

## Introduction

I wish to state by way of introduction that I wrote this dissertation prior to the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party, mainly during the summer of 1955, and I had practically finished it by September of 1955. I expected my case to be discussed by the Central Committee of the Hungarian Workers' Party \* during the fall of that year, after my recovery from my illness.

Hoping for this, I was prepared to hand my dissertation to the Central Committee as a justification of my principles and as a detailed reply to the accusations made in public against me since March of 1955. As is well known, my case did not reach the discussion stage, and I was not granted any kind of opportunity to expound my views or to refute the baseless accusations and slanders spoken against me. My dissertation was not placed before the Party forum at that particular time. I was expelled from the Party without having had my views clarified within the framework of the ideological battle or by legal Party procedure.

Since then, events of great significance have taken place before our eyes, among which the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party is the most outstanding. This convinced me that stating my views in writing, in order to refute the accusations made against me and the baseless slanders,

\* Communist Party.

would not be in vain—just as it was not in vain, after I was expelled and after the Twentieth Congress, that I added one or two chapters to bring the dissertation up to date. (I have indicated the date of writing separately at the end of each of these chapters.) Preparing this dissertation was not in vain, because when I reread it after the Twentieth Congress it strengthened my earlier conviction of the correctness of my stand on basic questions of principle.

The events of recent times have gradually led me to the decision to place this dissertation—if circumstances permit—before the Party members, and to let the Party membership ponder my replies to the accusations made against me.

So far I have kept quiet because I was silenced. But I now feel that it is my duty to the Party to speak up. Several circumstances have led me to do this. First, the just demand of the Party membership at past meetings that my case should be taken before the Party publicly, thus granting me an opportunity to explain my views.

Another circumstance that causes me to speak is the unprecedented amount of lying, slander, and abuse—in total contrast to Communist tendencies, morals and principles—by the so-called leadership, who shift the “ideological battle” so often mentioned since the Twentieth Congress from the ideological to the personal sphere through this slander and these barefaced lies. I wish to prove in my dissertation that I will not follow them along this path, which is so diametrically opposed to the Lenin party system and to Communist morals. I will stay within the limits of an ideological battle fought by arguments.

Lastly, I was induced to make this dissertation public by the fact that the Party and the Hungarian press—newspapers and magazines—gave me no opportunity for publicizing my views. Thus I was deprived of all means of acquainting the party membership and the general public with its contents.

The smouldering political, personal and ideological differences within the Party leadership since the June, 1953, resolutions of the Central Committee came to the attention of the Party membership and the general public in a one-sided fashion, i.e., in the form of accusations raised against me. I will disregard

the personal questions, although they have a significant role in the political persecution being carried on against me. One of the reasons for this is that the settlement of intra-Party differences, debates and exchanges of views have been shifted to the field of personalities. The clarification of problems arising from differences in principles is therefore all the more important. The battle being waged for the purity of the teachings of Marxism-Leninism and their proper application to the Hungarian situation is, in the last analysis, the battle to keep power in the hands of the people. This is the underlying question of these ideological-political differences. These questions clearly cannot be solved and clarified through resolutions brought about by one-sided accusations. An indispensable prerequisite is that all ideological-political differences that may arise must be solved through debate on the basis of principles, with valid arguments and the widest possible publicity. This is absolutely necessary, because this is the only proper Marxist, scientific method, and the Party method of clarifying ideological questions. There is a need for this because these are basic questions with regard to Party life and to building socialism. And lastly, the debate is necessary because the accusations were made against the former President of the Ministers' Council, and the Party membership as well as the people of the nation are plainly justified in wanting to see clearly what actually happened.

Mátyás Rákosi, at one of the sessions of the Communist meetings held in Somogy county, stated among other things the following:

In the Communist Party there cannot be two separate organizational rules, two kinds of laws: one for the leaders, let us say the members of the Political Committee, and one for others, the ordinary members. In this regard there cannot be any differences between Party members. One who makes a mistake—this was stated by the third Congress—regardless of the position he holds in the Party or simply as a personality—must answer for this before the Party. . . . The Party was right when it took this question to the masses of the hundreds of thousands of Communists and the millions of working people. Thus we have shown that we have no problem that we cannot place calmly before the judgment of the working people.

All this is proper and true. Therefore there should be no difference among party members: everyone should answer for his own mistakes—without regard to personalities—whether he be Imre Nagy or Mátyás Rákosi. I wish to avail myself of the rights outlined in the organization's rules, which assure me of the possibility of placing before the Party the responsibility and the mistakes of Mátyás Rákosi in the same manner that he used against me. Let the Party membership and the workers judge from this and from the accusations which he has raised against me what kind of mistakes were committed by whom, and who is responsible for what. I agree with the contention that there is no question that we cannot calmly take to the people for their judgment. But let us weigh things equally, on the basis of the equality of party members, and take not only Imre Nagy's actions, but also Mátyás Rákosi's actions to the people for their judgment. The justification of this demand was established by Mátyás Rákosi himself. I hope that he will not disclaim this when it comes to a question of his own person being judged.

In the question of intensified ideological differences between November, 1954, and January, 1955, I presented my views to the Political Committee on several occasions. This is what I reviewed briefly in a memorandum submitted to the Central Committee at its March meeting.

There were serious differences of opinion in the evaluation of the political and economic situation in the fall of 1954. After the October 1954 session of the Central Committee, as a result of the initial implementation of the resolutions then made, the strained situation prevailing prior to the meeting improved without a doubt. The confidence of the Party membership in the leaders grew, as well as their self-confidence in their ability to solve successfully the many problems then existing. The confidence of the masses in the Party and in the government also improved, and the masses looked to the future with hope.

This is indicated by the fact that the figures for production in the final quarter of the year were more favorable than the previous figures. There was a significant increase in the execution of the export plans (1950 million forints) which was well above the quarterly average. The balance between purchasing power and consumer goods indicated that in this period we were able

to reach a peak volume, almost without a problem. By the end of the year, compared to the year 1953, our domestic trade showed a 15 per cent increase. The constant and significant increase in currency circulation since July, 1953, had ceased to some extent in the final quarter of 1954. Certain improvements were evident in the better showing made by industry and the rising productivity of labor. Therefore, after October—except for the collections made in the agricultural sphere, where the results remained bad—there was clearly a certain tendency toward improvement, which it would have been wrong to overestimate and equally improper to disregard.

The policies of the Party were significantly successful, as set forth by Party documents, in calling to life the Patriotic People's Front Movement and in promoting its effective development. Despite growing pains, which had to be corrected as they went along, the Patriotic People's Front Movement could give important support to the policies of the Party and of the government in all areas followed by us since June in this new period in economic, political and cultural fields.

The Patriotic People's Front Movement strengthened the political activity of the masses on a nation-wide basis with regard to local, national, and international questions. This successfully added to the increase of local economic opportunities and to new work activities in the field of many social reforms.

A similar picture emerged after the second national political event in October: the election of the local councils, which had a decisive significance with regard to the political course of the Party and the government. Party documents state that the council elections of November 28, 1954, were a distinct success for the Party and the People's Democratic system. The Party's connection with the workers was strengthened, and the prestige of the executive branches grew. An impressive and intimate political atmosphere developed, where the great majority of the citizens professed their faith in the basic aims of building socialism, indicating that they were willing to follow the Party and the government in realizing its goals during this new political period. The success of the elections symbolized the failure of the internal and external enemies of our People's Democracy.

This is the manner in which the Party, in official documents,



evaluated the situation that evolved after October. Naturally, there were mistakes and deficiencies during this time, and dangers developed against which it was necessary to fight. To sum up: the period after October 1954, was characterized by the growth of the People's Democracy, the strengthening of the Party, the widening and stabilization of the bases for building socialism. Exaggerating the difficulties and mistakes, the frightening picture that Mátyás Rákosi painted of the situation in the country and the Party produced extraordinary dangers: it tended to discredit the policies carried on since June, to drive the Party and the country from the path taken in June, and to support the view that it was better to return to the old system.

It was from this viewpoint that the question of "rightist danger" arose. I did not concur in his exaggerations then, nor do I do so now. It must be admitted that the fight against "leftist" views and dangers had been carried on in a one-sided fashion for more than one and a half years, and that we had neglected the fight against the danger from the right. This was without doubt a mistake. This had to be changed all the more because in the Communist Party one cannot fight against only one deviation or danger, and because in the situation that arose the danger of rightist deviation grew. From this it follows that the attention of the Party had to be directed to this danger, and that it was necessary to use all the Party's means, agitation and propaganda for making more effective use of our ideological work against the danger from the right. I feel that this is what would have been proper, and that this would have been understood by the Party membership. But I could not approve a course that greatly *exaggerated* these internal troubles and dangers, or the hurling of these unexplained and unjustified charges into the ranks of the Party membership with explosive effect, thereby causing the greatest confusion.

Later the chief danger seemed to be that of increasing rightist danger. The uncertainty of the Political Committee, which it showed on this question, reveal the insufficient attention and work devoted to this serious problem. And if such a serious danger as this from the right was said to be, had arisen in the Party, allegedly drowning the Party and the country, why was this problem not taken to the Central Committee?

This was a far-reaching question, particularly in view of the fact that the October session had taken place only four to six weeks previously. This session had called attention to the fight against the danger from the right, but directed its real fire against the leftist deviation and danger. During that time the Political Committee, but primarily Mihály Farkas, was following a line differing from the resolution of the Central Committee, and did not ask for appropriate resolutions from the central leadership.

And it was not proper then, nor is it proper now, that the battle against the rightist danger (which was absolutely necessary) was not carried on by Party methods or regular Party procedures, but primarily and chiefly through administrative directives, by terrorization, vilification, dismissals, etc.

To sum up: in my March petition I established that the Party could not fight only on one front and carry on a battle exclusively against the "leftist" or the rightist dangers and mistakes, as has been the practice until very recently. Ideologically and politically, the Party must be prepared to fight against those rightist mistakes and viewpoints, but in such a manner as not to disable the Party from dealing with the mistakes and dangers of the left, which probably have deeper roots in our Party than elsewhere.

In my opinion the Party must definitely be oriented toward directing the closest possible attention to the danger from the right and fight on *both* fronts against all the dangers and mistakes that present themselves. Meanwhile attention must be paid to any deviation or danger showing up simultaneously in the work of the Party or in the various spheres of life.

In wide circles within the Party the fear has formed—and I too have had fears of a similar nature, which have since been proved correct—that what happens at present is not designed to correct the mistakes made in carrying out our policies since June on the economic, political, and cultural fronts, but to revise the June policies themselves and to revert to the policies in existence prior to June. I will carry on this June policy myself with all my strength, as I undertook to do in the declaration that I signed. The revision of the June policies and the reversion to those prior to June are what is being discussed now.

Events prove this. And this is a catastrophe both for the Party and for the country. As a most serious consequence the Party will break away from the masses, which, from the internal standpoint of the country and considering the impact it might have on the international situation, might have almost unforeseeable results.

In consideration of all this, I felt it necessary to emphasize in a resolution that the Party and government policies, from an economic, political, and cultural standpoint, cannot in substance be anything else than the application of the teachings of Marxism-Leninism to the concrete Hungarian situation, a re-formation and redevelopment of the socialist people's economy on the objective and lawful basis of building up socialism through this temporary transition period. This policy had to contain in itself socialist industrialization as the chief means and basis for socialist re-formation, with main emphasis being placed on heavy industry producing implements for necessary production, as well as the re-formation of socialist agriculture. In the economic policy of the Party the controlling factor must be production and the lowering of the cost of such production. To this, completely improperly, we have not paid enough attention thus far. This must now be remedied by serious exertion on our part.

I stressed in my petition that the June policies of the new period were not a deviation from the principles of Marxism-Leninism. This must be clarified because the danger exists that mistakes and difficulties in the economic and political situation and in literature, especially because of this exaggeration about the rightist danger, make it appear to Party members as though the June policy had been a rightist deviation. And this would inevitably lead to the abandonment of the June line and to the return to the old wrong policies.

That is why I emphasized that the Central Committee should declare that the actual mistakes that had earlier been revealed before it would be corrected. Meanwhile, let us go ahead in the spirit of the June resolutions along the path of building up socialism.

The views that I outlined in my petition I uphold, because I am convinced that those serious mistakes that were apparent in

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our Party's policies took place prior to the June resolutions. They sprang from exaggerated "leftist," sectarian, anti-Marxist views, whose chief representatives in our Party was the "four-some" under the leadership of Mátyás Rákosi, which was seriously branded by the resolution of the Central Committee in June. Lenin's statement characterizes them perfectly:

For the true revolutionary the greatest danger—possibly the only danger—is the exaggerated revolutionary spirit which forgets within what confines and under what circumstances it is proper and effective to apply revolutionary tactics. The true revolutionaries most often "broke their necks" when they tried to write "revolution" with capital letters, and almost canonized it as an immortal concept. They lost their heads and became unable to soberly weigh circumstances under which one must revert to reformist action. True revolutionaries can be destroyed only if they lose their ability of right thinking. They are destroyed not by external defeat, but by the internal failure of their cause, in this case most definitely, since by losing their ability to think straight they take it into their heads that "the great world revolution" can and will solve all manner of problems, under any circumstances, by absolute revolutionary methods.

Those who take such things "into their heads" are lost, because they have accepted an utter nonsense on a fundamental question. During the time of merciless war (and a revolution is the most merciless war of all) stupidity is punished by defeat.

From what does it follow that the "great, victorious revolution" can use only revolutionary methods, and that only the use of these is permitted? There is no precedent for this. And it definitely and undoubtedly is not true. That it is not true is clearly apparent on the basis of theoretical viewpoints, presupposing that we do not leave the area of Marxism. That it is not true is also proved by the experiences during our revolution. Concerning the theory: at the time of a revolution stupidities are committed just as they are committed at any other time, stated Engels—and "he stated the truth," wrote Lenin.

Prior to June the mistakes of our Party were without a doubt caused by "lefticism," by sectarianism. Such mistakes have deep

historical roots in our Party. At the same time we must know that "leftist" mistakes give birth inevitably to rightist mistakes. Since the announcing of the policies of June and the opposing of leftist mistakes, such mistakes have shown up in the national people's economy, in culture, and in the ideological field as well as in some phases of social life.

From this it clearly follows that one must fight with all the possible means of an ideological battle to eradicate these deviations, against that petit bourgeois frame of mind and the influence exerted by the lower middle class upon the worker. However, one must not for a single moment lose sight of the fact that the reasons that brought about sectarian "lefticism" and that have had such deep roots in our country are still there. That deviation is always most dangerous against which we do not fight with the necessary determination. And this at present is the danger from exaggerated sectarian "lefticism." Therefore one must fight ceaselessly against *both* rightist deviationism and against "leftist" mistakes and deviations.

However, in weighing all this, it must be established that the present difficulties in our economic, political and social life reach back to the time prior to June. Although we were successful in alleviating a major part of the difficulties in the process of realizing our June policies, inevitably as a result of past policies and partly through our own mistakes, new difficulties arose.

Taking all these into consideration, the Central Committee of the Hungarian Workers' Party was informed in a letter that I sent under the date of May 4, 1955, that I concur in the guiding principles and the practical objectives of the March resolutions made by the Central Committee. This is summarized as follows in the introduction to the resolution:

The Central Committee establishes that the resolutions made at the session of the Central Committee in June, 1953, were correct, that they remain in effect and, together with the resolutions made by the Third Party Congress, even today comprise the basis of our Party policies. In the spirit of these resolutions our Party still feels its main objective to be the systematic improvement of the welfare of our workers, an ever increasing rise in the social and cultural requirements on the basis of a widened so-

cialist production and growth in productivity. The chief aim of our Party can be attained first of all through stressing heavy industry, in addition to socialist industry, and on the basis of developing our agriculture.

Our Party will continue the socialist rebuilding of agriculture and the policies for further developing of the farmers' cooperatives on a voluntary basis. In addition to this it will further continue to assure support for the individual working peasantry and to enforce the principle of financial aid in order to increase their production and above all reach a greater degree of productivity. Communist criticism and self-criticism remain in effect in the interest of establishing collective leadership, and so do the resolutions made to insure its legality.

I agree with this completely even today, and similarly with the contention that in the successful fight waged to carry out the proper resolutions there were mistakes made and there were deficiencies. I consider it a mistake that the opportunist distortion of the true character of the June resolutions is not pointed out in either the March or the April resolutions made by the Central Committee. For this very reason the matter must be given the widest publicity in the Party press (since, as Mátyás Rákosi stated in the speech at Kaposvár, we have no secrets before the people), so that in comparing the June, 1953, resolutions of the central leadership with the measures taken for carrying out the directives, everyone should have the opportunity of establishing where, when, and by whom these Party resolutions were "distorted." This is the correct Party method of clarifying this question, and not one that simply states accusations without proof.

It would also be worth while to examine what kind of political and economic bankruptcy was left behind by the "leftist" exaggerators—what kind of a legacy we had to take over from them when in June, 1953, they had finally led the Party and the people's economy into a blind alley. Since June, 1953, for almost two years, the whole country's workers have been working to correct the serious damage brought about by the "leftist" exaggeration in all branches of the national economy. The Party and state leadership headed by Mátyás Rákosi in the financial sphere alone cost the nation two years of intensive work.



It can be figured, and it must be figured, what this meant in billions of forints. But who can judge in figures and in billions the political, cultural, and moral damage that was caused to the Party and to the nation? The political and moral capital that the Party resolutions and the government program represented was for two years used up to rehabilitate the country. If all the material, political, and moral strength that had been used to eradicate the damage which the so-called "foursome" had caused, had instead been used for building socialism, Hungary today would be a cheerful country, living in plenty and prosperity. However, we inherited a very heavy burden.

In the name of Marxism-Leninism, the "leftist" deviationists made promises they could not fulfill, with which they discredited the prestige of Marxism-Leninism. What did the "leftists" promise? They promised that during the period of the First Five-Year Plan they would raise the living standards of the workers by 50 per cent. On the other hand, between 1950 and 1954, industrial production (1938=100) grew from 150 to 300, while living standards decreased until 1953 and then increased by 15 per cent only as a result of the policies of the new period. The workers, in comparison to 1949, doubled industrial production, increased the productivity of labor by 63 per cent, and decreased the cost. Despite this their wages were in general comparable to 1949 levels.

They promised the upsurge of agriculture. Instead, as a consequence of the exaggeration of the "leftists" as regards peasant policies, there was a serious decline in agricultural production and a decided decrease in the number of livestock. It is well known that the area of untilled land in the spring of 1953 was approximately one million acres, which is more than 10 per cent of the arable lands of the country. The "leftist" exaggerators promised an abundance of consumer goods; but they created a scarcity that had no parallel since the liberation. If we now examine the 1955 program of the "leftist" exaggerators in detail, we again find the same promises, which again they cannot fulfill, because they have not taken into consideration objective facts, the laws governing social-economic life. One must no longer make promises that one cannot fulfill. We must not

shatter the faith of the masses in the Party, the truthfulness of the Party, or the correctness of Marxism-Leninism.

The honor of the Communists will be lost if they are considered chatterers. This danger is seriously apparent at the present time. This in turn shatters the political power of the working class, the federation of the working peasants, and thus weakens the status of the Communists. Not every mistake and sin can be rectified by self-criticism. The criticism of the masses, as has been pointed out by the classicists of Marxism and with special emphasis by Lenin, is a weapon powerful enough to sweep away power. We need a criticism by the masses that will strengthen this power. However it seems that the "leftist" exaggerators keep forgetting this.

It is well known among other things that the Hungarian "leftist" exaggerators caused a great decline by their policy of forced collectivization in the development of Hungarian agriculture. This had and still has a decisive influence upon the fact that production volume in Hungarian agriculture on the average is approximately what it was prior to the war. This is why there are serious faults apparent in the Worker-Peasant Federation without which the working class cannot uphold its power. This power is the basic decisive factor in every revolution, ours included. In the last analysis, however, those differences of opinion that have arisen within the Party in connection with the charge of rightist deviations are primarily not related to economic policies but concern the fate of political power. Because when the "leftist" exaggerators with their scatterbrained attitude endanger the basic indispensable requirements for building socialism—the power of the proletariat—they are jeopardizing that power built upon the faith and confidence of the working masses without which the building of socialism is impossible. The pseudo radicalism of the "leftists," their opposition to the masses, endangers this power of the proletariat, because it denies the Leninist teaching that keeping and solidifying the power of the working class is a task transcending everything else. The "leftist" crackpots have caused a deep political crisis among the working masses and have risked their power in our country. The main question of the differences of opinion in the ideological battle therefore is the question of

retaining political power, and which of the differences are mirroring the existing differences in principles.

The "leftist" exaggerators during the years 1949 to 1952 were guilty of grave mistakes in carrying out their political line, and in practice experienced failure. This was proved most tangibly by the necessity for the June resolutions, and by life itself. Yet they did not relinquish their anti-Marxist, anti-Leninist theories. The Marxist-Leninist theory teaches us that if in practice, in life, a theory is disproved, this theory should be re-examined. But the "leftist" deviationists are resurrecting their "theory," which has been shattered by life. They are again trying to mold the practical work of the Party and the country to this faulty theory. They are trying to mold economic policies above all else, meanwhile justifying all this as a battle against rightist deviation. The "leftist" deviationists, with the above resolutions, have created such chaos in political concepts that it cannot be established what is the correct Marxist-Leninist viewpoint; what is "leftist" deviation or rightist deviation; and who is what kind of a deviationist. Those who are doing this try to cover up their own deviation by hypocritically alluding to Marxism. That is why they avoid debates, and instead of engaging in honest arguments vilify their opponents. But can one carry on a debate over differences in principles and politics and the various views regarding them? I absolutely think so.

The central leadership should have no other standpoint, therefore they should assure the possibility for such debate. One cannot escape this. The charges and accusations demand an answer. If we want to assure in the Party that unity on principles which is nonexistent today, we must end the ideological and political chaos. And for this there is only one possible road to follow: clarification of differences of opinion by debates on principles and by free exchange of views.

It was for this reason that this lengthy dissertation was written. I have tried to prove the contention that the March resolutions of the Central Committee, to the effect that "rightist views had become so dangerous in our Party and state, because Imre Nagy supported in his speeches and articles these anti-Marxist views, and in fact primarily was the one who proclaimed them," is an unjustified and baseless accusation.

I am trying to prove with facts and arguments that there is no basis for the April resolutions of the Central Committee which declared:

Comrade Imre Nagy, as a member of the Political Committee and as the president of the Minister's Council, represented political opinions which were sharply opposed to the over-all politics of our Party and inimical to the interests of the working class, the working peasants and the people's democracy. Comrade Nagy tried to throttle the motor of socialist building, socialist industrialization, and especially the development of heavy industry, and in the provinces the movement of the agricultural cooperatives, which is the decisive method of socialist rebuilding of the villages. He tried to obscure and force into the background the Party leadership, and he attempted to pit the government agencies against one another, and the Patriotic People's Front against the Party. Comrade Imre Nagy by all this prevented the building of a solid basis for increasing the welfare of the people.

These anti-Marxist, anti-Leninist, anti-Party views of Comrade Imre Nagy form a composite system, an attitude which spread to the various fields of political, economic, and cultural life. The activities of Comrade Imre Nagy have caused serious damage to our Party, our People's Democracy, and our whole socialist structure.

Comrade Nagy in the interests of realizing his rightist, opportunist policies resorted to un-Party-like, anti-Party and even factional methods, which are completely incompatible with the unity, the discipline of the Marxist-Leninist Party.

All this is without any proof, facts, or arguments. I do not follow this path. My standpoint, my rights, the correctness of my views, my Marxist-Leninist faith I shall prove with theoretical and practical facts. It is possible that on one question or another my standpoint is incorrect. The Party debate can clarify all this. Let them prove by Marxist-Leninist teachings and methods that I am wrong. In my dissertation I have expounded my convictions, which I will uphold until the time that they can prove the contrary through the scientific means of Marxist-Leninist arguments and methods.

For my convictions and views I am ready to accept stupid



slanders, political persecution, social ostracism, and deep humiliation, as I have in the past. I also take the responsibility for the mistakes that I really committed. I will not accept responsibility for one thing: giving up my conviction on principles.

It was with these thoughts that I began to work on my dissertation. I have tried to accomplish a useful task for the benefit of the Party and for my country. The Central Committee can help to realize this aim by arranging the widest possible debate on this dissertation.