

## **November 3, 1956**

# **Imre Horvath's Notes of Khrushchev's Speech at the 3 November Session**

### **Citation:**

"Imre Horvath's Notes of Khrushchev's Speech at the 3 November Session", November 3, 1956, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Magyar Országos Levéltár, XIX J- 1-K Horvath Imre külügyminiszter iratai, 55, doboz. Published in CWIHP Bulletin 8-9, p. 398  
<https://wilson-center.drivingcreative.com/document/111886>

### **Summary:**

In this speech, Khrushchev admits that the lack of Hungarian leaders is his own fault. He criticizes Rakosi and Gero for poor leadership and for excluding Imre Nagy from the party. Regret is expressed for not removing Rakosi earlier. Khrushchev states that the Soviet Union can not be on the sidelines, and remarks that unless forced into retirement Nagy will work with the enemy.

### **Original Language:**

Hungarian

### **Contents:**

Translation - English

## Imre Horvath's Notes of Khrushchev's Speech at the 3 November Session(1)

Khrush., Bulg., Vorosh., Malen., Molot., Kagan., Mikoyan, Brezhnev

Khrush.: Organized counterrev. Events are without letup. From the north. Mistakes of Rakosi, Gero, + others Miskolc!(2)

We are doing a lot, but not everything! This is no justification for the fact that there are no Hungarian leaders! Rakosi was paralyzed, but we didn't actively speak out. We were too late in requesting that he be replaced. It's my fault and Mikoyan's that we proposed Gero rather than Kadar.(3) We gave in to Gero. Rak. and Gero are honorable and committed Communists. But they did many stupid things. Rak. is hardline, and Gero hapless. They criticized I. Nagy and regarded him as an opportunist, but he is also a traitor. The exclusion of I. Nagy from the party was a mistake and a reflection of Rak.'s stupidity. We would have arrested I. Nagy. We were for admitting him back into the party. Some of the rebels are not enemies! They were antagonized by the mistakes of the leadership. We welcome your (Kad.'s) choice. We cannot regard I. Nagy as a Communist. Dulles needs someone just like I. Nagy. We uphold the Declaration. But with I. Nagy that's impossible! Eng. + Fr. Egypt.(4) We consulted with other parties. Malen., Khr. Poland. We can't be observers on the sidelines. Yug., Rankovic, Kardelj, Micunovic, the ambassador in Mosc. + Malenk., Khrush. Alarm! Revol. government. The traitors want to use Kadar as a screen. If I. Nagy is not forced into retirement, he'll be working for the enemy.

-Munnich - Apro | Hidas  
deputy, -Ronai | Berei  
internal affairs, Kiss | Andics  
defense -Marosan  
-Kadar as chairman Kovacs  
-Kossa at finance Egri  
Veg

They want to isolate Kadar -Dogei Miskolc |-> Budapest Szolnok |

## Translator's Notes

1 See Note 157 supra. This document, located by Janos Rainer, was published in Hungary in 1996. See Vyacheslav Sereda and Janos M. Rainer, eds., *Dontes a Kremlben, 1956: A Szovjet Partelnokseg Vitai Magyarorszagra* (Budapest: 1956-os Intezet, 1996), pp. 92-93. The document is in Hungarian interspersed with a few Russian phrases and names. Horvath's notes show that the deliberations about this matter began at 8:45 p.m. (see Note 155 supra).

2 These three lines appeared in the far left column of Horvath's notes.

3 This statement is a candid acknowledgment of the extent to which the Soviet Union still controlled leadership politics and successions in Eastern Europe after Stalin's death. Khrushchev's reference to Mikoyan concerns the steps that Mikoyan took when he was in Budapest from 13 to 21 July 1956 (see Document No. 1 supra). During a preliminary meeting with Rakosi, Erno Gero, Andras Hegedus, and Bela Veg, Mikoyan took the initiative in bringing about Rakosi's dismissal. (The other Hungarian officials had long wanted to proceed with this step, but were unwilling to act until the Soviet authorities themselves told Rakosi he would have to go.) Mikoyan then participated in a crucial meeting of the HWP Politburo on 13 July, which voted to remove Rakosi from

his posts as HWP First Secretary and a member of the HWP Politburo. At Mikoyan's behest, the HWP Politburo also chose Gero as the new party leader. See "Zapis' besedy A. I. Mikoyana s Matyashem Rakoshi, Andrashem Hegedushem, Erne Gere i Beloi Begom, 13 iyulya 1956 g.," 17 July 1956 (Secret), compiled by Yu. V. Andropov; "Zapis' vystuplenii na zasedaniya Politbyuro TsR VPT, 13 iyulya 1956 g.," 13 July 1956 (Secret), compiled by Yu. V. Andropov; and "Zapis' besedy A. I. Mikoyana s Yanoshem Kadarom, 14 iyulya 1956 g.," 17 July 1956 (Top Secret), compiled by Yu. V. Andropov, all in APRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 483, Ll. 186-190, 191-205, and 206-215, respectively. In ciphred telegrams on 16 and 18 July, Mikoyan explained in detail why he ended up supporting Gero to become the new HWP First Secretary. See "TsK KPSS," 16 July 1956 (Strictly Secret - Urgent), Osobaya Papka; and "TsK KPSS," 18 July 1956 (Strictly Secret - Urgent), Osobaya papka, both in APRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 483, Ll. 183-185 and 225-236, respectively.

4 The nature of this statement is unclear (to say the least), but the mention of these countries at a time of escalating hostilities is another interesting indication of the role of the Suez Crisis in Soviet thinking about events in Hungary.