

1960

CURT - (H) CHANGES

Here Background

CHANGES IN THE HUNGARIAN GOVERNMENT

MUNICH, 14 January 1960 (Hungarian Evaluation & Research) - Romoland Radio in its broadcast of 20.00 hours on 13 January 1960 announced some not unexpected changes in the composition of the Hungarian Government. (CF. CR - 107, 113, Jan. 13). The communique of CC Session printed in "Nepszabadsag" (Jan. 13) had already indicated that changes were in the offing. The communique stated that the CC "dealt with some personnel and organizational questions connected with the Party and Government and based on the decisions of the VIII. Party congress." On the following day also the Board of the National Council of the Patriotic People's Front dealt with personnel questions connected with the Government, as reported by Radio Kossuth on 14 January 1960.

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F-58

The appointment of Gyula KALLAI as First Deputy Prime Minister was decided already during the VIIIth Party congress. Thus the government has now ten First Deputy Prime Ministers: IMREI, ALTO and the now appointed Gyula KALLAI.

The appointment of KALLAI, formerly NSWP secretary for cultural affairs, points to the fact that the Party attributes greater importance to public instruction hitherto and particularly to the introduction of the new school reform. In this connection it is interesting to note that KALLAI has already been deputy Minister of Culture, in 1953, and was Minister of Culture from 28 February 1957 to 18 January 1960. KALLAI stated at the VIIIth congress in December 1959, that the bringing about of the "cultural revolution" was one of the main tasks facing the NSWP.

The position of the Minister of Finance became vacant by the sudden death of Istvan Astos. The new minister, Imre Szere, born in 1923, belongs to the younger Communist generation. Already in 1940 he joined the Social Democratic Party and until its fusion in 1948 with the Communist he was member of that Party. After the fusion he became Party functionary of the Hungarian Workers Party. In 1954 he was elected member of the Central Committee and appointed Deputy President of the Central Council of Trading Cooperatives.

In July 1956 (after the downfall of Rakosi) he was promoted to Minister of Food Industry. After the crushing of the 1956 uprising he rallied immediately around the János Kadar group and headed the Commissariat of Food Supply which operated for only a few months. In February 1957 he again became a member of the Central Committee of the new Communist Party (the MSZP) and in May 1957 he was re-appointed President of the Council of Trading Cooperatives. The June 1957 Party conference confirmed him as member of the Central Committee.

The most interesting feature of the present changes is the appointment of Pal Losonoki to Minister of Agriculture. Losonoki was from about 1950 the president of the kolkhoz "Red Star" in Baros, which was the leading and one of the biggest kolkhozes in Hungary. It was visited frequently by the most distinguished guests of the regime. Thus, for the first time in the history of the Hungarian regime, an actual kolkhoz chairman has been made Minister of Agriculture. The appointment clearly demonstrates the importance attributed by the regime to the rapidly increasing socialist sector of agriculture. It should be held in mind that the village of Baros became by the end of December a collectivized village and County Szeged to which Baros belongs was declared to be a collectivized county on 1 January 1960.

Pal Losonoki is one of the first and most steadfast propagandists for collectivization. He is member of the Kolkhoz Council since its creation at the end of December 1951. At the May 1954 Party Congress he became alternate member of the Central Committee and in June 1957 full member. At the June 1957 Party conference he was among the speakers. Beside his Party activities he is member of Parliament, of the National Council of the Patriotic People's Front, two times holder of the Kossuth Prize, author of numerous articles in favor of collectivization.

During the revolution, however, Losonoki could not prevent the dissolution of his own kolkhoz in Baros, which is characteristic of the mood of the local population of that period, but he succeeded in a short period in reorganizing the kolkhoz after the crushing of the revolution. For his "meritorious services" in the fight for the crushing of the revolution he was awarded the Medal for Worker-Peasant Power.

The outgoing Minister of Agriculture, János Bokai, has been appointed as Hungarian ambassador to Peking replacing Sándor Fogarasi who is returning to Budapest. At the last Party congress Fogarasi was elected Chairman of the Party's Control Commission.

Another change affects György Marosán, who has been relieved of his post as Minister of State in the government and appointed member of the Presidential Council, a place which became vacant by the death of János Róvai on 4 August 1959. This means that György Marosán holds now in the state apparatus a much lower job than he

CONF - (P) (M) CHANGES.

NEWS BACKGROUND REPORT, January 18, page 3

F-39

has had before. The bulk of his activities will be devoted to the Party, where he is still member of the Politburo and one of the secretaries of the Central Committee. It is interesting to note in connection with his Party position that in his 31 October 1959 speech János Kadar suggested that Maroszi be appointed permanent First Deputy Party secretary, but at the subsequent November-December Party Congress no mention was made of this suggestion.

On the level of leading state offices NFI (16 January 1960) announced an interesting change. László Gyarmas, head of the Information Bureau of the Council of Ministers, has been appointed President of the Institute of Cultural Relations. This position has been vacant since February 1958 when his predecessor János Péter, was appointed First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs.

In the Information Bureau László Gyarmas is succeeded by his deputy, Géza Szendrői.

End.

(12.05)