

Hungary & Eastern Europe - Sixty Years Ago A Press Review by a Hungarian Refugee

Dr. László Reiner, Cancer Researcher died
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CZECH LIVING COST FOUND TO BE HIGH

Evidence Indicates Average
Citizen Lives More Poorly
Than Before the War

By JACK RAYMOND

Special to The New York Times.

PRAGUE, Czechoslovakia, Nov. 15—There is evidence that the standard of living of the average Czech citizen is lower today than before World War II.

This phenomenon places Czechoslovakia in a unique position compared with other Communist-led countries.

In Rumania and Hungary, no less than Yugoslavia, it has been seen that a certain improvement for the working people must be conceded regardless of the political system.

In Czechoslovakia this is said only on behalf of newly industrialized regions in Slovakia. However, even there it was indicated that the establishment of large projects had created housing and food supply difficulties not compensated by increased money earnings.

The standard of living in Czechoslovakia is undoubtedly higher than in other Communist-led countries. But this was true before World War II.

An article in the organ of the Czechoslovak Writers Union three days ago dealt sharply with the acute housing shortage in Prague, which was relatively untouched by war destruction.

About 120,000 persons are married every year but an average of only 35,000 apartments is built annually, the article said. It proposed dividing up existing warehouses, shops and offices as well as villas and possibly placing extra floors on some older houses.

A qualified foreign resident recently carried out a cost-of-living survey. It showed that the head of a family of five would have to work 300 hours a month more nowadays to maintain the pre-war living standard of a similar family.

The survey covered ninety-

three items considered basic to the cost of living. It took into consideration a variety of money reforms and wage adjustments since the end of the war. It covered such items as rent, which is now exceptionally low, and medical care, which is provided by the Government, and excluded luxuries, such as automobiles.

It is probably true that there is virtually no unemployment here. Part of the explanation for the labor shortage is that 3,000,000 Germans were expelled after the war from the former Sudetenland. The Nazis also killed 350,000 Jews.

Instead of being able to achieve a personal profit because of the labor shortage, as in a capitalist economy, a worker must take side jobs to make ends meet. In many families, there are at least two and often three working members.

As in every Communist-run country a huge number of women have been added to the total work force. It is not odd to find them holding heavy factory jobs. At the Skoda steel works in Pilsen a representative of the concern revealed that 25 per cent of the factory employees were women.

On a tour of the plant this correspondent saw women not only handling simple mechanical jobs but doing heavy crate work and crane jousting. Nevertheless in this respect Czech women appear not to have undertaken some heavy building construction work one sees Rumanian women do in their country.

One of the measures stressed by the Communists is Government-paid medical care. No statistics have been made available to show whether under the Government plan the number of persons adequately benefited is equal to the number able to afford private insurance or ordinary doctor bills before the war.

A young man encountered by this reporter revealed that he had had his eyes tested for new glasses six months earlier but expected to obtain them only in a few days from now. He said that most times he went privately to doctors but in this instance he thought that he would patiently "wait out" the system.

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POLAND IS UNIQUE IN SATELLITE ROLE

People in Warsaw Exhibit
Pride, Relaxed Attitude
and Devotion to Work

By JACK RAYMOND

Special to The New York Times.

WARSAW, Nov. 18—Despite ten years' attachment to the idea of monolithic communism, each of the satellite states differs from the others in more than language and customs, and Poland appears to differ most of all.

People here seem to walk more proudly and independently than in Prague, Budapest or Bucharest. There is an atmosphere of relaxation and devotion to work that appeared lacking in other satellite capitals. Although the huge Palace of Culture carries his name, there is no dominating statue of Stalin, as there are in other Communist capitals.

There are virtually no Communist flags, banners or slogans to be seen in Warsaw.

"The Poles have a sense of humor," one supporter of the regime said. "These slogans would hurt more than help around here."

Here one is reminded of the Yugoslavs' who are no longer in the Cominform, the grouping of Soviet-led Communist parties in Europe. Whereas the press in other satellite capitals is stilted and boring, here one can read the best written and most astute Communist opinions and versions of the news.

Comment Stirred by Poem

There can, of course, be no sharp criticism of the principle of communism. But in Polish publications one finds criticisms of sham that appear to have no parallel in the Soviet-led bloc.

A poem that appeared in a literary publication last summer still is the subject of comment and discussion here.

It was entitled "Poem for Grownup" and referred to a new steel plant at Nova Huta, near Cracow.

From villages, from towns they
go by wagons
To build a foundry, to create a
town by magic
To excavate from the earth a
new El Dorado.

Thus the poet wrote in introducing his subject, and then followed several verses such as:

They used to run about and cry.
In socialism

A cut finger does not hurt.

They cut their fingers. They felt.

They doubted.

The poet went on:

There are people in Nova Huta
Who have never been inside a
theatre.

There are Polish apples which
the children cannot get,

There are children scorned by

wicked doctors, there are
boys compelled to lie, there
are girls compelled to lie * * *

* * * There are people who are
waiting for a little bit of
paper,

There are people who are wait-
ing for justice,

There are people who have
waited for a long time.

We ask on earth—

* * * For a simple differentia-
tion of word from deed

We ask for an earth

Which we did not win by dicing,

For which a million fell in battle,

For clear truths, for a grain of
freedom,

For an ardent reason,

We ask every day

We ask, through the party.

This poem rang through Po-
land when it was originally pub-
lished. Its author, Adam Wazyk,
first was praised, then criticized
heavily, but he suffered no un-
toward consequences.

It is pointed out by long-resi-
dent observers here that Polish
leaders have been going slowly
with the socialization of agricul-
ture. Only about 20 per cent
has been socialized thus far. The
Communists are said to have
been careful about exerting pres-
sures against the church, al-
though Stefan Cardinal Wyszyn-
ski is in jail.

It is pointed out here that the
Polish Army is the only one of
the Communist armies that still
has church chaplains. The parish
priest is said still to be an im-
portant figure. And it is added
that the reconstruction of
churches in Warsaw was carried
out for more than architectural
and sentimental reasons.

More men in uniform are seen
on the streets of Warsaw than
in Prague and possibly even
Budapest, although not so many
as in Bucharest. Troops some-
times march through the streets.
This evening a company
marched down one of the main
streets, singing well and gaining
the admiration of onlookers.

When this correspondent com-
mented on this to an English-
speaking Pole, he replied: "They
are Polish soldiers first—Com-
munists afterwards."

His nephew tells - The shocking truth about Cardinal Mindszenty

A prisoner's diary, an aged mother's letters and tips from Hungary's Underground highlight this dramatic report on the fate of a modern martyr

By LASZLO SZAMOSFALVI

AS TOLD TO HELEN MAMAS ZOTOS

A veil of deliberate secrecy and silence has shrouded the name Mindszenty since my uncle's "trial" and imprisonment nearly seven years ago. The circumstances of his confinement, his whereabouts, his illnesses, all details of his martyrdom, which I shall reveal, have been as closely guarded as countless other secrets the Communists skillfully withhold until a propitious time.

Such a time came momentarily this past July when the Iron Curtain lifted for an announcement that stunned the world and left in its wake, as the Communists intended, the false impression that Hungary's Prince Primate has been "released."

As the Cardinal's nephew and the first of his relatives to reach safety in the free world, I shall tell his story as he himself might wish it told. I am encouraged to do so because he cannot now speak for himself and because he believes that one of our greatest weapons against Communism is the truth. His whole life has been dedicated to truth, he never wavered, and it would

be fitting at the last if the truth should set him free.

I have known my uncle intimately, having spent a great part of my boyhood years in his household. After my own mother's death, Mindszenty's mother, who is my mother's sister, took her place for me. (In Hungarian tradition, he is my uncle, although his mother is my aunt.) My personal experience with Communism, together with information from the Hungarian Underground, from "indiscreet" Red agents and other sources, enables me to call the Communist "bluff."

My information includes letters from the Cardinal's mother, excerpts from a diary kept by a fellow prisoner and smuggled bit by bit out of prison, reports on the violent fate met by those who were his persecutors, and recollections of my own three perilous missions of mercy to the imprisoned Primate—from the free world.

In Budapest on July 16th of this year Hungarian Communist authorities announced a so-called "interruption" of the Cardinal's life sentence. The news came buried among numerous other items over Radio Budapest's eight o'clock evening round-up, "Chronicle of the Day." It said: "The Ministry of Justice has granted Jozsef Mindszenty, upon his as well as the Roman Catholic Bishops Conference's appeal, interruption of his imprisonment, taking into consideration Mindszenty's old age and state of health. As residence, he was assigned a building of the Church appointed by the Bishops Conference." Then, as quickly as the Curtain lifted, it fell again, locking further comment away from Western ears.

This announcement, timed as a display of Soviet "good faith" at the opening of the Geneva "summit" conference, was a hoax. My uncle was not freed. Perhaps he will be some day, but at this writing he remains a Red captive.

I received word from the Cardinal's mother following this proclamation. She



Laszlo Szamosfalvi, first of Cardinal Mindszenty's relatives to escape through Hungary's Iron Curtain, tells the world—through his collaborator, Helen Zotos—what the Communists have done, and are doing, to his martyred uncle since his arrest and imprisonment for "treason" almost seven years ago.

said: "... You are pleased about the release of dear uncle, but it did not happen.

"Naturally the radio broadcast the news, and everybody was overcome with joy as everybody thought that it really happened.

"My dear, I visited him . . . thank God he is healthy and well, but only the good Lord knows when he will be set free."

As a prisoner Cardinal Mindszenty has not been treated any differently than the criminal behind bars. In an attempt to disgrace him in the eyes of our people, the Communists have prevented him from wearing his clerical robes. He has been deprived of his breviary, his rosary, his crucifix and prohibited from saying Mass and confession. He has been kept under constant surveillance, incommunicado, with even reading and writing materials denied him. Nevertheless, as Communism failed to stifle the soul of the Hungarian people, so have "untrustworthy" officials been found in prison who, risking their lives, did befriend him and treat him with the respect due his Holy Office.

Because such men exist, we have been able to learn what went on inside Vazs prison where Mindszenty was kept captive many years. It was with their aid that a diary from the pen of Dr. Laszlo Toth, a leading Catholic journalist, my uncle's friend, a co-defendant at the "trial" and a fellow inmate in prison, was slipped out of Vazs and Hungary. These excerpts help construct the Cardinal's story:

Vazs, May, 1949.

Saw him in the prison yard for the first time since the trial, but could not speak to him. The ordeal of the last six months has cast its shadow on his saintly face, and hardened its softness into a frozen mask; he has aged terribly.

Middle Summer, 1949.

The hero of the four-year struggle with the atheistic forces in Hungary occupies a privileged position among Vazs prison inmates. His trial and sufferings are known to everyone in the prison, and with every week that passes the grandeur of his figure, which true piety constructs, is increased through the stories circulated around the prison cells. In the history of modern peoples, there is scarcely any other example of a man, who, a half-year after his trial, became a martyr in the eyes of his countrymen. The Cardinal looks pale and thin. The heat is oppressive in the cells and it is impossible to sleep.

Winter, 1949-50

The Cardinal is slowly recovering his mental and physical strength; the marks of strain on his face have begun to disappear. Thank God. The first sign that the turn for the better had taken place in his general condition was when the Cardinal asked the prison warder to try to get him a book—"The Imitation of Christ."

The warder told me, however, that the Governor of Vazs prison had never heard of that book. Instead, he sent the Cardinal ten volumes of the complete works of Lenin!

From time to time I meet the Cardinal during the daily half hour walk. He says very little, but never has his diction been more lucid and pointed. What he does say is very simple: that every suffering has a deep meaning, and that we must trust in God. In his mouth these words acquire a remarkable wealth of meaning and authority. They travel swiftly from cell to cell, from floor to floor. Their effect has been quite marked upon the 2,000 inmates of this prison.

Every day I see practical proof of the fervent and pious love of the inmates of Vazs prison for

Cardinal Mindszenty. When passing his cell they take off their caps and cross themselves.

It is a bitter winter's morning; the first heavy fall of snow came during the night, wrapping the prison yard and buildings in an impenetrable white silence. The food situation is getting desperate; every night deaths occur; two priests died last week.

March, 1950

We are shivering in our cells both from hunger and from cold. The bread ration has been cut again. A moving scene occurred yesterday in the prison yard. A youth fainted and then collapsed while clearing away the mud. The Cardinal, who happened to be taking his daily walk, was the first to help him get up.

"I am hungry; I can't stand this any more," whispered the youth.

"Take the loaf of bread from me, please," the Cardinal whispered back, although he himself had little to eat.

With tears in his eyes, the youth kissed the Cardinal's hand. When they parted, the Cardinal told him, "I shall pray for you!" For more than four weeks the Cardinal sent his loaf of bread every second day to that boy. This noble gesture was commented upon both by the inmates and the prison's warders.

Undated, presumably 1951

When the Cardinal was transferred to Vazs, it was estimated that among the inmates there were many unbelievers, especially liberal Marxists who quarreled with the Orthodox Communists of Stalin's school.

But the Cardinal's presence in the prison has had a tremendous influence on the revival of faith among the 2,000 inmates. In the cells of Vazs prison religion has become a living spiritual force. I have witnessed many cases when the atheistic Marxists—former avowed enemies of all religion—have rejected Marx's dialectical materialism and embraced the Catholic faith. . . . Such occurrences have given me consolation for my sufferings. . . .

Undated, presumably Spring, 1952

The Cardinal has been removed from the general prison's ward somewhere else. I am sorry that I won't see him any more during the walk in the prison yard. But he has been carrying the burden of the prisoner's life with nobility and dignity. We do not see him any more but we feel his presence everywhere in prison. (End of diary).

(Continued on page 11)



Cardinal Mindszenty was distinguished for his calm, almost saintly face—but the effect of Communist abuse had made him a tense, angry listener at his now historic trial for treason and espionage before a People's Court, in February, 1949. Since his conviction he has been kept a prisoner behind a veil of secrecy.

Wash Post 20 XI 255

The shocking truth about Cardinal Mindszenty

(Continued from page 9)

As I think back to the days before my uncle's arrest, I remember the words of his final pastoral letter, circulated seven years ago last week (November 18, 1948), in which he forecast his own fate. "... None of my predecessors was so without means of defense as I am ... compelled to face untruths ... as I am ... (but) when compared to the sufferings of my country my own fate is unimportant."

Mindszenty might repeat those words today, for certainly few Christians have been more persecuted for their faith, more defamed and tyrannized, or more selflessly persistent in their dedication to truth and liberty since Christ carried His Cross to Calvary.

At the time, Mindszenty was speaking of the diabolical plot that was to lead to his debasement at AVH political police headquarters at Budapest's 60 Andrassy Street (renamed Stalin Street). He knew that arrest was imminent well ahead of the fateful hour when 16 policemen surrounded the palace of his Holy See at Esztergom the day after Christmas in 1948. He laid aside his robe, bade good-bye to his mother and alerted his priests with these words: "If a live Cardinal cannot help defend his country, perhaps a dead one can."

Hurriedly he scribbled on the back of a worn envelope a message to his bishops. It was to become an immortal indictment of Communism and the Cardinal's best-known declaration.

"I have partaken in no conspiracy whatsoever," he said. "I shall not resign my episcopal See. I shall not make any confession. If ... you should read that I confessed or ... resigned, and even see it authenticated by my signature, regard that as merely the consequence of human frailty; and in advance I declare such acts null and void."

My uncle is a man of immense courage. He foresaw what would happen at 60 Andrassy Street. He had been there times before to protect the unjustly accused and tormented. However grim, however humiliating his own experience there was to be, he was prepared to face it. "Other men possess far greater talents," he had said to me, "but I have nerve."

At Red police headquarters Mindszenty was starved, tortured, brain-washed, drugged. Irrefutable documentary evidence has been brought out of Hungary and submitted to Western intelli-



This photograph of a Mindszenty family reunion was taken in 1944. The Cardinal is second from right in the middle row. Beside him is his late father and, next to his father, his mother. The photograph at the extreme left shows Dr. Laszlo Toth, whose prison diary is quoted on these pages.

gence by eyewitnesses, as well as by officials who assisted in the conspiracy and who later fled. They included a doctor who gave Mindszenty drugs, a graphologist who forged damning documents, and two public prosecutors who detailed precisely how Cardinal Mindszenty's will was shattered.

The man who shared my uncle's cell for a time preceding trial escaped recently to bring me this fresh account: "Mindszenty was threatened with death if he would not confess according to Communist dictates at the trial. He collapsed many times in our cell when they brought him back from interrogation; he had recurrent nightmares. For days at a time he was not fed, but was given ice-cold enemas, stimulant pills and injections which I myself saw the doctors administer."

Mindszenty's crackup followed on the 25th day of arrest, and 13 days later, authorities were able to bring him, shockingly different from the man Hungary knew, to a so-called "trial" before a "People's Court."

There the churchman was made "publicly" to "confess guilt" to charges of treason, of plotting to overthrow the government and of illegal dealings in foreign currency.

On February 8, 1949, a life sentence was imposed, and the Cardinal was whisked away, never to be seen again except by his captors, for a time by fellow prisoners, and rarely, with special permission, by his mother.

Mindszenty, as martyr, rallied all Christianity to his cause, and his voice, silenced, cried out louder through prison walls. Fear of reprisals, public demonstrations, pilgrimages, liberation attempts (which were made and will be related later), and fear of real release by "unreliable" prison warders, compelled the Red regime not only to hide the Cardinal but to change his whereabouts at regular intervals. Before last July's announcement, there were in fact numerous "interruptions" of his sentence.

Since 1949, he has been in a dozen different prisons and detention villas, not only in Hungary but in Czechoslovakia. Once when the Russians became afraid, he was even moved to Soviet territory. Such precautions were taken to cover these movements that often three different points of confinement were designated simultaneously for him in three different regions, leaving wardens to argue who was responsible for the prisoner, while Mindszenty was shunted to a fourth unnamed place. There were times when my uncle himself did not know where he was.

One of my uncle's principal concerns throughout his lifetime has been the welfare of political victims of Hungary's ever-changing governments, of Nazi and Communist tyranny. To see justice rendered to them, he would carry their complaints from internment camps and prisons even up to Parliament. Now who in Hungary can look after him, can see if he has enough food, a bed to sleep on, a crucifix to pray before? Who is there to champion his rights?

The Communist conspiracy did not end with the imprisonment of my uncle. His persecution continued, and in Csehimindszent, Hungary, the village of his birth, the conspiracy extended to our family. We were made to suffer not only his loss, but Communist abuses and retaliations for his alleged crimes.

Next week I shall tell you the facts I have learned about Cardinal Mindszenty in captivity today, and the poignant story of the martyrdom of his aged, widowed mother, which has been no less heroic than his own.



ILLUSTRATED BY
CARL MUELLER

One of the Cardinal's former cellmates says, "He collapsed many times in our cell when they brought him back from interrogation; he had recurrent nightmares. For days at a time he was not fed, but was given ice-cold enemas ... and injections."

Times 26 XI 21

ARRESTS STIR BELGRADE

Seizures in Hungary Called Contrary to 'Normalization'

BELGRADE, Yugoslavia, Nov. 25 (AP)—A Yugoslav Government spokesman said today recent arrests of Yugoslavs in Hungary had "provoked consternation" in Yugoslavia.

Branko Draskovic, Foreign Office information chief, said at a news conference the arrests were "contrary to the policy of normalization of relations" between Yugoslavia and Hungary. He refused, however, to say whether Yugoslavia had taken the matter up officially with the Hungarian Government.

Belgrade press reports this week said a number of Yugoslavs who held Hungarian citizenship were arrested recently. Among those listed were several persons active during World War II in opposing pro-Nazi Hungarian authorities.

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Behind The Satellite Curtains



CZECHOSLOVAKIA—"Not even the imposing statue of Stalin (above) that marks the skyline has succeeded in destroying the beauty of medieval Prague. But along the city's antique streets and the great square named after Good King Wenceslaus, walk sullen people. No wonder! Shops once laden with consumer goods have been turned over to propaganda bookstores (one is shown at left) for a cause that expunges Masaryk's democracy. There are stories satirizing communism—and stories of police who pick up the story-tellers."



HUNGARY—"The Hungaria (left) is the once-famous New York Cafe in Budapest, where Ferenc Molnar and his literary and musical friends used to hang out. Above, three boys pose in Stalin Square, dominated by a huge statue of the late dictator but devoid of traffic or other people. Budapest was badly wrecked in the war. The major construction effort has gone into the bridges across the historic Danube. Seven of the original eight have been restored and a new one added. But the rest of the city is gray and shabby. The people are characteristically effervescent—until one notices that it is a facade. In communist Hungary they tell of the peasant lashing his horse and crying, 'Pull, you beast, this wagon is yours!'"

New York Times photographs by

Times 22x1215

DR. LASZLO REINER, CANCER RESEARCHER

Dr. Laszlo Reiner, since 1953 a research associate at the Institute of Cancer Research at Columbia University, died yesterday in the Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center at the age of 61. He was born in Budapest, received his M. D. at the university there in 1917, and four years later a Ph. D. in chemistry at Karlsruhe, Germany.

In 1924 Dr. Reiner held a Harvard fellowship and in 1924-25 a traveling fellowship of the Rockefeller Foundation. From 1929 to 1931 he was an instructor in bacteriology at New York University and from 1929 to 1942 a consultant and later research director for Burroughs Welcome & Co., pharmaceutical manufacturers, Tuckahoe, N. Y. From 1942 to 1953 he was associated with the Wallace & Tierman Products Company, Belleville, N. J., as an expert on pharmaceutical and medical research.

Dr. Reiner leaves his wife, Mabel Duthey Reiner, also a scientist, and a sister, Mrs. Renée Korody of Minneapolis.