Khrushchev indicates, Bierut died in Moscow in March 1956, right after Khrushchev's "secret speech" exposing Stalin's crimes. Ochab, in a speech of April 1956, made it public that Gomulka had been released, and that he had been wrongly imprisoned. But Ochab still asserted that Gomulka's political views were erroneous and had to be fought.

At first, after April 1956, Gomulka and his political allies, Kliszko and Loga-Sowinski, as well as Spychalski, were not allowed to rejoin the PUWP, nor were their views or activities given publicity. But that quickly changed as post-Stalin ferment and protest increased in Poland, especially after the events in Poznan in June 1956, when masses of workers demonstrated against the low standard of living. Violent clashes with police and troops ensued, with about sixty workers being killed. At the October 1956 plenum of the PUWP Central Committee, Gomulka and his allies were restored to the PUWP Central Committee and Gomulka was elected first secretary.

(The information in this note comes from Nicholas Bethell's *Gomulka: His Poland, His Communism* [New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969]; and Peter Raina, *Gomulka: Politische Biographie* [Cologne: Verlag Wissenschaft und Politik, 1970].)

For more on Marian Spychalski., Zenon Kliszko, and Ignacy Loga-Sowinski, see Biographies. [GS]

79. They had been in China to attend a congress of the Chinese Communist Party held September 15–27, 1956. [SK]

80. The delegation that went to Poland on October 19–20, 1956, consisted of Kaganovich, Khrushchev, Mikoyan, and Molotov. [SK]

81. The Belvedere Palace was built in 1764 as the residence of King Stanislaus Augustus Poniatowski. It also served as the residence of presidents of twentieth-century Poland. [SS]

82. Konstantin Konstantinovich Rokossovsky was minister of defense of Poland from 1949 to 1956. [MN] Within a year of Rokossovsky's arrival in Warsaw, 40 of the 52 generals in the Polish army were Soviet army generals. Each year about 100 senior Soviet officers were transferred to the Polish army. [SS]

83. On Marshal Ivan Stepanovich Konev, see Biographies.

84. Silesia was ruled by princes of the Polish Piast dynasty from 1102 to 1675. [SS]

85. Khrushchev is here referring to the workers' protests in the Baltic cities of Poland in summer 1970 that were suppressed with the use of deadly force by Polish troops and police. [GS]

86. Eduard Gierek was first secretary of the CC of the PUWP from 1970 to 1980. See Biographies. [SS]

HUNGARY

The report at the closed session of the CPSU Twentieth Congress on Stalin's personality cult and abuses of power had especially painful repercussions in Poland and Hungary. It's not surprising. The Hungarian Communist Party had also been badly battered [by Stalin's abuses of power].[1] Bela Kun, leader of the Hungarian Communists, was shot [in Stalin's purges in Moscow in 1939].[2] Many other Hungarian comrades who worked in the Comintern fell victim to repression. After the defeat of Nazi Germany, Rakosi came into the leadership of the Hungarian Communists.[3] Rakosi was an honorable man, deserving of confidence and even respect despite a number of shortcomings. Everyone has shortcomings. He was loyal to Communist ideals and served time in the Hungarian prisons for many years. Later he was exchanged and went to the USSR [from Hungary].[4]

I met with Rakosi a number of times when I was working in Kiev; he came to visit there. I received him and had conversations with him. In 1945, when

he left our country again and went back to Hungary,[5] he began to carry out the same work other Communists were doing in other "people's democracies."

International reaction accuses us of imposing Communism in the countries we occupied after Germany's defeat. That's true, but the same accusation can be made against the Western capitalist countries. The most flagrant example was that they literally unleashed a civil war in Greece.[6] Who was it that organized the war in Greece? The West! And Churchill in person. In his memoirs he describes riding in a tank in Salonika and observing British troops taking reprisals against Greek patriots and democrats.[7] In various forms reactionary forces undeniably relied on the presence of U.S. troops to strengthen the capitalist system in France and Italy.

So then, isn't that a just accusation [against the Western powers]? We don't deny that as Communists we gave assistance to the progressive forces. The Communist parties of those countries stood at the head of the progressive forces. We did all we could to support progressive initiatives in the countries we occupied. Subsequently they organized their own governments. They were officially recognized and became independent countries with their own independent national governments.

As head of the Communist Party Rakosi carried out a unification with other progressive political forces in Hungary. Unfortunately, he was complicit in the extermination of loyal cadres. It's true that in the first years after the war he did resist Stalin. When Stalin gave him the names of the latest in a series of "enemies of the people," among whom were members of the Hungarian Communist Party, Rakosi didn't agree with him. He argued that they were honorable people and that he trusted them. But Stalin immediately sent his "advisers," mainly Chekists [that is, secret police], to all the fraternal Communist parties. Many of them had already "distinguished themselves" in the USSR with the bloody methods of repression they used on whoever fell into their hands. Such "advisers" showed up in Hungary, too. Any such agent is bound to want to justify his existence by showing off his "good work." And what does his work consist of? Finding enemies of the people and showing Stalin how perspicacious he is, how skilled he is at uncovering and exposing enemies, thus justifying his assignment and the material benefits that accompany his position. Such agents were provided for very well by comparison with the incomes of other strata of working people or other social strata.

When Rakosi would come to Moscow, it was not a matter of him reporting to Stalin about enemies of the people in Hungary; rather, it was Stalin who pointed them out to him. He would say, here, this one is doing such-and-such, and you don't see it. You're blind. A blind man will bring our cause to ruin

and bring himself to ruin. Rakosi would defend himself. This happened once in my presence. All the members of the AUCP Politburo were present, but we couldn't say a word. After all, intelligence information about the "people's democracies" was reported only to Stalin, and he decided what was necessary or not necessary for Politburo members to know.

Did Stalin trust Rakosi? He did and he didn't. He sowed seeds of doubt about Rakosi. That was typical of Stalin.

Once I heard Stalin say: "Rakosi always comes to the Soviet Union when I'm on vacation. He finds out that I'm in the Caucasus and comes there to have a rest, too. That means he has some secret informers."

This was a foolish supposition. Not only Rakosi but everyone else knew when Stalin went on vacation. All he had to do was call up Poskrebyshev at Stalin's secretariat and find out where Stalin was on vacation.[8]

Imre Nagy also enjoyed Stalin's confidence. He had been a Communist since 1919. He came to the fore in the Hungarian revolution of 1919, which had been carried out under the leadership of Bela Kun. He held a leading position in the government and in the Hungarian Communist Party.[9]

[Erno] Gero was a man of a different makeup.[10] He was more concerned with theoretical work, political education of the masses, and the work of political enlightenment. He was better trained theoretically, and his character was such that he was inclined to stay closed up in his office, at his paperwork. In my view Gero deserved respect and confidence. I don't know where he is now or whether he's alive. It seems to me he's alive and well, living somewhere in the Soviet Union. I have nothing bad to say about Gero. Only good things.

Janos Kadar[11] was a young man compared to the cadres of the Stalin era. He came to the fore after the Hungarian revolution of 1919. He was a product of the underground work of the Hungarian Communist Party. After the defeat of the [1919] revolution Kadar headed the Communist Party of Hungary for a time. Later the Communist Party was dissolved. He was secretary of the Central Committee, and the decision to dissolve was made with his participation. Kadar himself ended up in prison [in Hungary]. The Hungarian reactionary forces arrested him. After the defeat of the Germans Kadar was promoted to the government, where he held the post of minister of internal affairs. When the pogrom began [that is, Stalin's assault on "enemies of the people" inside the Hungarian Communist Party], Kadar was one of those who fell into the meat grinder. He too was arrested. That was the work of Farkas—a long-standing member of the Communist Party who proved to be a person of the Beria type, a careerist and a person with abnormal inclinations, a kind of sadist.[12] I was later told what scorn and contempt Farkas displayed

when he interrogated honest people. And as if that wasn't enough, he dragged his own son into the bloody maelstrom. He made his son one of the butchers and executioners, too. Farkas became Hungary's real boogeyman, the embodiment of terror and death. And Kadar personally experienced all his mocking cruelty.

Kadar never returned to the subject of what he had experienced back then, and I didn't want to ask him. I didn't want to aggravate his unhealed wounds.

As for Ferenc Munnich, it's simply a miracle that he avoided the sweep of the grim reaper's scythe wielded by Farkas.[13]

I had known Munnich since 1930. When I was a student at the Industrial Academy I was called up for military refresher training as part of the Moscow Proletarian Division,[14] and I met Munnich there. He was working in a [Soviet] foreign trade organization, carrying out some sort of party functions. In the Moscow Proletarian Division he and I lived in the same tent, belonged to the same platoon, and ate out of a common kettle. He was a cheerful fellow, a former officer of the Austro-Hungarian army. He knew a lot of soldiers' jokes and was an excellent bedtime storyteller. He seemed to me a good comrade. Rakosi had a certain distrust of him. To rid himself of Munnich's presence in Hungary in the late 1940s Rakosi constantly sent him off to be ambassador to one or another country. Thus he ended up in the Soviet Union again [as Hungary's ambassador there]. It was an honorable form of exile, of a special kind. When I encountered him at official receptions I sensed that he was suffering a lot at being torn away from his homeland.

Let me return to 1956. In Poland a struggle developed in the top echelons of the party, but in Hungary the entire party organization of the capital city was drawn into the struggle. The clashes were sharper than in Poland. Political prisoners began to be set free. Kadar was freed and was immediately elected secretary of the Budapest city party organization. At the same time relations between Rakosi and Imre Nagy became more strained. There had been enmity between them for a long time, and we tried from Moscow in all sorts of ways to reconcile them. Rakosi accused Nagy of belonging to the right wing and considered him someone who had degenerated and was no longer a Communist. They came to the Soviet Union together once. Rakosi accused Nagy over the question of collectivization in Hungary, and Nagy rebutted him not only harshly but even viciously, and tears glistened in his eyes. But Rakosi continued to hurl political accusations against him. However, Stalin didn't have Nagy arrested. They say that was because Nagy had helped Stalin destroy Comintern cadres in the USSR. I don't exclude the possibility that he was an NKVD agent back then[15] and that Stalin considered him one of his own.

Meanwhile in Hungary events were developing at an extremely rapid pace. The Central Committee of the Hungarian Workers Party and Rakosi lost their influence. Not only could Rakosi no longer issue any orders that would be followed or influence the activity of Communist Party members, but also his name acquired the connotation of something despicable. In Budapest normal life was disrupted. Shooting incidents began to occur, mainly against Hungarian Chekists. They suffered substantial losses. Then, too, large demonstrations developed. This movement was headed by Nagy. People were demanding: "Give the leadership to Imre Nagy! Down with Rakosi!"[16]

Rakosi turned coward and appealed to us by phone to send an airplane right away to get him out of Budapest. He was afraid reprisals would be taken against him. And we did help him. Now the Central Committee of the Hungarian Workers Party was headed by Erno Gero. Such turmoil and trouble, such hurly-burly *(zavarukha)*, developed in Budapest that Gero couldn't cope with it either. He was denied recognition as leader of the nation and was regarded as merely a cohort of Rakosi. They were accused of having committed atrocities, having carried out unjust arrests and executions and other sins [which they actually had committed]. Of course the responsibility for those belongs to the Soviet Chekists, the so-called advisers, and to Farkas and his people. Gero was soon forced to resign as well. And Nagy came into the leadership. We still had a glimmering of hope that he would preserve Communist leadership in the country since he himself was a Communist.[17]

However this man was now marching behind the mob, with immature young people as his main base of support. High school students were especially active, or so our people in Budapest reported. Mikoyan, Suslov, and other prominent Soviet officials went there.[18] Anastas Ivanovich [Mikoyan] reported: "I went to see Nagy. We started a conversation. Suddenly a group of youngsters burst in, high school students, all carrying weapons, and they reported to Nagy that they had done such-and-such and were going to do so-and-so. Then other young people of the same kind came in." We soon saw that an anti-Soviet campaign was raging under the leadership of Nagy. Slogans were being shouted such as "Down with the Soviets," "Down with the Soviet army," "Russians get out of Hungary." Shooting incidents in the streets increased in number. Our troops didn't intervene for the time being on either side. We wanted to maintain neutrality. Internal questions having to do with the Hungarian people should be solved by the social forces in that country through their own efforts. But then they began shooting at our people, too. The situation was getting white hot. Andropov[19] was then Soviet ambassador to Hungary. He coped well with his tasks as ambassador and

had an excellent understanding of the events. He reported about everything to us with his good knowledge of the local conditions and gave useful advice that flowed logically from the existing situation.

During those days, after our trip to Warsaw [on October 19–20], the situation in Poland was becoming stabilized, mainly thanks to the position taken by Comrade Gomulka. But meanwhile a full-scale war over the Suez Canal broke out in the Middle East [on October 29].

Moscow had to react to the British, French, and Israeli aggression against Egypt. Meanwhile bloody slaughter was unfolding in Budapest. Others had now joined the student youth, including workers. Armed detachments made their appearance, and there was fighting going on with the use of artillery, especially antiaircraft artillery. Apparently the insurgents had raided military arsenals.[20] The peasants remained completely on the sidelines in these events. They continued their daily work in spite of the anti-collective farm appeals issued by Imre Nagy.

Nagy demanded that we withdraw Soviet troops from Hungary. But the Warsaw Pact existed, after all [and Hungary was a member state]. In our view only a legal government could make such a demand, but Nagy had come to power as the result of a coup. The Hungarian parliament had not discussed this question, and we felt that this demand did not have legal validity. A witch-hunt was unfolding against Communist Party members in Budapest, especially against Chekists. Party committees and secret police organizations were being smashed. People were being killed and hung by their heels, and other savage executions were committed. We withdrew our troops from the capital city, in order not to complicate the situation. In part they were based at a nearby military airfield. But our ambassador and other people were still in Budapest, and from them we knew what was going on there.

The Presidium of the CPSU Central Committee came to the conclusion that it would be unforgivable for us to observe neutrality and not provide aid in the struggle against counterrevolution, which was beginning to manifest itself along many different lines. White émigrés were returning to Hungary; some came by plane directly from Vienna to Budapest. The NATO countries were also wedging their way into the situation, contributing to civil war, with the aim of eliminating the revolutionary gains in Hungary and putting it back on the capitalist track. In order to decide on the spot what specific actions should be undertaken, Mikoyan and Suslov flew back to Budapest.[21] During the day they were in the city, and they spent the night at the military airfield where our troops were located.

We wanted to be correctly understood. We were not pursuing selfish aims but were striving to act in the spirit of proletarian internationalism. In connection

with this point of view we thought it necessary to consult with the fraternal countries and parties, first of all with the Chinese Communist Party.

We addressed a request to Mao Zedong that the Chinese send someone—anyone they found it possible to send—to Moscow for talks on the question of the events in Hungary. Without our support much proletarian blood would be shed there. China responded quickly. Liu Shaoqi flew into Moscow and with him were Deng Xiaoping and Kang Sheng. It was proposed that Ponomaryov[22] and I represent our side in the talks. I don't remember who else might have been part of the delegation from the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

We held our sessions at one of Stalin's former dachas, a place called Lipki [meaning "Linden Trees"]. A vacation resort is located there now. We sat together all night long. We weighed, from every angle, all the pros and cons of using armed force. From one moment to the next we each took opposing positions. At one point Liu Shaoqi proposed that we should wait and see, that the working class of Hungary would regain its strength, realize that the uprising was counterrevolutionary, and deal with it by itself. We agreed with him. Then we began to discuss further, and doubts arose. There was a danger that by now it would be difficult for the working class to cope with the situation in Budapest. The workers themselves had partly been drawn into the counterrevolution, especially young workers. Therefore we should provide aid, especially since our troops were in the vicinity of Budapest. Again and again we discussed the question and came to the conclusion that we had to give our assistance.

I don't remember how many times our positions changed. Each time when we had come to a general agreement, regardless of whether we agreed to use force or not to, Liu Shaoqi would consult with Mao [by phone]. Mao Zedong approved both the former position and the latter. We ended our all-night session with the decision not to use armed force. I went home. Liu Shaoqi and the Chinese delegation remained where they were. Stalin's former dacha was assigned as the residence for the Chinese delegation.

I arrived home toward morning. I couldn't really sleep. Budapest was like a nail being driven into my head and it gave me no rest. It was a historic moment. What decision should we make? Should we move in Soviet troops and crush the counterrevolution, or should we wait until the internal forces of Hungary could cope with it? It might happen that the counterrevolution would temporarily gain the upper hand, and then a great deal of proletarian blood would be shed. And if NATO penetrated through Hungary into the midst of the socialist bloc of Eastern Europe, things would go hard for all of

us. There was plenty to think about. We understood of course that an uprising had taken place and that the government formed as a result of that uprising did not have a mandate from the people. So then, what next? That same morning [November 1] we gathered again to discuss the question at a session of the Central Committee Presidium of the CPSU.

I reported how the discussion with the Chinese delegation had gone, how our views had kept changing, and how in the end we had agreed and came to the common opinion that we should not use armed force. Immediately I reminded the others what might be the consequences if we did not lend a hand of assistance to the Hungarian working class in time, and if the counterrevolutionary elements were able to consolidate. They were already beginning to control the government headed by Imre Nagy. Although he was a Communist, Nagy was no longer speaking in behalf of the Communists but only in his own name. Various émigrés had gathered around him; they had fled from Hungary after the socialist order was established there, and now they had returned. This indicated the direction developments would take if the counterrevolution was victorious. We discussed for a long time. In the end we decided that it would be unforgivable if we failed to provide aid to the Hungarian working class. We decided to use our troops and to lend a helping hand to the working class of Hungary.

We summoned Marshal Konev, who was commander-in-chief of Warsaw Pact troops.[23] We asked him how much time would be needed to restore order in Hungary. He asked for three days. And he was given the order: "Get ready. And you'll be informed further on when to begin." After that [still on November 1] we went to the airport, all the members of the Presidium, and informed the Chinese comrades about our new opinion. There were no arguments. Liu Shaoqi said that if in Beijing it turned out people were thinking differently, he would notify us. The Chinese flew off. And we began to think about consulting further with the other socialist countries, above all Poland. The situation there was not much better [than in Hungary], but things had not gone as far as an armed uprising, and in fact the situation was being stabilized. We agreed to meet with the Polish comrades the next day on Soviet territory near the Polish border. The Presidium assigned Molotov, Malenkov, and me to go to this meeting. Some building or room was assigned to us at a Soviet military airfield near Brest on our side of the border. Soon Gomulka and Cyrankiewicz arrived. We also arranged with the Czechoslovak, Romanian, and Bulgarian comrades that on the same day [November 2]—but later in the day—we would arrive in Bucharest, and we asked that delegations from Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria come there too for an exchange of views on the Hungarian question.

We presented our point of view to Comrades Gomulka and Cyrankiewicz. They listened in silence. I asked the question: "What should we do?" Gomulka expressed his view that although the situation was very complicated, all the same armed force should not be used.

I asked: "What then should we do? Nagy is demanding withdrawal of Soviet troops from Hungary."

Gomulka said: "No, don't withdraw the troops."

I asked: "Well, what then? The active Communist Party members of Hungary are being exterminated. They are being killed and hanged. Should our troops just stand by and watch?"

Gomulka said: "Nevertheless, we would propose that the troops should neither be withdrawn nor should they be sent into action. We have to allow for the possibility that the government, by taking a counterrevolutionary position, will expose itself. Then the Hungarian working class itself will overthrow it."

I asked: "But how much time would that take?" Thus we failed to arrive at a common viewpoint.

We said goodbye and parted. They immediately flew back to Warsaw. We had arranged earlier that Molotov would return to Moscow and report to the CC Presidium about the position of the Polish comrades while Malenkov and I would fly to Bucharest, where there would be a meeting of representatives of four Communist parties. From Bucharest it was our intention to fly to Yugoslavia, to consult with the leadership of the Yugoslav Communists as well. That was all the more important because at first the Yugoslavs had actively supported Nagy. They had acted more or less as his advisers in the struggle against Rakosi.

In Bucharest representatives from Czechoslovakia with Novotny at their head were already present, as well as representatives from Bulgaria headed by Zhivkov. Comrade Gheorghiu-Dej and his colleagues took part in the discussion on behalf of the Romanian comrades.

We outlined the state of affairs that had taken shape in Budapest as well as our understanding of the prospects. We didn't have to present our position at length because the other comrades were no less well informed than we were. Their embassies in Budapest had also kept their governments informed. Besides, the inhabitants of border regions in Hungary had begun to seek contacts with inhabitants of bordering areas of Czechoslovakia and Romania, to get support from them. Some people had even asked for arms. In Bucharest all the comrades supported us unanimously, without any wavering. They agreed it was necessary to act immediately. The Romanians and Bulgarians raised a question. They wanted to participate in providing aid to the revolutionary

Hungarians with their military units. But we objected that no one should take part in the operation other than the Soviet troops in Hungary. There were enough of them. They were present on Hungarian territory in accordance with international agreements drawn up at the conclusion of World War II and had the obligation to maintain order.

There was no need for others to participate. I made a joke: "The Romanians are eager to go into battle. This is a familiar road for the Romanians. In 1919 they took part in suppressing the Hungarian revolution, and now they want to suppress the counterrevolution." They wished us success and urged us not to delay.

That very same evening we flew to Yugoslavia. We flew in an IL-14.[24] The weather was abominable. Below us were mountains. All around us was pitch darkness. A thunderstorm had begun and lightning was flashing. Without sleeping, I sat by the window of the airplane. I had flown a great deal before that, had used a plane all through the war, but never found myself in such turbulence. The plane was being flown by an experienced pilot, General Tsybin, but even for him the job was difficult.[25] A scout plane was flying ahead of us [whose function was to report, in advance, on weather conditions along the route]. It was also a passenger plane, and to some extent it was lighting the way for us, informing us what the conditions were in the sky ahead of us. But we soon lost contact with that plane and were obliged to orient ourselves somehow from the terrain, from landmarks beneath us. At the airfield where we were supposed to land [near Dubrovnik, Croatia], certain equipment was lacking. It was a primitive airfield from the time of the war, and our plane didn't have radar. It was only Tsybin's great skill as a pilot that enabled us to land safely. We learned that the plane ahead of us wasn't there. Where in the world was it? We were very concerned about the fate of its crew.

A car was waiting for us. We drove to the harbor [at Dubrovnik] to take a boat to the island of Brioni, where Tito lived.[26] We had to ride in a motor launch. From the shaking up he had endured in the plane, Malenkov[27] looked like a living corpse. In general, he suffered badly from motion sickness even when riding in a car on a smooth road. Out on the sea the waves were very rough. We got into a small motor launch. Malenkov lay down and shut his eyes. I even began to worry about him. But we had no choice. We had no time to sit by the seaside and wait for better weather. Finally we reached the island. Tito was waiting for us at the dock. He gave us a warm welcome, and we embraced and kissed, even though our relations with him had been strained previously and were now becoming more and more strained because of the events in Hungary. Our views on the Hungarian question, after all, did not

coincide. We went into Tito's residence, told him why we had come, and presented him with the same question.

I must confess that I expected that we would have to put up with an even more complicated and difficult attack from Tito than we had from Gomulka. But we were unexpectedly and pleasantly surprised. Tito said: "It's absolutely correct. Troops have to be sent into action immediately, and the counterrevolution must be crushed." He went on heatedly arguing the necessity for such measures. All the ammunition we had prepared to counter his attacks remained unused. Rankovic was also present.[28] We began a discussion about the Hungarian leadership. We ourselves didn't know who could head up a government. We were interested in Tito's opinion. He looked at Rankovic: "Well, go ahead. Say what you have to say!" he said to Rankovic.

Rankovic pulled out a notebook and spoke the name of a certain Hungarian: "It would be good to include him in a provisional revolutionary government. He's a very good activist."

I replied: "According to reports from our people in Budapest that name belongs to one of our most inveterate enemies. One who fully and completely takes the same positions as Nagy. He in fact is one of the organizers of the bloodshed."

Rankovic named another name, and I said: "He's the same sort, going by the information we have."

At that point Rankovic put his notebook away. His comments had confirmed more than ever our previous opinion that when Nagy began his struggle against Rakosi the Yugoslavs not only supported him but gave him solid assistance, and thus they had been among the organizers of the counterrevolutionary events. But what did that have to do with the situation now? Why were they now taking absolutely the opposite position?

What it amounted to was that the Yugoslav comrades were very dissatisfied with Rakosi, wanted to see him removed, and placed their bets on Nagy. But when they saw that the shooting in Hungary was tending toward the restoration of capitalism and that they consequently could end up having a counterrevolutionary capitalist Hungary as a neighbor, they became frightened. Especially because half a million Hungarians lived in Yugoslavia.[29] All that would create greater difficulties for the Yugoslav socialist government. Its leaders saw that their aims and intentions had been overridden by the counterrevolutionary events. What if those who gained the upper hand in Budapest were not the friends of Yugoslavia but newly arriving émigrés from the West, who were busy with their nefarious work after returning to Hungary? They were already rubbing their hands with glee, calculating that the issue was being decided

in their favor. That's why the Yugoslav comrades now not only began to support us but were even urging us on.

Tito asked the question: "Will anyone else from the socialist countries take part in this?"

I answered: "We have agreed that no one else will."

"Well, that's good. That's correct. The other socialist states should not in any way take part in this business. The USSR is a great power. Its troops are already present in Hungary on a legal basis [under the Potsdam Agreement], and they can provide aid to the Hungarian working class."

At that point I told Comrade Tito the joke we had recently directed at Dej. Then I said: "It would be good if we could take a rest now because early in the morning we have to fly back to Moscow."

Tito objected: "No, you should rest for a couple of days; then you can fly back."

He asked: "When were you going to begin operations?"

I answered: "We have made no final decision, but sometime in the near future." I didn't want to tell him the specific day, although before we had flown off we had given Konev the order to complete his preparations within three days. By that time [early in the morning on November 3], two days had already elapsed, so that in fact Soviet troops would begin operations the very next day [November 4]. We thanked Tito and said we had to return to Moscow immediately. Tito of course understood that the day for action had been set but that we simply didn't want to tell him. That's the way it was. After all, we thought that since the Yugoslavs weren't taking a direct part, they didn't need to know. The fewer people who knew, even if they were on our side, the better. Any unexpected leak of information could cost us dearly.

I asked Tito: "How would you see it if Munnich headed the government?" He and Tito had been prisoners of war in Russia together during World War I. They met in 1917. From his instantaneous reaction I understood that Tito had a negative attitude toward Munnich. I don't know for what reasons: "We have also been given advice in regard to Kadar."

Tito was overjoyed: "That would be the correct thing. I know him to be a very good Communist, an honorable and serious man."

I commented: "Our people say the same thing. He was secretary of the party's Budapest city committee and visited the Soviet Union in that capacity. I didn't meet him myself, but others among our people have a very high opinion of him as a man of principle deserving confidence." We mentioned some other names at that point, but today they're not relevant.

By that time Nagy had already formed his own government, and Kadar had become part of the leadership as one who had suffered under Rakosi. Munnich

also held a prominent post. Incidentally, even before we had flown out of Moscow, we had informed Andropov to pass on the message that we were inviting Munnich and Kadar to Moscow. They sometimes went to the military airfield near Budapest where our troops were located and spent the night there, considering that less dangerous. In Bucharest we found out that they had indeed gone to Moscow.

When I told Tito that we ought to get a little sleep, he said: "No, let's not go to sleep. Put up with it for a while and let's talk all night. There's not that much time between now and morning, and I'd like to spend these hours with you."

"All right," I agreed. I decided that I could get some sleep on the plane and that for the time being we would summon up our strength and get by without sleep.

I was curious and asked Tito: "Why are you sitting out here on this island? Some airplane could accidentally drop a bomb here, and there would be nothing left of your villa, and you'd be gone along with it. Anything can happen nowadays, with the war against Egypt going on. The British and the French know you have friendly relations with Nasser.[30] That doesn't bode well for you."

Rankovic added: "Yes, for so many years now I've been insisting that he should live in Belgrade. But he doesn't want to."

Tito countered: "I'm not well, and I need to bathe in the seawater." He suffered from either reticulitis or sciatica, and that's why he felt attached to the sea [for the curative effect of the seawater].

We began exchanging views on the events in the Middle East, and I saw that Tito was very alarmed by the situation there. It disturbed him that such a situation had arisen near Yugoslavia, and he was concerned for Nasser's fate. Our conversation was friendly as we sat there until dawn, at which time Tito said: "I'll go with you. I'll drive you there myself." We got in his car, he took the wheel, and off we went to the dock. Our parting was friendly; we kissed, and he wished us a safe trip. We returned by motor launch to the airfield and flew to Moscow. Our planes were still slow back then. It was not until late afternoon, close to evening [on November 3], that we reached the Soviet capital.

The members of the CPSU CC Presidium gathered immediately, and from the airport we drove directly to the Kremlin. Together with Malenkov we reported on the results of our fraternal discussions. Molotov[31] had reported earlier about our conversation on the border [with the Poles]. It was confirmed that a majority were in favor of immediate and decisive action. Right

there and then we set about establishing the composition of a provisional revolutionary government in Hungary, consulting with Kadar and Munnich.

Molotov spoke sharply against Kadar. He didn't think Kadar should be promoted to the post of leader of the Hungarian Workers Party. If Molotov was convinced of something, he spoke sharply and even somewhat nastily, to repel those who disagreed with him. He permitted himself to use insulting expressions in regard to Kadar (of course Kadar himself was not present). Everything Molotov said was based on the fact that Kadar had continued to regard himself as a member of the leadership headed by Nagy, and even now, when he had been in Moscow for two days, while Malenkov and I were away, he had begun to display uneasiness and was eager to return to Budapest. I understood Molotov. How could we promote a person if he considered himself a member of the leadership against which we were preparing to strike a blow? After all, he was supposed to be the leader of the fight against the current government. "I vote for Munnich," Molotov said insistently.

I replied: "I also am in favor of Munnich, especially since I know him well. He's a veteran Communist, but he's not suitable for the post of first secretary of the Central Committee. He could be chairman of the Council of Ministers, but he's not capable of playing the leading role in the party, because he doesn't have the necessary qualities. Kadar can manage better!" And I proposed that Kadar be made first secretary and Munnich be made chairman of the Council of Ministers. That combination seemed to me the best. I said: "Let's invite them both here." And we invited them to the Kremlin.

We told them bluntly right then and there that a counterrevolution had begun in Hungary and that it was necessary to move against it, using troops. That was the only possibility of restoring a normal situation and putting an end to the uprising then raging in Budapest. I watched Kadar closely. He was listening in silence. His turn came to speak: "Yes," he agreed, "you're right. To stabilize the situation now your help is needed." Well, but what about Nagy? It was clear to everyone that he was a transitional figure, a threshold beyond which unbridled, openly counterrevolutionary forces stood. They bore the name Nagy on their banner for the time being, disguising themselves with him as a Communist, while they themselves were carrying out anti-Communist work. Only in Budapest was such political activity evident; the other parts of the country remained passive.

Munnich also expressed his support for action with the help of Soviet troops. Both Kadar and Munnich expressed the assurance that the people of Hungary as a whole would support the suppression of the counterrevolution. We began

to form a government. Kadar and Munnich were the main ones busy with this, because they knew the people. When the government had been formed they notified us. They had proceeded from the idea of attracting both party members and non-party people on a broad basis, including people who had taken a position that was not at all clear during the uprising. I think they acted correctly, displaying a profound understanding of the moods of the people and the reasons that had caused the explosion. They saw that the uprising was not directed against the socialist basis on which the Hungarian state had been restructured. People had risen up against Rakosi and the abuses of power that had been permitted under him. I personally understood that Rakosi was not the main one to blame, although he did abuse power. Another person who took an active part in forming the new government was Antal Apro, a good comrade and an honest Communist who was involved in matters of economic planning.[32] He had flown to Moscow together with Kadar and Munnich. There were other people present, but their names escape my memory now. Kadar, Munnich, Apro, and the other comrades drafted an appeal to the working class, the peasantry, and the intelligentsia, and to the Hungarian people as a whole, calling on them to correctly understand the necessity to overthrow the government of Nagy and restore socialist foundations. They also drafted an appeal to the Soviet government, asking it to provide military assistance in suppressing the counterrevolution.

It might be said that Kadar had gone to Moscow, that there a pro-Moscow government was cobbled together, and that's all there was to it! But we could throw the same ball back in the direction of those who helped Nagy and the insurgents.

Imperialist circles throughout the world supported him, above all the United States of America. Under whose protection were they prowling around, taking reprisals against people? On whose planes from Vienna did agents of the capitalist countries and reactionary Hungarian émigrés return to the country?

Who was helping them? I'll say it bluntly: of course there was sponsorship and sympathy, and aid was provided. Both sides always support the forces that impress them favorably.

Yes, the Soviet Union supports all revolutionary forces. We do this, proceeding from our international obligations. We wage our struggle under the slogan, "Workers of the world, unite!" We consider it our duty to provide aid when people appeal to us—if we think it's possible to provide such aid. The enemies of Communism do the same, both secretly and openly, depending on the situation. Is that normal or abnormal? I think it's normal. There's a class struggle going on. The question is posed: "Who will prevail?"[33] While

we are opposed to exporting revolution, we are also opposed to the export of counterrevolution. At one public rally I said the following: "We have repaid our debt to the Hungarian people. In 1849, when there was a revolution in Hungary, Tsar Nicholas I, at the request of the Austrian government, threw his regiments against the revolution in order to suppress it. The power of the Austrian monarchy was restored, and those actions were a mark of shame on Russia. Today, when the counterrevolution has begun to take reprisals against the Hungarian working class and its vanguard, the Communist Party, the workers of the Soviet Union, have lent a helping hand to the working people of Hungary. We consider this a progressive mission, unlike the action carried out by Tsar Nicholas I."

There is no point in making complaints against the forces hostile to Communism. Society is divided into two classes, two sides. One of them exploits the working class and the laboring peasantry. These classes are antagonistic. In this struggle any and every opportunity may be seized. In the capitalist countries we too seek to gain more influence among the masses, spread our ideology among them, and direct social development along the path of socialist construction, the path of establishing workers' and peasants' power. Our opponents operate in the same way against us. They make use of any mistake we make, and in quite a few countries they are constantly searching for a chance to drive us back and strengthen capitalist influence. There's a battle going on. Who will prevail?! The capitalist class rejects the notion that it has outlived its usefulness; in fact it thinks it should rule forever.

We Communists, Marxists-Leninists, believe in our theory. We believe in our ideology. We are convinced that "labor will become the master of the world" [a line from the song "The Internationale"],[34] that victory will go to the working class. But this victory will not come of its own accord. This victory must be achieved through struggle. Peaceful coexistence between differing governmental systems is possible, but there can be no peaceful coexistence in ideology. That would be betrayal of the people by the Marxist-Leninist parties. I am convinced that we will win!

I once let slip an incautious remark in relation to America when I said that we would bury the enemies of the revolution. Enemy propaganda picked up my words and made a great hue and cry over them, claiming that Khrushchev and the Soviet people wanted to bury the people of the United States. Thus they used for their own purposes a phrase that had slipped out of my mouth. At a press conference, when this question was brought up, I explained that it was not we that were going to bury anyone, but that the working class of the United States itself would bury its enemy, the capitalist class.[35] This

was an internal matter in each country. The people themselves would decide what road they would take and by what methods they would achieve victory.

The revolutionary workers' and peasants' government of Hungary did not establish itself in Budapest right away. At first it went to Uzhgorod [a city in Transcarpathia in the southwestern part of Soviet Ukraine near the Hungarian border]. From there the new government appealed to the population over the radio, read out its program, and called on the people to support it. Now a new stage of the battle began to unfold. From Uzhgorod they moved to one of the Hungarian cities.[36] Even before our main forces went into action, all the airfields of Hungary were taken by Soviet troops without resistance. Only Budapest remained outside the control of the new forces. The majority of the peasants were not affected by the disturbances. The industrial centers wavered. In each of those a section of the Communists firmly supported the socialist system, though not all the Communists. It was necessary in advance to repel the attacks of those who wanted to make the interpretation that our action went against [the principles of] socialism and Marxist-Leninist doctrine. No! Only the enemies of socialism use such formulations. But they are incorrect!

The further course of events confirmed our hopes. The counterrevolution in Hungary was eliminated.

When we made the decision to use military force in Hungary, Mikoyan and Suslov were not present among us.[37] They were still in Hungary and returned at night [on November 1], before Malenkov, Molotov, and I had made our preparations to fly off to meet the Polish comrades [on November 2]. Mikoyan lived next door to me.[38] When he found out that we were getting ready to leave, he called me and said he wanted to meet. We met at the last minute. I was already dressed to go to the airport.

I told him about our decision. He began to object, fearing that in this way we would undermine the reputation of our government and our party. He spoke in opposition to the use of armed force. I replied: "The decision has already been made. And I also voted in favor!"

Mikoyan became upset. He said: "But we weren't there."

"You weren't there because you were away from Moscow [in Budapest]. We didn't have the option of waiting for you."

He still didn't agree: "I demand that a new meeting be convened."

I said: "The deadlines have been set. Nothing can be changed. Our whole plan would be disrupted. Molotov, Malenkov, and I must immediately be on our way. We have a flight to catch. I consider the decision that was made a correct one and that you are wrong."

Anastas Ivanovich [Mikoyan] became extremely upset and even threatened that he could not vouch for the consequences and as a sign of protest he might even do something to himself.

I said to him: "That would be very stupid, but I believe in your good sense. You will understand the correctness of our decision." With that we parted. I didn't have any talks with Suslov at that time.

Order was restored in Hungary quickly, with the exception of Budapest. Officers of the Hungarian army joined the struggle there, and organized military resistance began. Artillery was dragged inside buildings and was used to fire down the streets. Defensive strong points were established. But even there the fighting didn't last for more than three days. It could have been ended even earlier if the resistance had been crushed in a crude way. But in that case we would have had to use more destructive weapons, and we didn't want to destroy the city. The new government began to function and to win over supporters. We sent Malenkov on an assignment to Budapest. Communications had to be established between the new government and our army. Our troops in Hungary were commanded by General Kazakov.[39]

He understood his tasks correctly and skillfully maintained law and order in the country. The former Hungarian army actually no longer existed, and so our army had to assume the functions of maintaining order. Among other things, Kazakov set up a blocking force along the border with Austria to prevent the border from being used by forces hostile to socialist Hungary. The situation began to stabilize. The Workers Party was renamed; now it was called the Socialist Workers Party. Unfortunately, not all the people brought in to be part of the government and leadership of the party functioned smoothly.

By now the historians probably have sorted everything out and placed it on the shelves. There's no need now to make a great to-do about the disagreements of those days. But not everyone was able to orient themselves correctly at that time in relation to what was going on. They sometimes called the counterrevolution a revolution. Yet if the uprising had been revolutionary, then what should the government that suppressed the revolutionary outburst be called? Many people at that time, as the Russian saying goes, lost their way among three pine trees. In Moscow we regularly received Hungarian newspapers. A number of them continued to discuss the events from incorrect positions. It was said that the Russians had taken action against progressive forces. I called up Malenkov: "Are you aware of how the recent events are being described in the Hungarian newspapers?" I asked him.

He replied: "Yes, I've been following the papers."

"How come you're allowing such things instead of explaining that with such slogans we can never achieve normalization of the situation in Hungary?" I put the pressure on him. "If the slogan is permitted that the movement against Rakosi was a revolution, then what are the actions against Nagy to be described as?"

Malenkov sought to justify himself: "What can I do? I tell them that, but they don't agree."

I insisted: "This is a fundamental question. They don't agree because they don't fully understand the situation. This isn't something we can make peace with. In my view you aren't showing sufficient energy and perseverance."

"No, I'm doing everything I can, but they don't agree. I've discussed this with the new leadership."

At that point the CPSU CC Presidium voted in favor of my flying to Budapest.[40]

I had placed great hopes in Munnich. I couldn't understand how he, a seasoned veteran, "an old wolf," who had gone through the revolution, could fail to understand such things.[41] After all, how many years had he lived in the Soviet Union. You would think that by now he would be trained to have a correct understanding of events. I was met at the airport. I asked that we drive through the streets of Budapest, which I didn't know very well. I had been there in 1946 and had liked the city very much. It's beautiful and picturesque, well designed, with fine architecture. The Danube River is truly the jewel of Budapest, a lovely adornment, as are the mineral baths fed by hot springs located right under the city.

The city had not suffered especially great damage. Only some individual buildings had been destroyed or damaged by gunfire. On the other hand, the streets were full of garbage, which hadn't been collected for a long time.[42] I thought the city might have suffered more because the insurgents had used antiaircraft artillery, and our side had replied with artillery fire at the buildings where the counterrevolutionary forces had entrenched themselves.

Talks began. We gathered in some dimly lighted room. I don't know why. Probably some modernist influence. In the West they used such lighting, and sometimes even candles, for large official dinners. I'm going into this because I clearly remember that the room was not sufficiently well lit. The entire new Hungarian leadership was gathered there. We had our meal. The Hungarians treated us to their excellent goulash. Their wine is also remarkable. At the same time we held businesslike political discussions. I still didn't know Comrade Kadar very well; therefore I addressed my criticism mostly to Comrade Munnich. I did that because he and I had once been close friends, and I was

sure that he would correctly understand that in criticizing him I was addressing the other leaders of the Hungarian revolutionary government and party leadership as well. I asked: "Comrade Ferenc, how could you permit such events?"

He said: "You yourself know that I was the Hungarian ambassador to Moscow, and I'm not responsible for Rakosi." That was his brief reply. And it was correct. Then I raised the question of the newspapers.

Munnich again didn't want to go into the essence of the matter. He said: "Comrade Khrushchev, I have nothing to do with the newspapers."

Then another comrade stood up. A tall man with a fine head of hair, the editor of the newspaper we were talking about.[43] He too remained in the leadership subsequently. I consider him an honest Communist. He openly and honorably defended his position, but he didn't understand the problem in its most profound essence. And I thought to myself, "How many people like him did Rakosi 'salt away'?!" Any voice against Rakosi was considered a voice of revolution. That was the tragedy of the situation. Hungary's misfortune consisted in that. Many people acted on the basis of that oversimplified formula. The newspapers also picked up this theme, and they constantly reiterated that a revolution against Rakosi had taken place in their country. I started to speak: "Dear comrades, please understand that you are speaking out against yourselves. How can you rally people around you with such slogans? If your slogan is correctly interpreted, that a revolution occurred, that means that Nagy was heading a revolutionary government. Then what kind of government is yours? The people become disoriented, as do the working class and the Communists. You have to orient people correctly to tell them that a counterrevolution took place. Because if it wasn't a counterrevolution, how could we have used arms against it? Under what slogans did the uprising take place? They were antisocialist slogans. Nagy in fact was transformed into a screen behind which inveterate counterrevolutionaries concealed themselves, reactionaries who had returned from emigration. You have to understand events correctly yourselves and explain them properly to the people in order to organize them under your leadership."

I spoke for a fairly long time. But the Hungarian comrades very stubbornly opposed my opinion. They were worthy people, deserving great respect, but they didn't understand what had happened, and that's why they couldn't explain it all correctly to those who not only didn't understand but were making use of this incorrect slogan [that a revolution had taken place against Rakosi]. In the end, and with great difficulty, we came to agreement. And in the end they themselves threatened one of the editors of the leading newspaper who was present that if he and his newspaper insisted on taking the position [that

the movement against Rakosi had been a revolution], they would have to replace him and assign another editor. The threats had no effect on him. He was a man of principle. But it seems to me that he himself came to realize his error. Both his newspaper and some other press publications began to interpret events differently and began to call things by their real names, to say that a counterrevolution had taken place and now a revolutionary government had come into the leadership that was waging a struggle both against the remnants of the counterrevolutionary movement headed by Nagy and against Rakosi's distortions of the correct Communist line.

Many Hungarians, genuine Communists who had firmly defended their convictions, had been killed [by Rakosi, Farkas, etc., and later by the insurgents]. When they fell into the hands of the enemy they refused to renounce Marxist-Leninist teachings. But Nagy, when he began to rule the country, tried to win people over or force them under one pretext or another, to speak into the microphone and make statements expressing their attitude toward the events according to his taste. He tried to extract from them an acknowledgment that he was the leader, and he demanded that they denounce the time of Rakosi and Gero. Some of them unfortunately did make such statements. Some out of fear and others simply because they didn't understand what was going on. Kadar told me about one such instance. Istvan Dobi,[44] who performed the functions of president of Hungary and died about three years ago, was formerly a peasant and an agricultural laborer. Nagy invited him to speak on the radio. Dobi was very popular among the poor peasants. He had taken part in the movement of agricultural laborers under the capitalist system; he was well known as a political figure close to the Communists, but he didn't carry a party card. Kadar explained: "Some Communists, when they heard that this man, even though he wasn't a party member, had rejected Nagy's proposals, should have blushed with shame. He behaved better than some Communists." Some [insurgent] soldiers had taken him off to be shot. And it was only Soviet troops who saved Dobi at the last minute. It was merely a stroke of good luck that his life was saved.

Nagy went into hiding. Later it came out that he had sought refuge in the Yugoslav embassy. Not only he, but many of his leadership group. This was a basis for a renewed cooling-off in relations with the Yugoslav leadership. The Hungarian comrades demanded that those who were hiding in the embassy be turned over to the authorities. The Yugoslavs strenuously resisted. Meanwhile time was passing, and the passage of time worked in favor of the revolutionary government. In the end the Yugoslavs felt compelled to release those who had ensconced themselves in their embassy. So many of them had

accumulated in the embassy that great overcrowding resulted, and the ambassador simply couldn't support them all any longer. The Yugoslavs insisted that assurances of safety for Nagy be given. The Hungarian comrades didn't agree to that. They arrested him as soon as he was brought to his own apartment. And they were right to do that! Kadar appealed to us and the Romanians, asking that temporarily, while they were trying to learn how to cope with the situation in Hungary and normalize the situation in Budapest, to keep Nagy in some place outside Hungary. He was taken by plane to Bucharest and remained there for some time.

The Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party under the leadership of Kadar appealed to the CPSU Central Committee with the request that we send aid in the form of cadres, above all advisers to help with the mining industry, because coal production had become disorganized. In order to restore industry and ensure its development, fuel was needed urgently. The restoration of the country's economy began with coal. We sent experienced people from the Donbas, both party and trade-union officials, who helped them quickly restore the coalmine operations in Hungary. Kadar asked our Young Communist League leaders to help restructure their youth organization, whose cadres had compromised themselves. Some had taken part in the counterrevolutionary uprising; others had been disoriented, behaved passively; and had lost the confidence of the workers. Help was needed to train fresh new people. Then Kadar, when he talked with me, jokingly called the advisers "colonels," he called the trade-union officials "majors," and he called the Komsomol leaders "lieutenants." Generally speaking, he's a man with a sense of humor.

In the upper circles of Hungarian society great confusion could be observed. The arrests [under Rakosi] had touched many of them, not only in the upper echelons but also lower down. That's why people listened very cautiously to the latest news. The memory of Rakosi was still very fresh in their minds. When a country experiences such an upheaval, it always has a painful effect. The Hungarian army was also demoralized. It didn't take part in the counterrevolution, but some individual officers were affected by the agitation—a small number, but they were quite active. Even after the defeat of the counterrevolution some people continued to waver for a long time. The new government demanded that people define their political attitude clearly toward the events and give assurances that they would honestly serve the people and carry out the decisions of the new government. Some officers refused to take such an oath, and in that way a purge of the army took place automatically, removing elements that didn't fully accept the building of socialism.

The army became smaller in numbers, but in quality it was better organized and stronger.

In spite of the outcries of the capitalist press and the accusations against the USSR that we had suppressed a revolution, life quickly began to flow in normal channels. The Soviet army returned to its barracks. We gave strict orders not to interfere in the internal affairs of Hungary or in the functioning of its government and party leadership. When I went to Hungary [with Malenkov, January 1–4, 1957], I gathered our command staff together and explained the correct line, suggesting the proper type of behavior for our military units, especially for our commanders. After all, the soldiers mainly remained in the barracks, but the officers had greater freedom of movement. We appealed to the officers not to make of themselves an unpleasant sight for the eyes of Hungarians, especially in the first period after the elimination of the uprising, not to appear in the streets, so as not to give our enemies any grounds for agitation.

Meanwhile the USSR had been urgently engaged in providing aid to Egypt and liquidating the military operation carried out by Britain, France, and Israel. We proposed to Eisenhower that the United States and the USSR take joint action against this threefold aggression. At the same time we drafted letters addressed to the British prime minister [Anthony] Eden, the French prime minister [Guy] Mollet, and the Israel prime minister [David] Ben-Gurion[45] warning them that there were countries that could stand up in support of Egypt and provide aid to it, without sending their own troops.[46] Therefore we proposed that the aggression be stopped immediately. They say that Guy Mollet during those days didn't even leave his office to go home for the night and that when he received the message from us he ran to the telephone to call Eden still wearing the underwear he slept in. Whether he picked up the phone wearing his underwear or not doesn't change the essence of the matter. The main thing is that within 22 hours after our warning was received the aggression was ended.

When critical situations developed in Poland and Hungary, creating difficulties for us, some British and French diplomats of secondary rank, when they met with staff members from our embassies over a cup of coffee in the capital cities of their countries, expressed thoughts along the following lines: "We take an understanding attitude toward the difficulties that have arisen for you in Poland and Hungary. And now we are having difficulties with Egypt. Let's come to a tacit agreement. You use whatever means you need to, to eliminate your difficulties, but don't interfere with us." Do you see how the imperialists wanted to take advantage of events, to deny us the possibility

of coming to the defense of the Egyptian people against the colonialists? But we quickly coped with the difficulties we had and untied our hands. Our voice in defense of Egypt proved to be so powerful that the aggression had to be called off. We were happy that Eden and Guy Mollet had enough courage to call off the war, which became a kind of historical landmark for the Soviet Union, too. Previously the notion was that the region belonged to Britain. It was no accident that when King Farouk of Egypt[47] appealed to Stalin for help, to provide him with arms to fight against Britain, Stalin refused. He expressed the opinion that that was Britain's sphere of influence and we had no business poking our noses in there. But now we had publicly spoken out against the aggressors, had threatened them ourselves, and had declared that we could not remain indifferent or neutral. Now we had to be taken into account as a force in the Middle East.

Let me return to Hungary. In spring 1958 I went there at the invitation of the government and the Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party.[48] The weather was already warm. When I arrived Kadar said that a public rally was being organized on a city square. The U.S. embassy was located not far from there. Cardinal Mindszenty, head of the Catholic Church in Hungary,[49] had been living in that embassy for a long time. He held a hostile position toward socialism. He represented the most reactionary wing of the counterrevolutionary forces that had been active in 1956. We therefore gave special importance to this public rally, having no doubt that Mindszenty and the American ambassador would both be observing it and perhaps even listening to the speeches—although they had plenty of agents who would be present at the rally, taking notes on what was said. On the other hand, the public rally attracted universal attention. When it became known that I was going to Hungary, the American journalists began trumpeting that Khrushchev wouldn't dare show his nose in the street. They said that if I dared to walk in the street, as was my custom when I visited other countries, things might go badly for me. The Hungarians would never forgive our use of military force.

The Hungarian comrades opened the meeting. I was there and I spoke. In my speech I criticized the workers of Hungary and the intelligentsia for allowing a counterrevolutionary uprising. I particularly addressed the working class of course. A great many people had gathered for this citywide meeting. Kadar pointed out to me that standing on the balcony of the American embassy was the American ambassador with Mindszenty next to him.

I made a suggestion: "Comrade Kadar, after the meeting ends, let's go down from the speaker's platform and walk among the crowd."

He wavered: "There are too many people."

I said: "That's a good thing—that there are lots of people. Let the Americans have a good look. They say that Khrushchev wouldn't dare stick his nose out on the streets of Budapest. Now let them see how Khrushchev and Kadar come down directly off the speaker's stand and walk among the crowd and mix with it. That will be useful in dispersing the fog and confusion in the minds of many, especially those who don't wish us well. It will help to wash people's brains clean."

That's what we did. The meeting ended; we came down off the speaker's platform and walked directly across the lawn. That made a good impression and had a sobering effect on the journalists who had been trying to arouse hostility and get the USSR and Hungary quarreling among themselves. We gave the enemies of socialism a glorious lesson.

Then a meeting was held at a big plant.[50] I also gave a speech there, to those who came to the meeting, arguing the correctness of our actions. Many Hungarians who spoke at such rallies expressed thanks to the USSR and the Soviet army for carrying out their international duty and helping eliminate the counterrevolutionary uprising that had been caused by abuses of power on the part of the Stalinists. Stalin had committed foul deeds in the Soviet Union and through his "advisers" had pursued the same policy in Hungary. People might say: "Well, what of it? People were specially selected to speak up." But if you judge not by words but by the expression on people's faces, it could be seen that these meetings transpired with great enthusiasm among those who had gathered. People approved the measures that had been taken by the new leadership of Hungary.

Then Kadar and I went to a mining region of Hungary to talk with coalminers.[51] Kadar had worked there once as a party leader in the underground during the war, and he had also been arrested there. A big public rally was held there, but it was of a very special kind. The coalminers had always shown great revolutionary inclinations, and I referred to that when I spoke. I reproached them. I spoke about my own past: "As a former mine worker I'm ashamed for you and for our brother miners of Hungary who failed to understand what was going on and didn't raise their voices against the counterrevolution." The miners had not taken an active part in the uprising, but on the other hand, they hadn't come out actively against it; they had been demoralized. In response many miners took the floor and blamed themselves and repented that they had made a political blunder.

Then we went to a construction site for a metallurgical plant on the Danube being built on the basis of credit we supplied and equipment we delivered.

At that time the city was called Stalinvaros,[52] but later the Stalin part of the name was dropped. There too a public meeting on an open square went along splendidly. And wherever such a meeting was held, we exposed the intrigues of the counterrevolution and of world imperialism, which was trying to restore capitalism in Hungary. We said that the actions taken by the leadership of the new government and the Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party headed by Comrade Kadar had been done in the interests of socialism, in the interests of the working class, the peasantry, and the working intelligentsia. Our words met with approval among the listeners.

Kadar asked me to meet with representatives of the intelligentsia also [at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences]. The meeting with them confirmed that the intelligentsia took a rather fastidious attitude toward the necessity for the measures that were carried out. We found less understanding at that time among the intelligentsia. But the clouds that had gathered over Hungary cleared away. When the situation became stabilized, the Hungarian comrades came to agreement with the Romanians, and Nagy was returned to his own country. He was put on trial. Nagy was condemned and paid with his life for the casualties caused by the putsch he led in fall 1956. As a result there was a cooling off in our relations with Yugoslavia again. I regretted that very much, but there was nothing we could do. I don't accuse the Yugoslavs of trying to help restore capitalism in Hungary. No, that would be stupid. The Yugoslavs wanted to get rid of the Rakosi leadership. They wanted a new leadership to establish friendly and good neighborly relations with them. Besides, Tito and his comrades were quite clearly aspiring to a leading role in the Communist movement after the exposure of Stalin's crimes. At any rate, that's how it seemed to me.

Of course when the reactionary forces, pursuing their own aims, wanted to restore capitalism in Hungary, at that point Yugoslavia's interests as a socialist state and a neighbor of Hungary were affected. Therefore when we told them we wanted to take armed action against the counterrevolution, Tito supported us without any second thoughts. A contradiction is evident in the positions taken by the Yugoslavs at different times, but that is a fact.

That's how I evaluate what happened then. Even now, as I'm living out my time as a pensioner, I think that our actions were undertaken correctly, in the interests of the revolutionary movement, in the interests of the Communist movement, in the interests of the struggle against reaction, for socialism and for communism!

Not many Soviet troops still remained in Hungary [within a few years after 1956]. When we undertook to reduce the size of our army (and we reduced

it by nearly half compared to the size it had been under Stalin), we also reduced the number of troops we had in Hungary. Then we came to the conclusion that we could remove our troops from Poland and Hungary altogether. We also withdrew "special weapons" [that is, nuclear weapons] from Hungary. We had no troops then in Czechoslovakia, Romania, or Bulgaria. Thus, [if we withdrew our troops from Poland and Hungary,] the only troops we would still have on the previous scale would be in East Germany. It was clear to everyone why they were there.

I had a special talk with Kadar in regard to Hungary: "Comrade Kadar, haven't you given some thought to the question of our troops remaining on Hungarian soil? We think it's possible to withdraw them. Whatever way you decide, we'll act accordingly."

He answered: "Comrade Khrushchev, decide it yourself. But I can tell you one thing: we have had no discussions about the presence of your troops. There are no negative sentiments in that regard. Hungarians are concerned about something else—that you not return Rakosi to us."

At that time Rakosi was living in the USSR.[53] Did there still exist in Hungary people who sympathized with Rakosi and regretted his fall? Yes, especially in the party. I don't know how numerous they were, but they did exist. Here in the Soviet Union it's the same. We condemned the cult of Stalin, but are there people in the CPSU who would now vote for him? Unfortunately, there are. There are people with a slave mentality still living in this world. People who were Stalin's underlings are still alive. And there are cowards and others. They say: "Well, what of it? So what if he had millions of people shot and put millions in the prison camps. The point is that he ruled the country with a firm hand."

Yes, there are people who believe that to rule means to whip and to whip, perhaps even to whip people to death. And in Hungary there were also such people. Fortunately, the absolute majority of the Hungarian people were opposed to any return of what had happened under Rakosi and were opposed to the return of Rakosi himself.

[As I have said,] our troops in Hungary were deployed along the border with Austria.

Kadar asked me: "Where else do you have your troops?"

I answered: "In Poland and Germany. There's no question of withdrawing them from East Germany. We could only withdraw from there on the basis of an agreement with our former partners in the war against Nazi Germany, in other words, with our opponents of today. Such an action could be taken only after a situation had been created in the world that eliminated the possibility of a new world war."

Kadar asked: "What attitude do the Poles take toward the idea of a withdrawal?"

I answered: "I haven't yet spoken with the Poles. We wanted to talk with you first and with the Poles afterward."

We had a discussion on the same subject with the Polish leadership. I had a talk with Gomulka about it, and we made a fairly substantial reduction in the number of our troops in Poland, reducing them almost by half. We could actually have withdrawn them all from Poland. This was especially true because of the further development of transport technology [in particular, more advanced transport planes], and in the event of military necessity we could quickly transport our troops to wherever they were needed. Maintaining troops outside the borders of the USSR has a negative political impact. After all, we don't want people saying that we don't trust the fraternal countries who are our allies. What is at issue is the idea of socialism. The Poles, Hungarians, and others are building socialism in their own interests. That is the main attractive force. It's not a question of fear of Soviet troops. You can't drive people into paradise by threatening them and making them fearful. People themselves must seek the way toward a better future. And they will follow that path. It is not a simple or easy path. It's complicated, but it's the only correct one. In the end it would be useful to bring all our troops home for economic reasons as well. It's very expensive to maintain them abroad. Their withdrawal would make the situation healthier and would strengthen the position of the Communists in Poland and Hungary. People could no longer point to the fact that Soviet troops were stationed there and that the people were consequently forced to put up with the existing government. We wanted to deprive our enemies of using an ace in the hole like that for propaganda purposes.

When I told Gomulka all this he began to object. It turned out that it was to Poland's advantage to receive hard currency from us as payment for the stationing of our troops in that country. I didn't discuss this question with other Poles. If Gomulka expressed such strong disagreement, the question should be withdrawn. We weren't about to force the issue. We didn't want to apply pressure in any direction, creating rough spots in relations with the Polish leadership.

I'm reminded in passing about the circumstances under which we withdrew our troops from Romania. Shortly after Stalin's death we had a discussion on this subject with the Romanian comrades. The Romanian minister of war, as I recall, was Bodnaras.[54] He had a very good attitude toward the Soviet Union. He was a veteran Communist who had gone through the prisons of capitalist Romania. We had absolute confidence in him. He suddenly brought up the question: "How would you react if we asked you to withdraw Soviet

troops from Romania?" I reacted in a very touchy way at that time; I even got hot under the collar. We were still under the influence of the ideas spread about as a result of Stalin's policies. This conversation took place before 1956, that is, before we had investigated all the abuses of power committed by Stalin, when we were still bowing down before everything Stalinist. But after some time had passed we returned to this question, which they had raised, and we did withdraw our troops from Romania.

1. The official name of this party was the Communist Party of Hungary from November 1918 to September 1944, the Hungarian Communist Party from September 1944 to June 1948, the Hungarian Party of Working People (after unification with the Social Democratic Party) from June 1948 to November 1956, the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party from November 1956 to October 1989, and thereafter the Hungarian Socialist Party.

2. For more on Bela Kun, see Biographies.

3. For more on Matyas Rakosi, see Biographies.

4. According to the main Soviet encyclopedia, Rakosi was imprisoned in Hungary in 1926 and released in October 1940. [GS]

5. The official name of the Hungarian state was the Hungarian Republic from November 1918 to March 1919, the Hungarian Soviet Republic between March and August 1919, then the Hungarian Regency Republic, again the Hungarian Republic from February 1946 to August 1949, the Hungarian People's Republic from August 1949 to October 1989, and then once more the Hungarian Republic.

6. British and later U.S. troops (under General Mark Clark) played a key role in the war of 1944–49 between pro-Western Greek monarchist forces and pro-Communist and left socialist forces in Greece, headed by the National Liberation Front (Greek initials, EAM) and its People's National Liberation Army (ELAS). [GS]

7. Churchill's memoirs describe his riding in an armored car through Athens, not Salonika, during street fighting in which British forces took control of Athens in December 1944, preventing the native Greek forces of EAM-ELAS from taking the city in the wake of the German withdrawal from Greece. See especially p. 315 of Churchill's chapter entitled "British Intervention in Greece," in *Triumph and Tragedy* (sixth volume of his memoir-history of World War II [Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1953]). [GS]

8. Aleksandr Nikolayevich Poskrebyshev was Stalin's personal aide. See Biographies. [SS]

9. On Imre Nagy, see Biographies. He was made prime minister of the Hungarian government in July 1953 and began a policy of "thaw," raising living standards, loosening strict police and censorship controls, releasing many unjustly imprisoned persons, and so on. But the Rakosi-Gero-Farkas group remained influential in the ruling Hungarian Workers Party (the name used by the Communists in Hungary), and they removed Nagy from all his posts in April 1955 and later, in September 1955, expelled him from the party. Pro-Nagy elements sought to organize a reform movement inside the party, which was especially strong among writers and intellectuals—one expression being the Petofi circle that emerged in spring 1956, after Khrushchev's "secret speech" against Stalin became known. [GS]

10. On Erno Gero, see Biographies.

11. On Janos Kadar, see Biographies.

12. On Mihaly Farkas, see Biographies.

13. On Ferenc Munnich, see Biographies.

14. The Moscow Proletarian Division was the name of one of the divisions in the Red Army. [SK]

15. Nagy was recruited to work as an NKVD agent in the 1930s. His cover name was "Volodya." [SK]

16. The mass demonstrations that developed in Hungary in October 1956 were demanding more democracy, including curtailment of the secret police. Nagy was not the leader of this mass movement, but its beneficiary. During the large demonstrations that began on October 23, secret police opened fire on the crowds, killing many. In retaliation for that, and for a decade of secret police brutality, the crowds did exact vengeance, killing people on the streets who were suspected of belonging to the secret police or the Rakosi-Gero wing of the Communist Party. [GS]

17. The order of events is somewhat telescoped in the preceding account by Khrushchev. Gero was elected general secretary of the Hungarian Communist Party, to replace Rakosi, on June 18, 1956. It was at that time that Rakosi left Hungary and went to the USSR. He was assigned a residence in Krasnodar territory, not in Moscow. Mikoyan was present at the plenum of the Hungarian party at which Rakosi was replaced. He exerted strong pressure to force Rakosi to resign, even banging the table with his fist.

It is reported that when a mass demonstration led by university students developed in Budapest on October 23, 1956, which was joined by tens of thousands (some estimate half a million) demanding steps toward democratization, Gero ordered the shooting of demonstrators. On October 24, the