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HUNGARIAN DAILY BACKGROUND

(Up to 1200 Hours December 18)

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1) The First Court Martial Sentences.

The martial law decree of December 9 came into force the same day. On December 12 it was added to by the President, which ruled that the death sentence could be imposed by court-martial for offenses coming under summary jurisdiction. The government decree regulating the carrying out of summary procedures (Mon. December 13, p. 803,) on the other hand, allowed the possibility of a 10-15 year prison term to be imposed in place of the death sentence.

Radio Keszth and Radio Munkacs reported on the first court sessions, held at MISKOLC, KECSKEMET and BUDAPEST. Several death sentences were brought; one of them was carried out, whereas the death sentences of several others were commuted to prison terms.

The Hungarian radio also reported on the arrest of certain persons found in possession of arms.

2) Workers Councils of Trusts and Combines Continue Activities.

On December 9 the Council of Ministers dissolved the BUDAPEST Central Workers Council and the district Workers Council. In connection with this, the question was raised: what will be the fate of those Workers Councils which are the central organs of certain trusts and combines? As the present decree, strictly speaking, does not apply to these Councils, there is no legal obstacle to their continuance. The Central Workers Council of the TATABANIA- and-GOSZELAN mines, therefore, has continued to operate.

The Central Workers Council of the GYEPEN Iron-and-Metal Plant took up a similar attitude. On December 15 and 17 the Council held a meeting at which it was decided to continue activities. But, in order to avoid presenting the government with a point of attack, it was decided to change the Council's name into the "Workers Council of the GYEPEN Iron-and-Metal Plant," omitting the word "central."

The CSEPEL Workers Council is the central organ of the 19 factory units of the Geopel combine and, as such, is one of the strongest Workers Councils (the number of Geopel workers is 14 to 16 thousand.)

It is easy to suppose that, taking courage from the example of the CSEPEL workers, the Workers Councils of the other trusts and combines (Perc Coalmining Trust, Boros Coalmining Trust, Baza Iron Plant etc.) will re-activate themselves.

At its meeting of December 17, the CSEPEL Workers Council decided on several demands of a political character. It was demanded that the police should stop the arrests or, if this could not be achieved, the workers should be told the reason for an arrest. They also demanded to have an enterprise press.

These demands are an additional proof that the government has not succeeded in diverting the workers' councils from political matters, and that these have started again to tackle political problems. As Elek RAPP, president of the Geopel Iron-and-Metal Works Plant Workers Council, said in his radio declaration of December 17: "In Hungary today one cannot find either an individual or an organization which does not deal with politics."

1) Contacts Between Actors and Writers.

According to an announcement of radio Kossuth, the management of the Hungarian Association of Theaters and Films will convene a meeting this week. This association was formed in 1949. In the first days of the revolution, the revolutionary committee of the association was set up, which appealed to other theaters all over the country to follow its example. In an appeal by the Revolutionary Theater Committee, actors were called upon to strike: "we shall remain mute until our nation regains its complete independence."

After the November 1 declaration of the nation's independence and neutrality, the association called upon the actors to resume work.

After the second Russian intervention, Radio Kossuth broadcast on November 21 a manifesto of the "Hungarian Dramatic Art Association" (obviously the former Hungarian Association of Theaters and Films.) In this manifesto, the association declared that it identified itself with the writers' statements of November 22, agreeing that the most precious right of literature and art was

the one obtained by the revolution: freedom and truth. The management of the association invited the following distinguished writers to its meetings:

- Gyula ILLYES x
- Laszlo KEMENY x
- Gyula KAT x
- Endre ILIUS
- Ferenc KARIKHTY x
- Dezso KERESZTESY
- Aurel KARPATY
- Aron TAMASI x
- Miklos STANPAS
- Miklos SZBAT

(*x indicates members of the Hungarian Writers Union Presidium. Dezso KERESZTESY was the member of the temporary presidium of the Revolutionary Council of Hungarian Intellectuals.)

End.