

November 3, 1956

**Working Notes from the Session of the CPSU CC
Presidium on 3 November 1956, with Participation
by J. Kadar, F. Munnich, and I. Horvath**

Citation:

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Summary:

Kadar argues that the source of mistakes in the past resulted from the monopoly that a handful of Hungarians had on relations with the Soviet Union. Rakosi is singled out as a source for previous difficulties. Kadar believes that forming a new revolutionary government is the only way to undermine the violence of the counterrevolution and prevent Nagy from acting as cover for such activities. To garner support amongst workers, Kadar argues that the new government must not be a Soviet puppet.

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

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Those Taking Part: Voroshilov, Bulganin, Kaganovich, Malenkov, Mikoyan, Molotov, Kirichenko, Saburov, Suslov, Brezhnev, Pospelov(1)

On the Preparation of Documents for Use in Hungary
(Khrushchev, Mikoyan)

The documents are poorly prepared. Cdes. Suslov, Mikoyan, and Shepilov are to prepare the documents.(2)

On the Composition of the Hungarian Gov't (Mikoyan)(3)

Cde. Mikoyan: At the head of the gov't is Kadar.

Kadar—it is worth speaking about mistakes, but for a long while there was no time. About one matter—why in the summer they chose Gero as secretary. The Soviet comrades always helped, but there was one mistake: only 3-4 Hungarian cdes. Enjoyed the full trust of the Soviet cdes.: Rakosi, Gero, Farkas. But among others there are many orderly people. 3-4 individuals monopolized relations between Hungary and the USSR. This is the source of many mistakes. Rakosi would say “this is the view of the Soviet cdes.,” and that would put an end to the debate. On the exclusion of Nagy from the party: Rakosi said that the Soviet cdes. share his view.

Cde. Kadar—the decisions of the XX Congress were heartily welcomed.(4) To criticize Rakosi means speaking out against the Soviet cdes. The congratulatory telegram in Rakosi's name (caused confusion).(5) For 12 years: the Soviet comrades were calm with Rakosi at the head and then Gero (they didn't raise objections to them). What now? On Nagy's behavior. They're killing Communists. The counterrev. are killing them, and premier Nagy provides a cover. The government lacks the forces to put an end to it. What must be done? Surrendering a socialist country to counterrev. is impossible. I agree with you. The correct course of action is to form a rev. government. I'd like to dwell on one point: the whole nation is taking part in the movement. The nation does not want to liquidate the peop.-dem. order. The withdrawal of Soviet troops from Hungary has great significance. We are being strengthened in our military relationship, and are becoming weaker in the political. National sentiments are offended (form, title).

Cde. Kadar: This government must not be puppetlike, there must be a base for its activities and support among workers. There must be an answer to the question of what sort of relationship we must have with the USSR.

Cde. Munnich: Believes that Cde. Kadar's assessment and conclusions are correct.

Cde. Kadar—the center of counterrev. Is in the city of Gyor.(6) If we declare Nagy's gov't counterrev., all parties will fall under this rubric. The government does not want to struggle against the counterrev. The position: on the basis of defending the peop.-dem. order, socialist gains, and friendship with the USSR and with other socialist countries and cooperation with all peaceloving countries. At the head of the gov't is Kadar. To send: Malenkov, Mikoyan, Brezhnev.(7) To fly off: (at 2:00-3:00) at 7:00 to 8:00 in the morning.

Translator's Notes

1 For some reason, Malin did not list Khrushchev's name among the participants. Also not listed here are Janos Kadar, Ferenc Munnich, and Imre Horvath, who took part in the segment on the formation of a new Hungarian government. This portion of the meeting began at 8:45 p.m., with Khrushchev and Malenkov in attendance after their return from Brioni.

2 The reference here is to documents issued by the Kadar government after it was installed in power.

3 A Hungarian scholar, Janos Rainer, recently found a document in the Hungarian National Archive that sheds important light on this part of the CPSU Presidium's deliberations. Notes taken by Imre Horvath, one of the Hungarian officials who were present, reveal that Khrushchev offered an opening statement here, which for some reason was not transcribed by Malin. The notes Horvath took of Khrushchev's speech are translated below (see Document No. 16) as a supplement to the Malin notes, but they may be worth reading at this point before finishing Malin's rendition of the meeting. Although Horvath's notes were written hurriedly in mixed Hungarian and Russian, they provide a good flavor of what Khrushchev said.

4 A secret report from the Soviet ambassador in Hungary, Yurii Andropov, in May 1956 was much less positive, alleging that "the work of the Hungarian press in illuminating the results of the XX CPSU Congress has been totally inadequate." See "I. O. Zaveduyushchego Evropeiskim Otdelom MID SSSR tov. Levychniku K. D.," Cable No. 141 (Secret) from Yu. Andropov, 2 May 1956, in AVPRF, F. Referentura o Vengrii, Op. 36, Por. 15, Papka 48, D. 178, Ll. 22-33.

5 This refers to a telegram published in major Soviet and Hungarian newspapers on 6 April 1956, shortly after the 20th Party Congress. The telegram, sent by Khrushchev (as party leader) and Bulganin (as prime minister) to their Hungarian counterparts, Rakosi and Hegedus, marked the 11th anniversary of the liberation of Hungary from Nazi occupation.

6 The local authorities in Gyor, including the security forces, had been supportive of the revolution from the outset. See *Gyor-Sopron megyeiek emlékeznek az 1956-os forradalomra* (Budapest: Zrinyi, 1991).

7 Judging from Malenkov's presence at Presidium sessions on 4 and 5 November, only Mikoyan and Brezhnev actually traveled to Budapest.