

Interviewer: N. Varga
Date: September 30, 1957
Place: N.Y.C.

I. Character Description

Very normal looking boy, small but well proportioned figure, open face, blond hair. His voice is quiet, unhesitant, but he doesn't like to talk much. His answers are short, ~~xxxxxxxx~~ intelligent, to the point. He has a constructive mind, which shows itself in his inclination to build, to create. There is a pleasant unity in respondent's personality.

He comes from a struggling workers family, but his parents must be very honest, modest, capable people with high moral standards, not too interested in any* thing else (politics, etc.) than to manage the family's decent survival without special over-ambitiousness.

II. Personal Inventory

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Age 11

Male

Roman Catholic

Szombathely

Last lived and spent most of his life in Szentpeterfa

Attended school in Szombathely the Sandor Petofi public school. Had started the fifth grade in the fall of 1956.

Father 46, mother 44, brother 22, sisters 16 and 13, one grandmother 76 here in U.S.

The whole family is living in Manhattan in four room apartment, kitchen and bathroom. Mother is cleaning women, father works in a church. Respondent attends St. Stephen public school, sixth grade.

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III. THE SCHOOL SITUATION

A. Can you tell us something about school in Hungary? What were your subjects?

"Our subjects were reading, writing, geography, drawing, Russian grammar, Hungarian grammar, and ~~xxxxxx~~ singing and gymnastics.

"We had two Russian hours a week, but we didn't learn anything else but grammar, writing and reading. And, of course, vocabulary. I didn't like this language, it was very difficult, even for me who spoke language, which is similar to the Russian. You can imagine how much more difficult * it was for the rest of the class who ~~xxxxxx~~ didn't speak any Slavic ~~xx~~ language."

Which subject did you like best?

"Geography. It wasn't difficult at all. This is why I liked it. We learned about Hungary and the countries around us. In the ~~thxxx~~ third and fourth grades I had a very good geography teacher."

Which subjects did you like the least?

"Drawing. I couldn't draw a line correctly. And I didn't like singing either."

Tell me something about your teachers, now.

"In the third grade we had a woman teacher. In the fourth also a ~~woman~~ woman, in the fifth we had a man. However, in the fourth grade we also had a man who taught us singing. In the fifth grade every ~~xxxx~~ subject was taught by a different teacher. But this man teacher was our form master.

"I liked the women teachers very much in the third and fourth grades. They were good. When I was sick the teachers said I didn't have to go to school."

Did you have any teachers you did not like?

"Oh, yes, I didn't like the singing teacher. He always beat me because I couldn't sing. "

Did the teachers treat all the children equally?

"The singing teacher didn't. He always made differences and favored a boy who couldn't sing ~~xxx~~ at all, but still he liked him."

Did you have any Communist teachers?

"I have no knowledge about it. I never asked and I never thought about it."

Who were your classmates? Tell me something about them.

"I had only one friend in Szobathely. He was a very bad student, and my mother told me that I had to help him in his studies. I wasn't a bad student. In the third grade I had an average 4, and the fourth grade I was fifth. I got a high mark in everything. Therefore, I had to help this boy. We went to visit each other everyday. I liked him. He was a good boy. His father was a railway man.²

What did you do with your ~~xxx~~ friend; what did you talk about?

"We learned together. We went out and built tents and played all kinds of games. We didn't talk too much. We played instead. But if I had anything to do I talked it over with him. I never had any secrets from him."

Who did you not like among your classmates?

"There was a boy I didn't like. He was a ~~xxxxxx~~ rascal. He always fought with the other boys."

Were there any Communists among your classmates?

"No, I don't know about that."

Were there any children at school who were looked up to by the others?

"Yes, we had two boys who could ^{sing} ~~think~~ very beautifully. They were soloists in our choir. They were always taken for concerts and all the rest of the boys envied them."

Let's say there are two children of your age. One of them is the son of a man who was once a lawyer but is now a common laborer. The other is a son of a man who was a common laborer ten years ago, but now is a manager of a factory. Which of them would you rather have as a friend.?

"I would rather have the first one as a friend, because if his father is now a worker then he wasn't important politically. Therefore, he was put in a lower job. But, if the other one isn't a Communist ~~or~~ either, then I would make friends with both of them."

Did you have religious instructions at school or somewhere else?

"If someone wanted to attend religious class he could. But the teachers had to reduce the grades of those boys who went to this class. In spite of that I went and registered for the religious class even so. At home my mother also told me religious stories."

B. ~~22~~ Did you tell your parents what happened in school?

"I told my parents only about my grades. I learned alone. I sometimes told what we learned at school, and my parents didn't say ~~xxxxx~~ anything. They never learned with me, but if my mother explained

something to me I knew then it was so. I believed her the most."

C. ~~Did~~ Did you ever talk about what happened at home when you were in school?

"No, I never talked about anything that happened at home. I never talk too much anyway. If there was a recess period we ~~px~~ played with the other boys and we didn't talk."

Did anyone warn you to talk about somethings at school?

"No. ~~Nobody~~ Nobody told me anything."

D. What did you do after school hours?

"I went home, I ate something, and then I went to learn with my friend, or he came to me. When I came home I played with other boys from the house."

What kind of books did you read?

"We took books out of the library. My friend had his own books too. I read 'Robinson Crusoe', different tales, Russian folk-tales. I read also about the Negroes in America, what kind of life they had here. They were not even allowed to sit in the same bus as the white people. "

What amusements did you take part in?

"We went to the movies every Sunday. I liked the films very much. They were interesting. Once in a while we also went to football games. with my father."

Did you play any sports?

"Yes, I liked swimming."

What kind of games did you play with other children?

My favorite kind of play was to build. We built all kinds of things from the material nextdoor because there was a house there in ruins."

Did you participate in the Pioneer movement?

"I was a Pioneer somehow halfway. I wasn't inaugurated because I was away for summer vacation when the other boys happened to be inaugurated. But I had a certificate and I also wore the necktie and cap of the Pioneers. I liked it pretty well because they set up different workshops and we could prepare ourselves to become carpenters, or tailors or even sportsmen ~~of~~ for competitions if we wanted to. They didn't talk about politics."

IV.

Now, tell us something about your family. What did your mother and father do?

"My father was a worker in a leather factory. He worked eight hours every day. My grandfather had a restaurant, a bar, in the next village. My grandmother, my mother's mother, was a maid when she was young. But my mother did not work. She was busy enough at home."

Where did you live and under what circumstances?

"At Peterfa. We lived in the outskirts of this village, or better said, it was a small city. And at Szombathely we lived in the middle of the city. We had a one room ~~app~~ apartment with a little ~~kixk~~ kitchen, without a bathroom. We used fountain water. We had our own well in the garden. The toilet was also at the end of the court in a separate little cabin."

How did you sleep? Did you have your own bed?

"We had two beds and a sofa. Two people slept in one bed. I slept with my brother."

"Our food was not too sufficient. We ate fruit only if our relatives brought something from Peterfa, and meat we saw only on Sundays if my mother got up at 3a.m. in the morning and lined up for meat."

Who did the housework? Did you help too?

"The housework was done by my mother. You know, my mother's mother was born here in America. And my mother was also born here. She went home to Hungary for a visit, met my father and married him. This is how she stayed there."

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"I ~~am~~ didn't help toomuch in the housework. Some-
times I helped make the beds and I washed the dishes.
I didn't like it very much."

V. REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS

A. Have you been rewarded at school for good work?

"If somebody was a very good student and had nothing but fives, he got a book of tales. I myself got two books that way, but didn't get any other reward."

B. Were you ever punished at school?

"Yes, we had very bad boys in the class. Many of them didn't learn their lessons. Then they either got a mark one or they had to kneel in the corner. If we left our copy books at home we also got a mark one. From the Russian language we always got worse marks than from the other subjects. The teachers didn't punish me physically. They closed us in the classroom after school hours or told the director about our mischievousness. But this was all."

C. Were you ever punished by your parents?

"Yes. Sometimes my father or mother would give me a cuffxx if I had been disobedient. But they beat me only with my hands once in a while."

VI.

A. Now, let me ask you a bit about the revolution. Can you tell us why you think the Hungarians ~~thought~~ fought in the revolution?

"I don't know exactly. I remember that one night somebody knocked on the door. The superintendent's wife came in and said that the radio just announced that a revolution had started in Budapest. After that my mother did not let me out on the streets. I only heard that the tanks arrived and I also heard that the revolution was defeated."

VII.

// What would you like to be when you grow up?

"I would like to be an architect. I like it very much because it's good work and pays well. It was the same home as it is here. I love to built. I always did it at play at home."

A. What is a good father like?

"A good father has to earn momey to assure the survival of his family. If he doesn't work there is no money."

What is an ideal teacher like?

"A teacher should be wise and educated. If he is not intelligent, by the way, he can't & even pass the examinations. He must be good and just with the children."

What is a good mother like?

"A good mother should bring up her children well. She should take care of her clothing, cook for us, and to wash us and keep us clean."

What are the three worst things a child can do?

"If a child is _____, if he's stupid at school, and if he doesn't behave on the ~~xxxx~~ street, therefore nobody likes him."

What are the three most important things a child should be ~~xxxx~~ taught?

"He should be taught to finish school properle, even the higher schools, & if he wants to be more educated. He should definitely be taught geography. Otherwise he ~~doesn't~~ doesn't know where he is, and would get lost. He also has to taught to help old people."

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What are the three worst things that can be said about someone?

"That he is stupid; He's ill-mannered, mocking the old people; he's disobedient."

VIII. SPECIAL SECTION

A. Who do you think are the three greatest people in the world?

"Eisenhower, Adenauer, and Tito. I know him--Marshall Tito."

Who do think is the greatest living Hungarian?

"Mindszenty."

B. Can you tell us a little about each of the people we are going to mention. They are all famous Hungarians.

"St. ~~Stephen~~ Stephen was a great king. He was born in Esztergom in a fortress which still stands today."

King M

"I know his name, but I don't know more about this king."

Francis Rakosi, II.

"He was a great hero and a leader in the siege. He had great victories."

Sandor Petofi

"He was born in Horthobagy in a small room. He started to write, and wrote more and more. Finally he got money for it. He was the leader of the revolution that was secretly organized and they ~~xxxxxx~~ printed their material in a secret base-ment. Petofi died in a siege for freedom."

Kossuth

"He lived in the same _____ as Petofi and they

met. Was he also a great poet?"

Istvan

"I don't know who he was."

Respondent doesn't know

M _____

"He was the friend of Petofi and Kossuth."

"He was a great leader and he also fought in different wars against the Turks. We learned poems about him."

~~Mak~~ Miklos Horthy

"He was also a commander of war."

Josef Mindszenty

"He was the greatest bishop in Hungary, but the Communists imprisoned him."

Imre Nagy

"He was the greatest man in Hungary. It was much better when he came into power in 1953. Then my mother and father were released from deportation and they came home. During the revolution he was a leader again, but he was dismissed when the Russians came from Russia."

IX.

What strikes you as being completely different in the United States from Hungary?

"We have to line up for meat at home and here we can eat meat whenever we want and as much as we want. And my father doesn't have to work here as much as he had to in Hungary. It's easier to make money here."

What are the things you like most about the United States?

"There are more toys here, beautiful dresses, more beautiful than at home, it is very good to be in America."

What are the things you disapprove of in the United States?

"I don't disapprove of anything. Maybe baseball is not too good, it's boring. There is nothing in it-- anybody could do it."

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