



A SPARK OF HOPE BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN : THE HUNGARIAN REVOLUTION OF 1956

MARCH 15th-17th, 2024



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MSUMUN NOTICES

Committee Content Warning

Please be advised that the contents of this background guide and committee may discuss/contain references to war, armed conflict, anti-Semitism, genocide, the Holocaust, rape (top of page 20), forced labor, labor trafficking, internment/labor camps, war crimes, murder, assassination, execution, torture, suicide. It is not MSUMUN XXIII's intention to condone these behaviors/ideas, however, such discussions may be necessary to fully understand the historical context of committees.

With that understanding, please also note that MSUMUN XXIII will not tolerate any replication of the above mentioned issues. While MSUMUN values the discussion and awareness of these topics and a delegate's obligation to accurately represent their assigned role, all participants who engage in any bigoted, racist, sexist, homophobic, ableist, fatphobic, xenophobic, or other such comments or sentiments will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action at the discretion of MSUMUN's Secretariat. Additionally, in all things, MSUMUN pledges its Secretariat and staff to maintain approachability and inclusivity; if any participant has any questions, comments, or concerns they are encouraged to contact MSUMUN's Secretariat or, in the case of delegates, its staff. If you have questions or concerns regarding this, please reach out to your committee's senior staff prior to conference weekend.

Michigan State University Model United Nations (MSUMUN) is committed to fostering a safe and secure environment for all delegates, staff, and advisors. In this, MSUMUN operates with a zero tolerance policy with regard to any and all instances of harassment and discrimination. Further, MSUMUN is committed to promoting the mental health of its participants and requires all participants to act with compassion, grace, and understanding. MSUMUN encourages participants to step out of their committee room and/or speak with a trusted individual if they are feeling overwhelmed or are otherwise uncomfortable.

All participants should be aware that MSUMUN's Secretariat and staff are designated mandatory reporters with MSU's Office of Institutional Equity while operating within their roles before and during the conference.

MSUMUN Statement on Mental Health

Red Cedar Model United Nations is committed to fostering a safe and secure environment for all delegates, staff, and advisors. In this, MSUMUN operates with a zero tolerance policy with regard to any and all instances of harassment and discrimination. Further, MSUMUN is committed to promoting the mental health of its participants and requires all participants to act with compassion, grace, and understanding. MSUMUN encourages participants to step out of their committee room and/or speak with a trusted individual if they are feeling overwhelmed or are otherwise uncomfortable.

Moreover, MSUMUN recognizes that some of its committees may include references to

or discussions of sensitive topics. While RCMU values the discussion and awareness of these topics and a delegate's obligation to accurately represent their assigned role, all participants who engage in any bigoted, racist, sexist, homophobic, ableist, or other such comments or sentiments will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action at the discretion of MSUMUN's Secretariat. Additionally, in all things, MSUMUN pledges its Secretariat and staff to maintain approachability and inclusivity; if any participant has any questions, comments, or concerns they are encouraged to contact MSUMUN's Secretariat or, in the case of delegates, its staff.

All participants should be aware that MSUMUN's Secretariat and staff are designated mandatory reporters with MSU's Office of Institutional Equity while operating within their roles before and during the conference.

MSU Provisional Land Acknowledgement

“We collectively acknowledge that Michigan State University occupies the ancestral, traditional, and contemporary Lands of the Anishinaabeg – Three Fires Confederacy of Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi peoples. In particular, the University resides on Land ceded in the 1819 Treaty of Saginaw. We recognize, support, and advocate for the sovereignty of Michigan's twelve federally-recognized Indian nations, for historic Indigenous communities in Michigan, for Indigenous individuals and communities who live here now, and for those who were forcibly removed from their Homelands. By offering this Land Acknowledgement, we affirm Indigenous sovereignty and will work to hold Michigan State University more accountable to the needs of American Indian and Indigenous peoples.”¹

¹ “Land Acknowledgement,” American Indian and Indigenous Studies, accessed December 5, 2021, <https://aiis.msu.edu/land/>.

RULES OF PROCEDURE

Article I: General Rules

1. Delegates are expected to adhere to all regular MSUMUN XXIII rules and standards of decorum.
2. In the event of a dispute over the Rules of Procedure, either those of MSUMUN generally or the A Spark of Hope Behind the Iron Curtain committee, the MSUMUN Secretariat will be the ultimate authority of appeal.

Article II: Meetings

1. All of the A Spark of Hope Behind the Iron Curtain committee meetings shall be attended by all specified members of the committee, unless otherwise authorized by the MSUMUN Secretariat.
2. Unless otherwise indicated by the MSUMUN Secretariat or the A Spark of Hope Behind the Iron Curtain committee staff, all meetings of the committee will be held in the specified the A Spark of Hope Behind the Iron Curtain committee room as designated by MSUMUN.

Article III: Agenda

1. Items for debate may be pulled from the background guide, but are not limited to what is explicitly mentioned. Staff would like to see well-rounded and well-researched delegates bring new and relevant topics to the table.

2. Any Committee member may make a motion to restrict debate to one topic. If this motion passes, debate shall be limited to the topic specified until such time as another motion is made to either change the topic under consideration or return to general debate.
3. The Agenda is to be set at the beginning of committee, formal debate on committee topics may not begin until the Agenda has been set.
4. A Speaker's List may be opened at any time when motions are being entertained. Additionally, a delegate may request to be added to the Speaker's List at any time. If the Chair is not actively calling for speakers to be added, a delegate may send a note to the dias.

Article IV: Conduct of Business

1. the A Spark of Hope Behind the Iron Curtain committee proceedings shall be conducted in the form of a permanent Moderated Caucus until such a time that a committee member makes a motion to change this.

Article V: Types of Proposals

1. Directive: A directive requires only one sponsor, though it may have more. The number of required signatories is up to the discretion of the Chair. A committee member need only move to introduce a directive in order for it to be considered by the entire committee.
2. Press Releases: A press release is usually passed in lieu of a directive if doing so is more likely to make the committee's intentions clear. A press release is written either in the form of a directive or a press release; it requires the same number of sponsors and signatories as a directive.

3. Communiques: A communique is an external communication from the entire committee with a non-committee member. Such a communication can include anything from a request of support to negotiations to even a threat. Passing this type of document can also result in the person being contacted meeting with the committee if requested.

Article VI: Voting

1. Votes may be entered as For, Against, or Abstentions.
2. Any delegate who designates themselves as “Present and Voting” during roll call may not abstain on any matter.
3. Votes on non-substantive proposals or procedural matters will be passed by the affirmative vote of a simple majority of committee members. Abstentions are allowed on non-substantive proposals, but not procedural matters.
4. Votes on substantive matters will be passed by the affirmative vote of a simple majority of committee members.
5. In all cases, a simple majority constitutes more than half of the For and Against votes.

Remaining Points

1. Any rules and regulations are subject to change at the discretion of the Chair.
2. If you have additional questions, please visit the [MSUMUN Website](#)

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to A Spark of Hope Behind the Iron Curtain: The Hungarian Revolution of 1956! My name is Truman Forbes, your chair for this committee, a Senior at Michigan State University studying Comparative Cultures & Politics and Environmental Studies & Sustainability, and I'm from Bradford, Pennsylvania (middle-of-nowhere). This is my fourth and last year in MSUMUN but my first year chairing so I'm extremely excited to start this journey together and learn along the way. I am a research assistant for a professor in James Madison College who does research focusing on issues of international development in India. I've also had the honor to intern in Washington, DC twice! First, with the US Forest Service and just this past summer with the US Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry and Senator Debbie Stabenow from Michigan is the Chairwoman.

During my Fall semester in 2022 I had the opportunity to study abroad in Budapest Hungary for four months. During my time I took a few classes on Hungarian history, visited several cities in Hungary, and made so many Hungarian friends. I also interned with the American Corner in Budapest which teaches Hungarian and international students English and various topics connected to the United States. A particular instance that impacted me immensely during my time in Budapest happened October 23, 2022. I was coincidentally hiking up one of the city's most famous hills that day to get a good view of Budapest when I got to the top and looked down and saw a parade of thousands of people marching through the streets, spanning for miles. They were celebrating the anniversary of the Hungarian Revolution on October 23, 1956

and I got to witness their joy first hand. Since then I've been itching to create a MSUMUN committee surrounding the Hungarian Revolution and dive into the often unrecognized stories of the Hungarian people. So I'm so grateful to finally be actualizing this goal with you all!

See you soon and Go Green!

Truman Forbes (*he/him/his*)

Junior Staff Introductions

Mia Allen (*she/her/hers*)

My name is Mia Allen and I am a junior staffer for the 1956 Hungarian Revolution Model UN committee. I am currently a sophomore in the James Madison College, where I plan to study International Relations and Chinese. Before coming to MSU I lived in Midland, Michigan, which is about an hour and a half drive away from East Lansing. In my freetime I enjoy baking, reading any book I can get my hands on, and playing with my dog Ferguson. Although my previous high school didn't offer Model UN, this will be my second year in Michigan State's Model UN. I am ecstatic for the MSUMUN year to kick off!

Elijah Solomon (*he/him/his*)

Hi, my name is Elijah Solomon I am a junior staffer for the 1956 Hungarian Revolution committee. I am a freshman here at MSU in the James Madison College, and I'm going to study International Relations. I am from Alexandria, Virginia which is just across the river from DC. I

enjoy watching football, reading about history, and generally spending time with friends. I was heavily involved with MUN in high school and excited to continue doing it in college.

Aldo Mujaj (he/him/his)

Hello most honorable delegates to the 1956 Hungarian Revolution! My name is Aldo Mujaj, and I am ecstatic to be serving as a junior staffer for this committee! I am currently a freshman in the College of Engineering majoring in computer science (and hoping to get a minor in German). I am from Rochester, MI and went to Stoney Creek High School where my Model UN career first began. I have been in Model UN since my freshman year of high school and have absolutely loved being around the debate and conference scene and overall getting to research and understand international relations. In my free time, I enjoying learning programming languages, baking desserts, and having coffee with my friends. I can't wait to see how committee will go!

Benjamin Stewart (he/him/his)

My name is Benjamin Stewart and I am a junior staffer for the 1956 Hungarian Revolution Committee. I am currently a sophomore majoring in International Relations and Political Theory & Constitutional Democracy with a minor in European Studies. This is my first Model UN experience and it has been very entertaining thus far. In my spare time, I like to read books about international politics and American foreign policy and watch Frontline documentaries on PBS. If I'm not doing either of those things, I like to touch up on my German with Duolingo.

LETTER FROM THE CRISIS DIRECTOR

Dear Delegates,

Hello and welcome to the revolution! My name is Hannah Woehrle and I am so excited to join you as we embark on this committee. I am a senior studying International Relations with a minor in Public Relations. This is my fourth and final year in MSUMUN, having spent my freshman year as an Assistant Crisis Director in a committee following the collapse of the Inca Empire and the last two years in the secretariat as Under Secretary-General of Technology. I am honored to round out my tenure in this organization with all of you. Outside of MSUMUN, I work in the district office of Congresswoman Elissa Slotkin and I work for the State News, MSU's student newspaper. I am also an MSU ambassador for Free the Facts, a DC-based organization that focuses on increasing policy literacy among young Americans. Additionally, I enjoy cheering for the Spartan basketball team and trying new recipes with my roommates!

I'm sure you have all learned something about the Cold War and how the United States and the Soviet Union fought for control and influence in Europe after WWII. The Hungarian Revolution of 1956 is an interesting, important, yet often forgotten part of this era, especially for Americans. What is so compelling about this piece of history is how many moving parts there were-- it's hard to clearly identify just two groups who battled it out over the course of 12 days. It is much more complex than that, with so many different ideologies fighting for power and working together. I encourage you all to be creative and think of solutions that might not follow the exact events of history, even if this means working with a character that might seem atypical.

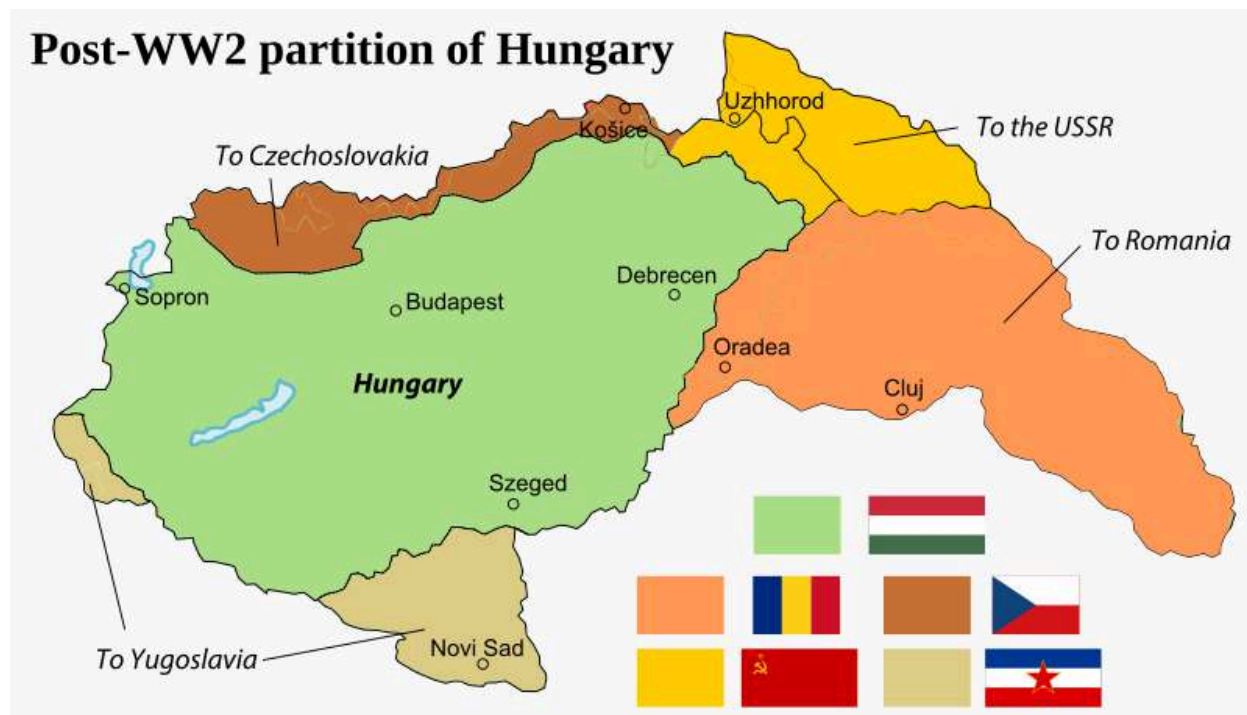
Best of luck and Go Green! (& Go White)

Hannah Woehrle (*she/her/hers*)

COMMITTEE CONTEXT AND POWERS

In early October, 1956 the Commission on De-escalation in Hungary was established by the United Nations. After protests in Poland against the Communist government on June 28, 1956 the UN passed a resolution creating the aforementioned commission to avoid further violence in satellite states, citing increased tensions between many Hungarians and the Communist government. The goal of the Commission is to prevent further violence and political, economic, and social instability in the country and bring people from various sectors and levels of power together. The Commission should aim to create a mutually agreed upon agreement/compromise to reduce existing tensions that could lead to further violence. Each person on this Commission was hand-selected by an independent, unbiased UN committee that aimed to equally represent the various factions and interests of Hungary. Global powers allowed for the UN to create the Commission in hopes of a peaceful resolution and avoidance of any more violence. This Commission will be meeting for the first time on the morning of October 23, 1956. The stated goals of the committee are clear: de-escalation and compromise, but make no mistake, many people in the room have embedded disagreement and the task will not be easy.

Map of Hungary (1956)



Recent History of Hungary

The Austro-Hungarian Empire

Situated in eastern Europe, the Austro-Hungarian Empire was a large empire that existed from 1867 to 1918. The empire's territory consisted of the modern-day nations of Austria, Slovakia, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia, Hungary, and parts of Serbia, Poland, Romania, Ukraine, and Italy.^[1] The empire was created in 1867 with the Ausgleich or compromise which set up the dual monarchy and made Hungary equal to the Austrians (before, it was solely the Austrian Empire).^[2] The compromise came after the Austrian defeat in the six-week war by the Prussians (which would become the German empire). After this, the Austrian Emperor Franz Joseph gave Hungary full autonomy with its government and constitution. The previous Austrian Empire became a dual monarchy with 2 sovereign states in one united empire. Both nations handled

internal matters independently of each other but matters of diplomacy and security were worked on together. Both halves were also very ethnically diverse internally, with Czechs, Slovaks, Poles, Slovenes, Serbs and Croats, Bulgarians, Romanians, and Italians. The same nationalistic drive that led the Hungarians to get political rights in the empire was apparent in the other ethnic groups. This nationalism became a huge problem for the empire as independence movements tried to tear the empire apart.

The Austro-Hungarian Empire was one of the old empires that, along with the Ottomans and Russians, was on its last leg due to the First World War. Like these other empires, the Austro-Hungarians were both economically and scientifically behind countries like Germany, France, and Britain. This was the result of weaker infrastructure, a less educated population, and other factors. For instance, the empire had less total railway length than France, and Germany, and similar levels to Britain, a much smaller country geographically.^[3] This is important as railroads were vital in this period and the primary mode of transportation of goods and people and dominant military theories began to rely on solid rail infrastructure for mobilization. Railways is only a case study but reflects more broadly on the industrial infrastructure of Austria-Hungary compared to the other major powers of the time.^[4] However, it wasn't just physical capital that left the empire weaker than contemporary nations. As mentioned before, the population of the Austro-Hungarian Empire was less educated than Germany, France, or Britain. This discrepancy can be seen with literacy rates in Austria-Hungary literacy sitting around 75%, while in France it was 96% and 99% in Britain and Germany.^[5] This problem was exacerbated because of the stark regional differences across the empire. The different peoples and regions of the empire had vastly different literacy rates with poorer southern regions having lower rates around 30% while the richer northern regions like Bohemia had 95%.

These examples paint a picture of how the Austro-Hungarian economy was behind that of other nations (GDP was not measured till 1944).

Just before the outbreak of the First World War, Austria-Hungary was a very divided and diverse empire that was nearing the end of its life. Economically and militarily weaker than its neighbors, the empire was in desperate need of reform, or it would likely fall to independence movements and mismanagement. However, this was still a very strong empire whose influence and power both internally and externally should not be underestimated.

1914 and World War 1

In June 1914, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the heir to the throne of Austria, was visiting Sarajevo to try and cool relations with the Serbs and southern Slavs of the empire. While there, he was shot by Gavrilo Princep, a Serbian anarchist who was opposed to Austro-Hungarian rule. After this, Austria-Hungary sent an ultimatum to Serbia with a list of demands with a clear demand to start a war with Serbia. However, Serbia's ally Russia vowed to come to Serbia's aid if attacked. Austria-Hungary consulted with their ally Germany and after a supposed "blank check," Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia and this marked the beginning of WWI.^[6]

Austria-Hungary, along with Germany, Bulgaria, and the Ottoman Empire, formed the Central Powers. They went up against the Entente which included Britain, France, Russia, and (later) the United States. Throughout the war, Austria-Hungary was majorly supported by the German Empire. This was deemed necessary by German high command due to Austro-Hungarian incompetence in almost all levels of the war. After war first broke out, the empire had immense trouble defeating Serbia, a much smaller country, and their campaign that led to hundreds of

thousands of Austro-Hungarian casualties. Many theorize the Austro-Hungarian high command was incompetent and rushed into invading Serbia. On a lower level, the empire and army was so ethnically divided that in each unit there were dozens of different languages. This made coordination near impossible because while officers spoke either German or Hungarian, their soldiers spoke their own native languages and often would not be able to understand the commands.

Another issue arose from just how many different conflicts the Austro-Hungarians were fighting. In the south, they fought against the Serbians and later Greeks; they fought Italians and supported German troops in the west, and in the east they fought the Russians. Fighting on all fronts lasted for years with Austro-Hungarian combat being characterized with high losses of life and ineffective offensives. A big turning point was the 1916 Brusilov offensive, where, in the east, the Russians launched a major offensive. This was not the first attack but was the most successful Russian offensive, crippling the Austro-Hungarian armies in the region. While the offensive was later halted and the Russians were removed from conflict, these attacks weakened the Austro-Hungarian army and showed them to be a largely ineffective force. Additionally, on the home front severe economic distress, food shortages, and famines weakened the empire. Throughout the war, Hungary was vital in the imperial war effort; despite comprising 48% of the empire's total population, they made up a majority of the empire's armed forces. The Hungarian half of the empire also provided a lot of the empire's war supplies and agricultural products. Despite these efforts, the empire still lost the war. In 1918 the armistice came into effect and divided the empire.

Interwar Period (1918-1941)

At the conclusion of the first world war, the balance of power in Europe shifted away from many of the old empires, such as Austria-Hungary. Despite it being a time of peace, the years 1918 to 1941 were difficult for countries all over the world. Still ravaged from the effects of WWI, much of Europe spent the interwar period recovering physically, financially, and politically – Hungary was no exception.

On June 4, 1920, Hungary, along with the United States, Great Britain, France, Italy, Romania, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (later Yugoslavia), Czechoslovakia, and Poland signed the Treaty of Trianon. By signing this treaty, Hungary lost over $\frac{2}{3}$ of its territory and population^[7]. Additionally, Hungarian forces were reduced to 35,000 men who could only be lightly armed and whose purpose was simply to protect its borders. Despite signing, many Hungarian leaders were angry with this treaty, arguing that reducing its land and population was a “violation of Hungary’s historical character,” and that doing so would displace thousands of people. Because of this, most of Hungary’s foreign policy efforts during the interwar period were dedicated to restoring Hungary’s borders and finding ways to return to its former power.^[8]

During this time, Hungary began to pass more conservative laws. Admiral Miklos Horthy, who had been an officer in the Austro-Hungarian navy, came to power as the head of a conservative-nationalist coalition, following the Romanian invasion of 1919. Horthy’s coalition undid many democratic reforms that were placed in Hungary immediately after WWI and presided over an almost feudal system of aristocratic rule for 24 years. Those who opposed his regime were members of the middle and working class, as well as more radical nationalists whose beliefs were rooted in anti-Semitic ideology.^[9]

Throughout the 1930s, anti-Semitism in Hungary became more widespread as Nazi German influences became more powerful. In 1941, six percent of Hungary's population was Jewish and in 1938, Hungary passed racial laws that classified Jewish people as their own race, similar to Germany's Nuremberg Laws. These laws reversed the equal citizenship status granted to Jewish people in Hungary in 1867. Additionally, they forbid marriage between Jewish and non-Jewish people, placed limits on which professions Jewish people could practice, prohibited Jewish people from employment in civil service, and greatly limited the economic opportunities of Jewish people. Anti-Semitic laws continued into 1939 when the Hungarian government established a forced-labor service for Jewish men of arms-bearing age, which later expanded to all able-bodied Jewish men in 1940. These men were subjected to extreme cold, were not given adequate food or shelter, and at least 27,000 Hungarian Jewish forced laborers died before the German invasion of 1944.^[10]

As Germany began invading countries across Europe and redrawing borders, Hungary was able to regain some of its former territories that had been lost in the Treaty of Trianon. From 1938-1941, Hungary gained back areas in former Czechoslovakia, Romania, and the Backa region. These were a result of Hungary and Germany becoming closer and closer and sharing similar political ideologies.^[11]

World War II

At the onset of the war, Hungary refused to allow German troops into Hungarian territory after the Nazis invaded Poland in 1939. Hungary allowed for Polish refugees to enter the country as the Nazis began to occupy Poland. However, once the Soviet Union gained control of

Bessarabia, Hungarian Prime Minister Pál Teleki allowed German troops to come into Hungarian territory to counter potential Soviet aggression.

In November of 1940, Hungary decided to sign the Tripartite Pact, a defensive alliance between the Axis powers who sought to deter the United States from entering the conflict. Hungary's relations with Yugoslavia, another member of the Tripartite Pact, were soured after the latter's government was overthrown by a pro-Western regime. Hitler concocted a plan to invade Yugoslavia to reverse the coup d'etat and included Hungary in those plans. Conflicted, Teleki refused to initiate an offensive against Yugoslavia, but he allowed German troops to cross into Hungarian territory to reach Yugoslavia. Great Britain contemplated declaring war to circumvent its policy of appeasement with Germany, triggering more anxiety on Teleki's behalf. Consequently, Teleki died by suicide, leaving László Bárdossy to assume the position of Prime Minister.

With Bárdossy in office, Hungary continued its collaboration with Germany against the Soviet Union for a brief operation. Bárdossy hoped that in Hungary's collaboration with the Axis powers, they would be able to appease them and salvage the country from the spread of Bolshevism. However, Germany forced Hungary to mobilize the entirety of its military to send it to the frontlines. Nicholas Horthy, a Hungarian statesman, decided to take another course and replaced Bárdossy with Miklos Kallay in March of 1942 with the goal of continuing the struggle in the East and gaining the favor of the West to elude being encompassed by Nazi influence. Under Kallay, Hungary was committed to a balancing act by protecting Hungarian Jews from the Nazi military and granting the left more rights while putting out peace feelers in the West. Kallay promised the West that if they appeared at Hungarian frontiers, they would surrender unconditionally. Unfortunately, a devastating battle occurred between the Hungarian

expeditionary force and the Soviet Union in January of 1943, which significantly reduced Hungary's manpower and equipment. Unsure of Kallay's intentions, Hitler provided Horthy with an ultimatum: either the Hungarians could fully cooperate with the Germans in the war effort or the Germans could occupy Hungary with the treatment accorded to an enemy. In March of 1944, the Germans occupied Hungary while Horthy was visiting Hitler in Germany and left him with no choice but to remove Kallay from office and place a collaborationist government under Döme Sztöjáy.

Under Sztöjáy's government, things in Hungary began to reflect the domestic politics of Nazi Germany. Jewish people were deprived of their properties and were forced to wear the Yellow Star of David on their clothing to identify them. Many of these Jewish people were either deported to gas chambers of German extermination camps or they were sent to forced labor-camps under the supervision of the Hungarian military. Though Raoul Wallenberg, a Swedish diplomat, was assigned by the United States War Refugee Board to assist and save Hungarian Jews, about 500,000 of Hungary's Jewish population had died during the war.^[12] In the summer of 1944, Romania had surrendered to the allies, easing the tensions within the Hungarian government. With the relaxation of conflict, Horthy decided to appoint Geza Lakatos and re-establish the peace feeling strategy to continue to appeal to the West. Unfortunately, Horthy was abdicated by the Germans and Lakatos' tenure was short-lived. To replace him, the Germans placed Ferenc Szalasi, leader of the fascist Arrow Party as the new Hungarian Prime Minister. By that time, however, the Red Army was pushing further into Hungarian territory as the German military weakened.

By April 1945, the Red Army had occupied Hungary from Germany. The transition of power was not peaceful. Many Hungarians were suspected of being fascist war criminals and were subjected to being sent to Russian gulags as punishment. Others were raped, abducted, or sentenced to labor camps without trial for as long as 5 years.^[13]

POST-WWII HUNGARY (1946-1956)

The Second Hungarian Republic (1946-1949)

Less than a year after Europe was liberated by the Allied powers, members of the National Assembly approved a law on January 31, 1946, which declared Hungary to become a republic which effectively abolished the almost 1,000 year monarchy which had reigned over Hungary.

Soon after, Prime Minister Zoltán Tildy of the Independent Smallholders' Party (FKgP) was chosen to become the first president of the new republic. Originally, most members of the FKgP had supported the National Assembly speaker, Ferenc Nagy, to become the new president and other members of the Hungarian Social Democratic Party had support for Mihály Károlyi, the head of state of the First Hungarian Republic. However, the Hungarian Communist Party, a growing force within the National Assembly, gave their backing to Zoltán Tildy, effectively ending support for the other candidates. To take the role of the presidency, the FKgP selected Ferenc Nagy as the new president of the republic.

The new government underwent many reviews and policy changes after the end of the Second World War. The Soviet Union, now beginning to set its eyes on increasing influence in Eastern Europe, helped found the Allied Control Commission (ACC). At face value, this

commission was created to help Hungary return to a more stable position and be able to ensure the success of the new republic through the Allied powers. However, the Soviet Union began to use the ACC as one of their main sources of influence over Hungary through the Hungarian Communist Republic and the Interior Ministry which was run by a Hungarian Communist majority.

As a part of Hungary's post-war plans, the Budapest People's Tribunal, which was established under the provisional government before the official declaration of the Second Hungarian Republic, began to prosecute war criminals who were in power during the war. Over the course of January to October 1946, 25 wartime officials and 15 out of the 19 ministers of the Arrow Cross Party were tried and assigned death sentences for their actions during the war. In total, the Second Hungarian Republic issued 477 death sentences. Of these, 189 were carried out with 250 of these death sentences being assigned by verdicts from the Budapest People's Tribunal.^[14]

Transfer to the Hungarian People's Republic

On March 5, 1946, the Hungarian Communist Party, the Hungarian Social Democratic Party, the National Peasant Party, and the Trade Union Council formed a political alliance called the Left-Wing Bloc (*Baloldali Blokk*). Feeling underrepresented by the majority that the FKgP held in the National Assembly, these left-wing parties wished to gain further influence in the Republic as they felt that the FKgP was heading Hungary in the wrong direction. They held their first demonstration in Budapest with the slogan "Oust the Enemies of the People from the Coalition!". To help come to terms with the frustrations of the new bloc, 20 so-called

“reactionary” members of the FKgP party were removed from the National Assembly. These expulsions began a new tactic of the Hungarian Communist Party to take control through “salami tactics,” the gradual removal of political opponents.^[15]

The Ascent of Imre Nagy

Imre Nagy has become a widely popular name in modern-day Hungary due to his revolutionary efforts. Being born in a peasant family, he was drafted into World War I where he was captured by the Russians and fought for the Red Army. Through his Soviet affiliations, he worked to set up Hungary’s new government where he gained the support of many Hungarian Communists which led him to hold many ministerial positions.^[16] However, his staunch support for the welfare of Hungary’s poor and poverty-stricken population led many in the Communist Party to feel distant from his views, and after serving as the premier (*de facto* prime minister) of Hungary, he was eventually excluded from holding any positions within the party.^[17] However, much of the young population of Hungary felt much more attached to Nagy’s future for Hungary, so after the student revolution took full force, support for Nagy rose once again to very great heights and he became the premier again. As a result, his reformist government took full control of Hungary where he pardoned political prisoners, promised democratic reforms, and dissolved the secret police.^[18]

CURRENT ISSUES

Political and Religious Oppression

The Soviet Union's control over its satellite states, like Hungary, was not only economically repressive, but also politically repressive. After World War II, the Hungarian Communist Party (Magyar Kommunista Párt, MKP), led by Mátyás Rákosi, gradually gained power through the use of "salami tactic", or the gradual weakening, splitting and eliminating of independent forces like the widely popular Independent Smallholders' Party.^[19] In 1948 the MKP gained power and a Stalinistic constitution was passed the next year, allowing Rákosi to rule with an iron fist over the Hungarian People's Republic. This iron fist included the implementation of the Hungarian State Protection Agency (ÁVH), which was basically an appendage of the Soviet Union's KGB and sowed fear throughout all Hungarian civilians. Between 1948 and 1956 approximately 350,000 Hungarian people were imprisoned or executed, including deportation to the Soviet Union and forced work in Soviet internment camps.

An example of the Soviet Union's repressive tactics included, most notably, the show trial of László Rajk, orchestrated by Rákosi, where Rajk was accused of being a western imperial spy, despite him being vital to the formation of the ÁVH.^[20] After being tortured and promised acquittal if he plead guilty Rajk confessed to all the charges brought against him at his 1949 trial. Instead of acquittal, Rajk was sentenced to death and executed soon after. This was just the beginning of the Stalinist show trials in Hungary, later 15 people were executed and 78 others were sentenced to prison in relation to Rajk's case. These show trials also marked the beginning

of the removal of all political parties in Hungary, strengthening the Communist government further.

Since the beginning of the 20th century, Hungary's religious makeup was dominated by the Roman Catholic Church and Reformed (Calvinist) Church. However, after the Soviet Union came to power post-World War II, the government began nationalizing all church lands and confiscating all religious educational institutions.^[21] By 1950 every church in Hungary was forced into strict legal agreements that severely restricted their activities and allowed for the Communist Party to ensure Hungary was a completely atheist state. Despite this reality there were still several prominent Hungarian religious figures who persisted in promoting religious activities in the country.^[22]

After de-Stalinization in 1953, Imre Nagy became Prime Minister and created a new atmosphere of political openness and market liberalization that was nonexistent beforehand.^[23] Academics, students, and anti-communists were encouraged by this hope. But in 1955, Rákosi was reinstated and crushed their ambitions. Rákosi went on to continue his Stalinist policies where he left off and joined the Warsaw Pact, creating even more dissatisfaction with Hungarian citizens. People are becoming increasingly restless and unwilling to function under the present strict rules of laws, grasping for greater freedom. More people are realizing their collective power and willing to take greater risks to achieve that freedom, but the Communist government and Soviet Union want to keep the status quo. Satellite states like Poland were rising up and spreading hope to other countries in the Eastern bloc.

Economic Decline & Poverty

Prior to the World Wars, Hungary's economy was supported mostly by agriculture, with the major export being wheat. Although rapid industrialization did occur, it was not enough to absorb the surplus rural population and in 1910, around two-thirds of the population still relied on agriculture to live, where only about one-sixth of the population worked in industry.^[24] The majority of these industrial and agriculture laborers lived with low living standards and conditions. Because there was a surplus of workers, many laborers were poorly treated by their overseers. Agricultural workers could be paid for less than 25 cents in a day and there were no legal limits to how long they could work for. Because of this inhumane treatment, immigration to other countries was seen as a favorable option for a better life. Economic conditions became significantly worse during World War I. During the war, outputs from agriculture decreased by half due to destruction of the terrain and Hungary almost experienced a severe economic collapse.

Following the defeat of the Central Powers in the first World War, the Allied powers prepared the Treaty of Trianon, which Hungary agreed to a condition of their loss. The treaty had disastrous consequences for Hungary: a loss of territory, reduced armed forces, and large reparations for Hungary to pay. The majority of which, Romania, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia benefitted from. Hungary was forced to relinquish two-thirds of their total land.^[25] Some of the land given away included Slovakia, Croatia and Vojvodina. This territory then went to other countries, such as Romania, Czechoslovakia and even Austria. Along with giving away the land, Hungary lost another two-thirds of its total population and was forced to keep its army at 35,000 lightly-armed soldiers. This treaty wounded Hungary's economic

potential and had disastrous effects for years to come. However, during the 1920s, due to rising inflation, the prime minister appealed to the League of Nations for a loan to combat the expected economic decline. This loan was surprisingly successful and almost immediately stabilized the currency for a couple of years. Unfortunately, this wouldn't last long.^[26]

Hungary faced extreme economic difficulty in response to the Great Depression. In 1929, there was a world-wide collapse of wheat prices. Because Hungary relied on wheat as its main export, many industries went bankrupt and unemployment skyrocketed. In 1928, unemployment in Hungary was around five percent but in 1933 this jumped to around 35 percent unemployment.^[27] This condition only got worse following World War II. Hungary's land was used for the war and ravaged. The war destroyed the land and entire towns. By the end of the destruction, Hungary lost about half of the national wealth and stripped of its livestock and machinery needed for agriculture.^[28] Not only did it lose its land and means of production, but Hungary would be forced to pay a reparations bill to the Allied forces that cost around \$300 million. This loss of economic revenue was only one part of a bigger issue. From 1945 to 1946, Hungary experienced the highest level of inflation ever recorded in history. The price level rose throughout the year and by the time it stabilized the exchange of the old currency to new currency was at a rate of 400 octillion to one.^[29] This inflation caused the purchasing power to decrease and the cost of living to highly increase in Hungary.

Three years after this hyperinflation, the Soviet Union created the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, also known as Comecon. Comecon was made up by states within the Eastern Bloc, such as Romania, Poland, and Hungary, and the main intention of Comecon was to strengthen economic development of these countries.^[30] Not only did it aim to strengthen economic development, but Comecon also allowed the Soviet Union to have greater influence

over the states closest to its border. Comecon was, in a way, a rival to the Marshall plan, which was created by the United States, and would redevelop Western Europe. By engaging Comecon in Hungary, the Soviet Union would be able to increase its power and control over both the economic and political landscape.



YOUTH ACTIVISM AND THE ROLE OF STUDENTS

Growing up oppressed

For much of the youth in Hungary, growing up under Soviet control was all they've ever known. Those who survived World War II and the German occupation were met with a Soviet takeover and years of propaganda and oppression. The Gestapo (the Nazi secret police) were replaced by the Kremlin. They had to watch as their parents and family members were either forced to fight for a cause they didn't represent or face the consequences of resistance. Their parents were forced to vote for the communist party and the youth themselves went nearly their entire lives without seeing their views represented. Not only were their political needs not being met, for most, their physical ones weren't either.

An Intellectual Revolution

Under Soviet control, there were strict limits placed on what could be published, especially in regard to criticism of the government. Writers existed to serve the Communist Party and Stalin considered them "engineers of the mind." He used them to create propaganda that would sway people to believe in the ideals of the Communist Party and, naturally, no anti-Communist voices were published. For the youth growing up in Hungary, this led to few options educationally. The only options for reading materials were those that were approved by the Communist Party, and anything else was heavily censored or outright banned.

Starting in 1955, however, more works started to appear that pushed the boundaries of what the Party allowed. For the first time in their lives many young people were reading articles and poems that weren't just Communist propaganda. For example, a young poet by the name of László Benjámín, wrote a poem from jail that described the sense of shame felt by Communist writers who had been used to produce propaganda and turned a blind eye to the injustices committed by the Party. Another new work, an article in a Writer's Union magazine, told that story that revealed details of a secret holiday village meant exclusively for Communist officials-- a luxury most people in Hungary could only dream of affording.

In October of 1955, 59 prominent writers and artists signed a manifesto protesting against "administrative methods" used against intellectuals and demanding more freedom of expression. This was one of the most public pushbacks against Communism and censorship that anyone in Hungary had ever seen. When Rákosi went up against the ringleaders of this manifesto, they did not back down, and there was little he could do to stop the continued public criticism of his leadership.^[31]

Many young students and scholars were inspired by these rebellious works. They distributed the numerous articles and pamphlets in secret, growing seeds of resistance. If they could not publicly display their disdain for the Soviet Union and Communist regime, they would use these writings as a way to appease their need for change. Soon, they began to pick up the pen themselves.

CHARACTERS

* indicates character is fictional

Ernő Gerő

Erno Gero was born in 1889 in Austria-Hungary and went to school in Budapest. He later joined the communist party of Hungary. He fled to the Soviet Union after the fall of the Bela Kun government in Hungary. While there he joined the NKVD and participated in the Spanish civil war where he purged Trotskyists earning the nickname the “Butcher of Barcelona”. During World War II he returned to the Soviet Union and continued working for the Stalinist regime. He then returned to Hungary in 1944 and became the right-hand man of Matyas Rakosi, the Soviet Union's puppet ruler of Hungary. But when Rakosi was ousted with destalinization Gero was named General secretary. His primary goals are to keep Rakosi in power in Hungary and purge the nation of anti-soviets. ^[32]

Béla Király

Bela Kiraly was born in 1912 in Austria-Hungary he won a scholarship to the Ludovika military academy.^[33] In WW2 he was on the Hungarian general staff in WW2 (Hungary was part of the Axis powers). While on the staff, he interceded on behalf of Jewish soldiers. After the war in 1945, he was cleared of fascist activities and was soon appointed head of a new military school. In 1951, he was removed and put in jail on false charges and was put on death row for 5 years. He was released in September 1956, and was appointed head of Hungarian Revolutionary Armed Forces in October 1956. Despite being the head of the armed forces, he hopes for a peaceful

resolution to this committee and for no one to go through what he went through, which he blames the Soviet Union for. He values freedom of speech, information, and expression.

István Bibó

István Bibó was born in Budapest, Hungary in 1911.^[34] From his childhood, he received an excellent education due to his father's position as director of a Szeged university library. Later, he followed in his father's footsteps by attending university in Szeged, obtaining a doctorate in Political and Legal Studies. During his time at the university, Bibó participated in political groups, such as the March Front, a left-wing group that called for democracy and freedom for the people in Hungary. This ideology would follow him for years to come; however, in 1944, during the German occupation of Hungary, Bibó was forced to go into hiding until the end of the second world war for giving out fake exemption papers to the persecuted Jewish people in Hungary. Following the war, he was appointed head of the administrative department and a professor of political science at the University of Szeged, where he wrote papers, criticizing the dictatorial tendencies of the communist party in Hungary, and even lost his job as a professor for his writings. He is a close political ally of Imre Nagy and aims to not only free Hungary from Soviet control, but also improve Hungary's reputation on the international stage and ally with like-minded nations.

János Kádár

Born May 1912, in the countryside of Hungary, János Kádár would go on to become the Interior Minister and Secretary-General of the Communist party in Hungary.^[35] In his youth, Kádár worked as an apprentice for a typewriter mechanic, but when the Great Depression hit, Kádár

lost his job. This experience led him to join the then-illegal Communist Party of Hungary in 1931, and in doing so, he was arrested multiple times for his political engagement. During World War II, Kádár attempted to learn from his previous experience and ran an underground communist movement, where he was once again arrested. However, once released, and with Soviet support, the communist party finally took power in Hungary and Kádár was appointed as Communist Interior Minister from 1948-1951. This was until he was jailed by Rakosi in 1951. Imre Nagy released him in 1954 and appointed him General Secretary of the party. His motives seem unclear; while he owes his thanks to Nagy for releasing him from jail, his politics align with the soviet party. He wishes for either the Soviet control to improve or for Nagy's government to align more closely with traditional communist beliefs. He is well known for his ability to compromise in true comrade fashion.

Sándor Kopácsi

Sandor Kopacsi was born on March 5, 1922, in Miskolc, Hungary, one of the many industrial cities located in the northeastern part of the country. Growing up in a working class family, Kopacsi had a sense of resentment towards fascism when he was shot at the age of 15 handing out leaflets against the Arrow Cross, a Hungarian fascist organization. He worked as a lathe operator and draftsman from the time he was 18 until he joined an anti-Nazi resistance group in 1944 when the Nazis occupied Hungary. With many Hungarians embracing Communism at the end of World War II, Kopacsi joined the police academy. However, once Kopacsi completed his training in 1948, he was tasked to nationalize schools in Northern Hungary, soon being rebuked for wasting resources during a rescue mission. In 1949, Kopacsi transferred to Budapest where he was granted the title of Director of Internment Affairs. His tenure was short-lived because his

assignment of exiling detainees for minor crimes did not align with his morals. After signing off 95 detainees, the government decided that he should attend the Communist Party School for two years, a school that Kopacsi described as a “school of zombies” that forced Communist agenda down the throats of students. Once his time at the Communist Party School was over, he rose up the ranks to become a chief police officer because the Communist Party needed a working-class chief. His experiences have made him resentful towards the Communist Party and the Soviet Union and he hopes for a Hungary where everyone is entitled to their own beliefs.

Pál Maléter

Pál Maléter was born on September 4, 1917, in Eperjes (now Presov), Slovakia to an intellectual socialist family. At 20 years old, Maléter pursued an education in medicine at Prague’s Charles University where he studied for two years until he moved to Kassa then to Budapest to continue studying medicine. However, due to a lack of finances, Maléter was forced to drop out of school and resort to volunteering for military service as a way to acquire Hungarian citizenship. The German invasion of Czechoslovakia also helped influence him to join the military due to his distaste for fascism. After completing his military training in 1940, Maléter was placed on the frontlines on the Eastern Front, where he was taken as prisoner of war by the Soviets. As a prisoner of war in the Soviet Union, Maléter attended Soviet partisan school and was placed back on the frontlines in the autumn of 1944. He currently serves as a commander in the Hungarian army and Minister of Defense. He is fiercely loyal to Imre Nagy and to Hungary, and while he is open to negotiating with the Soviets, he does not trust them or their ability to govern.

Mátyás Rákosi

Mátyás Rákosi has been the de facto leader of Hungary since 1947 and is an extremely well known figure in the Hungarian Communist party. Since his youth, Rákosi has been heavily involved with Communist politics, so much so he was exiled from Hungary for decades and was finally able to return in 1945 after the Red Army liberated Hungary from the Nazis. Here, Rákosi became the leader of the new Hungarian Communist Party and installed a brutalist Stalinist regime, crushing Hungarians' democratic ambitions. At this moment, Rákosi's power is now in question as people begin to rise up against his government and Soviet policies. His number one goal is to ensure the continued Soviet rule in Hungary and to remain in power.^[36]

Cardinal József Mindszenty

Since 1945, Josef Mindszenty has been Cardinal of the Catholic Church in Hungary and has been staunchly anti-fascist and anti-communist. After WWII, the Hungarian government, directed by the Communist party, took over the Catholic Church in Hungary, seizing their land and property for redistribution. The goal of this new government, and the Soviet Union, was a secular nation without the influence of religion. Because of his firm position as an anti-communist, Mindszenty was tortured by the Hungarian Communist government and given a life sentence after his show trial in 1949. However, Imre Nagy was able to break him out of prison in early October and use his political and military leverage to keep him free since then. Cardinal Mindszenty often provides a voice of reason and his main goals are to rid Hungary of facism and communism so that his people may be free to praise their God.^[37]

Géza Losonczy

Géza Losonczy was born in 1917 and became a journalist as well as a member of the Hungarian Communist Party. He and Imre Nagy became close friends and Losonczy started to give political advice to him. This, along with his writings, put a target on his back, and in 1947, Rákosi put him in jail and tortured him. However, he was released from jail and rejoined Nagy as his minister of press and propaganda affairs, conveying the wishes of Nagy to the press and public and continuing to provide political advice. He wishes for a free press in Hungary, something that is not permitted under Rakosi, and plans to use the power of the pen to persuade people to join the revolution.

Imre Nagy

Nagy was born into a poor family in western Hungary, and joined the Austro-Hungarian army in 1915 and fought against the Russians in World War I. He was captured, however, and while in Russian jail he learned the teachings of Lenin and Marx. He spent the interwar years and much of WWII learning about communism and attempting to spread its ideals throughout Hungary. After WWII, he held several positions in the pro-Soviet government, including ministerial positions in agriculture, food and the interior. Nagy oversaw much needed land reforms, redistributing land to local peasants and became popular enough that he was elected the Hungarian Prime Minister from 1953-1955. He had a much different approach to economic development than the Soviet government did, slowing down industrialization. This made him very disliked by the Soviets and in 1955 was ousted as Prime Minister. He remained popular among the people, however, and his outspoken belief in a democratic government quickly made him the leader of a movement to end the Soviet Regime.

Katalin Virág *

Like many young people growing up in Hungary under the Stalinist and communist regime, Katalin Virag is angry at the state of her government. At just 20 years old, Virag is upset with her lack of representation and the oppression that her people have faced for nearly her whole life. She is currently a junior in a university in Budapest and has become quite interested in the revolutionary writings of many scholars. While most of these essays are illegal, she is part of many youth and student activist groups that read and write critical media. As a top scholar at her university, many have instructed her to keep her head down and focus on her studies so she can have a strong future but Katalin knows that being silent will only result in a bleak future for all Hungarians. Katalin refuses to stay quiet while her and her people suffer. She has a voice, and she is just waiting for the right time to use it.

József Dudás

Described as having a “tiny grain of madness”, Dudás quickly made himself a key revolutionary figure fighting in the high ranks against the Soviets. One of his first involvements was being a part of the illegal Communist youth movement in Romania where he was arrested in 1933. After he was released from prison, he moved back to Hungary and worked closely with anti-Fascist groups to help defeat the Axis powers in World War II. Following the war, he joined the Independent Smallholders’ Party and, following numerous imprisonments and disagreements was eventually chosen by Imre Nagy to be a key leader of the revolution. He understands the power of using propaganda and the written word to persuade people to his cause, and is determined to recruit as many people to join the revolution as possible. ^[38]

András Hegedüs

Coming from a poor Hungarian family, Hegeus joined the then illegal Hungarian Communist Party after enrolling in university. He was not able to finish his studies after facing legal consequences for his underground communist work. In 1948, he became politically active once again through work with the Hungarian Working People's Party. In the early 1950s, Hegedus took on numerous roles of the Prime Minister, culminating in 1955 when he was named Prime Minister after party leader Rakosi forced out Nagy. At the time of his appointment, he was the youngest Hungarian Prime Minister in history. After signing paperwork asking Soviet troops for assistance, Hegedus became a widely unpopular politician and a majority of Hungary supported him returning power to Nagy. Multiple advisors have told Hegedus to flee the nation for his own safety, but the politician has stayed in order to advance Hungary past this political crisis and towards stability.^[39]

Mihály Kovats *

Born in Sopron, Hungary, in 1908 Kovats grew up on a farm. When he was 22 he moved to Budapest and joined the Hungarian military and rose through the ranks. In WW2, he fought with the Axis forces in the east, until he was captured by the Soviets. After the Nazi invasion and occupation of Hungary he joined the Volunteer regiment of Buda, a force of Hungarian POWs who fought with the Soviets. While there, he fought in the Siege of Budapest with the Red Army. After the war, Kovats became a civilian and testified against Hungarian fascists in war crime trials. Then, when Hungary became part of the Eastern Bloc, Kovats rejoined the army. He helped build the Hungarian Air Force and, because of his ties to the Soviets, became a general. Now, Kovats is on the Hungarian army's general staff and one of the senior members of

Hungary's armed forces. He is unsure about the future of his country. His relationship with the Soviet Union makes him a supporter of its rule, but he will remain loyal to Hungary above all and hope for a way the two can work together.

János Salamon *

Born in Miskolc, Hungary in 1910 to a well-off Jewish family, Salamon was able to travel and was educated in Budapest. During this time, life for him and his family grew worse as resentment grew in Hungary over the treaty of Triannon and loss of WWI. Later, as the Hungarian government aligned itself with Nazi Germany and the Axis, he and his family fled to the USSR. Throughout the war Salamon worked with Red Army intelligence using his knowledge of Eastern Europe and Hungary to aid the Soviets. During the late stages of the war, he joined the KGB and after the war's conclusion was deployed to Hungary by the KGB. When Hungary joined the Eastern Bloc he was instrumental in the creation of the AVH (Hungarian version of the KGB). Now he has been appointed Propaganda minister in Hungary and oversees censorship and pushing out propaganda for the Hungarian People's Working Party. He hopes for continued or expanded Soviet rule.

Yuri Andropov *

Born Grigory Vladimirovich Andropov-Fyodorov in Nagutskoye, Russia in 1914, Yuri was the son of a railway worker and a school teacher. His father passed away when he was five years old, and his mother when he was seventeen. (The death of his mother has been historically disputed because of changes in dates when reporting her death). Before attending Petrozavodsk University, Andropov was a telegraph operator, film projectionist, and boatman on the Volga

River. During his time at the university, Andropov was an organizer for the Young Communist League in the Yaroslav region, propelling him to join the Communist Party in 1939. Once the higher-ranking members of the Party noticed his intellectual abilities, they appointed him as the head of the Young Communist League in the newly created Karelo-Finnish Autonomous Republic. When Andropov was assigned to the party's secretariat staff in Moscow in 1951, he received more training to become a Soviet official. In 1954, Andropov was appointed Soviet Ambassador to Hungary. He hopes for continued Soviet rule.

Vladimir Ivanov *

Born in Szeged, Hungary in 1915 to a working class family, Ivanov lived in a small, isolated Catholic household. His father passed away when he was nine years old due to an accident at the industrial plant he worked at. From then on until he matured, Ivanov was forced to work for the same industry plant his father worked at to support his mother, who was a domestic worker, and himself. In 1925, his mother passed away from pneumonia. In 1936, Ivanov decided to move to Debrecen, Hungary, to find more opportunities in industry. When war erupted in Hungary, there is no evidence of Ivanov's occupation, which is disputed that he hid records of his conscription under German-occupied Hungary to acquire Communist Party membership. After the war, Ivanov returned to working in Debrecen at a manufacturing plant where he first encountered Communism. In 1950, he created a union that would ensure wages that would support a standard of living among industrialists that was supported by Communist ideas. However, Ivanov has expressed frustration at the Hungarian Prime Minister, Rakosi, because of the low production of consumer goods, leading to frequent shortages as a result of his economic policies. He upholds

and respects the goals of the communist party and hopes for a result that reflects these, but hopes there is a way to find a compromise and wishes for this to be the common ground.

Radomir Petrovič *

A member of the United Nations Security Council, Radomir Petrovič was originally born in Yugoslavia in 1915. Growing up in Yugoslavia, Petrovič can still recall conflicts with the Soviet Union from the Tito-Stalin split when Yugoslavia split from the Soviet influence. It's because of this history that he is sympathetic to Hungary's similar experiences with the Soviet Union. After serving as an ambassador to different countries, he found a job as a representative on the Security Council. He was currently sent by the United Nations to monitor the rising tension in Hungary. Above all, he hopes for a peaceful resolution to this conflict that makes all parties content with Hungary's future.

Mikolaj Kowalski *

Born near Warsaw, Poland, Mikolaj Kowalski still remembers the horrors from World War II. After fighting for the Allied troops, Kowalski was eventually promoted to Porucznik in the Polish Army, an equivalent to a Lieutenant in the U.S. Army. It was from this position that he saw many victories and atrocities while fighting against the Axis Powers before retiring at the war's end. With the end of the war, Kowalski will never forget how the Soviet Union pushed the German troops out of Poland and stabilized his country, which prompted his move to Hungary. Kowalski liked the idea of communism in the USSR, but doesn't believe a violent revolution is the way to achieve it in Hungary. This apprehension towards violence, as well as his general neutrality, is

why he was selected for this committee. He hopes to find a peaceful compromise between nations and protestors.

László Markos *

László Markos grew up in Marfino, Russia, a city close to the capital Moscow. His father was a strongly patriotic man whose politics were influenced by the Russian Revolution and who served in the Russian military as a navy man. While he never rose the ranks in the way he would have wished, he always spoke of the importance of serving one's country, which is why László joined the army as soon as he was eligible. His knowledge of military structures and battlefield tactics, as well as his father's legacy, helped him rise the ranks. He served as a Lieutenant for the Red Army in WWII and continued to prove himself as a knowledgeable and loyal leader, becoming General of Soviet Troops in Hungary. His loyalty to his country is only surpassed by his loyalty to the men he leads and his family. As such, the only thing he fears more than the collapse of the Soviet Union is the unnecessary deaths of his soldiers. As such, while László does hope to retain immense Soviet influence in Hungary, he is wary of the plausibility of doing so without risking the lives of many. He hopes this __ (council? Revolutionary group? Idk what's happening here) __ will be able to satiate the protestors enough to keep his soldiers safe while still keeping the USSR a dominant political and economic force in Hungary.

Peter Bernus *

Peter Bernus acts as the deputy minister of the Executive Committee for COMECON, also known as the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance. He was born and raised in Budapest where he grew fond of economic policy and international relations. After he received and read

through a pamphlet that described Lenin's ideal communist society, he became interested in the communist movement in Hungary, but his interest and popularity exploded after World War II as he worked to try and set up Hungary's new communist government. After the Communist Party gained his trust, he was appointed to his current position which is the highest position able to be held in the Comecon. However, his feelings now are muddled since he does not see eye to eye with Stalin's policies, but he also does not want to cause further instability within Hungary, the Communist Party, and the rest of the COMECON by speaking more revolutionary policies.^[40] Peter must attempt to strike a delicate balance between the demand for Hungarian economic freedom and Stalinist policy – all while protecting the economic interests of both countries. It is Peter's firm belief that without strong economic policy, Hungary will collapse.

Professor Ádám Szalai *

Ádám Szalai has always had a bitter taste towards becoming a politician, but he was always amazed by the inner workings of law and policy. After graduating from university, he discovered his passion for academia and decided to pursue his doctorate with a focus on labor law. Now a professor at Eötvös Loránd University, he works very close to students and is always interested to hear their comments and qualms in discussions. Known to be very easygoing and low-tempered, many of his students feel very open to discussing the poor labor conditions many of their families face and the general inequalities that many of the students feel are hurting their future. While understanding and being very sympathetic to his students' feelings, he knows that he cannot do much in the way of direct action for fear of his status in the Communist Party being damaged and him potentially losing his job, or worse. Ádám worries for the safety of himself, his family, and his students if these protests continue. While he is sympathetic to the fight against

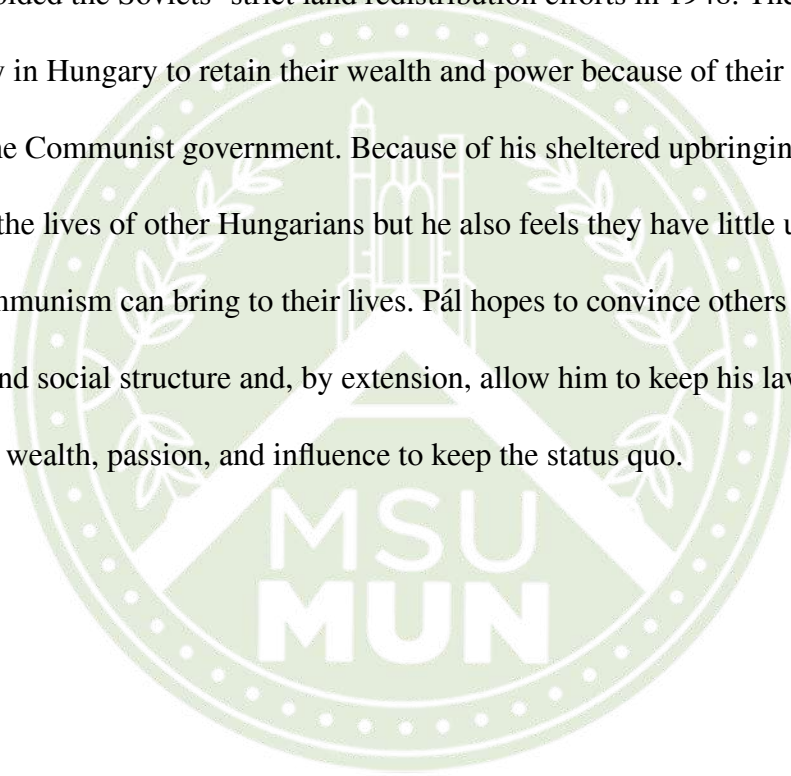
oppressive Communist policies, he feels as though his young students may be throwing their lives away before they even really start by risking critique of the government. He hopes that he can mediate between sides to decrease risk for everyone, reaching a solution that keeps everyone safe.

Béla Zwack*

Béla is a part of one of the most influential and iconic families in Hungary, the Zwack family. The Zwacks invented a unique Hungarian herbal liqueur called Unicum which was (and still is) extremely popular in the country.^[41] After relentless bombing during World War II, the Zwack Unicum factory was destroyed. However, the family was able to rebuild the factory quickly and begin manufacturing again. This unfortunately did not stop the nationalization of the factory by the Communist government in 1948.^[42] When this occurred, most of the Zwack family fled to the United States, but Béla stayed behind and gave the new Communist rulers a fake Unicum recipe while her family kept the real one safe in America. Today she still resides in Budapest and works in the Unicum factory, making (fake) Unicum as just another laborer. Her families sudden departure from her beloved homeland due to Communist policy has created deep resentment in Béla. She hopes that some day, the Communist regime may fall and her family can return to their former glory in Hungary, producing the best liqueur in the world. While other revolutionaries may clamor for violence and speedy revolution, Béla has always understood that the best way to get things done is through soft power and influence. Until the right time arises, she lies in wait, the power and influence of being a Zwack heiress being her secret weapon.

Pál Bethlen*

Born into nobility, Pál came from an aristocratic family that held a significant amount of land and power in Eastern Hungary. The Bethlens were a prominent anti-Nazi aristocratic family that secretly leveraged their wealth and influence to aid the Allied Powers and fight Nazi oppression during World War II. Pál, as the head of the Bethlen family, was celebrated across Hungary and also had a close connection to the Soviet Union. Because of this connection, Pál and his family avoided the Soviets' strict land redistribution efforts in 1948. They were the only aristocratic family in Hungary to retain their wealth and power because of their complex legal agreement with the Communist government. Because of his sheltered upbringing, Pál has little understanding of the lives of other Hungarians but he also feels they have little understanding of the good that Communism can bring to their lives. Pál hopes to convince others to keep the current political and social structure and, by extension, allow him to keep his lavish lifestyle. And he will use all the wealth, passion, and influence to keep the status quo.



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