PRESENTING HUNGARY

# The Language and History of the Hungarian People

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The ancestors of the Hungarians belonged to the Ugrian branch of the Finno-Ugric peoples. Their next of kin were the Vogul (Mansi) and the Ostyak (Khanti). The descendants of these peoples now live in the area between the Ural mountains and the lower reaches of the Ob river. The ancient Hungarians came to the present territory of Hungary in 896 A.D.

The mingling with the Turks, Slavs, Germans, Romans and other nationalities began already during the centuries of migration and continued in the long period that followed the foundation of the state. And therefore, almost every European race can be found among the Hungarian people.

The term *Magyar* is a name the Hungarians gave to themselves, the first syllable of the word being identical with the designation of the *Mansi* (Vogul) people; the second syllable *-ar* derives from the Finnish or Cheremissian word meaning "man" (*ember* in Hungarian). The terms in foreign languages, *Ugrin* in the Old Russian, *Vengr* in modern Russian, *Ungar* in German, *Hungarus* in Latin, and from that *Hongrois* in French, and *Hungarian* in English, probably derive from the name of the Bulgaro-Turkic people Onogur, who lived in an alliance of tribes to which, for a certain period, the ancestors of the Hungarians also belonged.

The number of Hungarians is about 14 million; about 10 million live in Hungary and the rest in the neighbouring countries and in the United States (637,000 in 1957), Canada, Australia, South America, Scandinavia and elsewhere.

## *The Magyar Language*

Within the Ural-Altaic family of languages, Magyar belongs to the Ugric branch of the Finno-Ugric languages. Apart from the Hungarians, these languages are spoken by about nine million persons in northern Europe and north-western Siberia.

A peculiarity of Hungarian is that it expresses with a termination annexed to the stem of the word what the Indo-European languages express with a particle or preposition placed before the word to be qualified. In simple (non-compound) Magyar words there are either exclusively deep or exclusively high vowels. Consequently, there are also two sets of suffixes, that is, one set to be used with words having deep vowels, and the other with words having low vowels (this is called vocalic harmony). The relation between the possessor and the object possessed is expressed by a possessive personal suffix, and not by a possessive pronoun. When the possessor is also expressed in the sentence, he, she or it always has precedence over the object possessed whereas in the Indo-European languages the sequence is usually reversed. Similarly, it is a unique faculty of the Magyar language that the verb, by means of specific suffixes annexed to it, is capable of showing whether the object is definite or indefinite. The language abounds in a variety of verbal suffixes and prefixes. There are no genders in the Magyar language, and the singular is used after numerals expressing plurality. Magyar does not take to clusters of consonants. Finally, the order of words within the sentence may be varied freely, which allows for the expression of many niceties of shade.

## *Short History*

### *The Founding of the State*

Many centuries before the appearance of the Magyars, their present country was inhabited by Thracian, Illyrian, and Celtic tribes, later by the Romans. The waves of the Migration of Peoples swept Teutonic and Turkic tribes among them the Huns and the Avars, to the lowlands intersected by the Danube and the Tisza. The Magyar tribes, led by Prince Árpád, overthrew the Slav states and settled down mainly in the plains and the hilly regions, and gradually spread their dominion to Transylvania, Slovakia and the Carpathian Ukraine of today.



The first decades after their settlement were marked by marauding raids directed mainly against the territory of present-day Germany and France, and later against Italy and the Balkans. Their nomadism and equestrian tactics helped make the Magyars successful. However, the momentous defeat suffered at Augsburg in 955 from the army of the German Emperor Otto the Great, put an end to these campaigns of plundering. The Magyars were driven back within the frontiers of their own new home. Agriculture, at that time already on a fairly well developed level, grew in importance. The first acres tilled by the Magyars gave rise to the feudal social structure. The formation of a stable governmental system is associated partly with the name of Prince Géza and mainly with that of his son, Stephen I (997—1038), the first king of Hungary (crowned in 1001). During these decades the total area of the princely and later royal domains extended considerably. Christianity began to spread, and by stages administrative organization into counties came into being.

### *The Reign of the House of Árpád*

While the descendants of Prince Árpád were in power, during the 11th, 12th and 13th centuries, Hungary became a flourishing state, strong enough to resist and repel the attempts, first of the Germans and later of the Byzantine Empire, to subject it. At the same time, the kings of Hungary added foreign territories—Slavonia, Croatia, the Dalmatian city-states—to their realm.

The Middle Ages in Hungary also bore the characteristic features of European development, the long struggle between royal and oligarchical power. A dismaying feature of Hungary's entire—and not only medieval—history was that every endeavour to establish a firm central royal power was frustrated, and, as a result of the historic antecedents and of Hapsburg rule, attempts to create a centralized system of government came into conflict with the interests of national growth.

To return to the Middle Ages, the first large-scale tragedy of Hungarian history was the Mongol invasion of 1241—1242. The Tartars, after routing the Hungarian army, laid the whole country waste. After they withdrew, King Béla IV (1235—1270) set about to reconstruct the country, building towns with ramparts around them and a number of fortresses. Productive forces began to develop rapidly. At that time money-economy made its first appearance in Hungary, and feudal legislation recognized the right of bondsmen to free movement under certain conditions.

*The Angevins and King Sigismund*

The last king of the House of Árpád died in 1301. His death was a signal for continuous struggles for the throne and also for internal disturbances. Finally, with the support of the Pope and the Italian bankers, Charles Robert I of the Angevin dynasty (1308—1342) took over the throne. He defeated the oligarchs and by a system of confiscation of landed property, and its redistribution by donation, he created a powerful class of large landowners, who, for the time being at least, were loyal to the dynasty. The towns and mining also developed considerably. During the reign of his son, King Louis I, the Great (1342—1382), Hungary grew in power and influence.

At the end of the king's rule, the position of the country was weakened as a result of the dynastic and conquering wars. In fact, it was at this very juncture that a strong and powerful Hungary was much needed. A new conquering power, the Osmanli Turks appeared on the scene and reached Hungary after subjugating and devastating the Balkans. It was unfortunate that the leagues of the great magnates and the baronial clans had regained their former hold and tied down the forces of King Sigismund of the House of Luxembourg (1387—1437).

*The Hunyadis*

The Turks invaded the southern part of Hungary. In this critical situation, one of the largest landowners of the country, János Hunyadi, took command of the Hungarian forces in the war against the Turks. Relying on his own army, Hunyadi conducted the fight with varying success until 1456, when his owerwhelming victory at Nándorfehérvár (the present-day Belgrade) foiled the Turkish peril for many years to come.

János Hunyadi ruled as regent; in 1458 his son, Matthias Corvinus, was elected king of Hungary. His reign (1458—1490) was the last age of splendour and glory of the independent Hungarian state. During it the representative system of the feudal estates became firmly established in Hungary. The king curbed the power of the oligarchy, and created favourable conditions for the production of goods.

The most important factor of his foreign policy in the first years of his rule was the defence of the country against the Turks. Later, he led wars of conquest and captured Vienna in 1485. He established far reaching diplomatic relations. Under Matthias, Hungary was the site of cultural growth on a hitherto unprecedented scale. The courts of Matthias at Buda and Visegrád became centres of science, art, and letters; his famous library, the Corviniana, had among its treasures many famous works of European erudition.



*The Peasant Revolt*

After the death of King Matthias, the oligarchy again forged ahead. Most of what had been created during Matthias' reign, was soon destroyed in the feudal reaction. The burdens laid on the peasantry grew harder every year.

Eventually the exasperation and despair of the peasantry found an outlet in the Peasant Revolt of 1514. A crusade against the Turks started it. Peasant armies assembled under the leadership of György Dózsa, marched through the Great Plain. The peasant spokesmen demanded the abolition of nobility and the restriction of the privileges of the Church. Although the peasants were victorious in many battles, they were finally overcome by the troops of the nobility. The retaliation was horrible. The leaders were executed with cruelty and torture. György Dózsa himself was seated on a throne of glowing iron. In 1514, the peasantry were condemned wholesale to being bound to the soil for eternity. This decision was incorporated in the Tripartite of Werbőczy, the code of feudal privileges for centuries to come. The primitive methods of agriculture survived in Hungary well into the middle of the 19th century, and urban and bourgeois development lagged behind events in other European countries.

*The Country Split in Three Parts*

When, twelve years after the peasant uprising, Sultan Soliman II (called the Great) marched his army against Hungary, the bickering magnates were afraid to call the peasantry to arms. Consequently the troops of the nobility—scarcely 25,000—suffered a decisive defeat from the well-equipped and powerful Turkish army near Mohács in 1526. The Turks occupied Buda, the capital of the country (1541), the Great Plain, large sections of western Hungary, and the country of the Trans-Tisza region. The western parts of Transdanubia and the northern counties came under Hapsburg rule, and the east became the independent

principality of Transylvania. Thus the country was split into three parts.

With a few breathing-spells of varying length, the next hundred and fifty years were simply an age of warfare. The campaigns against the Turks were accompanied by uprisings against the Hapsburg dynasty, so that the country was turned into a battlefield. After the recapture of Buda in 1686 and the expulsion of the Turks from Hungary, the court of Vienna treated Hungary as a province conquered with the force of arms. Large parts of the reoccupied territories were allotted to non-Hungarian landlords. Hungary was made a hereditary kingdom, and religious persecution once more became acute. Bondsmen were tormented by a cruel system of taxation and military billetings.

*Rákóczi's Liberation Struggle*

The crisis came to a head when a peasant uprising signalled Prince Ferenc Rákóczi II's liberation struggle (1703—1711). With the nobility and the peasantry joining forces, the insurgents were victorious during the first years of the war against the imperial troops. As a matter of fact, Prince Rákóczi was able to unite a large part of Hungary under his rule. But, because of the egotism of the nobility which thwarted the peasants' demands, and because nothing came of the foreign aid Rákóczi had been promised, the struggle for freedom was lost.

*The Age of Enlightened Absolutism*

Turkish misrule, the exploiting practices of the government, and continuous warfare may be named as the principal causes of the catastrophic depopulation of Hungary. The earlier character of the settlements had changed, the land around once flourishing was left uncultivated and became overrun by drifting sand. The Hapsburgs brought into being a stratum of big landowners loyal to the Vienna government. As a matter of fact, it became the set economic policy of the government in Vienna to turn Hungary into the supplier of raw materials for Austrian industry, and consequently obstacles were put in the way of Hungary's own industrial development.

Maria Theresa (1740—1780) and her son, Joseph II (1780—1790), ruled in the spirit of enlightened absolutism which was characteristic of the



age. Both mother and son enacted a number of reforms bringing relief to the miserable conditions of the bondsmen and introduced reforms also in the educational system. However, Joseph II's attempts to Germanize the Hungarians and make Hungary part of the Austrian empire called forth the large-scale resistance of the nobility. Yet for fear that the ideas of the French Revolution might spread also to this country, the bulk of the nobility turned to the Court of Vienna. Progressive forces were represented by only a handful of the nobility: intellectuals, poets and writers. The discovery of an underground republican movement of the Hungarian Jacobins under the leadership of Ignác Martinovics in 1794, and the cruel reprisals of the government (the leaders were executed in 1795), led to the consolidation of the forces of political reaction.

*The Reform Age and the War of Independence of 1848-1849*

Public opinion and feeling underwent remarkable changes during the opening years of the 19th century. The number was rapidly growing of those, mainly medium and small landowners and intellectuals, who were hampered in their activities by the many barriers of the feudal order and spirit. Parallel to this metamorphosis in the general spirit, national-bourgeois literary movements began to try their wings.

The period, called the Reform Age, bore the stamp of the activities of Count István Széchenyi, who drafted a grandiose scheme for the gradual transformation of the feudal conditions into capitalist ones. Count Széchenyi initiated a number of progressive measures and institutions (the first bridge over the Danube in Budapest, the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, and the introduction of river-steamers, etc.). Then the reform movement came under the sway of Lajos Kossuth, a representative of the lower nobility, who advocated the conversion of Hungary into an independent bourgeois state.

Stubborn resistance from the central government in Vienna and the Hungarian aristocracy hampered the progress of the cause of reforms. But, when the news came of the revolution of February 1848 in Paris, and later on in Vienna, the social tension in Hungary developed into an open revolution attended by widespread popular movements. On March 15, 1848, in Budapest, the radical youth, led by the poet Sándor Petőfi and his friends, drafted twelve points voicing national and revolutionary demands. The Hungarian aristocracy and the Viennese government, terrified by the news of the outbreak of the revolution, yielded to these demands.

Emperor Ferdinand appointed the first Hungarian parliamentary ministry, gave his assent to the abolition of villeiny and to the introduction by the legislature of bourgeois reforms in Hungary, and confirmed her constitutional rights.

The bloodless revolution was victorious for the time being; before long, in the autumn of 1848, open war broke out between Hungary and Austria. After initial failures, in the spring of 1849 the Hungarian Army launched an offensive and drove the imperial army out of most of the country. On April 14, the Debrecen Diet, in a declaration of independence, deprived the Hapsburg dynasty of the throne and elected Kossuth as Regent and President.

By then, throughout Europe the forces of reaction were quelling the revolutionary movements, and eventually the solidarity of the Holy Alliance prevailed. Tsar Nicholas I of Russia marched his troops into Hungary to lend a helping hand to the Hapsburgs. With the capitulation of August 13, 1849, the cause of the revolution and independence went under. Hapsburg absolutism took vengeance with mass executions and heavy prison sentences.

*The Dual Monarchy*

Hungary was coalesced into the Hapsburg Empire. Still the government could not restore the feudal system as it was before 1848. The abolition of villeiny and a number of other reforms introduced by the legislature of 1848 remained in force. The series of defeats suffered by the Austrian armies convinced the dynasty of the necessity of a reconciliation with Hungary, which took shape in the Compromise of 1867 giving rise to the Austro-Hungarian Dual Monarchy, an empire with two central governments and many nationalities, with individual responsibility for internal affairs. Parliamentary systems were also introduced.

Within this constitutional framework capitalistic development could take place more rapidly, although a number of traits of feudalism, together with the system of latifundia, were to exist for many decades to come. At the time of the census of 1880, still close to 70 per cent of the total population obtained their living from agriculture. Between 1870 and 1914, the number of labourers employed in industry increased by only 27 per cent. Industrial and financial capital were, however, born in this period. The class of industrial workers came into being. The first socialist organization, the General Association of Workers, was formed in 1868. In 1880, the Social Democratic Party of Hungary was formed.



The years before the First World War were filled with fierce political struggles, and the unsolved social and political questions became more and more unbearable.

In the midst of this critical situation, the ruling classes of Hungary, with their various commitments and undertakings, dragged the Hungarian people into the First World War which caused immense losses and ended in defeat.

*The Bourgeois Revolution and the Hungarian Republic of Councils*

The Austro-Hungarian Monarchy was dissolved and in October 1918, Hungary became a People's Republic. The bourgeois democratic revolution gave the power into the hands of a government formed of representatives of the left-wing bourgeois parties and the Social Democrats; Count Mihály Károlyi, a leader of the opposition in the Diet, became Premier of the new administration. However, this government was unable to cope with the difficulties. The government resigned, and after a declaration of union was signed with the Social Democratic Party, the Communist Party—formed in November 1918—took over the power on March 21, 1919, and proclaimed the Hungarian Republic of Councils. It was the first time in history that the people had control in Hungary. The government began the socialist transformation of the country. The short-lived Hungarian Republic of Councils enacted a number of momentous social, economic and cultural reforms. However, the Communist regime had to face the external military aggression of the Allied Powers, and, encouraged by the invading armies, counter-revolutionary tendencies came forward. Left with only its own resources, the young Council Republic was unable to resist the pressure and, after heroic efforts of 133 days, the regime collapsed. The White Terror introduced a counter-revolutionary era of 25 years.

*From 1920 to 1944*

The massacres organized by detachments of officers and other groups took a toll of about 5,000 deaths during the first few months of the counter-revolution. About 70,000 men and women were imprisoned, and nearly one hundred thousand were forced to seek refuge abroad. A former *aide-de-camp* of Emperor Francis Joseph, Rear-Admiral Miklós Horthy, became Regent of Hungary, which was nominally restored as a

kingdom. In 1920, a treaty was signed with the Allied and Associated Powers at Trianon, near Paris. Under the terms of the Treaty of Trianon, Transylvania, with its highly important Rumanian population, became part of Rumania; the Highlands and Carpathian Ukraine, with their predominantly Slovak population, were attached to Czechoslovakia; and Croatia and southern Hungary were made part of Yugoslavia. From this time on, revision of the peace treaties was in the focus of Hungarian politics, and the Horthy regime launched extensive and fierce propaganda against the neighbouring countries. Public life in Hungary became increasingly infected with chauvinism—a way of diverting attention from the many unsolved social and political problems.

The Social Democratic Party, which had yielded to the government demand to waive the organization of farm-workers, railway employees and civil servants, was, in return for this compromise, allowed to take up political activities. The Communist Party was suppressed and its members were outlawed.

The progress of economic life was slow. Heavy industry, which had lost its markets, was stagnating for the most part, but the talent of technical experts and skilled workers resulted in progress in other spheres. The products of Hungary's textile and leather industries soon appeared in the world market. Hungarian-made rolling stock for railway, agricultural machinery, electrical equipment and apparatus and telecommunications apparatus found markets in Africa, South America, and in many other places. Coal mining reached a comparatively high level in the 30's and bauxite and crude oil also became more important. That the overall growth was slow and there was even stagnation in industrial production was due to the low purchasing capacity in the home market, and to the backward conditions still prevailing in agriculture.

Unemployment and the backwardness of economy kept living standards alarmingly low. No wonder that in the 30's demands sprung up for democratic reforms on a comprehensive scale—first of all, for a redistribution of land. The ruling classes, while demagogically launching anti-Semitic and chauvinistic propaganda, sought the way out of the quandary by an alliance with the fascist powers, in order to defend their class interests and to further their territorial demands.

From after 1938 on, events followed one after the other at dramatic speed. The legislature put two anti-Jewish Acts on the statute books in quick succession. The decisions of the Vienna Awards allotted first part of Slovakia and the Carpathian Ukraine, then part of Transylvania, to Hungary. There was the aggression against Yugoslavia, and finally Hungary entered the Second World War on the side of Hitler. Open fascist measures were introduced: persons voicing ideas of social progress and many hundreds of thousands of Jews were deported to the extermination camps. The retreating Hitlerite armies turned Hungary into a battlefield, while murdering, looting, and carrying the valuables out of the country. The loss of human lives amounted to nearly half a million, and damage calculated on the 1938 basis corresponded to the national income of seven years.



The Soviet forces liberated Budapest on February 13, 1945, and on April 4 the last German units were driven out of the country. Not only did the Second World War end in Hungary, but a completely new historical period commenced for the Hungarian people.

*Epilogue to an Era*

At the liberation of Hungary, the political, social and economic structure of the country was in a bad condition. The farm-workers, the have-nots of the countryside and the peasants who owned one or two acres of land, totalled about a million. Together with their families, they formed the class of the "three million beggars," so much written about in works of social policy dealing with the inter-war years. At the same time, there were landlords owning two hundred or three hundred thousand acres of land. Only 21.1 per cent of the population worked in industry and mining. The political power was wielded by the large and medium landowners, the descendants of the former landowning families of the "gentry," and by the civil servants connected with them. Industrial and financial capitalists and a part of the bourgeoisie, although they represented immense economic power, readily accepted this "historic" form of political leadership, together with the attendant conventions of a superannuated society. This order of society was effectively buttressed up by the educational monopoly of the ruling classes. In fact, among those who were admitted to the only type of secondary school that qualified for admission to the universities or higher education, the sons of workers and peasants amounted to only 4 per cent.

Thus, although cultural life was highly developed in Hungary (within an obviously narrow circle), and university training was, by international standards, of a high level, the general education of the masses as a whole was on an extremely low level. In 1941, 20 per cent of the total population of people over ten years of age did not complete the four years of primary

education. The rate of illiteracy among the population of people after school-starting age was 8.6 per cent in 1930.

This picture of the backward conditions in social and cultural life can be rounded off by the fact that, although the number of unemployed was constantly on a high level, during the decades of the counter-revolutionary era there was not even a modicum of a systematized unemployment dole, and that in 1938, only 31 per cent of the total population had coverage under the social insurance scheme.

Under these conditions of income, employment and social services, consumption of food-stuffs remained on a low level. At the same time, the rate of the various diseases and of mortality was high. Tuberculosis was the specific scourge of Hungary, with the highest death rate in all of Europe. In 1938, 14 of every 10,000 inhabitants died of this disease. The infant mortality rate also remained excessive during the period under review.

The best forces of this society were, however, fighting for the transformation of Hungary between the two world wars, and the basic transformation of society started in 1945.

*From the Land Reform to the Second Five-Year Plan*

The almost twenty years that have passed since the liberation of the country have been years of feverish changes. A comparison between conditions in Hungary before the Second World War and after shows how well the change has deserved the term "historic."

Only some of the landmarks of the progress made during these eventful years will be reviewed here. Representatives of the democratic, antifascist forces and parties who had worked together during the war formed the first democratic government of Hungary. On March 15, 1945 (the anniversary of the high point of the 1848 revolution), the new government approved the Communist draft of a land reform abolishing the system of latifundia and redistributing the land among the peasantry. Under the Land Reform Act, in the spring of 1945 about 642,000 have-nots and poor peasants were allotted land. A total of 4,630,000 acres of land was redistributed among the peasants. The former estates of the treasury were turned into state farms. The power of the large landowner class came to an end in Hungary.

Reconstruction work was taken up in the ruined country, while inflation ran riot. Eventually, on August 1, 1946, the Forint currency was substituted for the Pengő that by that time had been bled white.



On February 10, 1947, the peace treaty was signed in Paris which, with one small exception, restored the frontiers of 1938.

The First Three-Year Plan was put under way on August 1, 1947, on the initiative of the Communist Party. The goal of the plan was to remove war damage, and raise the living standards of the working class to the pre-war level.

The plan was achieved in two years and five months, in fact, amid keen political fights and the wholesale change of proprietary rights in industry. The right-wing elements of the Smallholders' Party and of other right-wing parties aiming at the restoration of the old order were gradually ousted from the coalition government—formed of members of the Communist Party, the Social Democratic Party, the Smallholders, and the National Peasant Party—and also from the Diet, and in June 1948 the two workers' parties merged into one, taking the name Hungarian Working People's Party. All power was by then completely in the hands of the working class in alliance with the peasantry. The year 1948 marked the end of the first phase of the revolution. The bourgeoisie was ousted from power by the forces of the socialist revolution, and the building of socialism began. On August 20, 1949, the new constitution of the Hungarian People's Republic was promulgated, and a year later the Act of Councils introduced a complete reform of government and administration.

Meanwhile the process of nationalization, started in 1946, came to a conclusion by the end of 1949 with the nationalization of industries that employed more than ten workers.

As the result of the First Three-Year Plan, the output of industry surpassed the 1938 level by approximately 30 per cent. Agricultural production rose by 75 per cent as compared with 1946-1947, but it was still 10 to 15 per cent below the 1938 mark. Unemployment was essentially done away with, and the living standards of the town workers reached the 1938 level and in some places rose above it. On the basis of voluntary association of the peasantry, the first farming co-operatives came into being in the autumn of 1948 in some of the rural districts, and at the same time the first state machine stations were organized, making available tractors and other machinery to farmers.

Early in 1948 the Soviet Union and Hungary signed an Agreement of Mutual Friendship and Assistance. Similar agreements with other friendly people's democracies followed.

In January 1949, with the participation of Hungary, the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON) was established by the socialist countries.

The First Five-Year Plan was launched in 1950. The goal: by building up a strong socialist industry to convert this underdeveloped agrarian-industrial country into an industrial country with a well-developed and equipped agriculture, and to lay the foundations of socialism. As a result of the plan, during the next five years socialist industrial production more than doubled, with new industries and new industrial centres being built. In agriculture, co-operative farms continued to develop and increase in number and in area under cultivation. In February 1951, however, the target figures of the plan were raised without any regard to possibilities, available resources or the immediate interests of the workers. Consequently, there was a stagnation in living standards and in 1951-1952 real income fell below the 1949 level, a fact which was only partly mitigated by the extension of the sphere of the health service and the cultural development that took place.

In this atmosphere of the personality cult, cases also occurred of flagrant violation of socialist legality. Sentences were passed by the courts on the basis of trumped-up charges, and the political line of the Hungarian Working People's Party was distorted beyond recognition. The combined effect of mismanagement and abuses was a weakening of the ties between the broad masses and the party. In July 1956, the Central Committee of the Party removed Mátyás Rákosi from his post as secretary-general. However, the long hesitation which preceded this move and the earlier mistakes had by that time given rise to general discontent, which, within the party, the revisionist group of Imre Nagy could exploit for its own purposes.

On October 23, 1956, the counter-revolutionary revolt broke out for which certain organs of the imperialist powers had been preparing for many years. This revolt—which took a heavy toll of deaths—had as its ultimate goal the restoration of the political and social order of the pre-war years.

In this critical situation, when the achievements of socialism were in jeopardy, János Kádár and other Communist leaders at the beginning of November 1956 set up the new provisional Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, and formed the new Revolutionary Worker-Peasant Government which, with its proclamation of November 4, called the Hungarian people to defeat the counter-revolution and, in keeping with the Warsaw Agreement, asked for the armed help of the Soviet Union.

After the suppression of the counter-revolution, problems of economic and political consolidation came to the fore. The loss in production



and other damage totalled 22 thousand million forints. The Soviet Union and other socialist countries came to the aid of Hungary, to re-establish production and restore the damage. The majority of the destruction was repaired by the middle of 1957, and at the end of that year industrial production was above the 1955 level by 5 per cent, and the standard of living of the workers by 32 per cent.

Economic consolidation was to a great extent advanced by the measures by which earlier mistakes were remedied and by a greater degree of self-management in industry. The wage and salary system was reformed, the financial interest of the workers in industrial production increased (a system of profit-sharing was introduced), the sphere of authority of the trade unions was extended, and democracy in management was widened.

The system of delivery obligations in agriculture was replaced by a method of production under contracts, with the introduction of free marketing. This contributed greatly to reinforce the worker-peasant alliance and also to raise agricultural production. Cultural life, education and health conditions improved.

In 1958—1960, as the outcome of the Second Three-Year Plan exceeded production targets, the output of industry rose by 40 per cent, the national income by 22 per cent, the real income of persons living from wages and salaries by 16 per cent, and the real consumption of the peasantry by 17 per cent, compared to the 1957 level, and agricultural production in 1958—1960 surpassed by 12 per cent that of the years 1955—1957.

In the wake of the new measures in agricultural policy, the co-operative movement gained impetus at the end of 1958, and by the spring of 1961 the socialist transformation of agriculture was for all practical purposes complete.

In the first year of the Second Five-Year Plan (1961—1965), the upward trend which had begun in 1957 continued steadily. Industrial production exceeded the 1960 level by about 28 per cent in the first three years of the new Five-Year Plan. Material welfare of the country increased and health and cultural facilities continued to improve.

The Hungarian prime minister János Kádár launched a new slogan: "Those who are not against us, are with us," strengthening thus the unity of the country. The political, economic, social and cultural achievements of the country have raised the interest in Hungary all over the world and this resulted in a significant improvement of the general international position of Hungary. The vital foundations on which Hungary's internal and foreign policy are built up, are work and peace.

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