catering company employing at least 10 people was nationalized; regardless of the number of employees, all printing works and power plants also were nationalized. Altogether 34,000 workers were employed in these companies of the Hungarian capitalists and in the shops of several hundred artisans which were nationalized at that time—a total of about 3,000 small and medium-sized enterprises.

Small-scale industry began to shrink. During the December nationalization, some tendencies for the forced and artificial reduction of small-scale trade were evident in the economic policy. Private retail trade was also slightly reduced, but was still prevalent, with the state-controlled retail trade handling a little over 30 per cent of the turnover.

In the autumn of 1948, the co-operative farm movement began in

agriculture. By the end of 1949, the membership of the co-operative farm groups rose to 36,000 and the total area of their farms to 316,000 *hold*. The state agricultural farms also increased considerably, their arable land being 385,000 *hold* by the end of 1949 compared to 51,000 *hold* in 1948. Thus the socialist sector of agriculture began to develop and by the end of 1949 comprised 6.5 per cent of the total arable land of the country.

Parallel with this the kulaks were being pushed back on the one hand by increased taxation and by the compulsory delivery system, and on the other by restrictions put on their exploiting their employees. The kulak holdings had started to diminish, but they still owned as much as 14-15 per cent of the total ploughland. In fact, their estates amounted to two and a half times as much as the area in the possession of the co-operative farm groups and the state agricultural farms together, and economically they were at least three times as strong as the socialist sector of the villages. However, the individual small peasant farms constituted the decisive factor of agriculture, for their holdings amounted to about 80 per cent of the total arable land of the country.

As a result of the social changes, the coalition parties recognized the leading role of the Hungarian Working People's Party and accepted the aims it had designated in its programme.

The Peasant Party had some time earlier recognized that the Communist Party was best qualified to direct the people's democratic development. Socialist ideals were becoming increasingly prevalent in the ranks of the Peasant Party. This was expressed in the new programme it adopted in September 1948, which supported the further development of a planned economy and also championed the cause of the co-operative farms. It declared that the alliance of the working peasants "with the leading class of the struggle against capitalism, with the working class", had to be strengthened. It rejected the idea of a separate "peasant way" which "only strengthened the influence of the capitalist large farmers among the working peasants under the false slogan of peasant unity".

In the second half of 1948, the Smallholders Party continued to cleanse its ranks and removed several hundred people from its leadership and organizations because of their reactionary activities. At its national

conference in October 1948, the Smallholders Party declared that as a result of the disintegration that had taken place in its ranks, in the future the party intended to rely on the small and middle peasants and would endeavour to assist the consolidation of the workers'-peasants' alliance. It also supported the co-operative farm movement. At this time, the exponents of the kulaks were still active within the party, and in some provincial organizations they still played a leading role and were opposed to the left-wing leadership of the party. The national conference energetically condemned these manifestations. The Smallholders Party continued to cleanse itself of right-wing forces in 1949 too.

The socialist development of the country was accompanied by the resistance of the reactionary forces. Despite the fact that they were becoming politically more and more isolated, their various groups continued to spread false rumours and endeavoured to cause confusion by acts of sabotage, waiting in the meantime for the early military intervention of the Western Powers. The authorities exposed several groups of conspirators. One of these was a large group of reactionary elements that had taken cover in the Ministry of Agriculture and had been active for some time under the name of the Non-Party Bloc. Acts of sabotage also were discovered in industrial plants, for instance in MAORT's Transdanubian oil fields in American ownership. After the exposure of this sabotage, the government took the MAORT under state control and very soon all companies which were foreign concerns were taken into national ownership.

In the second half of 1948, clerical reaction led by Cardinal Mindszenty, the prince primate, headed the counter-revolutionary forces. Through its church organizations, this group had considerable mass influence. Abusing the religious sentiments of the believers, it continued to take advantage of the pulpit in its anti-democratic actions, although increasing number of the clergy were unhappy about this and some of them in fact opposed this attitude.

The reactionary church dignitaries launched a new attack against the people's power after the nationalization of the schools. They prohibited teachers who had been ordained from entering state service and con-

tinuing to teach in the nationalized schools. They tried to persuade parents to refuse to send their children to the nationalized schools, but this attempt completely failed.

The Hungarian Working People's Party launched a vigorous counter-attack against religious reaction, and a series of meetings in factories and the villages took a stand against the anti-democratic incitement, which was disguised as religious action.

It was at this time, in October 1948, that the 17th Congress of the Hungarian trade unions was held. The conference dealt with the progress of the Three Year Plan and with current trade union affairs and took a stand against the counter-revolutionary actions. On behalf of more than one and a half million organized workers the congress condemned the clerical reaction for turning the pulpit into a platform of political reaction, and the church gatherings and processions into counter-revolutionary meetings and demonstrations. The congress stressed that the organized workers respected the freedom of religion, but would not tolerate counter-revolutionary activities by clerical reaction.

The coalition parties also condemned the prince primate. In its resolution the October national conference of the Smallholders Party protested against the cardinal "taking advantage of his privileged position for anti-state activities" and called on the government "to prevent the constant upsetting of the peace of the souls".

In order to carry out their counter-revolutionary aims, the Mindszenty group organized a network of conspiracy. They enjoyed support from other reactionary groups and their activities received extensive assistance from the representatives of the Western Powers and primarily from the United States. However, the conspiracy was exposed and the members of the various groups participating in it were arrested. In December 1948, as a consequence of the arrest of one of the significant groups of plotters, the cardinal was also taken into custody. His accomplices included Duke Pál Eszterházy, whose family had been among the largest landowners of the country before the land reform.

The Western Powers attempted to make the Mindszenty case appear to be the "persecution of the church" and they carried on a large-scale propaganda campaign in defence of the exposed conspirators. Their

action also had the aim of encouraging the cardinal who faced a court trial. However, at the open trial he admitted his illegal activities under the onus of the disclosure. Light was thrown also on the illegal contacts he maintained with the diplomatic representative of the United States in Budapest.

The exposure of the conspiracy compromised the Barankovics party of the clerical forces which was, at any rate, disintegrating. Early in February 1949, István Barankovics defected from the country, and following this, his party announced its dissolution.

The political failure of the conspirators strengthened the efforts of some of the clergy to establish a loyal relationship with the workers' power. Church circles which certainly did not sympathize with the people's democracy, but regarded the policy of the Mindszenty clique as being detrimental to the church, also supported the settlement of relations with the state.

Talks were started between the representatives of the state and the churches and agreements were reached. The agreements concluded with the Protestants and the Israelites were signed in October and December 1948 respectively. Negotiations aimed at a comprehensive settlement with the representatives of the Catholic Bench of Bishops did not begin until January 1949. The deliberations took a long time because the bishops hesitated. At that time the reactionary policy of Pope Pius XII prevailed in the Vatican and this also constituted a considerable obstacle in the way of an accord. Finally, an agreement between the government and the Catholic Bench of Bishops was concluded in August 1950.

The Bench of Bishops undertook the obligation to "support the state order of the Hungarian People's Republic" and not to allow the "utilization of the religious sentiments of the believers and of the Catholic Church itself for anti-state purposes". It called upon faithful Catholics to "share to the best of their abilities in the great work being carried out by the entire Hungarian people under the leadership of the government of the People's Republic". It called upon the clergymen "not to resist the co-operative farm movement". In the agreement, the Bench declared that it approved and supported the peace policy of the government.

In the agreement, the government reiterated its guarantee of full religious freedom for the believers and freedom for the functioning of the Church. In a similar way to the agreements with the other churches the government pledged to provide the Catholic Church with progressively decreasing financial support until 1968, anticipating that by that time the Church "would be able to cover its financial expenditures from its own resources".

The agreement was a significant success for the policy of the Hungarian Working People's Party and the people's power on one side, and for the priests who favoured reconciliation on the other. Its conclusion was a result of the strengthening of the people's democratic system and met with understanding from the Hungarian general public and international democratic public opinion. On the other hand, the Western reactionary circles received the agreement with great consternation. The Vatican made it known to the Hungarian bishops that the news of the agreement "caused the Holy Father more than medium suffering". Nevertheless, the agreement strengthened the position of those who supported normal relations with the state and this was something that not even the internal and international reaction could alter.

Early in 1949 a new political alliance was formed, the Hungarian People's Independence Front, which aimed to eliminate party rivalry.

The people's front declaration of the coalition parties and of the leading mass organizations that supported the country-building aims of the Hungarian Working People's Party, was published on 1 February 1949. This considered the task of co-operation to "further guarantee the peaceful legal process of socialist social transformation with the inclusion of all the creative forces of the country". The statement also announced that the political and social organizations comprising the people's front would "submit in everything to the decisions of the National Council and would carry them out". The National Council of the People's Front was established. Its members included 27 representatives of the Hungarian Working People's Party, 9 of the Smallholders Party and 6 of the Peasant Party together with the delegates of the mass organizations. The two bourgeois parties which were outside the coalition, the Balogh

party and the Radical Party, also announced their adherence to the People's Front.

Parliamentary elections were held in May 1949. The parties making up the People's Front decided, on the recommendation of the Hungarian Working People's Party, to participate in the elections with a joint programme and joint list based on the declaration of the People's Front. The period of party rivalry had ended. At the same time, the partners in the coalition anticipated that a new phase of co-operation with the Hungarian Working People's Party would begin.

The May elections were a political demonstration by the overwhelming majority of the Hungarian people in favour of people's democracy. Out of the 6.1 million citizens entitled to vote, 5.7 million cast their ballots—a larger proportion than ever before. The People's Front list received 95 per cent of the ballots, a ratio which exceeded all expectations. The fact that the right-wing forces had largely disintegrated and for this reason could muster votes of any significance against the People's Front only locally, also played a role in this. In the country district of Vecsés, for instance, the proportion of votes cast against the list reached 29 per cent, at Mezökövesd 28 per cent, and at Nagykőrös 21 per cent. In these places the political activity of the reactionary clergymen was considerable, whereas in most of the country the majority of the priests dissociated themselves from reaction and in fact many of them openly supported the People's Front.

The new Parliament was made up of representatives of the workers, the working peasants, the progressive intellectuals and those of the urban petty bourgeoisie who supported the people's democracy. Altogether 43 per cent of them were from the working class, 28 per cent from the working peasants and 23 per cent from the intelligentsia. Seventy-one per cent of the representatives were members of the Hungarian Working People's Party, a proportion that expressed the leading role of the HWPP in the political life of the country. This was even more clearly expressed in the composition of the government. Out of the 18 members of the Council of Ministers, 13 represented the Hungarian Working People's Party, three the Smallholders Party and two the Peasant Party. István Dobi, the chairman of the Smallholders Party, was Prime Minister

and Mátyás Rákosi the Deputy Prime Minister. The leadership of the Hungarian Working People's Party regarded such an arrangement to be more expedient, mainly from foreign policy considerations. This however did not diminish the leadership of the Hungarian Working People's Party in the government, especially as István Dobi was a firm adherent of socialism.

The new National Assembly approved the Constitution of Hungarian People's Republic on 18 August 1949. The Constitution codified the great change which had occurred in the social development of the country. It declared: "Our people have started to lay the foundations of socialism and our country is progressing on the road of a people's democracy toward socialism." The building of socialism became a national goal codified in the Constitution.

The Constitution declared that the Hungarian People's Republic "is the state of workers and working peasants"; "all power belongs to the working people", which exercises power through its elected representatives. It sanctioned the social ownership of most means of production and at the same time confirmed the property right of the peasants to their land and also mentioned that the development of the co-operative farms was to be encouraged.

The Constitution laid down the general rights and duties of citizens. It stated that the People's Republic "strives to realize the principle of socialism", in other words that all shall work according to their ability and to share in the goods according to their work.

The Constitution determined the system of the state and its government. It declared that the county, county district, town, village and town district councils elected by the population were the local organizations of power. This meant that a system of councils had to be established. The detailed act on this was approved by the National Assembly in the spring of 1950. The councils became the local bodies of self-government and at the same time, the executive bodies of central power. Their formation meant that the government would no longer appoint lord lieutenants, chief notaries and notaries. Their duties were taken over by elected officials with a double responsibility: they were responsible to the councils and their electors, and at the same time they were responsible to the

central government bodies. To involve the largest possible proportion of the working people in the state administrative tasks and their supervision was an important principle and aim of the socialist state. The council system was aimed at ensuring the proper conditions of organization for achieving this goal.

The first council elections were held in October 1950. The voters were again very active. They elected 220,000 council members and alternate members. Fifteen per cent of them were workers, 67 per cent working peasants, 7 per cent intellectuals and the remained small craftsmen and others. One-third of the elected council members belonged to the Hungarian Working People's Party.

Linked with the council elections, the reorganization of public administration and the cleansing of the civil service continued. A considerable proportion of the former officials were retained, some of whom had become active supporters of the people's power, others became loyal, whereas some simply decided it was wiser to show themselves to be adaptable. This meant in effect that anti-socialist remnants of the old bourgeois administrative system still existed in the local council apparatus, although to a diminishing extent.

The first council elections were held in the first year of the Five Year Plan. The successes of economic building work and the establishment of the council system could have more effectively promoted the solution of the local tasks and could have encouraged the development of a socialist communal policy. However, at this time, the distortions which began to effect the policy of the Hungarian Working People's Party caused a break in the smooth progress of socialist construction.

Early in 1949, the Central Committee of the Party had strayed to a sectarian path with regard to the policy of alliances. At the session of the Central Committee of the Hungarian Working People's Party on 5 March 1949, Rákosi declared: "If the comrades believe that this People's Front is a lasting formation of long life they are very much mistaken. This People's Front is actually a stage in the process of the decay of the neighbouring parties . . . This people's front policy will not lead to anything of much account." At the next Central Committee meeting on 2 April he emphasized that the continued existence of the

coalition parties was undesirable because they ensured a permanent hiding place for the enemy. By this time, he had completely left out of account the possibility that these parties—continuing to struggle against the reactionaries infiltrating their ranks—could effectively help to bring closer to the cause of socialism strata over which the direct influence of the Hungarian Working People's Party was at that time still slight.

At that time the new People's Front did not have—and could not have had—practical experience. Thus, Rákosi's statement was not based on an analysis of empirical observations, but merely served to justify the sectarian concepts which were becoming prevalent. Consequently, the People's Front was not developed into a comprehensive organization, as originally planned by the HWPP leadership. The people's front policy—which had entered a new phase with the activity of the Left Bloc established in 1946 and achieved major successes—failed to continue its development and instead started to decay. The theoretical reason for this was a dogmatic interpretation of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

As the people's democracy developed, the dictatorship of the proletariat came into existence, however, without a clarification of the altered character of the political system. In the spring of 1948, that is, after the dictatorship of the proletariat had come into being, debate developed in the Hungarian Working People's Party with regard to this question. The leadership of the Hungarian Communist Party, and later of the Hungarian Working People's Party, maintained its earlier, theoretically incorrect view, which was contrary to reality, according to which socialism could be attained through a people's democracy, without the dictatorship of the proletariat. Eventually the leaders of the people's democratic states consulted Stalin and at the end of 1948 it was clarified that the people's democracy was already assuming the function of the dictatorship of the proletariat, consequently there was a proletarian dictatorship in their countries.

This recognition made possible a penetrating analysis of the specific national forms of the realization of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the utilization of the lessons to be learned from it in the further political development of the country, the people's front policy included.

However, the necessary analysis and careful consideration of the lessons failed to take place.

In Hungary the dictatorship of the proletariat developed amidst a multi-party system, which made it possible for the coalition parties to continue in operation to help in building socialism. The fact that socialism was becoming a world system made the conditions more favourable for this. Circumstances were developing in which the allied parties could have become organizations sympathizing with communism, and the politically more developed sections of their membership could have become Communists. This process was being unfolded. However, when it became clear that the dictatorship of the proletariat had come into existence, Rákosi, Gerő, Révai and other leaders of the Hungarian Working People's Party assumed a point of view that if there was a dictatorship of the proletariat, then a one-party system was certainly required; they were of the opinion that as long as several parties were in existence, the dictatorship of the proletariat could not be complete. For this reason, they set out to dissolve the coalition parties as rapidly as possible.

At this time, the leadership of the Hungarian Working People's Party reduced the role of the People's Front to the parliamentary elections, intending afterwards to make the functioning of the allied parties merely formalistic and finally terminate it. That was the way things happened.

The sectarian interpretation of the dictatorship of the proletariat was combined with the uncritical acceptance of the erroneous Stalinist views on the class struggle referred to earlier. The thesis according to which in the period of proletarian dictatorship the class struggle keeps permanently sharpening—rather than just in certain situations—also served to justify the efforts for the rapid liquidation of the coalition parties. And the thesis, according to which under conditions of workers' power the enemy would primarily attempt to infiltrate the party of the Communists, resulted in the fact that, on the instructions of the Rákosi group, the bodies of state security were looking for the enemy mainly within the Hungarian Working People's Party.

To the consternation of the party membership and the general public of the country they arrested László Rajk, a veteran fighter and outstanding figure of the Communist Party, in June 1949 and a few months

later he was charged with treason and sentenced to death. It was later discovered that the sentence had been based on fabricated charges. György Pálffy, Tibor Szőnyi, András Szalai and a number of other loyal and militant members of the Communist Party also fell victims to false charges based on unfounded accusations. A paralysing atmosphere of distrust spread in the Party and in the state and social organizations as well. The serious and highly responsible cause for political alertness deteriorated into hysteria, an instrument of irresponsibility and opportunistic ambitions. Suspicion was primarily directed against the pre-liberation members of the Communist Party, a number of these comrades were slandered by saying that the only reason they managed to remain alive during the period when the Party worked underground was because they had become traitors. On the basis of such accusations, János Kádár, Gyula Kállai and many other comrades were imprisoned.

Suspicion extended to a significant circle of former Social Democrats: groups of both right- and left-wing former Social Democrats were declared imperialist agents. Árpád Szakasits, György Marosán, István Ries and other comrades were thrown into prison on the basis of such fabrications. The major political advantage which the union of the two workers' parties in Hungary signified for the working-class movement at home and in Western Europe, was largely dissipated because of the trials based on trumped-up charges.

Parallel with the spread of the atmosphere of mistrust and suspicion, Rákosi and his associates ignored the Leninist principle of collective leadership. They used their great prestige and positions of power won during the successful struggles waged earlier to monopolize the leadership for a narrow group. They downgraded the role of the Central Committee and even of the Political Committee and made unconditional confidence in Rákosi the most essential criterion of party loyalty. This was accompanied by the development of the cult of Rákosi's personality, parallel with the personality cult of Stalin. Mátyás Rákosi's prestige deteriorated into a means of disguising increasing political confusion.

In 1944 Rákosi and a small group around him—which at that time included Gerő, Révai and Farkas as well as Imre Nagy and Zoltán Vas—before returning home to Hungary prepared to seize the party

leadership. They were distrustful of the leaders at home and underestimated their abilities, although they did not know them. As a matter of fact, it was a surprise for them that they found a more mature domestic political leadership in Hungary than they had expected. The leaders at home welcomed them with great expectation for they trusted their long decades of experience in the movement and their qualifications. They particularly trusted Mátyás Rákosi who had acquired considerable prestige with his conduct when he faced the fascist court, and they greeted him as the destined leader of the Party. The confidence the leaders at home placed in Rákosi and his group was confirmed by the fact that the general political line elaborated among the emigrants in Moscow was the same as the policy worked out and pursued at home.

As a result the Rákosi group's initial mistrust of the domestic leaders relaxed in 1945–6. Although they continued to act with a certain superiority, a unified leadership, based on a correct political line and its unified implementation, was brought into being. However, when Rákosi and his associates began to guide the Party along a sectarian path, their former distrust revived and became aggravated. This attitude, coupled with a distorted interpretation of political vigilance, played a great role in the violation of the law, the vilification of innocent people and the loss of loyal comrades. This is difficult to explain. However, it is a fact that they also used the Rajk case to find "accomplices" of the Yugoslav leaders, whom they had declared to be traitors, within the Central Committee of the Hungarian Working People's Party.

The violation of revolutionary legality was the most painful consequence of the reign of sectarian dogmatism. At the same time, this caused serious distortions in political life. The detrimental effect of sectarian policy was evident in the policy of alliances and in the curtailment of socialist democracy. The entire economic policy and the co-operative movement soon became distorted.

**The Second Congress of the Hungarian Working People's
Party and the Worsening of the Sectarian Policy
The Achievements and Problems of the Five Year Plan
Ambiguous Exposure of the Mistakes in 1953
and the Appearance of Revisionism**

Before the completion of the Three Year Plan the Five Year Plan was drafted and its implementation started in 1950. The results of the first year exceeded expectations, particularly in industry. Instead of the planned 21.4 per cent industrial output was 27 per cent higher than in the previous year. State industry expanded by 37 per cent, while the production of private industry decreased by 26 per cent. The nationalization measures of December 1949 and the further repressive measures in small-scale industry played a role in this.

In 1950, the output of agriculture was by 5 to 6 per cent more than the previous year's figure. In the meantime, the arable land of the state farms and the co-operatives both doubled in area, and by the end of 1950 the two together formed 13 per cent of the total arable land of the country.

Further rationalization in the manufacturing industry made possible by nationalization, the consolidation of work discipline and the general enthusiasm in work were major factors in increasing production. The inspiring aims of the Five Year Plan and the international circumstances also had a stimulating effect. The further strengthening of the international influence of the Soviet Union, the vigorous development of the people's democratic countries, the great victories of the Chinese revolution and solidarity with the peoples of Korea and Vietnam fighting against imperialist aggression—all these inspired the workers to improve their work. The realization that the development of each country within the socialist camp promoted the struggle against the danger of a new world war had a similar effect.

The distortions in political life naturally disturbed development. Incomprehension and doubts with regard to the negative phenomena of social life were increasing and people began to question whether everything was correct in the policy of the Party. However, the party leadership

still enjoyed considerable prestige and its explanations and views were generally accepted. At the same time, complacency became predominant in the leadership and especially within the Rákosi group, which was gradually appropriating the leadership entirely for itself.

These were the conditions under which the Second Congress of the Hungarian Working People's Party met on 24 February 1951. The main political report was delivered by Rákosi. He assessed the results of the Three Year Plan and the first year of the Five Year Plan, surveyed the increase of war-like tensions and put forward the proposal of the Central Committee for considerably raising the targets of the Five Year Plan. Gerő, who played a leading role in the direction of economic policy, gave a separate detailed report on this motion. Under the proposal the investment total for the five years was to rise from the originally contemplated 51,000 million forints to at least 80,000 million; industrial production would expand by 200 per cent instead of the original target of 86 per cent and the output of agriculture would be raised by 50–55 per cent. The raised targets of the plan called for a 50 to 55 per cent rise in living standards, instead of the earlier 35 per cent and to supplement this, the targets for housing construction and cultural and health investments were also raised.

The new goals of the plan were highly promising. Confident that they could be realized, the Congress unanimously approved the report, with great enthusiasm. The raised targets increased the anticipation felt by the entire membership of the Party and the entire working people of the country. However, it soon became obvious that the new plan was unrealistic.

The proportion of industry in the Hungarian national economy was not so low as to make it possible to treble it in five years, especially not together with the overall development of the country. Such rate of industrial growth is generally possible only in industrially underdeveloped countries or in periods of reconstruction following serious war damage. At the time of the Five Year Plan period Hungary had already completed the reconstruction of industry.

A certain increase in the industrial targets was feasible. This could have ensured the more intensive development of national defence, ne-

cessitated by the growing threat of war, and at the same time could have made the original—that is, the more moderate—plan for increasing living standards more realistic. However, the increased growth rate of industry from 86 to 200 per cent was such an overstrained plan that it was bound to cause regression in living standards. Raising the production targets of agriculture made the expectations from agriculture—exaggerated from the very beginning—even more unrealistic. Neither the political nor the financial and technical conditions were such as to suggest that the production of agriculture—based in the main on small peasant farms—could be increased one and a half times over in five years, while a decisive change occurred in the socialist transformation of the village.

The Five Year Plan resulted in major achievements, but it only partially attained the set goals. The rapid growth of industry considerably extended the technical basis for further development, and from being an agrarian-industrial state, Hungary became an industrial-agrarian country. The socialist sector of agriculture developed, and there were very significant increases in the cultural facilities and health protection available for the population.

From 1950 to 1954, industrial production increased by 130 per cent, and although it fell short of the raised targets, it registered a very significant growth. The output of state industry increased by 155 per cent, whereas that of private small-scale industry diminished, amounting to less than 40 per cent of the 1949 figure. A considerable number of large new enterprises were established: foundry No. 1 and the steel works of the Danube Iron Works, the November 7th power plant at Inota, the cement and lime works at Hejőcsaba, the chemical works at Kazincbarcika and the Hajdúság district pharmaceutical factory, etc. came into being. Many of the old factories were enlarged, for example, the Lenin Metallurgical Works at Diósgyőr, the Ganz factories and several textile mills and leather factories. Advance was made in the building of the Tisza dams; 150,000 new homes, several hundred schools and the People's Stadium in Budapest were completed.

Vigorous industrialization brought with it an increase in the number of workers and employees and a rapid growth in the population of towns

and industrial centres. The number of workers and employees engaged in industry (including those in the building industry) increased by nearly 470,000 in five years, and exceeded the one million mark in 1950.

However, the large-scale expansion of socialist industry was not accompanied by the contemplated increase in living standards. The investments absorbed most of the resources needed for a better life and in the period from 1951 to 1953 living standards dropped below the 1949 level. This was one of the social contradictions which became increasingly serious. It was only in 1954 that the average real incomes of workers and employees exceeded the 1950 level by over 10 per cent, which however lagged far behind of what had been planned.

Apart from the overstraining of the investment plans insufficient emphasis on efficiency in industrial expansion was one of the reasons for the drop in living standards. The modernization of the old industrial plants was pushed into the background and investments were not properly concentrated on the development of the products and branches of industry for which the resources of the country were more favourable. Parallel with the rapid increase in the manufacture of the means of production, the production of consumer goods fell short of the increasing demands.

The distortions in agrarian policy were primarily responsible for the reduction in living standards, for they brought about a stagnation in agricultural production and a deterioration in food supplies.

The Five Year Plan originally envisaged a 42 per cent increase in agricultural production—which in itself was an exaggerated target. The modified plan further increased this unrealistic goal. The average annual agricultural production for the five-year period barely exceeded the 1950 level and thus fell far short of the estimate.

According to the concepts of the Hungarian Working People's Party leadership, if the small peasant farmers could be persuaded to join the co-operatives as soon as possible, this would have provided the basis for attaining the production goals that had been set, but these concepts very much exaggerated the possibilities in the co-operative movement at that time. The plan envisaged the further development of the farming machine stations, the increased use of artificial fertilizers and other improvements

which would have promoted production. However, in itself the technical and agricultural development called for was insufficient to attain the production targets that had been set and in fact even these insufficient goals were not completely achieved.

Hungarian agriculture lagged far behind farming in the advanced agricultural countries and it was in the general interests of the nation to catch up as soon as possible. As a result of internal and international market competition, increasing proportions of the small peasant farms were ruined in the capitalist countries, and consequently large, modern peasant farms and capitalist farming concerns, whose advanced agrotechnology ensured high productivity, became prevalent there. The socialist state protected the small peasants from the exploiters, from the usury of the banks and from international competition and used other methods to create large-scale agriculture. This primarily involved encouraging the small peasants to join the co-operative farms and developing the state farms. For a socialist state, this is the only way to remedy the backwardness of agriculture and create new possibilities for its development.

The establishment of co-operative farms in the villages could be realized only as a result of a deliberately organized and controlled process. The Communist Party and the socialist state could not evade this major task, because the fate of the nation and the future of socialism depended on it. How the Party and the state could organize, control and promote this process of the revolutionary transformation in the villages was of decisive significance.

The sectarian view that discouraging the productive activities of the small peasants would assist the rapid development of the co-operative movement, already prevailed in the Central Committee of the Hungarian Working People's Party before the Second Congress. It was considered that it would take the co-operatives too long to demonstrate their superiority in actual competition with the small peasant farms and for this reason the formation of the co-operatives was to be accelerated through economic compulsion and pressure by the authorities. Increasing the burden of compulsory deliveries was the principal method of economic compulsion.

There was a good crop in 1951 and the harvest temporarily offset the consequences of the mistakes in agrarian policy. For example, the wheat yield amounted to 235,000 wagons—more than the average annual yield during the period from 1931 to 1940—and the compulsory deliveries amounted to nearly 60,000 wagons together with taxes in kind (out of this 8,000 wagons came from the state farms). On the other hand, the 1952 harvest was bad. One hundred and seventy thousand wagons of wheat were produced, but the compulsory deliveries increased to 76,000 wagons (of this 9,500 wagons came from the state farms). The state paid 60 forints for a quintal of wheat, whereas the market price was four times that figure. This system of compulsory delivery extended to a large variety of crops and animal produce. It reduced the readiness of the peasants to produce more, it lowered their living standards and was a source of increased bitterness both among the individual farmers and co-operative farm members. In fact the burden of the exaggerated delivery obligations made the consolidation of the collective farms impossible.

During the period of the Five Year Plan mechanization increased, but the amended plan was not fulfilled. According to the increased targets at least 26,000 tractors should have been added to the pool of the machine stations and state farms, whereas in actual fact the increase amounted to only about 5,000 and the total number of tractors was about 18,000 by the end of the period. The use of artificial fertilizers had also increased, but not to the extent prescribed by the plan.

The co-operative farm sector became larger. By the end of 1952, the number of the co-operative farm members had increased to nearly 370,000 and they farmed about 24 per cent of the arable area of the country. But many peasants had joined the collective farms only under the pressure of compulsion. In the summer of 1953 measures were taken to redress the grave errors and those who had been compelled to join were permitted to leave the co-operatives. As a result, by the end of 1954 the number of co-operative farm members had fallen to 230,000 and the area they cultivated was reduced to 16.7 per cent of the total arable area.

Simultaneously with the forced organization of co-operatives in 1951

and 1952 the liquidation of the kulak farms began. In order to reduce the excessive burdens, from 1950 the kulaks tried to get rid of part of their land, requesting that these parts be appropriated, hoping that in this way they could farm the remainder of their land in relative peace. They also lost some land during the compulsory land rearrangement process, under which the plots were reorganized for the benefit of the co-operatives. There were 47,200 individual farms of more than 25 *hold* in 1949, and this number had dropped to 9,000 in 1954, and their arable land had decreased from 1,422,000 *hold* to 205,000. This meant that over 38,000 farmers landed in lower categories and in fact some of them gave up their farms completely.

The arable land of the state farms amounted to almost 12 per cent of the country's arable area in 1954. Together with the ploughland of the co-operative farms 30 per cent of the arable land of the country was in the possession of the socialist sector. The increase of the socialist sector and within this the existence of the co-operative sector which accounted for almost 17 per cent of the arable area, constituted a significant result. The Party, the socialist state and the co-operative peasantry achieved these results despite the grave mistakes in agrarian policy, a forced leap forward and then a setback.

Thus the idea of co-operative farming deeply penetrated the Hungarian villages, and no doubt, the results would have been better still had a correct policy been pursued. However, it is also true that the aim of getting the majority of the individual farmers to join the co-operatives during this five-year period was certainly far from the realistic possibilities. Undue insistence on this, the violation of the Leninist principle of voluntarism was harmful to both the co-operatives and the country.

A sectarian "leftist" policy was also pursued with regard to private small-scale industry. As a result, private trade rapidly diminished—a fact which also played a role in the deterioration of the supplies to the population. Early in 1949, the number of small craftsmen totalled 180,000 and they employed 188,000 workers and employees. However, in 1953 there were only 46,000 small craftsmen employing 5,000 workers. In the summer of 1953 there was some slight change in this respect as well. As a result, by the end of 1954, the number of small craftsmen had

increased to about 107,000. The number of their employees remained limited and did not reach 7,000, only the number of their apprentices had increased.

The shrinkage of private trade from 1950 to 1953 was partially balanced by the development of the small-scale industrial producers' co-operatives. These co-operatives included some of the former private craftsmen and also admitted other members and engaged employees. Early in 1950, their total membership was 11,000 and almost 108,000 by the end of 1954. But the producers' co-operatives were only partially able to make up for the work of the 260,000 people who had left private trade. The development of the state-run light industry also helped to replace a significant part of small-scale industrial production, but not its repair and servicing activities, although the demand for such services was increasing, resulting from the fact that the urban population had increased by 400,000 during the five years.

Other achievements of the Five Year Plan included better health protection. The number of hospital beds had increased by more than 11,000 and exceeded 61,000. And social insurance benefits already covered 60 per cent of the population.

Cultural facilities had also considerably improved. The number of secondary-school students had increased by more than 70 per cent, including those attending the evening and correspondence courses. Enrolments in the higher educational institutes increased to 2.3 times the 1949 figure. As a result of the enlargement of the cinema network, the number of cinema tickets sold doubled. Livelier publishing activity, the national increase in the number of libraries and cultural centres and other data also confirmed the great progress made in the sphere of culture.

Thus the achievements were considerable and permanent. They provided additional confirmation of the great opportunities inherent in socialist planned economy. At the same time, however, it became obvious that these opportunities could be successfully utilized only if a sound political line and sound economic policy were pursued. Any deviation from the proper path made development more difficult and the sectarian policy caused deep contradictions and considerable damage. Although the technical bases for further development had been consider-

ably expanded, yet instead of the promised increase in living standards real wages decreased in the period from 1951 to 1953, and this shook the confidence of the workers and employees in the Party. The party organizations found themselves in a difficult position before the non-party masses, and justified doubts concerning the policy of the Central Committee also spread among the party members. The zeal of work emulation drives had already started to falter in 1951, and through enforcement the whole campaign became formalistic and bureaucratic. The mistakes in rural policy had shaken the workers'-peasants' alliance. The forced organization of the co-operatives led to the deterioration of the relationship of the Party with the individual peasants who were still hesitant to enter co-operatives. And the atmosphere of suspicion—the supposed existence of enemies wherever there was justified dissatisfaction or where supposed or actual mistakes occurred—linked with the imposition of unjustified punitive measures against many people, largely distracted attention from the illegal activities of the real enemy. As a consequence, the people's democratic system was weakened notwithstanding its significant achievements.

In June 1953, the Central Committee of the Hungarian Working People's Party assessed the situation, exposed a number of mistakes and passed a resolution on redressing them. What directly preceded this was that after Stalin's death, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union began to remedy the errors that resulted from the cult of personality and advised the parties of the friendly socialist countries to revise their policies in a self-critical manner. The leaders of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union expressed penetrating comradely criticism concerning the policy of the Hungarian Working People's Party. The leadership of the HWPP accepted the criticism and applied this in reaching its resolutions.

The June resolution of the Central Committee of the Hungarian Working People's Party stated that it had been a mistake to aim at industrialization that was too rapid. This economic policy neglected the interests of the working people and "carried in it the elements of a policy of adventurism". It did not sufficiently take into consideration the re-

sources of the country, the possibilities of and necessity for economic co-operation between the Soviet Union and the people's democratic countries, but was oriented towards a certain kind of autarchy. At the same time, the development of agriculture was neglected, and this was further aggravated by the establishment of co-operative farms "at an exaggerated rapid pace, which did not accord with the political and economic conditions existing in the country".

The resolution stated that the mistakes that had occurred resulted from a sectarian approach and one of their main sources was the lack of collective leadership and the spread of the cult of personality, for which Rákosi, Gerő, Farkas and Révai bore the main responsibility. The resolution emphasized the importance of restoring collective leadership. At the same time, the Central Committee decided that Rákosi, who from 1952 had been the Prime Minister also, should leave this post; however he remained the First Secretary of the Central Committee. Imre Nagy was recommended to head the government.

The resolution also noted that great attention had to be paid to strengthening the ties with the masses. The elimination of the mistakes in the economic policy was an important precondition of this also. The economic development plans and the pace of industrialization—especially that of heavy industry—had to be reduced, the living standards of the population had to be raised, with the real wages increased, the compulsory deliveries and taxes imposed on the peasants reduced and most of their debts in deliveries and taxes released. Investments had to be significantly diminished, except for agriculture, where they had to be increased. Even the small peasant farms had to be helped in their production activities, and more effective assistance had to be given to the co-operative farms, because their development was the main road leading to the socialist reorganization of the village, but their numerical development had to be slowed down. Peasants had to be permitted to leave the co-operatives, together with their land. The resolution also supported an increase in the scope of private small-scale industry and private retail trade.

The June 1953 meeting of the Central Committee decided on a number of important measures to reduce the overstrained plans regarding heavy

industry and the investments. As a result of the resolution wages were increased and significant price cuts were introduced. The burdens of compulsory delivery and taxation were lessened and house building and public utility constructions were speeded up. Measures were implemented to assist the production of the individual peasants. However, the comprehensive revision of the economic policy as a whole remained an unsolved task.

The resolution indicated the gross violation of the Leninist principles of party leadership, but with the sole exception of Mihály Farkas, all those who were primarily responsible remained in the leadership and in fact at its head. Important measures were decided on to re-establish law and order. The internment camps—which had remained in existence since the war—were closed, the excessive measures and severity used against the peasants were removed and methods were introduced to restore revolutionary legality. Nevertheless, the resolution did not present the complete truth concerning the violations of the law and avoided the question of the unjust sentences passed in the case of many militant members of the Party.

Rákosi, Farkas and Gerő who bore the main brunt of the responsibility for the victimization of loyal comrades and other innocent people on the basis of unfounded accusations, were afraid to face up to their responsibility. They endeavoured to delay any revision of these trials and evade full rehabilitation through pseudo-measures and various other manoeuvres. With regard to these trials, they also misled the Central Committee itself. The members of the Central Committee began to realize that extraordinarily painful cases were to be exposed, but at the June 1953 meeting they did not yet demand an investigation. The Central Committee bore the responsibility for this omission and especially for the fact that it tolerated the violation of the principle of collective leadership, and thus the cult of personality was able to dominate the Party.

The leadership of the Hungarian Working People's Party was not unified in the interpretation of the resolution of June 1953 and this lack of unity made it impossible to consistently implement the resolution. This divergence of views soon became apparent. As a result of Imre

Nagy's appointment to lead the government, the differences with regard to agrarian policy questions were the first to emerge.

As early as in 1949, there had been a sharp debate in the Central Committee with regard to the principal questions concerning rural policy. At that time, Imre Nagy was of the opinion that the Party should primarily direct its agrarian policy towards the development of small-peasant production. He wanted to encourage the development of the consumers' and sales types of farmers' co-operatives, based on small-scale commodity production and declared that the organization of agricultural producers' co-operatives was a subordinate task, especially as it would involve the danger of a deterioration in relations with the middle peasants which he considered a necessary concomitant of the development of co-operative farms. The essence of his concept was that the middle peasants could not be won over to the support of the collective farms, and indeed it was not necessary to upset them with such agitation, because in a people's democracy even the small-commodity producing sector was "progressing towards socialism".

The Central Committee had rejected the views of Imre Nagy in 1949 as right-wing opportunism and recalled him from the Political Committee. Imre Nagy had exercised self-criticism. He said that his mistake was linked with his incorrect viewpoint as regards the character of the people's democracy, which he had expounded at the end of 1947, when he was of the opinion that not the building of socialism, but the development of state capitalism was the order of the day. "My opportunist view concerning state capitalism," he stated at the September 1949 meeting of the Central Committee "that is, essentially an orientation towards capitalism, instead of socialism, has reappeared again, or rather continued with regard to the most important questions of the Party's agrarian policy . . ." "I arrived at conclusions whose essence was actually the deliberate or accidental conservation in agriculture of the individual small peasant farm—in the final analysis, capitalism." Imre Nagy's self-criticism—which cannot be regarded as sincere—did not even adhere to the correct element in his position, that the alliance with the middle peasants should be taken care of. The Central Committee acknowledged his self-criticism.

The right-wing opportunist views that Imre Nagy expounded in 1949 were rejected by the Rákosi group on a sectarian basis. What was mutual in the contrasting positions of the Rákosi group and Imre Nagy was their lack of faith that it was possible to win over the individual peasants—and especially the majority of the middle peasants—to voluntarily join the co-operative farms. This scepticism made Imre Nagy speak out in support of the preservation of small-scale commodity production and, on the other hand, persuaded the Rákosi group to employ economic compulsion and use the pressure of authority against the individual peasants. After his self-criticism in September 1949, Imre Nagy accepted the policy of the Rákosi group and played a considerable role in its implementation. He became Minister of Agricultural Deliveries. In 1951 he was again co-opted into the Political Committee and from 1952 he was a Deputy Prime Minister.

At the June 1953 meeting of the Central Committee, Imre Nagy was almost glorified. The resolution passed recalled what he had stated in 1949 about the deterioration of relations with the middle peasants; it noted that at that time Imre Nagy had drawn attention to the sectarian dangers, but it omitted to mention the fact that his action had been made from a right-wing point of view. In its ideological uncertainty at the time, the Central Committee had considered Imre Nagy to be a Marxist representative of the struggle against dogmatism and gave him a significant role in the implementation of the resolution. He however utilized this opportunity to revive his right-wing views. Both in 1947 and in 1949, the Central Committee had failed to tell the party membership about the substance of its theoretical debates with him. For this reason, now it was easy for him to act as if he were a representative of creative Marxism.

In his position as the new Prime Minister, Imre Nagy endeavoured to put his right-wing views in practice, ostensibly in the spirit of remedying past mistakes. Following his government declaration early in July, and primarily under its impact, a fierce campaign was started to dissolve the co-operative farms. This campaign—incited by the kulaks who had recovered from their passivity and demanded that the lands taken from them should be returned, aided by other right-wing elements, and

supported by the mood of significant numbers of the small peasants—was repressed by the Party and government. The completion of the summer harvest was first ensured and withdrawal from the co-operative farms was permitted only afterwards.

Imre Nagy returned to the views he had retracted in 1949. At this time, he received the support of several members of the Central Committee; Mihály Farkas was the most active of them who sided with Imre Nagy and thus achieved that soon he was again a member of the Political Committee and a secretary of the Central Committee. Rákosi and Gerő approved this move, because they were linked with Farkas in the shared ambition to cover up the frame-up trials. In order to ensure this, they were prepared to enter into unprincipled bargaining with Imre Nagy.

In December 1953, the Central Committee and the Council of Ministers approved a joint resolution on a three-year plan for agriculture. The resolution dealt with the general tasks of plant growing and animal husbandry, but ignored the problems of developing the co-operative farms. The Rákosi group retreated in the face of Imre Nagy's policy. However, the internal disputes continued and were evident in the policy of industrialization.

The Central Committee agreed that the pace of industrialization and especially the development of the heavy industry had to be lessened, but there were constant debates concerning the ratio of heavy industry and light industry. Several major investments had to be discontinued, including the construction of the Budapest underground railway which had already absorbed heavy expenditure and required even more (the construction was resumed only a decade later). Several of the comrades working in the top economic bodies pointed out that the country would suffer additional losses if heavy industrial investments of which 75 to 80 per cent had been completed were left unfinished through a freezing of capital funded. One of the problems concerning the structural development of industry was that the manufacture of basic materials lagged behind the rapidly developing processing industry and the requirements of the building projects. It was detrimental to stop the construction of the rolling mill at Dunaújváros, because its early completion would have

helped to supply the processing industry with the products of the Iron Works, and at the same time would have contributed to more economical production in the Iron Works. It was also detrimental to discontinue the work at the Danube Cement Works, for the increased house building and public utility constructions required more and more cement. Those who warned that caution was necessary in the decision to stop the construction of partially completed investments were described as "left-wing resisters". This phraseology was primarily used by the Imre Nagy group, but Rákosi and Gerő also assisted this in an unprincipled manner.

This was the situation in which the Third Congress of the Hungarian Working People's Party met in May 1954. Rákosi presented the main political report. He positively assessed the resolution of June 1953 and reviewed the results of the measures that had been taken following this resolution. He endeavoured to portray that the Party and government had satisfactorily redressed the earlier mistakes. He submitted the position of the Central Committee on the principles of the next five-year plan, according to which socialist industrialization was to remain "the principal means of socialist construction" in the next phase. However, the rate of development was to be slowed down and the development of Sector B would "at first exceed that of Sector A", in other words, the output of the branches manufacturing consumer goods would for a time exceed the production of those turning out means of production. The aim was to promote more adequate supplies of consumer goods for the population and to ensure the readjustment of the disproportions which had developed in the structure of the national economy.

The sound development of the national economy required an appropriate balance between Sectors A and B. However, the task could not be restricted merely to the ratio that existed between heavy industry and light industry, for intensive agriculture demanded larger quantities of machinery and chemical products, that is, more heavy industry products, and the same was required for the improvement of transport. Thus the task was to ensure within the national economy as a whole the appropriate co-ordination of the output of the means of production and of branches producing consumer goods. The economical development of

foreign trade was a part of this process, especially in a country like Hungary which exports a very significant proportion of its gross national product, in order to secure the import goods it requires. However, the leadership of the Hungarian Working People's Party limited the discussion to the ratio between heavy industry and light industry. This was reflected in Rákosi's report to the Congress.

The report declared the "extensive and more rapid increase" of agricultural production to be a "key question" of the next five-year plan. This suggested exaggerated development targets, although the emphasis was now placed on increasing small-scale commodity production. In fact Rákosi also stated that parallel with providing more scope for farms engaged in small-scale commodity production "co-operative farms should at all costs be radically improved" and the co-operatives should be "vigorously developed numerically as well".

The guidelines of the next five-year plan which were only broadly outlined, were marked by a compromise and were characterized by being insufficiently and ambiguously elaborated. So many questions were unsettled that the Central Committee was unwilling to designate the main targets and draw up the new plan before the end of 1954. For this reason, the report recommended that only an annual plan should be drawn up for the next year and the new five-year plan should be worked out in 1955 for the period from 1956 to 1960.

With regard to the situation within the Party, Rákosi reported that the Party "had continued to grow stronger since the Second Congress, it had struck deeper roots and had become more experienced, more tempered, better welded together and more unified". But this was not true. Some of the earlier mistakes were corrected, some of them survived and in the meantime new errors developed. The report said nothing about reviewing the frame-up trials. By alleging that it would be harmful to the interests of the Party if it transpired that good comrades and other people had been sentenced on the basis of false accusations, the Rákosi group endeavoured to disarm those who urged a reinvestigation. Such misgivings did in fact hold back a significant proportion of the party activists, including some members of the Central Committee from more vigorously demanding a public rehabilitation. However, the polit-

ical harm done by the violation of the rule of law was increased by the delay and ambivalence shown with regard to rehabilitation. This was something that placed a new weapon in the hands of the right-wing forces—a weapon they were not hesitant to use—for anti-party agitation, to mislead people and increase their own influence.

The Rákosi group was unable to depart from its sectarian errors and this was mainly the reason why they could not undertake the open ideological struggle against the right-wing views and policy of Imre Nagy and the group around him. In his report to the Congress Rákosi only stated that during the implementation of the June 1953 resolution “the right-wing danger intensified in our Party”. He remained silent about the fact that this danger also existed within the Central Committee and was in fact increasing. He made it seem as if the leadership were unified and cohesive, when in fact discord was intensifying within it. The Nagy group also avoided an open struggle in the sphere of principles. It was content to force the sectarians to make concessions to the right wing in return for keeping quiet about the dissension.

In this way the work and resolution of the Congress displayed the imprint of an unprincipled compromise between the dogmatic position of the Rákosi group and the revisionist views of the Imre Nagy group.

The Central Committee re-elected at the Congress elected Rákosi, Gerő, Nagy, Farkas, András Hegedüs, Antal Apró, Lajos Ács, Béla Szalai and István Hidas as members of the Political Committee.

After the Congress, on the demand of some members of the Central Committee and a widening circle of party members the revision of the frame-up trials was somewhat speeded up and a start was made to release from prison those who had been unjustly sentenced. However, this process was still going very slow and for this reason dissatisfaction continued to grow both within the Party and in the political public opinion of the country. The fact that the Rákosi group sabotaged the process was of advantage to the right-wing revisionist ambitions.

A revisionist mood had spread especially in some intellectual groups because of the insufficiently clear political line of the Party too. Many people who previously were most active in popularizing sectarian policy, now zealously incited a right-wing mood. Confronted by these phenom-

ena, the party leadership was irresolute and vague. The right-wing elements of the former coalition parties, the illegal organizations of clerical reaction and other hostile groups all endeavoured to utilize this situation for their own ends. The Western radio stations also engaged in very active anti-communist propaganda. One of the main trends of their tactics was to popularize the revisionists as “national Communists” calling on them to be more active, and encourage the various reactionary groups to support them. Propaganda for Imre Nagy developed, with the aim of spurring him on to make further steps in a right-wing direction.

Before the Congress, the Central Committee had decided that it was necessary to reorganize the People's Independence Front. It submitted a proposal to this effect to the Congress, which approved it. The idea was to set up the regional branches of the People's Front with the participation of the Hungarian Working People's Party and the major social organizations and including also the well-meaning members of the former coalition parties who had become passive. The work of organization was started in August 1954 and in October the People's Front Congress was held.

The People's Front could produce the desired results only if the policy of the Party was correct. On the other hand, if this policy was burdened by internal conflicts and dissension, the People's Front organizations were bound to become uncertain or the supporters of one or another of the antagonistic trends. From the very beginning, tendencies to push the Party in the background became evident in the new organizations of the People's Front, which in this way served as a new forum for revisionist and other right-wing elements. On the recommendation of the Political Committee, Ferenc Jánosi, at this time a leading representative of the Nagy group, was elected the General Secretary of the People's Front.

Uncertainty with regard to the topical problems of socialist construction, the increasing confusion within the Party and the intensification of the activity of the hostile elements all hampered the implementation of the production plan of the current year. The reduced plan called for an 8 per cent increase in the output of state industry in 1954, but the actual increase was only 2 per cent; moreover there was a decline in heavy

industry. Although real wages increased by 18 to 20 per cent, somewhat surpassing the 1950 level, productivity fell below the level of the previous year. The national production of agriculture was only 2 per cent higher than the year before, with a considerable increase in livestock and especially pigs, but with poorer crop results than in 1953.

The output of the manufacturing industry and of agriculture again lagged behind the increased purchasing power, and relative to the rise in wage and the income of the peasants, the increase in supplies was not satisfactory. This state of affairs was somewhat alleviated by the fact that production by the co-operative industry increased by 30 per cent and that of private small-scale industry doubled compared to the figures of the previous year. The earlier errors of reducing small-scale industry had been largely corrected.

Towards the end of 1954, the differences became more acute within the Central Committee of the Hungarian Working People's Party. The Nagy group continued to blame the "left-wing resisters" for the difficulties, on the other hand, Rákosi and his associates began to criticize Imre Nagy's right-wing policy. At its March 1955 meeting the Central Committee considered the disputed issues. It stated that the resolutions of June 1953 were correct, but right-wing mistakes were committed during their implementation. These found expression in the actions against the development of heavy industry, in the efforts to repress the co-operative farm movement and in the views idealizing small-scale commodity production by the peasants. Tendencies to push the role of the Party into the background had appeared in the People's Front organizations. In the press, the representatives of right-wing views criticized the mistakes, but remained silent about all the achievements of the past period. As a result—the resolution stated—productivity decreased in industry, the reduced delivery obligations were not fulfilled and "the increase in living standards was not based on firm and enduring foundations".

The resolution stressed that in developing industry "the economic endowments of our country should be taken into account" and the mistakes of pre-1953 industrialization were to be avoided. At the same time, it should not be forgotten that the material foundations of socialism

were primarily strengthened by "the development of socialist industry, heavy industry in the first place". The resolution stressed the need for developing the co-operative farms, which is to be achieved through the voluntary joining of the working peasants, at a more temperate pace. At the same time, support should be given to the small and middle peasants farming individually, helping them "to better utilize their economic opportunities and increase production on the basis of the principle of material interestedness". In other words, also in this sphere the mistakes that occurred before 1953, including overtaxation and the exaggeration of delivery obligations, should be avoided. The resolution declared that an uncompromising struggle was necessary "primarily against right-wing deviation", and in addition, against "the left-wing ultras and the violators of the rule of law".

The March 1955 resolution correctly indicated the right-wing mistakes and their consequences. It correctly stated that the main responsibility rested with Imre Nagy and those who supported him. It designated important tasks to correct the mistakes. At the same time, it mentioned left-wing mistakes only formalistically, therefore it did not create an adequate basis for a struggle on two fronts, but promoted the strengthening of sectarian positions.

The resolution elicited a certain anticipation in political life, but as the sectarian policy made further headway, uncertainty persisted and in fact increased. The authority of the party leadership continued to weaken, one of the main reasons for this still being the delay in the reinvestigation of the trials which had violated the rule of law.

An increasing number of the innocent people who had been sentenced were released from prison; but because it was afraid to face up to its responsibility, the Rákosi group maintained part of the unjust accusations against them. Instead of adequately helping to remedy the grave moral injustice, new wounds were inflicted by declaring the political reliability of these offended people as doubtful.

The right-wing forces capitalized on the continuation of the injustices for their own ends. They strove to rally the maligned people to their side and were in fact able to win over some of them. However, the innocently persecuted comrades, who recognized these right-wing en-

deavours and remained loyal to the ideals of communism and the Party, opposed these disruptive efforts, and fought shoulder to shoulder with all those who urged the energetic redress of sectarian mistakes and pressed for the repulsion of the right-wing efforts. János Kádár, who after his release became the Party Secretary of the 13th District of Budapest, and later First Secretary of the Pest County Party Committee, fought in the front-line of this struggle.

Unable to break with their sectarian mistakes, the Rákosi group failed to develop a political line that would strengthen the rank and file of the Party and overcome political uncertainty. The March resolution called for a struggle against the violators of legality but at the same time those who introduced the resolution continued to violate the rule of law, when they hampered the full moral and political rehabilitation of those who had been unjustly sentenced. This in itself was sufficient to weaken the authority of the leadership and increased the doubts of the party members and the general political uncertainty. This was made even worse by the emergence of sectarian mistakes in other spheres as well.

Instead of eliminating the right-wing efforts, evident in the People's Front organizations, through the more sound elaboration of the policy of alliances, the Rákosi group again endeavoured to atrophy the People's Front. At the same time, sectarian manifestations were again evident in rural policy. The taxes of the individual peasants and their delivery obligations were raised again, although not to the degree of the pre-1953 level. This was intended to provide better supplies for the towns. In addition, economic pressure—and in places administrative pressure—was again exercised in the organization of the co-operative farms.

Work on some of the unreasonably discontinued capital projects was partially resumed, but uncertainty continued to prevail concerning the perspectives of industrial development. The situation was such that the outlay for the new five-year plan had still not been completed during the year.

In 1955, industrial production increased by 9.6 per cent and within this the output of state industry rose 8.3 per cent, the larger part of the increase was derived from higher productivity. The support given to the co-operative sector became larger. By the end of 1955, the number of

co-operative farm members was over 300,000 and they cultivated 20 per cent of the arable land of the country.

Thus, the economic situation had improved and living standards had continued to slightly improve. However, political uncertainty still prevailed. The revisionist faction organized within the Party that collaborated with various non-party right-wing groups played an increasing role in this. Imre Nagy was increasingly placed in the limelight as their political leader, and he accepted this role.

In April 1955, the Central Committee relieved Imre Nagy of his membership in the Political Committee and excluded him from its own ranks because of his anti-Marxist views and factional activities. On the recommendation of the Central Committee, András Hegedüs was appointed to replace him as Prime Minister. Mihály Farkas, who had supported Imre Nagy over a period of time, was relieved of his membership in the Political Committee and from his post as a Secretary of the Central Committee, but he remained a member of the Central Committee.

Urged by the Political Committee, in May 1955 Imre Nagy addressed the Central Committee in a letter in which he accepted the March and April resolutions. "Although they are exceptionally strict," he said, "the measures adopted against me as a result of my errors criticized justly and in a party-like manner, meet with my acceptance." He refrained from mentioning any of the mistakes he committed; with reference to his illness he promised at a later date to give "a detailed theoretical analysis and on the basis of this, to exercise penetrating self-criticism in a party-like manner". At the same time, he stated: "I will support the Party with all my strength and will take the lead in rapidly rooting out any attempts or intentions, from wherever they may derive, which would try to take advantage of my anti-Marxist and anti-Leninist right-wing mistakes to loosen or disrupt the theoretical and organizational unity of the Party or its discipline, or which would try to turn them against the interests of our People's Republic and socialist construction."

As a matter of fact, by this time Imre Nagy was active as the leading representative of an organized faction and on the encouragement of his associates he started to work out their revisionist guidelines in more

detail. Because of his anti-party activities, the Central Committee excluded him from the Party in the autumn of 1955. However, the revisionist faction continued its operation both within and outside the Party. In addition to Imre Nagy, Géza Losonczy, who at that time worked in the editorial offices of the *Magyar Nemzet*, played a leading role in this faction. Their activities were made easier by the fact that the exclusion of Imre Nagy and some of his associates was not accompanied by an appropriate struggle on the plane of principles against revisionism.

The Rákosi group did not dare to engage in open theoretical and political discussion and even at intra-party conferences they tried to repress such debates. An ever increasing number of people who were concerned about the cause of proletarian power, including members of the Central Committee demanded the settlement of the matter, the clarification of the responsibility of the Rákosi group and the renewal of the Political Committee. However, the Rákosi group resisted these demands. The crisis within the party leadership became more acute and threatened to become a crisis within the Party as a whole.

**The 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet
Union and Its Effects in Hungary
The Development of the Domestic Political Situation
The July 1956 Meeting of the Central Committee of the
Hungarian Working People's Party**

The 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was convened in February 1956. This was an outstanding event, not only for the Soviet Union, but for the entire world Communist movement. At the time of its deliberations the socialist camp confronted the imperialist world in close cohesion. The resolution of the Congress stated: "It is the main characteristic of our times that socialism has outgrown the borders of a single country and has become a world system, and capitalism has proved to lack the strength to prevent this process of world history." Another event of historical significance in the change of

the international balance of power and in the weakening of imperialism was the rapid disintegration of the old colonial system.

However, imperialism still survived and its existence was a constant source of war danger; the Congress pointed out that the imperialist powers "are preparing for new sanguinary wars". It also stated that the forces fighting for peace and the security of the peoples also were growing. Assessing the changes in the international balance of power, for the first time the Congress declared the highly significant thesis that war was no longer inevitable, and there was a realistic possibility for preventing a third world war. The failure of the aggression against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the war in Vietnam waged by French imperialism, and the recognition of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam supported this statement of the 20th Congress with the force of facts.

The thesis on the possibility of avoiding a new world war—which was based on the Marxist-Leninist analysis of the changes which had occurred in the international situation—provided a significant ideological and political weapon for the struggle being waged for the peaceful co-existence of the two world systems and the guarantee of peace.

The change in the international power relations, and especially the coming into existence and strengthening of the world socialist system, facilitated the development of the revolutionary movements in the capitalist world. The resolution of the Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union pointed out that the possibilities had increased for the working class to assume power without a civil war, for the revolution to peacefully succeed at least in some countries.

The Congress also emphasized that the transition to socialism could take place under various conditions. This thesis also encouraged the people's democratic countries to pay greater attention to the analysis and consideration of the concrete conditions for building socialism.

The 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union reviewed the internal development of the Soviet Union and its international tasks from various aspects. The criticism of the mistakes created by the cult of personality and the further development of party and social life were given very ample consideration at the Congress. The violations

of the rule of law committed under Stalin's leadership were condemned. It was emphasized that the Leninist principle of collective leadership was to be strictly enforced in the Party.

The 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union elicited a considerable response in the world Communist movement and in the international working-class movement as a whole. It contributed to the ideological and political development of the Communist parties and it stimulated co-operation between the Communist and other anti-imperialist forces and the struggle for the consolidation of international peace.

The 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union also had a profound effect in Hungary. The party members, who expected and urged the solution of the crisis in the leadership and an energetic redress of the political mistakes, attached justified hopes to the lessons of the 20th Congress. However, the Rákosi group thwarted the realization of these hopes. Statements were made about collective leadership and it was admitted that two and a half years after the June 1953 resolutions this was still not "sufficiently" enforced even in the Central Committee; but nothing was said about the fact that they were the ones who had obstructed this. Other statements were made to the effect that the rehabilitation measures had to be consistently carried out, but in fact it was again they who had prevented this. Under such conditions those statements which were otherwise correct lacked authenticity.

In earlier decades, Rákosi had gained significant credit in the revolutionary movement, but his activities after 1948 were of considerable harm to the cause of socialism. He played a leading role in the sectarian distortions of party policy, in the violation of the Leninist rules of party life and in the gross curtailment of the role of the Central Committee. He bore the principal political responsibility for the violations of the rule of law and also for the delays with regard to rehabilitation. At the same time, this leading representative of a dogmatic approach and sectarian policy made unprincipled concessions to the right-wing demands of the Imre Nagy group on more than one occasion. To guide party policy back to the proper path and strengthen the authority of the party leadership it was imperative to remove Rákosi and his close group

from the party leadership, all the more so as it soon became obvious that they were continuing their earlier policy.

It was not only the Rákosi group, but the Imre Nagy-Losonczy faction also that adopted a double-faced attitude to the lessons of the 20th Congress; the latter declared themselves to be the "true" followers of that Congress. In the meantime, they intensified their relations with the various counter-revolutionary groups. The right-wing Social Democrats and other groups who were demanding a bourgeois democracy became more active; they became a kind of links between the revisionists and the Horthyite wing of the counter-revolutionary forces.

The bourgeois forces who favoured the restoration of capitalism exploited the dissatisfaction caused by the policy of the Rákosi group for the purposes of more open anti-socialist propaganda. On the other hand, the Nagy group continued its campaign against the system as the spokesmen for "remedying the mistakes" with the slogan of "democratic socialism".

A common feature of the propaganda of the bourgeois counter-revolutionary groups and the revisionist faction was the embellishment of Western capitalist conditions and the belittlement of the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries. They idealized bourgeois democracy and spoke a good deal about the wealth and rich supplies of goods in the Western capitalist countries, but were silent about the anomalies there, the class antagonisms and the anti-people policy of the imperialist powers pregnant with the danger of war. They remained silent about the genuine role of the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries in the defence of peace and in supporting the liberation struggles of the peoples; but they emphasized the shortcomings in these countries and scorned the historical results of their development. They spoke in terms of admiration about Yugoslavia, primarily because that country had dissociated itself from the Warsaw Treaty.

Both the bourgeois counter-revolutionary groups and Imre Nagy and his associates pursued a policy characterized by the ambition to remove the country from the socialist camp. One of the principal aims in the political programme of Imre Nagy and his group was the struggle against the "policy of blocs"; but this programme cast a smokescreen

over the difference between the aggressive NATO bloc and the Warsaw Treaty that served the defence of peace. They used the slogan of "neutrality" to demand the withdrawal from the Warsaw Treaty, which would dissociate the country from the defence alliance of the socialist countries. And they pursued this policy in a situation when the NATO powers had thrown the gates wide open before the rearmament of the West German revanchists. The Western radio stations and reactionary groups in Hungary extensively encouraged this "neutrality", because they hoped to deprive socialist Hungary of its most important international support.

Another common feature in the propaganda campaign of the bourgeois counter-revolutionary groups and Imre Nagy and his followers was the idealization of the coalition system in the period from 1945 to 1947 and the concealment of the class struggles which were waged under the coalition government. This was propaganda aimed at ensuring the ideological preparation for a return to the state of affairs before the victory of the socialist revolution, carried out under the slogan of "democracy". This was the main form of propaganda that advertised the road leading to a bourgeois restoration. In this same spirit they also put forward a demand for the restoration of the multi-party system.

During the provision of an ideological "basis" for revisionism, Imre Nagy placed the class interests of workers against the interests of the nation. In his opinion the working class "should not subordinate the universal interests of the nation for its own class interests". However, history has confirmed that it is the interests of the working class which most closely coincide with the universal interests of the nation, that the realization of the revolutionary goals of the working class provides the best service for the cause of the entire people. Of course, the working class is able to realize its great aims of serving the good of the working people as a whole only if it gains the support of the working peasants and the intellectuals, representing those of their interests which the general welfare of the nation demands. Consequently, the socialist development of the country to a large degree depends on the development of the alliance between the working class and the other strata of the working people. However, those who subordinate the interests of the

working class, which has assumed power, to the interests of other classes under the slogan of "the universal interests of the nation" have taken the road of discarding the dictatorship of the proletariat. And this—no matter how much one endeavours to prove that he is an adherent of people's democracy and socialism—is tantamount to giving up the cause of socialism.

The reason why the revolutionary representatives of the working class can act openly in the defence of their class interests is that these coincide with the universal interests of the nation. On the other hand, the representatives of the bourgeoisie act as the spokesmen of "national interests" and deny that they represent the interests of the capitalist class. When they endeavour to justify their disavowal of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the revisionists also refer to the "universal interests of the nation", adopting the above method of nationalist propaganda.

The bourgeois counter-revolutionary groups and their revisionist allies extensively capitalized on the Stalin affair in their propaganda. At a closed session of the 20th Congress Khrushchev devoted a special report to Stalin's role in the frame-up trials. This confidential report soon fell into the hands of the Western powers who immediately exploited it to launch a fierce anti-Soviet campaign. They hoped that by this they would be able to set back the process of relaxation that was evident in the international affairs. At the same time, all the right-wing forces exploited the Stalin issue against the Communist parties and those who co-operated with the Communists. The fraternal parties had to make very special efforts, particularly in the capitalist countries, to protect their ideals and policy from the attacks launched from all sides. They distinguished themselves in an important political test, and in the meantime continued their struggle to protect fundamental Marxist-Leninist principles, liquidate the dogmatic approach and to further develop their policy.

In Hungary, the Stalin affair was associated with the embitterment caused by the violations of the rule of law in this country, which was intensified by the delay in the rehabilitation. Thus the Stalin issue further increased the moral shock elicited by the violations of the rule of law, and the ideological and political confusion. The reactionary forces and

their revisionist allies utilized this for their own ends. They received extensive support from the Western radio stations, and primarily from the notorious "Radio Free Europe" of the Americans operating in Munich, which was put into operation to disseminate propaganda against the socialist countries.

The American radio station in Munich primarily encouraged the activities of the revisionists, the "opposition Communists", whom it described as the "true adherents" of socialism. It inspired the illegally operating bourgeois counter-revolutionary groups to let the Imre Nagy group emerge in the front-lines of an open political struggle against the dictatorship of the proletariat, to "let them effect the breakthrough".

The situation was growing increasingly serious.

The party leadership was unable to unfold an appropriate ideological and political struggle against this revisionist attack launched under the banner of "anti-dogmatism", and "anti-Stalinism". The main obstacles were Rákosi and his associates. An increasing circle of Communists, primarily the veteran members of the Party, who had shown great concern about the cause of the dictatorship of the proletariat, urged the Central Committee to approve the required decisions, to renew the Political Committee and replace Rákosi.

The ouster of the Rákosi group was demanded by various people for different reasons. Those who were genuinely anxious about the workers' power demanded such measures in order to redress the sectarian errors and suppress the revisionist activities. On the other hand, the right wing insisted on such a move so that the Nagy-Losonczy faction could seize the leadership of the Party.

Those who urged a struggle on two fronts—who were anxious about the unity of the Party and were cautious about taking any action contrary to what was expected of a Party member—refrained from engaging in public propaganda against the official leaders of the Party. They demanded that the Central Committee should take the appropriate decisions. On the other hand, the revisionists openly carried out propaganda together with their allies operating outside the Party and with great demagoguery they endeavoured to acquire popularity and organize mass

demonstrations. Under the impact of their agitation, many people who were genuinely concerned about the cause of socialism, came under their influence, including a large number of party members.

In July 1956, the Central Committee at last took the first decisions aimed at solving the crisis in the party leadership and remedying the political mistakes. The resolution stated that in 1955 the party leadership had again committed some of the pre-1953 mistakes: the Political Committee was unable to fulfil the expectations justly attached to the lessons provided by the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and there had been "hesitancy and delay" in remedying the mistakes. "The roots of both sectarianism and right-wing opportunism run deep" within the Party, and "the most consistent ideological and political struggle is required" against both.

The resolution took a stand on a number of important questions concerning the development of the country. It emphasized the need for developing socialist democracy. It stated that the democratization of state administration necessitated emphasizing the role played by both the National Assembly and the councils. To increase democracy in social life greater importance had to be placed on the trade unions and other social organizations, and on the development of the People's Front movement. In economic life, "the gradual elimination of exaggerated centralism" should be achieved through increasing the independence of the companies.

The resolution reiterated support for the policy of strengthening the co-operative farms and implementing the socialist reorganization of agriculture. This was especially emphasized because "recently views opposed to the co-operative farms have again been revived". At the same time it was pointed out that in addition to support for co-operatives of a higher form "more help should be given to the formation of co-operative farm groups of less advanced types and for their gradual development". Alongside this the individually farming peasants should be also encouraged to raise their production.

The Central Committee adopted the new five-year plan, which called for a 50 to 52 per cent increase in industry, a 27 per cent increase in agriculture in the average of five years, compared to the average of the

previous five years, and that the living standards should be raised by 25 per cent. These general provisions were realistic.

The decisions of the Central Committee in personal matters were also very important. It primarily depended on these decisions whether it would be possible to overcome the crisis in the leadership, to stop loosening the ranks of the Party and once again to strengthen the Party and the prestige of the party leadership and the government.

Mátyás Rákosi was relieved of his post as First Secretary of the Central Committee and from his membership in the Political Committee. Mihály Farkas—whose grave responsibility for the violations of the rule of law had been ascertained by a special committee set up by the Central Committee—was expelled from the Party. In the case of Mihály Farkas, the resolution gave a political motivation for the decision. On the other hand, Rákosi's replacement was effected without giving a political motivation; the resolution only referred to the deterioration of his health; he was sent for medical treatment and excluded from the leadership in this manner.

The Central Committee was supplemented: János Kádár, Gyula Kállai, György Marosán and Imre Mező were co-opted into it. János Kádár, Károly Kiss, György Marosán and József Révai were admitted to the Political Committee. Comrade Kádár was elected the Secretary of the Central Committee. Ernő Gerő became the First Secretary of the Central Committee.

The resolution of the Central Committee was a success for the Leninist forces of the Party and gave rise to confidence among those concerned about proletarian power and the Party. However, on the debit side of the political decisions there was the fact that the representatives of sectarianism retained a considerable role in the leadership. This was primarily evident in the fact that Gerő became the First Secretary of the Party. He made statements about the need for fighting on two fronts, yet he was unable to confront either the sectarian errors or the right-wing danger with appropriate thoroughness. Instead of an ideological struggle on two fronts, he preferred to experiment with a policy of "forgiveness on two fronts". He announced the opening of a "blank page", and hoped that the errors of the past could thereby be forgotten. However, it was impossible to consolidate the ranks of the Party without

a political and ideological struggle that exposed the old mistakes, particularly as the organized forces of the counter-revolutionaries and their revisionist allies were intensifying their attacks.

The July resolutions of the Central Committee marked the Party's first step to mobilize its forces for the consolidation of the workers' power and to ensure the proper conditions for the building of socialism with the actual development of a two-front struggle. However, the situation was complicated. The Central Committee of the Party and its members were still not unified, at the same time the organized forces of the right remained intact and speeded up their preparations for an open attack, the unleashing of an armed uprising.

**The 1956 Counter-Revolution and its Defeat
The Reorganization of the Party
Two-Front Struggle by the Hungarian Socialist
Workers' Party
The Consolidation of Socialist Power**

August 1956–December 1958

A more favourable opportunity than existed earlier for formulating and implementing the appropriate Marxist–Leninist policy was created by the July 1956 resolution of the Central Committee of the Hungarian Working People's Party. In fact the newly organized Political Committee immediately began to implement the resolutions. What needed to be done was outlined by the leaders of the Party at mass meetings at the end of July. This elicited a favourable response especially among the workers. New party resolutions were passed concerning several important questions. However, the Central Committee was unable to restore the Party's political cohesion and unity of action, and to ensure the fulfilment of the hopes attached to the July resolutions, because there was no clear and unified position in judging what was to be done, although such a stand was of decisive importance in the serious situation.

The resolution of the Central Committee on the policy of the Party regarding intellectuals was published in August. This endeavoured to correct the sectarian mistakes that existed in this field, ensure greater respect for intellectuals, and repulse the revisionist and nationalist perturbation which was especially intensive among the intelligentsia. On the initiative of the Political Committee, this resolution was discussed at meetings. Revisionist groups also expressed their views at these meetings and, under the slogan of combating past mistakes, they continued their disrupting activities within the Party. They no longer concentrated solely on the leading representatives of the former sectarian policy who were still in the Political Committee, but increasingly extended their attacks upon the principal cadres of the state and social organizations, in an endeavour to discredit and intimidate them for being "Stalinists".

The resolution of the Council of Ministers on the development of producers' co-operatives was made public early in September. Easier terms were provided for amortizing loans, further credits were granted for paying compensation for the value of the animals and other goods brought into the collective farms, and the payment of rent for the land contributed was ensured. The decisions also permitted the free market sale of products in excess of delivery obligations, more extensive scope was provided for co-operative farms to engage in commercial activities and they were encouraged to establish subsidiary productive plants. Co-operative farms were also enabled to purchase tractors, trucks, trailers and building materials. At the same time, the resolution facilitated the more effective development of lower grade co-operative farms, specialized groups and provisional co-operative associations.

This resolution of the Council of Ministers would have assisted the correction of the mistakes committed in the co-operative farm movement and could have counteracted the anti-co-operative farm propaganda of the right wing. However, the revisionists, together with other right-wing elements, continued their campaign against the co-operative farms. Their actions encouraged and mobilized the kulaks and perturbed the village workers.

Encouraged by the Central Committee of the Party, the Central Council of Trade Unions began to examine the problems of industrial democracy and called for an improvement in the activity of the trade unions. The revisionists also involved themselves in this activity, and with their demagogy created an atmosphere to exert pressure on the leading bodies of the trade unions, and called everyone who opposed the right-wing attempts to create confusion among "Rákosi-ites" and "dogmatists".

The Central Committee placed on the agenda the development of the people's front movement as one method of remedying the sectarian errors that distorted the policy of alliances. In co-operation with other right-wing elements, the revisionists endeavoured to utilize the attempts to reorganize the People's Front to strengthen their own positions.

There was an upswing in the activity of the various groups of the pre-1949 coalition parties. After concluding a secret pact with the Nagy-

Losonczy faction, Anna Kéthly and her clique prepared for the reorganization of the Social Democratic Party. They believed that the time was ripe for disrupting the political and organizational unity of the workers. The right wing of the former Smallholders Party and the former Peasant Party that had been ousted by the left wing in 1948–9, and who thought it was the appropriate moment for openly raising the banner of anti-communism, also rallied their ranks. Vigorous activity was resumed by some of the representatives of the coalition parties that in 1948–9 sincerely adopted and were ready to implement the socialist aims of the Hungarian Working People's Party, but later became passive as a result of the anomalies in Party policy. In the summer of 1956, most of them hoped to gain "absolution" for their earlier co-operation with the Communists by joining the revisionist factions or the former right wing.

There was a considerable intensification in imperialist propaganda and subversive activity against the socialist countries. The European propaganda staff of the United States of America, with headquarters in West Germany, were the principal directors of this propaganda campaign. The revanchist forces of West Germany also stepped up their activities to undermine the socialist countries. As part of the preparations for their aggressive plans, the Communist Party of Germany was banned in September 1956. Other NATO powers and some "neutral" capitalist countries, in particular Austria, which ensured that the various imperialist agencies established there could operate freely, also assisted the machinations against the socialist countries.

At that time, special objectives motivated British and French ruling circles to intrigue against the socialist countries. They were preparing for military action against Egypt and hoped that, if the disruptive activity against the socialist countries was successful, the Soviet Union would be unable to render adequate assistance to the Egyptian people. The situation was that the Cairo Government had nationalized the Suez Canal, and the British and French shareholders, the former proprietors of the Canal, wanted to get it back.

At that time, the Western anti-communist circles directed their main fire against Hungary. They supplemented their unceasing radio propaganda attack against the people's democratic system and the Soviet Union

with leaflets, which were sent in vast quantities into Hungarian territory by balloons. Their propaganda tactics were based on support for the revisionists, whom they urged to seize the leadership of the Hungarian Working People's Party. In addition, they encouraged and assisted the newly active right-wing circles of the former coalition parties, and surreptitiously rendered extensive aid to the illegal extreme right-wing organizations, enabling them to prepare for an armed attack against the socialist power. The bourgeois restoration forces were then warned to give all their support to the revisionists, because the latter were best equipped to frustrate the Central Committee's attempts to restore Party unity.

Among the well-intentioned people, who in fact took a stand in favour of rectifying past mistakes and consolidating proletarian power, the fact that the Yugoslav press and radio also increasingly supported the Nagy-Losonczy faction caused more confusion than the propaganda of Radio Free Europe. Some Yugoslav journalists and diplomats, stationed in Budapest, personally and intensively participated in this activity. The Nagy-Losonczy faction extensively relied on the assistance of Yugoslav propaganda organs which recommended that the policy of the Federation of Yugoslav Communists was the example to be followed.

Some of the illegal extreme right-wing organizations, surreptitiously supported by the imperialists, were of a military character. Most of them maintained contacts with American or West German espionage organizations. With such names as the Botond Division, League of Cadets, and National Resistance Movement, they carried out their activities under the leadership of various Horthyite and fascist Arrow Cross army and gendarme officers. In addition to preparing for armed action, they also drew up political plans in the event of the socialist system being overthrown. Other groups of the illegal extreme right-wing organizations were of a clerical character. They combined an anti-communist and nationalist campaign with religious propaganda, and their political aim was to achieve the restoration of capitalism, under the cloak of religion, with an extreme right-wing dictatorship. They operated under such names as the Christian Hungarian Party, the Christian Front, and so on, and were mainly organized by members of the dissolved monastic orders.

They also set up underground youth organizations, called the Christian Youth Movement, and so on. The members of these clerical organizations—especially those in the youth organizations—joined in the revisionist activity organized among the intelligentsia.

The revisionists were the organizers and leaders of the machinations to disrupt the Party. At that time, the extreme right-wing bourgeois-fascist groups worked in the background: they took advantage of the deepening political crisis by supporting revisionist actions and strengthened their own illegal organizations.

The Political Committee of the Hungarian Working People's Party resorted to various concessions in its efforts to make the leading groups of the revisionists see reason, but the overall result was that the authority of the Central Committee continued to weaken, the anti-revisionists became less certain and more demoralized, and the influence of the Nagy-Losonczy faction increased.

In this continually worsening situation, the Political Committee and the Party were paralysed for almost two months by the fact that Ernő Gerő had taken his annual leave, János Kádár had been sent to attend the Chinese Party Congress, and a delegation consisting of half of the members of the Political Committee was to go to Yugoslavia in the middle of October. In September 1956, the leadership in fact passed into the hands of István Kovács and Lajos Ács, both secretaries of the Central Committee, and András Hegedüs, the Prime Minister. Such a leadership was the acme of uncertainty and impotence, for which the policy of "mutual reconciliation" was largely to blame. This was proclaimed by Ernő Gerő at the July meeting of the Central Committee and in the situation that subsequently developed it proved to be a complete failure. Goodwill could not be shown towards the misguided unless their false prophets were first exposed, and the right-wing elements were effectively dealt with, both ideologically and politically. However, the Political Committee—since the majority of its members were unable to divorce themselves from the old sectarian errors—was unable to defeat revisionism, the avant-garde of the entire right wing in the ideological and political struggle.

Because of the impotence of the Political Committee, the members of

the Central Committee became increasingly confused and bitter. Some of the members of the Central Committee joined the revisionists, and others in the hope of restoring tranquillity urged a compromise with the circle of Imre Nagy.

The revisionists were able to extend their leadership to the discussion forum of young people which was formed in March 1954, under the name of Petőfi Club, within the framework of the DISZ (League of Working Youth). From the spring of 1956 on, the Club gradually became the propaganda centre for the revisionists. Because of its regular campaign against the system, the Petőfi Club was banned at the end of June. However, in September, the revisionists, who by that time were carrying out their campaign in the open reactivated the Club. From then on, those views that expressed concern over the presence and activization of the class enemy, were declared "sectarian". This was one of the ways in which the revisionists facilitated the activity of the various bourgeois restoration forces and justified their co-operation with them.

The right wing organized similar circles on the model of the Petőfi Club in Budapest and in the provinces, mainly at the universities, in order to create a legal organizational network, and a base for mobilizing the young people under their influence. They urged the creation of an "independent" national association for college and university students in October, thus breaking up the organizational unity of the DISZ. The errors of the youth league were used as a pretext, but the real reason was that the DISZ supported the Party and the power of the working class and could not be diverted from its support. In addition to the revisionists, the bourgeois restoration groups, including the representatives of the illegal extreme right-wing youth organization, were in the forefront of this action against the DISZ. They extended their influence over the college and university students who had split away from the DISZ and took an opposing stand to the Party, and rallied them in an organization named the MEFESZ (Federation of Hungarian University Students) in order to support the political bloc of the revisionists and other right-wing elements.

The journalists and writers who joined the revisionists extensively supported these actions against the Party and system. Their influence

increased and predominated in the majority of newspapers and the radio. This considerably contributed to the organization and preparation for the attack of the various right-wing elements. As a result of the division in the Political Committee and Central Committee of the Hungarian Working People's Party, uncertainty was by that time so great in the government organizations that they passively witnessed the new impact of revisionist propaganda and open plotting. The leaders of the Party and the Government expressed their disapproval with ineffective critical comments, or in some cases tacitly registered what was happening without being able to stop the process.

Early in September, a resolution of the Political Committee of the Hungarian Working People's Party ruled that the ashes of László Rajk and his associates, those comrades who were the victims of unlawful trials, should be laid to rest in a worthy manner. It was a painful responsibility, but nevertheless it was a moral and political duty, which at the same time demonstrated that the Party was determined to liquidate the last vestiges of the personality cult. There was disagreement among the members of the Political Committee concerning the implementation of the resolution. Some of them, who were concerned that the right-wing elements would take advantage of the funeral for their own political aims wanted to delay it, while others urged a compromise with the Nagy-Losonczy faction concerning the funeral. The members of the Central Committee could not reach agreement on this issue. The delay and the attempted compromise made it possible for the revisionists to take the lead in urging the arrangement of the funeral. This was held on 6 October, but under conditions when the right-wing forces in Hungary—and, of course, the Western radio stations—were able to reap the benefit of the moral consternation caused by earlier unlawful actions, and utilize it to the maximum to deepen the political chaos. Right-wing journalists, and especially the members of the leading revisionist group, played an important part in this. They capitalized on the funeral of László Rajk and his companions and, playing on the grief of the Party membership, they managed to turn political public opinion against the system. This provided extensive aid for all the right-wing forces.

In the summer of 1956, the revisionists started a campaign for Imre Nagy's readmission to the Party, Central Committee and Political Committee. This action was aimed at forcing the leaders of the Hungarian Working People's Party to retreat, while increasing the influence of their own faction. In August, the Political Committee decided that if Imre Nagy admitted his mistakes, his expulsion would be invalidated. Nagy proceeded with the cunning of a factionist: he urged the settlement of his Party affairs, he sometimes promised his "loyalty", and at other times, "on account of the general atmosphere", he made demands, waiting for the campaign in his favour to gather momentum. On 4 October, in a letter written to the Central Committee, he called for a public discussion on his views which were considered to be incorrect in the past, and promised that he would exercise self-criticism, if this "proved to be necessary as a result of ideological clarification", on the other hand he insisted on a correction of the earlier judgement if the criticism against him proved to be wrong. He remained silent about the ideological and political platform he had elaborated after his expulsion, which had been secretly distributed, and endeavoured to conceal his role in the revisionist conspirators' leadership. "I agree with the Leninist principles of democratic centralism", he wrote, "according to which I regard Party resolutions as compulsory for myself even if I disagree with them in part or whole." In the meantime, the secret headquarters of the revisionist faction, of which he was a leader, organized endless campaigns against the resolutions of the Central Committee and the Political Committee, and co-operated with the right-wing Social Democrats and other groups opposed to the system with the aim of overthrowing the Government and jointly seizing power. However, these activities of Imre Nagy were exposed only after the investigations that followed the defeat of the counter-revolution; at the time in question, all these were unknown to the majority of the Central Committee members. The Political Committee of the Hungarian Working People's Party changed its earlier stand and readmitted Imre Nagy to the Party on 13 October without his having exercised any self-criticism, and proposed that the Central Committee should in the immediate future discuss "the mistakes actually committed by Imre Nagy, and to what extent there were exaggerations

or incorrect statements in the earlier Party resolutions". This decision resulted from the fact that the majority of the Central Committee accepted Imre Nagy's promise of loyalty, hoping that as a Party member he would acknowledge his errors and thereby assist the isolation of misguided people from hostile trouble-makers. What occurred, however, was that the revisionists took advantage of this decision to intensify their propaganda in support of Imre Nagy.

An official visit to Yugoslavia by a Hungarian party and government delegation was due to take place at the time of the resolution. In its decision, the Political Committee was probably influenced by the wish to somehow settle the Party affairs of Imre Nagy, who was known to enjoy Yugoslav support, prior to the trip to Belgrade.

On the invitation of the Federation of Yugoslav Communists, the Hungarian party and government delegation, under the leadership of Ernő Gerő, left for Yugoslavia on 15 October, and returned on 23 October. It was during that period that the conspirators finalized their preliminary plot to trigger off the counter-revolutionary revolt.

The Counter-Revolutionary Revolt

The armed revolt started following a demonstration organized by the revisionists. The Nagy-Losonczy faction started this action with the aid of the students' organizations under its influence—and used as a pretext "solidarity" with events in Poland. For at that time, right-wing forces in Poland had managed to utilize the sectarian errors of the former leadership to unleash a political crisis. The counter-revolutionary forces in Hungary hoped that the events in Warsaw would lead in a nationalist and anti-Soviet direction.

Their action was facilitated by the fact that *Szabad Nép*, the central newspaper of the Party—where the revisionists had gained the upper hand in the editorial offices—welcomed the preparations for the demonstration on 23 October.

The Political Committee and the government vacillated on whether to permit or ban the march. It was known that the right wing intended

to utilize the event for an attack against the system, and so at first the demonstration was prohibited. Protests were immediately organized by the revisionists—naturally in the name of "democracy"—and the government retreated, withdrew the prohibition and granted permission for the demonstration. Some of the Party committees requested Party workers to participate in the procession and endeavour to keep it to a normal course. The Central Committee of the League of Working Youth adopted a similar stand. However this instruction was politically vague and organizationally diffuse—and therefore ineffective against the planned and guided operation of the right-wing groups.

Under the leadership of the revisionists, the demonstration began in the form of action by students on the afternoon of 23 October. The majority of the young people who went out to demonstrate did not want a counter-revolution, but wished to protest against past errors and urge the removal of those who obstructed a rectification of the sectarian policy. However, they came under the influence of revisionist and nationalist elements who skilfully exploited the slogans of the struggle against these mistakes, and the good intentions of the students were abused. Extreme right-wing groups participated in the demonstration from the very start and gradually took over its direction. Their nationalist and anti-Soviet demagoguery was soon combined with open anti-socialist exhortations. Red flags were torn down and trampled in the mud, red stars and the emblem of the People's Republic were destroyed, the symbols of the revolutionary working-class movement and the people's democracy were defiled, and while the national flag was continually waved, the shout was voiced, "All Hungarians are with us." In consternation, some of the revisionists witnessed this open counter-revolutionary propaganda, but dared not oppose it. However, these acts were glorified by the revisionist leadership which declared the atmosphere of an anti-communist pogrom to be insignificant, and their propagandists competed with the extreme right wing in their nationalist and anti-Soviet instigations.

The police force was passive, for it had been paralysed by the vacillation of the government and by political confusion within its ranks. Some leaders of the Budapest police, including the Chief Commissioner, had

joined the revisionist faction. The complete passivity on the part of the authorities concerning the maintenance of order, the vacillation of the Government, and the surrendering of the streets to the elements opposed to the system, all interacted to increase political chaos within the Party, and within the social and government organizations. And in the evening of 23 October, the elements, which had prepared themselves for armed revolt, unleashed the uprising. They relied on the right-wing mood of the masses, induced by the demonstrations prevailing in the streets.

During the evening of 23 October, armed groups of the counter-revolutionary insurgents launched an attack against the building of the Hungarian Radio and *Szabad Nép*, and against some insufficiently protected armouries and other important targets. Former Horthyite and fascist Arrow Cross army and gendarme officers assumed the leadership in the organization and direction of these attacks. With the help of the revisionists and the clerical organizations, they were able to temporarily recruit some hundreds of misled students and other young people to their armed groups and set up separate detachments of young people. They primarily emphasized the participation of these groups in their propaganda, in order to conceal the fact that they had organizations prepared in advance for armed struggle. There was a rapid increase in the reactionary forces consciously opposed to the people's democracy, who had been activated by the revolt. Hooligan elements also joined the armed revolt in increasing numbers, and so did groups sent in by the West, some in advance and some as the action gathered momentum.

After the outbreak of the uprising, the Central Committee immediately met in session. The necessary political unity could not be achieved even under the pressure of the critical situation, however it was established that counter-revolutionary activity had started and that the enemy had been able to recruit a large number of misguided people, especially young people, in this action. Since an armed attack had been launched against the people's power, the offensive should be repulsed and the enemy rendered harmless by the armed forces.

The armed revolt caused considerable consternation among the Party members and all adherents of socialism. They expected the Party leadership and Government to mobilize the required forces without delay.

The revisionist leadership manoeuvred in its preparations for seizing power. Imre Nagy acknowledged before the Central Committee that a counter-revolution had started and declared himself ready to help well-intentioned people become aware of what was going on and defeat the revolt. In the belief that in the critical situation Imre Nagy—putting aside any personal interests—would provide assistance as a Communist, the Central Committee accepted his declaration and admitted him and some of his associates to the Central Committee. It was also decided that András Hegedüs should be replaced as Prime Minister and Imre Nagy should again take over the post. Imre Nagy declared himself ready to use arms to defeat the counter-revolution; he and Losonczy were also co-opted into the Political Committee.

State security detachments and an armoured unit were instructed to go into action to suppress the armed attack. However, the tanks were ordered to draw up at the Radio building without ammunition, and simply rely on the psychological effect of their presence to terminate the attack. The counter-revolutionaries soon became aware of the instruction and were easily able to capture the tanks, for with no ammunition, the tank crews were unable to defend themselves: immediately the rumour was spread that the soldiers had "changed sides".

The Budapest garrison of the People's Army consisted of only a small number of troops. Before the outbreak of the counter-revolutionary revolt, the Political Committee had considered the need for moving larger military forces to the capital, but because of the divided leadership no resolution was agreed on. It was only in the late evening hours of 23 October, that the Party leadership and Government arrived at the decision that some provincial regiments were immediately to be sent to the capital to restore order. At the same time, on the proposal of the Central Committee, the Government requested the assistance of Soviet troops near Budapest, and received an immediate response. As a result, the vicinity of the Radio building, the *Szabad Nép* offices and the majority of the other objects, captured by the counter-revolutionaries, were freed of insurgents on 24 October.

The Central Committee issued an appeal to the population on 24 October. This stated that the enemies of the people had "raised their

hands against the state of the people, attacked the public buildings of the capital, and voicing counter-revolutionary slogans, had murdered, looted, destroyed and caused fires. The aim of this vile attack against our people's democracy is to overthrow our people's democratic order", thwarting Party and Government "efforts to rectify the shortcomings of our economic and political life, to assure a better life for our people". The counter-revolutionaries "with their filthy slanders aim to shake our people's confidence in the Soviet Union and wrench our country away from the family of socialist countries. The aim of their dark schemes is to turn our country against our friends, render us defenceless against imperialist intrigues, deprive our people of their freedom, and restore the power of the capitalists and landlords".

The appeal contained the information that in a number of plants the Budapest workers had frustrated the penetration of the insurgents. In fact counter-revolutionary bands, with the help of the students under their influence, had tried to break into several large factories, in order to disband the local Party organizations and organize the reactionary elements hiding in the enterprises that had been activated by the uprising, and also win over the drifting elements. The Party organizations rapidly set up factory guards; they requested arms, in order to repel, if necessary in armed struggle, any new attacks of the counter-revolutionaries. The Central Committee passed a resolution that the Communists were to be armed, but this was not put into effect. There was chaos and sabotage in the general staff of the army, and the revisionist leadership of the Budapest police prefecture also sabotaged the implementation of the resolution.

As the majority of the insurgents had been scattered, more favourable *military* conditions were provided for the rapid defeat of the revolt, but the deterioration of the *political* conditions have dangerously worsened. The revisionist leadership of the conspirators, headed by Imre Nagy and Losonczy, had infiltrated the Central Committee of the Party, and in this way two centres came into existence. One was the Political Committee, which included some of the leading representatives of the revisionists. The other was the revisionist centre, whose existence could be sensed, although its activities remained concealed from the Political Committee. The second centre, which had penetrated the Central Com-

mittee, maintained and extended its relations with other right-wing forces and also with the representatives of some of the rebels. After Imre Nagy moved into the post of Prime Minister, the revisionists, and with their help other right-wing elements, were rapidly able to increase their power and influence in Government organizations, the press and other areas. On the other hand, there was increasing ideological and political confusion and organizational decomposition among the forces fighting against the revisionists.

In his first radio statement as Prime Minister on 24 October, Imre Nagy acknowledged the counter-revolutionary nature of the uprising and, in accordance with the instructions of the Central Committee, called on the rebels to lay down their arms. He announced the government decree introducing martial law, that granted an amnesty to those who surrendered their weapons within a few hours. The amnesty was aimed at isolating misguided people from the deliberate counter-revolutionaries. Most of the students who had joined the rebels—once they realized in consternation whose camp they had joined—had soon deserted the counter-revolution.

A committee headed by Antal Apró and including Lajos Fehér and Ferenc Münnich, received full powers to direct armed action to put down the revolt. This committee ordered a curfew for 25 October, in order to thwart attempted counter-revolutionary demonstrations and facilitate the liquidation of the remaining armed groups, some of which still formed pockets of resistance. However, using his powers as Prime Minister, Imre Nagy prevented the announcement of the curfew, describing it as "anti-people", on the pretext that it would prevent the population from doing their daily shopping. And in the Central Committee the strengthened revisionist group succeeded in creating the kind of atmosphere in which Imre Nagy's action was accepted. Martial law, which had already been decided upon, could not be put into effect, for Imre Nagy and his clique succeeded in delaying its introduction. In this way, the revisionist leadership obstructed the mopping up planned by the defence committee and enabled the organizations of the right—which were expanding—to arrange additional mass actions on 25 October.

All the organizations of the counter-revolution, including the revisionists, encouraged by the extensive co-operation of the Western radio stations, began a frantic campaign of incitement against the state security detachments and the Soviet units that supported them. On 25 October, the various right-wing centres organized a demonstration demanding that the ÁVH (State Security Authority) should be disbanded and that the Soviet troops should leave the country. One of their armed groups, from concealed positions near the roof of the Ministry of Agriculture, opened fire on the crowds demonstrating in front of Parliament, and immediately the right-wing elements spread the lie that "the ÁVH are shooting at the people". Hardly had the murderous weapons of the provocators been fired, before Radio Free Europe in Munich was already beaming this "news" over the air. This bloody provocation was used to instigate a pogrom atmosphere against the state security forces.

Utilizing the renewed demonstrations, the counter-revolutionaries realigned their scattered armed groups and also extended their activities to the provinces. They directed attacks against the prisons, and both political prisoners and convicted criminals were released and with the participation of these elements additional armed bands were organized. The hundreds of young people who had dissociated themselves from the revolt were replaced by thousands of criminals.

There were heated arguments in the Central Committee of the Party on what was to be done. Imre Nagy and his associates had, already on October 25, taken an open stand against the armed suppression of the revolt.

There was a clash of two views. Those who demanded that the revolt should be quashed, protested against Imre Nagy's refusal to announce the curfew and take the necessary military measures. On the other hand, the clique of Imre Nagy advocated negotiations with the rebels, creating the false hope that if this occurred the revolt could be ended without bloodshed. They argued that the insurgents were "partly fighting for justified demands" and, in order to calm the people down, these demands should be satisfied. Confusion and chaos reigned in the Central Committee. Gerő—realizing the complete failure of the policy he also represented—retreated before the demands of the revisionists and decided to

support Imre Nagy's proposals. The viewpoint prevailed that efforts should be made to terminate the revolt without bloodshed.

Gerő—who had become a heavy moral and political burden—was relieved of the post as First Secretary of the Party, for he was in fact unsuitable to be in charge of the complex struggle. The delay over his removal had a negative effect, in that the right-wing forces were able to pronounce that this decision was their own political success.

The Central Committee elected János Kádár as the First Secretary of the Party. The majority of the Central Committee had confidence in Comrade Kádár—a fact which both sectarians and revisionists had to acknowledge. However, there was still considerable political dissension and it was increasing. In fact Imre Nagy and his clique had gone one step further in their assistance to the counter-revolutionary revolt.

At the Central Committee meeting already on 26 October, the Nagy-Losonczy faction openly demanded that the earlier assessment should be changed and the counter-revolution should be declared a "national democratic revolution". In this way, Imre Nagy and his clique identified themselves with the demands of those who hoped to bring about a capitalist restoration in a bourgeois liberal form. The bourgeois forces regarded such a restoration of capitalism as a "national" and "democratic" cause; political speculations prompted them to avoid the term "counter-revolution" and for that reason they tried to rename it a "revolution". This designation was also blared by the Western radio stations, which showered praise on the rebels.

The Central Committee at its meeting on 26 October rejected this dangerous motion which would have been tantamount to glorifying the counter-revolutionary revolt, and condemning and further demoralizing the defenders of the workers' power. However, a plan was approved that the Government should declare an amnesty for all those who laid down their arms by 10 p.m. on the evening of 26 October and that it should negotiate with the insurgents and fulfil their "just demands".

The Central Committee took a stand for the reorganization and political expansion of the Government. Thus, among others, Zoltán Tildy and Béla Kovács, two leaders of the former Smallholders Party, were co-opted into the Government. On 27 October, the *Szabad Nép* published

a statement by the Central Committee on the situation. The statement called upon "the Communists, the Hungarian working people, and above all, the workers, the armed forces, the former partisans, the firm protectors of the people's power to mercilessly annihilate all those using arms against the state power of our People's Republic, if they have not laid down their weapons by the deadline set".

The revisionists did not reconcile themselves to the 26 October decision of the Central Committee. Once again they thwarted the introduction of martial law and directed an offensive against the position of the Central Committee through the columns of *Szabad Nép*. The leading article in the official newspaper of the Party on 28 October was a stab in the back for the resolution and appeal of the Central Committee. It declared that the counter-revolutionary revolt was not a counter-revolution, in which also some misguided but honest people became entangled, but a "national" and "democratic" uprising that had been joined by "counter-revolutionary elements" too. The article in *Szabad Nép* caused considerable consternation and increased the confusion among Party members and among those ready to defend the workers' power, while at the same time it was warmly welcomed all along the right-wing front.

These were the conditions under which the Central Committee of the Hungarian Working People's Party met on 28 October. Under the demoralizing influence of the treacherous leading article in *Szabad Nép*, the opinion prevailed that by changing the assessment of the events the agitated mood of the people may be calmed down. In this situation the Nagy-Losonczy faction was able to enforce its demands. The Central Committee did not condemn the seditious leading article in *Szabad Nép*, but accepted and endorsed it. It also agreed that the Government should request the command of the Soviet troops stationed in Hungary to withdraw its units from Budapest and return them to their bases.

In the worsened situation, created by the *Szabad Nép*'s leading article, out of an erroneous principled and practical concept, the Central Committee of the HWPP consented to the 28 October decisions, in the uncertain hope of avoiding further bloodshed. On the other hand, political speculations prompted Imre Nagy's revisionist leadership to insist on this; they co-ordinated their moves with their allies in the hope

that in the future, the rival restoration organizations would recognize the leading role of their group and assist the clique to establish "order".

In a radio statement on 28 October, Imre Nagy openly glorified the revolt and announced the disbanding of the ÁVH. The right-wing elements, capitalizing on the earlier violations of the law, inflamed general hatred against the ÁVH, and used it as a pretext for demanding the dissolution of the state security forces safeguarding law and order, for the ÁVH was an obstacle to their restoration attempts. The Government statement of Imre Nagy politically condemned the defenders of the workers' power, and glorified those who had attacked it with arms. This further aggravated the demoralization in the camp of the adherents of the working people's power.

By that time, Imre Nagy had openly adopted as his government platform the demands of the rebels, which were in fact intended to overthrow the workers' power. As part of this programme, he announced that the insurgents' detachments would be incorporated into the armed bodies of the state. Their representatives were quickly drawn into the leadership of the armed bodies and were in fact put in charge. All this intensified the dismay and political confusion that already existed among the officers and in the ranks of the army, particularly as the cease-fire order, issued simultaneously with the disbanding of the state security forces, prohibited the armed forces of the state from taking action against the rebels.

In effect, the radio statement of Imre Nagy did not "calm the moods", but enabled the right wing to continue its incitement even more openly, for the counter-revolutionary schemes had received a new impetus, a further attack was to be launched against the workers' power. This was opportune, for in accordance with the request of the Government, the Soviet troops had been withdrawn from Budapest. And all the results of their assistance were cancelled out by the lack of adequate Hungarian leadership. Imre Nagy and his clique had managed to completely paralyse the Central Committee, while the headquarters of the counter-revolution operated unhindered. In fact additional "headquarters" and organizations were set up. The armed groups of the counter-revolution rapidly increased, the detachments which had been disbanded earlier

were reorganized, and some of the young people who left them on 24 and 25 October returned to their ranks.

Although the leaders of the armed counter-revolutionary groups were given a role in the leadership of the armed forces of the state, they still retained their own separate detachments. Under the leadership of the extreme reactionaries and following tactical guidance from the Western imperialists, they launched attacks against the police prefectures, the Party Committees, the factories and other targets. Most of the police stations and district police offices in Budapest were captured in quick succession, which was not difficult, for the head of the police prefecture of the capital had issued orders that the rebels were not to be resisted and policemen should hand over their weapons to them on demand. In this way, the rebels acquired the arms that should have been given to the Communist defence groups. Armed gangs attacked, captured and destroyed the headquarters of the Party Committees which had been centres of resistance against the counter-revolutionaries. Earlier, gangs that had obtained arms in Budapest had gone to the provinces in order to reinforce local groups there and organize anti-communist pogroms. They launched bloody provocations at Magyaróvár, Miskolc, Ózd and elsewhere.

On 28 and 29 October, the Budapest Party Committee drafted a plan to rally the revolutionary forces and launch a counter-offensive to defend the workers' power, and began to implement it. However, this was still contemplated in co-operation with the Imre Nagy group, who were informed of the plan, and, as a result, the plan also came to the knowledge of the military leaders of the rebels. On 30 October, various counter-revolutionary detachments launched a concentrated attack against the headquarters of the Budapest Party Committee at Köztársaság tér (Republic Square). After a gun-battle of several hours in which cannons were used, the building was captured and devastated, and 25 of the defenders were murdered, including Imre Mező, the Secretary of the Party Committee.

As the police had been dispersed, the State Security Authority disbanded and the Soviet troops had been withdrawn, there was no longer any law and order, and the counter-revolutionary mobs were able to

plunder and set fire to buildings at will. By that time dozens of special detachments of counter-revolutionary terrorists roamed the streets of Budapest and the provinces. People were lynched in the streets, and in just one week nearly three hundred Communists had been dragged from their homes or work-places and murdered.

The disintegration of law and order began in the evening of 23 October and was complete by 28 October. Transport had been paralysed and production gradually came to a standstill. During that time, most of the workers were unable to reach their factories or did not try to. However, the organized factory groups of the Communists were still active. They struggled against the grave moral and political confusion which existed even within their own ranks, but, nevertheless, they organized the defence of the factories against penetration by the armed counter-revolutionary groups who ruled the streets, and against the attacks of the right wing that was also stirring in the factories. In fact various groups of class-alien elements had appeared on the scene in the factories: these were the people who had made their way into industry after losing the wealth and privileges they had acquired through exploitation, who believed that their hour had come again. These elements joined forces with the revisionist and right-wing Social Democrats and anarchist careerists, and they tried to win over the members of the Hungarian Working People's Party who were willing to "repent" and make use of their help too. They launched an offensive to dissolve the Communist Party organizations and squeeze out the Communists.

The struggle within the factories was concentrated on setting up workers' councils and determining their composition. The organization of these councils started as early as 25 and 26 October. At that time, most of them were formed under the leadership of Communists and at the encouragement of the Central Committee, to ensure that the workers' councils—which had been given considerable publicity by the revisionists, who pointed to the Yugoslav example—should not be used by the counter-revolutionaries for their own end. However, after 28 October, the counter-revolutionary groups within the factories—often supported by the terrorist action of some armed bands that had managed to get in—declared wherever they were able to that the first workers' councils were dis-

banded; they announced their own list of members for the workers' councils—with the Communists by that time almost completely ousted—and they “ratified” this arbitrary composition at meetings which were usually sparsely attended. In the absence of the majority of the workers, they set up workers' councils of this latter type even at places where none had existed before. Parallel with this, at an increasing number of places the former factory guards were ousted and new ones recruited from their own supporters were installed. The factory guards organized by the Communists after October 23 had practically no arms, although supplies were repeatedly requested, but never received. On the other hand, the right-wing guards set up after the counter-revolutionary bands had got in, had been given weapons and created a reign of terror in the enterprises.

However, with a tenacious struggle, the Communists were able to retain the leadership of some plants, although in the majority, a completely unstable situation had developed. The Communists had retained significant positions, but at the same time the right-wing elements had also acquired a considerable hold and increasingly acted in the expectation of victory. In a significant number of enterprises, especially in the capital, the counter-revolutionary elements had been able to completely seize leadership, and considered their best strategy was to prevent the resumption of work for the time being.

At that time, certain revisionist groups voiced the slogan: “No factory shall be returned!” This slogan developed from the fear of losing political power, a very clear and real danger by that time, and was intended to stimulate the vain hope that the workers' power could somehow be safeguarded in the factories, even if they lost political power. However, if the working class lost political power, it would also lose both the formerly capitalist-owned and the newly built factories. With their slogan “No factory shall be returned!” the revisionists hoped to ensure political influence for themselves in the struggle for power that had developed in the right-wing camp. But by that time, the right-wing elements, having acquired increasingly important positions, openly aimed to push the revisionists aside and undermined the hopes of the revisionists that “order” would be created under their leadership. Thus, the Imre Nagy group was forced to consider the possibility that in a system, where a

counter-revolutionary dictatorship was being established, they would be ousted from the top political leadership and be permitted to exert only a secondary or tertiary role—if they did not completely lose their influence.

The former coalition parties, mainly with former right-wing leaders in the lead, were able to reorganize with the aid of the Imre Nagy Government. Their platform was the assumption of leadership and bourgeois restoration. In the newly formed Smallholders Party, Social Democratic Party and Peasant Party (the latter renamed as the Petőfi Party) discussions were held on how to bring about a restoration, what should be retained from the social welfare achievements, and whom they could consider possible allies, etc. These groupings made vigorous efforts to remove political leadership from the hands of the working class, and to liquidate the workers' power and the dictatorship of the proletariat, and once again introduce the system of capitalist enterprises, capitalism itself.

Parties of a clerical and fascist trend, with names such as the Catholic People's Party, and the Christian National Party, gradually entered the scene, together with organizations calling themselves the Hungarian National Committee and so on, and had at their disposal, or maintained close contact with armed gangs of terrorists. These urged that the Imre Nagy clique and all those who had been Communists or had co-operated with the Communists should be removed. For some days after October 28, American propagandists gave their backing to the activities of these groups. They aimed to speed up the anti-communist terror and the general sanguinary reprisals. It was in this spirit that the Party Committees were ravaged, the bloodshed was staged in Republic Square, and scores of other heinous crimes were committed. The dozen or so parties that had been organized under such names as “Catholic”, “Christian”, and “Christian Socialist” began to set up a joint Christian Front. They considered that they had found the appropriate political leader for their aims in Cardinal Mindszenty, who would be able to give the blessings of the Church to the counter-revolutionary dictatorship, which although it had cloaked itself with “national”, “religious” and “moral” slogans, had already shown its true colours in 1919 and 1920.

This course of affairs and the rise of the white terror shocked a large number of people, even among the leading intellectual groups of the

revisionists. They tried to dissuade the rebels from murdering and plundering, and they called on them to wait for "legal retaliation"; they hoped to achieve this by praising the "purity" of the revolt and shamelessly glorified its activity. Part of the extreme right wing supported this idea, but did not miss the opportunity to blame the revisionists for playing a role in the Communist system and warned them that if they did not keep quiet they would also be called to account for their earlier deeds. Most of them had been ousted from the "revolutionary" and "national" committees and from the leadership of the various organizations. The Imre Nagy leadership passively looked on while all this occurred.

Reorganized with Kéthly and Kelemen in charge, the leadership of the Social Democratic Party remained silent while the extreme right-wing acts of terror took place, and the Prime Minister, Imre Nagy, and his associates did the same. On the other hand, they rivalled the extreme right wing in their anti-Soviet and nationalist incitement. Some of the populist writers stepped into the foreground and condemned the acts of terror. They included László Németh who also spoke out in favour of retaining certain socialist achievements. These people acted as members of the Petőfi Party, but their position within the Party was not so decisive as that of those who had shifted farther to the right, and who favoured more extensive capitalist restoration.

During this period, the counter-revolutionary terror continually increased. The armed right-wing bands had released about 3,000 political prisoners and 10,000 criminal offenders from the prisons. Thousands of Communists were dragged off to the captured prisons, and the armed gangs prepared for general bloody reprisals. During investigations carried out later, it was discovered that a major massacre was to be simultaneously started in Budapest and some provincial towns on 5 November.

The organizational disintegration of the Communist forces and the lack of unity and central direction made the position of the workers and adherents of the people's power very difficult. The Central Committee of the Party was no longer able to act. At its meeting of 28 October, it abolished the Political Committee and the Secretariat. It created a

Presidium of six members which it vested with full power. János Kádár was the chairman, and the members included Antal Apró, Károly Kiss, Ferenc Münnich, Imre Nagy and Zoltán Szántó. It appeared that this smaller body would be more capable of taking action. However, within the Presidium, Imre Nagy continued to act as one of the directors of the revisionist leadership—which, in fact, was endeavouring to frustrate the activity of this body. In this, he was assisted by Zoltán Szántó, one of the members of the Central Committee who, unaware of the treachery of the Imre Nagy group, had decided to closely co-operate with them. The work of the Presidium was disorganized by the members of the Imre Nagy clique from the very beginning; when it was to meet in session, they attempted to draw in large groups of their associates; including several members of the Central Committee who supported them. Two days of heated debates were held under such conditions, and then, under the pressure of the delegations organized by the revisionists on 30 October, the dissolution of the Hungarian Working People's Party was announced, together with the organization of a new Party to replace it. In place of the Presidium set up on 28 October, a new body of seven members was formed as the Provisional Executive Committee. Of these, four members were close associates of Imre Nagy; but in addition to them György Lukács and Zoltán Szántó were members and János Kádár was also included.

A new Party formed under the direction of a leadership with a revisionist majority would inevitably be revisionist, and would not be a party that safeguards the workers' power, but destroys it. It became increasingly obvious that the members of the Imre Nagy clique were accomplices of the counter-revolutionaries, for they had openly surrendered proletarian power. However, it was still not known whether they had gone so far as participants in a preliminary conspiracy, or were simply opportunists who had been swept along by the events. Only a later investigation made it clear that they had shared in the preparation of the counter-revolution and had deliberately sabotaged the defeat of the revolt. However, the fact that they had given up and betrayed the workers' power became fully evident from the new government list compiled with their co-operation on 2 November.

The Government of 2 November was a government of capitalist restoration. The right-wing forces—partly on the advice of the West—permitted Nagy to remain in the post of the Prime Minister, for by that time they feared that a new revolutionary centre would be formed and the revolutionary forces would be reorganized, and turning to the Soviet Union for help, they would launch a counter-attack. In addition, two representatives of the revisionists received portfolios in the cabinet. Three representatives—including Anna Kéthly—of the right-wing Social Democrats, three politicians belonging to the Smallholders Party who had been ousted earlier, and two representatives of the right-wing of the Peasant Party were included in this Government that did not contain a single member who had fought to defend the workers' power. It is true that János Kádár's name was included in the published government list, but this was a deliberate manoeuvre to mislead the Communists, for, as a matter of fact, he had broken with the Imre Nagy group prior to the formation of this new Government. Kádár, Münnich and other comrades had left the Parliament building in order to organize a revolutionary counter-attack. Their absence alarmed the members of the Imre Nagy group, and a search was started to trace them.

The composition of the Imre Nagy Government left no possible doubt that the revisionist leadership had gone the full course in betraying proletarian power and had completely surrendered to the capitalist restoration elements, in fact they were unable to halt the open ascension of the clerical-fascist elements and the emergence of the white terror. Hungarian revisionism, denying the principle of the dictatorship of the proletariat, identified itself with the demand for the restoration of the 1945 coalition system, assisted the reorganization of the capitalist restoration and remained passive when confronted with the activity of the extreme reactionary parties. Joining in the chorus of anti-Soviet nationalist propaganda and paralysing the struggle of those who wanted to defend the socialist system, its exponents sank to the point where they openly abandoned the workers' power. Without Parliamentary approval, the Imre Nagy Government of 2 November arbitrarily announced the repudiation of the Warsaw Treaty. It spurned the defence alliance of the socialist countries, the fundamental international guarantee of the inde-

pendence of socialist Hungary. This break, extensively supported by Western radio propaganda, was one of the major demands of the bourgeois restoration forces, and the declaration provided additional encouragement for the extreme right-wing elements.

Prior to the formation of the 2 November Government, Cardinal Mindszenty, who was serving a sentence for crimes against the people, was brought to Budapest by the right-wing elements and proclaimed as the leader of the "national liberation struggle". His appearance on the scene was somewhat like that of a candidate for the post of head of state, for he was ready to take part in the formation of a so-called "Christian National" government—something that had gained notoriety during the Horthyite counter-revolution. With the approval of the Imre Nagy Government, he gave a radio address on 3 November, in which he announced what he considered to be the guiding principles for implementing the restoration. He urged the removal and settling accounts with all those people who had played any part in the establishment of the people's democratic system. He declared that a system "based on private property and exclusively of a cultural nationalist spirit" should be set up. The "cultural nationalist spirit" he represented was, of course, merely a new label for a régime similar to the "Christian course" of 1920. His ascension opened the eyes of many misguided people, they clearly saw the real face of the counter-revolution, the grave danger of losing socialist power and permitting the white terror to run its full course. In a letter written to Mindszenty, the leaders of the Christian Front stated that the people had gathered from the words of "His Eminence" that "the Church urges that the large factories and large estates should be returned to their former owners". In other words, the Cardinal openly declared what many would have preferred to have kept concealed, for the time being.

The counter-revolutionary forces placed great reliance on their propaganda glorifying private ownership, for they hoped they could get the peasants to side with them and turn them against the workers' power; in other words, they hoped to repeat what they had in fact been able to achieve in the majority of the villages in 1919, when they had worked to subvert the Republic of Councils. However, they were to be disap-

pointed in these hopes. They succeeded in mobilizing the kulaks and the until then skulking supporters of the former landed gentry, which constituted and organized power to be reckoned with, while the revolutionary forces were disintegrating. But the re-emergence of the former landlords and their lackeys, the activity of the kulaks, and the excesses and crimes committed by their organized groups stirred up considerable unrest among the basic masses of the peasants. No one could make them forget that the working class helped them carry out the land reform and defended it, and that the power of the workers had once and for all freed them from the landlords. For this reason, their anxiety concerning the possible weakening of the workers' power, the counter-revolution and the re-emergence of the landlords claiming back their estates, was stronger than the effect of right-wing propaganda in support of private property. Mindszenty's radio statement increased their restlessness, because from it they sensed that behind the spokesmen of private property there lurked the exploiting classes who wanted their land back. That explains why counter-revolutionary attempts to get the peasants to join their cause remained futile.

Even during the most critical period, the supporters of the workers' power, and the people's democratic system constituted a considerable majority compared to the counter-revolutionaries and traitors in both the towns and villages: this was convincingly demonstrated by later developments in the direction of socialism. Nevertheless, in the meantime, the revolutionary forces were paralysed by political confusion and moral shock, by the lack of appropriate revolutionary leadership and organizational dissolution, whereas the counter-revolutionary elements were becoming better organized, together with an increase in their own propaganda and that of the Western radios that magnified their successes. As a result, for the time being, the small but better organized camp of the revisionists, and other types of counter-revolutionaries, had gained the upper hand over the large but undirected and disarranged forces of socialism and the people's democratic system. Thus, the destruction of the workers' power and the victory of the counter-revolution became a real and imminent danger.

The Defeat of the Counter-Revolution and the Strengthening of the People's Power The Reorganization of the Party

The fate of socialism, and the future freedom and peace of the nation, depended on whether the revolutionary forces could compose themselves, again set up a new centre of struggle and whether the masses would rally behind the new revolutionary centre that would unfurl the banner of the workers' power and defend it.

The events of the days that followed 23 October 1956, and the more open and more brutal actions of the counter-revolution, linked with the full exposure of revisionism, created a new situation. Many people recognized the peril, and throughout the country more and more people waited for clear guidance, a summons, and strong leadership into battle for the workers' power. In the thinking of the Communists, and the firm adherents of the democratic system, dismay and bitterness about the counter-revolution were mixed with the desire to act. It was in this spirit that local centres worked, mainly in the outer districts of Budapest and in a number of provincial regions. The most significant revolutionary organizations included those that were active in the 4th, 10th and 13th districts of Budapest and in the provincial mining regions of Nógrád and Dorog: simultaneously the setting up of armed units was also started. Local revolutionary groups were active in a number of factories and co-operative farms, especially in the Tisza region. The creation of a new solid and able leadership was a matter of life and death, and a start on its organization began at the end of October.

The revolutionary centre, under János Kádár's leadership, was formed on 1 and 2 November. Four members of the Presidium of six set up by the October 28 meeting of the Central Committee—János Kádár, Ferenc Münnich, Antal Apró and Károly Kiss—were included, and in addition, György Marosán, Béla Biszku, Lajos Fehér, Gyula Kállai and other comrades. István Dobi, the President of the Presidential Council—the personification of the constitutional order of the Hungarian People's Republic and the legal continuity of power—fought shoulder to shoulder with them.

The founders of the new centre reached the decision that the Imre Nagy Government must be removed and a government should be formed which would undertake the struggle to defeat the counter-revolution and restore law and order.

On the initiative of the new revolutionary centre, the Hungarian Revolutionary Workers'-Peasants' Government was formed on 3 November, with János Kádár as its Prime Minister. In addition, four other Ministers of the Government before 1 November, Antal Apró, Imre Horváth, István Kossa and Ferenc Münnich, were included, as well as Sándor Rónai, the Speaker of the Parliament, Imre Dögei and György Marosán. The new Government issued its first appeal to the Hungarian people from Szolnok on 4 November. It called the working people of the country to arms to defend the people's democratic power, restore order and continue constructive work.

The new Government regarded the disarming of the counter-revolutionary bands as its most urgent task. In addition, one of the fundamental aims of its activity was to promote the separation of misguided people from the class enemy and traitors.

The first point of the programme announced in the appeal of 4 November was the protection of national independence. The second point was "to protect our people's democratic and socialist system against all attackers, to safeguard our socialist achievements, and to ensure our progress on the road of socialist construction." These two points of the platform constituted a closely integrated entity, which the misguided people, who had come under the influence of revisionist and nationalist propaganda, had to be made to understand. They had to be made aware of the fact that overthrowing the workers' power would end national independence, and that the counter-revolution, though paying lip-service to the slogans of national sovereignty, would, in fact, subordinate the country to the Western imperialist powers. A socialist country is able to ensure its national independence only if it consolidates its socialist system.

The third point of the programme called for the "ending of the fratricidal struggle", because a fratricidal struggle was being waged, for with the help of the revisionists, the counter-revolutionaries had used large

numbers of well-intentioned people for their own purposes and had encouraged them to use arms against the protectors of the workers' powers. In order to end this situation, the counter-revolution had to be defeated, and the ideological and political confusion had to be surmounted.

Some points of the programme dealt with the tasks of improving living standards, adjusting economic policy and improving the administration, and with other important responsibilities of the Government, including the abolition of the compulsory delivery system and changes in peasant policy, aimed at strengthening the workers'-peasants' alliance which had been shaken.

One point of the programme stated that the Government considered that it was its duty "to cultivate friendly relations with every socialist country". And it was most important to preserve friendly ties with the Soviet Union, an important prerequisite for the reinforcement of the workers' power. When the Hungarian workers' power was in trouble, it could turn, in the first place, to the Soviet Union, and it could above all expect protection from that country. The Revolutionary Government did not waste time availing itself of that opportunity.

The most recent Hungarian history clearly illustrates the international nature of the class struggle. In 1919, the capitalists and the landlords relied on the imperialists for aid, and the Entente armed forces had defeated the Hungarian Republic of Councils. In 1956, the whole of international imperialism had supported the counter-revolutionary revolt. The Hungarian working class and the Hungarian People's Republic, on the other hand, could count on the support of the socialist countries and the international working class against all the counter-revolutionary attacks. The Revolutionary Government announced in the appeal that "on behalf of our working class and of our country it had addressed the request to the Soviet Army command to aid our people in dispersing the dark forces of reaction, and to help our people restore order and peace in our country". This aid could ensure that the armed bands of counter-revolutionaries would be quickly dispersed and the country could avert a prolonged civil war and especially an intrusion by the armed forces of the Western Powers.

The new Government immediately received the requested aid, and when its appeal was broadcast over the radio at dawn of 4 November, the Soviet units also went into action.

Many thousands of fighters for the workers' power were set back on their feet by the formation of the Revolutionary Government and its appeal. With its clear, militant programme it provided political guidance and gave the local centres of revolutionary resistance an adequate feeling of political security.

Extending its ranks, the new revolutionary centre developed into the new Provisional Central Committee of the Party and the reorganization of the Party started. Its first appeal to the Hungarian Communists, to the members of the Hungarian Working People's Party, appeared on 6 November.

The appeal stressed that it was necessary to concentrate "all forces of the Party because only in this way can we successfully oppose the counter-revolutionary attack for the restoration of capitalism and defend the power of the people".

Thus, the appeal called for a principled struggle on two fronts, because without this the Party could not be strengthened and the workers' power could not be consolidated again. "We must definitely break with the harmful policy and criminal methods of the Rákosi clique which destroyed the confidence of the broad working masses in our Party and undermined the strength of the Party in its very foundations." A definite break also had to be made from the Imre Nagy-Losonczy group "which, having surrendered the positions of the working class and the people's power and having taken a basically nationalist and chauvinistic stand, had opened the way for the counter-revolutionary forces and thereby in fact betrayed the cause of socialism".

In its appeal, the Provisional Central Committee announced that as an expression of the radical break with the mistakes of the Hungarian Working People's Party, "the name of the Party will be changed and we shall assume the name the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party. Relying on all the sound forces of the Party, we shall restore and revive the Party organizations".

The appeal stressed that the Party was based on the foundations of

Marxism-Leninism. "We belong to the great international camp of the working class. We regard ardent affection for our homeland as inseparable from the cause of proletarian internationalism, which we unshakably believe in." The main task was to shatter "the forces of the counter-revolution that were acting now without any disguise". Every member and every organ of the Party was asked to "support with all their strength the Hungarian Revolutionary Workers'-Peasants' Government" and promote "an immediate return to normality".

With the appeal of the new Provisional Central Committee, the dissolution of the Party on November 1 became invalid, and reorganization began. The appeal stated: "Party organizations should stand on their feet again! Every member of the Party who is ready to go into battle—relying on the masses—for the power of the working people, should immediately register at the Party organizations and start work." The situation is serious, but "if we join forces and marshal our lines our strength will be sufficient! Our Party is invincible if it adheres to its ideals and if it relies on the working class and the broad masses of our working people".

The change of the name of the Party—mentioned in the 1 November statement on its dissolution—remained in force for reasons mentioned in the appeal of the Provisional Central Committee. What started under the name of Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party was not the organization of a revisionist Party—as planned by the Imre Nagy group—but the realignment of the sound forces of the Hungarian Working People's Party, who reorganized the Party on a Marxist-Leninist basis. Implementing the policy of the new revolutionary centre, the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party went into battle to lead the counter-attack of the revolutionary forces to victory. In this struggle, the Party had to be cleansed of dogmatic and sectarian errors and revisionist traitors and vacillating elements, who were sympathetic while there were successes, but easily alarmed and swayed by enemy influence in difficult situations.

The most important task of the reorganized party forces was to help the Revolutionary Government to consolidate the people's power as soon as possible. This involved the restoration of the power of the local

councils, the reorganization of the armed forces and restarting industrial production and transportation.

The 7 November meeting of the Government declared that "the executive committees of the councils are to be the legal authorities of state administration everywhere". In fact during the counter-revolutionary attacks, the right-wing forces had set up counter-revolutionary bodies with such high-sounding names as "revolutionary committee", "national committee", and so on, and through these they had removed the leaders of the councils in many areas, placed the council apparatus under their own control and paralysed or dispersed them. At first, even Communists had been active in these "revolutionary" and "national" committees in some places, in order to moderate their activity and as they had been compelled to make concessions to the right wing, they even attempted to gain positions of leadership in these committees. However, as a result of their participation, the right-wing forces capitalized on the presence or the names of Communists in the committees, in order to disguise the counter-revolutionary nature of these bodies. After 28 October, the Communists were ousted from these organs. By 4 November, these counter-revolutionary committees immediately began to disintegrate—a process which was accelerated by the 7 November resolution of the new Government. Within a matter of a few days, the councils had resumed power in most areas of the country.

The rapid restoration of the authority of the councils was possible because they were the power organizations of the people. Although the Rákosi-ite policy had caused major difficulties in their work and brought about a large number of anomalies, nevertheless, most of them retained contact with the working people. There were some council leaders and other officials who could not be permitted to remain in their posts, but the authority of the councils was to continue and had to be strengthened. Instinctively or consciously, the masses of the workers and peasants realized that the re-establishment of the council organs was one of the prerequisites for consolidating the people's power.

The reorganization of the armed forces began with the establishment of the voluntary revolutionary militia. Party activists, factory workers and members of co-operatives, including thousands of people who had

been Party members before the liberation (1945), joined the rapidly organized voluntary constabulary, and thousands of officers of the People's Army and large numbers of the dissolved State Security and Police units asked to be admitted. Shoulder to shoulder with the Soviet troops, they shattered the armed counter-revolutionary bands and neutralized their scattered and fleeing groups. At the same time, these armed detachments had the responsibility of restoring and defending law and order, until the reorganized police were ready to take over this task.

At the same time, the People's Army was also reorganized. The "revolutionary" committees organized by Imre Nagy's men and Horthyite officers who had openly appeared on the scene, began to vanish after 4 November. They succeeded in disintegrating the previous army command—which had been paralysed by the political and military impotence of the sectarians and by treachery. As a result of the events and their own inactivity, the units of the People's Army had become demoralized, discipline had relaxed and had become non-existent in a number of units. But the hopes of the right-wing elements that they could mobilize a regiment of the People's Army against the new Revolutionary Government and the Soviet troops who had been asked to help, were doomed to failure. All such attempts proved futile.

Several units of the People's Army had remained intact, through the most difficult days. The First, Second and Third Revolutionary Armed Regiments for National Defence were organized from these, immediately following 4 November. Other units of the People's Army also participated in carrying out the tasks of the militia. And after the 4 November turning-point, the politically reliable units of the Army immediately gave their support to the new Revolutionary Government and the Provisional Central Committee of the Party.

The traitors fled and sought asylum with the imperialists. The armed forces were cleansed of those who had proved to be adventurous elements or whose high degree of political instability had rendered them unsuitable to continue as officers. The new Government stipulated that every officer should pledge his loyalty to the programme and policy of the Revolutionary Government. Three-quarters of the officers signed this pledge. The armed counter-revolutionary elements were rapidly shattered.

In a few weeks' time, the scattered bands that went into hiding were neutralized. This was an essential prerequisite for political consolidation—but not the only one. It was also important to overcome the ideological contagion of nationalism and revisionism, to politically expose and isolate the counter-revolutionaries, and to enlighten and gain the support of the people who had been misled. This required appropriate ideological and political determination and patience. Armed force was needed to smash the armed rebels, but the reorganization and consolidation of the people's power and the ideological and political tasks linked with this could be solved only by the Party and Government that were in the process of being reorganized.

The government of capitalist restoration, which had been formed two days earlier, collapsed on 4 November. Imre Nagy and his associates asked for asylum and assistance at the Yugoslav Legation. Their Social Democratic and bourgeois partners fled in every direction: many of them swiftly fled to the West. Cardinal Mindszenty ran to the US Legation.

The imperialist powers launched a campaign against the Revolutionary Workers'–Peasants' Government in an attempt to enforce the restoration of the Imre Nagy Government of 2 November. Although they were aware that such efforts were in vain, they attempted to utilize the Hungarian events for anti-communist and anti-Soviet propaganda. They also utilized the forum of the United Nations to call for intervention into Hungarian internal affairs, and on 7 November forced the acceptance of a resolution that condemned the Soviet assistance rendered to the Hungarian people. The majority in the United Nations that approved the imperialist aggression against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and permitted the troops of the aggressors to remain active in Korea as "United Nations troops", condemned the Soviet action taken in defence of socialist Hungary.

This United Nations action was part of the imperialist propaganda campaign which endeavoured to give encouragement to the counter-revolutionary forces that had disintegrated in Hungary: in addition it was an attempt to inspire the hope for Western military intervention. Imre Nagy had asked for such intervention. He had illegally declared

Hungary's abrogation of the Warsaw Treaty on 2 November, and went so far as to betray the power of the workers by asking for the military intervention of the Western Powers on 4 November. This was his last act before he retreated to the Yugoslav Legation.

The campaign of the Western Powers was complicated by the fact that, on the instigation of Britain and France, the Israeli army had invaded Egypt at the end of October, and British and French air and naval forces had attacked Egypt, which was unwilling to return the Suez Canal to them. The aggression in Egypt by these two NATO Powers and their Israeli accomplices showed very many people that these Powers were not adherent of national independence.

Simultaneously with the assistance rendered to the Hungarian people, the Soviet Union—to the consternation of the Western Powers—protested against the British, French and Israeli aggression, and intimated that it would make the required military aid available to the Egyptian people. The aggressors were forced to stop. The USA, their NATO partner at the time, did not become involved in the Suez aggression; the Canal was not its affair and it did not want its relationship with the Arab states to deteriorate over such an issue, for it aimed to increase its economic penetration into these countries, and primarily lay hands on their oil resources. As a result, the representatives of the countries dependent on the USA—the "American voting machine"—did not give their support in the United Nations to this British, French and Israeli aggression. On the request of the Egyptian Government, a resolution was approved by the United Nations that condemned the attack and demanded the withdrawal of the aggressors. The Washington administration and other Western countries endeavoured to utilize this resolution to give themselves a semblance of "objectivity" in the eyes of Western public opinion, and thus increase the propaganda effect of the illegal United Nations resolution concerning the Hungarian question.

The publicity campaign that was waged in the capitalist world regarding the "Hungarian question" caused considerable difficulties for the Communist parties. Wide circles of sympathizers who were not fully aware of what had happened, and many Communists, could not comprehend the events. The difficulties of the fraternal parties were increased

as the majority of the Social Democratic parties joined in the reactionary campaign. However, the Communist parties stood firm, the barrage of bourgeois propaganda could not shake them, they persistently fought against it. They unanimously supported the struggle that had been launched to defeat the counter-revolution in Hungary, backed the Hungarian Revolutionary Workers'-Peasants' Government and welcomed the assistance provided by the Soviet Union as a feat of proletarian internationalism. At the time, their action was given considerable force by the fact that the socialist camp was united—the danger that had threatened socialist Hungary stimulated them to display a solid front. The fraternal countries and the parties were confident that the counter-attack of the revolutionary forces would soon consolidate the Hungarian People's Republic and wrench from the hands of international reaction the propaganda weapon they had forged for themselves out of the "Hungarian question".

In addition to restoring law and order, in the first days the Government concentrated its strength on the rapid reorganization of production and transport, that had both been disrupted by the counter-revolution, and on speedily providing food supplies for the cities.

As a result of the reorganized work of the councils and the immediate and significant assistance requested and received, within a short time, from the fraternal socialist countries transportation and adequate food supplies were in operation.

Industrial production recovered more slowly. In those factories where the Communists had retained their places during the most difficult days and had managed to remain in control of the plants despite the pressure, work began immediately after 4 November, particularly in the provinces.

A sharp intramural struggle developed in those enterprises where the counter-revolutionary forces had been able to ensure the monopoly of their own "workers' council" before 4 November and in those where the right wing had gained a majority in the workers' councils, but had not been able to completely oust the Communists. Restarting work and reorganizing the factory organizations of the Party came into the foreground of this struggle. This was the area where the main struggle had

to be fought against the right-wing forces who were experimenting with the realignment of their ranks and were carrying out a rearguard action. After 4 November, they hoped to preserve their important positions, especially in Budapest, through the "workers' councils". A large part of the working people still had illusions concerning the workers' councils. The right wing hoped to capitalize on this and reorganize some of its forces on the basis of their positions in the workers' councils. Revisionist intellectual circles were ready and willing to provide assistance for this.

On instructions from the Imre Nagy group that remained in the Yugoslav Legation, a second revisionist centre was illegally set up, which became one of the main organizers of the new anti-government action. Various anti-communist, petty-bourgeois and bourgeois-nationalist groups organized and directed this hostile movement, and carried out their activities partly underground, and partly legally through the Writers' Association, the Journalists' Association and other organizations of the intellectuals. Attaching extensive hopes to the workers' councils which were under their influence, they attacked the Revolutionary Government on behalf of the workers' councils.

A considerable proportion of the members of the workers' councils—especially after the "reorganizations" that followed 28 October—were class-alien. For example, out of the 1,163 members of the workers' councils of the 16 largest iron and metal works and the 8 largest light industrial enterprises, 280 were former capitalists, landowners or kulak elements, former Horthyite officers and officials, or representatives of former right-wing organizations. After 1945, of necessity they became workers or industrial employees, and during the period in question they posed as the "representatives of the working class". There was an especially high number of them among the leaders of the workers' councils; from 60 to 65 per cent of them were chairmen, vice-chairmen and secretaries of the Budapest workers' councils. They had succeeded in acquiring these positions because they were able to rely on the co-operation of the reviving right-wing Social Democratic groups and the elements joining the revisionists of Imre Nagy's ilk, and on the support of the armed bands that had invaded the factories after 28 October. Some members of the factory guards organized by them were scattered

after 4 November, but some stayed, and small groups of the shattered counter-revolutionary bands received temporary asylum among them. These armed guards were used for about three or four weeks to intimidate those who were more sober in their thinking and to carry out acts of terror.

Those who urged a speedy resumption of work were driven from a number of factories by the right-wing leaders of the workers' councils with armed threats. In an effort to acquire popularity and gain a mass basis for itself, the right wing combined its threats with nationalist incitement and various kinds of material favours. With no heed to the future, stocks were squandered, production was muddled, clothing, linen, and shoes, etc., were distributed in enterprises manufacturing consumer goods, and other methods were used elsewhere to gain favour among the working people. At the same time, endeavours were made to hamper the recovery of the factory organizations of the Party. The slogan was adopted: "No Party organizations in the factories." These methods were used to ensure a monopoly of the "workers' councils", in the hope that their position would be consolidated if the "transformation" of the Government could be forced.

However, the Communists set up their party organizations and linked their activity with efforts to put production straight. The well-intentioned but misguided members of the workers' councils were confronted with the question whether they should help the party organizations or the anti-communists. As they realized that only those who spoke and acted for the resumption of productive work could be the defenders of the workers' power, an increasing number of people separated themselves from the saboteurs of production and made increasing efforts to cooperate with the Communists. Many of them joined the Party, or if they had been HWPP members, applied for re-enlistment, thus showing that they were ready for a determined struggle in support of the policy of the Party and the power of the workers. A sharp demarcation line soon appeared between the adherents and opponents of the workers' power.

The extreme right-wing elements that were active in the workers' councils also endeavoured to "prohibit" trade-union activity in the

enterprises. "Neither Party, nor trade unions," they insisted, fearing the existence of any organization that might control their activities. With regard to the trade unions, they found themselves in opposition to their Social Democratic partners. During the period of the counter-revolution, the reorganized groups of the right-wing Social Democrats regained important positions in the central committees of a few trade unions—through the so-called "revolutionary committees" that had also been set up in them—and in some of the factories. Before and after 4 November, they co-operated with the extreme right-wing and anarchist elements in banning the operation of Communist Party organizations in the factories. However, the banning of the trade unions was turned down. As they began to understand the substance of the counter-revolutionary events, a certain differentiation occurred among the Social Democrats: some of them dissociated themselves from the strike and sought co-operation with the Communists.

The right wing in the workers' councils also endeavoured to gain the economic and technical leadership in the factories. It started immediately after 28 October, and continued for a time even after 4 November, to remove the directors, chief engineers and shop-foremen and replace them with its own people. To make these changes in personnel, it capitalized on the justified discontent against some of the managers, or on the mood stirred up by false propaganda. The removals and new appointments also reflected a state of discord between the rival groups and their members, each trying to seize the best posts. However, after 4 November, at an increasing number of places the working people demanded the return of those who had been removed under false pretenses. This was, at the same time, part of the struggle to ensure productive work and political consolidation. The workers' councils were thus compelled to cancel many of the replacements they had initiated.

With the encouragement and guidance of the propaganda of Radio Free Europe and other Western radio stations, the right wing in the workers' councils precipitated a strike and paralysed production. In the meantime, various counter-revolutionary elements intimidated the people and told them that the Kádár Government would bring back a Rákosi-ite policy, and together with the Western radio stations they proclaimed that

only the Imre Nagy group could save the country from this danger. They demanded the restoration of the Imre Nagy Government or at least the "extension" of the new Government. At times they demanded that the Imre Nagy group should be co-opted into the Government, and at other times the inclusion in it of some of the representatives of the shattered groups of their bourgeois partners or of the "workers' councils". They wanted people in the Government who from the inside would again stifle the measures taken against the counter-revolution and would facilitate the legal operation and power struggle of the counter-revolutionary forces. It was also a common feature of the right-wing action in the "workers' councils" that the Soviet troops were slandered as occupiers and their withdrawal was demanded in the hope that this would leave the way open for the invasion forces of the Western Powers. Such demands of the various delegations of the workers' councils were put to the Government, but it refused to take any step which would hamper smashing the counter-revolution.

In the workers' councils—even in those in which the right wing had seized the leadership—there were large numbers of sincere adherents to the workers' power who however had temporarily come under right-wing influence as a result of the widespread ideological and political confusion. The Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party and the new Government considered that it was an important political task to separate these people from the hostile elements. The Party did not immediately reject the possibility that the workers' councils, cleansed of right-wing elements and with a correctly defined scope, could assist the restart of production and the political consolidation.

On 13 November, in agreement with the leaders of the Central Council of Hungarian Trade Unions, a government decree regulated the operation of the workers' councils. Their participation was ensured in the leadership of the enterprises, including participation in the organization of work and the development of the wage system, and at the same time it was stressed that they had a task in strengthening work discipline and improving production. They had extensive scope in industrial social welfare policy. At the same time, the decree laid down that a workers' council resolution could be accepted by the management only "if it

does not conflict with generally valid laws and decrees". It also provided for new elections to the workers' councils "with the participation of all the working people of the enterprise".

The government decree on the workers' councils helped to liquidate the positions of the right-wing forces in the enterprises and restore order and work discipline in production. The counter-revolutionaries launched a campaign against the decree, linking this action with their principal anti-government demands.

The concentrated anti-government offensive was launched in the middle of November, and although only for a short time, the illegal revisionist centre, rallying the right-wing forces in the workers' councils, managed to create a broad organizational network.

On 14 November, the representatives of the workers' councils of 22 to 25 enterprises in the capital and the "delegates" of various revisionist and nationalist intellectual groups formed the so-called "Central Workers' Council of Greater Budapest". The first business of this mixed body was to "announce a strike" against the Government. The announcement was used by the right-wing elements in the enterprises to stop the work where it had been resumed. While the Government concentrated its resources to ensure order and supplies for the population, the counter-revolution started a campaign in the name of the Central Workers' Council of Budapest to frustrate this endeavour. In order to strengthen their organizational network, attempts were made to set up district and country workers' councils in the capital and provinces.

A delegation from the Central Workers' Council called on the Government and demanded that Imre Nagy should be re-appointed Prime Minister, the Soviet troops should be withdrawn, and the multi-party system and the coalition government of 1945 should be restored. A demand was also presented for the free activity of the capitalist restoration forces and their return to political power as "the demand of the workers". At the same time a protest was made against the operation of Communist Party organizations in the enterprises.

The Government negotiated with the delegation, and took this opportunity also to expose and publicly refute the demands submitted and called on all honest workers to return to work. This was one method of

encouraging the working people to turn against the nationalist trouble-makers who hampered work. Some of the members of the Central Workers' Council also took a stand against the strike. As a result of all these factors, the strike was called off by the 16th.

However, the right-wing actions continued. Some of the moderates had been ousted from the Central Workers' Council in Budapest, and so the influence of the extreme elements had increased in that body. A 48-hour strike was again called for 22 and 23 November. It was then demanded that the Government should permit the organization of a "national workers' council", which should be recognized as the second political power. Plans were made for setting up "armed detachments" of the workers' councils. The Government did not permit the establishment of the "national workers' council". By staging another "48-hour strike", the counter-revolutionaries hoped to force the Government to rescind this prohibition. However, the majority of the workers' councils in the enterprises—even some of those which were under right-wing leadership—did not support the strike. The workers' councils of Csepel, Győr and Tatabánya turned against the Central Workers' Council; although the right-wing forces had considerable influence in their ranks, the working people's increasingly organized hostility against those who endeavoured to disrupt public order and production compelled them to support the move to return to work despite the fact. The action of those who urged a return to normal work became increasingly effective, resulting from the fact that Party branches had been organized in the enterprises.

On 4 December, the counter-revolutionaries endeavoured to organize a demonstration of women, in order to make up for what they had failed to achieve by calling a 48-hour strike. This was also organized in the name of the Central Workers' Council. They had managed to mobilize two or three hundred women and intended to march to Parliament. There was the danger of a new provocation, namely, that armed bandits in places of concealment may open fire on the marching women, and then the voluntary militia would be blamed for the bloodshed and the incident could be used for incitement against the Government. However, the voluntary militia dispersed the demonstration.

The armed groups, that had gone into hiding, assassinated people. They attacked some of the trams, that had just been put into service, with hand-grenades and rifles, and threatened to kill those who wanted to resume work. In the capital and in a number of provincial areas they endeavoured to murder Party organizers, the voluntary militia and council officials. The members of the voluntary militia rounded up the perpetrators and succeeded in making more and more of them ineffective.

On 6 December, the Communists organized meetings in several places in Budapest, including the square in front of the Sports Hall (Harminkettesek tere), and the West railway station. The participants demonstrated in support of the workers' power, the people's democracy and the Kádár Government, and urged that more energetic measures should be taken to prevent the outrages by the counter-revolutionaries. The participants of some of the meetings joined forces at various places and several thousand people marched together in the streets. The counter-revolutionaries attacked them in an attempt to disrupt the demonstration. At the West railway station, a working woman and an officer of the voluntary militia were shot dead and a number of people were wounded. However, this incident made the marchers demonstrate even more ardently in support of the workers' power. With their assistance the members of the voluntary militia were able to catch the attackers and scores of their accomplices.

The demonstration on 6 December was an indication that the revolutionary forces which had reorganized their ranks were taking control in the streets of the capital, while the counter-revolutionaries were forced to retreat to their hiding places. At the same time, the murders and assaults showed that the enemy was not willing to accept defeat and was ready to engage in any villainous act to hamper the consolidation of the people's power.

The counter-revolutionaries staged a savage provocation at Salgótarján on 8 December, in the name of the county workers' council. Here the police had arrested two troublemakers, one of whom had been convicted of armed conspiracy against the People's Republic and sentenced to 12 years imprisonment, and had been released from prison by the counter-revolutionaries. The right-wing elements in the county

workers' council described the arrest of these two people as an "anti-democratic" act and organized a demonstration against the police and the Government. With false slogans and armed threats they managed to get over two thousand people to march on the County Council. The snipers who had mingled with the crowd opened fire on the members of the voluntary militia and policemen who defended the County Council and provoked an armed skirmish. Those hiding in the neighbouring houses shot at both the voluntary militia and policemen and "their own" demonstrators. The provocation took a heavy toll of casualties, some fatal. The police arrested those who had initiated the bloody event and started the shooting.

More effective action against the terrorists and troublemakers was imperative in order to consolidate public order and ensure normal work. The Government passed a decree providing for the dissolution of the regional workers' councils that operated illegally, that is, the Central Budapest, district and county workers' councils. The right-wing leaders of the Central Workers' Council were arrested on charges of anti-state activities. On the request of the Government, on 11 December, the Presidential Council instituted martial law (summary jurisdiction) for all cases of murder, robbery, looting, unlicensed possession of fire-arms and explosives, and other crimes against the lawful order of the People's Republic. A special decree laid down provisions concerning the guards that operated in enterprises and institutions; and the disarming and disbandment of the right-wing organized guards began, with the restoration of the lawful enterprise guards.

As a protest against the Government measures, the counter-revolutionaries, on behalf of the Central Workers' Council, again called for a 48-hour strike, on 11 and 12 December. The forces behind this move were clearly indicated by the fact that Radio Free Europe was the first to announce the new strike appeal. However, by that time, the Central Workers' Council was disintegrating and other regional workers' councils were also falling apart. The process of purification was also making headway in the workers' councils in the enterprises: the majority of the right-wing leaders had been forced to leave and many of them had fled from the country.

Parallel with the attempted strike on 11 and 12 December, the right-wing forces also organized additional armed provocations. They provoked fatal skirmishes and carried out assassinations at Miskolc, Ózd, Tatabánya, Eger and Hódmezővásárhely. This was, however, the last spark of the rearguard action of the defeated counter-revolutionaries, followed by the rapid shattering and disintegration of their remaining forces. On 11 December, they still achieved, or just enforced a stoppage of work, but this elicited very sharp opposition, and in most of the plants where work was discontinued, it was resumed on the same or next day.

The failure of this last action by the "workers' councils" accelerated the general restoration of work discipline. Under the leadership of the Party organizations, the battle was intensified in the enterprises to curb and oust the troublemakers and ensure steady productive work. The Government no longer permitted wages to be paid for days when no work was performed. The fact was that until that time, in order to reduce hardship for those who had been made idle through no fault of their own, sums for wages—or a large part thereof—were made available even for those factories where no regular work was carried out. On the other hand, the right-wing leaders of the workers' councils had spent the state funds, allocated for wages and salaries, on financing the anti-state strike. For this reason, the strike was termed "the strike of convenience". It was terminated by the December measures of the Government. After the failure of the last strike attempts by the "workers' councils", the number of those returning to work increased very rapidly. Those who had been temporarily swayed by the troublemakers, quickly sobered up, and there was a rapid isolation of the right wing.

The counter-attack of the revolutionary forces and their endeavours to restore order and production continued on two fronts. The December 1956 resolution of the Provisional Central Committee, concerning the events which had occurred and the tasks facing the people, was a very important theoretical and political weapon in this struggle.

The resolution was published on 8 December, and its effect immediately became apparent in the self-assured actions of the revolutionary forces and the increased speed in the process of political purification. The

resolution stated that the events which had been unleashed in October had had "four basic reasons or determining factors" which, well in advance of the actual outbreak of the counter-revolutionary revolt, had been "simultaneously effective, side by side, interlinked and in interaction with each other, and had jointly led to the tragic development of the events". These reasons and factors were listed as follows:

"1. From the end of 1948, the Rákosi-Gerő clique, which had a decisive influence in the Central Committee of the Hungarian Working People's Party and Government of the Hungarian People's Republic, had started to deviate from the principles of Marxism-Leninism . . .

"2. In the precipitation and tragic climax of the October events, a major role was also played by the wing of the party opposition, which had developed in earlier years and had since steadily increased, that rallied around Imre Nagy and Géza Losonczy . . .

"3. The counter-revolution of the Horthyite fascists and Hungarian capitalists and landowners was a basic factor in the preparation and unleashing of the October events, and while it had significant forces that operated illegally in Hungary, its main forces had been rallied and organized in West Germany.

"4. Finally, international imperialism, whose objectives naturally extended much farther than the Hungarian question, also played a decisive and fundamental role in the events in Hungary."

International imperialism strove—and still strives—to utilize the counter-revolution in Hungary in a campaign against the entire world socialist system and the entire world Communist movement. Thus, the defeat of the counter-revolution and the consolidation of socialist power was not only the cause of the Hungarian people, but of the entire socialist world and the entire international revolutionary movement.

The December resolution outlined the principal tasks as follows: "The Communists have to fight against the counter-revolutionary danger primarily with patient educational work, enlightenment and conviction, unmasking and politically isolating the enemy—and if necessary with force of arms." The Party regarded "as one of its principal tasks the constant reinforcement of the foundations of the people's state power and of the workers'-peasants' alliance". The resolution called on the

Government to ensure that an economic policy appropriate to the situation should be elaborated as soon as possible.

The December resolution was a very important weapon in the struggle for purification. The composure and decisiveness of its analyses and conclusions assured the adherents of the People's Democracy that the counter-revolution would be entirely liquidated, the workers' power would be quickly consolidated, and the socialist system further developed.

In their struggle, the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party and the Revolutionary Government were able to rely on the solidarity of the socialist countries and the international Communist movement. The leaders of the Yugoslav Party also expressed their approval of the turn of 4 November and the military assistance provided by the Soviet Union. However, this Yugoslav support was accompanied by some disturbing circumstances. The Yugoslav Legation had given asylum to Imre Nagy and several of his companions in the building of the Legation on 4 November. There—maintaining relations with the leaders of their outside groups, some of whom had gone into hiding—they were given the opportunity to encourage and guide the actions of these groups against the change of 4 November. Moreover, Edvard Kardelj, one of the leaders of the Federation of Yugoslav Communists, publicly described the reorganization of the Hungarian Communist Party as a wrong and futile attempt, and, as he completely misunderstood the general situation that existed within the workers' councils in November, had recommended that the workers' councils should assume power.

The Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party refuted those views which disapproved of the reorganization of the Party and, following a Leninist policy, it opposed the anti-Party troublemongering, and continued the reorganization of the revolutionary vanguard of the working class. The Hungarian Government protested against the impermissible action of the Yugoslav Legation in Budapest allowing the Imre Nagy group to remain on its premises. This situation, which had become an embarrassment to the Yugoslav Government, ended when, on the request of the Hungarian Government, the Imre Nagy clique was requested to leave at the end of November. Under an agreement concluded between the Hungarian and Rumanian authorities, they were then sent to Rumania

—in order to disconnect their contacts with political life. Later, during the investigation into the counter-revolutionary conspiracy, when their true role was discovered, they answered for their treason before a Hungarian court.

To free the misguided people from the influence of the enemy, primarily the ideological and political infection of nationalism and revisionism had to be overcome. The decisive issue in this struggle was definite support for the workers' power and the Revolutionary Government, and support for internationalist fraternal relations with the Soviet Union. Any concessions in this only made it more difficult to separate the working people, who had just been temporarily swayed by the right wing, from the class enemy and traitors.

The ideological and political purification most rapidly occurred in the factories. The Party branches again became the political centres of the factory collectives, and throughout the country the workers' councils lost the political importance they had assumed during the troublous days.

The ideological and political purification also gathered momentum in the trade unions. The Communist leaders of the Central Council of Hungarian Trade Unions ensured that the Hungarian trade union centre declared its support for the Revolutionary Workers'—Peasants' Government immediately after 4 November. In some trade unions, where the right wing had become predominant in the central leadership during the counter-revolution, this purification occurred after the December resolution of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party.

The trade unions concentrated their efforts on promoting the resumption of production. They also had to improve the activities carried out to protect the workers' interests, which had been neglected in the years prior to 1956. However, it was important to repel those right-wing views which demagogically used the slogans of trade union "independence" and the protection of the rights of the workers, or denied responsibility for strengthening work discipline, or fought against it, supported exorbitant demands and so prevented the consolidation of the people's power and the development of the country. Without the full restoration and improvement of production, all attempts to improve the living

conditions of the working people were bound to end in a cul-de-sac. The trade unions could contribute to improving work discipline and readjusting production only if they joined also in the struggle to overcome the revisionist-nationalist contagion. This struggle of political and ideological purification, that sifted out the right-wing elements, was accelerated in the various trade union bodies.

The January 1957 plenary meeting of the Central Council of Hungarian Trade Unions played an outstanding part in the consolidation of the trade unions. This session, which pledged its support for the policy of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, took a stand both against the pre-1956 sectarian errors, and also against the revisionist and other right-wing views and trends which were proliferated during the days of the counter-revolution. It emphasized that the trade unions were independent organizations of the working people, but they were not independent of the workers' power, they had taken part in creating this power, they were organizations of the working class in power. In a similar manner, they were not independent of the leading party of the people engaged in building socialism, a party whose aims they adopted and with which they fought shoulder to shoulder to achieve these goals. They recognized the leading role of the party of the working class, for its leadership was an essential prerequisite for rallying the revolutionary forces and ensuring their purposeful activity, for ensuring the very existence of the people's power and for pursuing the building of socialism. The plenary meeting of the CCHTU unequivocally repudiated the revisionist demagogy that paraded under the slogan of the right to strike, and demonstrated that insistence on this, in a socialist state, was an anti-working class and counter-revolutionary demand. The tragic experiences of October had supplied ample confirmation of the correctness of this view.

The leading bodies and activists of the trade unions tackled their assignments with greater self-assurance. For a time, their activities in the enterprises were disturbed by the fact that no clear line had been drawn between the respective spheres of activity of the trade union committees and the workers' councils within an enterprise, and it was in fact very difficult to draw a demarcation line between them. Moreover, as the political purification progressed, it became increasingly evident that the

activities of the right-wing and anarchist elements had politically compromised the workers' councils. As a result of all these factors, in the autumn of 1957, the Government, in agreement with the CCHTU, decided to abolish the workers' councils and replace them with the formation of factory councils. The trade union committees in the enterprises guided their formation; the majority of the members were trade union shop stewards and other elected factory activists. However, in fact, the factory councils were confronted by the same distrust and antipathy which their predecessors, the workers' councils, had elicited. Thus, they were not able to adequately chart and pursue their activities, and in fact, the trade union committees in the enterprises gradually took over their duties.

In the enterprises the local branches of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party carried out important work in reorganizing the revolutionary forces of the working class and restoring production. As a result of the outstanding role played by these branches, the majority of the industrial workers and intellectuals expressed increasing confidence in the HSWP and the Revolutionary Government.

The workers'-peasants' alliance was consolidated faster than had been expected. This primarily resulted from the fact that the Government discontinued the distorted compulsory delivery system, decided on a system of government purchases based on contracts, and successfully carried out this task. A system of produce collection was established which suited the interest of the country and met with the agreement of the peasants.

Changes in co-operative farm policy and the rectification of the earlier mistakes in this policy were basic elements in improving the workers'-peasants' alliance. In the given situation it was inevitable that the organization of co-operative farms should be dropped from the agenda. In accordance with the position of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party on this question, the Government arranged for the land and animals, contributed by those who had withdrawn from the co-operatives, to be returned to their former owners.

A peculiar situation had developed concerning the producers' co-operatives. While during the counter-revolution most of them stayed

together, after the attack against the people's power was repulsed, many of the co-operatives dissolved, and many members withdrew from those co-operatives which had held together, because there was no longer a threat of the former landlords returning and there no longer seemed to be any need for the peasants to join forces against this danger. The desire to farm individually became stronger, especially among those who had joined the co-operatives under economic and administrative pressure. For this reason, the co-operatives which had incorporated about 22 to 23 per cent of the arable area of the country before the counter-revolution, farmed only 9 per cent of this area by January 1957.

In some places, the kulaks endeavoured to capitalize on the disintegration of the agricultural co-operatives and attempted to regain the estates they had lost. However, the Government provided adequate assistance to the remaining co-operatives to repulse any attempts along these lines. In a similar way, the kulak claims against the state farms were energetically rejected.

When the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party approved the return of land and animals of those who insisted on giving up their co-operative membership, it made it clear to the peasants that the socialist reorganization of agriculture still remained one of the principal objectives of the Party. It continued to proclaim that the realization of this aim was in the general interests of the country and an essential prerequisite for building a socialist society, and that a radical improvement in the life of the peasants was possible only along these lines. However, it also declared that significant increases in co-operative farm membership would be put on the agenda only when most of the individual peasants had come to understand the need for this. Until that time, the HSWP attached importance to helping individual farmers develop their farms. Alongside this, the Party and Government devoted considerable attention to assisting the remaining co-operative farms; for strengthening them was essential to create the political and moral climate which could eventually lead to a new impetus in the growth of the co-operative movement.

It was an interesting feature of political development that, simultaneously with the disintegration of a number of co-operatives in December and January, the process of consolidation of the workers'-peasants'

alliance started and became more definite. This was based on the aim of protecting the people's power against the counter-revolution, and the fact that the workers' power adjusted its relationship with the working peasants—both with the individual farmers that still constituted the majority of the peasants and with the co-operative farms—contributed to this process.

Political and ideological purification was slower in the field of cultural life. For some time, the leading groups of the revisionists and other nationalists continued to be active in concealing the counter-revolutionary nature of the October events and in glorifying them. Some of them were deliberate enemies of proletarian power, and others had moved so far to the right under the joint impact of the sectarian mistakes and the counter-revolutionary events that they had reached a point of no return. In addition to these, there were also those who had so far been unable to free themselves from the effects of nationalist and revisionist demagogy, or simply could not face up to their grave errors and responsibilities and, endeavoured to find some self-justification, by blaming others for their own mistakes.

In the field of culture, the right-wing forces still had significant legal bases in certain institutions and in some of the organizations of the intelligentsia. A particularly active right-wing group operated in the Writers' Association and in the Journalists' Association, the Communists had been ousted from both leading bodies during the counter-revolution. These right-wing elements had encouraged and supported the counter-revolutionary actions of the Central Workers' Council in Budapest.

The right-wing forces did not voluntarily relinquish the legal political positions they had established for themselves in these associations of the intelligentsia that served as covers for illegal organization and unlawful activities. They pushed writers, journalists and actors into the foreground who, intoxicated by the praise and encouragement of the reactionary forces in Hungary and their patrons abroad, acted as champions of "national consciousness" and "true democracy", and made a bid for political leadership. By that time, the influence and organized power of the intellectuals who firmly supported the workers' power were still

insufficient to win over the members of the cultural associations who had been misguided or had become passive for various reasons, and thus to put these associations in order through their own resources. The Government, on the other hand, could not passively stand by while the defeated counter-revolution endeavoured to reinforce its remaining positions in the cultural area.

In January 1957, the Government officially suspended the operation of a few organizations of the intelligentsia, including the Writers' Association and the Journalists' Association. Appropriate measures were also taken in the cultural institutions, together with changes in personnel. These measures were necessary to ensure that everybody should understand that the HSWP and the Government were determined to restore order everywhere. At the same time, the work of ideological education continued.

In the spring of 1957, *Élet és Irodalom* (Life and Literature), a publication of those writers who identified themselves with the cause of the workers' power and of socialism, began to appear, with György Bölöni as its editor. The Ministry of Education, requesting the co-operation of outstanding representatives of cultural life, formed Literary, Dramatic, Cinematic and Art Councils, in order to stimulate creative work. Consolidation also progressed in cultural life. As a result, the associations of the intelligentsia—the Journalists' Association in 1958, and the Writers' Association in 1959—were reorganized and started to operate again.

The significant events of political consolidation included the formation of the Workers' Militia and the Young Communist League in the spring of 1957, which both became important factors in public affairs of the country.

The Workers' Militia was set up at the end of February 1957. With the reorganization of the People's Army and the police, the officers and non-commissioned officers of the revolutionary armed units of the voluntary militia continued to serve in the professional armed corps. The police once again took charge of law and order. However, the lessons of the counter-revolutionary events had set the requirement that the workers' power should also have non-professional armed forces. This was primarily a political and moral requirement, and its fulfilment

contributed to the socialist consciousness of the working people. At the same time, the Workers' Militia increased the defence capacity of the country.

The Party workers and factory, village, and office workers who had joined the revolutionary armed militia during the difficult days of November, entered the Workers' Militia when they returned to production or other areas of employment. They constituted the first companies of the Workers' Militia, and later their ranks were supplemented in all parts of the country with new militants who undertook voluntary armed service.

In the early part of 1957, four youth associations, the so-called "strata organizations" functioned. One of them, the Federation of Hungarian University Students (MEFESZ), came into being before the counter-revolution and played a major role in the disintegration of the united youth association, the League of Working Youth. The various parties that emerged during the counter-revolution also formed their own youth organizations, but these disintegrated after 4 November. The MEFESZ continued its activities throughout the political turmoil and internal arguments. In November 1956, a separate organization of young workers formed under the name League of Hungarian Revolutionary Young Workers (MAFISZ), was set up by working youth with the help of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party and the trade unions. Similarly, an organization of young peasants, the National League of United Peasant Youth (EPOSZ), also emerged. A student association of secondary school students, largely made up of children of Communist parents, also came into being.

In February 1957, the Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party decided that "in order to educate a new Communist generation imbued with Marxist-Leninist ideology, furthermore to provide a comprehensive political guiding organization for the youth movement now divided into stratified associations, it is necessary to set up a league for young Communists." Following this resolution, an organizing committee was formed which addressed an appeal to Hungarian youth: "We want to be in the forefront both in socialist construction and in the armed defence of our country, of our people's state. To do this,

we need an organization which is led by the Party, that unequivocally declares its aims and through its deeds shows where it belongs."

When it was formed, the MAFISZ immediately supported the Revolutionary Workers'-Peasants' Government, although it had not declared itself as the youth organization of the Party. Its leaders had been motivated by this aim, but in the days of November, when the MAFISZ was formed, pressure from the right wing in the workers' councils and in the trade unions had forced them to express the "independence of MAFISZ". After the right wing in the workers' councils and trade unions had been repulsed, a more decisive stand was taken that the revolutionary association of working youth could not be independent of the revolutionary party of the working class, of the leading political force. This recognition had already become prevalent in the MAFISZ when Communist young people formed the youth organization of the Party, the KISZ—Young Communist League.

The Young Communist League was constituted on 21 March, 1957, on the day of the anniversary of the socialist revolution of 1919. It immediately endeavoured to co-operate with the stratified youth organizations to assist their political development and the work of the Communist young people active in them. However, co-operation with the MAFISZ very soon led to the amalgamation of the MAFISZ with the KISZ.

The Young Communist League developed most rapidly among working-class youth. This not only resulted from the fact that, with the merging of the MAFISZ, it immediately acquired a significant organized force among young people, but because the revolutionary forces of the working class could be reorganized in the shortest time. Soon, the KISZ continued its development as the united organization of both working-class and peasant youth. An increasing proportion of the members of the EPOSZ asked for admission; and large numbers of the EPOSZ organizations joined the KISZ *en bloc*. As a result of this process, the EPOSZ ceased to exist, not as a result of any administrative ban by the authorities, but because of the restoration and consolidation of the workers'-peasants' alliance.

The situation more slowly cleared up in the MEFESZ. The majority

of its members had come under right-wing influence. Many of their leaders had been counter-revolutionaries or had become counter-revolutionaries during the events and for that reason had fled after 4 November. Following the educational work of the HSWP and the restoration of law and order, political and ideological purification also started among the college and university students and their Federation. The Young Communists carried out especially persistent work. They managed to repulse the right-wing elements. As a result of the political development in the thinking of the instructors and students, an increasing number of people left the Federation, and many asked for admission to the KISZ. In this way the MEFESZ degenerated and became extinct.

The KISZ also began to set up branches in the secondary schools. Thus, the associations of the secondary-school students became transformed into KISZ organizations, and the separate secondary school organizations were discontinued.

The Young Communist League became the united organization of working-class, peasant and student youth. Special departments were formed in the Central Committee of the KISZ to deal with the problems and affairs of the individual strata of young people within the movement.

The attraction of the KISZ was increased by the fact that it openly acted as the youth organization of the Party. The growth of the prestige and authority of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, and increased confidence in the HSWP, also provided the KISZ with greater influence. This led to the restoration and consolidation of a united youth movement attached to the Party.

Considerable progress was made in the reorganization of the Party early in 1957. During the issuing of new membership cards, the members of the Hungarian Working People's Party who had remained faithful, even under difficult conditions, to the Communist ideal continued as HSWP members. It was not the aim of the HSWP to again have among its membership those who, although they sympathized with the Party, in political consciousness, ideological qualifications and in their readiness to champion the socialist cause were below the standard required of Party members. The Party considered it highly important to gain the

support of these people for its policy—but as sympathizers outside the Party.

In February 1957, the Provisional Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party assessed the progress of general consolidation and the advances in the reorganization of the Party up to that time. By that date, the membership of the HSWP approached two hundred thousand. The February resolution affirmed that the reorganization was proceeding soundly. It was possible to ensure the ideological, political and organizational unity of the HSWP, and "also to ensure that the leading role of our Party is increasingly effective in the state and social life of the Hungarian People's Republic". The counter-revolutionary forces had failed in their attack, during which they described the Communists as Stalinists and Rákosi-ites, and used all possible forms of incitement against the Communists.

Some Communists still hesitated to apply for their transfer to the HSWP. They were troubled with doubts because to a lesser or greater degree they feared the fictive threat unceasingly propagated by the Western radios and the counter-revolutionary forces in Hungary that there would be a return to the "Rákosi-ite" policy. The Party was careful to ensure that no vacillating elements should again endanger the unity of its ranks and the capacity of its organization to act. The condition for registering was the applicant's unequivocal support for the policy of the HSWP and the Revolutionary Government. The Provisional Central Committee granted a certain time for those who had not yet clearly understood what policy they would be supporting by requesting their registration. However, the February resolution set a limit to this waiting period. It stipulated that former HWPP members could request their registration in the HSWP with recognition of their previous membership until 1 May. After that date, they would be admitted to the Party only as new members.

The February resolution took a stand against the new variety of sectarian manifestations, which were observed at a number of places during the process of reorganization, that had disturbed the development of the Party's relations with the masses. A dangerous attitude of this kind was the anger shown by some Party members against the former

HWPP members who did not request their transfer. At a number of places these people were regarded as deserters from the battle, as traitors to the revolutionary cause. The February resolution stated: "... the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party is linked with the vast majority of the former members of the Hungarian Working People's Party by bonds of the long and successful joint struggle for the victory of socialism." The entire membership of the HSWP had to be made to understand that the vast majority of the ex-HWPP members, who had become non-Party people, constituted the stratum of the working population who were closest to the Party and whose support for socialist aims could most easily be regained through the Leninist policy of the HSWP.

Thus, by the conclusion of the transfers, that is by May Day, the membership of the HSWP had increased to over 283,000. The vast majority of members were former HWPP members and approximately 15 per cent were new members—mainly young people who had become Communists in the struggle for the defence and consolidation of the workers' power. The whole of the Party once again represented stable political power, cemented into cohesion by the Leninist policy and the major success of the Provisional Central Committee of the HSWP in the consolidation of the workers' power.

1 May 1957, was an important date in the history of the Hungarian Party and people. On the appeal of the HSWP, hundreds of thousands marched to the Budapest mass meeting of the Party, their columns filling Heroes' Square and the entire neighbourhood. At this exceptionally enthusiastic rally—where János Kádár delivered the main address—the working people, consolidating their power, held a triumphant demonstration, expressing their joy for the defence of freedom, and support for the HSWP and the Revolutionary Government, the new high command of the revolutionary forces that led the country out of the confusion caused by the counter-revolution. May Day demonstrations of a similarly buoyant mood also took place in the provinces. The participants totalled more than one million. The force and vigour which at the same time were gathering momentum in productive work and were also evident in the May Day demonstrations, was of tremendous political significance. This show of energy exuberantly proclaimed to the world that the

Hungarian people supported the Revolutionary Government and the HSWP, they approved the decisions and measures of the government and Party, and backed the cause of building socialism.

Consolidation was taking place more rapidly than expected. In this, a primary role was played by the fact that the vast majority of the working people—even the majority of those who, under the impact of revisionist and nationalist propaganda had been temporarily influenced by the counter-revolutionary forces—quickly learnt from the events. They were convinced that the Revolutionary Government was the government of the people's power, it protected the interests of the people and ensured the socialist future of the nation. They appreciated the fact that the HSWP and the Government had acted in accordance with their statements; they could not be intimidated either by nationalist propaganda or by demonstrations, and their faith in the masses could not be shaken. It was also brought home to those who had earlier been misguided, that the "good advice" given by the workers' councils, certain groups of writers and other revisionist and nationalist circles that had turned against the Party and Revolutionary Government, prevented the restoration of law and order and productive work and had hampered the further advance of the nation. It also soon became obvious that most of the elements in the workers' councils and other groups which were the most blatant opponents of the HSWP and the Revolutionary Government were in fact very dubious "representatives" of the people: it was found that many of them had always been enemies of the workers' power. The nation-wide May Day demonstration was an additional political bow against the enemy and the apologists of the counter-revolution.

Shortly afterwards, in the first half of May 1957, the National Assembly met in order to hear the report of the Presidential Council and the Government on the struggle to defeat the counter-revolution, consolidate the people's power, and the further tasks of building socialism. It endorsed the decisions of the Presidential Council, the appointment of the Revolutionary Workers'-Peasants' Government, and voted support for their work. It approved the report of the Government on the activities it had carried out up to that date, and further assignments. The decisions of

the National Assembly confirmed what hundreds of thousands of working people had expressed at the May Day parades and meetings.

Those who were primarily responsible for the pre-1956 sectarian policy were no longer in the National Assembly: Rákosi, Gerő and several members of their group, who had been dismissed from leadership by the HSWP, had resigned. Those who had deviated to the right and some of the politically confused representatives relinquished their mandates. Out of the 298 M.P.s a total of 28 had left the legislature of the Hungarian People's Republic in this manner. One representative had absconded to the West. The fact that the vast majority of the representatives had stood firm on the side of the people's power preserved the continuity of the National Assembly; cohesion was consolidated on the basis of the new policy of the HSWP.

The June 1957 National Conference of the HSWP A New Upswing in the Building of Socialism

The Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party held a National Conference from 27 June to 29 June, 1957. This Conference met at a time when under the leadership of the HSWP, the revolutionary forces of the Hungarian working class had consolidated the people's democratic system, and had done this much faster than anyone had thought possible during the difficult days of November.

The events of October 1956 brought into focus the fact that the counter-revolutionary forces, receiving many-sided support from the Western imperialist powers and the various representatives of the capitalist world utilizing the mistakes committed by the Communist Party and the socialist state, and the extensive assistance from the revisionists, could achieve significant temporary successes that might endanger the people's power. If Party unity is disrupted as a result of the grave errors and the Party organizations disintegrate, then the revolutionary forces become incapable of action. Anti-socialist forces acting in an organized manner, with the aid of the imperialist powers, can create a counter-revolutionary dictatorship with the aim of restoring capitalism. The internationalist

aid of the socialist countries and of the international revolutionary movement will be unsuccessful, if the internal revolutionary forces fail to reorganize their ranks in order to defeat the counter-revolution and defend the workers' power.

On the other hand, the development which took place following the turning-point of 4 November 1956, provided convincing proof that if there is a revolutionary centre which calls every adherent of the people's power to struggle on the basis of a clear programme, then the revolutionary party of the working class, a party possessing considerable experience, can soon recover and, having reorganized, can regain its capacity for action, and the people can defeat the counter-revolution. Only the development of the capacity for action of the internal revolutionary forces could ensure that the fraternal support from the socialist countries and the international revolutionary movement would have the desired result, that it would effectively avert further imperialist intervention, and would help to smash the counter-revolution.

In November and December, tens of thousands of counter-revolutionaries fled to the West. Imperialist propaganda helped them to lure along about one hundred and fifty thousand misguided people—mainly young people, including a large number of school-age children. This inhuman and incredibly base seduction, often on the level of kidnapping children, helped to reveal the true face of both Western propaganda and the counter-revolutionary forces in Hungary. One-third of those who had been seduced in this way later returned to Hungary.

The hostile elements that remained became more and more isolated, because the majority of the misguided people turned against those who had misled them. Some of the right-wing elements stopped fighting and lay low, waiting to see what would happen. Others formed small groups and continued their activities underground. Thus, the struggle continued, but with a change in positions. The strengthened workers' power firmly defended the people's democratic system against all those who endeavoured to harm it.

The need to put economic life in order was an integral part of the consolidation of the people's democratic system. In November, the railway, disorganized and damaged by the counter-revolutionaries, and the

ruined tram-lines in Budapest had to be restored. Parallel with this, industrial production gradually started again. Direct damage resulting from the counter-revolution caused losses amounting to over 3,000 million forints, and the slow-down in production was an even greater setback for the economy. In November 1956, the output of the mines and manufacturing industry did not attain 20 per cent of the figure of the previous year, and the December figure was also hardly more than 30 per cent of the same month during the previous year. Together with the lag in production during the first months of 1957, the losses suffered by the country exceeded 20,000 million forints.

The serious economic difficulties were successfully bridged by the aid received from the fraternal countries. The Soviet Union contributed large sums of foreign currency, and the Chinese People's Republic also provided considerable aid. Highly important commodities were received from the socialist countries and especially from the Soviet Union. The counter-revolutionary forces and their foreign supporters thought that the setback in production would inevitably lead to inflation, and thus increase the possibilities for political troublemaking. With the assistance of the fraternal socialist countries it was possible to avert this danger. In the first three months of 1957, the production of state-owned industry attained 80 per cent of the monthly average for the period from January to September of the previous year, and 96 per cent during the following three months. A transitional one-year plan was drafted for 1957. The national resources had to be intensively concentrated because only in this way was it possible to ensure the means for the most important production targets. The practical tasks were also accompanied by theoretical struggle; there was a need to overcome the revisionist view which denied the Marxist-Leninist principles of a socialist planned economy. Strengthened government direction and a socialist planned economy represented the only way to ensure the rapid normalization of economic life. In the meantime, attention had to be paid to a change in the economic management, by increasing the independence of the individual companies.

As a result of rapid political and economic consolidation, the conditions for a new upswing in the building of socialism had come into existence by the time the Party Conference was convened. The report of the Central Committee was the main point on the agenda of the Party Conference. It was submitted by János Kádár, who analysed the lessons to be learned from the period which had elapsed, clarified the general policy of the HSWP, evaluated the results, and dealt with the tasks ahead. The resolution unanimously approved by the Party Conference expressed support for the political policy that had been pursued so far.

The resolution affirmed that "the formation of the workers'-peasants' government for the defence of the revolution was historically inevitable", and its correctness was soon confirmed by life. The reorganization of the Party, which was successfully carried out under the direction of the Provisional Central Committee, was a decisive factor in the defeat of the counter-revolution.

In addition, the resolution stated that the workers'-peasants' government "had acted in the most sacred cause, the defence of the liberty of the Hungarian people, and generally for socialism and peace" when it had requested Soviet assistance in order to "defeat the counter-revolution as speedily as possible, to save the people from a lengthy civil war, and to avert the danger of war which also included the threat of splitting the country". The Soviet Union "had acted as a true friend of the Hungarian people and had fulfilled its duty, deriving from the principles of proletarian internationalism". This support had not only facilitated the defeat of the internal counter-revolutionary forces, but had also "ensured the borders of the country against the dangers of armed infiltration and military invasion".

Analysing the causes which brought about the counter-revolution, the resolution confirmed the basic verdict on the December 1956 resolution of the Provisional Central Committee and exposed the major features of the tactics of the hostile forces. It stressed that these forces "had not yet been completely eliminated", but were still making trouble and causing ideological and political confusion with the support of Western radio stations and following Western guidance. Thus, the struggle had to be continued and those "who had committed crimes and were still actively

fighting against the people's power" had to be punished without mercy. At the same time, the resolution cautioned that misguided working people who had only been guilty of minor errors should not be regarded as counter-revolutionaries.

The resolution placed considerable stress on ideological work. A consistent ideological struggle had to be waged against those revisionist views that favoured reconciliation with the class enemy, the followers of which after engaging in factional struggle, and disrupting the unity of the Party, were "bound to become traitors, and go over to the camp of the bourgeoisie". The representatives of such views "had to be driven out of the party".

In connection with the reorganization of the Party, one of the very important questions that occupied the attention of the Communists was to gain validity for the Leninist principles of party life. The Rákosi group, which had a decisive influence in the leadership of the Hungarian Working People's Party, abused power by introducing and developing the cult of personality and had thus violated the principles of democratic centralism. The revisionists forged a weapon out of this situation against the principle of democratic centralism; this was a part of their factional activities and one of the methods by which they undermined the unity of the Party. They succeeded in casting doubt on the Leninist principle of democratic centralism in the minds of those people who were ideologically less firm, because they failed to see that the anomaly did not derive from the principle, but precisely from its violation.

The resolution of the Party Conference took a stand on this highly important issue and declared: "Democratic centralism is a basic Leninist law of party life" and its enforcement is a duty of all bodies of the Party. "At present, the main task is to strengthen Party discipline, parallel with full respect for the rights of the members. United action in accordance with the resolution must be strictly insisted upon," in addition to safeguarding the newly developed, courageous and free debates preceding decisions. The resolution instructed the Central Committee that "in order to defend Party unity, in cases of the utmost gravity, the strictest measures were to be taken; it was better to dissolve certain Party branches that turned against the policy of the Party, rather than

to permit a repetition of the sort of occurrence when enemies of the Party and vacillating elements were able to undermine Party unity from within."

The tasks of defending and strengthening the workers' power united the Party members on the platform of the general political line of the HSWP, but there were still arguments in many places concerning the assessment of the reasons which had led to the outbreak of the counter-revolution. Some of those who had committed right-wing mistakes during those events, emphasized the damage caused by the Rákosi-ite policy, in order to make it appear that their own mistakes were less serious and more excusable. On the other hand, some of those guilty of sectarian mistakes endeavoured to soften the measures taken against sectarian political mistakes by drawing attention to the crimes of the revisionist traitors.

The Party Conference was also addressed by József Révai, who had been one of the outstanding leaders of the Party for over thirty years. At that point, he considered that if revisionism was the principal danger and if the main task was to overcome the ideological and political contagion of the counter-revolution, concurrent sharp criticism of the anomalies of the earlier Party policy would obstruct the implementation of this primary task. The Party Conference energetically repudiated this position, which was incorrect and harmful in principle and was derived from a misjudgement of the situation. One of the basic tenets of the two-front struggle by the HSWP—and this was strongly emphasized at the Conference—was that without condemning and rectifying the former sectarian mistakes, it would be impossible to successfully fight against revisionist troublemaking. A radical break with the sectarian errors of the HWPP leadership was essential for shaping the new Leninist policy of the Party, and a struggle against those new sectarian manifestations that had appeared was essential for further developing such a policy.

The National Party Conference also played an outstanding role in the consolidation of the Party organization. The membership figure of the HSWP at that time was 350,000, hardly more than one-third of the pre-1956 membership of the HWPP. Nonetheless, the Party was stronger and its influence was more extensive than in the years prior to the counter-

revolution. The HSWP was much more the vanguard of the working class than the HWPP had been. Its members were rallied in the struggle to defend and consolidate the people's power.

A decisive source of the strength of the HSWP was that the members of the new leadership successfully applied Marxist-Leninist principles to the conditions prevailing in Hungary. They had drafted a policy which was convincingly proved to be correct, both by the practical results of consolidation that were much faster than had been expected and the experiences of eight months of struggle of the HSWP. Having gained the confidence of the masses, the policy of the HSWP consolidated the social leadership of the working class and strengthened the workers'-peasants' alliance. In this way, the Party again became the acknowledged effective leader of society and state life.

The Party Conference elected a new Central Committee of the HSWP. This concluded the reorganization of the Party and ended the period of transition. The Central Committee elected a Political Committee and co-opted into it: Antal Apró, Béla Biszku, Lajos Fehér, Jenő Fock, János Kádár, Gyula Kállai, Károly Kiss, György Marosán, Ferenc Münnich, Sándor Rónai and Miklós Somogyi. Comrade Kádár again became the First Secretary of the Central Committee. The June 1957 National Party Conference of the HSWP was the conference of the reorganized Party of the Communists which had reaped a historic victory. Its significance equalled that of a party congress. It strengthened the Leninist political guideline that had been developed during the defeat of the counter-revolution and it was an effective contribution to the further development of this policy.

There was an upswing in progress following the Party Conference. The upswing in building work played a major role in this. The 1957 national economic plan envisaged a result that closely approached the 1955 level in industry. Because of the difficulties in the early part of the year and because of exaggerated caution as a reaction to earlier unrealistic targets, the national economic plan for 1957 carefully avoided even the hint of over-reaching itself. The realization of the plan objectives ensured the restoration of the national economy, but the envisaged production

figures fell behind the increased level of consumption. However, progress was faster than expected—especially in the second half of the year. As a result, state-owned industry exceeded the plan for the year by 10 per cent, and the 1955 level by 2 per cent. The yearly average of productivity also attained the 1955 figure. State-owned industry again employed almost 1.1 million people, approximately the same number as in 1955. The counter-revolution had caused the largest immediate material losses precisely in state industry, for it created a lag of almost two years in its development.

In 1957, the production value of co-operative industry was 25 per cent higher than in 1955. The number of people engaged in the small craftsmen's co-operatives increased to nearly 140,000. The output of small-scale private industry also increased faster in 1957, exceeding the previous year's production by approximately 70 per cent; the number of private artisans and tradesmen amounted to more than 123,000, and they engaged a total of 25,000 assistants and apprentices. In accordance with the policy of the HSWP—correcting earlier mistakes in this field—the Government expanded the opportunities for small-scale industry.

The output of industry as a whole was 6 per cent higher in 1957 than in 1955. The state sector played a decisive role in this increase, contributing 82 per cent of industrial production as a whole, although its share was somewhat lower than in the past. As a result of a better harvest than had been expected, agricultural achievements were also above the planned targets.

In the meantime, a Three Year Plan for the period from 1958 to 1960 was elaborated. Concerning the main tasks of the plan, which at the time was still only under preparation, the resolution of the Party Conference declared: "During these three years we have to be able to ensure the balance and sound further development of our national economy from our own resources." Justified anxiety about overambitious plans inspired slightly exaggerated caution in drafting the Three Year Plan. As a result, production targets were set somewhat lower than was reasonable. For example, the plan envisaged a 25 per cent increase in industrial production, a 15 per cent rise in productivity and a 13 per cent augmentation of the national income for the three-year period, whereas in the

first year of the plan, in 1958, industry had been able to increase its production by 13 per cent, productivity rose by 9 per cent, and national income was augmented by over 6 per cent.

A boom in the building of socialism occurred in 1958. The socialist work emulation competitions played an important part in this development which was faster than had been contemplated. Considerable local initiative provided the impetus for this drive, and the Party committees and the trade union bodies encouraged these initiatives, and carefully ensured that the earlier bureaucratic mistakes were not repeated in the organization of the work competitions.

The Party and the Government made no promises concerning any significant increase in living standards for 1958. The main aim was to ensure the level already achieved, and to attain this, the leadership required the active co-operation of the masses. As an important principle of its policy, the HSWP considered that only well-founded promises should be made to the people. It was better to provide more than has been planned, if that becomes possible, than to do less than was promised. This was one of the lessons gained from the experiences of the First Five Year Plan, which was openly discussed with the Party members and the entire people. The frank and open words met with understanding, and had the result that the people's creative activity "corrected" the production targets upward.

The security of the producers also increased in agriculture. Individual peasants endeavoured to utilize the possibilities of small-farm economy to a greater extent. In the meantime, they regarded the co-operative farms with increased interest, for such farms were becoming consolidated and exceeded the output of the individual farms, especially in field crops. The state effectively assisted the co-operatives, but this assistance had changed from what it had been in the past. Subsidies to supplement the incomes received less emphasis, whereas material assistance, to assist the modernization of production and the development of large-scale farming, became more significant and almost exclusive. Many of the former members rejoined the co-operative farms.

One of the very important results of 1957 and 1958 was that the contracting system, a new method of produce purchase by the state,

evidently worked. The purchasing agencies were able to procure more produce than the earlier collection system. It was demonstrated that the produce requirements of the socialist state could be ensured not only through the system of compulsory deliveries, but also through freer trade. The contractual state purchase system played an important part in the consolidation of the co-operatives and enhanced the possibilities of an expansion of trade as the collective farms became stronger. This possibility had a favourable effect on the thinking of peasants and helped to mature the kind of awareness which was required for a more large-scale upswing in the co-operative movement.

The mass rally of peasants that took place on 20 August 1957, at Kisújszállás, was a splendid demonstration of support for the HSWP, the Revolutionary Government, and the workers'-peasants' alliance. The people who had come from a large number of towns and villages in the Tisza region, pledged their faith in and support for the people's power and the continuation of the work to build up the country. István Dobi and János Kádár spoke at the meeting and, over the radio, their message was carried to the people of the entire country. "The people of the Tisza region," Dobi said, recalling the difficult days of the counter-revolution, "both co-operative and individual peasants, were among the first from the provinces to call on me at Parliament and request arms in order to help us smash the counter-revolutionary forces." János Kádár gave a comprehensive review of the Party and Government policy and also spoke in detail about its agricultural policy. Expressing the mood of the peasants of the country, the mass rally welcomed both the general and agricultural policy of the Government with enthusiastic approval.

The policy of alliances pursued by the HSWP played an important role in the consolidation of the workers' power, for it proclaimed the national unity of all the followers of the people's power against all the enemies of the people's power. The Patriotic People's Front was reorganized in the spirit of this policy. "This form of co-operation by Communists and non-party people," the resolution of the June Party Conference stated concerning the People's Front, "has to be extensively developed, both in order to promote the work of the councils and various economic,

cultural and scientific bodies, and in order to improve the country's general political life."

The People's Front embodied the solidarity of the workers, intellectuals and co-operative farmers building socialism, with the individual peasants and all those who supported the people's democratic system, accepted the socialist aims of the workers' power and assisted its work of building the country.

The People's Front was reorganized under the leadership of the HSWP and with the participation of the Young Communist League and other social organizations. It provided room in its ranks for the representatives of science and culture, irrespective of whether they were Communists or not, members of the former coalition parties, the representatives of the Churches, and in general for all those who wished to take part in the work of building the country, work led by the HSWP. The federations of the national minorities in Hungary—the German, South-Slav, Slovak, and Rumanian—also participated in the activities of the People's Front.

The People's Front is not a mass organization, but a movement relying on mass organizations. It has a national network of county, district, town, city-district and village People's Front committees, with the National Council of the People's Front, or rather its Secretariat, co-ordinating their activities. Early in 1958, during a general activation of political life, the local People's Front meetings or the regional People's Front conferences elected the People's Front committees. Significant new forces joined in this work.

The new elections for the National Assembly and the councils were an important event in political affairs in November 1958. The nomination meetings convened by the People's Front accepted the nominees, both Communists and non-party people, as candidates of the People's Front. With the participation of over four million people, the nomination of over 100,000 people to stand as candidates in council elections was endorsed, and several hundred mass meetings approved the nomination of candidates to stand for election for seats in the National Assembly.

The National Assembly and Council elections in November were prepared and carried out during the struggle against imperialist propaganda and the troublemongering attempts of the internal enemy.

Western radio propaganda endeavoured to encourage its disheartened followers by repudiating the consolidation of the workers' power. Their old phrases had not been successful, but as they were still slaves to their own propaganda, they found it difficult to develop new methods of deception. At the time of the elections, they called for a boycott of the polls. However, this boycott propaganda was a complete failure at the nominating meetings, and during the elections.

Nearly 6.5 million people, 98.4 per cent of those entitled to vote, cast their ballots in the elections for the National Assembly and Councils; and the candidates standing for the Peoples's Front received over 99 per cent of all the votes cast. The combined number of invalidated and negative votes barely exceeded 60,000. The people's democratic system, the workers' power, the HSWP and the Patriotic People's Front had scored a major success.

The new upswing in the building of socialism in Hungary was also able to rely on the progress achieved by the international revolutionary forces. The anti-communist campaign launched by the reactionary forces of the world during the previous year was halted in 1957, and several other activities aimed against the national liberation movement also came to a standstill. The international revolutionary and anti-imperialist movements had gathered momentum.

The general anti-communist campaign of the imperialists reached its climax in 1956, with the unleashing of the counter-revolutionary revolt in Hungary. On the other hand, the defeat of this revolt and the rapid consolidation of the people's democratic order played an important part in repulsing the onslaught of international reaction. The hopes the imperialists had attached to the events in Poland also proved to be vain. The fraternal party in Poland—whose leadership was reshaped in October 1956, under the leadership of Wladyslaw Gomulka—took a definite turn against the old errors, and at the same time it prevented the counter-revolutionary forces from jeopardizing the existence of the workers' power under the pretext of taking action against the mistakes. With the repulse of the right-wing offensive, the people's democratic order was also consolidated in Poland.

The countries of the socialist camp had rallied their ranks more closely, they had thwarted imperialist attempts to disrupt their unity, and were able to display rapid and continuous economic development. They provided increasing aid to the peoples fighting for their independence. This, and especially the action of the Soviet Union, greatly contributed to the fact that early in 1957 the Israeli aggressors were compelled to withdraw from the Sinai Peninsula, which they had invaded with British and French assistance in the autumn of the previous year. In 1957 the NATO powers threatened Syria, a country that was developing in a progressive direction, with an armed attack, deploying the Turkish military forces along its borders, but the steps taken by the Soviet Union forced the aggressors to withdraw.

In August 1957, for the first time in the world, the Soviet intercontinental rocket made its appearance, and in November 1957 the first Soviet sputnik was placed in orbit around the earth. Thus, a new era of space research began, opened up by the development of Soviet science and technology. This exerted a tremendous influence on international public opinion. It further inspired the enthusiasm of the socialist countries and all progressive mankind, but, on the other hand, it aroused considerable unrest in the imperialist camp. This was very favourable for the forces campaigning for a peaceful co-existence between the two world systems and the abolition of the colonial system.

In November 1957, during the new impetus in the international revolutionary movement, the Communist and Workers' Parties held two highly significant conferences in Moscow. One was the Conference of the Communist Parties of the Socialist Countries, and the other, a meeting of 65 fraternal parties, active in various countries of the world. At the former, the party of every socialist country was represented, with the exception of the Yugoslav Party, which although it did not attend the conference to which it was invited, did participate in the meeting of the 65 parties.

The conference of the fraternal parties of the socialist countries approved a Statement which is a document of great theoretical significance in the international Communist movement. Analysing the situation in the world, this document stated that "the basic content of our times is

transition from capitalism to socialism" and that the course of world development was determined by "the trends and achievements in the competition between the two opposing social systems". The Statement approved several basic findings made by the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party. The most important of these was the thesis that war was no longer inevitable and that the forces of peace fighting together can prevent the outbreak of a new world war. The Statement corroborated the Leninist principle of the peaceful co-existence of the two systems. In addition, it adopted the viewpoint that an armed uprising is not the only possible way that leads to a victorious revolution: under the conditions of our times, in a number of capitalist countries it could occur that the revolutionary forces could attain power without armed action and carry out the revolutionary transformation of society.

The Statement of the fraternal parties of the twelve socialist countries, which was adopted by the overwhelming majority of the Communist and Workers' Parties—was supplemented by the Peace Appeal approved by 65 fraternal parties. This Appeal called on the people of the world to fight together against the arms race, to support the banning of nuclear and hydrogen weapons and fight against the arming of the West German revanchist forces. It took a stand for the establishment of a collective security system and for the peaceful co-existence of countries with differing social systems. "We offer our hands to all people of goodwill," the Appeal stated. "Let us together relieve the peoples from the burden of armaments imposed on them. Let us free the world from the danger of war, death and annihilation."

The Moscow Conference of 1957 demonstrated to the world the firm cohesion of the socialist countries. This solidarity enhanced the political effects of the theoretical theses of the Statement. The Conference greatly stimulated the development of contacts between the socialist countries and other peoples fighting against imperialism.

At that time, the anti-imperialist struggle, especially that of the Arab peoples, was advancing. Egypt and Syria had joined forces in the face of imperialist pressure. The Algerian people continued their armed freedom struggle against the French colonizers. In July 1958, the Iraqi revolution overthrew a régime which had served the imperialists. In the

hemisphere of America, the popular revolution of Cuba under Fidel Castro's leadership had gathered momentum in order to overthrow by the end of 1958 the reactionary system which had enjoyed the support of the American imperialists. Staring into the face of the United States of America—the strongest power of the capitalist world—a people's power had come into being in the Western hemisphere, a fact which had a tremendous impact, especially on the Latin American countries.

The imperialist powers endeavoured to halt this new upswing in the international revolutionary movement through various actions, and anti-Communist propaganda was a constant concomitant of these attempts. For this purpose, they continued their attempts to utilize the so-called "Hungarian question" inside and outside the United Nations, attacking the Soviet Union for the assistance it had given to the Hungarian people in 1956 and for its obstruction of Western intervention. The NATO countries were slow to admit the complete failure of their anti-Hungarian schemes. Under pretext of the illegal United Nations resolution passed in 1956, they forced the "Hungarian question" again and again onto the agenda of the world organization, hoping that it would continue to be profitable for their propaganda. However, the fact was that by 1958 the consolidation of the legal order of the Hungarian People's Republic and the new upswing in building socialism had knocked the weapon out of the hands of international reaction, which it had forged in the 1956 counter-revolution.

The new upswing in the building of socialism in Hungary was a major victory for the Hungarian people, the socialist world and the international Communist movement.

General Upswing in the Building of Socialism Development and Victory of the Co-operative Farm Movement Laying the Foundations of Socialism

1959-1962

The political and economic consolidation of the workers' power was followed by an upswing in the building of socialism. Industry developed faster than planned. The shift to co-operative farming in agriculture occurred sooner than expected and with a success beyond all anticipations. Significant achievements were also attained in other areas of social life. The foundations of socialism were laid, and the building of socialism entered a more advanced stage.

The Results of the 1958 to 1960 Three Year National Economic Plan

In 1957, when emphasis was placed on putting the national economy into order and revising the economic policy of the country, it would have been difficult to work out a plan for a period of five years, and for this reason a three-year plan was drawn up. The results of 1958 showed that development was more rapid than that envisaged, and the achievements of 1959 and 1960 also confirmed this trend.

In 1960, the production of state and co-operative industry exceeded the 1957 level by 40 per cent, compared to 23 per cent envisaged in the plan. The hot rolling mill, open-hearth furnace No. 1 and the coking unit No. 2 of the Danube Ironworks, the Tiszapalkonya plant and the Pécs thermo-electric power plants, the Borsod Chemical Works and several other factories were put into operation, and a number of old factories were considerably enlarged. Private small-scale industry dwindled, and in 1960 its contribution to industrial production as a whole was less than 3 per cent.

In this way, the new industrial upswing was due entirely to the growth of socialist industry. The output of the heavy industrial branches increased as a whole by 49 per cent, and within this engineering by 63 per cent. The joint proportion of the sectors manufacturing electric and telecommunications machines and instruments together increased from 23.8 per cent to 27.6 per cent within engineering. There was also a development in the manufacture of television sets and electric household machines—such as washing machines, refrigerators and vacuum cleaners. The output of agricultural machines doubled. The production of machines used in transport also increased faster than average, but the Hungarian development of diesel locomotives was not so successful.

The aggregate increase of the light-industrial branches was more moderate, but even so it was very significant, being 36 per cent above the level of three years earlier. The growth in the output of the branches producing mass-consumption articles, both in light and heavy industry, helped to satisfy the increased requirements of the population.

The annual average output of agriculture was from 10 to 11 per cent higher between 1958 and 1960 than the average figure for the years from 1955 to 1957. This increase was of special significance, because this was the period of great social transformation in the villages. This change was greatly facilitated by the success of the Three Year Plan. Agriculture was supplied with 19,000 tractors and many other machines. Applied with effective agent 31.5 kilograms of artificial fertilizer were used per hectare of arable land in 1960, compared to 15 kilograms in 1957, i.e. the use of fertilizers doubled.

National income increased by 22 per cent compared to the 13 per cent envisaged, and the productivity of state industry increased during the three years by 20 per cent instead of the 15 per cent foreseen.

The Three Year Plan envisaged a 6 per cent increase in the real wages of workers and employees. The main aim was to maintain the increase in living standards established in 1957, or to ensure its modest improvement from domestic resources. The overfulfilment of the production plans and productivity targets at the same time made it possible to supplement wages and salaries with the distribution of significant profit shares,

and as a result the real wages of workers and employees in 1960 exceeded the figure of three years earlier by 10 per cent instead of the 6 per cent contemplated. Family allowances and a slight upgrading of pensions also contributed to the increase in per capita income.

During the period of the Three Year Plan, 180,000 new homes and over 2,500 new general and secondary-school classrooms were built. The number of general-school pupils was 10 per cent higher, and college and university enrolment was 22 per cent more in 1960 than in the previous three years. Social security had already been extended to cover 85 per cent of the population; the number of hospital beds increased by 2,500, and the number of doctors by 1,500.

A very important factor in economic policy is that the structure of industry, that is, the composition of its branches, should develop in conformity with the potentialities of the country. This is a long-term process because the existing industrial structure is also one of the resources of the country, one on which further development is based. The change in the sectorial structure can primarily be effected through new investments. In this field, the achievements of the Three Year Plan were the first substantial step forward.

During the period the Three Year Plan was carried out, the changes, which occurred in the system of management in 1957, were consolidated. The modification of the system of economic management in industry was achieved by a significant decrease in central plan directives, together with a corresponding increase in the independence of companies and enterprises, and other measures which increased the incentive of individual enterprises to improve production. Ensuring an appropriate share in the company profit gained above the plan was one of the latter incentive methods. The system of giving detailed instructions on how to attain plan targets diminished to a greater extent in the management of agriculture. The replacement of compulsory delivery obligations with the system of state purchases under contracts in itself represented a considerable change in control.

The work emulation movement which was revived in 1957, and which developed into the socialist brigade movement, was an important factor in the upswing of socialist industry. The purpose of the movement was

to encourage teamwork and a sense of responsibility at work, for higher production, and better-quality products; and to stimulate joint efforts to achieve co-existence in a socialist spirit and improve the education of the members. Gaining the distinction of "socialist brigade" was the symbol of this aim. The movement was initiated in the factories in December 1958, inspired by the model of the Communist work brigade movement which developed in the Soviet Union. It was led by Communists. Their enthusiastic initiative received the support of the local bodies of the HSWP and the regional Party executive committees. The trade unions played their part in promoting the movement through the direct organization, industrial and national guidance of the contest. In 1960, 40,000 brigades were active in the work emulation competitions, and out of these 3,000 had by that time won, and 10,000 were competing for, the "socialist" distinction. By 1962, 7,000 brigades had gained this honorary distinction and 22,000 were working for it.

The socialist brigade movement became the principal form of work emulation, a movement of hundreds of thousands of people, something new in the development of the building of socialism. The movement started in industry, but also extended to other branches of the national economy. Its formation and rapid development expressed that the working people were in agreement with the policy of the HSWP and the aims of building socialism.

HSWP policy also altered and developed the work methods of the Party. An extremely important feature in this process was that the aims set by the Party and the Government should be accepted by the decisive majority of the population, and the working people were mobilized to implement these aims. All this required good orientation and information from the lower bodies to the higher bodies and vice versa. It was similarly essential that the intermediary and lower Party organizations should display greater initiative and have more scope in appropriately linking national and local tasks, for this greatly affected the extent to which local forces could be mobilized and how effectively the general party line could be implemented locally. The appropriate Leninist policy ensured that the decisions of the higher bodies should not merely be compulsory, but that the lower bodies should accept them on the basis of convincing

arguments, and this helped the members persuade the masses to accept the Party position. The style of work adopted by the HSWP played a part in speeding up progress.

The Growth and Victory of the Co-operative Movement

By the end of 1958 the political and moral conditions had been established for a new upswing in the co-operative movement. The agrarian policy of the HSWP played an extremely important role in this. The first decisions which changed the pre-1956 rural policy—among which the radical change in the system of produce acquisitions and the co-operative farm policy were the most important—were followed by a thorough revision of agrarian policy as a whole.

The resolution which contained the detailed guidelines—the "Agrarian Theses"—was approved by the Central Committee in July 1957. This resolution stressed that rallying the individual peasants in co-operative farms still remained one of the fundamental aims of the Party. The resolution stated that it could be expected that the agricultural labourers and holders of less than four *hold* (about 5.7 acres) of land would find it easier to join the co-operatives. But the small peasants with individual holdings of from four to eight Hungarian *hold* numbered over 45,000 in 1957, and constituted an important section for the advancement of the co-operative movement. The guidelines envisaged that when they saw that the existing collective farms were becoming stronger, this stratum of the peasants could also be won over more easily. The number of medium-sized peasant farms exceeded 250,000, and those over 15 *hold* (about 21 acres) numbered 58,000. The vast majority of the latter were also medium-sized peasant farms, although many of them had evolved through the reduction of the former kulak estates.

The agrarian political resolution of July 1957 did not leave out of consideration the likelihood that with the growth of security the production of the medium-sized peasant farms would become stronger, a trend which might lead to some capitalistic tendencies. Therefore, the

production of these farms was encouraged, although adequate government measures were required to limit speculation.

The agrarian political resolution stated that, relying on the forces represented by the existing collective farms—that is, the state farms and the co-operative farms—and on the agricultural labourers and peasants with holdings of less than four Hungarian *hold*, “everything had to be done to win over the main forces of the peasants, the small and medium peasants.” The resolution also pointed out that “co-operative farms were the main way” for the socialist transformation of the villages, in other words, co-operatives of a higher order. In this type of co-operative, the basic means of production are collectively used; and, in addition to the collective tilling of the fields, horticulture and animal husbandry are also collective, farm management is carried out according to a common plan, purchases and sales are collective, and an overwhelming part of the income is distributed in proportion to the work carried out. The resolution stated that in addition to such co-operatives of a higher order, producers’ associations of a more general type, which at first collectively cultivated only field crops, but could gradually extend their activities to other areas of collective farming, should also be encouraged. The resolution considered the likelihood that the strongly property-minded middle peasants could be primarily won over to support these simpler forms of co-operation.

The resolution pointed out that the establishment of large-scale agricultural plants required significant investments which “cannot be implemented by exclusively peasant resources under either capitalism or socialism. Under socialist conditions this meant that the state had to expend substantial sums on the establishment of large-scale co-operative farms”.

In 1957, sound competition started between the individual peasant farms and co-operative farms. In 1954, in general, the co-operatives exceeded the individual farms in the average yields of the main crops. They produced 14.6 quintals per hectare of autumn wheat, whereas the individual farms achieved yields of only 11.5 quintals.* Average

* 1 quintal=2 cwt.

maize crops were the same for both. The co-operatives achieved slightly higher yields of potatoes, and significantly higher yields of sugar beet than the individual farms, but on the other hand, the individual farms were still ahead in their production of fodder plants and vegetables.

The results indicated that the co-operative farms—whose members were in the main the former agricultural proletariat and poor peasants—farmed sufficiently well to attain and exceed the average yields of medium-size peasant farms, and considerably outstripped the output of the small peasant farms that were under eight *hold* in area. The net incomes of co-operative families, including the income gained from the supplementary household plots, was higher than the net incomes of small peasant families. The co-operative farms ensured better living conditions and developed new forms of human contacts. Their members were once and for all released from the desperate struggle for land which had been accompanied by so much contention and which so often pitted brother against brother.

Influenced by the strengthened collective farms, nearly 20,000 new members joined the co-operative farms in 1958, and thus their combined membership increased to the round figure of 140,000. In addition, the membership of the more general group of co-operatives amounted to 29,000 by the end of 1958. At that time, 14.6 per cent of the country’s arable land belonged to the co-operative sector. Agitation against the co-operatives was less effective and the attraction of the collective farms increased. This was one of the very important indications of the fact that the workers’-peasants’ alliance had become consolidated and the rural workers expressed stronger confidence in the HSWP and the Revolutionary Government.

In December 1958, the Central Committee of the Party discussed the position of the co-operative farms and arrived at a highly significant decision concerning their further development. It observed that “the political and economic situation makes it possible for the co-operative farm movement to develop faster during 1959 than it has advanced so far.” Although the resolution explained that the conditions for really

dynamic progress did not yet exist, "even these conditions can be ensured within a reasonable time." The resolution reiterated that the socialist reorganization of agriculture was "in the fundamental interests of our entire society", and that this immense task was to be carried out with a simultaneous increase in agricultural production.

Among other things, the more rapid development of the co-operative movement demanded a unity of concept. Certain requirements in the 1957 Agrarian Political Theses were not uniformly interpreted, and with the strengthening of the co-operative movement these differences in attitude came to the surface. Some people denied the feasibility of solving this double task and the possibility of increasing agricultural output parallel with the reorganization of the villages. They were of the opinion that such reorganization would inevitably be accompanied by a temporary decrease in production, and was something that had to be accepted. Another group of these sceptics would have delayed the organization of the co-operative farms with the explanation that higher output "must not be risked for the sake of socialist transformation". The December 1958 resolution of the Central Committee rejected these views. It emphasized that only through such a socialist reorganization could modern large-scale farming replace small farm holdings.

At the same time, the resolution also refuted those views according to which only the organization of perfectly equipped, materially well-provided co-operative farms was permissible, and the speed of transformation should be made dependent on the number of large-scale agricultural plants which the state was able to equip in any given year. Naturally, state assistance was a very important precondition for such a reorganization, but what the peasants did to accelerate this progress through pooling their own means of production and their efforts, was also important. If the growth of the co-operative movement was more rapid than was envisaged, more state assistance than planned would have to be allocated for the co-operatives.

There were also differing opinions regarding the forms of the co-operatives. Some people were not in favour of organizing co-operative groups of a lower form, fearing that the extension of this type would undermine the existing co-operatives of a higher level. Others, placing

undue emphasis on the principle of gradual progress, put too much stress on the lower forms because they were not confident that the majority of the peasants would immediately choose the higher forms of co-operation. In 1957 and 1958, the press and the radio mainly expressed this latter view. The Central Committee repeatedly emphasized that the co-operative movement in Hungary relied on the existing co-operatives and that its main form would continue to be the higher type of co-operative farm. Nevertheless, the negative attitude concerning the lower form was incorrect, especially in hilly regions and areas, where for the time being it was very difficult to set up higher-type co-operatives which would operate efficiently.

In addition, there were some people—the adherents of the old sectarian approach—who believed that pressure—such as depriving them of large portions of their income—should be applied to the individual farmers to induce them to join co-operatives. The Central Committee energetically repudiated this view, which would have resulted in shaking the confidence of the individually farming peasants in the Party and Government, when this confidence was one of the main political conditions for an upswing in the co-operative movement.

The resolution also set the aim of intensifying co-operative propaganda, providing effective aid for the existing co-operatives, and the careful preparation of the formation of new co-operatives. It declared that to fulfil this aim, 500 comrades, volunteering for the work as part of their Party activity, would be sent from the towns to the villages. In addition, hundreds of specialists would be sent by government organizations to the countryside to help in the work. The resolution declared that "from 50 to 100 well-trained Communists should be organized into groups of activists in every county" with the aim of assisting the village leaders to organize co-operatives and campaign for them. It was made the responsibility of the village Party organizations to set up, together with the councils, committees consisting of from 20 to 40 members who were to draft plans "for the formation of co-operative farms or the enlargement of existing co-operatives".

The resolution also devoted considerable attention to increasing state support, with the main emphasis placed on improving production. The

organization of patronage for the co-operative farms was also a designated task.

The December 1958 resolution was a document of outstanding significance in the struggle of the HSWP. It achieved theoretical and political unity concerning the problems of this pressing revolutionary task and provided theoretical and practical guidance for its solution.

The Central Committee was aware of the fact that the rate of reorganization would inevitably differ in the various counties and in the different regions within the same county. It did not set numerical quotas for reorganization, but provided guidelines and practical advice. The county Party committees had to prepare the county plans, together with the leaders of the county councils, giving due attention to local recommendations and plans. The organs of the Central Committee, the Political Committee and the Secretariat were to control the plans and, in consultation with the county Party committees, to approve or modify them—in several cases they somewhat reduced them.

The co-operative farm campaign and organization drive started in January 1959, and the movement received a greater impetus than had been expected. Especially outstanding results were registered in the counties of Győr-Sopron and Szolnok, where the reorganization was almost completed by March. With the expansion of the existing co-operatives and the formation of new ones, over 340,000 new members entered the co-operative farms by the spring of 1959, and the proportion of arable land belonging to the co-operatives increased from 14.6 per cent to 36 per cent of the national arable area.

State assistance greatly contributed to the upswing of the movement. The state aided the organization of large-scale farms with investment credits and other loans, with special hiring rates for machinery, reduced rates for fertilizers and so on. The peasants who joined the co-operatives were reimbursed for the property they had contributed, less a compulsory contribution to the non-distributable co-operative fund.

The social welfare measures also exerted a considerable influence on the peasants. One of these was the compulsory payment of rent for the land contributed. This was especially important for those elderly peasants

who could not carry out regular work, or only with difficulty. Another of these measures was the trade union national health scheme with medical care and pensions, which was extended to co-operative members. Elderly co-operative farm members who had contributed their land to a co-operative and were unable to fulfil the number of years required for a pension, were able to obtain a modest old-age grant from the co-operative pension fund in addition to receiving land rent.

The fact that the election of a chairman was left to the decision of the members was another factor in the success of the reorganization. Most of the new chairmen were peasant farmers, former poor or middle peasants. In addition some workers, Party activists, council employees, agricultural experts and teachers familiar with farming, who had contributed to the work of the transformation, were also elected to head co-operative farms.

This greater than expected speed and vigour of rural reorganization was made possible partly by the convincing power of enlightenment, and also by the organization and mobilization of the network of activists who worked in the committees responsible for co-operative farm development. In addition to the Party and council bodies, the People's Front committees also joined in this work, and outstanding efforts were also made by agricultural experts and the teachers in the villages. The principle of voluntarism was carefully observed, and this stimulated better campaign work through convincing arguments and enlightenment.

It was an important aspect in the development of the co-operative movement that entire villages, and not only the small, but middle peasants joined the co-operatives. By the spring of 1959, several hundred villages bore the sign "co-operative village", and several districts had the "co-operative district" sign posted at their boundaries.

The reorganization of entire villages raised the question whether the former kulaks should be admitted to the co-operatives. In the past, this had been prohibited. The Party took the position that the decision as to whether the former kulaks should be accepted or excluded should be taken by the co-operative peasants. Most of the requests for admission by former kulaks were granted. In accordance with the Central Committee decision, their rights were to be limited for a period of two years

during which they could not be assigned to any post of leadership and could not be elected to any leading body. After fulfilling two years of honest work, with exemplary behaviour, these restrictions were to be removed.

The achievements produced in the first phase of the reorganization of the villages extensively confirmed that the December 1958 resolution of the Central Committee had been timely and its guidelines were correct. It became very important to consolidate the results of the reorganization carried out so far, and especially to ensure the efficient performance of the farm work that would begin in the spring. For this reason, in March the Central Committee decided to discontinue the numerical growth and concentrate all available forces on the consolidation of the existing co-operatives. This was considered essential for continuing the reorganization in the autumn with a new spurt of enthusiasm.

The second phase of the reorganization commenced in the beginning of November 1959 and continued until the end of February 1960. By the spring of 1960, the total membership of the co-operatives had reached 870,000, and the arable land had increased to 57 per cent of the national area. Together with the tillage of the state farms and other state enterprises and institutions, about 75 per cent of the arable area of the nation belonged to the socialist sector of agriculture. The reorganization of the villages had still not been completed, but the turning-point had been reached with the socialist sector attaining a strong majority.

The counties of Győr-Sopron and Szolnok became co-operative counties in 1959, followed by the Fejér, Veszprém, Somogy and Heves counties in the spring of 1960. Seventy-six districts had become co-operative districts, and over 70 per cent of all the villages were co-operative villages attaining the criterion that at least 80 per cent of their arable areas belonged to collective farms.

The February 1960 resolution of the Central Committee, assessing the achievements attained up to that date, "expresses its sincere appreciation for the sound decision of the working peasants who had chosen co-operative farming. At the same time it wishes to express its sincere thanks to all the Communists and non-party workers, working peasants

and intellectuals who, with untiring efforts, and patient educational activity, had helped the new co-operative members to arrive at this important decision". The Central Committee drew the attention of the Party and state bodies to the need to again concentrate resources on the consolidation of the collective farms.

The fact that in the winter of 1959-60, an additional five hundred political workers were sent by Party bodies, and a thousand specialists by government bodies into the villages, also played an important part in the rapid advances of the co-operatives.

The strengthening of the co-operatives demanded further political work, and the main tasks in this were undertaken by the Party organizations of the co-operatives. Tens of thousands of peasants contributed devoted work to the reorganization of the villages and became participants in the building of socialism. A resolution of the Central Committee stipulated that if such co-operative peasants wished to join the Party, they could be admitted as regular members with the approval of the county Party executive committee without any prior candidacy. Several thousand co-operative peasants joined the Party in this manner. Nevertheless, in 1960 many of the branch organizations were still numerically small, with fewer than ten members. In addition, nearly 20 per cent of the co-operative farms still lacked a Party organization. The branch organizations in the state farms, tractor stations, and the regional ones in the villages contributed valuable work in the establishment and strengthening of the Party organizations of the co-operatives. The membership of the village Party organizations increased from 110,000 to 140,000 during the three years of reorganization, that is, from the beginning of January 1959 until the end of 1961. Many members of the village branch organizations were transferred to the co-operative Party organizations. The membership of the latter slightly exceeded 22,000 in January 1959, 61,000 in the spring of 1960, and 86,000 by the end of 1961. As a result, following the amalgamation of the small co-operatives, Party branch organizations or Party groups became active in almost every co-operative farm by 1962.

The village Party organizations also relied on the organizations of the Young Communist League, whose membership in the villages increased

from 118,000 to 156,000, from January 1959 until the end of 1961. Out of this membership figure, 116,000 belonged to the KISZ organizations in the co-operatives, 22,500 to the village (regional) KISZ's, and the remainder to the KISZ organizations at state farms and tractor stations. The local People's Front committees and the women's committees also made very effective contributions to the transformation of the villages.

Strengthening the cohesion and work discipline of the membership was an important task in the consolidation of the co-operative farms. In fact, at first various contradictions caused difficulties in this. There were conflicting interests between the former agricultural labourers and small peasants, on one hand, and the middle peasants, on the other, concerning the question of land rents. The former wanted all the distributable income to be divided in proportion to the work performed. As there were legal provisions concerning this, they had to reconcile themselves to the payment of land rents, but they endeavoured to reduce them to the lowest possible minimum. On the other hand, those who had contributed relatively more land to the collective farm wanted adequate land rents. Ultimately, state decrees laid down that at least 5 per cent and at the most 10 per cent of the average distributable net income per *hold* should be paid in the form of land rent for the land contributed. Within these limits it was left to the discretion of the co-operative members to fix the proportion. In actual practice, the national average payment for land rent was only slightly above the legal minimum.

During the period of reorganization there were disputes over the role of the household plots. Some ultra-radical views favoured the cancellation of the allocation of household plots; others, on the contrary, held views that these plots be increased beyond the limits of household farming. Both of these harmful views were rejected by the Central Committee. Some of the co-operative members were not yet sure whether the collective farms would fulfil the hopes attached to them, and regarded larger household plots as a token of added security. This feeling of insecurity had to be removed by strengthening the collective farms and making them more lucrative. In addition, considerable attention also

had to be devoted to the household plots, because over a long-term period they were to play a very important role in animal husbandry (especially meat, milk and eggs) and also in vegetable and fruit production.

There was a need to increase the cohesion between members of longer standing and new members in the co-operatives. The fact was that in some producers' co-operatives the old and the new members tended from the beginning to remain apart. Many of the old members disliked the fact that the new entrants, who had hesitated to join or were even opposed to the co-operatives during the most difficult times, could now simply "walk into a ready-made thing". In a number of villages this negative attitude of the older members resulted in the fact that prospective applicants preferred to form a new co-operative rather than join the existing one. This kind of separation had to be overcome. Long-term members had to be made aware of the fact that they should accept those who followed their example, in a manner that was worthy of the first champions of a great social cause. The separation gradually relaxed. Parallel with this process, the amalgamation of the small co-operatives within a village became a frequent occurrence.

During the activities carried out to consolidate the co-operative farms, the troublemongering of hostile elements became more evident. Early in 1959, the development of the co-operative movement caught the enemy unprepared, so it was unable to organize serious resistance. It was predictable, however, that it would not remain passive. Later in 1959, imperialist radio propaganda and the internal reactionary elements carried out a noticeable counter-campaign. They disparaged the collective work of the co-operatives, slandered the Party workers and the patronage movement that assisted the co-operatives. In fact in some places hostile elements in the villages went so far as to perpetrate acts of terrorism. In 1959, proceedings were started in the villages for 29 offences of this nature, and this figure increased to 67, including 15 cases of arson, in 1960. These were mainly the crimes of the class enemy which was unable to emerge from its isolation, and were desperate and futile attempts to disrupt the major social transformation occurring in the rural areas.

However, neither Western radio propaganda nor troublemongering by

internal reactionary elements were able to obstruct the great advances of the socialist revolution in the countryside. They were unable to significantly sharpen the class struggle during the reorganization. In only a few places were they able to significantly dampen the enthusiasm of the movement. The kulaks, who had been the main hope of reaction in the villages, were divided by the flexible and humanitarian admission policy of the co-operatives. As the majority of kulak applicants were admitted, those left out became isolated and were unable to recruit a significant number of supporters from among the middle and small peasants.

The third phase of the reorganization of co-operative farms began in November 1960 and lasted until March 1961. During this phase, co-operative membership increased by 340,000 and reached 1.2 million. The cultivated area farmed by the co-operatives amounted to more than 75 per cent of the national area, and within this figure only 3 per cent belonged to co-operative groups of a lower type. In this way, the arable land of the socialist sector—that is the land belonging to co-operatives and state farms—comprised about 90 per cent of the national area by the end of that period.

As the vast majority of the individual peasants joined the co-operative farms, the cause of the socialist reorganization triumphed in the villages. The possibility was opened up for Hungarian agriculture to enter a phase of socialist progress through the development of large-scale co-operative farms. In the period from 1959 to 1961, the annual average of agricultural production was higher than the annual average for the previous three years. Thus it became possible to carry out a dual assignment: to continue to increase agricultural production parallel with the reorganization. This made the victory—of the party, the working class and the peasants who had joined the co-operatives—achieved through the reorganization of the villages, that much the greater.

The type of development aimed at a quantitative mass increase was concluded in the co-operative movement. Winning over those who still farmed individually, no longer demanded a general organizational campaign, but became a local challenge which would be dealt with in the future according to local conditions. The available resources had to be

concentrated on consolidating the collective farms, developing large-scale socialist farming and solving the many different kinds of tasks that accompanied the social transformation of the villages.

During the period from 1959 to 1961, the state provided significant financial assistance for the villages. In that period, the investments from the national budget in round figures totalled 100,000 million forints. Out of this sum, over 17,000 were spent on direct agricultural investments: 5,400 million was allocated for the development of state farms and state forestries, 3,500 million for the improvement of tractor stations, and 6,300 million forints were allocated for credit and free assistance for co-operative investments. Larger sums than planned were allocated for investment loans for the co-operatives and the improvement of tractor stations. During the three-year period, the co-operatives were able to invest over 2,000 million forints from their own resources. During the three years of the reorganization, the number of tractors increased from 26,600 to 44,000. The use of artificial fertilizer per hectare of arable land rose in active agent from 19.8 kilograms to 41.3 kilograms. Stable sheds for over half a million cattle, nearly one and a half million pigs, and three-quarters of a million sheep were built on the co-operative farms.

Together with the increased yields, the figures quoted above also indicated that, despite the unavoidable initial difficulties, the development of the large-scale collective farms began immediately during the reorganization of the villages.

The patronage movement, which had developed on the basis of the December 1958 resolution of the Central Committee, effectively assisted the organization and consolidation of the co-operative farms. The Secretariat of the Central Committee stated in its April 1959 resolution that the patrons should be "small groups, but well-qualified, which can provide concrete and regular assistance to the co-operative farms". The movement had quickly extended. Most of the patronage groups consisted of people who had been active in the organization of the co-operatives. In the summer of 1959, nearly five hundred Party organizations in Budapest set up patronage groups, which visited over eight hundred co-operatives. In the spring of 1961, the number of Budapest Party organizations that were active in the movement exceeded six hundred. Their

groups visited co-operatives designated by the county and district Party committees in over sixty districts.

The Party organizations in the provincial towns and industrial plants participated relatively more in the patronage movement than the Budapest organizations, because they were able to concentrate their activities in nearby areas. In 1961, the Party organizations of 131 factories and institutions set up patronage groups in Borsod County, which in the main, regularly visited 360 co-operative farms. In Baranya County, the patronage groups of 200 Party organizations visited approximately 300 co-operative farms. The number of workers in factories, institutions and offices participating in the patronage movement throughout the nation reached a hundred thousand. They assisted the organization of large-scale farming, the preparation of the farming plans, and the planning and building of farm buildings; installed electric fixtures, repaired machines, kept the accounts, and procured materials for the co-operative farms.

Another no less important area of patronage was political work. Party workers and KISZ activists from the towns co-operated in setting up and strengthening the Party and KISZ organizations in the co-operatives. They held Party days, meetings and group discussions. They helped to allay the doubts which some peasants still entertained and overcome the mood in favour of withdrawing from the co-operatives which still occurred in some places. They organized workers'-peasants' meetings in the factories, and acquainted co-operative farm members with life in the factories and the work of the factory Party organizations. They took books to the villages, and initiated the establishment of village libraries and cultural centres in several places.

The patronage movement provided considerable political assistance to the rural areas and at the same time increased the city workers' knowledge of village life. This experience assisted the urban workers' understanding of the major tasks that confronted the co-operative farms, and that their assistance, together with extensive state aid, were very much needed to fulfil them.

The decisive political condition which promoted the socialist reorganization of agriculture was that the HSWP observed the principles of

Marxism-Leninism in its agrarian policy, together with the careful consideration of the requirements prompted by socialist progress and the concrete possibilities. It was aware of the fact that the Party and the working class had to guide the peasants onto a socialist path through the co-operative movement, with the help of the socialist state. It was also aware that this immense task could only be successfully solved with the agreement and support of the peasants. The HSWP carefully ensured that the voluntary principle was adhered to. When an impatient organizer in some places violated this extraordinarily important principle, the Party immediately intervened. In this way it ensured that such action did not induce vacillation or doubts, or nourish the trouble-mongering campaigns by the enemy.

Good timing was also of considerable importance in the success of the rural transformation. The Party recognized the historic moment when conditions were mature for it to lead the cause of the socialist transformation in the villages to victory. These conditions did not mature automatically, but primarily resulted from the fact that the workers' power had been consolidated, the Party, before the end of 1957, had restored and strengthened the alliance of the workers and peasants, and socialist building received a new impetus. The HSWP gained the support of the peasants for its policy and thus prepared a new advance in the co-operative movement.

In accordance with the concrete situation, the HSWP constructively applied the principle of the Leninist policy of alliances. Some people attempted to "apply" the Leninist triple slogan in the co-operatives of firmly relying on the poor peasants, strengthening the alliance with the middle peasants and fighting against the kulaks. This Leninist slogan is a basic principle of the policy which determines the relationship of the workers' power with the individual peasants. Since the co-operative farms came into existence, the co-operative peasants had become the closest allies of the workers. It was, therefore, no longer possible to apply the triple slogan referring to the individual peasants to them; in fact, any such attempt had to be averted since it could have endangered the development of a united co-operative peasantry. This had to be clarified, in order to bring the co-operative farm movement to fulfilment.

With patient and successful educational work, the Party prepared the ideological debate on the differences between the socialist views of the working class and the small-property owner's approach of the individual peasants, and this treatment was conducive to the advancement and triumph of the co-operative farm movement. This was an ideological struggle between the two allied classes. With the victory of the socialist approach in this clash of views, their alliance became closer and rose to a higher level. In fact the working class did not conquer its ally, but guided it along a socialist path.

With the reorganization, a new phase began in the social evolution of the villages, a phase in which the old class differences that used to divide the peasants had disappeared and a united co-operative peasantry had developed. This opened up a new stage in the progress of the whole nation. The workers'-peasants' alliance, that was formerly the class-alliance of the working class and the individual peasants, mainly with small-scale production, became the alliance of the working class and the co-operative peasantry.

The Seventh Congress of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party

The Launching of the Second Five Year Plan Laying the Foundations of Socialism

The Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party held its first congress after the defeat of the counter-revolution, from 30 November to 5 December, 1959, during the period of the great advance in the co-operative farm movement. This was when the second phase in the socialist reorganization in the countryside had started and the guidance of agriculture as a whole onto a socialist road was an achievable target. The second year of the Three Year Economic Plan was nearing completion, and the results attained so far had made it obvious that the targets would be overfulfilled, ensuring a higher starting basis for the Second Five Year Plan, during the period from 1961 to 1965.

The HSWP was a reorganized party, but not a new party of the

Hungarian Communists; the resolution asserted that it was the "successor to the Hungarian Communist Party and of the Hungarian Working People's Party, formed from the merger of the two workers' parties. In accordance with this historical continuity, the present congress of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party is the Seventh Congress in the history of the Hungarian Communist movement". The deliberations of the Congress were attended by 732 delegates, representing 437,000 Party members and candidate members. The agenda included the report of the Central Committee, given by János Kádár; the economic tasks and the new Five Year Plan, which was reviewed by Jenő Fock; and amendments to the Rules, submitted by György Marosán.

Reviewing the events of 1956 and the developments following the defeat of the counter-revolution, Comrade Kádár stated in his report:

"The counter-revolutionary revolt of 1956 remains a dark chapter in the history of our people. However, the fact that hardly three years later we can state that the counter-revolution belongs to history, confirms the great political experience gained by our people; it testifies to the determination and unity of the people in overcoming the troubles and difficulties caused by the counter-revolution—to the fact that our people was able to bury the counter-revolution."

The Congress confirmed the policy of the Central Committee of the HSWP, carried out by the CC from 4 November, 1956—with the approval of the National Party Conference since June 1957. It asserted that the policy had brought about the rapid consolidation of the people's power, and had made the rapid consolidation of the building of socialism and the great advances in the co-operative movement possible. It endorsed the theory and practice pursued in the reorganization of the Party and the development of party life. It approved the policy of alliances which the Central Committee had developed and implemented after the turning-point of 4 November, 1956. It stated that "during the last three years, with the assistance of the People's Front policy, broad non-party masses had taken part in the political life of the country and found their places in the life of the country."

The Congress Resolution reviewed the historic struggle for socialism and evaluated the social changes which had occurred since the liberation.

The Hungarian people inherited a backward industry and agriculture, and the position of the country at that time was aggravated by the fact that the criminal war, into which the Horthyite ruling circles had plunged the nation, had caused disastrous losses. Despite all this and the losses and relapse caused by the 1956 counter-revolution, by 1958 industrial production rose to three and a half times the output of 1938. The annual average agricultural production from 1954 to 1958 exceeded the annual average of the period from 1949 to 1953 by 15 per cent; this was not entirely satisfactory, but was still considerable.

Congress paid particular attention to the co-operative movement, which by that time had become a major issue of the entire social and political life of the country. Congress re-affirmed the December 1958 resolution of the Central Committee that laid down the task that by convincing the individually working peasants, "we will in the next few years complete the reorganization of agriculture."

Congress considered that the solving of the immediate major tasks, for which the Party, together with the working masses, was to fight, was to complete the laying of the foundations of socialism and accelerate the building of socialism. This was also the aim of the Second Five Year Plan.

With the conclusion of the Three Year Plan and the fulfilment of the Second Five Year Plan that would be started in 1961—the Congress resolution affirmed that an increase of at least 50 per cent had to be ensured in national income by 1965 and a 65 to 70 per cent increase in industrial production, over the 1958 figures. At the same time, the resolution set the aim that the annual average of agricultural production should increase between 1961 and 1965—parallel with the continuation and completion of the reorganization—by 30 to 32 per cent over the annual averages for the period from 1954 through 1958, and per capita real income should be 26 to 29 per cent higher than in 1958.

Congress approved the 15-year house-building plan which the Central Committee had approved in the summer of 1959. A major gap had to be closed in this field. Following the liberation, house building was primarily intended to remedy war damage, the building of new homes lagged behind the increased demand and the maintenance of old dwelling-

houses was unsatisfactory. Requirements had mainly increased because of the rapid development of the towns. Naturally, the rise in living standards, and low rents, also contributed to the increased housing demands. During the period of the First Five Year Plan from 1950 to 1954, when the number of urban inhabitants very rapidly increased, a total of 150,000 new homes were built. However, this was insufficient to halt the deterioration in the housing situation. The housing question became one of the major social issues of Hungarian society. Although 180,000 new homes were built during the period from 1958 to 1960, this hardly alleviated the problem. For this reason, the Central Committee of the Party decided that from 1961 to 1975, one million new homes would be built based on a comprehensive plan, with 250,000 to be completed in the plan period from 1961 to 1965, 350,000 in the following years, and 400,000 in the period of the plan from 1971 to 1975. This plan covered the development of co-operative and private house building, as well as the state development of housing. Congress approved the housing allocations of the Second Five Year Plan in accordance with the comprehensive plan.

With regard to economic tasks, the resolution stressed the need to increase work productivity, ensure a faster development of technical standards and the further improvement of the infrastructure of industry; it also called for the intensified industrialization, of the industrially backward areas, and of the Great Plain in particular.

Concerning economic tasks, Congress approved a separate detailed resolution which paid considerable attention to the analysis of the experiences to be derived from building work. Development had involved major and minor mistakes. Such shortcomings were often exposed by development itself. The resolution encouraged and demanded the elimination of these. Regarding the work of industrial enterprises, it primarily drew attention to the need to achieve faster progress by increased productivity, a reduction in production costs, improve quality standards and extend the variety of products. The aim was a quantitative increase, the resolution stated, possible only where "the material and power required for production and the sale of products were ensured". It was important to emphatically stress this, because the manufacture of prod-

ucts above the requirements of the plan for which there was no excess demand, unnecessarily increased stocks, and withdrew material and energy from products that were in short supply.

The organizational rules were an important document of the Congress. The resolution reinforced the amendments proposed by the National Party Conference, including a few changes of minor importance. These modifications were aimed at increasing the rights of Party members and developing the initiative of local branches, they thus strengthened the two aspects of democratic centralism—democracy and centralism.

As this was the case in the past, the Rules stated that it was the duty of every Party member to carry out Party resolutions. The amendments affirmed the right of Party members, if they disagreed with a decision, to expound a contrary opinion to the higher Party body “while carrying out the resolution according to the Party line.” Another amendment affirmed that those who suppressed criticism, must be called to account, with the Party starting disciplinary action against them. This amendment was included, not only because the Rákosi group had oppressed criticism at that time, but also because such an attitude could repeatedly manifest itself in a Party in power and could spread, unless the Party took energetic action against it.

The HSWP Rules ensured the right of Party members to ask to be dropped from the list of members. The Rules of the Hungarian Working People’s Party had prescribed the expulsion of such a person, categorized those who wished to leave the Party in the same group as those expelled because of disciplinary offences. The HSWP was of the opinion that the right of voluntary withdrawal should be ensured without any moral condemnation. The Communist Party was not an open-house for vacillating elements, or a jumping board for careerists, but a voluntary militant organization motivated by Communist ideals—the vanguard of the struggle waged for the creation of a new society. The vanguard character of the Party would be enhanced, if it was possible for those who wished to leave it to relinquish their membership by being removed from the list. At the same time, such a measure increased the responsibility of Party organizations concerning the admission of new members

and made it their task to follow and assist the ideological and political development of members.

The important amendments to the HSWP Rules included the provision that both the Central Committee and lower executive Party committees should invite non-party expert consultants to work out and discuss certain Party resolutions. The itemized recording of this right of the Party bodies made the HSWP policy of alliances a part of the constitutional statutes of the Party.

An important thesis of the HSWP policy of alliances was that in the Hungarian People’s Republic non-party people could serve in any post for which they were qualified by their political stand and abilities, except position within the Party. The proclamation of this principle, during the period of the reorganization of the Party, helped to dissuade ex-HWPP members from asking for admission to the HSWP thus undertaking the obligations of Party membership, only in order to ensure their jobs. The resolution of the June 1957 Party Conference confirmed this principle, whose correctness was verified by experience.

The Seventh Congress of the Party focused its main attention on the tasks deriving from the general advances in the building of socialism. The effects of this upsurge were evident in the overfulfilment of the Three Year Plan, the major results of the second and third phases of the co-operative movement, the first successes of the efforts to consolidate the co-operative farms, and the acceleration of social development as a whole.

The February 1961 resolution of the Central Committee declared that socialist production relations had become dominant in agriculture. It assessed the initial results achieved in the consolidation of the new co-operatives. The new co-operative farms formed in the winter of 1960–1, in the third phase of reorganization, were to be consolidated as far as possible before the end of the main agricultural season of 1961. The consolidation of those co-operatives that were formed earlier, which had been enlarged with new members and significant additional areas during the reorganization campaign, was to be continued. For this reason, the February 1961 resolution of the Central Committee did not

yet state that the laying of the foundations of socialism had been completed. It did not consider that the numerical results of reorganization had been sufficient to regard this highly important task as solved, and it reserved this judgement until the time when a degree of consolidation had been achieved that would make the numerical attainments of the reorganization permanent.

1961 was a year of drought, consequently increasing difficulties obstructed the consolidation of the co-operative farms. A serious drought had always been an extremely heavy blow for the individual farms. On the other hand, the peasants in the co-operative farms, with effective aid from the socialist state—increased mechanization and more extensive use of artificial fertilizers, etc.—were able to ensure that gross agricultural production in 1961 was not below the previous year's figure, despite the unfavourable weather. In other words, the co-operative farms had proved their worth—to the country and their own members—in a difficult year for agriculture. At the same time, particular attention was paid to the activities that ensured long-term development; thus large-scale vineyards and fruit orchards were planted on 25,000 *hold*, and the number of tractors and machines owned by the farms increased. This contributed to assisting the vast majority of the members to gain confidence in the possibilities and future of their collective farms.

The number of those joining the co-operatives continued to increase. In the spring of 1962, 96 per cent of the national arable area belonged to the socialist sector. The remaining 4 per cent was cultivated by individual peasants, workers engaged in both agriculture and industry, other employees, and pensioners, etc.

The March 1962 resolution of the Central Committee of the HSWP stated:

“In December 1958, the Central Committee considered that the socialist reorganization of agriculture and the parallel increase of agricultural production were immediate tasks. This courageous resolution elicited scorn and anger from the class enemy, and even a number of well-intentioned people doubted its realism. Our Central Committee, our Party, can now report to the entire Hungarian working people that

the goals set in December 1958 have been achieved, well in advance of the date envisaged.

“The socialist reorganization of agriculture has been concluded in our country, socialist production relations have indisputably become dominant in our entire national economy, and during the three years of reorganization there was also a simultaneous increase in agricultural output. Safeguarding and consolidating the workers' power against the counter-revolutionary attack, the economic results produced in the development of the socialist national economy as a whole, and the socialist reorganization of agriculture—these are the three outstanding and inter-related victories of historical significance which the Hungarian people has won since November 1956.”

The socialist relations of production indisputably prevailed in the national economy as a whole. This meant that the laying of the foundations of socialism had been completed in Hungary.

As a result of the major social changes in the rural areas, the ideological and political content of the workers'-peasants' alliance became broader; this alliance no longer merely served as the joint protection of the people's power, but for the joint building of socialism. The March 1962 resolution of the Central Committee affirmed that since the peasants had rallied into co-operative farms, “a difficult and glorious period of development has been concluded”. The results of this not only increased the ideological and political significance of the workers'-peasants' alliance but also promoted the development of a social outlook among the intellectuals. Society had taken a big step forward to become “the united socialist society of the working class, the co-operative farm peasants and the intelligentsia”.

The Cultural Policy of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party

The struggle waged for the cultural advancement of the people is an integral part of the policy of the revolutionary workers' parties. Their programmes always contain immediate cultural objectives, and more distant cultural goals. Working for the realization of these aims, they

broaden their contacts with those engaged in cultural work and extending culture, and endeavour to gain their support for these socialist aims and the ideals of Marxism-Leninism, which serve cultural progress with the greatest devotion.

With the victory of the socialist revolution, there was a tremendous increase in the significance of the cultural policy of the Party. The struggle for certain demands was replaced by efforts to work out a detailed educational policy and to put it into practice, for the development and general extension of socialist culture had become the tasks of the state.

The educational policy of the Hungarian Communist Party, and later of the Hungarian Working People's Party, played a decisive role in the development of the cultural revolution which followed the liberation of the country, and was also highly significant in the education, the upsurge of scientific and cultural life, and the increasing impact of Marxism-Leninism. The anomalies, which developed in the overall policy of the HWPP, disrupted the ascent of the cultural revolution, and the advances later made by revisionism—which appeared under a Marxist guise—also held up progress; this enabled hostile elements to promote their trouble-mongering political activities in several areas of cultural life.

After 1956, among other things, the HSWP had to revise the earlier cultural policy of the Party. It had to expose the damage caused by both dogmatism and revisionism, and it had to restore or work out the Leninist cultural policy, which corresponded to the universal and domestic conditions of cultural life. Above all, a consistent ideological and political struggle had to be waged in the various areas of cultural life to liquidate the positions gained by the counter-revolutionary elements in 1956. This was a struggle in which the cultural policy of the HSWP was gradually shaped, a policy which was also fruitful among the intellectuals. During the consolidation of the workers' power, the decisive majority of the intellectual workers at first loyally marked time, an attitude which was gradually replaced by increasing confidence in, and agreement with, the Party policy. This development was more rapid among the technical intelligentsia and teachers, and slower in literary and art life.

The Central Committee of the HSWP approved the Party's comprehensive Principles of Cultural Policy. This document on cultural policy was drafted in the spring of 1958, when the process of political purification was making significant advances in practically all strata of the intelligentsia, but when a determined, consistent but at the same time patient struggle against right-wing views still had to be continued. A wide circle of Communists and non-party people active in cultural matters participated in drawing up and discussing this document.

This important Party document stated that the development and general extension of socialist culture was "not an instinctive and automatic process", but a task which could be solved "only under the direction of the Party and with the assistance of the cultural organizing activity of the state". Of all fundamental social processes, it takes the longest time to transform the thinking of people. The representatives of the reactionary views and political ambitions of the former exploiting classes who have been deprived of their power, continued to hold important positions in the field of culture for a long time, positions which they utilized for attacks against the developing socialist order. This was one of the reasons why the development of socialist culture was inevitably accompanied by ideological and political struggle. In the cultural field, the positions of the representatives of the former exploiting classes were more concealed, their possibilities for manoeuvring were more extensive, and they were able to rely on the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois views that had survived in the consciousness of the masses. Socialist culture "can develop only in a class struggle, consistently and expediently waged, through the ever more effective propagation of Marxist-Leninist ideology and by overcoming and removing bourgeois views".

The Principles of the Cultural Policy affirmed that the revolutionary labour movement had exerted a lasting influence over cultural development in the past. The struggle of the working class had contributed the art of Béla Uitz, Gyula Derkovits, Attila József, Miklós Radnóti and György Goldmann to Hungarian culture. The document also paid tribute to the other values of pre-liberation cultural life, which had been of assistance during the anti-fascist struggle and had advanced the cause of democratic national solidarity. This primarily referred to the works

of Zsigmond Móricz, Gyula Illyés, Zoltán Kodály, Pál Pátzay and numerous other representatives of cultural life.

Expressing appreciation of the great achievements of the cultural revolution which had gathered momentum after the liberation, the document stated that the people's power had terminated the educational monopoly of the former ruling classes and had enabled the sons of the working people to conquer ever extensive areas of culture and science. Both the quantitative dimensions and qualitative material of general and advanced education illustrated considerable progress. Adult education outside the schools had received a new impetus and so had the development of literature and art. A historically unparalleled upsurge had started in Hungarian scientific life.

The resolution pointed out that the results refuted the lies of counter-revolutionary propaganda which endeavoured "to lessen and even deny these highly significant achievements". This propaganda tried to diminish the cultural workers' awareness of the irrefutable fact that "the only passable road of our national cultural policy is the socialist road, for only this leads to the cultural elevation of the working masses of the Hungarian people, a people becoming a socialist nation."

Speaking about the grave errors committed in pre-1956 cultural policy, the document stated that these included an over-evaluation of ideological development in the cultural field and the neglect of the principled struggle against bourgeois ideological influences; in the main, administrative measures had replaced theoretical clarification and the conquest of incorrect views and attitudes. There was considerable neglect and a large number of theoretical mistakes with regard to fostering the country's progressive cultural heritage. The cultural policy of the HWPP did not devote sufficient attention to the cultural traditions of the working-class movement and particularly "to the heritage of the Republic of Councils and the proletarian culture which had developed between the two world wars". At the same time, dogmatic narrow-mindedness became entrenched, in opposition to works which, although they were not of socialist ideology, nevertheless enriched the cultural heritage of the nation. On the other hand, however, under the impact of the nationalist theory of a "united" national culture advocated by the revisionists after 1953, a

green light was given to "the bourgeois heritage which is a far cry from democratic culture".

Revisionism caused extensive damage in cultural life, and its role in opening the gates wide to bourgeois views sharply came into focus. Those who had acted at the beginning in a Marxist disguise, under the slogan of criticizing sectarian mistakes then launched an offensive against the Leninist principle of party-inspired culture, and went so far as to reject the class struggle and proletarian culture. In the meantime, partly joining forces with the revisionists, the open representatives of bourgeois ideology emerged into the foreground, and finally assumed leadership in the attack against socialist culture. The document stated: "this was a very important element in the ideological preparation of the counter-revolution. It was confirmed that wherever the ideals of the Party were pushed into the background, the cause of socialism was in peril."

After the turning-point of 4 November, 1956, persistent work also made it possible to curb the counter-revolutionary elements in cultural life. Although this still did not terminate the major confusion stirred up among the intelligentsia by counter-revolutionary subversive activity and the revisionist and nationalist propaganda supported by the Western radios, ideological and political purification became more rapid. As a result of this process, in the summer of 1958 the Central Committee was able to state: "The vast majority of the intelligentsia are honourably working to carry out the tasks of building socialism," and the authority of the Party had again increased among them. It also diagnosed that only a part of the intelligentsia identified themselves with Marxism-Leninism, although it was "the ideological foundation of our socialist culture and our entire social life". The majority of the non-Marxist intelligentsia were loyal to the people's democratic system and in many things were of the same view as the Party, and sympathized with the socialist aims, "but ideologically they do not stand on firm ground. This situation, on the one hand, prevents them from sharing with all their strength and abilities in the building of socialist culture (even though subjectively they have the good intentions to do so), and on the other hand, provides constant possibilities for the infiltration of bourgeois views".

The document particularly emphasized that in our cultural development the socialist ideology was primary. The state—in accordance with Party policy—also ensured publicity for “non-socialist works and views which are well-intentioned and loyal to the People’s Democracy”. However, these new cultural works can only become really lasting assets to national culture if they are addressed to the builders of the new world and facilitate the development of socialist consciousness. It is a task of the ideological struggle to support the creation of works conceived in a socialist spirit and to defeat theoretically the incorrect views and hostile ideological influence. But if need be, “all attempts which are directed against our people’s democratic system, openly or covertly”, have to be combatted by coercive means.

The resolution thoroughly dealt with the manifold tasks of the ideological and political education of the working class and the other working people, and with the ideological and moral instruction of young people. The latter task was made more complicated by the fact that the educators—who had an especially outstanding responsibility for this—in the majority did not hold Marxist views yet. Consequently, it was important that the support of the educators for socialist aims should be enhanced by their mastery of Marxist-Leninist ideology. They had to be given adequate assistance for this, which placed a special responsibility on the institutions of advanced education.

The process of ideological and political purification was slower in the field of art. The anti-socialist views in their manifestations usually camouflaged the opposition to socialism. Others avoided clarity in their works and were reserved in giving support to the cause of building socialism, not because of hostile intentions, but as a result of their ideological uncertainty.

The document on cultural policy objected to peremptory decisions in stylistic arguments. It took a stand against the vulgar interpretation of general comprehensibility and expressed its support for experiments that served the progress of art. “But the ideological vacuity of decadence in art, form-breaking for its own sake and its anti-human tendencies are”, the document stated, “alien to our social system and ideology, they are alien to socialist humanism. The Party can by no means be reconciled

to permitting the wasteful formalist products of bourgeois decadence and the views which are their sources to infect without restraint the artistic taste and development of our people.”

The HSWP rejected the “individualist bourgeois interpretation” of the freedom of art which “endeavours to assert calumnious tendencies under the pretext of experimentation with form, and endeavours to smuggle the contraband of hostile views into our art life under the label of courageously raising problems”. On the other hand, the Party supported realist trends in the belief that “an artist with a genuinely realistic intention and approach—if he does not isolate himself from the working people’s struggle for socialism, but supports it—will, with the aid of the people and the Party, sooner or later arrive at socialist realism through the facts of reality and his own inner artistic motivation.” The theoretical position of the Party was that major support should be given to those artistic efforts which combine a realistic portrayal with struggle, for socialist aims, that endeavour to embrace and develop, by the means of art, everything that advances the cause of socialism, of communism; the true social mission of socialist art.

In addition to the foregoing, the guidelines of cultural policy touched upon a number of other important problems, and brought their solution nearer. They also indicated the way in which other important documents could be drafted. One of these was published in February 1959 and analysed the trends in post-liberation literary life. A wide circle of Communist and non-party consultants also co-operated in the drafting of this document. It encouraged writers to courageously represent Communist ideals and to contribute to this with additional works. Another aim was to bring the non-Communist writers closer to the cause of building socialism. It also helped to make them conscious of their social responsibilities. It supported the observance of Leninist party principles in the creation of new literary works. It stated that one of the main elements was “to support, with the means of literature, the struggle waged for the victory of socialism”. Leninist party principles “did not mean a mechanical and superficial identification with the policy of the Party”, but an ideological empathy with the cause of communism. The document took a

stand against those who turned their backs on the socialist ideals and objectives of the working class and proclaimed "a mendacious supra-class trend", and, "with the catch phrase of the 'freedom' of literature want to turn the men of letters against progress and utilize them in the service of the bygone bourgeois world".

The document also dealt with Marxist literary criticism which played a very important function in party guidance and the ideological influence exerted over literature. Criticism could fulfil this function only if it broke with schematism, avoided superficiality, did not avoid theoretical issues and did not let itself be influenced by "bonds of friendship and clique considerations". A break had also been made from the view that "considers criticism theoretically valuable and alert only if it fights exclusively against mistakes. Those who pay no attention to achievements, are not alert".

Concerning literary trends, the document stated that the struggle was "primarily characterized by the struggle of the various ideologies", and alongside this, the criteria of style and genre are secondary. Socialist and non-socialist efforts confront each other; the Communists have to fight this struggle "with ideals and works".

One of the main tasks of the entire ideological educational work was the struggle against nationalism, and the development of socialist patriotism. A comprehensive Party statement regarding this question was published in September 1959. The document stated that bourgeois nationalism had fulfilled a progressive role against the feudal system and foreign oppression during the struggle for a national state, but, on the other hand, it was reactionary when it was an ideological weapon in the hands of the bourgeoisie for diminishing the class-consciousness of the working people and inciting hatred among nations. The betrayal of the nation left its imprint on the nationalism of the Horthyite counter-revolutionary system, which was itself conceived in treachery. In 1919, the Hungarian bourgeois and landowning class became a lackey, an intelligence agency and quartermaster of the imperialist powers and worked against the Hungarian Republic of Councils that waged a revolutionary and defensive war, and against the workers' power which safeguarded the freedom of the nation. The representatives of this class

were ready to allow the nation to pay any price to the imperialist powers to restore their own capitalist and feudal rule. The nationalist incitement, which was nourished by their fear of the proletarian revolution and their desire for conquest, also served to disguise their unparalleled betrayal of the nation. It was in a spirit of nationalist and chauvinist propaganda that they plunged the country into becoming a belligerent ally and vassal of Hitlerite Germany.

The document reviewed the various brands of pre-liberation Hungarian nationalism and pointed out the differences between them. There was a considerable difference between the nationalism of the ruling classes allied with Hitlerism, the tendency to turn towards the Anglo-American powers, and the nationalism of the middle-of-the-road petty-bourgeois tendencies. Nevertheless, they were "reduced to a common denominator in many ways" by their "opposition to the revolutionary movement of the working class" and to Marxism, the ideology of the working class. The common feature of Hungarian nationalist trends was their anti-Soviet character, which was amply nourished by the ruling classes' fear of another socialist revolution.

In its opposition to all brands of nationalism, the Hungarian revolutionary working class fought against fascism, the Hitlerite occupiers and their Hungarian accomplices, for a democratic national solidarity. The document stated: "The HWPP carried on the traditions of the Communist Party, when after the year of the change, it continued to fight against nationalism; extended and protected the idea of proletarian internationalism, reviewed the historic role of the Soviet Union in shaping the fate of mankind and the development of our own country, and when it proclaimed that the cause of socialism and national independence was inseparable from the cause of the socialist camp." Nevertheless, the HWPP was unable to adequately repulse nationalism and "after 1953 it was unable to check the revisionist and nationalist attack".

In its offensive against the dictatorship of the proletariat, the 1956 counter-revolution made extensive use of nationalism—and especially its anti-Soviet features. The lessons gained from the events very clearly showed that a prolonged and persistent ideological struggle still had to be pursued against all brands of nationalism, for the complete victory

of the concept of socialist patriotism. It was in fact the significance of this task that justified the elaboration of a separate document about it.

"It inevitably follows from the struggle between the world socialist system and imperialism, and from the characteristics of the Hungarian class struggle," the document stated, "that on the ideological front of political ideas, nationalism is the arch enemy in the present period."

The Seventh Congress of the HSWP confirmed the cultural policy which was comprehensively expounded in the Principles of the Cultural Policy and was supplemented in the documents on certain important problems of ideological and cultural life. It stated that a new blossoming was also evident in cultural and scientific life. However, this trend was still hampered by a number of factors. "Some of the main obstacles to our progress," the Congress resolution stated, "are the remnants of a capitalist approach, nationalism, and the adherence to private property among the peasants, petty bourgeoisie, and part of the intelligentsia. Petty-bourgeois thinking, individualism and indifference to social interests were still active among the more backward strata of the working class. An ideological struggle must be carried on against these backward views, in order to ensure that the Marxist-Leninist world-outlook prevails in all areas of our social and cultural life."

The peasant way of thinking was undergoing a considerable change at the time of the Congress; the advances of the co-operative movement indicated that a community approach was gaining ground and the small-scale farming views were diminishing. However, the latter survived and would become extinct only as a result of continued progress. The process had, however, started, and this marked a major social stride forward and was the result of a great ideological and political victory. Its impact accelerated the development of social consciousness as a whole and increased the possibilities for the blossoming of socialist culture.

The tasks of the ideological struggle were also increasing. In some instances, the vestiges of the views of a bygone world had to be sharply confronted. This was particularly so, for through the means of ideological infiltration and their "softening-up" policy, the imperialist powers multiplied their efforts to disrupt the cultural development, political life and

social progress of the socialist countries. Thus, the ideological class struggle continued. The further advances of socialist culture had to be ensured against this background.

The International Conditions for Building a Socialist Society The November 1960 Conference of the Communist and Workers' Parties

The international revolutionary upswing, which received a new impetus from 1957 to 1959, brought new successes for mankind. The shift in the balance of power in favour of the socialist world and the general anti-imperialist front continued. The capitalist powers endeavoured to counter this with various activity; but, although they sometimes managed to retard the trend, they were unable to set the clock back.

In the early 1960s the world socialist system was joined by another country—the 14th—as revolutionary Cuba brought into being the first socialist state in the Western hemisphere. In a struggle against political oppression, economic blockade and military threats by Washington, its revolution gathered force. In April 1961, counter-revolutionary troops from the United States invaded Cuba, with the support of the US Navy and Air Force. However, in three days, the revolutionary army and the armed people of the country smashed the invading forces and defended their country. The socialist countries immediately took a stand by Cuba, and the entire progressive world expressed its sympathy. The Cuban revolution took counter-measures in reply to Washington's threats: it nationalized all the banks and other companies of US capital in Cuba. As a result, the majority of the banks and large companies passed into the possession of the people. The lands of both the foreign and domestic big landlords were confiscated and partly distributed among the peasants and a larger portion was used for the creation of state and co-operative farms—primarily the large sugar cane and other plantations. Confronted with imperialist threats, the Cuban revolution requested and received appropriate assistance from the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries, and set the country on the path of socialist progress.

Rapid industrial development continued in the world socialist system. The share of the socialist countries in the world's industrial production rose from 27 per cent in 1955 to above 36 per cent by 1962. The industrial output of the advanced capitalist countries remained higher, but their industrial superiority continued to diminish. The aggregate share of the USA, Western Europe and Japan in the world's industrial production decreased from 63 per cent in 1955 to about 56 per cent by 1962. With the exception of Poland and Yugoslavia, the socialist countries had already carried out the socialist transformation of agriculture and had also made the socialist relations of production dominant in agriculture. The development of the socialist world was entering a new phase.

The Soviet Union, of course, continued to be a decisive factor in the development of the new world system. In 1962, Soviet industry produced one-fifth of the industrial output of the world and more than half of the industrial output of all the socialist countries. In addition, it increased the prestige of the Soviet state and the entire socialist world with new successes in space research. 12 April, 1961, when Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin in the Vostok spaceship rose into the cosmos, was a red-letter day in the history of mankind. For the first time, a man orbited earth, and the age of cosmic travel had started. The leading capitalist power with the most advanced industry in the world, the United States of America—which increased and is still increasing its power and economy through the exploitation of a large number of countries financially and politically bound to it—had to make immense efforts to close the gap in the newly evolving contest of space exploration.

With the new vigour of the independence struggles in Africa, the decline of the old imperialist colonial system was approaching its terminal stage. In 1960 and 1963, thirty countries gained their independence, including 25 in Africa. Among these, the most outstanding struggle was that of the people of Algeria who gained their national sovereignty in 1962, as a result of an almost eight-year war of liberation. The French colonizers tenaciously endeavoured to retain the country, but the Algerian people forced the French army to leave.

The imperialist powers did not reconcile themselves to the loss of their rule over their former colonies. A policy of neo-colonialism replaced the

old-type of colonialization. When new states were formed in the former colonies, the neo-colonialists recognized their independence only if a political group or government attained power which had to rely on the neo-colonialists for support and follow the policies they dictated. Apart from formal recognition of independent statehood, it was in the interests of neo-colonialism to leave more scope for the internal bourgeoisie, local merchants and other commercial strata; and in fact out of political and business considerations the neo-colonialists helped these strata to become somewhat stronger. At the same time, they retained the key economic positions and the possibility for further penetration; and managed to ensure that the governments of the formally independent, but in fact still dependent countries were kept in subservience. Often they maintained their former positions in the public administration.

The ex-colonizers were not always able to establish neo-colonialist war bases in the liberated countries, or if they did, they were not always able to retain them over a long period of time. The growth of the independence struggle brought about the liquidation of these positions. But the imperialists endeavoured to obstruct this course of events. Economic, political and military threats are all among their weapons; and they often went as far as open intervention, and they supported and organized counter-revolutionary conspiracies and putsches. An example in point was the Congo, a former Belgian colony, which gained political independence in 1960. Democratic national forces headed the independence struggle, and, under the leadership of Patrice Lumumba, they began the building of the new Congolese state. But the imperialists triggered off armed struggle against the Congolese democratic national forces, Lumumba was murdered and reactionary political groups were set up to head the new state. The national democratic forces had to continue the fight against internal reaction in order to liberate their country from the shackles of neo-colonialism.

One of the characteristic features of neo-colonialism is that the monopoly position of the former colonizing powers becomes weaker or is lost. Penetration by other imperialist powers into the former colonies becomes easier, bringing with it a sharpening of the conflicts among the

capitalist powers. Neo-colonialism had formerly been introduced by the imperialist powers as a method of rule in certain areas of the world—primarily in Latin America. It was new where it replaced the old colonial system.

Before the Second World War, 56 per cent of the population of the earth lived under the colonial and semi-colonial rule of the imperialist powers, a figure which decreased to 2 per cent by 1962. The peoples that had liquidated the power of their own exploiters, and had set their countries on the path of socialist development, had managed to completely shake off the imperialist yoke. This was primarily possible in those countries where the revolutionary forces, led by the Communist Parties, came to power.

The majority of the former colonies and semi-colonies had not yet advanced to the point of taking the socialist path, but some were making successful efforts to create suitable conditions for socialist development, building up the state and co-operative sectors of their national economy and strengthening their national industry.

In most of the states that were formed—following the liquidation of the old colonial system—diverse class influences prevailed among those in the leading positions of political power; the governments had still not determined the line of development on which the country should be steered, but vigorous efforts were made to end the economic dependence on the imperialists. Elsewhere, those exercising political power were still the unequivocal representatives of the capitalist system, who—under the patronage of the imperialist powers—endeavoured to repulse the revolutionary forces. Even in these countries, it was a national demand, supported by part of the national bourgeoisie, to loosen the ties of dependence on imperialism. Thus, as an integral part of the struggle for national independence and social progress, neo-colonialism is combatted in all these countries.

The peoples who fight for the full liquidation of the remnants of the old colonial system, to terminate neo-colonialist servitude and to avert the imperialist threats, are primarily supported by the existence and increasing international influence of the socialist world and the multifarious assistance they receive from it. The support the peoples fighting

against neo-colonialism give to one another is also increasing; in addition, they derive effective assistance from the solidarity of the revolutionary forces in the leading capitalist countries.

The domestic resources of the countries of the world socialist system have increased, their internal and international possibilities have become more extensive, and naturally their tasks have also become greater. However, there were also some disturbing circumstances which unexpectedly affected the new world system, the Communist world movement and other forces of the anti-imperialist struggle. The fact was that in the spring of 1960, the leaders of the Communist Party of China took an open stand against the general line of the international Communist movement and against its cohesion.

The leaders of the Communist Party of China attacked the Leninist principle of peaceful co-existence between states with differing social systems, a principle which they themselves had advocated until 1958. They declared that this principle was appeasement with imperialism. The Chinese leaders carefully avoided involving China in a direct military conflict with the imperialist powers, and at the same time they abused the Soviet Union for not starting a war against the capitalist world.

Maoist ideology refuted the assessment that the principal front of the international class struggle was between the socialist and the capitalist countries. In opposition to this Marxist-Leninist thesis of fundamental importance, it alleged that the principal conflict was between the rich and the poor countries. The Maoist leadership hoped that with the aid of such false theses the countries of Africa, South and East Asia and Latin America could be rallied behind China. The riches of the imperialist powers are mainly and often decisively derived from the exploitation of a number of countries they subjugate. On the other hand, the peoples of the Soviet Union conquered the poverty inherited from Czarism, exclusively through their own work, showing other peoples how to overcome poverty. The Chinese leaders were well aware of this fact, but in their attempt to put China forward as the model to be followed by other peoples, they preferred to befog the issue.

The leaders of the Chinese Party revised Marxism in an attempt to "make it Chinese", and they contended that everyone should regard China as the centre of the international revolutionary movement. They regarded the Soviet Communist Party as the main obstacle that resisted the imposition of their views on other socialist countries and on the international Communist movement. For this reason, they attacked with special vehemence the Soviet Communist Party and the Soviet Union, which had given the greatest assistance to the Chinese revolution. They attacked the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party and the criticism of the cult of personality connected with it. They favoured the survival of the cult of personality, moreover, in such a manner that its centre should be in Peking and Mao Tse-tung should be recognized as the leader of the new world.

The abuses by the leadership of the Chinese Party were immediately refuted by the Soviet Communist Party and most of the fraternal parties, but at first only through internal resolutions, correspondence and talks. In a comradely manner, the attention of the Chinese leaders was drawn to the grave errors inherent in their position and its harmfulness. Soon an international conference was convened, an initiative which should have been taken in any case to advance the common struggle.

In November 1960, the representatives of the Communist and Workers' Parties met in Moscow to discuss the world situation and the questions of the international struggle, and to take a stand concerning them. Eighty-one fraternal parties attended this conference, which, after a long debate, unanimously approved the Statement assessing the situation in the world and the principal tasks of the parties. The Chinese leaders won over some of the parties—the Albanian, the Indonesian and the New Zealand parties—to support their position, but found themselves so isolated that, in return for certain concessions in formulation, they deemed it more expedient to back down in favour of the position held by the vast majority.

The Statement approved at the Conference confirmed that ensuring a policy of peaceful co-existence between states with differing social systems was a basic prerequisite for maintaining world peace and was something that the socialist countries and the Communist Parties had

to continue to fight for consistently. It affirmed that this struggle was one form of the fierce economic, political and ideological battle waged in the international arena by the forces of socialism against the aggressive forces of imperialism. It refuted the allegation that peaceful co-existence between the capitalist and socialist states would encourage the oppressed people to reconcile themselves to the rule of their oppressors. The truth was that the socialist countries working for normal inter-state relations, extensively supported the struggle of the oppressed peoples—including the armed freedom struggles waged for national independence.

The Statement drew particular attention to the need for the mobilization of the peoples against the danger of a new war to be continued with untiring vigour. For imperialism, that possessed thermonuclear weapons, threatened all mankind. The Statement stressed: "A world war can be averted through the joint efforts of the world socialist camp, the national liberation movements, all the peace-loving forces, including all countries that oppose war."

The Statement confirmed the basic principles and general line of the document issued by the 1957 Moscow Conference. On some contested issues, such as the roads leading to the triumph of the revolution or the assessment of the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party, the 1960 Statement adopted the assessment of the 1957 document verbatim. This was something that the representatives of the Chinese Party found difficult to reject, as the 1957 Statement had also been signed by Mao Tse-tung. He did not attend the 1960 Conference, but finally, Liu Shao-chi, the head of the Chinese delegation, was authorized to sign the new document on behalf of his Party.

The unanimous acceptance of the 1960 Statement caused the world Communist movement to hope that the Chinese leaders would moderate and perhaps even give up their harmful stand and their attempt to impose their policy on the remainder of the socialist countries and the international Communist movement. The national liberation movements entertained similar hopes; for them the unity of the socialist camp represented far-reaching aid, whereas any weakening in its cohesion made their struggle harder and caused them the gravest difficulties. However, the Chinese leadership soon destroyed all hopes of consoli-

dated unity. Petty-bourgeois nationalism, which opened the gates wide for great-power chauvinism, prevailed over internationalism in the leadership of the Communist Party of China. This attitude led the Chinese leaders onto the path of ambitions for hegemony and turned them against all those who viewed such strivings with displeasure.

This Maoist splitting factious activity fanned definite hopes in all anti-Communist tendencies. The dissension that arose in the Communist movement was utilized for attacks against the Communist Parties. From this state of affairs, the right-wing Social Democrats in the capitalist countries forged a political weapon against working-class unity. The Communist Parties persistently fought against such efforts to disrupt cohesion. Whatever the difficulties, the unity of the working class had always been and would always be a fundamental condition of the struggle against the power of monopoly capital.

The vast majority of the Communist and Workers' Parties—safeguarding the fundamental principles and general line of the 1957 and 1960 Statements—continued to work for the unity of the international Communist movement. Despite ideological differences they recommended that the leadership of the Chinese Party should maintain political solidarity in the common struggle against imperialism. However, the Chinese leadership rejected all proposals of this nature. Difficult years followed in the struggle for the unity of the world Communist movement. Nevertheless, the majority of the fraternal parties gained further strength from the struggle against the efforts to disrupt unity. They knew that there was no longer any power on earth which could change the historic fact that the world Communist movement was the greatest political movement of our times. Whether mankind can curb and liquidate imperialism, whose existence has become the greatest threat to the world depends on its further progress.

Hungary at a Higher Phase of Building Socialism The Eighth Congress of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party

The laying of the foundations of socialism, and the predominance of socialist production relations in every branch of the national economy, opened up a more advanced stage in the building of socialism. This occurred under social conditions when the working class, the vanguard of socialism, was numerically the strongest class of the country. Between 1949 and 1962, their numbers had doubled. They became a decisive force in political life, in industry, in the state sector of agriculture and in transport, and were a decisive factor in practically every sphere of society. The leading role of their party, the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, was generally acknowledged, and its policy had gained the support of the vast majority of the working people.

One of the main social prerequisites for progress in the more advanced phase of building socialism was that the peasants should adopt socialist aims and be transformed into a co-operative class. The development of large-scale co-operative farms and the mechanization of agriculture had brought about higher productivity in peasant work, accompanied by a gradual decrease in the peasant population. At the same time, agricultural production had increased and consequently the contribution of the peasants to the national income had not decreased, but had increased. The peasants worked shoulder to shoulder with the working class in the socialist building of the country. The development of the co-operative large-scale farms gradually brought the working and living conditions and the thinking of the peasants nearer to that of the workers. This is, of course, a longer process, but the gradual reduction of class differences between the working class and the peasants had started. This was one of the main features that introduced a higher phase in socialist construction.

Class differences between the working class and the peasants are completely eliminated only under communism, but this social process gains momentum with the progress of socialist construction. An integral part of the process is the acceleration of the cultural development of

the villages. The lag behind the towns gradually lessens, and urbanization begins. The reorganization of agriculture, the consolidation and development of the co-operative farms and the strengthening of the state farms is naturally accompanied by the reduction and the final disappearance of the social differences between the towns and agricultural villages.

As the stage of advancement to which a society attains becomes higher, the role of the intellectual work becomes more important. The development of the national economy, culture and science require ever larger numbers of highly qualified experts who are devoted to the cause of socialism. During the building of socialism, the intelligentsia shows the fastest numerical growth. This tendency was also expressed in the fact that the number of students in institutions of advanced learning—which was less than 12,000 in 1938—increased to 23,000 in 1949 and rose to over 67,000 by 1962, the latter figure including also evening and correspondence course students.

However, the increased requirement for intellectual work not only requires the further growth of the intelligentsia, but also a rise in the cultural level of society as a whole. The significance of intellectual effort is also generally increasing in the work carried out by manual workers, and as a result, the demarcation line between intellectual and manual work will eventually disappear. This is another process which reaches fruition only under communism, but starts and develops during the building of socialism. The increase in political consciousness, specialized knowledge and general cultural standards plays a major role in the raised productivity in every field, and contributes to reducing the differences between the cultural levels of intellectual and manual workers.

By its very character, our society ensures extensive opportunities for education. This is reflected in the fact that the number of general-school children (the first eight grades) was 34,000 in 1938 and 140,000 in 1962; the number of secondary-school pupils did not exceed 11,000 in 1938, but was nearly 47,000 by 1962; and there were 65,000 apprentices in skilled work in 1938, and 144,000 in 1962; moreover, the educational level provided by schools became incomparably higher than that received by students before the liberation. The advances made in extra-curricular adult education and the multitude of various advanced courses

also contributed to the higher general cultural level. The courses that provided political information, primarily organized by the Party organizations, also had an important function. Over 600,000 people, many of them non-party members, participated in the various forms of Party education in 1961–2 alone.

A more advanced phase of building socialism commences after the foundations of socialism have been completely laid. The next strategic aim is to complete the building of socialist society. Hungary entered this phase of social development. Consequently, the Party accordingly set the new tasks and immediate aims, and submitted them to the people.

The country attained this more advanced stage of building socialism during the initial period of the Second Five Year Plan; this occurred sooner than expected because the reorganization of the villages was realized more rapidly than anticipated. This required some modifications in the Five Year Plan. State support for the consolidation of the co-operative farms had to be increased, and most of the investments in agriculture, planned for the second half of the Five Year Plan, had to be brought forward. More money was spent on increasing the defence capability of the country than was earlier appropriated. The attack against revolutionary Cuba in the spring of 1961, the escalation of Washington's intervention in Vietnam and Laos, the provocations against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the speeded-up arming of the West German revanchist forces and a large number of other factors, required the socialist countries to reinforce their defence forces. This also involved the Hungarian People's Republic, especially as the counter-revolution of 1956 had impaired the defence potential of the country and disrupted and slowed down its development. With the improvement of its defence capability, Hungary caught up with the allied socialist countries.

The fulfilment of the investment and national defence targets in excess of prior plans was facilitated by the very favourable fact that the results of the Three Year Plan were better than expected. It was already clear at the time of the Seventh Congress that the plan would be over-

fulfilled. The results of 1960, however, provided a starting base for the Second Five Year Plan that was even higher than that envisaged at the Seventh Congress.

For the period from 1961 to 1965, the plan envisaged a 48 to 50 per cent increase in industrial production. This represented an increase of 83 to 87 per cent over 1958, compared to 65 to 70 per cent contemplated earlier. The general development objectives of agriculture and the increases in per capita incomes remained unchanged. On the other hand, the aim of house building was 300,000 new homes, instead of the earlier target of 250,000.

The principal aim of the Second Five Year Plan was a significant extension of the material and technical bases of socialism and, at the same time, the consolidation of the co-operative farms. The further improvement of public health, medical care, education and culture, formed an integral part of the plan. With the reorganization of agriculture, the national health scheme covered 94 per cent of the population. Progress was particularly rapid in health facilities for the rural inhabitants and, as a result, the differences were reduced in the medical care available in the towns and countryside.

The school reform was the most significant of the cultural policy measures. A large number of Communist and non-party experts participated in its elaboration, and, on the initiative of the Party, the draft reform was submitted to public discussion. Following this it was submitted to the National Assembly, which passed it in the autumn of 1961. The school reform served to further develop a public education system that provides modern knowledge and propagates socialist ideas. The fundamental aims included education for work, strengthening the links between the schools and life, and greater respect for manual work. Polytechnical education was widely introduced. At first, exaggerations, rash and unrealistic experiments caused anomalies in this field, but this trend was later corrected. The development of the vocational schools was no less important, for they provided more extensive specialized knowledge and skilled practice, and also raised the standard of general education. The school-leaving age was raised by law, and school attendance was made compulsory until 16 years of age. The aim was that

completion of the eight-grade general school should become universal and that all young people should acquire more education. The school reform also covered advanced education. Consequently, kindergarten teachers and general school teachers received higher-standard training, to a higher level.

In February 1962, the Central Committee of the HSWP decided to convene the Eighth Congress of the Party in the last quarter of the year. The news aroused interest and anticipation among the entire Party membership and the non-party masses. The working people pledged higher output and started socialist work emulation drives, in honour of the Congress. The March meeting of the Central Committee welcomed these initiatives, for they were additional indications of confidence in the policy of the HSWP.

Early in April 1962, the Central Council of Hungarian Trade Unions also issued an appeal calling for support for the work competitions in honour of the Congress. It declared that this drive would give a new impetus "to the movement of socialist brigades, to the competition for the distinction of socialist workshop, socialist plant, socialist factory, enterprise or farm". It drew attention to the fact that, in addition to the brigade contests, more attention should also be paid to individual work emulations.

In mid-April, the first national conference of socialist brigade leaders was held. The experiences gained during the work emulation drive and further tasks were discussed with the participation of a thousand delegates. Those in the forefront of building the country were enthusiastic advocates of the work competition in honour of the Congress. In their appeal they drew attention to immediate tasks in the factories and called for their fulfilment. The important tasks of the competition included a reduction in production costs, the faultless fulfilment of export plans, and savings in materials, energy and tools.

The industrial plans were more ambitious than in the previous years, and considerations of quality received more emphasis. The upswing in political life, the preparations of the Party for the Congress, and the higher output pledged by the working people, helped to fulfil the tasks. The production of state industry was 8 per cent higher in 1962 than a

year earlier, and exceeded the 1960 level by 20 per cent. Agricultural production had hardly increased because of the unfavourable weather. It was a problem that young people left the villages in larger numbers than desirable. Nevertheless, the consolidation of the co-operative farms continued. Teamwork had improved, mechanization had accelerated, and productivity had increased.

In the weeks preceding the Congress, the international situation had become exceedingly critical. In October 1962, the Washington administration, headed at that time by Democratic Party President John F. Kennedy, threatened Cuba with military invasion; it imposed a sea blockade around the island—the first step in the realization of the invasion plan. With this blockade it hoped to prevent Soviet cargo ships from reaching Cuba, and isolate that country from its allies. The revolutionary government and people of Cuba did not yield to these threats, but immediately mobilized. The Soviet ships also continued their voyages. In response to the American invasion attempts, the countries of the Warsaw Treaty Organization—including Hungary—placed their armed forces on the alert. In its statement of 24 October the Hungarian Government declared: “By ordering the naval blockade, the government of the United States of America has committed aggression against Cuba.” It condemned the administration in Washington for “hypocritically alleging that the people of Cuba constitute a threat to the United States. The peoples know, however, that Cuba does not threaten America, but the lords of American monopoly capital want to suppress the liberty of the Cuban people”. The statement demanded that the US Government withdraw “its measures which trample international law underfoot, endanger the freedom of shipping, and are tantamount to a direct war provocation”.

The working people, at meetings throughout the country, condemned the American aggressors. The weeks before the Congress were a period of solidarity with the Cuban people and an intense struggle to safeguard international peace.

The Kennedy administration found itself confronted by the vast majority of international public opinion. Seeing this development of affairs, especially the defensive alert of the socialist countries and the determi-

nation of the Cuban people, it declared itself ready to respect the sovereignty of Cuba and lift the naval blockade if Soviet rockets that had earlier been shipped to Cuba were withdrawn. In this way, the agreement that was reached was something in the nature of a compromise. However, in substance it meant that the USA was compelled to shelve its invasion plans, and the freedom of revolutionary Cuba and international peace were successfully safeguarded.

The extremely dangerous Caribbean crisis had passed when the Eighth Congress of the HSWP was held, but its lessons were very fresh indeed, and served as a warning that the forces of peace must always be on the alert.

Congress deliberated from 20 to 25 November, 1962, with the participation of 650 delegates. The main point on the agenda was the report of the CC submitted by János Kádár. In it he stated:

“Three years ago, the Seventh Congress of our Party summed up our main tasks by stating that we had to hasten the building of socialism and complete the laying of the foundations of socialism in the next few years. At this Congress, the Central Committee is now able to announce to the Party, and the Party to the working people, that this task has been carried out: the building of socialism has moved forward with great vigour, and the laying of the foundations of a socialist society has been concluded in our country.” The Congress report and the resolution stated that the country has “entered the phase of the complete building of socialism”.

Assessing the historical significance of the changes and their international conditions, Congress stated: “If the Hungarian People’s Republic marches forward shoulder to shoulder with the Soviet Union and the socialist camp, the socialist achievements of our people will be permanent. The international predominance of social progress and the forces of peace, and the fidelity of the Hungarian people to the socialist system, make the victory of socialism invincible and final in our country.”

Congress dealt in detail with the economy of Hungary. Its resolution reported that the national economy was developing soundly, and the plans were realistic, even though the drought was again slowing down

progress in agriculture. "Our aim is to continue to improve the structure of the national economy; to produce up-to-date goods on a high technical level and to increase economical production, exports and investments." The Congress set forth the task of raising—during the Second Five Year Plan—"at least two-thirds of industrial production by increasing work productivity". The resolution stressed: "Increasing work productivity, improving rentability and stepping up production today constitute the main front on which the struggle is being waged in our country for the complete building of socialism."

Congress paid considerable attention to economic co-operation among the socialist countries. As the industry of a certain country rises to a higher level, the more urgent it is for that country to effectively join in the international division of labour. This is particularly important for small countries that can raise their mass production to a world standard in the industrial sectors and whose development of products is economical and advantageous only through international economic co-operation. Particular emphasis was placed on making the collaboration of the fraternal socialist countries more effective in the area of production in addition to the further improvement of trade. The Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party and the Hungarian Government considered this to be very important. Congress stated: Co-operation among the CMEA countries "increased significantly during recent years, but not to the desired extent. Improving the cohesion and internationalist co-operation of the socialist countries is in the vital interest of each one of them." The more diversified and effective this economic co-operation is, "the faster we build socialism and communism, the more rapidly the world socialist system will win the economic competition against capitalism."

The socialist legality is a fundamental requirement of our social life. It was in the spirit of defending the legal order that the HSWP fought its struggle to defeat the counter-revolution and consolidate the workers' power. It also ensured that the violations of the law committed during the personality cult were adequately investigated, and to achieve this a separate resolution was approved in August 1962. It defined the exceptionally serious political responsibility that rested on Mátyás Rákosi and Ernő Gerő for what had happened, and both of them were expelled

from the Party. Congress, when it approved the resolution of the Central Committee on this question, reiterated: "The arbitrariness and violation of the law, which were concomitant with the personality cult, gravely impaired the democracy of our socialist state and caused inestimable damage to the cause of socialism." The exposure of these anomalies and their rectification, as far as possible, also contributed to the consolidation of the legality. "Our people know and greatly appreciate the fact," the resolution stated, "that in our country everyone who does not cause any harm to the people's power can live and work freely, safely and securely."

The Hungarian people achieved their great results through persistent struggle. The struggle continued, but its nature was changing. "At present the main area of the class struggle is," Congress stated, "the strengthening and improvement of the socialist economy and the development of socialist consciousness." The development of socialist national unity had come into the forefront of political life, and this was a "struggle for safeguarding and improving the socialist system and for the complete victory of socialism".

With regard to the political assessment of people, the significance of their—or their parents'—class background was steadily decreasing; even concerning people of bourgeois origin, the manner in which they fitted into the new social system was becoming decisive. As part of this change, social origin was no longer taken in consideration for admission to college and university, discrimination on this basis had been abolished. The majority of Party members and non-party workers accepted this change, but many people argued against it. Congress confirmed the position taken by the Central Committee. In its resolution it asserted: social progress, and within this the socialist progress of general education, makes it possible and in fact imperative that in deciding admissions "the yardstick should be the preparedness, ability and the political and moral attitude of applicants."

In a penetrating manner, Congress dealt with the problems of party life. It considered that since the Seventh Congress the HSWP had continued to develop soundly. The membership of the Party had increased to 548,000 by the time of the Eighth Congress. Ideological and political

unity was becoming firmer in its ranks. The success of the reorganization of agriculture increased the prestige and authority of the Party before the entire people; it augmented the number of Communists and dispelled the doubts that had at first accompanied this great change.

The HSWP had achieved these successes while it had to contend against various deviations to the right and "left". Congress asserted that the vast majority of the Party members were freed from the harmful influence of sectarian and revisionist views, although such views still existed, and Lenin's warning was still valid: at times of crises and greater changes in social life, there may be a growing danger of deviations, of tendencies divergent from Marxism. In the struggle against bourgeois and petty-bourgeois influences the HSWP consolidated the ideological and political unity of its ranks and developed its ideology. It responded—as Congress stated—on the basis of Leninist ideas, to such complex problems as the relations between the class struggle and class alliances during the period of combating the counter-revolution, the time of socialist consolidation and of the building of socialism; to the inter-relationship between economic and political factors in the socialist reorganization of agriculture; to the transformation of social relations in the village and the simultaneous development of agricultural production; to the role of the middle peasants and to the solution of the kulak problem; and to the way to develop a united peasant class.

Based on experiences, Congress drew its theoretical conclusions: "In the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat—under the appropriate policy and favourable international conditions—major turns in the socialist revolution do not inevitably elicit a sharpening of the class struggle and a drop in production." Thus, the HSWP refuted "the false thesis of a permanent and absolute sharpening of the class struggle", and had the courage to call on the strata which "were not earlier in sympathy with our aims, partly opposed to them" to support the building of socialism.

Domestic and international events, and the policy of the Party had the joint effect that people of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois views came closer to socialist aims. Congress stated that the Party promoted this; "but is opposed to the belief that the policy of socialist national unity

gives a green light for the maintenance and justification of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois ideology". Theoretical consistency must be combined with political flexibility: "political alliance and ideological discussion form a unity." There is no peaceful co-existence in the field of ideological struggle.

"A primary prerequisite of further progress," the resolution stated, "is that the gap should be bridged between relatively backward ideological work and the advances of social relations, the ideological struggle has to be increased in every area of scientific and cultural life to educate the kind of people who live, work and think in a socialist fashion."

As a result of several decades of struggle by the Hungarian proletariat, the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party led the people to a more advanced phase of socialist construction. It relied on the battle experiences of the long revolutionary struggle that had required considerable sacrifice, and on the international revolutionary movement. It relied on the lessons learned from the heroic struggle of the Hungarian Republic of Councils, the first proletarian power in the Danube Valley, not forgetting, however, the lessons supplied by the struggle against imperialist intervention. The unremitting struggle waged by the Communists and their comrades-in-arms during the 25 years of the Horthyite régime revealed the inexhaustible revolutionary vigour of the Hungarian working class. Strength and the certainty of future victories were provided by the existence and magnificent progress of the Soviet Union—that had become the greatest inspiration and hope for the oppressed in their struggle—compared to that of the entire capitalist world.

Steeled in the struggle against Horthyite fascism, the Hungarian Communists became the vanguard of the resistance of the people and nation against the criminal participation in the Hitlerite war of conquest. In the struggle for an anti-fascist national solidarity and an independent democratic Hungary, this revolutionary vanguard increased in strength, and under its guidance the working class became the leading class of the nation. The Communist Party became the leading political force of the country.

The Hungarian people can thank the liberation of their country to

the victory of the Red Army. This is a great lesson for the nation as a whole, and a new source of political strength for the working class and poor peasants. A revolutionary liberating army had arrived in Hungary—the army that because of its difficult position was unable to come to the aid of the Hungarian Republic of Councils in 1919. From 1918 to 1920, under the leadership of Britain and with the participation of the USA, the united forces of the Entente Powers endeavoured to overthrow the Soviet power. During the Second World War, on the other hand, both Britain and the United States of America entered into a military alliance with the same Soviet Union that they would have wished to annihilate between 1918 and 1920. In 1945, it was the Red Army which hoisted the red flag of freedom in Budapest, Vienna and Berlin. This was a major lesson for the peoples of the world.

The liberation of Hungary took place during a radical change in the international balance of power and as a part of that change. The change that occurred in international life was a change for which the ruling circles of the Western Powers were unprepared and they tried in vain to reverse it. With increasing vigour, the peoples of the liberated countries participated in this change, especially where the working class had assumed a leading role in the direction of affairs. Hungary became one of these countries. The imperialist powers were unable to repeat what they perpetrated in 1919 when, with their military intervention, they restored the rule of the capitalists and big landowners. The presence of the liberating Red Army prevented them from doing this.

Following the liberation, the Communist Party started the reconstruction of the country. It was the only Party that in the eastern part of the country came forward with a comprehensive platform for reconstruction in November 1944 and invited the co-operation of everyone who was willing to share in the realization of the programme. It consolidated its united front with the Social Democratic Party, whose left-wing forces with the help of the Communists successfully averted the schemes of the right wing of their Party to disrupt working-class unity and undermine the people's democratic order.

The Communist Party was the vanguard of the solidarity between the workers and the peasants, it was the most consistent exponent of

the land reform and the architect of its implementation. The thousand-year-old cause of the landless and poor peasants had been championed by the Communists and was carried to victory under their leadership.

The revolutionary forces had to combat reactionary attempts to liquidate the people's power. In the years between 1945 and 1947, the bourgeois forces—who mainly operated under the badge of the Small-holders Party—held significant positions of power and exerted considerable political influence on the coalition government. Relying on their positions in the government and administration, in finance and the economy, with the support of clerical circles and trusting in the assistance and promises of the Western Powers, they endeavoured to acquire the leading role in the political power and oust from there the working class and poor peasants, reverse the land reform, and restore a system of unrestricted capitalist exploitation in the country. Under the leadership of the Communist Party, the popular forces repelled these attempts.

On Communist initiative, the Left Bloc was formed in 1946. It carried out a successful counter-attack and dealt blow after blow at the positions of reaction. With the active support of the masses, it was able to oust the bourgeoisie from political power and to convey the mines, banks and industrial enterprises into national ownership. The democratic revolution which developed in 1945 created a people's power which paved the way for socialist revolution—reaction was no longer able to obstruct it. As one of the newly formed countries in the new world socialist system, Hungary took the path of socialist development: a great historical achievement of the Communist Party and of all those who fought shoulder to shoulder with it.

The joint struggle for a democratic national renaissance, for the establishment and safeguarding of the people's power, for a socialist transformation, the repeated victory of the socialist revolution and the extension of Marxist-Leninist ideas, led to the unification of the two parties again, to the formation of the Hungarian Working People's Party.

The triumph of the workers' power and the unification of the workers' parties hastened the development of the country. In a few years, industrial production had trebled compared to the output of 1948, and

Hungary, formerly an agrarian-industrial country, became an industrial-agricultural country. The co-operative farm movement started in the villages. Lasting results were achieved through the cultural revolution. The dogmatic approach, distortions and anomalies which had become prevalent in political life, the violations of legality, and ultimately the revisionist attack, which unfurled its banners under an "anti-dogmatism" slogan, caused a serious setback in this development. Ideological and political confusion increased, the unity of the Party was disrupted and its relationship with the masses was loosened. A serious situation developed for which the adherents of socialism were unprepared: the external and internal forces of reaction, with the aid of the revisionists, unleashed a counter-revolutionary revolt in the autumn of 1956. Sectarian mistakes and betrayal had paralysed the Party and the revolutionary forces, and made them unable to act. The people's power and all the revolutionary achievements of the working people were imperilled.

The new leading centre of the Party that launched the revolutionary counter-offensive was organized during the difficult days of autumn 1956. Having requested fraternal aid from the Soviet Union, it soon carried the struggle for the defence and consolidation of the workers' power to triumph. Within a very short time the Party was able to reorganize its ranks. Safeguarding the achievements of earlier years, it waged a successful battle on two fronts—both against the dogmatic views and sectarian practice of the HWPP leadership, and against revisionism which had betrayed proletarian power and acted as a quartermaster for the counter-revolution.

The revolutionary counter-attack by the HSWP was successful and the workers' power was rapidly consolidated—sooner than anyone had expected—because the Party could rely on several decades of battle experience in the revolutionary struggle. Using these experiences in the Leninist spirit, the policy of the Provisional Central Committee of the HSWP and the Revolutionary Government opened up great possibilities for the appropriate utilization of these experiences in all the activities of the Party, state and social organizations.

The great triumph that had been achieved in the rapid consolidation of the workers' power, the new upswing of socialist construction and

the socialist reorganization of agriculture were additional confirmation that under the leadership of its Communist Party, the Hungarian working class was fulfilling its historical mission: it was leading Hungarian society from capitalism into socialism. The country had reached a significant stage in this path when it completed the laying of the foundations of socialism and entered the more advanced phase of building socialism. The Eighth Congress of the HSWP laid down the immediate tasks of this phase of the struggle, and focused attention on the realization of the Five Year Plan. At the same time, it designated the general aim which had to be attained during this phase of the struggle: to complete the building of a socialist society.

The party of the Communists came into being—ready to shoulder a great historical responsibility. Thousands of its members gave their lives for the cause inscribed on the banner of the Party. This is the greatest aim ever before the peoples: to replace a social order based on exploitation with the socialist system that abolishes all forms of exploitation and oppression and whose development leads to communism. Socialist Hungary took a further big stride ahead along this path when—realizing the aim which the Eighth Congress of the Party set for Hungarian Communists and for the entire Hungarian people—it entered a higher stage of building socialism.

Printed in Hungary 1973
University Printing House, Budapest