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A COMMUNIST IN A  
"WORKERS' PARADISE"  
JOHN SANTO'S OWN STORY

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CONSULTATION WITH  
COMMITTEE ON  
UN-AMERICAN ACTIVITIES  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
EIGHTY-EIGHTH CONGRESS  
FIRST SESSION

MARCH 1, 4, AND 5, 1963  
(INCLUDING INDEX)



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COMMITTEE ON UN-AMERICAN ACTIVITIES

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PUBLIC LAW 601, 79TH CONGRESS

The legislation under which the House Committee on Un-American Activities operates is Public Law 601, 79th Congress [1946]; 60 Stat. 812, which provides:

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, \* \* \**

PART 2—RULES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

RULE X

SEC. 121. STANDING COMMITTEES

\* \* \* \* \*  
17. Committee on Un-American Activities, to consist of nine Members.

RULE XI

POWERS AND DUTIES OF COMMITTEES

\* \* \* \* \*  
(q)(1) Committee on Un-American Activities.  
(A) Un-American activities.  
(2) The Committee on Un-American Activities, as a whole or by subcommittee, is authorized to make from time to time investigations of (i) the extent, character, and objects of un-American propaganda activities in the United States, (ii) the diffusion within the United States of subversive and un-American propaganda that is instigated from foreign countries or of a domestic origin and attacks the principle of the form of government as guaranteed by our Constitution, and (iii) all other questions in relation thereto that would aid Congress in any necessary remedial legislation.

The Committee on Un-American Activities shall report to the House (or to the Clerk of the House if the House is not in session) the results of any such investigation, together with such recommendations as it deems advisable.

For the purpose of any such investigation, the Committee on Un-American Activities, or any subcommittee thereof, is authorized to sit and act at such times and places within the United States, whether or not the House is sitting, has recessed, or has adjourned, to hold such hearings, to require the attendance of such witnesses and the production of such books, papers, and documents, and to take such testimony, as it deems necessary. Subpenas may be issued under the signature of the chairman of the committee or any subcommittee, or by any member designated by any such chairman, and may be served by any person designated by any such chairman or member.

\* \* \* \* \*  
RULE XII

LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT BY STANDING COMMITTEES

SEC. 136. To assist the Congress in appraising the administration of the laws and in developing such amendments or related legislation as it may deem necessary, each standing committee of the Senate and the House of Representatives shall exercise continuous watchfulness of the execution by the administrative agencies concerned of any laws, the subject matter of which is within the jurisdiction of such committee; and, for that purpose, shall study all pertinent reports and data submitted to the Congress by the agencies in the executive branch of the Government.



RULES ADOPTED BY THE 88TH CONGRESS

House Resolution 5, January 9, 1963

\* \* \* \* \*

RULE X

STANDING COMMITTEES

1. There shall be elected by the House, at the commencement of each Congress,

\* \* \* \* \*

(r) Committee on Un-American Activities, to consist of nine Members.

\* \* \* \* \*

RULE XI

POWERS AND DUTIES OF COMMITTEES

\* \* \* \* \*

18. Committee on Un-American Activities.

(a) Un-American activities.

(b) The Committee on Un-American Activities, as a whole or by subcommittee, is authorized to make from time to time investigations of (1) the extent, character, and objects of un-American propagandea activities in the United States, (2) the diffusion within the United States of subversive and un-American propagandea that is instigated from foreign countries or of a domestic origin and attacks the principle of the form of government as guaranteed by our Constitution, and (3) all other questions in relation thereto that would aid Congress in any necessary remedial legislation.

The Committee on Un-American Activities shall report to the House (or to the Clerk of the House if the House is not in session) the results of any such investigation, together with such recommendations as it deems advisable.

For the purpose of any such investigation, the Committee on Un-American Activities, or any subcommittee thereof, is authorized to sit and act at such times and places within the United States, whether or not the House is sitting, has recessed, or has adjourned, to hold such hearings, to require the attendance of such witnesses and the production of such books, papers, and documents, and to take such testimony, as it deems necessary. Subpenas may be issued under the signature of the chairman of the committee or any subcommittee, or by any member designated by any such chairman, and may be served by any person designated by any such chairman or member.

\* \* \* \* \*

27. To assist the House in appraising the administration of the laws and in developing such amendments or related legislation as it may deem necessary, each standing committee of the House shall exercise continuous watchfulness of the execution by the administrative agencies concerned of any laws, the subject matter of which is within the jurisdiction of such committee; and, for that purpose, shall study all pertinent reports and data submitted to the House by the agencies in the executive branch of the Government.



## PREFACE

By Representative Francis E. Walter, Chairman,  
House Committee on Un-American Activities

While Soviet tanks were crushing the Hungarian revolution, the stream of refugees entering Austria in the fall and winter of 1956-57 carried with it John Santo.

Accompanied by the then Commissioner of Immigration and Naturalization, Lt. Gen. Joseph M. Swing, I was shuttling at that time between the principal crossing points at the Austro-Hungarian border, the Andau Bridge and Nickolsburg, and Vienna. On the morning of November 17, 1956, I was advised that John Santo had appeared in one of the temporary camps established for Hungarian refugees by the Austrian Government. It was a surprise.

I knew much about John Santo, the militant, frontline Communist in the United States since 1928 until 1949. I knew that he had left this country under deportation orders after the then Hungarian Ambassador to the United States, Mr. Endre Sik, in March 1949, in a bedroom of a private apartment in Bronx, N.Y., offered him a Hungarian passport which the Ambassador then and there filled out himself, stamped it with a seal which he took out of his pocket, signed it, and handed it to Santo.

I knew much about the fiery orator and the tireless organizer of the Communist Party in the United States, the prominent Communist activist who rose from the ranks to top leadership positions not only in the Communist Party itself but in a major labor union then penetrated by the Communist conspiracy, the Transport Workers Union (CIO).

The fight that John Santo carried against the attempt of the U.S. Government to deport him is reflected in hundreds, maybe thousands, of pages of legal records, as well as Communist propaganda. The Communist Party, aided by its legal arm, the American Committee for Protection of Foreign Born, and Santo, himself, used the constitutional due process of law to its limits. The "John Santo Defense Committee" organized by the Communist Party collected upward of \$100,000 to prevent Santo's deportation.

The first warrant of arrest in Santo's case was issued on October 7, 1941, and deportation hearings commenced on the next day. Evidence introduced in the proceedings established that he was an active member of the Communist Party from at least 1932 and was closely associated with Communist-dominated organizations since 1928. It took until November 1948 to complete the series of tedious proceedings and appeals with the issuance of a final warrant of deportation on October 11, 1948.

Here is where the Communist government of Hungary stepped in and relieved the United States of Santo's presence through the good offices of Ambassador Sik, thus indicating the importance it attached

to secure Santo's services for the Communist cause behind the Iron Curtain generally and in Hungary, specifically. This report tells how he was used there.

In Vienna, in 1956, Santo applied for entry to the United States stating that he had abandoned and abjured the Communist cause and desired to return to the country where he had fought for that cause for over 20 years.

Many people, many good Americans then in Vienna, were convinced of Santo's sincerity. The Church World Service, an organization dedicated to rendering assistance to refugees all over the world, took Santo under its protective wing and secured temporary employment for him in Austria, first as an interpreter and then as a teacher of the English language. The great humanitarian, a dedicated social worker, the late Roland Elliott, director of the Church World Service's refugee activities, with whom I had the privilege of being associated for well over a decade in displaced persons and refugee work, turned to me requesting that I intercede with immigration authorities and obtain their agreement to Santo's entry to the United States as a refugee. I was reluctant to do so at first and I suggested that more time should be allowed to pass before Santo's sincerity and trustworthiness could be evaluated.

In 1958, while I attended one of the sessions of the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration, Mr. Elliott brought Santo to Geneva, Switzerland. My conversation with Santo lasted for several hours and I was impressed by what he told me. He retraced the history of his youth in the United States where he had arrived from Hungary at the age of 19, attempted to study at Chicago, Ill., dropped out of school after a very short time and soon attracted the attention of Communist organizers, whom he joined voluntarily and with great enthusiasm. He then proceeded to tell the story of his exile from the United States and his experiences in Hungary.

Although the ring of sincerity was quite apparent in Santo's story as first told to me, an extensive review of Santo's activities in the United States and a study of records of interrogations conducted by American officials in Austria, caused me to defer action in Santo's behalf. One important element of this decision was my conviction that Santo's return to the United States, if it were to occur, must be in full compliance with the law—and the law, the Immigration and Nationality Act, states that a former Communist is not eligible to enter the United States until he demonstrates that "since the termination of such membership or affiliation such alien is and has been for at least 5 years prior to the date of the application for admission actively opposed to the doctrine, program, principles and ideology of such party" (Communist Party or a Communist-dominated organization). (Sec. 212 (a) (28) (I) of the Immigration and Nationality Act.)

My second conversation with Santo took place again in Geneva on April 8, 1962, in the presence of the then member of the House Committee on the Judiciary, Representative James F. Battin, of Montana. The interview again lasted several hours. Without prodding and questioning, Santo reviewed what he called "my Communist life" and expressed what to me sounded like an urgent desire to tell his story "to whoever should listen to it in America"—to use his own words. He was still living in Vienna, engaged at the time with an Austrian


partner in the importation of goods from the United States. He was recognized as a refugee by the Austrian authorities and by the United Nations High Commissioner. He was a stateless person and used as identification a travel document which is issued under the auspices of the High Commissioner to a person in such status.

In conclusion of our conversation I told Santo that I intended to consult with the proper authorities in Washington and that after the statutory 5 years of his disassociation from the Communist Party had lapsed at the end of 1962, I believed I would present his case to the Attorney General of the United States who is vested with discretionary power to admit refugees on parole pursuant to the so-called Fair Share Act (the Act of July 14, 1960).

In January 1963, after the Protestant Episcopal Church, acting through the Church World Service, provided the necessary sponsorship affidavit, John Santo entered the United States.

The Committee on Un-American Activities believes that Santo's own story is a unique document of paramount importance. It is primarily designed to educate and provide food for thought for those who may still, even at this late hour, not be fully aware of the devious ways in which the Communist conspiracy works in the United States under the direction of foreign powers and the inhuman, tyrannical application of the Communist doctrine in those unhappy lands which this conspiracy has been permitted to capture.

There are, I am sure, more "Santos" in the United States, busily continuing the work which John Santo was doing here between 1928 and 1949. The study of John Santo's story might make it easier for an attentive reader to recognize and unmask them. John Santo's story might also clarify the minds of some, young and old, who have been misguided, blinded, or duped by open and hidden Communists into following their evil doctrine and assisting them in the achievement of their evil aims.



*Chairman, Committee on Un-American Activities.*

March 21, 1963.



# A COMMUNIST IN A "WORKERS' PARADISE"

## John Santo's Own Story

FRIDAY, MARCH 1, 1963

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON UN-AMERICAN ACTIVITIES,  
*Washington, D.C.*

### CONSULTATION

The consultation with Mr. John Santo was held at 10:10 a.m. in Room 226, Cannon House Office Building, Washington, D.C.

Committee member present: Representative Edwin E. Willis, of Louisiana (presiding).

Staff members present: Francis J. McNamara, director, and Donald T. Appell, investigator.

Mr. WILLIS. Do you solemnly swear that the testimony you are about to give will be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Mr. SANTO. I do.

### CONSULTATION WITH JOHN SANTO

Mr. McNAMARA. Will you state your full name for the record, please?

Mr. SANTO. John Santo, S-a-n-t-o.

Mr. McNAMARA. Where and when were you born, Mr. Santo?

Mr. SANTO. I was born on May 13, 1908, in Hungary.

Mr. McNAMARA. Would you give us a brief sketch of your educational background?

Mr. SANTO. I graduated from a commercial high school in 1927. I came to the United States in the fall of 1927 to further my education and for a short period of time attended Crane Junior College in Chicago.

Mr. McNAMARA. Mr. Santo, are you a member of the Communist Party?

Mr. SANTO. I am not now a member of the Communist Party.

Mr. McNAMARA. Were you ever a member?

Mr. SANTO. I was a member of the Communist Party of the United States from 1928 to 1949, a period of 21 years.

Mr. McNAMARA. Have you ever been a member of any other Communist Party?

Mr. SANTO. I was a member of the Hungarian Workers' (Communist) Party from 1949 to 1956, altogether amounting to 28 years.

Mr. McNAMARA. You were in Hungary in 1949?

Mr. SANTO. I was.

Mr. McNAMARA. Why did you return to Hungary in 1949 after coming to this country years before?

Mr. SANTO. Basically, I returned to Hungary because the government and the Communist Party of that country of my birth advised me to do so.

Mr. McNAMARA. Was there any other factor influencing your return?

Mr. SANTO. Yes; this came about because at that period in 1949, after due process before the Immigration Commissioner in the city of New York, I was ordered deported for being an alien illegally in the country, inasmuch as I came to the United States as a student and had overstayed; furthermore, because I was an alien engaged in subversive activity designed to contribute to the overthrow of the Government of the United States.

Mr. McNAMARA. When did you return to the United States, and how—that is, from Hungary?

Mr. SANTO. I fled Hungary in the aftermath of the Hungarian revolution of October 1956, going then to Austria, where I lived and worked for 7 years until January 1963, at which time I was paroled for re-entry into the United States.

Mr. McNAMARA. Under what provisions of the U.S. Immigration Law and on whose intervention was this brought about?

Mr. SANTO. This came about as a result of the personal interest of Congressman Walter, the chairman of the House Subcommittee on Immigration and Nationality and chairman of the Committee on Un-American Activities.

Upon my fleeing Hungary in November 1956, I immediately searched out an American newspaper reporter in Vienna, in order to make a statement indicating my complete break with the Communist Party and communism in all of its aspects.

I found in Vienna Mr. Barrett McGurn, correspondent of the *New York Herald Tribune*, to whom I gave my statement, which was then published on November 24, 1956. Subsequently, various representatives of the U.S. Government contacted me.

Mr. McNAMARA. Mr. Santo, you say that you are not now a member of the Communist Party and that you have not been a member since 1956. What caused your break with communism?

Mr. SANTO. Basically, my break with communism can't be adduced to one factor alone, such as the Hungarian revolution of 1956, which gave me the opportunity to flee Hungary and communism. If it is desired to put the answer in a nutshell, it is the contradiction between the shining beauty of the theory of communism and what it is in practice as a bestial, corrupt, retrogressive way of life, as a system of government of false morality, perverted ethics, wasteful economy, and politics of horror and torture for the working people.

Mr. McNAMARA. Did these contradictions first become apparent to you during your stay in Hungary? Was it during this period that your eyes were opened on these points?

Mr. SANTO. Prior to that period, there were obviously often, also in the United States, contradictions between the so-called party line—that is, the general line of the Communist International—various zig-zags, going from one extreme to the other, in its application to life and political developments that affected me somewhat.



Such an outstanding zigzag took place in the 1930's, the comparatively long period during which the general line of the party called for a struggle against fascism, more particularly Hitlerism, on the basis of the widest possible united front activity. Then I woke up one fine day only to find that, according to Stalin, fascism was a matter of taste. This was followed by the infamous Soviet-Nazi Pact.

As is well known, this pact gave a free hand to Hitler Germany to start the Second World War. Such contradictions and zigzags, however, could be, and were, swallowed by me in the conviction that the defense of the first Soviet state was the paramount task of all Communists, requiring various sorts of sacrifices, including those of maneuvering against the enemies of the Soviet Union.

However, it is one thing to live in the United States and to look from afar upon communism being built in the Soviet Union, and another thing to live in a country such as Hungary ruled by the Communist Party under a so-called dictatorship of the proletariat.

The 7 years of my life in "People's Democratic" Hungary from 1949 to 1956 laid bare for me as nothing else could, the inhumanity, the anti-humanity, the lawlessness, the complete lack of any moral and ethical standard of that system of society.

There was no way, living there, to find the theoretical or tactical excuses and justifications for what was being done as it had been possible to do from faraway United States.

Mr. McNAMARA. Mr. Santo, you were in Hungary at the time of the uprising of October 1956. Much has been written and told about that uprising. Will you describe briefly your own personal experiences during the uprising, and just how and why they caused you to make your break with communism?

Mr. SANTO. The system of proletarian dictatorship atomizes society. Each human being lives alone and works in his lonely self for the state.

On the surface, most everybody is a "comrade," greeting one another in the prescribed Communist fashion, but actually there are no friendships or social contact outside of one's field of work, and it is even dangerous to speak freely in the circle of one's family.

Thus the public self of the population, agreeing and applauding various government policies and, on the other hand, the isolation and the fear prevalent in all aspects of life, brought with it a schizophrenia—an all-embracing schizophrenia, a splitting of the personality—which spoke in words of approval, whereas hidden deep down in the brain and soul, in the atom of society, man itself, the disagreement was violent.

The Hungarian revolution, however, did away with this situation, and for the first time during my stay of 7 years in Hungary, I suddenly found myself, together with the masses of the people, merged openly in one conviction—in the disapproval of communism, of the dictatorship of the proletariat in all of its ramifications.

I recall looking down from the window of my office on the second floor of Akademia Utea 3 in Budapest at noon of the day of the revolution, October 23, 1956, seeing hundreds of people going to the demonstration, which was forbidden by the government—and there I saw myself, way back in 1928, in the United States, in the city of Chicago, going myself to demonstrate for the anti-war convictions by joining the Communists.

During the development of the Hungarian revolution, there were many concrete examples of the complete unity of the Hungarian people, members of the Communist Party and those who were not, indicating their complete abhorrence of that system of society which they were determined to break up. Old Bolsheviks and young university students of working-class backgrounds, as well as the intellectuals, the women, the members of the armed forces, all were agreed on one thing: the necessity of breaking up the system of falsehood and exploitation of the people of Hungary, as carried on under the leadership of the Hungarian Communist Party.

Mr. McNAMARA. Do you have information you can give us concerning the role played by the Soviet Union and its armed forces in suppressing the Hungarian uprising?

Mr. SANTO. The last straw, the one that broke the camel's back as far as I myself was concerned, in respect to my affiliation and loyalty to communism, was the role played by the armed forces of the Soviet Union in the crushing of the Hungarian revolution.

I have seen innocent blood shed without any pretext or provocation at all. I recall, for instance, that during the second attack by the Russian Red Army forces, tanks were patrolling the streets simply for the purpose of terrorizing the population into submission. Bread was scarce, and a line formed before a bakery to purchase bread. One of the Russian tanks pulled into position and shelled that breadline, killing mercilessly women who simply wanted to assure a loaf of bread for their families.

Perhaps I ought to add here that in all the demonstrations and Communist activities of my life in the United States, including 3 years of service as a soldier during World War II, I never saw anything resembling this wanton brutality and unprovoked destruction of innocent human life.

This was war against the unarmed womenfolk of Budapest, designed to terrorize the population into submission, into unquestioning, blind, subservient obedience.

Mr. McNAMARA. Just 7 years before all this happened, Mr. Santo, you voluntarily chose to leave the United States and go to Hungary. Why?

Mr. SANTO. The then government and leadership of the Communist Party of Hungary had evidently followed my activities in the United States and, beginning with 1947, I received various messages indicating that my return to my country of birth, Hungary, would be welcomed and desired.

Mr. McNAMARA. Why did these messages begin in 1947?

Mr. SANTO. Because at that time, the Immigration Service reinstated against me deportation proceedings that had been suspended in 1942, when I was accepted for service in the U.S. Army.

Mr. McNAMARA. Did these messages from Hungary come to you directly or through the U.S. Communist Party?

Mr. SANTO. These messages came directly from Hungary, through mail written by friends who had lived in the United States and had returned to Hungary in 1946.

These messages advised me to visit the Ambassador of the Hungarian People's Republic, Endre Sik, in Washington, D.C., which I did in the spring of 1949. He confirmed the invitation for me to re-

turn to Hungary and advised me to get the approval of the American Communist Party leadership.

Mr. McNAMARA. Did you get that approval?

Mr. SANTO. I did—through the person of Joseph Peters,<sup>1</sup> then a member of the staff of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the United States, whom I had known in 1928, when he was national secretary of the Hungarian Bureau of the Communist Party of the United States. Through Peters, I applied for a decision of the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the United States. A few days later, Peters got in touch with me and informed me that the Secretariat approved my return to Hungary.

Mr. McNAMARA. Do you know whether, prior to the U.S. Communist Party's decision that you could return to Hungary, there were any conferences or contacts with either Hungarian or Soviet representatives in this country on the matter—or was this something which the American Communist Party just, to the best of your knowledge, decided on its own?

Mr. SANTO. I presume that the top leadership of the American Communist Party had direct contact with Ambassador Sik. This presumption is based on the fact that after Peters relayed to me personally the approval of the Secretariat, he also invited me to the party to be held in the Bronx, where the leading Hungarian-American Communists—Louis Weinstock,<sup>2</sup> James Lustig,<sup>3</sup> John Lautner,<sup>4</sup> and their wives—as well as Ambassador Sik were to be present.

At that gathering in a private home, I received from Ambassador Sik my Hungarian passport, into which he inserted my photograph and affixed his seal. He placed his signature on the visa to make valid my return to Hungary.

Mr. McNAMARA. Prior to leaving the United States for Hungary in 1949, did you receive from the U.S. Communist Party instructions

<sup>1</sup> When Whittaker Chambers testified before the committee in August 1948 and revealed his own associations with a Communist underground apparatus within Government agencies in Washington, D.C., during the period 1934-37, he identified J. Peters as his superior and the "head of the underground section" of the Communist Party of the United States. Chambers said it was Peters who had assigned him to liaison and other duties with the party's underground in the Nation's Capital and had introduced him to Alger Hiss and other Communists working in the Federal Government.

A man of many aliases, Peters was born Alexander Goldberger in Hungary. In the late 1920's he held responsible posts on a number of Communist publications in the United States and eventually became a national party functionary. He was the author of *The Communist Party—A Manual on Organization*, which served as a basic tool for Communist organizers after its publication in 1935. Peters was interrogated by this committee on Aug. 30, 1948, but refused to answer pertinent questions on grounds of possible self-incrimination. When faced with the prospects of being deported, he departed from the United States voluntarily in 1949.

<sup>2</sup> Louis Weinstock was, for many years, a key officer of the AFL Painters Union. He has also served on the Communist Party's National Board and has been known as "Mr. May Day" because, for years, he organized its May Day celebrations in New York City. He was tried, convicted, and served a 3-year sentence for violation of the Smith Act. He preceded James Lustig as business manager of the *Daily Worker*, being appointed to the post in February 1960, and also replaced Lustig in this position when Lustig resigned in the fall of 1962. Weinstock is one of ten top U.S. Communist Party leaders against whom proceedings have recently been held by the Subversive Activities Control Board for the purpose of compelling registration under the Internal Security Act of 1950.

<sup>3</sup> James Lustig was born in Budapest, Hungary, in 1902, came to the United States in 1921, and became a citizen in 1928. In 1931 he ran for alderman in Bronx, N.Y., on the Communist Party ticket. Lustig was, for many years, a top official of District 4 of the Communist-controlled United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America (UE). In 1961 and 1962 he served as business manager of the official Communist Party newspaper, *The Worker*. Several times identified as a member of the Communist Party by witnesses who have testified before this committee, Lustig has served a prison term for contempt of Congress, growing out of his appearance before this committee in 1946.

<sup>4</sup> John Lautner broke with the Communist Party in 1950 and has since been a Government witness in a number of Smith Act trials and other security proceedings, in addition to testifying before this committee. Lautner held various important posts in the party prior to his break, including that of head of the New York State Control or Review Commission.

as to what you should do when you arrived in Hungary, contacts you were to make there, and related advice or orders?

Mr. SANTO. J. Peters, as well as other leading Hungarian Communists who had previously visited Hungary, advised me to send a telegram upon my arrival in Europe to Comrade Simon, in Budapest, who had also previously been a resident of the United States and had returned to Hungary after the Second World War. According to these instructions, Simon would take care of everything after receipt of such a telegram.

Mr. McNAMARA. When did you arrive in Hungary, who met you, what kind of a reception did you receive there?

Mr. SANTO. I left the United States on June 10 by ship, going to Amsterdam, from there by plane to Prague, and from Prague to Budapest. At the airport in Budapest, Hungary, I was received by Comrade Simon.

Mr. McNAMARA. Prior to leaving the United States to return to Hungary, Mr. Santo, what were your concepts, your ideas, your convictions, beliefs, about what communism really was?

Mr. SANTO. I was a convinced Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist. The philosophy, the ideology, the principles, and the practice taught by this triumvirate of communism filled my brain, my heart and soul.

All these three giants of communism were equal in stature in my understanding and appreciation: Marx, who founded the materialistic interpretation of history; Lenin, who developed the theory of imperialism, applied it to conditions of the 20th century, and concretely led the preparation and execution of the Bolshevik revolution in 1917, as a model for all countries and all peoples; and Stalin, the inheritor of the mantle of Lenin, the great executive of communism, under whose leadership the Soviet Union established a planned economy, industrialized backward Russia, collectivized its agriculture, and above all, kept the Communist Party of the Soviet Union as the razor-sharp edge of the world revolution.

Searching back as to the reasons why I originally joined the Communist Party, I think it is fair to say that I was motivated by the basic principles of the Christian-Judeo civilization, of the brotherhood of mankind, living in peace and well-being upon this earth.

As a goodly portion of all members of young generations do, I felt pity and compassion for those who lived miserable lives of poverty, of ignorance, of exploitation, and of discrimination.

Based on the fact that my father died in the First World War and left me an orphan at the age of 13—after which I had to support myself and my family—I was convinced that wars issued from economic foundations, reflecting the struggle of the rich for the control and division of spoils and of wealth, and that only a new society could bring peace on earth, good will toward men, and a decent way of life based on political, economic, and moral freedom.

Though I never visited the Soviet Union, I followed its development, not only through the Communist Party press, but more particularly through the daily reports of such sources as Walter Duranty, the correspondent of the *New York Times* in Moscow, as well as through articles such as those of Louis Fischer in *The Nation*.

It was my conviction that the society being built in the Soviet Union successfully solved such basic problems as unemployment and racial

persecution and that, notwithstanding all the sacrifices that were required, communism was worth all of that and more.

For these reasons, I gladly sacrificed all my energies and was ready to lay down my life for the cause of communism, the greatest—as I then firmly believed—of all causes that ever existed in the long history of mankind.

Mr. McNAMARA. On the basis of what you have said, Mr. Santo, I would gather that your membership in the Communist Party—from the time you joined it in the United States in 1928 until you left this country in 1949 to go to Hungary—had brought about quite a complete change in certain of your principles or concepts on certain matters. Is this so?

Let me explain what I mean: You joined the party because you believed in the Christian-Judeo concept of the brotherhood of man, everyone living in peace.

In 1949, when you left this country, you were thoroughly dedicated to Marx, Lenin, Stalin, and to Stalin as the man who had kept the CPSU as the razor-sharp edge of the revolution.

The doctrines of Lenin and Stalin preach class hatred, rather than the brotherhood of man, which was a conflict between your original motivations for joining the Communist Party and the ideas you had when you went to Hungary. Would you care to comment on this?

Mr. SANTO. Yes. The dialectics of Marxism teach the unity of opposites. Lenin's doctrines include the doctrine of overthrowing by force and violence the capitalistic rule of the handful of rich for the benefit of the multitude, while at the same time maintaining that out of this unavoidable clash and violence will grow the beautiful flower of a society of free and equal men and women and of races, living in peace, well-being, and harmony.

As in many other things, one could always point to, understand, and believe—as I did then—that this was the same way that a new human being comes into the world—through sacrifice and violence. This is the only way that children can be born, and the fathers and the mothers and the midwives all must accept the sacrifices involved in the birth of the new, be it the human being or a new form of society. Out of such revolution was the United States itself born.

Mr. McNAMARA. Mr. Santo, you have explained the ideological weapons, shall we say, the principles, the beliefs, you had as a Communist when you left this country to go to Hungary to live in a nation that was actually under Communist rule. Now, could you give us, in addition to that, a brief description of the practical weapons you as a Communist had, based on your prior training and experience?

Mr. SANTO. Like many other Communists in the United States, I was considered by the Communist Party of the United States—and also considered myself—a professional revolutionary, one who dedicated his life to the overthrow of the capitalistic system of society and government, establishing in its stead a society based on the collective, state ownership of all the means of production under the leadership and guidance of the vanguard of the working class—the Communist Party.

Concretely, assigned by the Communist Party, I have fulfilled various tasks of a political and organizational nature. Thus, for instance, I was a Communist journalist for some years, organizer of the unem-

ployed, section organizer of the Communist Party in the borough of Bronx, city of New York.

Mr. McNAMARA. Section organizer, Mr. Santo, would be the highest post in the party in the Bronx. Is that not true?

Mr. SANTO. Yes.

Mr. McNAMARA. What other posts did you hold?

Mr. SANTO. I was a member of the District Bureau of the State Committee of the Ohio District of the Communist Party, member of the Trade Union Commission for the State of New York, but finally and mainly a trade union leader.

I was general secretary of the Transport Workers Union of America, and subsequently national director of organization of the same union from 1934 to 1948. Thus, I spent some 14 years of my life—of the most satisfying nature for myself personally—by organizing workers in trade unions and leading them in struggles for improved wages, shorter hours, better working conditions, vacations and holidays with pay, through the medium of collective bargaining and, if necessary, by directing strikes to achieve improvements in the economic status of the membership.

As an officer of the Transport Workers Union, I have participated in the various conventions of the CIO.

These 14 years of my life left an indelible imprint upon me, inasmuch as they had made it possible for me to work for the improvement and the elevation of the working class.

Notwithstanding the fact that my role in the trade union field was always directed by the Communist Party and subservient to the interests of the party as prescribed by its general line, nevertheless, it was basically a very rewarding type of work for me.

Mr. McNAMARA. We will stop for lunch now, and come back at 1 o'clock.

(Whereupon, at 12:15 p.m., Friday, March 1, 1963, the consultation recessed, to reconvene at 1 p.m. the same day.)

#### AFTERNOON SESSION—FRIDAY, MARCH 1, 1963

#### CONSULTATION WITH JOHN SANTO—Resumed

Mr. McNAMARA. Mr. Santo, would you state for the record when you arrived in Hungary, what happened on the way, and also tell what kind of a reception you received there?

Mr. SANTO. I left the United States on June 10, 1949, by ship to Amsterdam. Prior to my leaving the United States, in order to prepare myself for what might await me in Hungary, I committed a cardinal sin for a Communist, inasmuch as I purchased an anti-Communist book, the work of Mr. Ferenc Nagy, who had been Premier of Hungary between 1945 and 1947.

Aboard ship, I read this account of the events and developments in Hungary after the Second World War, an unbelievable story of the ruthless Communist drive for power. The book gave an account of all sorts of double dealings, chicanery, breaking of pledges, destruction of democratic allies of communism, of which Ferenc Nagy himself was one, until they compelled him, in 1947, to resign as Prime Minister of Hungary.

The book made an impression upon me as to what I might expect to find in Hungary, but more particularly, it acquainted me with the person of Laszlo Rajk, Minister of Interior, and, at the same time, assistant to the general secretary of the Hungarian Workers' Party, Matyas Rakosi.

According to this book, some of the dirtiest work carried through in Hungary by the Communists was concentrated in the person of Rajk. Amongst other things, the book claimed that Rajk was the only real Hungarian in the top leadership of the Hungarian Communist Party, that he was the leader of the anti-Semitic faction within the Communist Party, and that he was the most vicious hangman, persecutor, and vilifier of persons who in some form stood in the way of complete Communist domination of Hungary.

As fascinated as I was with the book, I didn't dare to take it with me to Hungary and, after tearing it up in the harbor of Amsterdam, I dropped it in the ocean.

Symbolically, the name and fame, the life and death of Rajk would not let me alone all during my sojourn in Hungary. Stepping ashore in Europe, in Amsterdam, I purchased a copy of the *New York Herald Tribune* where, on the front page at which there appeared a news item with a Belgrade dateline, reporting the arrest of Laszlo Rajk.

Mr. McNAMARA. On what charges? Do you recall?

Mr. SANTO. I believe it was just speculation based on the fact that he didn't appear on the reviewing platform of the May 1 demonstration, or else that he hasn't been seen after the May 1 parade and demonstration of that particular year.

Mr. McNAMARA. Who welcomed you on your arrival in Hungary?

Mr. SANTO. As per instructions, I sent a telegram to Simon from Amsterdam, and he was the one who received and greeted me at the airport in Budapest.

Mr. McNAMARA. Who was Simon?

Mr. SANTO. Comrade Simon had lived for a time in the United States and was active in the Hungarian Communist movement. After the Second World War, he returned to Hungary and received a post of importance, and besides this job, unofficially, he was assigned to be the guide and official host of Communists coming from the United States to Hungary.

Mr. McNAMARA. Was Simon his first or his last name?

Mr. SANTO. His family name. His full name was Moses Simon.

In my particular instance, Simon was extremely friendly, helpful, and hospitable. He took me to the Astoria, one of the best hotels in Budapest. I received in this then partially bombed-out hotel one of the best rooms, which means that it also had a bathroom. Comrade Simon informed me that I was going to be a guest of the Hungarian Trade Union Center and made arrangements for me to meet the leaders.

The next day, accompanied by Simon, I was introduced to three assistant general secretaries of the Trade Union Center; namely, Comrades Gacs, an oldtime Hungarian Communist who returned after the Second World War from abroad; Forgacs, youthful head of the foreign department of the Hungarian Trade Union Center; and Comrade Piros.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Laszlo Piros, assistant secretary of the Trade Union Congress, Minister of Interior during October uprising, and chief of AVO (secret police).

Mr. McNAMARA. In addition to assigning you one of the best rooms in the Astoria Hotel, did they bestow any other special favors on you?

Mr. SANTO. After a general discussion of the state of affairs in the United States, they informed me that I was their guest until the party assigned me to a definite task. The hotel expenses, as well as meals and spending money, were covered by them.

In the days to follow, I also met Antal Apro, general secretary of the Hungarian Trade Union Center, who indicated his desire to place me in a job in the Hungarian trade union movement; more particularly he was thinking about a job of anti-American propaganda through the medium of the various trade union journals.

Subsequently, I also met Karoly Kiss, chairman of the Control Commission of the Hungarian Communist Party who, after a number of detailed discussions concerning my past, one day handed me my membership book in the Hungarian Workers' Party, that is, the Communist Party of Hungary, which recognized my membership with its original date in the United States as of 1928.

My legal status and citizenship matter was discussed in the party center of the Hungarian Workers' Party by the head of the legal department, a certain Comrade Ferry, who made arrangements to see that I got certification of Hungarian citizenship.

I also contacted my old friend and spiritual father, Lajos Bebrits, Hungarian Minister of Railroads and Transport, who recruited me into the Communist Party in the United States way back in 1928. Bebrits was deported from the United States to the Soviet Union in the early part of the 1930's as the result of being subpoenaed by the Fish committee where, as it was then the party line, upon being questioned, he maintained proudly his belief in the necessity, advisability, and unavoidability of using force and violence for the purpose of the overthrow of the Government of the United States.<sup>1</sup> So with the Russian Red Army he returned to Hungary in 1945.

I had to talk a number of times to Bebrits on the telephone, because he was reluctant—for me at the time for unknown reasons—to meet me personally.

Finally, however, he did invite me to his house for supper, which was, by the way, the only invitation that I received for years into a private home in Hungary.

During the supper, the discussion concerned mostly the Hungarian movement in America, and generally the status of the work of the party there. Concerning questions that I have raised about the Soviet Union, he avoided direct answers, but answered every question on my part with a question of his own.

This disturbed me, because Bebrits was a man of encyclopedic knowledge and a person whom I have known in America as very open and direct, and I simply had to deduce that there might have been certain experiences that he underwent in the Soviet Union of which he didn't care to talk.

At this point, perhaps it is worth mentioning that, generally, Communists don't ask specific questions, even in personal relationship.

<sup>1</sup>Louis Bebrits, editor of the U.S. Hungarian language Communist newspaper, *Uj Elore*, was a witness before the Special (Fish) Committee To Investigate Communist Activities in the United States on Sept. 27, 1930.



Mr. McNAMARA. Why is this?

Mr. SANTO. Discussions, even amongst friends, are of a general nature in order to avoid possible political mistakes in viewpoint, and especially because of conspiratorial points of view.

This means, of course, that based on Communist training, one talks only to and about things that help the revolutionary movement and keeps as many cards as close to his chest as possible. I think that answers your question.

Mr. McNAMARA. What happened at this time?

Mr. SANTO. During this period, since I had nothing else to do, I took long walks to get acquainted with Budapest and its people. I also desired to secure an apartment, which, with the help of Comrade Ferry, was assigned to me in the second district of Budapest on Attila Utea, 22a, for American standards, modest apartment indeed, but which had a bathroom and was one of the very few buildings having central heating system.

Comrade Ferry also assigned a person to accompany me to a huge basement warehouse for the purpose of selection of furniture for the apartment.

Since the people from the Trade Union Center with whom I had contact knew that I was very anxious to start working, they countered by proposing and then insisting that I must take a vacation.

Nilly-willy, that is what happened, and one fine morning Comrades Gacs, Forgacs, and Piros appeared and without further ado transported me down to Lake Balaton, to one of the fancy resort hotels at the village of Balaton-Lelle.

Of course, the Balaton is one of the most beautiful, very large lakes of Europe. The weather and the water were fine—yet one small incident stands out in my memory.

Comrade Gacs accompanied by Comrade Forgacs came down to visit me after a week, and we all had a very pleasant time discussing the fate of the world as is usual amongst Communists, until suddenly in another automobile, Comrade Piros arrived.

There followed a most agitated discussion some distance away behind the bushes between Comrade Piros and Comrade Gacs.

Mr. McNAMARA. Did you ever find out what this discussion concerned?

Mr. SANTO. Piros and Gacs departed in the automobile without giving me any explanation as to the reason for the hurried return to Budapest. Evidently Comrade Forgacs was also dumfounded.

However, the mystery didn't remain completely hidden for long, because though I visited the trade union central headquarters upon my ending of the vacation at the Balaton, I haven't seen Comrade Gacs again for 6 years; that is until 1955 when, during the general release of innocent people from the jails and concentration camps of Hungary, he also returned—a broken, old man.

Mr. McNAMARA. Did you eventually get a job?

Mr. SANTO. It was getting to be early fall, and one fine day my American training forced me to an impetuous step. After a sleepless night, I decided to write a letter to Comrade Matyas Rakosi, general secretary of the Workers' Party of Hungary, saying that I returned to Hungary upon the invitation of the Hungarian Party and

here I was doing nothing, not even being given a chance to express my thanks in person to Comrade Rakosi.

I closed the letter saying that, knowing that he was a very busy man, I took this method of thanking him for the opportunity to help, to return to Hungary and thusly take part in the building up of socialism.

I knew that there will be some response, but even so, I was amazed next morning at 5 o'clock when two men, both clad in the uniform of the secret police, knocked on the doors. They came into the apartment, saying that they had instructions to take me immediately to Comrade Rakosi.

Mr. McNAMARA. Mr. Santo, before you get on further, I would like to ask you one question. What, in your view, was the reason for this vacation at the resort shortly after your arrival in Hungary?

The reason I ask is this: Last May the committee took testimony from a man named Chi-chou Huang, a Chinese who had defected to this country from Red China. He had been in the United States in the late 1940's as a student on a scholarship from the Nationalist Government and then he decided to go back to China, not to free China, Nationalist-held territory, but in 1949, when the civil war was still going on, to Red China's territory; and when he got there, he was given a wonderful reception, just as you were when you first arrived in Hungary, and they gave him, too, a kind of enforced vacation.

He was one of a number of people returning, arriving in Peking, in the Tientsin area, and he, like you, became very impatient after a while with this enforced idleness, this imposed vacation. He wanted to get on helping the revolution, too. He had the same experience you did.

What, in your view, is the reason for this policy, as it may be, in handling people who come from the free world into Communist territory?

Mr. SANTO. Frankly, it is a difficult question to answer, but there are a number of possible explanations.

One, people are not being put to work while awaiting their official transfer and dossier from the Communist Party of which they were members.

Two, they want to see simply how does one behave under this enforced idleness and what weaknesses of character, what human soft points, they betray.

Three, even though I have seen only a few people, nevertheless, they milked my brains dry.

Mr. McNAMARA. In what way?

Mr. SANTO. By systematic and repeated questions on the same subject, to see whether or not, in one repetition, I would not give another story than on some other occasion.

During this period, furthermore, I had to write innumerable detailed autobiographies, in hand, without copy, which sometimes were given back to me to elaborate on certain questions. Finally, it has been my belief, during the latter part of my stay in Hungary, that originally I was invited in 1947 to return to Hungary with the idea of involving me as one of the confessors in the Rajk trial, which was certainly prepared long before it broke in the fall of 1949.

Mr. McNAMARA. Basically, then, would you say that this enforced vacation is a security step on the part of Communist governments to test and assure themselves of the reliability of new comrades coming into their area?

Mr. SANTO. Yes, I certainly believe that that is basically the thing, because a month before my return to Hungary, Joseph Peters and his wife went to Hungary. At that time we met every day, or almost every day, and of course he received no job placement either.

Mr. McNAMARA. How did Peters get to Hungary? Wasn't he in the United States just a short while before you left for Hungary?

Mr. SANTO. After the attorneys filed in New York in 1949 on my behalf for permission for voluntary departure, and which was granted, the same attorney applied similarly in behalf of Joseph Peters.

Mr. McNAMARA. Why? Was he, too, under deportation order?

Mr. SANTO. Yes, he was under deportation proceedings and was also involved in the Chambers-Hiss underground activities as their chief.

Mr. McNAMARA. Chambers had actually named Peters in testimony before this committee as the underground boss, the Soviet representative, in the U.S. Communist Party here.

Mr. SANTO. That is so.

As soon as Peters' permission for voluntary departure has been approved, he took an airplane and reached Hungary, whereas I completed my preparations and went by boat to Europe.

Mr. McNAMARA. So Peters was also idle then?

Mr. SANTO. Peters also had no job. Needless to say, the enforced idleness and very likely his more detailed knowledge concerning the dangers inherent in the situation for him made Peters extremely nervous. One incident aggravated his nervousness and my impatience.

Mr. McNAMARA. What was that?

Mr. SANTO. At that particular time, we kept close contact with some Hungarians to whom we felt indebted for the services and information rendered. Thus, for instance, we spent an evening having supper in a restaurant with Comrade Simon and his wife, Peters and his wife, and I.

Mr. McNAMARA. This was in Budapest, not at the lake?

Mr. SANTO. At this point, we are back from the lake.

Simon's wife left early and, after having had our meal and coffee, we all took a walk in the direction of Simon's residence, because he claimed to have had a headache.

The incident stands out in my memory, because after saying goodby, we expected Simon to immediately enter the house where he lived. Instead of that, reaching the corner, I had a feeling that somebody was observing me, turned around, and sure enough, Simon was standing at exactly the same spot where we left him, looking after us.

That same week, we learned from the wife of Comrade Simon that that night her husband was arrested under the charge of being a spy and an agent.

Mr. McNAMARA. Of the United States?

Mr. SANTO. Of the imperialists.

He was another person who disappeared in 1949, one of the few acquaintances that I had that was freed alive in 1956, but so broken that he was placed in an institution, which no one was allowed to visit.

Mr. McNAMARA. At this period, although you had been in Hungary just a short while, you, as a Communist in a Communist nation, were feeling less secure than you had felt as a Communist in the capitalist United States? Was this not so?

Mr. SANTO. Mr. McNamara, you are joking.

Mr. McNAMARA. Not a joke, a very serious question.

Mr. SANTO. Of course, of course, but my answer is implicit in the events that I am relating.

Mr. McNAMARA. Surely.

Mr. SANTO. After all, in the United States, the worst that can happen to a Communist is that one gets arrested; the policeman is very nice, even gives you a nickel to call up your lawyer, allows you to go home, accompanied by him, for the purpose of making private arrangements such as emptying your pockets of possible documents that you don't want to be arrested with, and by the time you get to the police station, your lawyer is there, with a bail bond and, in no time at all, you are outside walking in the beautiful sunshine, or in the rain, as the case may be.

But not in Communist Hungary. There you simply disappear, and it is possible the wife, as in the case of Comrade Simon, will gleefully inform you that "Good riddance, he is gone. They took him away."

Of course not in all instances is that so. There were some wives who wouldn't dare to tell a word, even if their husband was arrested. Or in other instances, the wife and the husband both get arrested, and thus there was nobody to tell anything.

Mr. McNAMARA. Did you obtain an interview with Mr. Rakosi?

Mr. SANTO. The two secret service policemen stood by while I dressed and then took me to the party center where, without further ado, I was in the presence of Comrade Rakosi.

Mr. McNAMARA. What can you tell us about Rakosi as a person, his background?

Mr. SANTO. Rakosi was the idol of the Hungarian Communists and one of the idols of the Communists everywhere.

Mr. McNAMARA. Why?

Mr. SANTO. Coming from a smaller country, he had the personal attributes not dissimilar to that of Stalin. Rakosi's background, in short, was the following:

He completed high school in Hungary, after which through the medium of a special stipendium of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, around 1910, he was sent to London to study at the university.

In 1914, he was drafted into the army and subsequently, became a Russian prisoner of war, joined the Bolsheviks, and participated in the civil war in Siberia.

Then a young man, he returned to Hungary and was one of the assistant peoples commissars under the Communist regime of Bela Kun, which lasted but for a short period of time.

Mr. McNAMARA. That was at the end of World War I?

Mr. SANTO. Yes. Subsequently, he was Comintern agent in Italy and other countries and, in the middle of the twenties, returned to Hungary for underground Communist work.

He was arrested in 1924 and remained in jail for a period of 16 years, ultimately being exchanged by the Hungarian Government for some captured battalion flags dating back to 1849 when the czarist

Russian Army broke the democratic Hungarian revolution. This deal was arranged by Ribbentrop, Nazi Foreign Minister of Hitler Germany, and Molotov, Soviet Foreign Minister, during the honeymoon period of the German-Russian Pact.

During the Second World War, besides radio messages to the Hungarians calling for opposition to the Nazis and to the war, he also trained the cadres, surrounded by whom he returned to Hungary in 1945.

Without a shadow of doubt, Rakosi was a brilliant mind, having the general cultural attributes, Marxist training, and personal qualifications for high leadership. In person, plain, short in size, intelligent, shrewd eyes, a good knowledge of the world political situation, and speaking some seven or eight languages, he certainly made a tremendous impression on all those who came in contact with him, including, of course, American reporters and journalists, who from time to time had received interviews from him.

Mr. McNAMARA. Would he attempt to use these interviews as vehicles for the dissemination of Communist-serving propaganda, as seems to be normal in all such cases?

Mr. SANTO. Of course. That is why interviews. Otherwise it is a waste of time from the Communist view.

Mr. McNAMARA. What subjects did you discuss with Rakosi?

Mr. SANTO. It started off with the appellation to me, "My impatient young friend," and then we had a short discussion concerning my patience versus impatience.

The discussion, however, immediately turned to the United States. He displayed an amazing knowledge of the leading political figures in the United States and a superior knowledge of the leading personalities in the American trade union movement.

Thus, for instance, I recall definitely questions concerning Sidney Hillman, David Dubinsky, John L. Lewis, and a most peculiar question to which he returned a number of times from various angles—

Mr. McNAMARA. And what was that?

Mr. SANTO. An assault upon President Walter Reuther of the United Auto Workers was perpetrated, which then was considered a mystery.

As I recall, what happened was that Reuther was at home and was shot with a shotgun from the outside through the window, hitting him in the shoulder or the arm.

Above all, however, Rakosi wanted to know my opinion of the various Hungarian Communists in the United States and indicated after the name of Weinstock, Lautner, Lustig, and even Peters, who was by then in Budapest, that they were all spies placed in the Communist Party of the United States by the Government of the United States, by the FBI.

Of course, I refused to accept these characterizations—I didn't know that I was taking my life in my hand by doing so—and the more I disagreed, the more vehement he got.

Mr. McNAMARA. You believe he was completely sincere in making this accusation against these men?

Mr. SANTO. No; I believe he was playing cat and mouse with me. He was hellbent on testing me as to my perspicacity and sophistication.

Thus, for instance, he attacked with great vehemence John Lautner, whose case subsequently became well known in the United States.

During the discussion Rakosi said that Lautner was recruited into the American secret service while being stationed at Bari, in Italy, during the Second World War, serving in the OSS.

Concerning Weinstock, he made the point that it was impossible that Weinstock was not a spy, since his personal habits of heavy drinking would inevitably be utilized by the secret service forces of the United States to blackmail him into the role of a spy.

Mr. McNAMARA. He presumed that all governments would act as Communist governments would, using whatever blackmail weapon they might have on individuals to force these persons to do their will? In other words, he presumed as a Communist, thinking as one, that the U.S. Government, too, would do what he would do, what a Communist Party would do, what a Communist government would do, to the individual.

Mr. SANTO. I don't think so. I think he knew very well the decent and humane methods of the Government of the United States. He was simply playing a game with me and, at the same time, laying a foundation for his own actions, which were soon to blossom forth in one of the greatest frameups in the history of mankind.

Mr. McNAMARA. What frameup is that you are referring to?

Mr. SANTO. At the end of the discussion, instead of calling me, "My impatient young friend," he began to call me, "My naive young friend," and suddenly pulled out of his desk a number of documents, asking if I ever heard of Laszlo Rajk.

Upon my answer that I had heard here and there about Rajk, that he was Minister of Interior and assistant general secretary of the party, he issued a cynical laugh and said, "We caught him. We caught him redhanded and he confessed everything."

Pointing at the pile of papers before him, he said, "This will appear on the front page tomorrow morning in the *Szabad Nep* (official organ of the party). Let me read to you some selected chapters concerning the dirty work of the American imperialists."

Then he spent the next half hour reading to me parts of various confessions in which Rajk confessed; that he was a police spy in Hungary in 1930 and during the Spanish civil war in league with the Trotskyites of Spain, to undermine the Loyalist government; that subsequently he was an agent of the Deuxieme Bureau of France; that he became an agent of Hitler: that from the Hitlerite Gestapo chiefs and his accomplices, he received instructions to aline himself with Tito: and that during his whole period of public office and public trust and high-leading party position in Hungary beginning with 1945, he acted upon instructions of the chief American spy agent, Tito.

As a matter of fact, some portions of this confession clearly admitted that it was the aim of Rajk, under the leadership of Tito, to kill Rakosi, as well as all other top leaders of the Hungarian Communist Party—Erno Gero, Mihaly Farkas, Joseph Revai—and to overthrow the People's Democratic Hungary, with the help of foreign bayonets.

Mr. McNAMARA. And were all these charges later "proved"—I use the word "proved" in quotes—in the Rajk trial?

Mr. SANTO. The next day, just as he indicated, the charges against Rajk appeared on the front page of the official organ of the Hungarian

Workers' Party *Szabad Nep*. And then for a period of a month or more, there was nothing else discussed in Hungary that didn't pertain in some fashion or form to the coming of the trial against Rajk and his associates, as well as the broadcasting of the proceedings of the trial, the confessions, and the sentences of those involved.

Mr. McNAMARA. Was the major evidence against these men their confessions, or was there other objective external evidence that was used in any amount at all to convict them?

Mr. SANTO. Well, the trial and all that pertained thereto, following my first, last, and only discussion with Rakosi, was a tremendous event in my life. I read every word that was printed about it, including the special book issued in Hungarian and translated in English concerning the trial.

Mr. McNAMARA. Published, that is, by the Hungarian Government, the Communist press?

Mr. SANTO. Yes.

I listened to, from morning till night, the proceedings, including the confessions of the major accused. I heard the summary of the prosecution, every speech of defense counsel, I listened with especial care, particularly, to the so-called last word of the accused, a prerogative granted under most European law for people after they have been sentenced.

All of this was absolutely convincing, so that the thought that this was a gigantic frameup never even occurred to me, and I should add, by the way, that in the United States, occasionally for relaxation, I used to read detective stories and mystery stories and even listened on the radio to Ellery Queen, and if there was some mistake in the plot or weakness in the logic of the story, I was trained to detect it, but there was nothing like it in this.

There were no mistakes. This was not only self-confession, this was like the 10 fingers of 2 hands grasping into each other, and there was no loophole for any intelligent person. It was not only self-confession, it was one man confessing against the other. There were affidavits. Affidavits, for instance, of the U.S. citizen, Quaker relief representative, Mr. Noel H. Field, which bound the American secret service directly into the plot.

Mr. McNAMARA. How did they prove—for example, what evidence was produced that Rajk was an agent of French Intelligence? In addition to the confessions of the man accused, Rajk, was there any objective evidence, testimony from any other source, that he was in fact an agent of French Intelligence?

Mr. SANTO. Well, no. It was basically verbal testimony, but that verbal testimony was cross testimony, involving, by the way, not only leading Communists, but there were witnesses who were large landowners in Hungary in pre-Second-World-War Hungary.

There were witnesses who were police chiefs before the Second World War. There was the uncle of Rajk, who testified against Rajk. There was a teacher, a girl from a little village who testified as to the places and dates and events that all were completely enmeshed, one into the other.

Mr. McNAMARA. But how could anyone of these persons testify from firsthand knowledge that Rajk was an agent of French Intelligence?

Mr. SANTO. Well, concretely about the French Intelligence, one of the major witnesses—

Mr. McNAMARA. Well, I took that just as one of the many charges made against him.

Mr. SANTO. One of the major witnesses amongst the many on this score were the others who served in Spain. It should be at this point made clear that Rajk was not anybody. Rajk was commander of the Rakosi Battalion in Spain, and under him served a thousand Hungarian Communists, the great majority of whom died in Spain under the leadership of Rajk.

At this point when the International Brigade was dissolved and all its members had to flee through France, the Americans came back to America, the others who could not go back to their homelands, like the Hungarians, were placed in detention camps.

Mr. McNAMARA. In France.

Mr. SANTO. In France. It was testified that agents of the Deuxieme Bureau came into the camp to talk to Rajk, and Rajk alone. There were witnesses who testified that Rajk was the only one who had permission to leave the camp anytime he wanted to, to go into the city from this particular detention camp.

There were witnesses who testified overhearing discussions between Rajk and leaders of the Deuxieme Bureau, discussions between Rajk and Yugoslav Communist leaders who ultimately were the highest officers around Tito, such as Rankovics, and some of the others, so that I submit that if I ever had any doubt—and I never did—as to the basic honesty and truthfulness of Communist procedures as amongst themselves, the Rajk trial only strengthened that conviction.

Mr. McNAMARA. And how do you feel about the Rajk trial today?

Mr. SANTO. It is one of the major reasons why I am here, because Rajk didn't let me alone. That man came back. It came back in 1954 when, as a result of the convulsions following Stalin's death, the leaders of the Kremlin desired certain personnel changes to take place in satellite countries, including Hungary.

Thus, they forced Rakosi, who by then was not only general secretary of the Hungarian Workers' Party, but also Prime Minister of Hungary, to relinquish the post of Prime Minister and, in that post, he was followed by Inre Nagy.

Under the premiership of Nagy, all those Communists who were still alive were given a rehearing, their cases re-examined, and one after another, they began to come out from the jails and dungeons into the world, and slowly their story began to be spread around.

Mr. McNAMARA. And was Rajk one of those?

Mr. SANTO. No, Rajk was dead. But his spirit was alive. The dead man was alive and opened the eyes of some of us.

After the arrest of Rajk, a comparatively unknown Hungarian Communist was appointed Minister of Interior, by the name of Janos Kadar, and under his ministership of interior took place the trial of Rajk and his execution.

After the Moor had done his services, the Moor could go, as Shakespeare said, and Kadar was arrested. But Kadar wasn't killed, so in 1954, he was let out of jail and, as a matter of fact, reinstated in his position on the Central Committee, and there he told his story, which slowly trickled down into the skulls, even thick skulls like mine.



Kadar told a story that on the orders of Rakosi, after Rajk had been tortured months after months, he went there, saying that the party, Rakosi, and Stalin asked him, Rajk, to do this service, to confess to all these anti-revolutionary, anti-working-class crimes, that all of this was only a weapon against Tito, that actually he won't be punished, and that he and his family, the major accused and their families, after the trial will be all sent to the Crimea, in Russia, where they will live happily forever.

On this condition, Rajk agreed to collaborate, but after the confession—

Mr. McNAMARA. To make the false confession.

Mr. SANTO. Yes, but after the confession and after the trial and after the sentence, they were simply hung. Rajk was hung, Tibor Szonyi was hung, Andras Szalai was hung, General Gyorgy Palfy, Minister of the Army, was hung. Bela Korondy, police chief of Budapest, was hung, and innumerable hundreds and thousands were hung and killed and jailed.

The Spanish Fascists killed, of the thousand members of the Rakosi brigade, perhaps two-thirds.

Mr. McNAMARA. In combat.

Mr. SANTO. In combat. But nine-tenths of those who survived and came back to Hungary were killed by Rakosi, and one of these that was killed—not through confession, it was done another way—was the brother of Jim Lustig.

Mr. McNAMARA. And who is Jim Lustig?

Mr. SANTO. In New York, Jim Lustig was an old friend of mine, for some 25 years. He was active with me in the Hungarian movement and then in the trade unions, and before I returned to Hungary he asked me to look up his brother, by the name of Bela Ladanyi.

In the early part of 1950, one Sunday, I took a streetcar and traveled to an outlying village on the outskirts of Budapest, and there at the given address I found Comrade Ladanyi, who had all the appearance of some one who fought and suffered in Spain and all the appearance of someone who suffered in concentration camps before the Second World War, who fought in Africa against the Nazis and ultimately, in 1946, came back into Hungary, where he got a job as an army man in counterintelligence.

Ladanyi was about 40 years old. He just got married about a year before, they had a small child, a baby a few months old, and they were extremely happy.

Finally, after a tortured life, he had a family. By the way, he had a lame leg. He came back with a lot of machinegun bullets in his leg, from Spain.

Evidently, he also did not relish personal contact, because our visit ended by inviting him to visit us, which he didn't do for another year, when one evening, I was called up in my office that someone was waiting for me at my home, and would I please come home.

I went home, and there was Bela Ladanyi, but not in uniform anymore. This was early in the evening, and he told me the story that 5 minutes before 5 o'clock that afternoon his superior came in, told him that as of 5 o'clock, in 5 minutes, he was fired from his job.

He was in tears and asked me what could he do—could I do? Of course I told him, "There is only one thing. Go to the party and appeal. Ask the reasons why."

He came back a week later, and said he was not allowed to go into the party center. As a matter of fact, going into the party center, you had to show your party book, so he handed over his party book. They simply took his party book away, and instead of seeing anybody in the party center, he wasn't any more a member of the party.

A couple of months later, his wife came to see me. Her husband Bela Ladanyi was dead; that day he got killed. I asked her what happened.

Ladanyi couldn't get any job at all, ultimately landing a job driving horses and a cart. One day he received a particular task to get up very early in the morning, and at 4 o'clock in the morning drive from Budapest to a faraway little village near the Yugoslav border. That was not a regular highway, it was only one of these horse-carriage paths. Two huge trucks, one in front and one in the back, squashed him and his cart and his horses together; that is where he died, Bela Ladanyi, the brother of my friend Lustig, one of those who served in Spain.

I don't think that there are a dozen of them left alive, from those thousand Hungarians who went to fight in Spain.

Mr. McNAMARA. How did your interview with Rakosi end?

Mr. SANTO. With his arm around my shoulder, in the direction of the door, he expressed the opinion that since I was connected with subways and streetcars, perhaps I ought to get an assignment in the trade union field covering transportation.

As a matter of fact, it wasn't any more a question of getting a job for the sake of doing something. I went through the door and kept on repeating to myself that the world consists of spies, spies are everywhere, everybody is a spy.

I think it was a dangerous thing. Oh, there was one more thing I remember I told him. I remember at the end of the thing I said, "Now spies, spies—well, perhaps I am a spy. How can I prove that I am not a spy. Can a guy take his heart out of his breast and put it on the table and say, 'Look at it, I am not a spy?'"

And he gave me sort of a cynical laugh. It was then that he asked me about the job, what I wanted to do.

Yes, and there was the last thing, as the door opened. Suddenly—I was already at the door—he said to me, "Well, how do you like the Hungarian woman, Comrade Santo?"

I looked at him and said, "I guess they are fine."

He laughed again and said, "I hope you will be satisfied with your work." Cynical, cynical as hell.

Mr. McNAMARA. What effect did the interview with Rakosi have on you?

Mr. SANTO. Certainly the rest of the people whom I knew during the short period I was in Hungary indicated to me that one must be cautious. But one can't live in the United States, as a Communist, so to say, simply growing up alongside of Marx, Lenin, and Stalin, one is also affected by the Bill of Rights and the Constitution.

Thus, while this overwhelming cascade of spies everywhere did affect me, that was not in the direction of making me scared. Just

the opposite. It sort of crystallized my own determination that as an American Communist I must prove my mettle through my work, devotion, and loyalty. This is what I was determined to do, as soon as the chance was extended to me.

Mr. McNAMARA. What employment did you eventually receive as the result of your interview?

Mr. SANTO. After the interview, again a month or more went by without anything happening, until one day I received two letters, one from the personnel department of the Ministry of Light Industry, calling upon me to visit them for the purpose of an interview for a job, and simultaneously a letter signed by Karoly Kiss, which informed me that the Secretariat of the party has assigned me for work to the personnel department of the Ministry of Light Industry.

Mr. McNAMARA. Exactly what employment did you receive?

Mr. SANTO. Upon visiting the personnel department, Comrade Janos Hegedus, assistant chief, informed me that they had a position open in the division of the Ministry of Food and Canning. Next evening, I had to appear before the Assistant Minister of the Ministry of Light Industry, Comrade Ivan Altomare, chief of all food industries.

He was a Hungarian born of Rumanian parents, who spent, after having been captured as a prisoner of war in 1917 in Russia, some 33 years in the Soviet Union. Amongst other things, he graduated from the so-called Red Academy and subsequently held various assignments in milk, beer, and other industries of the Soviet Union.

Mr. McNAMARA. Was the Red Academy, so-called, in the Soviet Union, an institution for the training of people in the field of management?

Mr. SANTO. The Red Academy is a quickened course consisting of 2 years in which people participate who have not completed educational standards and are given expedited training in engineering, a smattering of chemistry and of administration, and so forth.

These were the people in the Soviet Union who were put into leading positions as directors and chief engineers, in preparation of discharging the industrial executives of the old regime, with whose help after the civil war Russian industry has been started to produce again.

A similar Red Academy was set up in Budapest also, where each 2 years, some hundreds of comparatively young students of working-class origin were turned out with diplomas of engineers and similar grades.

Mr. McNAMARA. Do you have enough knowledge about either of these academies, the one in Hungary or in the Soviet Union, to characterize them from the academic viewpoint? How well qualified are the people who are turned out of them after this accelerated and abbreviated course in these subjects? What standards do they have?

Mr. SANTO. In my field, I received three or four such graduates. Some of them became directors of the largest factories we had, some others were given such tasks as chief engineer in the plant, a couple of them worked in the ministry as heads of the section for technical development and for planning.

Mr. McNAMARA. Was their training in the academy adequate to equip them, really, for the jobs they were given?

Mr. SANTO. No. Actually the training, notwithstanding the fact that they worked extremely hard during these 2 years, was very superficial. As a matter of fact, this whole Red Academy was a provisional setup, because by 1951, everybody with similar qualifications was put through a regular university or academy in order to reach the grade of engineering, chemistry, and so forth.

Mr. McNAMARA. Mr. Santo, you were appointed assistant chief of the meat and canning industry. Is that correct?

Mr. SANTO. Yes.

Mr. McNAMARA. And how long did you maintain or hold that position?

Mr. SANTO. The economy of the country was constantly being reorganized—politically and administratively. Thus, for instance, I was hardly in a job for a few months when the Ministry of Light Industry was split in two—Ministry of Light Industry remained for textile, furniture, and so forth, and a new ministry was set up for Food and Collection of Produce.

Within this Ministry of Food and Collection of Produce, the division to which I was attached was split, and meat became a separate division, of which I remained assistant chief, and canning was made a separate division.

Then a year later, meat and poultry were brought together in the newly formed Ministry of Food, while the collection of produce became a separate ministry. I was assigned as chief of the meat and poultry division.

A year later, the meat and canning division was split in two, meat separately, and canning separately became an independent division. It was then, in 1953, or 1954, that I was appointed chief of the division of meat industry, in the Ministry of Food, which position I held until I fled Hungary in 1956.

I should mention the fact that the difference between assigned and appointed was that an assignment is something temporary, which the Minister has jurisdiction to take care of until the party appoints someone, and that person as division chief, of course, would be approved by the secretariat of the party.

Mr. McNAMARA. And is it true, then, that the party controls all activity, even purely management affairs? Not only political positions, cultural, and so forth, but even when it comes to purely technical positions of management, there is always the party that has the final voice, and only the party that can have it?

Mr. SANTO. Every position, every position and every job, down to the lowest, is controlled by the party. Naturally, the higher the position, the closer and the more direct party control.

Thus, for instance, I have indicated that every permanent chief of division before appointment must have approval from the party secretariat. Under the chiefs of division, there are section chiefs which the division chief can appoint, but only with the approval of his minister, and his minister won't give approval until the personnel department of the ministry approves, and the personnel department of the ministry won't do anything until that is discussed with the person in charge in the party center who is in contact with the Ministry of Food.

So that there is complete control. As for the average clerk in the ministry, he can't be brought in the ministry, or he can't be kept in

the ministry on his job without the approval of the personnel department of the division, approved by the personnel department of the ministry, approved by the representative in the party center.

As a matter of fact, during the 7 years that I have been in Hungary, every year there was a ministry "chistka". "Chistka" is a Russian word meaning cleansing, so that each year, the so-called unreliable elements which in the beginning were defined as class enemies—people who were descendants of the bourgeoisie, capitalists, factory owners, land owners—these were to be cleaned out. As the years rolled by, there was the question of the class aliens.

MR. McNAMARA. And what were class aliens?

MR. SANTO. These were the sons and daughters of small shopkeepers, petty artisans, intellectuals, doctors, dentists, lawyers. They were considered class aliens, and had to go. In principle, in the Ministry, they could stay only so long till a substitute was found who was of working class or poor peasant origin.

By "poor" peasants is meant someone whose father and mother combined didn't own more than a few acres of land, and whose peasant parents didn't own more than one horse and one cow, and a dozen chickens. More than that was already middle peasant. Owning 40 acres and a mule, by the way, fell into the category of Kulak or rich peasant.

MR. McNAMARA. And when the various ministries and divisions were purified of these class aliens, where did the class aliens go? What was the next step for them?

MR. SANTO. Well, by and large, anybody so cleansed, if he had ability, and if there was room, and if the chief of the division was so inclined, might try to place them in some factory under his jurisdiction.

MR. McNAMARA. Even if the man was a bookkeeper or a lawyer?

MR. SANTO. Well, they had to learn to be clerks and statisticians. Suppose they were good at bookkeeping or clerking of some kind and then if the three "if's" were positively answered, that is where he could get a job.

By and large, however, this was not the case. A man cleansed had only one recourse, and that was, he had to report for work assignment to the State Employment and Placement Bureau. The State Employment and Placement Bureau had only menial jobs, and in the instance of Budapest, not even menial jobs in Budapest.

There was a regulation that prohibited anyone, even a physical laborer, to take a job in Budapest, because there wasn't enough rooming and overcrowding was too great, so that these jobs would be far away in the provinces, especially dirty, dangerous, unsanitary, heavy work; mines; swamps; and work of similar nature.

MR. McNAMARA. In a general way, at the time of your arrival in 1949, what were the living conditions? Had a 5-year plan been initiated at that time?

MR. SANTO. The 5-year plan had been initiated in the spring of 1949. But its effects were hardly noticeable at the time of my arrival. As a matter of fact, Hungary then was considered one of the show windows of the Communist world, where there was an abundance of food, there was, comparatively speaking, a liberal attitude toward the arts and sciences, and people did live a social existence.

There were cafes where people could go, sit around and meet friends, there were a variety of good restaurants with good food, where the prices were not too exorbitant.

So that one could generally say that while the living standard was low, there was no unemployment, and people were by and large satisfied.

This was the heyday in People's Democratic Hungary, the period following the unification in 1948 of the Social Democratic and the Communist Parties into the new Hungarian Workers' Party, during which the sharp edge of the struggle was mainly directed against certain leaders of the Hungarian Smallholders' Party, the major political party of Hungary, which received over 50 percent of the votes in the free elections that followed the ending of the Second World War.

It is to be mentioned that in these elections, the Communist Party received around 17 percent of the votes and, as later people boasted to me, even these numbers of votes were rigged, inasmuch as most Communists were assigned trucks and so-called flying squadrons, traveling on trucks, voted in every voting place for the Communist Party.

However, with all of that, the party could only reach something like 17 percent of the votes, and the Smallholders' Party received the overwhelming majority of the votes.

By the time I reached Hungary, a new phase and a new stage of the establishment of the monopoly of the Communist Party was in swing. The preview of that were the arrests that I personally observed, as well as the Rajk trial, which laid the basis for the most tremendous upheaval, brutality, torture at will and whim, of all opponents and possible opponents of the top Communist leadership of Hungary.

MR. MCNAMARA. Did anything else of real significance happen in 1949?

MR. SANTO. The day before the end of the year on December 30. I received through special messenger a confidential, highly secret invitation to attend a meeting in the evening at the sports arena. Since there was a crowd of some 5,000 there, evidently a lot of other people received similar personal invitations which were closely checked, along with the party membership book, at the gates to the building.

MR. MCNAMARA. What was the nature and purpose of this meeting?

MR. SANTOS. We didn't have to wait very long to find out why we were called together.

Erno Gero, whose name I had learned through the Rajk trial as the second man in Hungary, made the report, in which he depicted the state of the nation, and announced the decision of the Central Committee to move Hungarian economy to a higher stage through the nationalization of all enterprise that employed over 10 people.

In April 1949, when the first 5-year plan of Hungary was announced, industry and commerce were 80 percent nationalized, and the now announced nationalization of enterprises that employed over 10 people was to add to the socialized sector of economy by bringing it up to 90 percent.

MR. MCNAMARA. This was part of the 5-year plan?

MR. SANTO. Evidently. The meeting had all the earmarks of a putsch, inasmuch as Gero denounced these small storekeepers and artisans as being the most nefarious enemies of socialism, who were

responsible for black marketeering, speculation, and whose activity endangered the value of the forint, unit of Hungarian currency.

The bloodthirsty tone, reminding one of the leader of a lynch mob, made a very peculiar impression upon me, who expected and had previously experienced at important party gatherings in the United States a sober, unemotional, businesslike tone, only to find myself before the speaker of the evening, who not only screeched and ranted, but actually did an Indian dance.

I couldn't help but think that Comrade Gero was the son of the owner of a textile factory, similarly, all other top Hungarian Communist leaders came from bourgeois families, Rakosi himself being the son of a grocer.

Evidently through the person of Gero they were declaring war to the death on that social stratum from which they sprang.

After his report, the machine went into operation and some thousands of those present were given slips with names and addresses of enterprises which were nationalized and of which the holder of that particular paper became the director.

The whole operation was motorized, and within minutes everybody was on their way, in the darkness of the evening and in the night. In Budapest immediately, and in the provinces in a few hours, the new directors assumed their prerogative as agents of the government and operators of that particular enterprise.

In the meat industry, as the subsequent days proved through the move, all private enterprise above 10 employees and under 10 employees were taken into state possession. Even where the butcher was the only one in the enterprise, being owner and worker in the same person, and where his store consisted of a room of his apartment and his warehouse was his kitchen or his basement, that, too, was expropriated.

The owner was given a piece of paper which entitled him to compensation for the expropriated property. Actually, however, I don't remember one instance of anybody getting a red cent for all that was taken from him.

As a matter of fact, within a few days, the Treasury Department went to work examining every such nationalized shop or store, and through the medium of back taxes and penalties for failure of appropriate taxes—the "right" amount of taxes—the personal individual property, clothing, and furniture of those involved was taken away from them.

Actually, the whole nationalization of small business, based on what I have experienced in the meat industry, didn't add any wealth to that possessed by the State, nor did it accrue in any way benefits as far as supplying the public with the necessities of life or additional products were concerned.

Mr. McNAMARA. What effect did it have?

Mr. SANTO. The only effect it had was of stripping those that had some small resources of their own, which would have made it possible for them in some insignificant and negative manner, to object, or not to submit immediately to the policies of the state and the government.

Even as far as their labor power was concerned, it was not utilized in their own field.

In Hungary, in contradiction to the prevailing method, for instance, in Yugoslavia, the owner of a butcher shop couldn't remain employed in his own establishment, and certainly he was not allowed to go to work in a large slaughterhouse or sausage factory.

He had to change occupation. His roots were torn out. He had to go to work wherever the state was willing to give him the chance to earn his daily bread.

As far as benefits and advantages are concerned from this last major stop in nationalization, perhaps it looked good on paper reports rendered to Moscow, that as far as industry and trade were concerned, they were a hundred percent state owned, and the leaders of the Hungarian Communists have again proved long before the other satellites did so that they were the most aggressive copiers of the Soviet Union.

MR. MCNAMARA. Mr. Santo, because of the hour, I think we will conclude the consultation for today. It will be resumed Monday morning. We will notify you of the exact time after arrangements have been made.

(Whereupon, at 4 p.m., Friday, March 1, 1963, the consultation was recessed to reconvene on Monday, March 4.)



# A COMMUNIST IN A "WORKERS' PARADISE"

## John Santo's Own Story

MONDAY, MARCH 4, 1963

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON UN-AMERICAN ACTIVITIES,  
*Washington, D.C.*

### CONSULTATION

The consultation with Mr. John Santo was continued at 11:05 a.m., in Room 226, Cannon House Office Building, Washington, D.C.

Committee member present: Representative Edwin E. Willis, of Louisiana (presiding).

Staff members present: Francis J. McNamara, director, and Donald T. Appell, investigator.

### CONSULTATION WITH JOHN SANTO—Resumed

MR. McNAMARA. Mr. Santo, when our consultation concluded Friday afternoon, you had told us that after your arrival in Hungary in 1949 you were, as of the end of that year, the assistant chief of the meat and canning industry.

You also had told us that when you first arrived in Hungary, the standard of living was relatively high as far as Eastern Europe was concerned, but that at the end of 1949, steps were taken to nationalize small shops, and this had quite an impact on the economy of the country and also on the freedom of the people.

Now, as 1950 began you were a new man, a former American Communist in a new and important post in Hungary.

Will you tell us what your attitude was then toward your position, and the general situation in which you found yourself?

MR. SANTO. I was determined to prove myself, to show through my work that the task assigned to me would be fulfilled to the satisfaction of my superiors in the Ministry of Food and the party.

I knew that the building up of socialism, according to the phrase of Lenin, was not similar to a stroll down a well-paved Fifth Avenue. With 21 years of Communist training and successful Communist work behind me, I believed I knew what the score was, and naturally believed myself perfectly capable to cope with whatever new developments required of me.

MR. McNAMARA. 1950 was a new year in your life in more ways than one. Will you tell us what your major duties were in your new position, and describe the events in Hungary which affected them and you personally.

Mr. SANTO. 1950 was a year of vital and basic developments in the economic and political life of Hungary. Event followed event, dictated by the policy of the party, to speed up the 5-year plan, and to smash and uproot any obstacle and possible opposition thereto.

The first of these events was the preparation and implementation of planning as it affected the meat and canning industries. The National Office of Planning sent the plan figures down to the various ministries, the ministries sent these plan requirements down to the divisions, and the various divisions in charge of the different plants of industry divided the planned tasks and indexes between the factories under their respective jurisdiction.

Mr. McNAMARA. How realistic were the goals that were set?

Mr. SANTO. While the preceding year, each ministry and each division was obliged to submit its own plan, considered by the experts in the field to be realistic, actually the approved plan and index figures that came back in 1950 considered only the overall requirements as set forth by the party.

Thus, for instance, in 1950, and in each of the years that followed during my stay in Hungary, essentially the plan—which was law and had to be fulfilled—increased the required production value by 10 percent and, at the same time, placed at the disposal at the special bank handling wage funds an amount of money 10 percent less than the average the worker was earning the preceding year.

Mr. McNAMARA. Could you protest against this? Did any of the unions in Hungary, or worker organizations, protest?

Mr. SANTO. The unions as a practical matter had nothing to do with the plan or with wages and working conditions. The plan fixed that, and it was the duty and obligation of the trade unions to assist in the carrying through of the plan by popularizing the concrete tasks, organizing various movements for efficiency and rationalization, such as the Stakhanovite movement of labor competition.

However, in 1950, there was an opportunity to protest which required that one carry on a battle with his own minister for his approval to request a hearing on the approved plan before the tax officials of the Office of National Planning.

The chairman of the National Planning Office at that time was Comrade Zoltan Vas, a somewhat younger version of Comrade Rakosi, having also been in jail together with Rakosi during the same 16-year period, ultimately being released, living from 1940 to 1945 in the Soviet Union, and coming back to Hungary, together with Rakosi, in 1945.

Comrade Vas, one of the rare Hungarian Communist leaders with a robust sense of humor, listened for only a few minutes to the protests of the division chiefs of the Ministry of Food; then in answer, since he was an excellent raconteur, he told us the story of Rockefeller and the beggar. It went like this: A beggar comes into the office of Mr. Rockefeller, and pleads with him for alms to be able to buy a hot dog and a cup of coffee. Rockefeller listens to him, then pushes the buzzer for his secretary. When the secretary enters, Rockefeller turns to him, saying: "Will you throw this man out immediately, because if I keep on listening to him, it will break my heart." The beggar was thrown out.

And that was the answer of Comrade Vas to our protests and to our proposals for changes that would make the plan more realistic.

Mr. McNAMARA. How many officials were at this meeting with you to make a plea to Comrade Vas?

Mr. SANTO. There were some six or eight division chiefs, such as those of the beer industry, tobacco industry, bakery industry, wine and liquor industry, household goods industry, milk industry and, of course, the meat and canning industry.

Mr. McNAMARA. Were these men of sound knowledge in their field and broad practical experience in it, so they could be counted upon to make solid recommendations?

Mr. SANTO. Some of them, like Comrade Bokor, who was then chief of the meat and canning industry, was an expert who spent all of his adult life in the meat industry, having been prior to 1945, the highest executive of the world famous Herz salami factory.

Some of the others were young party cadres, and, of course, their knowledge of their respective industries was insufficient, but these, too, had previously received the advice, the soundest practical judgment, from the experts in their particular field.

As a matter of fact, the meeting did not break up at that point, and our protests continued. Most vociferous was the division chief of the tobacco industry who, like Comrade Bokor, was a man of over 60 years of age, with a lifetime of experience behind him in the field of tobacco. To this elderly comrade, Zoltan Vas of the National Planning Office had the following piece of advice:

"Now," said Comrade Vas. "you have really a very simple job. Your industry makes cigarettes. All you have to do, each year, is to see to it that there is one less strand of tobacco in each cigarette. Then you can certainly fulfill all the requirements of the plan that we have approved for you."

And sure and amazingly enough, the cigarettes of Hungary—the most common brand being the Kossuth brand—got looser and looser as the years went by until, around 1954, one had to twist the end of the cigarette into the mouth in order to get a few puffs out of it before the tobacco simply fell out of the wrapper.

Mr. McNAMARA. Did the price of the cigarettes go down with the quantity of tobacco in them?

Mr. SANTO. It, of course, did not. The price remained the same.

Mr. McNAMARA. In view of the excessive and unrealistic demands made upon the meat industry, what steps were you forced to take in an effort to meet these?

Mr. SANTO. Cattle and pigs being the major raw materials for public supply and for export tasks, we were compelled to fulfill the plan by various methods of cheating.

The plan called for turning over to our business partners—that is, the Ministry of Home Supply and Interior Commerce and the Ministry of Foreign Trade—dressed, edible meat and various types of sausages. The plan did not include in these edible parts lungs, kidneys, tripe, pigs' feet, and other items of very inferior quality.

However, we succeeded in making an agreement with our counterparts in the Ministry of Home Supply and Interior Commerce that for plan fulfillment 2 pounds of these would be accepted where the plan called for 1 pound of beef or pork.

Furthermore, all kinds of innovations were introduced.

Thus, for instance, after the slaughter of a cattle, it must be kept in the cool rooms for a period of 24 hours, during which certain essential chemical changes take place, but at the same time, the carcass loses 2 percent of its weight through evaporation of water found in the tissues.

From American technical literature, we discovered a method to help solve our problems.

If, after slaughtering the cattle, the sides of meat were covered with wet sheets prior to being placed in the cool room, the loss through evaporation in 24 hours only amounted to 1 percent, so that we actually turned over to our counterparts, whose task was to supply the consumers with meat, 1 percent more meat by weight than we could have otherwise.

Mr. McNAMARA. What effect did this have on the quality of the meat for the consumer?

Mr. SANTO. It did not have any harmful nutritional effect upon the meat for the consumer, but by the time the meat arrived on horse-drawn carriages to the stores in question, and by the time it was sold to the consuming public, the carcasses not being covered any more by wet sheets had lost 1 percent extra weight in transit. Thus, what we gained in weight in the slaughterhouses under the jurisdiction of the Division of Meat and Canning was lost in the stores at the expense of the Ministry of Interior Commerce, or if it was sold immediately directly to the consumer, the consumer lost that extra 1 percent by the time his slice of meat got into the kitchen.

Mr. McNAMARA. Can you think of any other devices that were used in an effort to meet this problem of unreasonable demands?

Mr. SANTO. The plans of the Division of Meat and Canning also called for the turning over of fixed quantities of leather to the leather and shoe division of the Ministry of Light Industry. To improve our plan fulfillment, experiments were started which produced leather through the medium of processing the small bits of material such as the ears of the cattle.

Then an innovation was accepted that, after certain tanning treatment of the cervix of the cows, that, too, could be used, as a type of substitute for leather, out of which were made such items as wallets, covers for various passes, et cetera.

As a matter of fact, one innovator was given an extremely high bonus for the discovery that he made insofar as the skinning of chicken, turkey, duck, and geese feet were concerned, out of which a product similar to crocodile leather could be manufactured.

For the purpose of skinning the poultry feet, a shop of some 20 workers was set up, and then the product was turned over to a special shoemaking establishment under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Light Industry, from which actually shoes were made. The fact that these shoes didn't last longer than a couple of weeks, and could never withstand the effect of one single rainy evening, was not taken into consideration.

The plan was law, and the plan had to be fulfilled at all costs.

Mr. McNAMARA. Did you apply similar methods to the production of sausages, salami, and other encased meats?

Mr. SANTO. Indeed we did. As is known, hot dogs consist of raw meat, to which during the processing, water is added. The percentage

of water added during the processing was increased from year to year, because only that way could we fulfill the plan by weight and by value.

Perhaps the most successful of these methods were developed as far as the production of salami is concerned. Hungarian salami is a world-famous product, consisting basically of 50 percent pork, and 50 percent pork fat, which, after being cured, kept at low level of temperature for a long period of time, loses a great deal of its natural water content. It is filled in horse casing, and then smoked slowly with the use of hickory wood chips.

A couple of fellows came forward with an innovation, which called for the use of beef instead of pork. Since beef in Hungary consisted 90 percent of overage cows, the raw material value as compared with pork was half, so that the production cost of salami, consisting of inferior grade beef plus pork fat, amounted to a tremendous saving and profit for the factories involved.

By the time the Hungarian revolution of 1956 rolled around, inside of Hungary there was practically no real salami sold, only the above-described beef plus pork fat combination.

Mr. McNAMARA. Were any of these meat products exported?

Mr. SANTO. No; the inferior salami and sausage for the most part, were not, because they could not be. The foreign business partners of the Hungarian state would not accept them.

Mr. McNAMARA. These steps were taken during the early years of the first 5-year plan. Now, as you reached these goals, were your goals in future years set at higher rates?

Mr. SANTO. Yes.

Mr. McNAMARA. And how did you meet those, as they went progressively higher and became more unrealistic? Wasn't there a limit to the devices you could cook up?

Mr. SANTO. The meat industry during the 7 years that I was in Hungary always fulfilled its plans. It fulfilled both its export plans and its obligations toward home consumption. Of course, this became increasingly more difficult.

Thus, for instance, around the end of the first 5-year plan, more and more home consumption was fulfilled by horsemeat. True, we always had a certain portion of the plan consisting of horsemeat, but as the collectivization of agriculture progressed, and especially in years when there was a drought, such as 1951, the peasants turned over their horses for slaughter. With the meat thus produced, we fulfilled the plan.

Another method was that often we received skinny, deformed but live piglets, which the peasants or the collective farms considered unsuitable. Alongside the major slaughterhouses, we set up small and subsequently larger pig sties, where through the use of byproducts of the industry, we raised and fattened them, and that, too, by the time these pigs were slaughtered, added to the fulfillment of the plan.

Mr. McNAMARA. Was the horsemeat sold by the industry labeled "horsemeat"?

Mr. SANTO. Yes. The regulation was that horsemeat could only be sold in special stores, and all horsemeat products had to be so labeled. But if in the other butcher shops there was no beef or pork to be had, the working population, in order to have some sort of meat,

was increasingly compelled to purchase their Sunday dinner at the horsemeat butcher shop.

Sausage was also labeled as horsemeat product and around 1955, we eventually also made for home consumption, salami based on horsemeat plus pork fat.

Mr. McNAMARA. You mentioned the fact that the horsemeat came largely from the peasants who, in years of drought, and so forth, turned it over to the government. Did they do this freely, or was there compulsion, and were they compensated adequately for their horses?

Mr. SANTO. In this particular instance, there was no compulsion used because none was needed.

I recall one particular year when even the newspapers published stories that the peasants, because they had absolutely no fodder and couldn't see the slow starvation of their animals, simply took their horses over to the slaughterhouse and left them there, gratis. This was confirmed in the reports we received from the slaughterhouses.

The price paid to the peasants mostly at other times was a fraction of its value and its production cost.

However, each peasant was compelled to deliver to the state the quantities, items, and sorts of livestock, including specified quantities of pork, beef, and poultry, at the so-called plan price, which was tantamount to a fraction of its cost.

These deliveries of produce and meat-in-kind were, for all practical purposes, a tax-in-kind levied on the peasantry of Hungary.

Mr. McNAMARA. You stated a moment ago that each year, despite the fantastic goals set, your export plans were met. What were the export plans?

Mr. SANTO. The export plans were quantities and sorts prescribed as plan task of the Division of Meat to be turned over to the Ministry of Foreign Trade. These were mostly dressed halves of pigs and beef, the English-type bacon, canned ham, and canned pork loin.

Mr. McNAMARA. What was Hungary's major export market for these products?

Mr. SANTO. The half carcasses of dressed beef and pigs, were mostly exported to the Soviet Union, East Germany, Austria, Italy, and other neighboring countries.

Bacon was exported to England, salami was sold all over the world, wherever the business partners succeeded in securing import licenses.

The Ministry of Foreign Trade has tried unsuccessfully through the years to export salami to the United States. They failed primarily because of the veterinary approval requirements which they could not meet.

Mr. McNAMARA. Now, did the government insist that the export norms be met every year, even though there was a shortage and inadequate meat supply for domestic consumption?

Mr. SANTO. The highest priority, the absolute must, of plan fulfillment was that of placing at the disposal of the Ministry of Foreign Commerce the quantity and the quality designated in the plan and at such time intervals as provided for in the approved plan.

Mr. McNAMARA. Did Hungary's export trade decline at all as the result of poorer quality meats being produced?

Mr. SANTO. No. The export plan never declined, and furthermore, the quality was rarely inferior. If there was anything that was first quality, that was the products designed for export.

This didn't mean, however, that inferior goods were not also exported. From time to time, the National Office for Planning and the Ministry of Foreign Commerce came to the Ministry of Food depicting the desperate situation, requesting plan overfulfillment.

In these instances, they were ready to take, and did take, anything at all that they could dispose of at whatever prices they could get for them on the world market.

Mr. McNAMARA. Mr. Santo, the shortcuts, deceptions, and tricks utilized in your industry to meet your norms must have affected two other government agencies, one, the ministry which had overall responsibility for your finished products, and also the ministry charged with supplying you with your livestock.

Now, in view of the fact that the devices used by you to meet your norms had an effect on their norms as well, what steps did they take to solve their problems?

Mr. SANTO. Our supplier, the ministry which procured produce and livestock, also had their respective solutions.

These ranged from placing rock salt before the cattle, for instance, the day prior to turning the cattle over to the slaughterhouses—

Mr. McNAMARA. What effect did this have?

Mr. SANTO. The cattle, after licking the salt, would drink a great deal of water, which then they tried to make us accept as the actual weight of the livestock.

However, by and large, this trick could only be successfully used for a short while, and then only at outlying slaughterhouses. We overcame this trick in the Division of Meat by simply requiring livestock to remain in pens for 24 hours prior to being weighed, during which time, of course, it lost the extra weight.

Basically, our partner in the supply of livestock simply turned to the peasants and used force and violence in order to fulfill their plans.

In most villages, the agent of the ministry which procured the produce and livestock worked very closely with the party and with the secret police. They committed lawlessness and violations of the so-called Socialist legality on an unheard-of scale, cleaning out the barns by sweeping the floor for the last grains of corn so that not even seeds remained for next year's planting.

Similarly, wherever they found livestock, they took it one way or another.

Mr. McNAMARA. Will you tell us how this affected the Ministry of Home Supply and Interior Commerce, and what it did?

Mr. SANTO. The Ministry of Interior also had their tricks to assure plan fulfillment. The most common one was to sell an inferior cut of meat as a superior kind, which necessitated the payment of a higher price. Then it was allowed to add 15 percent bone to the purchase of every pound of beef, for instance. All they had to do and did was add 16, 18, or 20 percent bone to the cut of meat. As a matter of fact, this method of cheating developed into quite a lucrative racket.

The Division Chief of the Ministry of Interior Supply, Comrade Szoke, was caught in 1951 or 1952, charged with and convicted of thievery, accomplished in the above-described manner, amounting to

many millions of forints, and having a butcher agent in the conspiracy throughout Budapest in every major butcher shop.

Comrade Szoke was tried and hung for this crime. But, of course, in a more modest form, this and similar practices continued.

Mr. McNAMARA. Mr. Santo, certain natural phenomena over which the government and the people had absolutely no control naturally affected production—drought, for example. Did the 5-year plans make any allowances for drought or other calamities which would make it virtually impossible to meet requirements?

Mr. SANTO. Such factors as drought, flood, too much rain, not enough rain, wind, erosion of the soil, et cetera, were never taken into consideration in the plans.

The same way as in the meat industry, 10 percent higher plan figures were given yearly, not only for the meat industry, but also for agricultural production.

It was expected that the weather, the sun, the moon, the wind, would behave like good comrades and assist in plan fulfillment.

Naturally, this resulted in constant crises in the various sectors of the economy which could be covered only by tricks, by falsification, and helped along through the secrecy of the plan and its fulfillment. Everything pertaining to the plan was not only law but secret. Every document pertaining to the approved plan and its fulfillment was considered highly secret and kept under lock and key at all times, with the exception of the one clerk who was responsible for keeping the records and then only he handled the particular document for as long as he worked on that item.

Mr. McNAMARA. Outside of the purely economic and financial results, what effect did this unrealistic establishment of norms and the cheating and other devices used to meet them have on the people?

Mr. SANTO. It undermined public morality, because the people as workers and consumers were exploited and cheated at every turn. After a while, the traditionally extremely honest and honorable Hungarians had to succumb to what can't be designated any other way but through the use of the word "Balkanization" of private morality and behavior.

Mr. McNAMARA. Would you clarify that, the term "Balkanization" as applied to morality?

Mr. SANTO. As the 5-year plan developed, cheating and thieving became everyday occurrences in practically all branches of life. For instance, electric bulbs from the toilets had to be covered with a wire guard which was locked into its place, because one bulb equaled 3 hours average worker's wage.

Mr. McNAMARA. In view of the hour, I think we might adjourn the consultation for lunch, and we will return at 1:30, if possible.

(Whereupon, at 12:40 p.m., Monday, March 4, the consultation adjourned, to reconvene at 1:30 p.m., this same day.)

#### AFTERNOON SESSION—MONDAY, MARCH 4, 1963

#### CONSULTATION WITH JOHN SANTO—Resumed

Mr. McNAMARA. Mr. Santo, a while ago you described your meeting which was an effort to obtain some sensible revisions in the 5-year



plan. You, as one of the manager class, shall we say, in Hungarian industry were completely ineffective.

Now, what was your reaction? As a man who had spent so many years of your life in the trade union movement in this country, what was your reaction to the complete impotence of the trade unions in Hungary, in obtaining any redress from the harsh conditions that were imposed on their members as a result of the unrealistic norms established in the 5-year plan, and how, too, did you react when you saw the manner in which they served as mere tools of the government rather than as independent agencies established by workers to protect their own interests?

Mr. SANTO. I recall that I turned to the trade union of the foodworkers in the beginning of 1950 to assist me, not so much in getting the proposed plan for the year reduced, but its effect on the workers involved.

There were about 12,000 workers employed in the meat and related industries, which thus composed an important portion of the membership of the Hungarian Food Workers' Union.

The leaders of the foodworkers' union simply laughed at me, and said that I should have no worry at all concerning the workers, because they will take the lead in seeing to it that the prescribed wage rate was sufficient.

Actually, what happened was that they initiated the movement for labor competition.

Mr. McNAMARA. And what was that?

Mr. SANTO. Workers received a very low hourly rate of pay, and in each industry, as far as the workers actually engaged in production or maintenance were concerned, certain norms were fixed.

The campaign initiated by the trade union had as its slogan "Overfulfill your norm—earn more money for your family."

Sure enough, the workers accepted the slogan, and the competition in the various aspects of processing of meat began to show 50 percent, 100 percent, 200 percent overfulfilling of the norm, and, of course, also an increase in the take-home pay.

At this point, the trade union threw the ball back to the party. Articles appeared in the official organ of the Hungarian Workers' (Communist) Party saying that the norms were too low, and that the best proof of that was found in the fact that it could be and was overfulfilled by 50, 100, and 200 percent, and even more.

The party then threw the ball back to the National Planning Office, which in turn simply sent down to the various ministries and divisions new plan figures as far as the norms were concerned.

Mr. McNAMARA. And these were raised considerably?

Mr. SANTO. And what was 200 became the 100 percent of the norm.

Mr. McNAMARA. This was "Stakhanovism" on a tremendous scale.

Mr. SANTO. That was Stakhanovism in 1950, and it was repeated in some form or another every year thereafter until the speedup in the various industries, especially the one for which I was responsible—the meat industry—reached fantastic proportions.

Perhaps there are some who remember the days of the sweatshop in America, and there will be some who remember Upton Sinclair's book entitled *The Jungle*, dealing with life and work in the stockyards of Chicago around the turn of the century. Well, those condi-

tions were mere child's play, compared to Communist Hungary where, the tempo of work was incredible, accompanied, of course, by very serious and increasing accidents on the job.

In the slaughterhouses, where working conditions were naturally extremely dangerous due to the steam, the slippery floors, the blood-soaked boots, the workers were compelled in order to make a living to work with their long knives of some 15 to 18 inches in blitz style. Accidents were daily occurrences.

Some workmen suffered injuries cutting off fingers; the blade would slip and be shoved into their own bowels, into their thighs, into their legs. Yet, instead of slowing down the tempo, the trade union started a campaign for the curtailment of accidents on the job, blaming the workers if an accident took place.

The year-in, year-out further tightening of the basic work norms are graphically illustrated, for instance, by some statistics which appear in the very doctored-up official Hungarian statistical yearbook, a copy of which is presently available at the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

According to this yearbook, the average wage in 1954 amounted to 889 forints.

Mr. McNAMARA. How much is that in American dollars, roughly?

Mr. SANTO. This is, at the official rate of exchange, about \$80 a month. However, the actual purchasing value, as compared with the dollar, would be around \$35 to \$40 a month.

According to this same book of Hungarian official statistics, in 1 year where these figures are available—that is, in 1954—the meat industry produced 3,994 million forints worth of products; and in 1955—that is, in a period of 1 year—the value of production at plan prices—which remained always unchanged—the sum increased to 5,444 million forints, roughly speaking, 35 percent.

True, the average wage by 1955 also increased, amounting per person per month to 942 forints; that is to say, it was 5 percent more than in 1954. However, this actually meant that wages remained stationary since an additional working force was required to cope with 35 percent increase in production.

Mr. McNAMARA. You mentioned that as the work norm increased—with the support and demand of the unions—the accident rate went up tremendously in your meat industry, and in others, I presume. Would you care to say something generally about the relative extent and quality of protective devices—safety devices—in America and Hungarian Communist factories? Did they have, in any of the factories in Hungary, anything comparable to the safety regulations and mechanical devices that exist in the United States?

Mr. SANTO. I mentioned previously that at the turn of the century, in American meat industry, conditions were extremely bad and that Upton Sinclair actually wrote a novel entitled *The Jungle* which, by the way, has been translated and is being circulated in all Communist countries as reflecting the situation existing today in the United States. As a matter of fact, this is far from the truth, because in 1949, prior to my leaving the United States, I visited the Chicago stockyards as a tourist, and had the opportunity to go through the slaughterhouses.

In the Chicago slaughterhouses, there was built a special glass-enclosed corridor or balcony, so that visitors who cared to check the production, manufacture, and processing of meat could do so.

But entry into the slaughterhouses, meatpacking plants, sausage factories, and generally in all industrial plants was strictly forbidden in Hungary, and anyone had to have a pass issued to him by the minister having jurisdiction over that factory.

This was done not only for security reasons but also because the hygiene, the sanitation and the protection of workers under the conditions described above did not permit public or private inspection.

Of course, there were attempts made in the division of meat industry for the protection of the workers.

Thus, for instance, a meshed-wire protector, covering the breast and especially the belly part and the groin of the workers was issued.

However, the workers had to fulfill their norms, and these devices were in their way, so they were worn and used only while someone—some higher-up—was present, checking and controlling, and as soon as he left the premises, this protective device was discarded.

Mr. McNAMARA. Mr. Santo, you spoke of the labor competition and the establishment of ever-higher norms. You mentioned the fact that the trade unions called upon the workers supporting the government to "overfulfill your norm," and the trade unions made this plea or demand on the basis that they should do it for the benefit and welfare of the family.

I was impressed by this, the fact that they did not call on them to overfulfill their norm as a patriotic duty, to overfulfill for the sake of the government.

Why, in your opinion, did they give them a purely personal motivation for this, rather than a patriotic one?

Mr. SANTO. Of course, there was another slogan, too, perhaps much more important than the one indicated previously. The famous slogan of Comrade Erno Gero, supreme economic dictator of the country, and this was: "The country belongs to you—you are building it for yourself." However, this slogan was worn threadbare from 1945 onward, and it was necessary for the trade union to find another handle for their tool, and that is why the appeal was made to speed up work, which will benefit the family through higher take-home pay.

Mr. McNAMARA. And this was actually a capitalist appeal, when you get down to it—more money, better standard of living, general economic welfare of the family.

Would you agree with this or not?

Mr. SANTO. Well, it gave the trade union a chance, for a short period of time, to give the workers a feeling that at last the trade union was doing something for them, directing their efforts toward higher pay.

Mr. McNAMARA. What did the trade unions actually do for the workers?

Mr. SANTO. The trade unions of Hungary were, for all practical purposes, a gigantic company union, playing the same role which many company unions did long ago in some industries and localities in the United States with the help of the yellow-dog contract. It made it impossible for the workers to organize into a union of their own choosing for the purpose of protecting and promoting their interest, wages, hours, and working conditions.

The trade unions in Hungary were an immense monopolistic machinery, because the workers had to join if they knew what was good for them. For their membership and their dues payment—which amounted to about 1½ percent of their wages—the outstanding "Stakhanovites" and champions might be sent to a vacation resort as a reward.

One-third of the vacation resorts of Hungary were controlled by the party and the various ministries. Two-thirds of the vacation resorts—hotels, buildings at lakeshores, and in the mountains, et cetera—nominally belonged to and were administered by the trade unions.

If the rooms were fully used during the vacation season, about 5 percent of the workers had a chance to utilize them, if their work was deserving enough in production.

Furthermore, the trade unions had a parallel organization as far as education of leading cadres was concerned, similar to the ones conducted by the Hungarian Workers' Party. Their curriculums consisted of the same subjects, Marxism, Leninism, and the works of Stalin, with special attention being paid to such additional subjects as the various Russian movements for efficiency, rationalization, speedup, care and saving as far as raw materials were concerned, et cetera.

A further task of the trade unions was to receive foreign visitors.

Thus I recall meeting a delegation of slaughterhouse workers coming from Argentina, who were, of course, shown only that which convinced them as to the superiority of the Communist system of government, where everything belonged to the state and the people.

Mr. McNAMARA. What role did the trade unions actually play on the question of wages for workers?

Mr. SANTO. The trade unions had a national collective agreement with the various ministries, but these had nothing to do with wages, because these were fixed each year in the respective 5-year plan covering that period.

Mr. McNAMARA. Didn't the trade unions even make a pro forma attempt to negotiate wages with the government representatives, to make it appear to the workers that they were trying to do something for them, and that they had some hand in this field?

Mr. SANTO. They did not. The theory of it was that since everything belonged to the people, and most particularly to the working class, the working class couldn't negotiate with itself. Everything was theirs, and, therefore, there was no reason to negotiate.

Putting it in trade union terms for the workers, the argument ran that you don't negotiate with your right-hand pocket to put the money that is in there into the left pocket. Whether it is in the right-hand pocket or the left-hand pocket, the money, the goods, the factories, the country are yours.

Mr. McNAMARA. Did the unions take the same attitude on issues such as fringe benefits?

Mr. SANTO. The fringe benefits such as overtime pay, vacation with pay of 2 weeks per year, were fixed by law.

As far as overtime is concerned—which the workers were glad to get, because it increased their pay—this was something that the trade unions bitterly opposed. Often an industrial division such as the

Division of Meat would receive a telephone call from the general secretary of the trade union involved, protesting against the amount of overtime that was allowed the previous month, as indicated by the statistics issued for that period.

Mr. McNAMARA. Did the Hungarian Government have the problem of what we call featherbedding; and what role, if any, did the unions play in issues involved in this problem?

Mr. SANTO. There was no featherbedding of any kind. As a matter of fact, the idea that people should get paid for work not done or for unnecessary work would be considered an insane idea. People got paid as long as they worked, as long as this work was provided for in the plan, and as long as the wage fund for the work was available at the bank for wages and salaries.

If someone was not necessary in the production process, he was simply laid off.

Mr. McNAMARA. Did the workers have unemployment insurance?

Mr. SANTO. There was no unemployment insurance, neither in law nor in fact.

If somebody lost his job, he was compelled to report to the State Employment and Placement Bureau, and was assigned to a job. That job didn't have to be in his industry, nor in the community where he lived with his family. If he wanted to work and earn a living, he had to go to the place, to the occupation, at the rate of pay existing there, and accept that job.

Mr. McNAMARA. Was there anything like home relief for the workers in Hungary, or charity? Did they have union welfare funds?

Mr. SANTO. There were no union welfare funds. There was no home relief in the budget of the various communities, and charity either of a public or religious character did not exist. The churches themselves were stripped of all property and had no resources for any kind of charitable activity.

Needless to say, their constantly shrinking church membership could hardly contribute to any charitable fund, since they, themselves, lived from their hard-earned pay from one week to another, with absolutely no resources or reserves.

Mr. McNAMARA. In Hungary, was there anything done in the way of appeals to the workers to make special contributions to help the government, bond drives, and things like that.

Mr. SANTO. Beginning 1949, the so-called State Loan Drive was instituted. While in 1949 it was pretty much a voluntary affair, it became by 1950 and subsequent years for all practical purposes a compulsory tax. Each factory was given a quota which amounted to about 10 to 12 percent of the monthly wage fund: if someone refused to sign, the director of the factory called him in. If that didn't suffice, he was called into the office of the secretary of the Communist Party of that particular factory, and if that wasn't sufficient, someone from the secret service visited him, either on the job or at home.

In this process, the question was placed: "Do you want to lose your job? Do you want to lose your party and trade-union membership? Do you want to go to jail?"

White-collar workers were expected to sign up for 12 percent and higher paid executives 15 percent. I myself signed for 15 percent of my wages to be deducted for the plan loan drive.

Mr. McNAMARA. Did you set this 15 percent deduction yourself, or did someone set that for you?

Mr. SANTO. We were advised that division chiefs were expected to sign for 15 percent.

Mr. McNAMARA. Now, what role did the unions play in this matter? Did they help make this a compulsory, enforced supertax, shall we say, on the workers, or did they play no role in it one way or another?

Mr. SANTO. Each factory had a triumvirate, consisting of the director, the party secretary, and the trade-union secretary. In all such matters as the fulfillment of the plan or the carrying through of the plan loan drive, they worked very closely together.

Mr. McNAMARA. What was the responsibility of the worker toward the items he produced?

Mr. SANTO. The worker was financially responsible for the product that he produced.

During the 1951-53 period, he could be and was actually fined if the quality of the merchandise produced by himself didn't meet the requirements.

Thus, for instance, if in the speeded-up skinning of a cattle, the knife slipped and it caused a hole in the hide, he got no pay for the skinning of that particular skin, and, further, had to make a financial restitution for the damage caused by him.

Mr. McNAMARA. What about the factory managers and their responsibility for the products they were turning out?

Mr. SANTO. The factory manager was responsible for every failure, every deficiency, and every mistake committed in his plant. If a boiler blew up, he was responsible. For instance, if for some reason in the meat industry too much livestock was dumped at one given time into the slaughterhouse, which mostly occurred during the month of November when it was still warm but the peasant didn't have enough fodder and wanted to discharge his obligations to the state, it happened often that the livestock would be slaughtered and left to cool outside in the open since the coolrooms were full. If, during the night it was warm and the meat began to spoil, the factory director was responsible.

One concrete instance happened at the slaughterhouse in the city of Gyula, where a few hundred pounds of meat thus got spoiled. The director involved received a 6 months' jail term for it. The technical solution was not available, yet he was responsible, and he was penalized.

Mr. McNAMARA. Mr. Santo, your testimony indicates the trade unions in Hungary had no real life or meaning from the viewpoint of the traditional Western trade unionist. They performed none of the functions for the workers that trade unions in this and other free nations do. Why, then, did they exist? Is it purely as a propaganda instrument, so that the Communist government can say: "See, here we have unions for the workers, too," or is it a control organization, an additional arm of government, or a mixture of the two?

Mr. SANTO. The answer to that question is manifold. The trade unions exist in Communist countries because of the natural desire of industrial workers to have an organization for the protection of their craft and industry. To satisfy this natural inclination and aspiration and tradition of the workers, trade unions are allowed to exist.

Furthermore, these trade unions play not only a negative role insofar as making impossible the organization and carrying through of strikes, or movements for shorter hours, better wages, improved working conditions, but they are also the second line of propaganda organization, following in the footsteps of the Communist Party itself.

As Lenin said of trade unions under communism: "Trade unions are our best schools of communism," and certainly one of their major functions was the turning out of propagandists and functionaries for the various aspects of Communist life.

Mr. McNAMARA. Because of the fact that the workers in Hungary actually had no union or any other organization truly devoted to their interests, what was their status? What would you say about the status of the workers in Communist Hungary compared with those in this country or other free nations?

Mr. SANTO. The workers of Hungary had to learn, like everybody living under the so-called dictatorship of the proletariat, that it was a terrible fraud perpetrated on them since, in fact, it was a dictatorship against the proletariat.

The Communist government does away with the capitalists and the landowners in the first stage after coming to power. Numerically speaking, of course, these are usually a small minority. The middle class, those who are affluent, are shoved down with the proletariat. But the real sharp edge of the so-called dictatorship of the proletariat is directed against the proletariat itself, because they are the overwhelming majority, a majority whose numbers increase from day to day by virtue of the wiping out of the small business and by the industrialization of the country.

The working class under the so-called dictatorship of the proletariat must learn four things in the negative sense: To see nothing, to hear nothing, to say nothing, and above all, not to think. A thinking worker is cursed by the worst of possible afflictions, and that is why most workers in Hungary, notwithstanding the fact that the price of liquor was skyhigh—a bottle of the cheapest rum being the equivalent of 3 days' pay—nevertheless had to have their shot of rum before going to work, and their quota of wine or rum upon quitting work.

As to the positive features that the worker had to acquire in order to survive, that was work—merciless, never-ending, unsanitary, sweated, speeded-up—on the job on which he was employed. That was the life and the tragedy of the Hungarian worker during the years that I lived there.

Of course life, the nature of man, the instinct of the working man, protested against fate, and since there was no other channel, more and more people engaged in petty thievery.

I recall one working man, the champion pig skinner of the great Budapest slaughterhouse, who after having won first place in the competition of his craft, was decorated with the highest honor, the Medal of Socialist Hero of Labor. A few weeks after the decoration, he was arrested. It was established that in the false bottom of his lunch pail, he took home every day a few slices of fat back. Those few slices of fat back, amounting to perhaps a quarter of a pound, amounted to more than 1 hour's pay.

Every day arrests took place for thieving but thieving continued.

In the lard-rendering plant, one worker who complained that he couldn't use the work boots issued to him, they were hurting his feet, asked and received permission to wear his private shoes. It was discovered upon his arrest that prior to quitting, he would pour liquid lard into his shoes, go home, boil his shoes, and use the lard so obtained to cover the needs of his family. The value of that lard amounted to 2 hours' pay.

In a factory under the jurisdiction of the Meat Division, casings and bowels were processed. Women, just like men, were checked every day at quitting time through manual searching, because some of them could hide a few yards of sheep's casing on their person. One yard of sheep's casing was worth on the black market 1½ hours' pay.

Slowly, thieving reached the higher ranks. Factory directors would exchange their products. So did many division chiefs. In those industries which dealt with suitable consumer items, like the Ministry of Food, the Minister stole, himself, by requiring twice a week plates of samples, each time from a different factory, allegedly for the purpose of controlling quality. Actually, the 6 to 8 pounds of cold cuts, ham, and salami were sent to his home through his private chauffeur, to be used by his family and servants.

Mr. McNAMARA. Were all these people party members?

Mr. SANTO. Notwithstanding the various cleansing processes of the party, there were around a million members of the Hungarian Workers' Party, which, by and large, meant that physically fit males and physically fit females were members of the party.

Mr. McNAMARA. And these would be the people who were selected to fill these key posts?

Mr. SANTO. Key posts were filled only by party members, with the exception of a few select expert fields, where they didn't have available cadres.

Mr. McNAMARA. Would you describe the role of the Communist Party at the factory level? Did it dominate, for example, not only the trade unions, such as they were, but also the managers and the management of the factory?

Mr. SANTO. The party secretary, of course, was in touch, had to report and did report on the manager to the district organization of the party in which the factory was located, which then transmitted that report toward the higher party organization.

The party secretary also had direct contact with the secret police. The triumvirate of the factory, consisting of the manager, party secretary, and trade union secretary, met once or twice a week, and if necessary every day for the discussion of problems.

Mr. McNAMARA. Was the party secretary himself in the factory, or did he just have a representative there at all times?

Mr. SANTO. He was usually a worker employed in that factory who, however, had stopped taking part in productive work and devoted his full time to so-called party activity, which meant conducting of campaigns, circulating literature, getting signatures for various drives, controlling and directing various speedup campaigns, and being in charge of the educational and propaganda features of party work.

The party members on all levels had to participate in seminars for the acquiring of Communist theoretical knowledge.



In offices of factories, as well as in the ministry itself, if the work-day started at 8 o'clock, the party members had to be there at 7, and 1 hour was spent for the purpose of reading aloud of editorial that appeared on the front page that day of the *Szabad Nep*, official organ of the Communist Party.

After such reading aloud, there would be a discussion, all for the purpose of improving the Communist understanding of the party membership.

Mr. McNAMARA. Mr. Santo, you have described the status of the worker, his conditions in Hungary. Could you give us some practical day-to-day comparisons?

Would you give us figures on the actual wages paid the workers in Hungary, and what they can buy with those wages? Their real value?

Mr. SANTO. Of course, the significance of wages can only be judged by a comparison of what one can buy with them.

The prices of commodities and foodstuffs in 1949 had been comparatively favorable, and were similar to that paid in neighboring capitalist countries.

Alongside of the intensification and speeding up of work for the same amount of money, in a systematic manner, the prices have increased.

In 1949, rationing and tickets for basic supplies still existed, which assured the working people a certain quantity of sugar, flour, lard, meat, and soap at controlled prices.

At the end of 1951, however, the party, with great fanfare, jubilation and hosanna, announced the end of rationing, signifying this as a tremendous bonanza, because everybody could buy of all products as much as he wanted to.

Mr. McNAMARA. What practical effect did that have?

Mr. SANTO. Very cleverly, it was projected that perhaps the prices would rise somewhat as a result of the end of rationing, and for that reason, it was coupled with a 10- to 15-percent increase in wages and salaries.

At the same time the party announced the new prices of all major commodities. The very items which were previously rationed were increased by at least 50 percent, and special foodstuffs, such as meat and lard, were increased 80 percent.

Actually, the end of rationing and the new prices amounted to a 25-percent decrease in the standard of living, even though rents, electricity, gas, and carfare remained stationary.

Those items which were supplied and could best be purchased only on the free market, such as vegetables, fruits, and other agricultural products, increased in price from 200 to 300 percent.

As to the purchasing power of the wage earned by the workers, a few items of illustration would show the situation around 1953.

To purchase three eggs, the worker had to spend an hour's pay, calculated at a high fulfillment of his norm.

A shirt of the most ordinary cotton variety equaled 1 week's pay.

To purchase a pair of shoes, the workingman had to spend 2 weeks of his pay.

Mr. McNAMARA. Would this include the shoes made out of the skin from chicken feet, poultry feet, that you described before?

Mr. SANTO. No: they were more expensive. They were sold as crocodile leather at a price equaling 3 weeks' pay.

Out of these chicken feet shoes were made high-fashion, handmade items.

A suit of clothing consisting of 50-percent cotton and 50-percent poor grade wool, 6 weeks' pay. A pound of pork, 3 hours' pay. Two hours' pay, a pound of boiling beef. A pound of soup meat of beef, 5 hours' pay. A pound of lard, 3 hours' pay. A pound of butter, 6 hours' pay. A pound of bread, 30 minutes of work. A pair of nylon stockings, 10 days' pay, if it bore an American label, and German perlon, p-e-r-l-o-n, stockings, 6 hours' pay. A pound of coffee, 1 week's pay.

Mr. McNAMARA. Mr. Santo, did the war in Korea have any particular effect in Hungary that you recall?

Mr. SANTO. Parallel with the war in Korea, alongside of the cutting down of the living standards, as indicated previously, terror against leading individuals, and increasingly more, involving masses of people, accelerated. Thus, for instance, around the middle of 1950, the two leading Social Democrats, Szakasits, President of the People's Republic of Hungary, and Marosan, Minister for Light Industry, who were primarily responsible for making possible the merger of the Social Democratic Party of Hungary with the Communist Party of Hungary in 1948, in the merged Hungarian Workers' Party, both were removed and arrested as agents of the Western Powers and saboteurs.

At the same time, some 2,000 lower functionaries of the Social Democratic Party were also arrested on the charge of sabotage.

Mr. McNAMARA. Was this merely chronological coincidence, or was there some relationship between this and the Korean war?

Mr. SANTO. It is my belief that these measures were coordinated by the top leadership of the Hungarian party, whose activity, of course, was approved by the Stalin leadership of the Kremlin.

Mr. McNAMARA. What role, if any, did the Government of Hungary play in the Korean war, to your knowledge?

Mr. SANTO. The Korean war was pictured in the press as an aggression on the part of American imperialism, and the on-the-spot reports from Korea attested to the so-called germ warfare carried on by the American troops against the helpless North Koreans.

It might be of interest to mention the fact that the Communist journalist who then was in Korea and sent back these reports concerning the germ warfare, by the name of Tibor Meray, upon coming back to Hungary and discovering the frameup nature of the Rajk trial, courageously took his place in the vanguard of those whose activity ultimately resulted in the 1956 revolution. Meray fled Hungary and is presently in exile; he is living in France.

Mr. McNAMARA. Didn't he in one of his books expose the falsity of his own claims?

Mr. SANTO. He did. Tibor Meray, Kossuth Prize winner for the articles originating from Korea, and Tamas Aczel, Stalin Prize and Kossuth Prize author, together wrote the best books exposing the regime of terror of which they were "court" propagandists.

At the time I met him in December 1956, in Vienna, Meray was practically out of his mind, condemning his own foulness, having

written those articles from Korea, and pledging to do his best on the literary field to try to make amends.

MR. McNAMARA. Were concentration camps located in Hungary?

MR. SANTO. As to the size and location of these camps, I, like the population at large, had no direct knowledge. In 1956, I learned there were 180,000 Hungarians in concentration camps—that is to say, about 10 percent of the working population—and that there were additional tens of thousands that were sentenced, but couldn't start serving their term, had to go home and wait until called to start serving their jail sentence.

MR. McNAMARA. This was because there wasn't enough room for them? Were there so many sentenced, the camps were not large enough to hold them all?

MR. SANTO. That is right.

MR. McNAMARA. On what ground were most of these people sentenced? What brought about the creation of the camps, and the sentencing of so many people to them? What were the charges?

MR. SANTO. Members of the Communist Party were usually sent to camps on charges of being spies. Others, for theft, quite a lot for being Kulaks—rich peasants—who were allegedly engaged in sabotage; for attempting to cross the border and flee to the West; for paying for abortion of an unwanted child; and innumerable other reasons.

Besides concentration camps, there also began and developed mass deportation from Budapest of members of the middle class of the old regime, for the purpose of freeing their apartments, and using them in out-of-the-way places as labor forces on construction jobs.

Thus, for instance, I saw in Szeged, in 1953, one of the largest cold storage warehouses being built by some hundreds of girls, even in their rags exquisitely beautiful, in the age group between 16 and 20, daughters of such deported families.

Other such deportees—called class enemies of the regime—were deported to various villages where they had to live in pig sties. The only work they could possibly get was that of watching geese graze.

One of such deported persons I knew personally from the United States.

MR. McNAMARA. Who was that?

MR. SANTO. Mrs. Rose Weinstock.

MR. McNAMARA. Is she the wife of Louis Weinstock?

MR. SANTO. Wife of Louis Weinstock, came to Hungary first in 1948, as head of the Hungarian delegation from America to an International Congress of Women for Peace.<sup>1</sup>

Around 1952—as she related to me—because of certain incompatibility with her husband, she decided to accept the invitation extended in 1948, and together with her then 12-year-old daughter<sup>2</sup> returned to Hungary. For a few months, she lived in Budapest at her own expense, a forlorn soul. Then herself and her daughter were seized by the secret police and deported to a faraway village where they had to live, having as their home a cowshed.

MR. McNAMARA. Do you know what the charges against her were?

<sup>1</sup> Women's International Democratic Federation, Second Congress, November 30–December 6, 1948 (Budapest, Hungary).

<sup>2</sup> Susan Weinstock; she returned to Hungary as a student in 1959, and on September 15, 1960, was married in Budapest to Szilard Kun, a Hungarian sports director.

Mr. SANTO. Nobody knew the charges against her. The secret police simply picked them up and deported them. She only knew that it was forbidden for her to return to Budapest.

This, nevertheless, happened about a year later, very likely due to the general liberalization of Hungarian life by Imre Nagy, who became Prime Minister in the middle of 1953.

It was at that point that she came to Budapest, visited me, and asked me what to do. It was dangerous, yet I advised her to go to the American consulate and petition for the renewal of her passport, the validity of which had expired meanwhile. She did so, and like someone who escapes from the inferno, and jubilant at being alive, returned to the United States.

Subsequently, to my amazement, I heard that she wrote an article in the *Daily Worker*, praising the Hungarian People's Democracy, and condemning the revolution of 1956.

That she survived that deportation was a miracle, and was due to no small measure to the humanity and generosity of the American consulate in Budapest, which she should have never forgotten, nor her husband, Louis Weinstock.

Mr. McNAMARA. Would you continue telling us something of the major political developments in Hungary during the period you were there?

Mr. SANTO. While the country was groaning in despair, and people lived only to work and sweat, the party decided in December of 1951 to erect in the heart of Budapest, not far from the Heroes Square, a 25-foot bronze statue of Stalin, and to celebrate the occasion with a march, parade, and demonstration.

There was a march, a parade, and a demonstration. People cheered and applauded. Nobody could tell that way down under the surface powerful forces were trying to find a way out of this inferno on earth.

Mr. McNAMARA. During the course of your stay in Hungary, did you come in contact with any Soviet citizens?

Mr. SANTO. As all other industries, we received from time to time a visitor from the Soviet Union as an expert in our industry. In 1933, with the help of American engineers and architects, the first large-scale plant of the Soviet meat industry was set up in Moscow, the so-called Moscow Myaznaya Kombinat.

One of the Russian technical employees came to advise us how to improve the technique of slaughtering and meat processing. We went to greet him at the railroad station when he arrived with a little cardboard luggage, weighing perhaps 10 pounds.

Three months later, he went home, and this time, in deference and in appreciation of his advice, we went to the railroad station to take leave from him. There were a couple of hundred of us, with brass bands and flowers.

The gifts with which he was showered during his stay in Hungary amounted to a half a carload of various edibles, appliances, textiles, and other paraphernalia, which evidently could not be purchased for love or money in the Soviet Union.

Mr. McNAMARA. Do you recall the impact the death of Stalin, in March 1953, had on Hungary and the Communist Party there?

Mr. SANTO. The death of Stalin was immediately followed by further tightening of the screws in the economic, political, and social life of Hungary, all, of course, under the slogan of "The unity of the party, which is more precious than the sight of our eyes."

Mr. McNAMARA. Was this tightening due primarily to fear that, with the death of Stalin, there might be great difficulty for the party and the world Communist movement in keeping control over the people?

Mr. SANTO. Not in the beginning. As a matter of fact, everything seemed to run in its own style until the East Berlin revolt. Even about this event, we learned very little, except that the Nazis and the Fascists were again trying to come back into power.

However, for reasons then unknown to anyone, in July, Imre Nagy who was by and large one of the unknown leaders of the party, a member of the Central Committee, suddenly became Prime Minister of Hungary, which position was held until then by Rakosi, who at the same time was general secretary of the party.

As the world knows, by now, the East Berlin uprising caused a tremendous scare in the Kremlin, and worry that similar and more dangerous revolts could take place in Eastern Europe under Communist domination.

Accordingly, the then leaders of the Kremlin, consisting of Malenkov, Molotov, Beria, Mikoyan, and Khrushchev, worried especially concerning the very temperamental Hungarian nation and more particularly about their utterly ruthless leadership headed by Rakosi.

Nobody in Hungary then understood the meaning of the resignation of Rakosi as Prime Minister, and the assumption of that office by Imre Nagy.

Nevertheless, through directives received from the Prime Minister's office, which also trickled down to us in the meat industry, certain improvements in life were noticeable.

Thus, for instance, wages were increased by 15 percent, but, more important, slowly at first, in 1954 people were slowly being released from the catacombs and jails of Hungary.

Mr. McNAMARA. Will you state briefly, to the best of your recollection, the impact of the regime of Imre Nagy on the people, the party, in Hungary?

Mr. SANTO. It was very confusing for a country which by then had been trained through Pavlovian methods. As is known, Pavlov, a famous Russian scientist, trained dogs to respond to the ringing of a bell, which in the beginning meant food on the plate, and which actually resulted in the saliva of the dog running when even an empty plate was placed before him as long as the bell rang. That was the method with which, basically, the Hungarian working class and the Hungarian Workers' Party was trained.

Mr. McNAMARA. The conditioned reflex.

Mr. SANTO. The conditioned reflex requiring only the issuance of a slogan, or a name, like Stalin; a name, Rakosi, immediately resulted in the so-called "iron applause," a rhythmic clapping of the hands, with a smile of beatitude on the face and a glint in the eyes.

Suddenly, through the incomprehensible and unexplained changes under the regime of Imre Nagy, which were also paralleled by attacks on the cult of personality, something seemed to have gone wrong.

After the terrible 4 years of 1950-53, it seemed somehow as though laughter came back to Hungary. The plates on the table were beginning to have some food on them. There was a literary ferment, with critical articles and plays. Something unfathomable, elusive, yet real, began to sweep the country.

Mr. McNAMARA. Was there a decrease in police terror under the Nagy regime?

Mr. SANTO. Definitely. The deportees were beginning to come back to Budapest. They received back—some of them—their apartments. The concentration camps began to open up their gates, and tens of thousands of people returned.

But above all, in the party, first whispered and gossiped, and then openly, discussions began.

This process, of course, was tremendously accelerated by the secret speech of Khrushchev at the 20th Congress of the Bolshevik Party of the Soviet Union in 1956, in which he exposed Stalin as a tyrant, a criminal, and a coward.

By then, however, the growing confusion reached new heights in Hungary, because in the middle of 1955, again as a result—later we learned—of Russian intervention, Imre Nagy was removed as Prime Minister, and his place was taken by a young nonentity by the name of Andras Hegedus who, under the slogan that the country had been endangered by the right-wing deviationism of Imre Nagy, and with the vociferous and bloodthirsty backing of Rakosi, reversed all the reforms initiated by Imre Nagy.

As a result of these developments, an intellectual turmoil developed in the country.

Personally, my eyes were opened much slower than those of others, because of my complete isolation from contact with the Hungarian population.

It was only in 1956 when the days that shook my personal Communist world really began.

Thanks to the American Communist Party, which supplied the *Daily Worker* to the Hungarian state radio, through a friend employed there, I received an issue of the *Daily Worker* containing the complete secret speech of Khrushchev. Stalin was my idol. When I ran out of all scientific, theoretical and political explanations, as I did, for instance, in conjunction with the Russian-German Pact in 1939, I could always fall back upon the self-assured conviction: "Stalin knows what he's doing. If Stalin does it, it's right. Long and forever live Joseph Stalin."

In this attitude, I was no exception. I recall, for instance, having read a book written by Istvan Kossa, general secretary of the Hungarian Trade Unions between 1945 and 1950, which I read not long after my arrival in 1949. Comrade Kossa wrote a book about his experiences during the Second World War as a political prisoner in a labor battalion, sent there for his Communist affiliation. He was on the Russian front, and the labor battalion was assigned to demine a certain field separating the Hungarian soldiers from the Russians.

The book described how many lives were lost in this demining work, until finally a group decided to escape by running over to the Russian line. But they didn't speak Russian, and they were afraid that they

would be machine-gunned before they reached the Russian lines. Kossa led them shouting, "Stalin, Stalin, Stalin."

This is what I also was, and this is what many of us were, blind, mistaken followers of a leader, as primitive in our attitudes as the savages in a jungle with their tribal chiefs and medicine men.

I still didn't know about the horrors in Hungary, because nobody told me and I was too stupid to discover it for myself, but about Russia I received further education when Martin—"Marcy"—Stone, a young Hungarian poet whom I knew in the thirties, in New York, and who went to Russia in 1932 to help build socialism, one day appeared in my office in the spring of 1956. He was then an old bald man, with elephantiasis in one of his legs—swollen to double its normal proportions.

He was laughing, this horrible creature who could only fit into one of the Karloff thrillers, telling me what happened to him in Russia.

He went to Russia with his wife and small baby and worked in Leningrad in the Electroavod, electric appliances factory. All went well. As a matter of fact, it was wonderful in the Soviet Union, since the factory where he worked sent him to evening college and he graduated each year with high honors.

In 1937 he was arrested, beaten, compelled to confess, sentenced for life imprisonment in Siberia.

Mr. McNAMARA. On what charges?

Mr. SANTO. Deviationist, diversionist—something that was in 1937 the mold in Russia.

He was put into a camp of 10,000 people, consisting of Communists of various nationalities from all over the world. According to Marcy, there were a thousand such camps for Communists in faraway Siberia. He survived from 1937 until 1956, because he was a clever boy who learned something in America.

Every day, the OGPU guards entertained each other while drinking a great deal of vodka, by shooting down some of the prisoners.

One day, the guards called the prisoners together and asked them if any of them could repair a typewriter. Marcy had no idea about repairing a typewriter, but he volunteered, and in a couple of weeks, he succeeded in repairing the typewriter. Thus, after everybody was dead in this particular camp for Communist political prisoners, they kept on transferring him from one camp to another and protecting him because they needed someone to repair typewriters.

In 1955, he was set free on condition that he had to remain, live, and work with his family in Kazakhstan, one of the autonomous republics of the Soviet Union in Asia.

From there, in 1 year's time, he succeeded in returning to his homeland.

The funny thing, the funny guy, the funny life, he couldn't stop praising the wonderful Hungarian bread. It was the best bread in the world. In all those terrible years in Siberia, he missed nothing but a good piece of bread.

And then he took out a piece of paper and read me his last poem, entitled "Wall Street Is War Street."

After all, after all, after all, he was still a Communist and didn't have one critical word to say about Stalin or communism. It was Wall Street that wanted war!

Mr. McNAMARA. Do you know anything about him, where he is today?

Mr. SANTO. No, I didn't want to talk with him any more. There ought to be in human beings some point where they say "I won't take it."

It was at this time, slowly, without knowing much of anything about what went on in Hungary that I began to ask myself the question, "How did I ever get here?"

It was at this point that I began to raise some questions in my own mind and also talked to some people.

Mr. McNAMARA. Because of the hour, again, we will conclude the consultation for today, and resume tomorrow morning at 10 o'clock.

(Whereupon, at 4:35 p.m., Monday, March 4, 1963, the consultation recessed to resume at 10 a.m., Tuesday, March 5, 1963.)



# A COMMUNIST IN A "WORKERS' PARADISE"

## John Santo's Own Story

TUESDAY, MARCH 5, 1963

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON UN-AMERICAN ACTIVITIES,  
*Washington, D.C.*

### CONSULTATION

The consultation with Mr. John Santo was reconvened at 10:20 a.m., in Room 226, Cannon House Office Building, Washington, D.C.

Committee member present: Representative Edwin E. Willis, of Louisiana (presiding).

Staff members present: Francis J. McNamara, director, and Donald T. Appell, investigator.

### CONSULTATION WITH JOHN SANTO—Resumed

MR. McNAMARA. Mr. Santo, would you tell us some of the other major developments that took place in Hungary prior to the revolution?

MR. SANTO. The first major incident was that of the expulsion in 1955 from the Hungarian Workers' (Communist) Party of Imre Nagy, Prime Minister, between the summer of 1953 until the spring of 1955. This expulsion from the party for "right deviationism" and for "ruining the economy of People's Democratic Hungary" took place in the spring of that year. Of course, Nagy had some friends and they were not idle, spreading stories concerning the battle amongst the giants of Hungarian communism, members of the Central Committee of the Hungarian Workers' Party. The party (meaning Rakosi) was not satisfied with his expulsion from the party. They have also caused him to be discharged from his post as university professor and even from the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. The same Central Committee of the Hungarian Workers' Party which unanimously elevated him to the position of Prime Minister in June 1953, unanimously relieved him and persecuted him in the spring of 1955.

It should be mentioned at this point that Imre Nagy was one of the greatest experts on Hungarian agriculture and, as a matter of fact, right after World War II, as Minister of Agriculture, was responsible for the law that distributed the large landed estates, of which some hundreds of thousands of Hungarian landless peasants each received a few acres of land. Thus he had a legendary name amongst the peasantry of Hungary.

Furthermore, due to the fact that during his premiership wages and salaries were increased by 15 percent, there was also a strata of the working class that was grateful to him. Above all, he seemed to have had an immaculate personal character and honor and dignity which no other Hungarian Communist leader could match.

Nevertheless, his most important supporters came from the ranks of the literateurs, the authors, the journalists, the artists, intellectuals, and the university students.

To give characterization of the man, Imre Nagy, who was a Communist, but above all, he was a Hungarian patriot and a man—a decent, honest, great man—I want to quote, in part, from an appeal against his expulsion written by him and circulated in Hungary:

But the most reprehensible procedure, and the one most destructive of Communist morality and character, is to exploit the existing material dependence of Party functionaries and members in order to influence their political views and personal behavior. There are those who, corrupted by their favorable material status, and abandoning principled moral conduct, will do anything as servants of degenerate Bonapartist power and personal dictatorship. Many Party functionaries and members, however, with their Communist sense of honor and integrity violated through material dependence and their human dignity humiliated, are being compelled to deny their principles and political beliefs, to abandon their convictions, and to engage in falsehood and hypocrisy. These persons perceive and recognize the ignoble means, the untruth, the unprincipled un-Partylike procedure, and the prevalence of intimidation, revenge, and reprisal. Their Communist sense of honor rebels against and condemns such things, but the grave consequences of taking a courageous stand, of candidly expressing an opinion, and of adhering to principle, such as political ostracism, material losses, and unemployment, all too frequently restrain them. \* \* \* They are ashamed of their behavior which they know is incompatible with Communist morality; they are ashamed of mendacity, of two-timing; they are ashamed of their lack of principle and of their cowardice; they are ashamed that, despite their better convictions, they have become—through material dependency—blind, docile tools and have moved from their political opposition into passivity and indifference. Thus, servility, the serious malady of our social and Party life, is developing and spreading dangerously. The twins, Bonapartism—personal dictatorship—and servility go well together \* \* \*.

\* \* \* Another characteristic symptom of the deterioration of morality in public life, a symptom that has become actually epidemic in social and Party life, is careerism, the pushing and elbowing for favors, even aims, from above. \* \* \* The careerists are sycophants, bootlickers; they have no principles or opinions of their own and will say without any compunction that black is white. In every case, they seek the favor of those who are in a position to assure them a better place in Party or state affairs, greater prestige, more income, broader authority, and, last but not least, a limousine. They go to any length to gain the favor of the leaders; they grovel and bow and scrape before them; they flatter them. The deterioration of morality in public life pleases the careerists, whom, unfortunately, we may encounter on all sides. The number of them tends to increase because, instead of denouncing them, the leaders tolerate and quite frequently even pamper them, since their kowtowing flatters the vanity of the leaders, as they will do anything or carry out any orders for them without reservation.

Of course, careerism is not something that is an exclusive characteristic of Communist society. It is also found in the free world under capitalism. The difference is that the careerist, by and large, is restrained by certain moral principles that are alive in the free society; by the opinion of his fellow man, by the teachings of religion, and to some extent and ultimately by his own conscience.

When and if the unbearable limit is reached in the free world in the life of the careerist and the sycophant, he can always quit, go and find another job, even go to another country.

In the Communist world when that point is reached by a careerist, he cannot quit or find another job, he must then, to escape from his own conscience, commit even worse crimes, lower himself into even more nefarious channels of activity, and only thus can he hope to acquire that crudeness, that inhumanity and bestiality which were so characteristic of key individuals in the life of People's Democratic Hungary.

Mr. McNAMARA. Mr. Santo, do you have any firsthand, personal knowledge of any Soviet role in the actions taken against Imre Nagy?

Mr. SANTO. At the time in Hungary, we had no idea. We did not know that his elevation to premiership had been decided in Moscow and that his dismissal, similarly, had been decided in the Kremlin. The role of the Russians in the political development of the last years prior to the 1956 October revolution, however, did slowly emerge into the conscience of the Hungarian people.

Without any publicity, Gabor Peter, the feared head of the Hungarian secret police, was arrested. This became known simply by virtue of the fact that Laszlo Piros was appointed head of the secret police, which was publicized. Later, in a speech far away from Budapest, Rakosi mentioned the name of Rajk calling him a "Comrade." This was a tremendous shock to public opinion because until then Rajk was condemned as a traitor. It also meant that Peter—like Beria in Russia who was liquidated a few years prior to this in Moscow—was responsible for the death of innocent men.

The Russians contributed further by having published an article in the *Pravda* exonerating Bela Kun, leader of the first Hungarian Soviet State in 1919, who was tried, sentenced, and executed as a deviationist in one of the anti-Soviet trials in Moscow in 1937.

Bela Kun, who was also a legendary figure among the giants of communism, having been one of the favorites of Lenin as the creator of the second Soviet State in 1919, and who subsequently played an immense role in the affairs of the Comintern, writing articles and training personnel for the education of the Communist parties, engaged in furthering the world revolution.

Questions were being raised. If Rajk was suddenly a comrade again, though he was dead, then he was not guilty. He was innocent and so were Tibor Szonyi, Andras Szalai, Gen. Gyorgy Palffy, and the tens, the hundreds, and the thousands of others who were condemned and executed in 1949. If Bela Kun was not a "diversionist," then perhaps all the others who were publicly tried in Moscow in 1937, 1938, 1939—in the presence of reporters and journalists of the free world—were also innocent. The world evolved into a nightmarish place.

According to the verbatim trial proceedings in English titled, *Laszlo Rajk and His Accomplices Before the People's Court*, published by SZIKRA, Hungarian Communist publishing house, the following newspaper reporters were present at the trial in Budapest in 1949: Joseph Kingsbury Smith,<sup>1</sup> Richard Clark,<sup>2</sup> Stephen White,<sup>3</sup> A. Marton,<sup>4</sup> George May,<sup>5</sup> J. Szatmari,<sup>6</sup> Mary Egger.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Joseph Kingsbury Smith, International News Service (New York).

<sup>2</sup> Richard Clark, United Press (New York).

<sup>3</sup> Stephen White, New York Herald Tribune (Paris).

<sup>4</sup> A. Marton, Associated Press (New York).

<sup>5</sup> George May, NANA (New York).

<sup>6</sup> J. Szatmari, International News Service (New York).

<sup>7</sup> Mary Egger, Overseas News Agency (New York).

For me, my awful nightmare turned into such trials and tribulations as those suffered by Job.

At the end of the 1930's, Comrade Israel Amter, district organizer of the Communist Party of New York, gave me a book entitled *Report of Court Proceedings in the Case of the Anti-Soviet Trotskyite Centre, Heard Before The Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R., Moscow, January 23-30, 1937, In Re: Y. L. Pyatakov, K. B. Radek, G. Y. Sokolnikov, L. P. Serebryakov, N. I. Muralov, Y. A. Livshitz, Y. N. Drobnis, M. S. Boguslavsky, I. A. Knyazev, S. A. Rataichak, B. O. Norkin, A. A. Shestov, M. S. Stroilov, Y. D. Turok, I. Y. Hrasche, G. E. Pushin, and V. V. Arnold.*

This volume became sort of a bible for me personally. It was my talisman, my defense against all evils of possible deviation from the party line, my counselor and solace in hours of need when some aspect of party policy and its evil effects on human beings disturbed my soul.

In such instances, this volume, which I always carried with me, made it possible to turn to the last pleas of the accused, amongst whom my favorites were Pyatakov and Radek, who was the most brilliant publicist, a Communist of world-renowned brilliance of the period when I joined the Communist Party of the U.S.A. in 1928.

The tragic last sentences of Pyatakov, for instance:

I am too keenly conscious of my crime, and I do not venture to ask you for clemency. I will not even make bold to ask for mercy.

In a few hours you will pass your sentence. And here I stand before you in filth, crushed by my own crimes, bereft of everything through my own fault, a man who has lost his Party, who has no friends, who has lost his family, who has lost his very self.

Do not deprive me of one thing, Citizen Judges. Do not deprive me of the right to feel that in your eyes, too, I have found strength in myself, albeit too late, to break with my criminal past.

But especially Radek, whose last sentences were:

It is very sad that we have realized this so late, despite all our learning. But may this realization be of service to others.

Pyatakov was executed—Radek disappeared. Questions were forming in my mind. What kind of world is this new, shining paradise on earth?

Mr. McNAMARA. What effect did the rehabilitation of Bela Kun and these others have on the fate of Rakosi?

Mr. SANTO. By all earmarks and checking the record, the indications of things to come left Rakosi utterly undisturbed. As a matter of fact, it was on March 19, 1956 that Rakosi held his famous speech explaining the by now world-famous "Salami Tactics" of the Hungarian Communist Party in crushing all bourgeois and other opposition in the aftermath of the liberation of Hungary by the Red Army in 1945 and the years following it.

Mr. McNAMARA. And what were these "Salami Tactics"?

Mr. SANTO. The "Salami Tactics" were a classical Communist explanation how all ends must be played against the middle. How the middle itself must be split. How, for instance, beginning with the Smallholders' Party of Hungary, which received an electoral majority, the Communists concentrated on compelling that party to operate on its own body politic, slicing off a thin layer of the leaders of the right and, as soon as that was accomplished and achieved, placing additional demands, leading to the further self-amputation of that party.

It explained how, when necessary, the trade unions were called on to demonstrate their membership in the hundreds of thousands on the streets of Budapest demanding that the Smallholders' Party expel a particular group of its leaders, ultimately demoralizing leaders and rank and file of that party. It showed how in this situation a united front was entered into with the Social Democratic Party, and thus in combined manner placing demands upon the Smallholders' Party; how in certain instances the Russians were called upon to assist by kidnapping and taking into Russia the general secretary of the Smallholders' Party (Kovacs), and how finally Ferenc Nagy, Prime Minister, was compelled to resign by exchanging for his resignation the life of his small son.

It was at the end of March, a few weeks after this speech, that Rajk was officially exonerated, and the exoneration appeared in the *Szabad Nep*, official Communist organ.

Mr. McNAMARA. Could you give us some further details on the case and rehabilitation of Rajk?

Mr. SANTO. Rajk said the following in his last plea of the accused in September 1949 before having been hung—

it is undoubtedly true that to a certain extent I became an instrument of Tito, or rather of Tito's policy—of the same Tito who followed in Hitler's wake and followed Hitler's policy in the Balkans and in Eastern Europe, and who was backed by the American imperialists, his ruling masters.

Rajk confessed having been an agent of Tito, who was a follower of Hitler, and all of whom have been directed by the American imperialists. Rajk was hung in 1949 for this reason, and now in 1956 Rajk was exonerated. Accordingly, Tito was innocent of being a follower of Hitler, and the "American imperialists" were not guilty either.

The convulsions, moral, spiritual, and political, were not only my personal sorrow, but engulfed increasing strata of the population. Thus, the Hungarian Writers' Association attacked publicly Rakosi—an unheard of, unbelievably, insanely courageous act.

Two days later, Rakosi answered by cutting the prices of consumers' goods by 10 percent and, on May 10, by ordering the removal of the Iron Curtain barbed wires on the western and southern frontier of Hungary, leading to Austria and Yugoslavia. What was a trickle previously in releasing those innocently jailed who were still alive, continued at an accelerated rate. Thus, the Social Democratic leader, Gyorgy Marosan, and then another ex-President of Hungary, leader of the Smallholders' Party, Zoltan Tildy, and at the end of June, 20,000 other Communist and Social Democratic political prisoners were released like a flood from the jails of Hungary.

Mr. McNAMARA. In your estimation, was this an attempt on the part of the Government to relieve the pressure on itself that was becoming apparent? Was it a move to appease the people?

Mr. SANTO. It certainly was an attempt to appease the public, but, of course, it could not have solved the problems that were in the offing within Hungary and upon which the impact of developments outside of Hungary could not be calculated by anyone.

Thus, for instance, in the spring of the year 1956, with the permission of the party, the Young Communists organized a debating club, called the Petofi Circle, named after Sandor Petofi, the most famous

Hungarian revolutionary poet of the war of liberation against the Austrian Hapsburg rulers of 1848, who died a hero's death during that revolution. This insignificant debating club suddenly became the focus of attention of the whole country, drawing to its weekly gatherings first a thousand, then 5,000, then tens of thousands of people, whatever the subject was, and they ranged from literature of "Socialist Realism" to such questions as the potentialities of Hungarian agriculture.

These meetings were basically attended by the top Communist lawyers, intellectuals, and students of the various branches and sections of Hungarian society. Yet they took the most extraordinary pains to dissociate themselves from the evils of communism, and their meetings ended by demands for the resignation of Rakosi.

Rakosi answered by the expulsion of Tibor Tardos, a young Hungarian writer and Communist, and of Tibor Dery, European-famed Hungarian author, from the Hungarian Communist Party. Of course all of these measures were simply oil on the flames of revolt to come.

Mrs. Rajk, widow of Laszlo Rajk, was freed, and what the others freed from the jails didn't dare to do, she did. She began to tell the story, the gory story of torture, of inhumanity, of the crushing of bones to extract confessions, as perpetrated in the underground jails of Hungary in order to extract confessions.

It was at this point that Janos Kadar's story, a horror story that shook every Communist to the innermost of his soul, began to trickle down and out into the masses of the people.

MR. McNAMARA. How were Mrs. Rajk's accounts spread? Did she actually publish them, or was this all by word of mouth?

MR. SANTO. Mrs. Rajk was the only one who openly got up at the Petofi Circle debates, told her story, and raised questions such as that (a) her husband was innocent, and she demanded complete exoneration; (b) demanded to know where her son was, whom they have taken away from her, and she couldn't find the child; but above all (c) she demanded a public trial of all those responsible for the jailings and torture.

MR. McNAMARA. Did Rakosi attempt to take reprisals against her for these public declarations?

MR. SANTO. At this point, Rakosi was unable to take personal reprisals against Mrs. Rajk. What he could do, and did do, was call a meeting in the sports arena of 5,000 functionaries of the Communist Party organization in Budapest, where he tried to develop a lynch spirit against Imre Nagy, against Dery, and against the other leaders of the Writers' Association, the Journalists' Union, and the other intellectuals who were in the forefront of the demand for the purging of Hungarian and Communist life of immoralities, inhumanities.

MR. McNAMARA. What effect, Mr. Santo, did the Poznan uprising—in Poland in June 1956 I believe it was—have on political developments in Hungary and this ferment that was obviously growing there, the rebellion of the people?

MR. SANTO. The story of the Poznan uprising, in which some hundreds of thousands of workers participated, rebelling against the unbearable exploitation and denationalization imposed upon them by Communist tyranny, further opened the floodgates of revolt in Hungary. The sands of time were running out, and the *Mene, Mene,*

*Tekel, U'pharsin*<sup>1</sup> appeared on the clouds hanging above Hungary. People became bolder. Janos Kadar became bolder and told his story before the Central Committee of the Hungarian Workers' Party—a body of "men" sworn to secrecy as to the proceedings before that august body.

That boldness of spirit and moral outrage then prevailing resulted in Kadar's story trickling down to the people, including me. It went like this: Kadar was a member of the Hungarian underground Communist Party during the years of the Second World War. Being a diligent, clean, ambitious, plain workingman, he rose steadily the rungs of the Communist ladder, until he was assistant secretary to Rakosi, general secretary of the Hungarian Workers' Party, and in 1949, at the end of that year, Kadar became Minister of Interior. It was he who was sent by Rakosi, accompanied by Mihaly Farkas, old-time Hungarian Muscovite Communist leader, Minister of War of Hungary, and also an assistant general secretary of the party, to visit Rajk in jail.

They asked Rajk, who refused to confess, to do so in the interest of the party—to confess being an agent of Tito and of the American imperialists. A representative of the secret police of Russia was also present, endorsing the proposal that in exchange for a self-confession, he, Rajk, and his family will be allowed to go to the Soviet Union, where they will live a rewarding prosperous life.

Rajk confessed and, as known, was hanged.

And then it was Kadar's turn.

Kadar was arrested early in 1950. In the beginning, he thought that it was all a mistake, a misunderstanding, and that Comrade Rakosi must be notified. He will see to it that they—the stupid butchers engaged in his torture—were punished, and that he was let free. But the beatings continued. The tortures continued. Kadar was stood against a wall for days, without food and water. The wall was white—it was designed to develop a psychological feeling of helplessness. Kadar didn't confess.

Then his nails were pulled out. Kadar showed to the members of the Central Committee the 10 fingers of his hands, where the nails were missing.

His teeth were knocked out with a hammer. His testicles were beaten with a cane. Tortures were applied exactly the same as in the worst Fascist-Nazi prisons. Kadar did not confess.

It was at this point that Kadar was visited in the jail cell by Mihaly Farkas, and by his Russian-born and educated son, Vladimir Farkas, a colonel in the Hungarian secret police, a man 30 years old. The guards were beating Kadar. He was writhing on the floor. Two guards forced the mouth of Kadar open, and the colonel urinated into his mouth while everybody around him laughed because the thing was funny.

Ultimately, Kadar confessed.

The story of Kadar was the topic of discussion, raising innumerable questions, not only in discussions secretly whispered but in the souls of men, in the dark recesses of the mind, in the moral fiber of human beings, who were dreaming of a new world that was just, clean, decent, honorable.

<sup>1</sup> Aramaic words traced on the wall at Belshazzar's feast warning him of his impending doom. (Daniel 5:25)

I went to see my old friend who recruited me in the party in 1928 in the United States and who was Minister of Railroad and Transport, Lajos Bebrits. Physically, Bebrits was a giant of a man, 6 feet tall, who was famous in the Hungarian movement in the United States because he could drink a gallon of wine on top of eating 10 pounds of stuffed Hungarian cabbages.

This time, in the summer of 1956, Bebrits talked, because everybody talked at that point in Hungary. He told me his own personal story. In 1937, he was also arrested in Moscow, charged with being a follower of Bela Kun, and thus being a diversionist and agent, a spy.

MR. McNAMARA. How was it that he was in Moscow in 1937?

MR. SANTO. Previously, I have mentioned his name as having been deported in 1932 as a result of a hearing before the Fish committee of the House of Representatives, in which he testified that he believed in the forcible and violent overthrow of the Government of the United States.

MR. McNAMARA. And did he go directly to Russia from the United States?

MR. SANTO. Yes. He went to Russia directly and was engaged there in literary work, since, as I have previously indicated, he was a fine writer, publicist, journalist, a man of great intellectual capacity and attainments.

In the jail, he was beaten by a Russian who was 6½ feet tall. He showed me by standing up how this man who was bigger than himself, with hands like shovels, would slap his face, the right cheek, while as he fell to the left, the other huge hand of the torturer slapped his left cheek. Like playing ball, except it wasn't a ball—from right to left and left to right—but the head of Bebrits. It always ended by the demand "Confess or else."

Ultimately Bebrits confessed. One night he sat down and wrote in his hand the confession that, though he was deported from the United States as a Communist, it had all been arranged between himself and the President of the United States, a man named Abraham Lincoln; that his whole deportation was arranged by Abraham Lincoln to get him into the Soviet Union as a spy; that he was a spy for the American imperialists and, as such, he visited every week, for the purpose of delivering his spy report to the Americans, the Ambassador of the then royal Rumania in Moscow, a man by the name of General Avarescu. Of course, General Avarescu was at the time Prime Minister of Rumania, living in the capital of the country, Bucharest, running a semi-Fascist type of government, and of course having nothing to do with the Rumanian Embassy in Moscow in the sense of visiting there, getting spy reports.

The next day, when he was taken before his torturer, Bebrits handed over his confession. The Russian embraced him, kissed him on both cheeks, saying: "Why didn't you do this before? You see, it was all so unnecessary to keep on beating you up \* \* \*."

Bebrits told me that, during this period, the Russian secret police arrested every foreigner living in Moscow, Communist or non-Communist, great Communist leader or just rank and filer. The telephone book was used, and anyone with an un-Russian name was arrested, and finally—said Bebrits with a sigh—"every 10th person, whether he



was Russian or not, was arrested, thus filling the jails, the concentration camps, and slave labor camps of Russia."

Bebrits received a public trial, and would have been condemned to death, but for an accident. A rank-and-file, ex-Hungarian-American Communist by the name of Toth-Tengerdy was in the courtroom when Bebrits was tried. This plain, ordinary, rank-and-file worker asked to testify against the prosecution charges, saying that Bebrits was an innocent man.

Thus Bebrits was not executed. He, like hundreds of thousands of others, was sentenced to a long jail term, which he served in Kazakhstan.

The story of Bebrits was confirmed by Toth-Tengerdy, whom I knew in Budapest in 1949-56, where he was employed by the Ministry of Heavy Industry as host and translator to the Russian experts who came to advise Hungarian machine-building industry.

The story of Kadar, of Bebrits, affected me as a psychological sledge hammer. I felt myself dissolving, breaking up, morally, mentally, intellectually. A thirst arose in my soul to crawl away in shame, in disgust, in despair.

Mr. McNAMARA. Was Bebrits, himself, unshaken in his Communist faith, despite his experience?

Mr. SANTO. His reaction seemed to have been that it's all in a day's work. This fine, cultured man that I knew and admired in the United States, as a Communist Minister in Hungary was one of the most hated. He was absolutely brutal in the treatment of the employees of his ministry, and metaphorically speaking, used a whip like a martinet, driving the railroad workers. The number of lives and careers of people that he had broken were legion.

Bebrits would never have talked, telling me what happened to him, what transformed him into a brutal piece of a human machine of callousness, of vulgarity, of cursing, except for the general atmosphere of bewilderment that embraced all levels of society. Allowing me to come into his presence in his office and talking to me about the horrible things that happened to him was, in itself, a sign of the complete demoralization of the ruling Communist strata. His story was told not in despair, discouragement, and disgust, but in laughing solicitude for my naivete.

Like some jailkeepers or male nurses engaged in the lunatic asylum, who after long years and decades inevitably become callous, hard, devoid of human feeling, so he, Bebrits, wasn't any more the social-democratically inclined, refined mind, publicist, journalist, the friend of all human beings, one whose mind encompassed all human weaknesses. It was the Pavlovian product—the trained human dog or dog-like human being who, without feeling, would do anything when the bell tolled, to do and die, to torture others, or be tortured himself in turn.

The spark of humanity that led him to communism turned into its opposite. There was nothing human left in him. No compassion, no pity, no mercy for anyone, including himself.

Mr. McNAMARA. In writing in his confession, as he did in Moscow, that Abraham Lincoln had sent him to the Soviet Union as a spy, did not Bebrits fear that this obvious falsehood would be discovered, that it would be taken as a sign of contempt for his captors, and that tre-

mendous reprisals would be taken against him for this, that his punishment would be increased? Or did he honestly believe that these people were so stupid that they would accept this falsehood without even perceiving it?

Mr. SANTO. This was yet the partially naive believer, Bebrits, who confessed because he saw the futility of resistance that could lead only to being beaten to death by his good-natured, bearlike primitive Russian guard. Evidently at this point of mass arrests and mass tortures in Russia, the caliber of the guards was not very high. Their job was simply to beat a confession out of whoever was given in their custody. That prosecutors for the state also accepted this confession was probably due to the fact that these also were of inferior caliber, including the judges themselves, who most likely never studied American history, and Abraham Lincoln, for them, was as good a name for being President of the United States as that of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who was as a matter of fact at that time, President of the United States. Of course such an error would not have escaped the attention of Prosecutor A. Y. Vyshinsky, procurator of the U.S.S.R. (subsequently Foreign Minister and delegate to the United Nations of the Soviet Union) who was in charge of the major purge trials in Russia, or the President of the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R., Army Military Jurist V. V. Ulrich.

Mr. McNAMARA. Would you describe, Mr. Santo, the events surrounding the eventual resignation of Rakosi?

Mr. SANTO. On July 14, 1956, an unheard of event took place insofar as the steelworkers of Czepele Island, a major bastion of Hungarian heavy industry, issued an ultimatum demanding—

Mr. McNAMARA. That is in the middle of Budapest, isn't it, in the Danube River?

Mr. SANTO. Yes, Czepele is in the middle of Budapest, surrounded on both sides by the Danube. The steelworkers issued an ultimatum demanding an increase in wages. Five days later, Rakosi resigned as general secretary of the Communist Party, an event which shook the country like an earthquake. Even though the publicly issued statement referred to the ill health of Rakosi as the major reason for his resignation, adding only a few words of self-criticism concerning past mistakes, nevertheless, his toppling from the Olympian heights of power, prestige, simply accelerated the process of dissolution of the most important asset of Communist rule: the monolithic, all-inclusive, total unity of the Communist Party. Everywhere signs of the breaking up of the tenacious fiber of Communist dedication were to be seen.

Lenin, the most astute theoretician of the theory and practice of revolution, was quite right when he said that to make a revolution, two factors are necessary: The working class, the lower strata of society, must not be willing any more to tolerate their condition of life. The second equally important factor, that the ruling class should not be able any more to rule in the old way, falling apart as amongst themselves in holding onto their rule of government.

This second factor, the decomposition, the falling apart, the dissolution into warring factions, cliques, groups of the granite-like Communist ruling class, the apex of which was the person of Rakosi, reverberated throughout the land and brought into motion, in criticism, in violent moral condemnation, and even in renegacy of the former com-

ponent parts of the Praetorian Guard rule of the so-called dictatorship of the proletariat.

Behind the refined theories of Marx-Lenin-Stalin, in actual life, Communist governmental rule under and beyond the facade of the so-called proletarian dictatorship, is a governmental apparatus of brutal oppression, which can be characterized only by its real self, the pushbutton rule.

The lowest layer of society are the industrial workers and the working farmers in their overwhelming millions, who are granted the opportunity, as a privilege, of working with the sweat of their brows, their hands and their body, having fancy Communist blinders, which in other societies are reserved for horses and which permit them to see nothing else but that piece of work to which they are assigned.

Above this layer are the members of the Communist Party, consisting of renegade bourgeois intellectuals, as well as workers and peasants who join the party because, directly and indirectly, they come to appreciate the fact that in order to have some security, they must be members of the Communist Party. Naturally, from this mass of a million Hungarian Communists come to the top mostly the careerists—ruthless, vicious, unprincipled sycophants, as exemplified in the city and in regional committees of the party.

Above these towers the Central Committee of the Communist Party, in this instance the Hungarian Workers' Party, consisting of bribed, obedient, subservient men and women who are sworn to utter secrecy in their deliberations and decisions, but who have actually no power, as some members of the Central Committee of the Hungarian Workers' Party confessed to me.

Over this pyramid stands the Political Bureau, the high priests of communism, who in fact are but a gang of criminals, sworn to mutual support of the one and only leader, the general secretary of the Communist Party. This is the man who is god. This is the man who pushes that button.

Pushing of the button in the United States means that someone wants to take a ride in a lift, for instance. Pushing the button under communism means that the man, who is the only man and who is god at the same time, wants something done. The pushing of the button might mean that the norms of work must be increased; that a private villa is to be built for himself or as a reward for, at the moment, a most deserving stooge; or that contraceptives become illegal in the country, as they were between 1949 and 1953, compelling the production of children, because he, the man who pushes the button, desires it so.

The toppling of this god-man, man-god is catastrophe, because we were trained that there could be only one god, and thus after the resignation of Rakosi, Gero, the new general secretary of the Hungarian Workers' Party, appeared as an interloper.

Mr. McNAMARA. Who were the personalities primarily responsible for the resignation of Rakosi and for Gero being appointed his successor?

Mr. SANTO. As the world subsequently learned, the underground rumblings that were breaking out on the surface, the protest of the intellectuals, the speeches at the Petofi Circle gatherings, the threat of the strike of the steelworkers of Czepel, the merciless condemnation of

Rakosi by Mrs. Rajk, the gory details of the horror story of Kadar—who ultimately became, as the result of the smashing of the October 1956 revolution through Russian tanks and bayonets, the general secretary of the new Communist Party of Hungary—which trickled down from the secret session of the meeting of the Central Committee of the Hungarian Workers' Party into the ears and brains and souls of the top layers of the Hungarian Communists and the Hungarian people as such, ultimately reached the Kremlin.

The Kremlin at this time itself was not only shaken by the Poznan events and the increasing personal power conflicts of those who claimed to have inherited the mantle of Stalin, but who had their agents in Hungary warning of disaster to come if Rakosi stayed.

It was thus that the Russians ordered, forced, and compelled the resignation of Rakosi, when, unannounced, at the meeting of the Political Committee of the Hungarian Party, Mikoyan appeared.

According to the information that transpired after the Hungarian revolution, Rakosi came to this meeting of the political committee of the Hungarian Workers' Party with a complete program consisting of the following items: a general wage cut to be carried out immediately, because the Hungarian workers lived too well; a cutting of the social insurance fund by 290 million forints (11 forints equal \$1); cutting benefits under the old-age pension plan by 300 million forints; additional local taxes to be levied through the city and village councils by 800 million forints; curtailment of the contribution of the state to the factory canteens by 300 million forints; sports cut 74 million forints; and the pride and joy and glory of the People's Democracy's showcase achievement for the outside world, a cutting of the contribution of the state to the day nurseries for children by 34 million forints.

It was at this point, when the other members of the political committee agreed to the acceptance of Rakosi's proposals to be presented the next day to an emergency meeting of the Central Committee for approval, that, unannounced, Mikoyan entered the room. He said only a few mild words. Rakosi demanded the arrest of 4,000 ring-leaders of the anti-party revolt. Mikoyan hinted very gently that instead Rakosi ought to resign.

Rakosi protested, saying, "The party needs me." The members of the Political Bureau understood; for them, a wink was as good as a nod, as the Irish say concerning a blind horse. They unanimously demanded the resignation of Rakosi.

Next day, the Central Committee approved the resignation of Rakosi and the appointment of Gero as general secretary of the Hungarian Workers' Party.

Mr. McNAMARA. What was the ultimate result of Mrs. Rajk's revelations as far as her deceased husband was concerned?

Mr. SANTO. The insistent demand of that brave woman, wife and mother, compelled the Central Committee to order not only an exoneration of Rajk, but the exhumation of his body and those of his associates who were hung with him as members of that frameup trial, at traditionally consecrated grounds, where the heroes of Hungarian history were buried, at the graveyard of Kerepes.

The public exhumation and the reburial of Rajk took place on October 7, 1956. Two hundred thousand people turned out for this

occasion, coming as silent groups of demonstrators from the various factories, offices, and a pitiful handful of a group, those still alive, members of the Rakosi Brigade of the Spanish civil war fame. Speeches were made by Ferenc Munnich, who fought in Spain, and by Antal Apro, Minister of Building Construction. It was a quiet reburial. It was like the quiet before the storm that was long in coming, but would come for sure, and it did, a couple of weeks later, on October 23.

Mr. McNAMARA. We will stop for lunch and come back, then, at 2:15.

(Whereupon, at 1:10 p.m., Tuesday, March 5, 1963, the committee recessed, to reconvene at 2:15 p.m., of the same day.)

#### AFTERNOON SESSION—TUESDAY, MARCH 5, 1963

#### CONSULTATION WITH JOHN SANTO—Resumed

Mr. McNAMARA. Mr. Santo, the revelation of the frameup in these various trials that took place in Hungary and in the Soviet Union apparently had a very strong impact on you, stronger than other developments and matters that had occurred over the years in the course of your affiliation with communism. Why, in your estimation, did this one point mean so much to you particularly?

Mr. SANTO. The answer to this question lies partially in my American background. In the early days of my membership in the Communist Party of the United States, events affecting me personally extremely strongly were the cases of Sacco and Vanzetti, two immigrant Italians who were executed after proceedings lasting many long years and during which they received due process of law, never admitting the crimes of which they were accused. Then the cases of Tom Mooney and Warren K. Billings, as well as the cases of the Scottsboro boys. These cases convinced me that American capitalism, in its stage of decline and decay, required frameup sacrificial victims and resulted in that emotional fire that strengthened Communist belief and conviction.

During the 21 years that I lived in the United States of America, the Communist Party of the United States of America, with its intellectual allies and helpers, developed a worldwide movement of protest against the execution of the people involved. It even succeeded in ultimately contributing to the release of Tom Mooney. Thus a whole generation of Americans, including myself, grew up in the conviction that capitalism must be abolished to do away with frameups, the trial of innocent people who were the sacrifices on the altar of a system of profit, exploitation, and tyranny over the exploited, the miserable, the poor. It contributed to the intellectual conversion of the non-Communists into Communists, and it steeled the Communists to be more determined than ever to work unceasingly for the overthrow of the system of capitalism, as the only way out to a society where men could be men and honesty and dignity prevailed for all members of society.

These ideas I acquired, so to say, with the Communist mother milk of my infancy as a member of the party, and the basic ideas of lawless frameup were abhorrent to me. Thus my utter intellectual annihilation when I discovered that the Communist system of society

required as a Moloch with an insatiable hunger ever new legions of human offerings, to be sacrificed on its altar of oppression, deceit, and shame. More than this: the Communist government and system of society required these sacrifices after compelling its innocent victims, be they Cardinal Mindszenty, the Catholic Archbishop of Hungary, or Kadar, a high-ranking member of the Praetorian Guard of the Hungarian Communist Party, down to the insignificant members—whose name and family remained unknown to the world—in all phases of Hungarian life until it became clear to me that the Communist system of society was like a huge meat grinder, swallowing human lives, irrespective of legal procedure, of justification, or any rational reasoning. The Communist system of society further required of all those who had a name and fame of some sort, though they were innocent of any crime at all, to confess publicly, to accuse themselves in public, to condemn themselves, their families, friends, associates, and acquaintances to everlasting shame as the worst dregs of the underworld, wallowing in spying, in treason, in every conceivable dastardly behavior that would cause them and the bearers of their name to be anathema to decent human beings, Communist or non-Communist alike.

This was not, then, it became increasingly clear, a free society based on decency, honor, freedom, truth, or liberty, fraternity, and equality, but only a modern method of oppression composed to a varying degree of ingredients as old as Genghis Khan, Machiavelli, with a good measure of scientific Pavlovism thrown in.

What it amounted to might and did have some economic achievements, such as speeding up of the process of industrialization, which, of course, would have come anyhow on a sounder, saner, and more efficient basis.

But as a matter of fact, this society didn't bring to anyone a greater measure of happiness, of the development of the creative ability dormant in the human soul, nor of a more humane, kindly understanding of the weaknesses of human nature. It erected a society consisting of a pyramid, upon the top of which danced in crazy array men unscrupulous enough to reach that high place, twirling madly in a life poisoned by power and the desire to acquire more and more unlimited and uncontrolled power, knowing no God or man in their aspirations.

Mr. McNAMARA. Mr. Santo, do you still believe that the various U.S. cases you mentioned a while ago, Sacco-Vanzetti, Tom Mooney, Billings, the Scottsboro boys, and so forth, were frameups?

Mr. SANTO. I never studied those cases with an objective eye—but due process of law, the right to counsel of one's own choosing, the system of trial by jury, the right to a defender of the accused, the constitutional provisions against self-accusations—much abused by the Communists in America, who as well as some innocent people consider the fifth amendment as the shield of the Republic but actually many of whom aim for the destruction of that Republic and that very Constitution whose fifth amendment protects them—judges trained, sworn in the administration of justice in an independent manner from the executive and the legislative branches of the Government, all of this, plus the practically unlimited opportunities of appeal and some more appeal, seem to give the answer to your question.

There might have been some, in some instances, miscarriages of justice, but they certainly were not premeditated, preconceived, cold blooded abuse of the judicial power. The decision fairly reached might have been mistaken, but they were the best judgment of honest members of juries and were ultimately upheld by even more honorable judges of the various courts of appeal and finally by the members of that august body, the nine old wise men who constitute the Supreme Court of the United States.

Therefore, without at this time going into details, I must submit that the overwhelming chances were that those were not frameups, but just punishment meted out for actual commission of crimes as charged.

Mr. McNAMARA. All these, of course, have been controversial cases, Mr. Santo, and in some cases, obviously, I think the Communist Party has made them controversial. In other cases, sincere, well-meaning people have questioned the verdicts, and of course, we can never have perfect justice under any system. We make human errors.

Mr. SANTO. Perhaps Sacco and Vanzetti died as innocent men, but they died in dignity, and what man can ask for more than to die in dignity? As long as the world lives, the dignity of that human spirit that was Vanzetti, his beautiful poems, will not leave this earth and its young generations, irrespective of his guilt or innocence. It should continue, the free spirit of the mistaken anarchist and the nihilist, Vanzetti, to inspire the young generations to struggle against tyranny, to struggle against inhumanity, to struggle against exploitation. But this young generation should learn that the organized inhumanity has finally reached its bastion of evil in the Kremlin, and not in Wall Street; in the rumblings of tanks on the streets of Budapest, and to a far lesser degree on the byways of Scottsboro; in the ruthless extermination of millions of innocent Russians, Hungarians, Lithuanians, Estonians, Rumanians, Bulgarians, and others, and not in the snuffing out of a life of one trade union leader who might or might not have used a bomb, mistakenly believing that, by doing so, he is furthering the cause of a trade union or of the working class.

Mr. McNAMARA. Mr. Santo, in conclusion, as far as our consultation on developments in Hungary are concerned, would you care to make any additional comments on the revolution?

Mr. SANTO. Volumes have been written in every language about the tragedy of the brave, hot-blooded, fiercely liberty-loving Hungarians who wrote a glorious page in the history of mankind by raising high their banner of revolt against Hungarian Communist tyranny, supported by the Russian Red Army. Two hundred thousand men and women and children ultimately were killed, driven out, or left Hungary when that struggle was lost.

Personally, for me, the revolution brought a revelation of the indomitable spirit of human beings and the ultimate failure of the crushing of the spirit of man by Communist or other totalitarian tyranny. It was crushed, but it remains the hope of the world, and that spark of revolt will never die.

Personally, there was one additional piece of revelation during the Hungarian revolution, in itself a small, little incident that raised the curtain into one little corner of that dark room of the functioning of

the worldwide net of espionage of Communist secret police. It wasn't only that the secret police officers ran like rats, deserting the ship, catching planes in Austria to fly away to Australia. It was the answer to my own question of who was assigned by the Hungarian secret police to watch over me.

Through the years, of course, I learned that the secret police had agents everywhere. It was around 1954 that the man in charge of the meat industry, a pock-faced, dour young man, came to discuss with me certain items of interest to the secret police of Hungary and to express their dissatisfaction with the class enemies still employed in the meat division of the Ministry of Food, consisting of some 66 men and women.

He came to demand from me—as previously the head of the personnel department of the Ministry of Food, the secretary of the party organization of the ministry, and on numerous occasions Minister Ivan Altomare himself did—the firing of a man by the name of Jenó Siki.

Siki was a young Hungarian whose parents had emigrated to the United States—and according to the personnel department, the party organization of the Ministry, and the Minister himself, that was a hideous crime. All along the years, I refused to comply with that request, which was tantamount to a command. I argued that two-thirds of my division consisted of working-class cadres, whose scholastic training, experience, ability in administration, were extremely weak, and that this man Siki who even though not a member of the Communist Party of Hungary, was the mainstay of my division, inasmuch as he had experience since 1945 in administration, that is, in writing of documents, letters, preparing reports, which the others simply could not do.

Finally came the pock-marked, dour man, who each time visiting me gave another name on the telephone, and thus I could never refuse to receive him. He said that Siki had to go. But since I was by then one of the very few people with decades of membership in the Communist Party, an old "Bolshevik," I could and did refuse. He kept on revisiting me, always granting an additional 6 months to see to it that Siki was fired from his job.

Of course they could have simply cut off his pay and thus solved what at that time for them seemed to be a problem. But that didn't happen; of course I was happy and never added up 2 plus 2 equaling 4.

During the second attack of the Russian Red Army in November 1956, I sat alone in my bullet-ridden office, answering telephone calls and doing the best I could to provide with meat the rebelling people of Budapest, when in came Siki. I was glad to see him, because very few members of my division were brave enough to come and do their duty after October 23. We talked, and together we went to the window, whose panes were broken from air concussion during the preceding week. As we stood there, the both of us, looking out the window, on the Lánchíd, the Chain Bridge of Budapest spanning the Danube, suddenly from somewhere a salvo of bullets were fired, aimed at us. The shots went a couple of inches above our heads. We ducked and Siki was shaken. It was immaterial for me at that point whether I lived or died. In this situation, where Siki was shaken to the innermost depths of his soul, he told me the story that it was he



who was the agent of the secret police all through the years, ever since 1951, assigned the task of watching and reporting over me.

In 1951, upon leaving the office of the Ministry of Food, he was stopped by two men, who identified themselves as members of the secret police, ordered him to get into a car, and took him to Andrassy Ut 60, where he had to sign a pledge of secrecy, which included a paragraph that betrayal of that secrecy justified the secret police in killing him, and was compelled to agree to submit weekly reports concerning me.

Of course he claimed that he never reported anything untruthful or even damaging, but knowing the secret police, that was hardly true and certainly not material. What was significant was the devilish, devious, dirty method of roping in a guy who evidently was completely subservient to them, because upon his head, safety, and freedom hung the ineradicable fact that his parents lived in the United States, and that Siki would be the last person in my division in Hungary or in the world whom I would have ever suspected of being the fingerman against me. If this was so—and it was so—then obviously the organization and operations of the secret police, the supplying of denunciation, was a method of government, which was developed to the finest of all possible arts.

This fact, added to my previously gathered information, which amounted in a nutshell to this: The invisible government in all Communist countries is the organ of terror, the secret police. It consists of the most devoted, leading strata of the members of the Communist Party, of insignificant rank-and-file Communists, and innumerable other human beings who, while not members of the Communist Party, are compelled to serve in one capacity or another the orders of the secret police. The actual power of the government was not even the million-strong membership of the Workers' Party of Hungary, or of their various unit secretaries, district secretaries, Central Committee members, or those constituting the Political Bureau; the real power was in the hands of the one who could push the button, thus instructing and mobilizing the secret service forces for the carrying through of his orders.

It cleared up, to some extent, also the mystery of Elizabeth Bentley and Whittaker Chambers, whose disclosures in 1947 and 1948, prior to my departure for Hungary, simply didn't make sense to me. Seven years of Hungarian living in the so-called land of the proletarian dictator and People's Democratic Hungary made me learn an awful lot. There *were* spies; most everybody was a spy, everywhere could be spies, and nobody but a damned fool ought to underestimate the role, the importance, the worldwide net of paid, bribed terrorists and simply damn fool dedicated agents and professional sadists that constitute the Communist underground secret police net.

Mr. McNAMARA. On the basis of the 7 years you spent in Hungary, Mr. Santo, how firm a grip would you say the Communist Party has on the country today? How loyal to the government are even the party's members, people who if you asked them would say, "Yes; I am a Communist."

Mr. SANTO. I have too much appreciation of human intelligence to answer this question by saying that they are the same honest, idealistic, truthful Communists, as say, I was for long decades. They, too,

learned something, and a lot of them, if not all of them, know that they are lying, that they are serving the untruth, the evil, or the chimera of a never-never land.

Human beings are not dogs, Pavlovian methods notwithstanding. A spark of the eternal spirit of human beings remains in life. And if in self-protection or in self-delusion, in self-abasement, in self-rape, they say, "We are Communists," many of them are not and know that they are not. They do what they do because they believe they have to do it in order to survive, to hold their jobs, and being charitable, one must presume that many of them hope for a better day, a day of a new, successful revolution. That, of course, will depend to a large extent on developments in Hungary, in the world at large, but most particularly in the Soviet Union and in the United States of America.

Mr. McNAMARA. Mr. Santo, the Hungarian revolution is about 6½ years old now. At the time it developed, and for months afterward, there was much debate in this country about what the United States as the leader of the free world and its allies should do. Without discussing whether or not the free world failed the Hungarian people, what, in your estimation, today, is the net effect of the Hungarian revolution? Looked at in the context of what the free world did and what it didn't do, did it win, did it lose?

Mr. SANTO. Historically speaking, the 1956 revolution of the Hungarian people against Communist tyranny can only be compared to the 1905 Petrograd revolution of the downtrodden and exploited by czarism and abused workers of Petrograd.

This historical significance of the Hungarian revolution lies in the fact that it shows that people, some people, might want to bring about a Communist revolution, but that after experiencing it on their own hide for some number of years, nobody or most nobody would want to keep it, if there was a decent alternative that was available to them.

The free world gained, or at least certainly should have gained, a large measure of reassurance as to its ultimate superiority, and added conviction to keep up its way of life in opposition to the Communist system.

The free world should have also learned—and it did—that it is in mortal danger and that new ways, methods, and approaches are necessary in view of that mortal danger of tyrannical communism, which is hell bent on world domination.

There is a lot being said and written these days on both sides of the Iron Curtain concerning coexistence. As a result of the Hungarian revolution and many other developments, the world should not forget that Lenin said:

As long as capitalism and socialism exist, we cannot live in peace: in the end, one or the other will triumph—a funeral dirge will be sung either over the Soviet Republic or over world capitalism.

Last but not least, the Hungarian revolution indicated that Lenin was quite right in reverse as far as the revolution was concerned. The weak spot of communism is the Communist Party itself, because most Communists are human, just like other people. Communists are, by and large, decent human beings just like the majority of the non-Communists, and because of that, they can be and should be reached with political, ideological, and moral weapons. The Achilles heel of

totalitarianism lies in the absolute necessity of its monolithic nature. Any small crack in that monolithic wall means a great deal more than the outside world believes. Every little crack should be paid attention to. Within the Communist parties, the smallest struggle ought to be nursed along, on the way of enlargement, because, ultimately, the hope of the world lies that these cracks will grow in size and depth, and that the underground force of the dissatisfaction of the million masses of people, when and if it does come, reaches culmination it will cause the cracks to be torn asunder.

Mr. McNAMARA. Based on your 28 years' experience as a Communist would you say that any Communist party can be termed a political party in the normal sense of that word?

Mr. SANTO. The Communist parties are not parties in the usual, accepted meaning of that word, no more than the dictatorship of the proletariat could possibly be the precursor of the brotherhood of mankind, nor of people's democracies having anything to do with either people or with democracies. The Communist parties are not parties, but national components of a worldwide apparatus, a tool whose manipulators are in the Kremlin.

Mr. McNAMARA. Would you say that Communists are bound together by what might be called a faith? We have heard more than once—it has often been said that communism is a religion, at least in some respects.

Mr. SANTO. It is not a religion, because while dogmatic, its dogmas are like the shifting sands, or more properly like the devil quoting the Bible. It could be more aptly considered a faith, because besides the body of theory, dogma, besides rational thinking at the end of which the Communist has answers—even if they are false—to all questions concerning politics, sociology, economy, ethics, morality, philosophy, or even biology, beyond all of that, a Communist must also have a mystical faith. This mystical faith must be of a very primitive nature, centering upon, on one hand, one individual, the Marx, the Lenin, the Stalin, the Rakosi, the Khrushchev, or some one individual, pretty much like the savages must have supreme faith in their tribal chief, who is all-wise, infallible, and incorporates in himself all earthly and heavenly virtues.

This faith has another arm in the belief in the collective ownership of the means of production as the end-all and cure-all of all ailments of society.

It is my belief that, while all comparisons have certain shortcomings, communism can be compared to addiction much more than to religion or faith. The Communist philosophy provides the same escape for people who desire something else than what they have, who are in some manner unfulfilled in their life, in their family, in their love, for people who are ambitious and find no quick outlet for energies—they might turn to morphine, cocaine, or they might join the Communist Party.

There are especially in the affluent society of America many individuals who have feelings of guilt or shame because undeservedly, they believe, they were born to wealth. There are many people who have the opinion that everything can and should be tried once. Such people might take one single shot of morphine, to remain forever addicts, pretty much the same way as some innocent housewife in her

ennui, boredom, leisure from tasks, responsibilities, work, attends a meeting of some united front, or another for a deserving cause like peace. Such people discover after a while that they need more meetings, or more shots, until their addiction is complete, and they are helpless cogs, bolts, and wheels in the Communist apparatus.

Mr. McNAMARA. Can you have communism without Stalinism? Will communism be—can it be—any different under Khrushchev?

Mr. SANTO. No, I do not believe so. As a matter of fact, all indications are that Stalin only did precisely what Lenin did in a much more human, intelligent, and therefore not so easily discovered manner, and Khrushchev is doing exactly what Stalin did, and had to do.

One reads quite a lot nowadays about the fact that Khrushchev is not a man molded in the image of Stalin.

For one thing, Khrushchev, as well as Mikoyan and the others who are now ruling the roost, were molded by Stalin. For another thing, while people are saying that Khrushchev is something different than Stalin because his opponents Malenkov, Molotov, Zhdanov, and others, Bulganin, are still alive, have jobs, and are doing work, Stalin allegedly killed them or caused them all to be killed. But this is false.

Stalin took 5 long years—from 1924 to 1929—to achieve even the expulsion of Leon Trotsky from the Bolshevik Party, and as a matter of fact, the killer's ax, originating in the Kremlin, crushed the skull of Trotsky only in 1940, 16 years later. The Bukharins, the Radeks, and the others who ultimately around 1937 and 1938 lost their lives in the great purge, the great public purges of Russia, also had some 14 years to live yet.

Khrushchev and his associates jointly decided—in this instance, very cleverly—that Beria had to die, not only for the crimes that he committed, but also for the knowledge of the complicity of the Khrushchevs and the others who are now running Russia just like Genrikh Yagoda, first head of NKVD, was killed by Stalin for the same reason.

Mr. McNAMARA. It was to save their own skins that he had to die?

Mr. SANTO. Precisely. The pattern of Stalin was the playing of the right and the center against the left, and after the left was liquidated, the playing of the center against the right, and after the right was liquidated, the liquidation of the center. Those names that appeared in the purge trials—the Bukharins, the Kamenevs, the Zinovievs—were the apostles of the Russian revolution. It was not as though Judas betrayed Christ, but as though after the crucifixion of Jesus, the apostles banded together and killed off each other, the only one remaining alive being Judas—Stalin.

Will history repeat itself with Khrushchev? It has already begun so. Molotov is gone, so is Malenkov, Bulganin, Zhdanov, and who knows how many others? The time will come when those remaining alive will be killed because they must be killed, since they know too much, are in opposition, or could certainly become the opposition, to the rule of Khrushchev.

It is possible that at some point Stalin became a murderous paranoiac, but most of the killing was done in order to assure his individual rule, without opposition and without a possible focus of opposition in a land enveloped in fear, anxiety, and terror. That is the explanation for the murders, the tortures, the slave camps, because in the

Communist society there is only one thing for which leaders can struggle—for more power, always more and more power; and absolute power, as has been said, corrupts absolutely.

Mr. McNAMARA. For many years, Mr. Santo, your life was based largely on the belief that in order for the world's evils to be cured, it is essential that private property be abolished. What is your belief about private property today?

Mr. SANTO. The mystical belief that all ills and all ailments of society can be cured, that human nature, being what it is, can be changed for the better, has its foundation in the convictions as originated by Marx that for all of these ills and ailments, fallacies and weaknesses of human nature, the private ownership of factories, mines, banks, stores, and the land is responsible.

During the 7 years' living in the country where there was no private property, because in easy or violent stages everything was nationalized, expropriated, made collective property, I found that this system of society was in no way superior to the society which is based on the private ownership of property. It was not more efficient, by and large; it did not lead to the production of more wheat or more shoes or more steel in relationship to the amount of human labor involved. The only difference was that everything over and above the miserable pittance paid out in the form of wages and salaries went into the collective coffers of the state.

Everybody knows that all Communist countries are suffering from what seems to be an irreparable, cancerous state of affairs in regard to agriculture. Less people appreciate the fact that the widely heralded and publicized Russian achievements, measured in decades as far as industry and industrialization are concerned, are in no way superior to similar periods of time with vastly less human sacrifice involved in such countries as Japan between 1865 and 1905, at the end of which Japan was strong enough to defeat Czarist Russia; or if one compares the same period of industrial development on the basis of free economy and private ownership of factories, mines, railroads, and banks in the United States, the development of heavy industry, of a much more human and certainly a much more efficient steel industry as compared with that of Russia, would be obvious to all.

The collective ownership of the means of production, coupled with a dictatorship, is not superior to a system of government based on free private property, available to all as a result of hard labor—hard, dedicated, talented labor—which is properly managed under a free government.

People when judging the industrialization of the Soviet Union, especially the people of the so-called new nations of the underdeveloped world, are forgetting two things: the immense physical magnitude of Russia and the availability there of practically every type of raw material and natural wealth. The second factor which is forgotten, particularly by liberals and anti-Fascists and Socialists, is that for a limited period of time, in a limited way, a dictatorship such as the ones of the late and unlamented Mussolini and Hitler also produced some seemingly glorious results. Hitler, too, could build factories quickly. New automobile highways appeared as though by magic, unemployment difficulties disappeared, but the price was to be

found in the concentration camps, in the gas chambers, in the jails, in inhumanity. So similarly in the communistic dictatorship.

Mr. McNAMARA. Other than the quotations from Lenin which you placed in the record a few moments ago, do you have any other observations to make on the subject of peace with the Soviet Union? Do they believe the propaganda they put out about peace?

Mr. SANTO. With the Communists—and the higher the Communist stands in the hierarchy the more so—there is a barbed wire, an Iron Curtain, between the brains and the mouth. What the Communists say about the peace, that it is wonderful, it is of course taken from the Bible. And peace is wonderful.

For the Communist Party, for the Kremlin, "peace," like all other words, is a tool. The world knows how the American League Against War and Fascism, that attracted many hundreds of thousands of persons, disappeared when the word "fascism" had to become respectable, because Stalin and the Russian Government alined themselves with it. The word "peace" and the true peace movements are very noble movements. They ought to be supported, if that peace movement recognizes that the Soviet Government doesn't give a damn whether they achieve world domination through peace or through war, as long as they can dominate the world.

And secondly, all peace movements should declare themselves against communism, fascism, nazism, and all types of totalitarianism, which are the enemies of peace. There are some people who might believe that the Soviet Union is not warlike, doesn't want war, has too much achievement in the way of factories, cities, too many people under their rule to sacrifice them in a war. Perhaps Milovan Djilas, a leading Yugoslavian Communist, presently in jail for having written a book entitled *Conversations with Stalin*, is an authority that ought to be listened to, because evidently what he wrote was the best truth, as he knew it, in the previously mentioned book.

Djilas says:

If we assume the viewpoint of humanity and freedom, history does not know a despot as brutal and as cynical as Stalin was. He was methodical, all-embracing, and total as a criminal. He was one of those rare terrible dogmatists capable of destroying nine tenths of the human race to "make happy" the one tenth.

If the situation warranted it, if the possibility was given, Khrushchev and Mao Tse-tung similarly would not disdain destroying nine-tenths of humanity to keep one-tenth "happy." Which means under their rule.

Mr. McNAMARA. Mr. Santo, why have you decided to do what has undoubtedly been so difficult for you, to tell in this fashion the story of your personal tragedy?

Mr. SANTO. When finally I raised a question in myself and for myself, asking "How did I get here?", of course in my mind I saw myself as a young man of decency, of honor, and—if I might be permitted to say so—an overdose of naive idealism, only to have taken through 28 years of my adult lifetime one step after another leading to what could be considered nothing else but a den of criminals, or monsters, of modern Lucifers. If only a particle of my altruism, idealism, my love for my human brothers with all their weaknesses, shortcomings,

needs, desires, hopes, remained within me, I felt the need of telling what happened to me.

Often in my Communist life, at the end of a bitter and losing struggle, I felt myself as a grain of sand on the wings of the wind of time. At the bitter moment of the barbarous crushing of the Hungarian revolution, a picture appeared in my mind's eye: that happy land of America, far away beyond the ocean, where the white clouds peacefully floated in the sky, where even at the sacrifice of some bloody noses and frozen feet, the weekly unemployment insurance check that crowned the efforts of the hunger marchers in 1934 amounted in purchasing power to more than the pay of the chief of the division of the meat industry in 1956, where a workingman at the end of a day's work could drop in the corner bar and have a few with his friends, a land where black was black and white was white, and the roses didn't grow—as they never could grow on dung heaps—but were raised on open fields of the good earth and in warm hothouses.

This land, this Government, these people, the United States of America, whom I love, appeared to me; and in that moment of bitter trial, disillusionment, reaching into the marrow of my bones, I cried out "America." Ultimately, through the long roundabout way, I have arrived here.

Mr. WILLIS. Mr. Santo, in the name of the committee, I want to thank you for this consultation. We know from past experience that what you have done is not easy, but I am convinced that this record will be an effective instrument in awakening many persons to the awful truth about communism that you learned only through bitter experience. It is also quite possible, I believe, that this record may be instrumental in opening the eyes of some, especially the youth and perhaps even some of the people who were comrades of yours in the Communist Party in past years.

Thank you again.

(Whereupon, at 4:45 p.m., Tuesday, March 5, 1963, the consultation was concluded.)





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