

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

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Photograph from "Leap Through the Curtain."  
Nora Kovach and Istvan Rabovsky.

## Pirouettes to Freedom

**LEAP THROUGH THE CURTAIN:**  
The Story of Nora Kovach and Istvan Rabovsky, told by George Mikes. Illustrated. 223 pp. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. \$3.50.

By ROSALYN KROKOVER

**O**N Feb. 9, 1954, two well-publicized dancers—husband and wife—appeared on stage for the first time before an American audience. They were Nora Kovach and Istvan Rabovsky, guest artists at the Broadway Theatre with Roland Petit's Ballets de Paris. Nine months before they had made the headlines as refugees fleeing to sanctuary in West Berlin.

Now they relate all in an "as told to" book. George Mikes is the journalist who has set down their life story in clear, fast-moving prose. The story is interesting, even exciting. The fact that the central characters are ballet dancers is only incidental to the interest of the book.

Kovach and Rabovsky met as students at the school of ballet in the Budapest Opera. They were there through the war years, when the Nazis took over, and their account is a fearsome picture of a country in its death throes. Even more realistic is their discussion of the war's aftermath and their part as handmaidens to Soviet propaganda.

The two authors are in a good position to tell the story. As the two leading dancers in Budapest they were sent to Leningrad to study at the famous ballet school. On their return to Budapest they gave a concert that was rapturously received. As they wryly note: "We had come from Russia, we had been taught in Russia, so we were wonderful and admirable; had we come from Paris or London and danced ten times better \* \* \* we should have been deemed fifth-rate, provincial and inartistic."

Everywhere in Budapest, that spring of 1950 was Big Brother.

Miss Krokover is the author of the forthcoming "The New Borzoi Book of Ballets."

Photographs of Stalin were in every nook and corner. The Stakhavonites were busy filling production norms. Signs like this appeared on the bulletin board of the opera: "Dancers! This year we have appeared in fifty performances. Our target for the year is sixty performances. Let us overfill our plan!"

Kovach and Rabovsky confess that they were well treated—and they hated every bit of it. As "People's Artists" they represented Hungary on trips to various satellite countries. Spies were everywhere. Old friends grew to distrust one another. The atmosphere was intolerable. So they fled.

**T**HE book really ends with their flight from East Berlin, but there are a few words about their reception in the West, and Rabovsky adds a seven-page conclusion that contains some comment about ballet as practiced outside the curtain. He claims to be disappointed. He also shows obvious bitterness about some of the reviews he has received. Critics have referred to him as "an acrobat." This rankles. "I have no apologies to make," he writes. "I belong to the Russian school and I cannot change my views overnight—nor do I intend to. \* \* \* I feel that no real dancer can be reproached for being able to leap like an athlete."

This begs the question. Rabovsky, who happens to have tremendous elevation, would be the first to admit that acrobatics are nothing without style. And he also has admitted that his early training, in Budapest, was provincial. His six months in Leningrad were of profit, but it takes much more than six months to unlearn a lifetime of bad dancing habits. The critics were but pointing out an obvious fact, suggested by Sol Hurok in his short preface to this book: "They have the talent to become great stars also in the West, provided they go on working with that relentless, almost religious, zeal and devotion which must be the lot of every great dancer."



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# Aid Offer to Include Four Red Countries

By Donald J. Gonzales

United Press

The United States yesterday expanded its offer of food and other relief measures to victims of the bitter European cold wave to include four Iron Curtain nations.

The State Department disclosed the action in announcing that United States ambassadors in 19 countries have been ordered to make urgent reports on relief needs in the stricken areas of Europe and the Near East.

In doing so, the Department apparently expanded President Eisenhower's offer Sunday to provide United States farm surplus to victims of the severe European winter.

White House news secretary James C. Hagerty had said at Thomasville, Ga., in reply to questions that the President's offer did not apply to Iron Curtain countries.

But instructions sent to United States envoys to get the program started included four Soviet bloc nations—Romania, Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia—as well as Communist Yugoslavia.

Besides the five Communist countries, nations receiving United States aid offers included Britain, France, the Netherlands, Belgium, Norway, Denmark, Italy, Greece, Turkey, Luxemburg, Portugal, Spain, West Germany and Austria.

## More Snow in Europe; Death Toll Now 747

LONDON, Feb. 21 (AP)—Heavy snowstorms brought new hardship tonight to Europe in its record 22-day cold wave. The death toll rose to 747.

Weathermen promised no immediate relief, although the sun warmed parts of Italy and Sweden today.

An earthquake rocked a large part of Turkey, causing five deaths. An estimated 1200 homes were destroyed.

In Germany, hunters began mercy shooting of deer trapped in the ice and snow. United States Army engineers blasted ice jams at a Rhine River bridge in Mainz.



# June 22 1956 Bela Kun Record Cleared As Reds Rewrite History

Special to The New York Times.

MOSCOW, Feb. 21—Bela Kun, Hungarian revolutionary and one of European communism's best-known figures, was restored to grace today. Kun, who knew, supported and was

## INFLATION CHECKS WIN IN COMMONS

British Government Upheld,  
325 to 259, at Close of  
Two Days of Debate

By THOMAS P. RONAN

Special to The New York Times.

LONDON, Feb. 21—Commons affirmed tonight its confidence in the Government's ability to solve Britain's economic difficulties.

Voting along party lines, it accepted, 325 to 259, a Government motion asking an expression of confidence. By 325 to 258 it rejected a Labor party motion of censure.

The voting brought to a close a hard-hitting two-day debate on the Government's efforts to fight inflation and particularly on the measures it took last week as part of that battle.

These measures included a 1 per cent rise in the bank rate, the Bank of England's discount rate, to 5½ per cent, further restrictions on installment buying, reductions of about \$106,000,000 in the bread and milk subsidies and cutbacks in Government spending.

### Measures Termed Inadequate

Similar measures and others aimed at cutting home consumption by limiting spending and borrowing were taken by the Government last year. But during the year Britain's trade deficit increased, the gold and dollar reserves with which the sterling area finances its trade dropped 25 per cent and the cost of living rose.

The burden of the Labor party indictment was that the Government's measures were inadequate because the Government had failed to bolster its monetary controls with physical controls such as placing limitations upon imports.

It also contended that some of the steps including the reduction in the bread and milk subsidies discriminated against the poorer section of the community.

Government speakers conceded that the steps taken last year had not worked fast enough but they insisted that they were operating. The speakers were confident the new measures would help to turn the inflationary tide but also promised that even tougher ones would be invoked if the need arose.

Hugh Gaitskell, leader of the Labor party, said his party believed in a combination of monetary and physical controls because physical controls enabled

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supported by Lenin, was the head of the short-lived Communist regime in Hungary, which he named a Soviet republic, from March 21 to Aug. 19, 1919. After several court trials in Vienna, Kun went to the Soviet Union.

The action coincided with the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Communist party. At today's session of the congress, Premier Nikolai A. Bulganin called on the Soviet people to

Excerpts from Kaganovich and  
Bulganin speeches, Page 4.

fulfill the new Five-Year plan. He also urged them to maintain the lead the Soviet Union professes to hold in the peaceful development of atomic energy.

Kun was active there, but in the Nineteen Thirties, when other Communist personalities, as has been pointed out at the current congress of the Communist party of the Soviet Union, also went into eclipse, Kun disappeared.

He is not mentioned in the Soviet Encyclopedia, the latest volume of which, issued last September, praises Matyas Rakosi, Hungarian Communist leader, as one of the leaders of that revolution, but ignores Kun.

Today, in Pravda, Eugen S. Varga, economist of Hungarian origin, published an article noting the seventieth anniversary of Kun's birth. He recounts the relationship between Kun and Lenin. An official at the Hungarian Embassy here said Kun was dead, but he was unable to say when his country's most famous Communist had died.

During the Soviet party congress, Anastas I. Mikoyan, a So-

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## Bela Kun Is Restored to Grace; Soviet Purged Hungarian in 30's



Bela Kun



Associated Press

Stanislav V. Kassier

viet First Deputy Premier, referred to unjust actions that had been taken against well-known Communists in the previous era on the basis of false information presented many years after specific acts had been supposed to have occurred.

### Two Others Exonerated

By HARRISON E. SALISBURY

Bela Kun was one of the most bloodthirsty revolutionaries of our time.

For years after his flight to the Soviet Union, Kun lived the comparatively humdrum existence of the functionaries of the Communist International. Never again in his lifetime was the revolutionary flame to light in Hungary.

Then came the Nineteen Thirties and the purges of the old Bolsheviks by Stalin. Kun vanished into the execution chambers. The date—even the year—is not publicly known.

The only clue to Kun's existence lay in repeated reference by the Communists to "Trotskyite agents" who had "penetrated even into the highest party institutions." But, says the Soviet Encyclopedia, with "profound difficulty" the "Marxist-Leninist core of the party was finally cleansed."

Kun, in other words, was shot as an agent of Leon Trotsky, Stalin's great political opponent.

Thus, Kun's name joined those of two lesser known Soviet Bolsheviks, Stanislav V. Kassier and Vladimir Antonov-Ovseyenko, on the rehabilitation list.

One bright spring morning in 1938 a United States correspondent in Moscow noticed that the portrait of Mr. Kassier, then Communist party chief in the Ukraine, was missing from a display posted outside his apartment house.

About the same time grizzled old Mr. Antonov-Ovseyenko, who led the Bolshevik assault on the Czar's Winter Palace in 1917, sailed from Spain on a Soviet boat for Odessa.

Nothing was ever heard of Messrs Kassier or Antonov-Ovseyenko again.

A suspicion that they were victims of the purge of the Nineteen Thirties has now been confirmed. Anastasi Mikoyan, member of the Presidium of the Soviet Communist party, acknowledged in an address to the Twentieth party Congress in Moscow that the two men were the victims of false accusations.

There are no particular lines to link Mr. Antonov-Ovseyenko and Mr. Kassier beyond the fact that each man had had some connection with the turbulent Ukraine.

However, in their younger days both were linked with Trotsky.

This link strengthens the suspicion that the anathema pronounced on Trotsky's name by

Stalin may be lifted by Stalin's heirs, at least as regards the early revolutionary and immediate post-revolutionary years.

A fiery young naval petty officer who had played a role in the 1905 Russian revolution at the Sevastopol naval base, Mr. Antonov-Ovseyenko was the principal member of the Bolshevik military committee that carried out the actual uprising in Petrograd (now Leningrad) in 1917.

He had been a member of the opposing Social Democratic faction, the Mensheviks, and had been close to Trotsky while that revolutionary leader was in exile in Paris. Mr. Antonov-Ovseyenko was at Trotsky's right hand in the Russian civil war. He led the Red forces that finally established Soviet power in the Ukraine.

After the Revolution, Mr. Antonov-Ovseyenko wrote his memoirs and dabbled a little in politics as a Trotsky supporter, but threw his allegiance to Stalin after Trotsky had left the Soviet Union.

Stalin sent Mr. Antonov-Ovseyenko on various diplomatic missions abroad when civil war broke out in Spain. Stalin shipped him off to Barcelona. There, it was said, his task was the liquidation of anarchist and Trotskyite elements among the Spanish Loyalist forces.

In 1938, Stalin ordered Mr. Antonov-Ovseyenko back home. He was supposed to take up a job in the Ministry of Justice. Apparently he walked straight into the hands of the secret police.

Mr. Kassier was one of the tough hard-mouthed, hard-fisted young party lieutenants upon whom Stalin founded his control of the Communist apparatus.

Mr. Kassier was in the Ukraine at the time of the revolution. He went into the Communist trade union movement and by 1921 was a rough young Moscow union organizer, and a supporter of Trotsky. However, Mr. Kassier quickly cast his fate with Stalin.

By 1930 Mr. Kassier had become a member of the Politburo. He was party secretary of the Ukraine in the grim days of peasant collectivization and the ensuing famine.

When the great purge finally got underway publicly in 1936, Mr. Kassier was named as one of the intended victims of the first band of old Bolsheviks tried—the group headed by Lev Kamenev and Grigory S. Zinoviev. He became a victim of the purge just two years later.

One possible clue is that Mr. Kassier worked closely in 1938 with Sergo Ordzhonikidze, Communist party boss of heavy industry and like Stalin a Georgian.

Mr. Ordzhonikidze died in 1939, presumably of a natural death. But there has long been a suspicion that Mr. Ordzhonikidze had broken with Stalin over the purges. Possibly this break cost Mr. Kassier his life.



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# Hungary Releases 9 Catholics

Reuters

VIENNA, Feb. 25—The Hungarian government has released nine Roman Catholic officials after many years of imprisonment, Radio Budapest said tonight. Joseph Cardinal Mindszenty was not among them.

One of the nine was Dr. Josef Baranyai, former director of Hungary's Catholic Action, who was arrested at the end of 1948 and sentenced to 15 years in 1949 together with Cardinal Mindszenty.

The other eight released men were identified as Peter Gyepvari, Rezsoe Bolyos, Karoly Prilis, Ferenc Juhasz, Istvan Eroes, Lajos Ilusfoelder, Arpad Bihari and Mihaly Raba.

Joseph Cardinal Mindszenty was not mentioned. He was sentenced to life imprisonment in 1949 on charges of treason, espionage and currency offenses. Recently he was allowed to leave prison and live in a monastery in South Hungary, but he is still apparently under restrictions.

The bulletin said all nine released officials had been pardoned and set free by decision of the Hungarian President's Council. It gave no reasons for the release and no details about the men.



# Stalin's Second Death

*Recasting the Red Dictator in a More Accurate Image, His One-Time Glorifiers Inter His Hated Memory*

By WILLIAM HENRY CHAMBERLIN

Perhaps the most striking feature of the Communist Party Congress in Moscow was the second death of Josef Stalin.

At the preceding Congress, held a few months before the 73-year-old dictator succumbed to a stroke in March, 1953, Stalin completely dominated the proceedings. His slightest word was hailed as a pearl of wisdom by eager sycophants. Stalin's last major literary effort, a somewhat muddled treatise entitled "Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR," was given the widest possible circulation and praised as a precious addition to "the treasury of Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist thought."

Very different was the attitude toward Stalin at the recently-convened Congress. It was a case of "none so poor to do him reverence." In death he suffered, with a kind of retributive justice, the fate which he meted out to many of his old party comrades whom he had marked out as victims of his ferocious purges. Speaker after speaker hurled stones at his memory and there was no Mark Anthony to plead the cause of the deceased dictator.

Especially sharp were the attacks of Anastas Mikoyan, Deputy Premier, for many years in charge of Soviet foreign trade relations. Mikoyan gave short shrift to Stalin's "Economic Problems of Socialism," noting that one of its predictions, a contraction of production in the United States and Western Europe, had been contradicted by the facts.

## Conspicuous Absence

Praising "collective leadership," Mikoyan noted that it had long been absent during the era of Stalin's personal rule. He found Stalin's "History of the Communist Party" seriously deficient. Most sensational of all, from the standpoint of Soviet and international Communism, Mikoyan charged Stalin with falsifying history and making unfounded accusations against some of the victims of his purges.

Mikoyan has substantially revised his estimate of Stalin since the last Congress. At that time he referred to Stalin's works as "a treasury of ideas." He said that Stalin, in his books, "illuminates our life with the brilliant light of science" and dutifully ended his speech with the cry: "Glory to the great Stalin."

It is unlikely that any of Mikoyan's colleagues will accuse him of inconsistency. They are all in the same boat. All might adduce, as excuse for their glorification of the dictator during his lifetime, the simple reply of the Abbe Sieyes, when asked what he did in the French Revolution: "I lived."

There is something heartening to the human spirit in this evidence that the dead hand of a tyrant, even if he escaped war and revolution and died in the fullness of power and synthetic glory, cannot forever cast history in a false mold. In Stalin and Hitler, the twentieth century has been cursed with two of the worst tyrants who ever lived, two men of whom it is not rhetorical exaggeration but sober fact to state that they sent millions of completely innocent human beings to death, not in military operations but in everyday administration.

To the millions of Jews and smaller numbers of civilians in occupied countries that were the victims of Hitler must be added, to

Stalin's account, millions of recalcitrant peasants, great numbers of people in Poland, the Baltic states and the "disloyal" Soviet republics and hundreds of thousands of Communist party members liquidated during purges.

Stalin's heirs have two reasons for wishing to dissociate themselves, so far as they can, from his memory. It should never be forgotten that they are his men, brought up in his school and associated with his acts of ruthlessness.

First, it is a natural impulse to make the dead tyrant the scapegoat for all that the Soviet peoples have suffered in hunger, deprivation, slave labor and purges during the last quarter of a century. The idea that Stalin was a beloved "father image" to the people whom he oppressed should have received final burial with the deliberate denigration of his memory by the highest figures in the present Soviet regime.

## Bait for Socialists

Second, by throwing the memory of Stalin to the wolves, it may be possible to make considerable progress in foreign relations. Marshal Tito of Yugoslavia, for instance, who at first had been rather coy and standoffish in his attitude toward the Congress, chipped in with a message of warm greeting when the trend against Stalin became clear. It may be easier to catch left-wing socialists for "popular front" experiments with the bait of representing Stalin as solely responsible for the unpleasant aspects of the Soviet regime.

There has already been a retrospective rehabilitation of the Polish Communist party, which was mercilessly purged as infected with Trotskyism and dissolved in 1938. Far more Polish Communists perished in Moscow at this time than ever suffered the extreme penalty at the hands of conservative Polish pre-war governments.

The new course is not without elements of danger to the Soviet regime. If the Soviet people are now told that Stalin was an idol with feet of clay they could conceivably become skeptical about policies with which Stalin's name is closely associated—collective farming, for instance, and the steady sacrifice of their interests, as consumers, to the demands of militarization and heavy industry.

## Factional Feuds

Complications may also arise in the satellite countries. If Polish Communists are told that their party was wrongfully liquidated in 1938 other Poles may begin to wonder who committed the mass murder of Polish war prisoners in the Katyn Forest. All sorts of factional feuds may be stirred up in the Communist party leadership in Czechoslovakia and Hungary if the ghosts of the former Communist leaders in those countries, executed for "Titoism," are allowed to walk.

It is not clear how far it will be possible to repudiate Stalin while continuing to practice many features of Stalinism or whether it will be possible for men who are Stalin's agents and creatures to criticize their former boss without compromising their own reputations. The profit-and-loss account of Moscow's Operation Revision has not been cast up. But the operation has started, and is likely to affect the news from Moscow and the satellite capitals for some time.



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## HUNGARIANS NAMED IN INTERFAITH WORK

Four Hungarian immigrants, including a former Prime Minister, a former member of Parliament and two religious leaders, were made chairmen of a committee of Hungarian refugees in the National Conference of Christians and Jews yesterday.

In a ceremony at the Building for Brotherhood, 43 West Fifty-seventh Street, they were officially welcomed to promote the work of the organization by Dr. Everett R. Clinchy, president of the national conference.

The new committeemen are the Very Rev. Bela Varga, Canon of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Veszpresv, Hungary; Dr. Bela Fabian, former member of the Hungarian Parliament; Miklos Kallay, Prime Minister from 1942 to 1944, and Unitarian Bishop Alexander Stivanyi of Lancaster, Mass., who will serve as Protestant chairman.

"America has been strengthened by immigrants whose suffering from poverty and slavery gave them the insight which helped to form this country's concepts of freedom," Mr. Clinchy told the committee.

"We have a job of maintaining our stability as we face our headline problem of race relations. It is important for us to add to our work the strength and enthusiasm of these Hungarian refugees."