

COMMUNISTS VS. CONSERVATIVES AND THE STRUGGLE FOR THE HUNGARIAN SOUL IN CANADA,

1940-1989

By

CHRISTOPHER PETER ADAM

Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the Ph.D. degree in History

Department of History

Faculty of Arts

University of Ottawa

© Christopher Peter Adam, Ottawa, Canada, 2012

ABSTRACT

COMMUNISTS VS. CONSERVATIVES AND THE STRUGGLE FOR THE HUNGARIAN SOUL IN CANADA, 1940-1989

Christopher Peter Adam

Supervisor:

University of Ottawa

M. Mark Stolarik

This thesis explores the pervasive political divide within Canada's Hungarian communities between communists and nationalist conservatives. Both sides in this conflict struggled for ownership of Hungarian national symbols and the right to be seen as the "true" guardians of Hungarian identity in Canada. While religious differences between Roman Catholic and Calvinist Hungarian immigrants served as a divisive force in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the arrival of a massive wave of new immigrants from the lands of the defunct Austro-Hungarian Empire after the First World War introduced into Canada the fiery political divisions between the far left and right that engulfed Hungary in 1918/19. Throughout the interwar period, during the Second World War and in the Cold War era, successive regimes in Budapest intervened, further politicized and divided Canada's Hungarian communities, separating them into "loyal" and "disloyal" camps. But both communist and conservative Hungarian-Canadian leaders demonstrated a significant level of agency by often charting their own course and thus confounding their allies in Budapest. This thesis argues that Hungarian-Canadian communists only paid lip service to the Marxist language of class conflict, while national self-identification trumped class-based identity or internationalism, and conservative nationalists represented a large, politically heterogeneous camp, divided by generational conflicts and tensions between immigrant cohorts.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A number of historians, academics, friends and family members have been instrumental in making my research for this dissertation possible. Mária Palasik, head archivist at the Historical Archives of Hungarian State Security not only sparked my interest in the field of Hungarian state security, but also helped grant me speedy access to an array of collections on Hungarian agents in Canada. Hungarian historians and researcher János Kenedi, the former government-appointed chair of the Kenedi Commission into Hungarian communist-era state security, provided me with a wealth of background information on the workings of the former security apparatus and was good enough to share his knowledge with me during three meetings at his apartment in Budapest and in a regular stream of e-mails.

Professor Mark Stolarik, more than anyone else, spent time reading, correcting and suggesting changes to my research, as well as encouraging me, while I struggled to balance my work-related obligations with the completion of my dissertation. Professor Stolarik was always available to meet with me and provided invaluable insight into my research, arguments and methodology.

My parents have also played a key role in encouraging me to continue my university education. Although my father did not live to see me complete the PhD, as an immigrant, he was always supportive and proud that his son had the opportunity to complete graduate studies. My family's immigration to Canada, as a result of the suppressed 1956 Hungarian Revolution, sparked my interest in this field.

CONTENTS:

Abstract:	1.
Acknowledgements	2.
Introduction	5
Chapter 1: The Development of Canada's Immigration Policy and the Rise of Hungarian Communities in Canada	35
Chapter 2: Multiple Identities and Divided Loyalties: The Politics of Identity and Canada's Hungarians during the Second World War	69
Chapter 3: Mutual Suspicions	104
Chapter 4: The Hungarian-Canadian Communist Movement	134
Chapter 5: The Anti-Communist Far Right	183
Conclusion	213
Postscript	225
Appendix 1: Hungarians in Canada by province (1941)	232
Appendix 2: Denominational breakdown of Hungarian-Canadians	233
Appendix 3: The Refugees of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution	234
Appendix 4: Hungarian places of worship in Canada	235
Appendix 5: Hungarian weeklies and monthlies	237
Bibliography	238

Introduction

Diaspora communities often struggle more with issues of multiple identities and conflicting patriotic loyalties than their compatriots who never emigrated from their homeland. Canada's politically diverse communities grappled with what it meant to be patriotic during the Second World War and then in the Cold War, when repression in communist Hungary forced tens of thousands of Hungarians to flee. But the different junctures in Hungarian history that led people to emigrate created a diaspora deeply scarred by the past, marked by political battles in the home country and intra-ethnic feuds over which faction served as the authentic guardian of Hungarian patriotism abroad.

Historian Carmela Patrias' seminal work on the politics of the Hungarian-Canadian community during the interwar period argued that Hungarians were divided ideologically into two camps: conservative anti-communist nationalists, who were largely supportive of Hungary's authoritarian, right-wing interwar regime and Communists schooled in the language of international and class warfare; devout believers in the dictatorship of the proletariat.¹ Hungarian Canadian Communists were, in the late 1920's and early 1930's keen to build class solidarity around the ever-growing number of Hungarian emigrants arriving in Canada from the lands of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire. What Patrias does not explore is that even if this may have been their initial goal, and that of the Communist Party of Canada, Hungarian Canadian Communists were never able to tear themselves away from the language of patriotism, and occasionally even ethnic nationalism. Class-based identification never proved salient.

¹ Carmela Patrias, *Patriots and Proletarians : Politicizing Hungarian Immigrants in Interwar Canada*, (Montreal : McGill, 1994) 169.

This study explores the ideological divide between conservatives and communists from 1940 to 1989, continuing where Patrias left off, but offering an alternative narrative and set of conclusions. Rather than reaffirming the dichotomy present in Patrias' work, it is more accurate to speak of two warring factions within the Hungarian-Canadian diaspora: one of them deeply anti-communist, conservative in outlook and overtly nationalist, while the other pretended to subscribe to Marxist precepts of internationalism, gravitated only superficially to the supremacy of class-based identity, but was every bit as ethnically insular and keen to be seen as patriotically Hungarian as their archenemies on the right. Both sides in this ideological divide chose key episodes in Hungarian history and specific national symbols to rally around and the actions of both, as well as the political conflicts in the community, were heavily determined by their respective relationship with the Hungarian government. Those who were members of Hungarian communities in Canada, but chose not to gravitate to either political camp were most likely to have their loyalties and patriotism questioned by both sides.

Hungarian Canadian community leaders and the editors of Hungarian-language newspapers perceived themselves or each as belonging to two distinct and diametrically-opposed camps encompassing Hungarian patriots and internationalist proletarians. In fact, both groups battled for ownership over the symbols of Hungarian patriotism and the right to serve as guardians of the Hungarian identity and the nation's "soul." Hungarian-Canadian Communists were first and foremost patriots, rather than proletarians. Their national identity always trumped class-based loyalties, even if the rhetoric of class warfare proved salient in internecine battles with right-wing Hungarians.

Politics, patriotism and diaspora

National governments often see their respective diasporas as strategic political assets and the successive Hungarian regimes—including the country's World War II authoritarian leadership and postwar communist dictatorship—were no exceptions. However, Oxford sociologist Steven Vertovec argues that each change in government in the home country and every new wave of immigrants create ideological rifts and tensions within the diaspora. “Awkward encounters or serious intra-diaspora conflicts tend to arise as new waves of migrants meet people of previous waves who preserve bygone traditions or who left with greatly differing political views and circumstances.”²

According to political geographer Alan Gamlen, the more underdeveloped and poverty-stricken the home country, and the more dramatic a recent regime change has been, the more likely it is that the government will place a heavy emphasis on exerting control and political influence over its diaspora.³ Favoured diaspora leaders and the regime of the home country collude, in order to delay the process of integration into the host country and build a loyalty to the regime at home, which can have political, diplomatic and economic advantages for the developing state and its fledgling rulers. According to Gamlen, “the common thread running through all these policies is the attempt by states to produce a communal mentality amongst non-residents; a sense of common belonging to the home-state that renders expatriates governable. The discourse of belonging to a diaspora is crucial

² Steven Vertovec, “The Political Importance of Diasporas,” *Centre of Migration Policy and Society Working Papers*, Vol. 5, 2005, 3.

³ Alan Gamlen, “Diaspora Engagement Policies: What Are They and What Type of States Use them,” *Centre of Migration Policy and Society Working Papers*, Vol. 32, 2006, 4.

in attempts to produce this governable mentality, or governmentality.”⁴ Gamlen identifies three key elements of building “governmentality” in the diaspora, namely: encouraging a sense of belonging by emphasizing national symbols, supporting—even financially—institutional completeness in émigré communities and offering them political rights, such as the vote, in the home country.⁵ Prior to 1989, the Hungarian government pursued the first two of these three policies, with both the interwar right-wing and postwar communist regimes going so far as to fund “friendly” Hungarian Canadian newspapers. Michel Foucault argued that both institution-building and nation-building served as ways for states to reinforce their dominance over their citizens, or subjects.⁶ Countries with sizeable diaspora populations and the need to improve their fledgling regime’s image abroad make political use of their diaspora populations. Extending governmentality well beyond their borders forms an integral part of what Foucault refers to as the hermeneutics of power.⁷

Yet neither Gamlen nor Vertovec explored how the power relationship between the home regime and the leaders of the diaspora was reciprocal. The regime sought engagement with its diaspora and, in the case of Hungarian-Canadians immigrants, had to contend with suspicion, generational and ideological differences, as well as hostility on the part of those they assumed could help them engage the community. This hostility existed even when the regime offered financial assistance and privileges in return for loyalty. Gamlen wrote about building “governmentality,” but Hungarian-Canadian community leaders often proved ungovernable.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁶ Michel Foucault, “The Subject and Power,” *Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, (Sussex: The Harvester Press, 1982), 208.

⁷ Hans Herbert Kögler, *The Power of Dialogue: Critical Hermeneutics After Gadamer and Foucault*, (Cambridge: MIT Press: 1999), 46.

As such, the political discourse between the regime and its favoured diaspora group focused on a form of political discourse that thinkers like Foucault and German sociologist Jürgen Habermas could actually agree on labelling as “irrational.” The relationship between Hungary and its favoured group of immigrants was characterized by deliberative politics. Rather than following the classical liberal belief that political dialogue is based on negotiating the self-interest on both sides in a specific issue, deliberative politics injects ideas around morality and emotion into the debate, elevating it above the strictly rational.⁸ Habermas argued that when deliberative politics prevailed, it led to the “ethicization” of communication in given communities, as well as an ethicization of their political discourse.⁹ It was hardly enough for the Hungarian government to simply offer leaders of the communist Hungarian-Canadian émigré community lavish state-subsidized trips to Budapest, or partially fund their newspaper through the embassy in Ottawa. Neither form of assistance broke down the deeply ingrained suspicions that an older generation of Hungarian-Canadian communities harboured in their dealings with younger party functionaries in Budapest. As such, the government often resorted to appealing to a more nebulous sense of party, or ideological loyalty and patriotism, as well as creating boundaries, in order to determine who should be allowed in and who should be excluded from the diaspora.

What both the political leaders of the diaspora and the respective Hungarian regimes feared is that, with time, the émigré communities would become dormant and indifferent to

⁸ Jeffrey Flynn, “Communicative Power in Habermas’s Theory of Democracy,” *European Journal of Political Theory*, September, 2007, 437.

⁹ Jürgen Habermas, *Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy*, (Boston: Blackwell Publishers), 1996, 297.

events at home and national causes. Hebrew University political scientist Gabriel Sheffer refers to this process as “hybridization.” Immigrants become so active in their host society that their political and national loyalties undergo a transformation, both becoming more nuanced in the process.¹⁰ Sheffer notes that it is precisely this process of hybridization in the Polish American community, starting in the 1940’s and culminating in the 1970’s, that led to a decline in political activity, until the arrival of a new wave of immigrants in the early eighties.¹¹

The Hungarian-Canadian diaspora and the difficulty of governmentality.

The Hungarian government maintained a keen interest in Canada’s Hungarian communities throughout the twentieth century. This included the Cold War, not only as a result of their sheer numbers, with an influx of 27,000 immigrants between the wars and more than 38,000 refugees after the suppressed 1956 Revolution, but also due to the country’s proximity to, and close ties with the United States. All major Hungarian immigrant organizations and their newspapers in Canada—whether overtly political or generally apolitical—had to consider what their relationship with Hungary would be, either due to regular overtures from Hungarian officials, or out of pressure from the immigrant community. Throughout the twentieth century, Hungarian Canadian immigrant communities were heavily politicized, starting from the interwar period when Budapest funded a conservative newspaper that was supportive of the authoritarian regime, to the post-war communists who sent both cash and agents to Canada to build their influence among immigrants. The memory of the crushed 1956 revolt loomed especially large and it

¹⁰ Gabriel Sheffer, *Diaspora Politics—At Home Abroad*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 142.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 142-143.

tended to impassion the political discourse, as different sides in the conflict claimed the revolution's heritage as their own. The Hungarian government's approach to the Hungarian-Canadian immigration during the Cold War focused on gathering information on these communities, in order to determine if they posed a risk to Hungary's communist regime, exploring the role that they might play in the Cold War, exacerbating divisions and tensions among them and increasing the government's influence by creating contacts with individuals and organizations deemed to be either "friendly" or, at the very least, not overtly hostile to the communist regime.

The 1956 Hungarian Revolution completely transformed the ageing communities that had existed before the revolt, creating new generational and cultural conflicts, as well as infusing the community with a large wave of skilled workers and educated professionals.¹² The Hungarian revolution began as a student protest on October 23, 1956 in Budapest and as a peaceful symbol of solidarity with protesters in Poland who had demanded reforms from the country's communist government. When Hungary's Communist leader, Ernő Gerő, labelled the student protesters as counter-revolutionary criminals, the crowds marched to the headquarters of the state radio in Budapest and demanded that their fourteen points of reform be read out on the air. It is believed that the revolution was sparked by secret police agents who shot into the assembled crowd and with

¹² When the first books appeared on 1956, the suppressed revolution was still very much a current event, especially in light of the still unresolved Hungarian refugee problem and a drawn-out internal soul-searching among Western Marxists and left-wing politicians. Books published on the revolution were generally polemical in nature and often journalistic, while historians in Hungary were unable to publish anything beyond the propaganda of a government which at first referred to 1956 as a reactionary, regressive counter-revolution, and then later tried to downplay what had happened by speaking in vague terms about the "unfortunate October events." More recent monographs and edited works on 1956 avoid both the polemics and the obligatory vagueness and distortions of Hungary's former communist regime, including Csaba Békés' and János Rainer's book. Csaba Békés and János Rainer, *The 1956 Revolution*, (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2002)

the subsequent arrival of a contingent of soldiers who defected and armed the students. Within one day, the Hungarian Communist government resigned and Imre Nagy, a former reformist prime minister took over. Nagy proved unsuccessful in restoring order and convincing the revolutionaries to disarm and return home. Only once Nagy fulfilled all the demands of the rebels—including a commitment to hold free, multi-party elections, withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact, a declaration Hungary's neutrality, an order calling for the removal of all Soviet soldiers from Hungary and full amnesty for political prisoners—did the beleaguered prime minister gain the trust of the rebels. Nagy included conservative, social democratic and communist ministers in his interim cabinet, thus giving rise to Eastern Europe's only representative, democratic government. In no Soviet bloc country—including Germany in 1953, Poland in 1956 or Czechoslovakia in 1968-- had reforms taken such a radical turn. This ultimately resulted in the reassertion of Soviet and communist authority, as a result of the re-invasion of Hungary--involving 200,000 Soviet troops--during the early hours of November 4, 1956. With BBC broadcasts and radio reports documenting the fighting, the events in Hungary proved to be the world's first televised revolution and one widely covered by the western media. Fearing an escalation of the conflict, both the United States and the United Nations decided not to intervene, leading to the victory of Soviet forces in Hungary. Radio Free Europe, which broadcast anti-communist messages into Hungary and other Eastern bloc countries from its base in Munich and was funded by the CIA, kept the false hope alive that military intervention was on the way, even though it was never forthcoming.¹³ An estimated 5000 people—both

¹³ According to the Minutes of American National Security Council meetings, CIA officials anticipated anti-Soviet revolts in Eastern Europe and observed cynically that a crushed revolt would serve as a propaganda victory for the anti-Communist west.

civilians and soldiers—died fighting over a two week period, while many hundreds of people—including Prime Minister Nagy—were executed following the revolt. More than 200,000 refugees fled Hungary, first to Western Europe and then to North America in late 1956 and early 1957. János Kádár filled the political vacuum that followed the suppressed revolution. He rebuilt and reformed the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party and he ordered the brutal persecution of all those who had been involved in the uprising, including teenagers who were executed at just 18 years of age.

Following four years of repression, Kádár remodelled himself into Eastern Europe's most pragmatic communist leader with an economic program called the New Economic Mechanism and a cultural policy known as "Banning, Tolerating and Supporting." He allowed for limited private ownership, a semi-capitalist economy and adopted a relatively liberal approach to governance. Those who arrived to Canada as refugees in 1956 or immediately following the revolution often had a much darker, less nuanced view of Kádár than many in Hungary, as they would not have experienced any of the liberalizing reforms that he introduced after 1963.¹⁴

Minutes of the 290th NSC Meeting, July 12, 1956, *The Online National Security Archive*, George Washington University, Online document: <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB76/doc2.pdf>.

¹⁴ For a dispassionate, nuanced view of János Kádár's legacy, see Roger Gough's monograph *A Good Comrade*. Gough wrote his book in the shadow of a poll which stunned many Hungarians, as it showed that Kádár was the third most popular Hungarian leader in the country's more than 1,000 year old history. Saint Stephen, Hungary's founding king came in first, followed by nineteenth century reformer István Széchenyi and then Kádár, a man widely seen by Hungarian immigrants as having betrayed the revolution. Gough, in the most extensive English-language biography ever written about Kádár, describes the Hungarian communist leader as an "austere, withdrawn and tenacious man." Roger Gough, *A Good Comrade: János Kádár, Communism and Hungary* (London: I.B. Taurus, 2006), 7.

The Historiography.

The importance that the Hungarian government placed on immigrant communities in Canada is most clearly reflected in the large quantity of Foreign Affairs documents stored at the Hungarian National Archives in Budapest. Since much of this material only became accessible to researchers over the course of the last two decades, following the collapse of the one-party regime, it is not surprising that the bulk of historical literature on Hungarian Canadians (most of which was written before 1989) did not take these documents into account. Only a handful of historians have written scholarly works on Canada's Hungarians, and many of these books focused not on the Cold War, but rather examined earlier Hungarian communities, especially settlements in Western Canada prior to World War I, and the growth of the immigration during the interwar period.

Only two major English-language academic monographic survey histories on Canada's Hungarian communities exist, namely N.F. Dreisziger's *Struggle and Hope: the Hungarian-Canadian Experience* (1982) and Carmela Patrias's *Patriots and Proletarians: Politicizing Hungarian Immigrants in Interwar Canada* (1994). Dreisziger's book is a survey of Canada's Hungarians, stretching back to the 1890s, and as such does not examine the post-1956 period in depth and does not focus on the role of the ethnic press. Dreisziger also published a collection of essays in 2007, which includes a section on Hungarian immigrant communities, although the emphasis is not only on Canada, but rather on the West.¹⁵ Patrias's work, by contrast, does examine the way in which newspaper editors and journalists attempted to politicize and polarize Hungarian-Canadians into rival conservative

¹⁵ Nandor Dreisziger, *Hungarians from Ancient Times to 1956, Biographical and Historical Essays*, (Ottawa: Legas Publishing), 2007.

and communist camps.¹⁶ However, she only looks at the interwar period and does not explore whether the seemingly diametrically opposed Communists and nationalists were, in fact, significantly different in their patriotism. Patrias correctly suggests that Hungarian-Canadian community leaders and politicians in Hungary colluded in an effort to politicize the diaspora, but the author does not explore whether members of Hungarian communities in Canada had any agency to resist these efforts, or if community leaders were ever able to waver from the path set by Budapest. An exploration of the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs' archival material in Budapest declassified after the publication of Patrias' book indicates that the diaspora had far more agency than previously thought to determine the precise nature and course of the community's politicization and they often made use of this in ways that perplexed Hungarian officials, particularly after 1945.

A handful of scholarly works explore the earliest days of Hungarian settlement in the prairies and Hungarian folk culture in Canada, the most notable of which is research by Linda Dégh into both the peasants of Western Canada and the industrial workers of Ontario's Tobacco Belt.¹⁷ What makes Dégh's research unique is that she does not neglect industrial workers when exploring folk culture, even though it is far more common to attach this phenomenon almost entirely to rural populations.¹⁸ Dégh argues that the attachment to Hungarian folk culture served as an important facet of patriotism and national identity, leading to a revival of folk beliefs, habits, attire, dance and music that was moving towards

¹⁶ Carmela Patrias, *Patriots and Proletarians: Politicizing Hungarian Immigrants in Interwar Canada*, (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994), 19.

¹⁷ Linda Dégh *People in the Tobacco Belt: Four Lives*. (Ottawa: National Museums of Canada 1975), 16.

¹⁸ Kálmán Dreisziger, "Hungarian Community Folk Dance Groups in Canada." *Lectures and Papers in Hungarian Studies*. Hungarian Studies Association of Canada. 1994. 5.

extinction in twentieth century Hungary.¹⁹ A focus on folklore and Hungarian-Canadian prairie settlements also carries with it the risk of creating a somewhat romanticized view of these colonies.²⁰

The dearth of scholarly historical research on Hungarians in Canada during the twentieth century has not been due to a lack of interest on the part of the academic community, but rather to an acute lack of scholars who can conduct research in Magyar. Additionally, researchers who were able to work with Hungarian sources and examined the Hungarian immigration more generally, without a focus on the Canadian situation, tended to all but ignore Canada. For example, Steven Béla Várdy's *Hungarians in the New World* glosses over Hungarians in Canada, focusing instead almost entirely on the United States, despite the title.²¹

A modest number of general works, however, do examine Hungarian Canadians. The most prominent is Gyula Borbándi's *The Biography of the Hungarian Immigration, 1945-1989*.²² Borbándi, who lived in Western Europe and was a key member of the Hungarian intelligentsia abroad, wrote a book which was largely free of polemics that characterized nearly all works published in Hungary prior to 1989, including those that appeared only a few years before the collapse of the one party regime.²³ Ferenc Bakó's

¹⁹ Linda Dégh, "Uses of Folklore as Expressions of Identity by Hungarians in the Old and New Country," *Journal of Folklore Research*, Vol. 21, no. 2-3, 1984, 45.

²⁰ See Hollos, Marida. "Families through Three Generations in Békevár," R. Blumstock (ed.) *Békevár: Working Papers on a Canadian Prairie Community. National Museums of Canada*. Ottawa. 1979 and Dojcsák, G.V. *A kanadai Esterházy története* (The Story of the Canadian Esterhazy), (Budapest: Magvető 1981)

²¹ Stephen Béla Várdy, *Magyarok az Újvilágban*, (Hungarians in the New World), (Budapest: Magyar Nyelv és Kultúra Társaság, 2004).

²² Gyula Borbándi, *A magyar emigráció életrajza, 1945-1989*, (The Biography of the Hungarian Immigration), (Budapest: Európa Kiadó, 1989).

²³ An example of a more scholarly, yet still polemical work is Miklós Szántó's *Magyarok a nagyvilágban* (Hungarians in the Wide World), (Budapest: Kossuth, 1970).

Kanadai Magyarok (Hungarian Canadians), however, is one of the only major works to focus exclusively on Hungarian immigrants in Canada.²⁴ Bakó aims to provide a broad survey history of Hungarian Canadians, from their settlements in Saskatchewan in the 1890s until the late twentieth century. The book does, however, bear some of the hallmarks of post-1956 Hungarian historiography, especially in terms of its vague and innocuous references to the revolution as simply “the event of 1956.”²⁵ Bakó ignored the critical changes that the revolution and the subsequent wave of refugees brought to Hungarian communities in Canada. Whenever the author interviewed Hungarians who arrived in Canada after the revolution, he called into question their status as refugees, by referring to them as “fifty-sixers,” in quotation marks.²⁶

Bakó wrote his book from a sociological and anthropological perspective and conducted research in Canada. Not surprisingly, his work focuses on an examination of folk traditions and everyday life among Hungarian Canadians, especially issues related to integration, assimilation, employment, eating habits and momentous events in the personal lives of individual immigrants, such as births, baptisms, weddings and deaths. Bakó’s publication is unique in that it is the most scholarly Hungarian work to focus on the immigrant experience in Canada and is most useful to social historians. For example, Bakó uses oral interviews to explore the tension between secular and religious Hungarians. The author concludes that many working class Hungarians who gravitated to communist organizations or subscribed to left-wing periodicals in Canada may have refused to participate actively in church communities, but often relied on Hungarian Catholic parishes

²⁴ Ferenc Bakó, *Kanadai Magyarok* (Hungarian Canadians), Budapest: Gondolat, 1988.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 43.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 250

and Protestant congregations when it came to weddings and funerals. Bakó recounted in detail how a miner—also a self-declared atheist—arranged for his deceased communist wife to have a religious funeral, after she told him on her deathbed that she would not want people to have a negative impression of her.²⁷

Bakó's work is also unique in that it is the only major study to examine the eclectic dialect spoken by many Hungarian Canadians, particularly the generations that arrived before 1956, and to provide an extensive glossary of these words.²⁸ Their language often reflected their peasant or working-class roots, the prevalence of Germanic or Slavic words in rural, “kitchen” Magyar, as well as the integration of English for terms and expressions that they would not have used back in Hungary.

Hungarian communities across western Europe and North America also produced a body of literature on immigrants, but these are not scholarly and, frequently, they more closely resemble journalism. Tibor Baráth's *The Ideology of Hungarians Abroad* is among the more prominent examples.²⁹ Despite what the title suggests, a significant portion of the publication consists of essays focusing not only on immigrants, but rather on events in Hungarian history, told through the eyes of an immigrant.

While many of the non-scholarly works on Hungarians in Canada, produced by immigrants, are either deeply polemical, or simply brief, local histories of individual churches and organizations published on the occasion of various anniversaries, they are invaluable. István Török's *Catholic Hungarians in North America* is a useful survey of

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 250

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 313.

²⁹ Tibor Baráth, *A külföldi magyarság ideológiája*, (The Ideology of Hungarians Abroad), (Montreal: Sovereign Press, 1975).

Hungarian Catholic communities during the postwar period.³⁰ To the author's credit, he makes a conscious effort to cover not only American, but also Canadian Catholic communities and institutions. The book, however, offers almost nothing in terms of analysis, instead focusing on providing a brief outline of individual community histories. No insight is provided on internal differences or disagreements in each congregation, or on the socio-economic composition of the parishioners.

The fiftieth anniversary of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution in Canada led to a renewed interest in the history of Hungarian Canadian communities. Yet even this important commemorative event did not lead to the publication of an analytical survey history of Hungarian communities in Canada after the divisive 1956 Hungarian Revolution³¹. Audrey Wipper, a retired professor of anthropology at the University of Waterloo, published an essay on how Hungarians in Ontario reacted to the flood of refugees arriving in Canada after 1956 and Éva Tömory—a doctoral candidate at the University of Toronto—researched the contributions of some of the most successful Hungarian entrepreneurs in Canada.³² The newest scholarship on the Hungarian experience in Canada has been characterized by two approaches: either the scholar focused on the response of the

³⁰ István Török (ed.), *Katolikus magyarok Észak-Amerikában*, (Catholic Hungarians in North America), (Youngstown: Katolikus Magyarok Vasárnapja, 1978).

³¹ Western scholars, many of them from an earlier generation of Hungarian émigrés themselves, played an essential role in building the historiography of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, at a time when scholars in Hungary either ignored altogether, due to state censorship, or labeled it as a fascist counter-revolution against the socialist order. The first western historian to publish a major work on the uprising was Francois Fejtő, a Hungarian historian who immigrated to France in 1938 and who served as a professor of East European and Soviet studies at the *Institute d'Etudes Politiques*, in Paris. During the 1930s, Fejtő was deeply involved Hungary's underground Communist movement and was imprisoned for his Marxist beliefs in 1932. He later joined Hungary's Social Democratic Party and his publications have always revealed him as left-wing historian and thinker.

Francois Fejtő, *La Tragédie hongroise: Ou un revolution socialiste anti-Sovietique*, (Paris: Ed. Pierre Horay, 1956).

³² Audrey Wipper, "Ontario's Hungarian Community Responds to the Revolution and the Refugee Crisis: The Fund-Raising Drive," and Éva Tömory, "Entrepreneurship: How the '56-ers Helped Build Canada's Economy," *Hungarian Studies Review*, Vol. XXXV, No. 1, 2008, 85.

Canadian government or community organizations to the immediate refugee crisis of 1956/57, or the piece explored the impact of individual Hungarians on Canadian society, rather than the life of various communities as a whole. What is missing is an analysis of the development of Hungarian communities in Canada after the 1956 watershed and their single most important and divisive issue: the émigré's relationship with communist Hungary.

All Eastern European immigrants groups in Canada struggled with how to deal with an often hostile home country and how to retain their heritage. Even Eastern European Communists approached their comrades in government back home with suspicion. Nevertheless, what intensified the Hungarian Canadian community's conundrum was the post-1956 Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party's relatively liberal and tolerant approach to government. János Kádár, Hungary's communist First-Secretary, was despised by many fifty-sixers for having betrayed the revolution and for having brutally persecuted the uprising's participants for nearly four years. Yet it was much more difficult to condemn and oppose him—or to convince Canadian authorities of the nefarious nature of communist rule in their home country—if Kádár was using limited free enterprise to build the Soviet bloc's most consumerist, moderate and prosperous society. Hungarian Canadians were deeply divided over whether to fervently oppose or tacitly support Hungary's communist regime, or to simply choose a more pragmatic approach and remain apolitical *vis-a-vis* Kádár's Hungary. Hungarian diplomats in Canada and Hungarian policy towards émigré communities sought to exacerbate these divisions, and thus weaken the most fervent anti-communists and their hold over groups more willing to negotiate and compromise.

The Role of the Press.

The lack of an analytical survey history of Hungarian-Canadian communities after 1956 is only one of the historiographical deficiencies that this dissertation seeks to address. Few historians have covered a key aspect of the Hungarian immigrant experience, namely the press, with the exception of Patrias's examination of the interwar period. The émigré press, and newspapers more generally, function as a vehicle through which society negotiates its past and present and became increasingly important within the power structures of ethnic communities as the clergy lost their monopoly on leadership and had to share power with secular leaders.³³ Yet leaders of secular ethnic organizations have preferred consensus politics and decision-making over open dissent and debate, in an attempt to portray their community as united.³⁴ The ethnic press, particularly in the case of the Hungarian Canadian community, served as an open forum for the pent-up political frustrations and disagreements that community leaders hoped to sweep under the carpet. The Hungarian Canadian press was characterized less by newspapers that were open to a plurality of political opinions, but rather a multitude of rival publications each representing a well-defined ideological slant, demonstrating vicious hostility towards their competitors.

The ethnic press reveals the cracks in the united facade that leaders of cultural associations and mutual benefit society prefer to present to the majority population, showing that minorities balance multiple identities alongside their national affiliation. Identity based on ethnicity is often at the crossroads of what sociologists refer to as

³³ Jack Jedwab, "Leadership, Governance and the Politics of Identity," *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, Vol. XXXIII, No. 3, 2001, 13-14.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 25-26.

“intersecting identifications” based on differences in religious affiliation, dialects and language, culture, regional origins, class interests and gender.³⁵

While the ethnic press highlighted divisions, competing interest groups and differences in each community, many of these newspapers did successfully rally their readers around Canadian policy issues that were seminal to the group’s interests. Eastern European community newspapers followed closely developments surrounding the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, suggesting that while Canada may be bilingual, it was, in fact, multicultural.³⁶ The Ukrainian community was most extensively involved in the B&B Commission, producing more submissions than any other minority group and their newspapers and calling on the government to recognize a handful of official regional languages, beyond English and French, whenever linguistic minorities comprise at least 10% of the local population.³⁷ While Ukrainian newspapers were extensively involved in the debates surrounding the B&B Commission, Hungarian community newspapers remained largely on the sidelines, due to their editorial focus on international news and general neglect of Canadian politics. In the 1960’s, the largest newspapers catered increasingly to the recently arrived refugees following the 1956 Revolution and their family members who immigrated in the subsequent years. Their interest in Canadian politics was

³⁵ Sociologist Joanna Anneke Rummens differentiates between “identity” and “identification,” with the former often assigned by society as a label and the latter involving a more personal and conscious process of classification. Rummens sees ethnic identity as being “relational and contextual,” based heavily on one’s interaction with others, while “identification” is “processual” (sic) and often personal. Joanna Anneke Rummens, “Conceptualising Identity and Diversity,” *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, Vol. XXXV, No. 3, 2003, 20-21.

³⁶ Julia Lalande, “The Roots of Multiculturalism: Ukrainian Canadian Involvement in the Multiculturalism Discussions of the 1960’s as an Example of the Third Force,” *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, Vol. XXXVIII, No. 1, 2006, 48.

³⁷ Jaroslav Rudnycky served on the B&B Commission and was particularly adamant about giving official status to regional language. Rudnycky was thinking, in particular, about German, Italian and Ukrainian and suggested that the British North America Act be amended accordingly, encouraging provincial or municipal governments to develop legislation that would give local official status to minority languages. Ibid., 50.

very limited, in comparison to more established, earlier generations of immigrants in ethnic communities that did not experience such a dramatic influx of new arrivals. The last large wave of Ukrainian immigrants arrived in Canada during the late 1940's as Displaced Persons (DP's) from refugee camps following the Second World War,³⁸ while 36,000 Hungarians arrived as refugees between 1956 and 1958, followed by a steady stream of immigrants during the 1960's, as families were reunited.³⁹ Newspapers that failed to address the interests of refugees and their families, focusing on the home country and Cold War politics at the expense of Canadian domestic politics, were doomed to failure.⁴⁰

Editorials and the selection of articles express the way in which the given newspaper wishes to be perceived by its readership, while letters to the editor are often representative of the ideas, views and beliefs present in a specific community. Although the majority of readers will never write a letter to the editor, or have their work published, the relatively small group of people who *do* send their thoughts to the paper do not live in isolation and represent the prevalent views of the day. Newspapers are often very rich primary sources, as they represent a dialogue between the editors, leaders and other elites of the community, as well as the “average” reader. In the case of Hungarians in Canada, the significant number of publications printed after 1956 and the diversity of their political and ideological inclinations means that these papers provide the best glimpse into both changes

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 53.

³⁹ Department of Citizenship and Immigration, Record of the Privy Council Office, Box 862, File no. 555-54-565, Library and Archives Canada.

⁴⁰ Neither of Canada's two original Hungarian weeklies, namely the communist *Kanadai Magyar Munkás-Új Szó* (Canadian Hungarian Worker--New Word) and the conservative *Kanadai Magyar Újság* (Canadian Hungarian News), managed to attract readers among the new arrivals. Their emphasis on Canadian politics was of little interest to the “fifty-sixers,” who instead supported two newer conservative weekly publications, the *Kanadai Magyarok* (Canadian Hungarians) and *Magyar Élet* (Hungarian Life), both of which still exist today.

in public opinion over the years, and the way in which community leaders attempted to infuse the immigration with specific ideological messages and political debates.

Hungarians were not the only ethnic groups in Canada to use their press as a tool to maintain a sense of patriotism among immigrants and to participate in political battles taking place in their home country. Joseph M. Kirschbaum, for example, argued that Slavic groups in Canada used their newspapers as a forum to vent grievances and present opinions about the political and social situation back home.⁴¹ An examination of these papers revealed that Slavs in Canada were often divided along the same political and ideological lines as compatriots living in their home countries. Although most Hungarian-Canadian newspapers were nationalistic, just like Slavic ones, tension and conflicts between various Hungarian papers of different political stripes characterized the Hungarian-Canadian press. Conservative, liberal and far-right publications competed with each other for the prized “ownership” of the 1956 Revolution and its memory. Unlike most other ethnic papers, almost all Hungarian publications rallied around a single event and each camp tried to interpret the legacy of the revolution in light of its respective ideology. As such, this dissertation shall demonstrate that the central aim of the Hungarian-Canadian press was not language maintenance, as was the goal of most ethnic newspapers in Canada and the United States, but rather an attempt to infuse Hungarian communities with specific political and ideological messages, and possibly to affect change in the home country.⁴²

⁴¹ J.M. Kirschbaum, “The Ideological Orientation of the Canadian Slavic Press,” *Slavs in Canada* (Vol. 3) Inter-University Committee on Canadian Slavs, 1971, 297.

⁴² Joshua Fishman, “The Non-English and the Ethnic Group Press, 1910-1960,” *Language Loyalty in the United States*, London: Mouton & Co. 1966. 71-72.

The impetus behind the formation of Hungarian ethnic newspapers after 1956 also appears to be different than in the case of most other immigrant communities in Canada and the United States. Sociologist Susan Olzak argued that most white ethnic newspapers in the US were established out of group solidarity, during a period of hostility towards the immigrant community on the part of the both the majority population and other minorities.⁴³ In the case of Canadian-Hungarian newspapers published after 1956, competing periodicals often arose and flourished not because of *external* attacks directed towards the community, but due to pervasive ideological differences *within* the community itself and the complicated memory of a recently suppressed revolution.

Of the more than 200 Hungarian newspapers and periodicals published in Canada during the twentieth century, the large weeklies were aimed at a general, adult audience and offered reports and analysis of local, national and international news, as well as information on community events and political commentary. Nevertheless, a significant number of smaller circulation publications—often published by “freedom-fighter” organizations and veterans of the Second World War, as well as various obscure right-wing groups—were among the most militant in their opposition to Hungary’s communist regime and frequently subscribed to a pre-1945 version of Hungarian ethnic nationalism.

The existence of radical right-wing publications underlined what communist periodicals and a small handful of left-leaning or liberal publications already assumed in the early 1960s—namely, that some in Canada’s Hungarian communities were most interested in reviving aspects of interwar Hungarian nationalist and sometimes extremist ideologies

⁴³ Susan Olzak, “Ethnic Conflict and the Rise and Fall of Ethnic Newspapers,” *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 56, No. 4, Aug. 1991, 459.

and simply used the democratic and anti-communist slogans of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution as a cover for their activities. By the early 1960s, the trauma of 1956 and the arrival of tens of thousands of refugees had begun to wear off. The near unanimous, anti-communist solidarity of the previous years began to crack and ultimately gave way to political tensions and differences within the community, emphasizing the rift between liberals, conservatives, radical right-wing elements and Canada's aging, old-time Hungarian communists. One of the most profound consequences of these political tensions was the separation of Hungarian Jews and their media and cultural organizations from their Catholic and Protestant compatriots, whom they saw as frequently tolerating anti-Semites, former fascists and Nazis in their midst. This dissertation aims to examine these political tensions within the post-1956 communities over the course of three decades, and how this friction manifested itself on the pages of the émigré press.

The only scholarly work on the Hungarian-Canadian press after 1956 is a brief article on Hungarian newspapers in Ontario, which forms a chapter in a special issue of *Polyphony*.⁴⁴ This chapter, however, is more a general historical survey of the Hungarian press in Ontario than an examination of what the newspapers were saying on political, ideological and social issues.

In addition to this article, a new publication by Tibor Tóth, a young historian based in Hungary, focuses on far-right media in Hungarian émigré communities. However, the work focuses primarily on exploring how these groups and newspapers reacted to major international events during the Cold War and beyond, as well as on their relationship with

⁴⁴ Robert F. Harney (ed.), "The Ethnic Press in Ontario," *Polyphony*, Vol. 4, No. 1, 1982. 64.

Hungary, both before and after the 1989 transition to democracy. Tóth included little analysis on the far-right's relationship with mainstream or apolitical émigré organizations. The only exception was when the author mentioned the tense relationship between the far-right and Catholic parishes, most of which refused to celebrate masses for Hungarian fascist or far-right leaders and did not condone their causes.⁴⁵ The book explores the far-right's criticism of the Vatican, which decried the fascistic dictatorship proposed by the extreme right, whilst still proclaiming the doctrine of papal infallibility. Tóth also examines how the unwillingness of émigré priests to offer a mass for Hungary's late Nazi leader, Ferenc Szálasi, who happened to be a practicing Catholic, irked his followers in the West.⁴⁶ Yet nothing is said about the far-right's relationship with the numerous Hungarian Protestant congregations in the West.

As with most histories that examine Hungarian immigration—or a cross-section of it—in the West, there is surprisingly little mention of the situation in Canada. Montreal was a major centre of the far-right movement after 1956. While Tóth acknowledges that a Hungarian in Montreal edited the world's largest Hungarian-language far-right publication after 1986 and spent well over three decades publishing smaller newsletters, there is little mention of Hungarian far-right activity in Canada during the Cold War.⁴⁷

Canada's Hungarians and the Cold War.

Canada's Hungarian communities reflected great political, social and generational diversity following the 1956 Revolution, and this reality was represented in the relations

⁴⁵ Tibor Tóth, *A Hungarista Mozgalom Emigrációtörténete*, [The Hungarist Movement's Immigration History], (Debrecen: Debrecen University Press, 2008), 146.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 147.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 271.

that different community groups, newspapers and political organizations maintained with Hungary's communist government. All Hungarian communities—including generally apolitical organizations, such as churches, folkloric dance ensembles, youth groups and professional associations—had to tackle the issue of what type of relationship they wished to maintain with Hungary, especially following the 1964 opening of the Hungarian embassy in Ottawa. Hungarian diplomats frequently attempted to establish contact with groups that did not engage in overt political activities and those that at the very least did not have as their mission anti-communist agitation.

Soon after 1956, Hungarian authorities developed a relatively sophisticated understanding of the diversity of the immigration and the differences between various cohorts. This nuanced understanding may not have been reflected in the tone of official statements or in public communist rhetoric, but officials in Hungary realized that Hungarian immigrants to Canada—even fifty-sixers—were not monolithically anti-communist and hostile. The oldest living generation of Hungarian Canadians were those who had already settled in Canada prior to World War I. Officials in postwar Hungary demonstrated a certain level of paternalistic benevolence towards many of them, especially workers and peasants—who had little formal education—associated with the communist immigration. The Hungarian government saw many of them as not only “friendly,” but also strongly patriotic and supportive of some postwar, communist initiatives, such as land reform. Canada, of course, had its fair share of staunchly anti-communist and conservative Hungarians, who congregated around the *Kanadai Magyar Újság*, a weekly that once had close ties with Hungary's authoritarian, rightist interwar regime, and many of them came during the the 1920s or 1930s.

By the late late fifties and early sixties, the Hungarian government did not see this group of interwar, anti-communists as being especially worrisome. Instead, they were most concerned with the Displaced Persons (DPs) who immigrated to Canada in the late forties and early fifties. Reconciliation was not seen as possible or desirable with this group, which formed the backbone of the political émigré community. Hungary's state security agency actively monitored this group and dispatched agents to Canada in the 1950's and 1960's, in order to collect information on the political activities of these so-called "enemy" immigrants, determine their relative importance when compared with other cohorts and uncover any conspiracies or actions against the regime in Hungary.

By the late 1960s, developing relations with Hungarian Canadians who were either apolitical or demonstrated no open hostility towards Hungary's post-1956 regime became more of a priority for Hungarian authorities than trying to build ties with the ageing, rapidly dwindling and sectarian Hungarian Canadian communist immigration. After 1956, Hungary's relationship with communist organizations in Canada—especially the weekly *Kanadai Magyar Munkás* (Canadian Hungarian Worker)—remained generally cordial, but was also tense. While the years following the 1956 Revolution represented an era of intense repression in Hungary, as the regime led by János Kádár attempted to consolidate its power and ensure that a similar insurrection would not recur, the government adopted a more liberal outlook starting in 1960. As part of this trend, the way in which the government viewed the fifty-sixers also started to change. Hungarian authorities became more open in the recognition of this group's diversity and realized that even if most of them could not likely be convinced to return, they could at least maintain mutually beneficial relations with them. Hungarian authorities wanted to use the *Kanadai Magyar Munkás* and the affiliated

Kossuth Sick Benefit Society to these ends, but the government was unable to convince Hungarian Canadian communists to open up to left-leaning fifty-sixers, by being more welcoming, inviting them to community events and encouraging them to subscribe to the weekly.

The Hungarian government rapidly discovered three defining characteristics of Canada's Hungarian Communists in the 1960s. First, the community's leadership was increasingly old and visibly exhausted. As such, community leaders were no longer inclined to engage in major campaigns aimed at attracting large numbers of new recruits, even though the Hungarian government was probably correct in assuming that some fifty-sixers could have potentially become active in left-wing groups, had these organizations been more welcoming and less ideologically driven.

The second defining feature of Canada's Hungarian communist community was its closed, introverted nature. Officials in Hungary's Foreign Ministry, the Interior Ministry and in the state security agency all described Hungarian Canadian communist leaders and organizations as being sectarian. Repeated appeals on the part of Hungarian authorities asking the *Munkás* and affiliated organizations to welcome potentially "friendly" fifty-sixers into the movement went unanswered. Additionally, the Hungarian government's attempt to establish a new left-wing mass newspaper—which would appeal to a much broader base than the more orthodox Communist *Munkás*, and one that might also attract apolitical readers—never materialized.

The third characteristic of Hungarian Canadian communist leaders was that they did not fully trust government officials in Hungary and were wary when it came to divulging

information on their activities or organizational life. Although the existence of these tensions is not readily apparent by reading the *Munkás*, Foreign Ministry reports and correspondence stored at the Hungarian National Archives in Budapest attest to the lack of trust between the two sides. Authorities in Hungary came into contact with this phenomenon when they occasionally invited Hungarian Canadian communist leaders to take part in all expenses paid trips to Budapest, only to find that the visitor tended to remain tight-lipped, untrusting and suspicious of these overtures.

When Hungarian authorities realized that the communist community would be of little help in terms of establishing links between the fifty-sixers and Hungary, they increasingly relied on their foreign missions—specifically the Embassy in Ottawa and the Trade Commission in Montreal—to make in-roads into the much larger, non-communist Hungarian-Canadian communities. The embassy proved especially active in sending its attaché to community events and contacting cultural and professional organizations. In most cases, these officials offered community organizations things that they were sure they needed, such as music for dance groups or professional contacts for the Engineers' Association. In exchange, officials simply asked that these “friendly” individual and organizations remain in contact and maintain cordial ties with representatives of the Hungarian government.

The real motives of Hungarian officials, however, were far less benevolent. Hungary had an interest in using its “friendly” contacts to gather information on ideological divisions within the immigrant community, in order to exacerbate these tensions and simmering conflicts. The embassy in Ottawa proved especially active in this regard, well into the

1980s. Occasionally, embassy officials overstepped their bounds, leading Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs to follow up on Hungarian community complaints against the subversive activities of diplomats, by summoning the ambassador. The presence of allegedly subversive elements and the potential that the embassy or other institutions of the Hungarian government had contacts within organizations, kept Cold War tensions high with Hungarian Canadian communities until 1989.

Hungary's authorities used their network of "friendly" contacts to gather information on Canada's Hungarians, but also dispatched state security agents, even in the mid-1980s, in order to keep an eye on "enemy" elements. Few Hungarian Canadians active in community organizations were willing to openly acknowledge that they had been in contact with the embassy or with Hungarian authorities (even though their motives in most cases were apolitical) for fear of the backlash that this would cause, especially from the political immigration and more staunchly conservative elements. Yet there were numerous channels for cooperation with Hungary. In addition to dealing with the embassy, the World Federation of Hungarians (MVSZ)—an organization closely associated with the governing Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party—tried to establish close contacts with potentially "friendly" Hungarian immigrants, in order to counterbalance the activities of "enemy," anti-communist groups. The MVSZ, however, had most success with the Hungarian Canadian communist community, but these contacts later proved to be among the least valuable.

The history of the Hungarian Canadian immigration during World War II and the Cold War period is largely a story of this community's relationship with Hungary and a deeply divisive and destructive political power struggle involving multiple players with

diverse interests. While government officials in Budapest sought to engage the Hungarian diaspora, strengthen those in Canada seen as loyal to the regime, ensure that the émigré community was governable by their allies and halt the process of assimilation, local community leaders battled with each other for both the right to appropriate symbols of Hungarian patriotism and be perceived as the guardians of Hungarian heritage. This dissertation examines the struggle for ownership over Hungarian patriotism and identity in Canada and how the Hungarian regime, particularly after World War II, played a key role in exacerbating the ideological divide and left-right polarization present since 1848 in Canada's Hungarian communities.

Chapter 1: The Development of Canada's Immigration Policy and the Rise of Hungarian Communities in Canada—From the Prairie Pioneers of “New Hungary” to Savvy Urbanites.

Canada's Hungarian communities developed and grew in tandem with changes and liberalization in Canada's immigration policy, as well as the decline and eventual demise of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Hungarians were one of a handful of ethnic groups from Eastern Europe to resettle in Canada in search of abundant land in the late nineteenth century and then in hopes of plentiful labour several decades later. While the demographic

background of nineteenth century Hungarians settlers was drastically different from the more urban and educated immigrants arriving during much of the twentieth century, all cohorts of Hungarians arriving in Canada were deeply divided along ideological and political lines.

The first Hungarian communities were created in what is today Saskatchewan during the mid-1880's. The way in which Hungarian colonies were established demonstrate that community elites were just as ideologically divided in the nineteenth century as they would be decades later. Hungarian Prairie colonies were seen as the forerunners of a “new Hungary” and their initial establishment had more to do with the politics of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, than with building Canada or providing Hungarian peasants with plentiful land.

Eastern European Immigration to Canada.

The Prairie provinces, rather than towns in Ontario or Quebec, were the first bastions of Canada's Eastern European immigrant communities. This was due to the Canadian government's policy of favouring economically self-sufficient farmers over any other groups. Even in 1901, two decades following the arrival of the first large wave of Eastern European farmers who settled in Saskatchewan and Manitoba, Prime Minister Wilfrid Laurier informed his Minister of the Interior, Clifford Sifton, that immigrants from anywhere in Europe were welcome, so long as they were agrarian workers.

In 1870, Canada began its policy of encouraging settlement in what was then Rupert's Land, after the federal government purchased this territory from the Hudson's Bay Company. The Dominion Lands Act of 1872 provided new settlers with up to 160 acres of

land, in exchange for a \$10.00 registration fee and relatively modest guarantees that they would commit to farming the area for at least three years.⁴⁸ Yet much of the enthusiasm for unrestricted immigration from Europe had to do with a challenging reality. By the 1880s, a growing number of settlers had decided to migrate to the United States and many more were looking for work in Winnipeg—the only significant urban centre in the west—or in the Tobacco Belt regions of southern Ontario. Until 1891, the number of immigrants and settlers who decided to leave the West after relatively short stays was higher than the number of new arrivals.⁴⁹

Laurier's government maintained an "open doors" policy towards immigration and Sifton in particular believed that it was in Canada's best interest to encourage the largest possible number of agrarian workers to settle in Canada, rather than attempt to impose quotas or restrictions. Canadian businesses agreed fully with this policy and petitioned Laurier to encourage the immigration of industrial workers, in addition to farmers, as this abundant supply of cheap labour increased profit margins. While Canadian business played an active role in encouraging immigration, the Trades and Labour Congress (TLC) proved to be much less enthusiastic about Sifton's open doors policy. In fact, labour leaders went so far as to dispatch representatives to the United Kingdom, in order to criticize Canada's immigration policy and pressure authorities into providing companies with subsidies, so that they might improve the working conditions of Canadian employees.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ "An Act respecting the Public Lands of the Dominion, 1872" *Acts of the Parliament of the Dominion of Canada*, (Ottawa: Brown Chamberlin, 1872), Library and Archives Canada, NLC-12420.

⁴⁹ Donald Creighton, *Canada's First Century: 1867-1967* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1970), 76.

⁵⁰ James W. St. G. Walker, "Race," *Rights and the Law in the Supreme Court of Canada—Historical Case Studies*, (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1997) 251.

In 1906, Sifton attempted to appease the TLC, which demanded that the Laurier government restrict the immigration of an “inferior class” from continental Europe, who were less prone to rapid assimilation than arrivals from Great Britain, north-western Europe and Scandinavia.⁵¹ The TLC clearly referred to Eastern European immigrants, primarily from the lands of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Sifton drafted the Immigration Act of 1906, which gave the federal government the prerogative to forbid any “class” of immigrants from settling in Canada. This measure, however, did little to restrict Eastern European immigration, as officials applied this act in order to reject immigrants with criminal records or communicable diseases, rather than prohibit any white Europeans from settling in Canada.⁵²

The labour movement’s suspicions of immigrants and the purpose that they served in the eyes of government and business were not unjustified. In 1902, the Canadian Northern Railway turned to the Doukhobors⁵³ in order to help break an on-going strike, while in 1907 the Salvation Army misled a group of Scottish immigrants to come to Canada with promises of land, while their real purpose was to serve as scabs.⁵⁴

The labour movement’s reticence surrounding immigrants subsided once trade union leaders realized that many from Eastern Europe, England and Scotland would bolster their ranks and some even had experience in strikes. In 1913, Slovak and Ukrainian

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 252.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 252.

⁵³ The Doukhobors were immigrants from Russia and members of a Christian sect that strongly opposed the authority of the Russian Orthodox Church, as well as government interference. Doukhobors were strident pacifists who first started settling in British Columbia, Manitoba and Saskatchewan in 1899. For a scholarly survey history of the Doukhobors in Canada, see: Andrew Donskov, et. al., *The Doukhobor Centenary in Canada: A Multi-Disciplinary Perspective on Their Unity and Diversity*. (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2000).

⁵⁴ Charles Lipton, *The Trade Union Movement of Canada, 1827-1959* (Toronto: NC Press, 1973), 111-112.

immigrants in both Cobalt and South Porcupine laid the foundations of the first coal miners' union in western Canada, while a Ukrainian immigrant played an active role in establishing the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America's Toronto branch.⁵⁵

While labour leaders started warming to immigrants, the Immigration Act of 1910 and the decision to intern thousands of German and Austro-Hungarian citizens as enemy aliens between 1914 and 1920 suggests that the early enthusiasm for the new arrivals and Sifton's open doors policy were replaced by greater caution.⁵⁶ A total of 8,579 German, Austro-Hungarian and Turkish citizens were interned in 27 camps, while an additional 80,000 were forced to register with local authorities.⁵⁷ The Immigration Act of 1910 in particular aimed to restrict the growing number of Asian immigrants to Canada by requiring new arrivals to have a certain amount of money set aside to cover their costs. As such, the issue of race found its way into Canada's immigration policies and concerns that Asians would be less likely to assimilate occupied immigration officials.⁵⁸ When Frank Oliver replaced Sifton as Minister of the Interior in 1905, race, rather than occupation, formed the key criteria of Canada's immigration policy. In stark contrast to Sifton's approach, Oliver feared that Eastern European immigrants would, like the Asians, be incapable of assimilating into the dominant Anglo-Saxon culture.⁵⁹

Canada's immigration policy before 1914 was largely influenced by industrialists who viewed Eastern and Central Europe as a vast source of cheap labour. But legislation

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 125.

⁵⁶ *Acts of the Parliament of the Dominion of Canada: passed in the session held in the ninth and tenth years of the reign of His Majesty King Edward VII.* Vol. 1. (Ottawa: C.H. Parmelee, 1910), 36.

⁵⁷ Valerie Knowles, *Strangers at our Gates—Canadian Immigration and Immigration Policy, 1540-2006*, (Toronto: Dundurn, 2007), 127-128

⁵⁸ Walker, 253-254

⁵⁹ Knowles, 106.

that resulted in the internment of 8,579⁶⁰ Eastern Europeans as enemy aliens during the First World War, the post-war labour surplus caused by soldiers returning from the front, as well as the 1919 Winnipeg General Strike not only galvanized many xenophobic English Canadians who had long suspected Eastern Europeans of being crypto-Bolsheviks, but it also deterred industrialists from lobbying for the continuation of Canada's open doors immigration policy.⁶¹ John W. Dafoe, the editor-in-chief of the *Winnipeg Free Press* blamed the chaos caused by the strike on the "fanatical allegiance of the Germans, Austrians, Huns and Russians" and called on the authorities to "clean the aliens out of this community and ship them back to their happy homes in Europe, which vomited them forth a decade ago."⁶²

Dafoe's overt racism, directed against all Eastern Europeans, was widespread in Canadian society and it explains why the internment of peoples from the Austro-Hungarian Empire continued until 1920, nearly two years following the end of the First World War. The internment experience, which not only impacted those men, women and children imprisoned in 24 internment camps, but more than 80,000 Eastern European immigrants who were classified as "enemy aliens" and forced to report to local police stations, left a lasting mark on many internees and immigrant communities, some of whom suffered from severe mental health problems and others who joined communist movements, as the only place where they found a measure of acceptance.⁶³ As such, not all Eastern European

⁶⁰ Bohdan Kordan, *Enemy Aliens: Prisoners of War: Internment in Canada During the Great War* (Montreal-Kingston: Queen's University Press, 2002) 36.

⁶¹ Barrington Walker, *The History of Immigration and Racism in Canada*, (Toronto: Canadian Scholars Press, 2008), 138.

⁶² John W. Dafoe, as quoted by Walker. *Ibid.*, 136.

⁶³ Many of the 70,000 Ukrainians who immigrated to Canada between 1910 and 1914 were unskilled labourers lured by the promise of abundant employment, but made destitute, in part due to the recession of 1913, as

immigrants who subscribed to pro-communist papers in their own language, or who participated in left-wing fraternal benefit societies were devoted followers of Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels or Vladimir Lenin, although some had undoubtedly been radicalized by the discrimination they suffered during the War and the racism that continued unabated, well into the 1920s.⁶⁴

The Communist Party of Canada, and its predecessors, had a disproportionately large number of immigrants from Eastern Europe among its members. In 1921, John Boychuk, a Ukrainian immigrant, was among the founders of the Workers' Party of Canada and one of nine members on the party's executive council and as of 1922, one of three Ukrainians appointed to the party's Central Committee.⁶⁵ On December 11, 1921, when the Workers' Party held its first conference, the two largest organizations present were the Ukrainian Labour Temple Association and the Finnish Socialist Association.⁶⁶ Once the party began establishing local branches, Eastern Europeans were significantly more active

well as by "patriotic" employment policies following the outbreak of the First World War I. Municipal governments argued that unemployed Eastern Europeans threatened "civil order" and called for their removal from major urban centres. Bohdan Kordan, *In the Shadow of the Rockies, Diary of the Castle Mountain Internment Camp, 1915-1917*, (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1991), 12-13.

⁶⁴ A good example of the widespread racism in Canadian society against immigrants of all ethnicities from the Austro-Hungarian Empire can be found in: Robert England, *The Central European Immigrant in Canada* (Toronto: Macmillan 1929). Although his book is full of tropes and stereotypes of Slavic populations, England is actually more sympathetic to Central Europeans immigrants than many English Canadians were and called on the government to integrate them into mainstream society, as part of a nation-building effort.

⁶⁵ The Workers' Party of Canada served as the legal front organization of the Communist Party of Canada, then banned by the War Measures Act, which was still in effect. John Kolasky, *Prophets and Proletarians—Documents on the History of the Rise and Decline of Ukrainian Communism in Canada* (Toronto: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1998), 113.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 114.

than English Canadians.⁶⁷ By 1925, the CPC had 4,500 members, of whom nearly 1,000 were farmers, primarily of Ukrainian and Finnish origin.⁶⁸

Starting in the 1920's, Hungarian, Polish, Slovak and Ukrainian communities in Canada each published communist newspapers and established fraternal benefit societies, offering workers and new arrivals a place to meet, as well as financial and medical assistance. The Slovak Cultural Association launched a newspaper entitled *Hlas ľudu* (The Voice of the People) in 1933, which continued publishing until it was banned by the federal government at the start of the Second World War.⁶⁹ During the interwar period, left-wing Polish Canadians were represented by the Polish Alliance in Canada, as well as local associations in Brandon, Montreal and Winnipeg, but much like the Hungarians, Poles were politically divided, between conservative, Roman Catholic nationalists and the anti-clerical left.⁷⁰

Hungarians had been actively involved in Canada's labour movement since the 1870's, when the first Hungarian settlers arrived. Mark Szalatnay, a participant in the 1848 Hungarian Revolution, arrived in Canada in the late 1860s and played a key role in Ontario's nascent trade union movement⁷¹. Szalatnay first found political asylum in the

⁶⁷ While the party's English-language Winnipeg branch only had 70 members by January 1922, Ukrainians numbered 100. By March 1922, Ukrainian communists established four branches, and had a total membership in the WPC of over 400. *Ibid.*, 114-115.

⁶⁸ Anne Burger, *The Communist Party of Canada During the Great Depression—Organizing and Class Consciousness* (Simon Fraser University, 1980) 71.

⁶⁹ Like most other eastern European communists in Canada, the Slovaks had a communist paper and movement until the collapse of Communism in 1989/90. After *Hlas ľudu*, *Ludové zvesty* (The People's News) was published until its demise in 1990. Mark Stolarik, "Slovaks" in *The Encyclopedia of Canada's Peoples*, (Paul Magocsi, ed.), (Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1999), 1177.

⁷⁰ Henry Radecki, *Ethnic Organizational Dynamics—The Polish Group in Canada*, (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1979) 108.

⁷¹ The 1848 Hungarian Revolution broke out on March 15th, 1848, when liberal and republican Hungarians, under the leadership of Lajos Kossuth, sparked an uprising against Austria's Habsburg monarchy, called for

United Kingdom, after having been forced to flee Hungary following the defeat of the 1848 Revolution. But Szalatnay's decision to organize strikes, as secretary of the Miners Union of South Wales, his numerous arrests and his campaign urging Britain's labour unions to formally endorse Karl Marx's *Communist Manifesto* convinced British authorities to brand him as an "undesirable alien" and have him deported.⁷² After migrating to the United States Szalatnay became active in Baltimore's Cigar Makers Union, but ultimately moved to Canada and in 1872 helped organize a major cigar makers strike in Toronto. Canadian police arrested Szalatnay and he received a four month jail sentence, after which he was deported to the USA.⁷³

The Hungarian Canadian communist movement was established in July 1929, with the launch of a new Hungarian-language weekly, entitled the *Kanadai Magyar Munkás* (Canadian Hungarian Worker). The paper was not only unapologetically Marxist, but it also published stinging tirades against those in Canada's Hungarian communities who supported Hungary's authoritarian interwar regime.⁷⁴

By way of introduction the *Munkás* used its first issue, published on July 16, 1929, to launch a vehement verbal attack against right-wing Hungarian Canadians and their preferred weekly newspapers, the *Kanadai Magyar Hírlap* (Canadian Hungarian Journal)

independence from Vienna and spoke out in favour of reuniting the ethnically-diverse regions of the historical Kingdom of Hungary under a new, sovereign government based in Budapest, then called Pest-Buda. The revolution was defeated on August 13th, 1849, after the Habsburgs called in the forces of Tsarist Russia to crush the uprising. For more on the 1848 Hungarian Revolution, see: Istvan Deak, *The Lawful Revolution: Louis Kossuth and the Hungarians, 1848-1849*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979).

⁷² Charles Lipton, *The Trade Union Movement of Canada, 1827-1959* (Toronto: NC Press, 1973), 55.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 55.

⁷⁴ During the interwar period, the Kingdom of Hungary was re-established under the regency of Admiral Miklós Horthy. The regime created from the ashes of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the political chaos that ensued in 1918-19 was clerical, semi-feudal and broadly authoritarian. See: Thomas Sakmyster, *Hungary's Admiral on Horseback, Miklós Horthy, 1918-1944* (Columbia University: East European Monographs, 1994).

and the *Kanadai Magyar Újság* (Canadian Hungarian News), promising to strike and put them both out of business.⁷⁵ The paper explained that its goal was the “political education and upbringing of the working class” and was staunchly critical of the repression and poor working conditions experienced by miners, factory labourers and farm hands. The *Munkás* spoke to workers, its target audience, but did so in highly polemical terms: “Our working brethren, we speak to you—you who labour in sweat next to cauldrons in Canada’s factories and you who work in the darkness of mines.” The *Munkás*’s fiery language and class-based view of the world only fuelled the red scare that broke out in Canada nearly a decade earlier, following the Russian Revolution and Civil War in 1918-1919, as well as the Winnipeg Strike. It was precisely the surge of anti-communist sentiment, mixed with prejudice and fear of the “other” that often led to the labelling of Eastern European immigrants as left-wing trouble-makers.⁷⁶

Newfound concerns about race and the growing number of Eastern Europeans in Canada led anthropologist Robert England to publish a major policy paper in 1921 on how the government should handle settlers from the lands of the former Austro-Hungarian monarchy and imperial Russia. England was troubled by the fact that there was an increasingly segregated non-Anglo-Saxon majority in rural Saskatchewan, comprised primarily of Ukrainians, Slovaks, Lithuanians, Russians and Hungarians. Yet his goal was to regulate and improve the school system in these regions, and ensure that immigrant children actually attended classes, even if their parents did not always see their formal

⁷⁵ “Hétről hétre,” (From Week to Week), *Kanadai Magyar Munkás*, July 16, 1929, 1.

⁷⁶ Daniel Francis, *The Red Scare of 1918-1919: Canada’s First War on Terror* (Toronto: Arsenal Press, 2010), 14.

education as a pressing priority.⁷⁷ Rather than supporting quotas based on race, England suggested that Canada give immigrants IQ tests and base decisions on whom to admit from Eastern Europe by determining their educational background and willingness to learn. Unlike both Sifton and Oliver—who saw immigration from a pragmatic, business perspective—England believed that the systematic assimilation and education of immigrants must be at the centre of a Canadian nation-building effort.

England's purpose was to determine the specific problems associated with assimilation and to examine the customs of Central European settlers, primarily in rural Saskatchewan. The field research began in 1921 when a group of thirty-one teachers and professors, including England, were awarded scholarships by the Masonic Order of Canada to visit ethnic, farming communities in Saskatchewan and conduct surveys, as well as to keep a journal of their day-to-day experiences. He adopted a quintessentially primordialist view of ethnic groups, in which ethnic traits and qualities were seen as biologically determined. In England's mind, ethnic identity was an unchangeable phenomenon. England determined that Canada's Central European immigrants were, by their very nature, medieval in thinking, uneducated, primitive, susceptible to superstition and mysticism. Central European men exploited their wives and children, they were lazy and plagued by a lack of proper hygiene.⁷⁸ England made frequent references to the "Slavic temperament" and the Anglo-Saxon teachers sent out to these communities observed that Ruthenians, Slavs and Hungarians were "less enterprising, progressive and industrious than other

⁷⁷ Robert England, *The Central European Immigrant in Canada*, (Toronto: MacMillan, 1929) 28.
⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, ix.

nationalities. There is a measure of contentment because there is no visible chance of change.”⁷⁹

Despite England’s relatively tolerant—if condescending—approach towards Central and Eastern Europeans, Canadian authorities were reluctant to accept arrivals from these regions after the Russian Revolution of 1917, for fear of the spread of communism. This was coupled by the fact that a growing number of demobilized soldiers sought employment, often unsuccessfully, thus leading to a rise in anti-immigrant sentiment.⁸⁰

While the fear of Communism and a desire to prohibit those who had fought against Canada in the War to immigrate were key factors behind the restrictive Immigration Act of 1919, an improved economic climate in the early 1920’s encouraged businesses to pressure the government into loosening its immigration policy. This led the government to sign an accord with the Canadian Pacific Railway and the Canadian National Railway. The 1925 Railway Agreement allowed for the two companies to directly recruit immigrants from Eastern and Central Europe as cheap labour, even though people from these regions were still categorized as “non-preferred.”⁸¹ Signed on September 1, 1925, the Railway Agreement allowed for the railway companies to recruit immigrants as agrarian workers, or domestic help, thus effectively handing over an important government power to the railways. Starting in 1926, private companies could also apply for “special permits,” in order to recruit immigrants for industrial labour and for the service sector, thus opening the industrial regions of southern Ontario and Montreal to Eastern Europeans.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 89-91.

⁸⁰ Doukhobors, Hutterites and Mennonites were seen as particularly suspect, in light of their pacifism and communitarian beliefs. A revision to the Immigration Act in 1919 barred their entry to Canada. Knowles, 132.

⁸¹ Knowles, 168.

The Railway Agreement caused significant controversy among Canadians disturbed by the fact that 185,000 non-preferred immigrants from Central and Eastern Europe arrived over the course of just five years.⁸² In 1930, public outcry and the impact of the Great Depression led the government to annul the accord. By this point, however, new Hungarian, Polish, Slovak and Ukrainian communities took root in Canada.

With the outbreak of the Great Depression in 1929, immigration was restricted and, thanks to a conscious policy on the part of the federal government, most immigrants who did come were of British descent.⁸³ After 1939 and the outbreak of World War II, the number of arrivals from Eastern Europe declined dramatically, but a handful were still able to settle in Canada. Most prominent among this group was the Czech shoemaker and industrialist, Thomas Bata, who arrived from England, after fleeing the German invasion and dismemberment of Czechoslovakia in 1939.⁸⁴

The Creation of “New Hungary” and Hungarian Communities Before World War I

The first Hungarians who arrived to Canada in the 1880s were almost exclusively peasants from the lands of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, who had first settled in the United States, but began resettling in the Northwest Territories (today Saskatchewan) at the encouragement of a travel agent and self-declared “count” based in New York.⁸⁵ The Kingdom of Hungary’s land-hungry peasants—who in their home country usually tilled the soil of church estates and the lands of local nobility—came to Canada not as temporary

⁸² Knowles, 175.

⁸³ Knowles, 142-143.

⁸⁴ Walter B. Pitkin, “Shoemakers Who Don’t Stick to Lasts,” *The Rotarian*, August 1942, 13.

⁸⁵ Andrew A. Marchbin, “Early Immigration from Hungary to Canada,” *Slavonic Review*, Vol. 13, 1934, 128.

agrarian workers, or “sojourners,” but as settlers looking for a new home.⁸⁶ Approximately 84% of the immigrants who left Hungary in the latter half of the nineteenth century to first settle in the United States were peasants.⁸⁷ “Count” Paul Oscar Esterházy, born Johannes Baptiste Packh, was a travel agent living in the US, who pretended to be a Hungarian aristocrat. Born in Esztergom, Hungary, Packh formally changed his name to Eszterházy in 1867, claiming to be a son of Count Nicholas Eszterházy. Hungarian authorities often took Eszterházy’s claims to aristocracy at face value, in spite of protests from the authentic Eszterházy family.⁸⁸

After arriving to the USA in 1869, Esterházy was among the key promoters of emigration from Hungary to North America. In the 1890s, Esterházy increasingly assumed the role of a settler agent and encouraged Hungarians in the US, as well as potential immigrants from Hungary, to settle in western Canada, where his goal was to establish a “New Hungary.”⁸⁹ At first, Hungarian peasants settled in what contemporaries labelled “Hun’s Valley” in Manitoba, but by 1890, most of them had moved to Qu’Appelle Valley, in present-day Saskatchewan. The first Hungarian settlements just north of the Qu’Appelle Valley—namely Békevár, Otthon and Esterhazy--were all located in areas that then belonged to the Northwest Territories, and which would be incorporated into the province of Saskatchewan in 1905.

⁸⁶ Robert F. Harney, Boarding and Belonging, *Urban History Review*, Vol. 2-78, (October 1978), 9.

⁸⁷ Paul Bódy, “Emigration from Hungary,” (in N.F. Dreisziger, ed.) *Struggle and Hope--The Hungarian-Canadian Experience*, (Toronto: McLelland and Stewart, 1982) 30.

⁸⁸ G. [V.] Dojcsák, A kanadai Esterházy története [The history of the Canadian Esterhazy] (Budapest, 1981); “The mysterious Count Esterhazy,” *Saskatchewan History*, 26 (1973): 63–72.

⁸⁹ M.L. Kovacs, “The Saskatchewan Era, 1885-1914,” (in N.F. Dreisziger ed.) *Struggle and Hope--The Hungarian-Canadian Experience*, 63.

At first, Esterházy's Magyar peasants simply called their new settlement in western Canada "Esterhaz" and they lived side-by-side with other nationalities from the multiethnic Austro-Hungarian Empire, most notably a large number of Czechs and Slovaks. But ethnic divisions present in the homeland soon appeared in Canada and ethnic Magyars dropped the term "Esterhaz" and began referring to the Roman Catholic Hungarian enclave as Kaposvár, named after a town in Hungary, and the Protestant settlement as Békevár.⁹⁰ Esterhaz's Bohemians in turn referred to their settlement as Kolin. Magyars formed a clear majority (60%) of Esterhaz's population, but the presence of 22 Czech and 9 Slovak families led to the creation of segregated ethnic enclaves, particularly in the case of the Czechs.⁹¹ The Slovaks and Hungarians, however, were more likely to live in the same area, as many had arrived in Canada together from Pennsylvania, or hailed from the same villages and regions in what was then northern Hungary.⁹²

Ethnic tension between Czechs and Hungarians first broke out in 1890, when Julian Vass, Esterhaz's Magyar postmaster died and was replaced by Joseph Knourek, a Bohemian, in 1891. Magyars were furious and an additional post office was opened named Kaposvár and administered once again by an ethnic Hungarian.⁹³

Sometimes patriotism and ethnic kinship were more important factors for Magyar peasants than the quality of the land that they farmed. For instance, in 1903 ethnic Hungarians formed a second settlement immediately to the north of Esterhaz called

⁹⁰ Jason Kovacs, *Establishing a Place and Constructing Identity: A Case Study of Place-Making in Esterhazy, Saskatchewan*, Queen's University (Thesis): 2003, 4.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 87.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 84.

⁹³ Ethnic tensions became more vitriolic in 1896, when Kaposvár's Magyars petitioned for the closure of the Czech postmaster's office in the centre of Esterhaz, suggesting instead that he be moved to the northern edge of the settlement. *Ibid.*, 85.

Stockholm, adjacent to an area inhabited primarily by Scandinavians. The peasants, most of whom had been landless in Hungary, were warned by Canadian land agents that the soil around Stockholm and in areas to the west of Esterhaz was of poor quality, yet the Magyar newcomers were adamant in their desire to settle in close proximity to the Hungarian Catholics of Kaposvár.⁹⁴

Ethnic tension proved to be one form of division among settlers from the lands of Austria-Hungary, but religious division among ethnic Hungarians abounded as well. In addition to segregating themselves into ethnic enclaves, Hungarians divided themselves further into Catholic and Protestant colonies. The Catholics inhabited Kaposvár, while Protestants settled in the Kipling area of Saskatchewan, creating in 1900 the Békevár colony.⁹⁵ Most of Békevár's settlers came from Transylvania, the heart of Hungarian Calvinism. In 1901, the locals even invited a prominent Calvinist minister from Debrecen, Kálmán Kovácsi, to lead the colony's congregation.⁹⁶ Kovácsi was keen to further ingrain in the population an even stronger sense of Calvinist identity through the creation of religious fraternal societies, including the Self-Training Circle and the Christian Spiritists' Society.⁹⁷

While Catholic Kaposvár and Protestant Békevár remained the bastions of a religiously-divided Hungarian community, the first decade of the twentieth century witnessed the creation of multi-confessional colonies as well in southern and central

⁹⁴ Paul Sántha, *Three Generations, 1901-1957—The Hungarian Colony at Stockholm*, Stockholm, SK: 1959, 19.

⁹⁵ *Békevár: The Golden Jubilee, 1900-1950* (Kipling, SK: 1950), 6.

⁹⁶ György Izsák, *A Szamaritánus* (The Samaritan), Toronto: s.n., 1950, 49-50.

⁹⁷ N.F. Dreisziger, "The Quest for Spiritual Fulfilment among Immigrants: The Rise of Organized Religious Life in Pioneer Hungarian-Canadian Communities, 1885-1939," *Magyar Egyháztörténeti Vázlatok – Essays in Church History in Hungary*, 16, 3-4 (fall-winter 2004), 95.

Saskatchewan, including in areas originally settled by northern Europeans and Anglophones. The growing number of Hungarians in Stockholm rechristened and Magyarized their settlement by referring to it as “Sokhalom,” Wakaw—north of Saskatoon became Mátyásföld—named after an area in Hungary’s Pest county—Plunkett became known in the Hungarian community as Pinkeföld and later as Pinkefalva, while a Hungarian settlement near Lestock assumed the name “Székelyföld,” a reference to an almost homogeneously ethnic Hungarian area in eastern Transylvania, and one that is often perceived by nationalists as the heart of the Hungarian nation.⁹⁸

While many of the first settlers were Hungarians from the USA who had been encouraged to settle on the prairies by agents such as Esterházy in the late nineteenth century, other notable leaders of local Hungarian communities continued this mission and aimed to draw Hungarians from the United States to Canada. János Kovács, for example, was a pastor in the USA who in the 1890s wrote articles for American-Hungarian newspapers about Canada and its vast, unsettled lands. According to an early publication on Hungarians in Canada, printed in Hungary by Ödön Paizs, a journalist who had visited the various Hungarian communities in Canada between 1927 and 1928, those immigrants who settled in Canada did so because they could not enter, or failed to make a living in, the United States. For many settlers, Canada was a “replacement United States, on a smaller and more primitive scale.”⁹⁹ In the 1920s, Békevár and Bander together was home to thirty-five Hungarian families, while nearly 150 families lived in Stockholm,

⁹⁸ Jason Kovacs, 96.

⁹⁹ Ödön Paizs, *Magyarok Kanadában—Egy most készülő országról*, [Hungarians in Canada—About a Country in the Making], (Budapest: Athenaeum Kiadó, 1928) 12.

Saskatchewan.¹⁰⁰ According to Paizs, most Hungarians were not at all enamoured by eastern Canada, which became “the refuge of those, who could not get into the United States, and thus were forced to stay in the east out of necessity.”¹⁰¹ However, by the period following World War I, Canada had become a major destination for emigration from Hungary.

The Interwar Wave

While Hungarian immigration to Canada froze during the First World War, the interwar period, thanks to the 1925 Railway Agreement, saw a significant rise in the number of new Hungarian migrants from the ruins of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Between 1923 and 1930, over 27,600 Hungarian immigrants arrived to Canada. The growth of Hungarian urban communities in Ontario and Quebec became a trademark of this period.¹⁰² A new and more socially diverse wave of immigrants arrived in Canada in the 1920s, escaping the chaos wrought by the end of the war, the terror of Béla Kun’s Soviet-style revolution of 1919, Horthy’s counter-revolution only months later and Hungary’s decimated economy. By 1941, Canada’s Hungarian population stood at 54, 598 and the largest number of Hungarians lived in Ontario and Saskatchewan.¹⁰³ Nevertheless, industrialized areas in southern Ontario and cities such as Montreal and Toronto served as the destination of choice for an ever-increasing number of Hungarians. Symbolizing the shift from West to East, in terms of the location of Hungarian-Canadian communities, by 1941 Montreal was home to 3763 Hungarians, making it the largest center of Hungarian

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 13.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 10.

¹⁰² N.F. Dreisziger, “Years of Growth and Change,” *Struggle and Hope--The Hungarian-Canadian Experience*, 100-101.

¹⁰³ Pál Sántha, *Kanada Magyarsága*, [Canada’s Hungarians], (Winnipeg: Kanadai Magyar Újság, 1946), 20.

immigration in Canada.¹⁰⁴ Toronto boasted a Hungarian population of 2194, with Ontario overtaking Saskatchewan to become the province with the most Hungarians.¹⁰⁵

Mihály Fehér, a liberally-minded Protestant minister, founded the first Hungarian church in Montreal on May 30, 1926, under the aegis of the United Church of Canada. Initially, the Hungarian United Church had only forty faithful. However, this number increased dramatically and by 1929 the annual report counted 270 members.¹⁰⁶ By 1942, the congregation had become self-sufficient and purchased its own building.¹⁰⁷

A few years after the establishment of the Hungarian United Church in Montreal, Hungarian Catholics also began to organize their own community. Jeremos Hédly, a Franciscan priest, laid the foundations of Montreal's Hungarian Catholic community and celebrated the first mass on April 22, 1928 to a group of thirty faithful gathered in a small chapel.¹⁰⁸ Encouraged by Father Hédly, the young men of the community established the St. Emeric Youth Association (*Szent Imre Ifjúsági Egyesület*) and the women founded the Saint Elisabeth Catholic Women's Association. The community was permitted to celebrate Mass each Sunday in the Sacré-Coeur Chapel of the Notre-Dame Basilica.

After the departure of the first two Hungarian priests, the Archdiocese of Montreal sent the Reverend Henri Gaboury, a French-Canadian, to tend to the city's Hungarian Catholics. Father Gaboury tried to learn Hungarian and within six months he acquired a

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 25.

¹⁰⁵ Please see the Appendix for the provincial breakdown of the Hungarian population. *Ibid.*, 25.

¹⁰⁶ *A Magyar Református Egyház Jubileumi Emlékkönyve, 1926-2001*, [The Jubilee Album of the Hungarian United Church, 1926-2001 (Montreal: 2001) 18.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 18.

¹⁰⁸ *Magyarok Nagyasszonya Egyházközség, 1928-2003*, [Our Lady of Hungary Parish, 1928-2003], Part I., (Montreal: 2003) 8.

sufficient command of the language to hear confessions and to administer the sacrament of reconciliation.¹⁰⁹ Gaboury's tenure at the head of the Hungarian Catholic community between 1932 and 1936 was a period of growth and development. The community purchased its own building on Saint-Laurent Boulevard and the Hungarian Catholic Home had fifteen beds available for the arrival of new immigrants, as well as two rooms where women were taught to sew.¹¹⁰ Father Gaboury went to great pains to solicit the support of French-Canadian Catholics for his Hungarian mission and established the "Amis des Hongrois" fund to raise money for the fledgling Our Lady of Hungary Parish.¹¹¹ By the Second World War, the Hungarian parish counted 272 families.¹¹²

Although Montreal boasted the largest Hungarian-Canadian community, the 1920s and 1930s also witnessed a time of growth for the Hungarians of Toronto. With the establishment of the Hungarian Catholic Circle in 1929, the city's Hungarian Catholics rented a space where they met, held English-language courses and organized their first public event, a Christmas tea.¹¹³ László Forgách became the community's first pastor in 1931, at which point Hungarian Catholics rented an existing church. They finally purchased their own church in 1943 on Spadina Avenue and the Hungarian Sisters of Social Service, arriving to Toronto from Saskatchewan, began negotiations on the purchase of a convent in the same year.¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁹

Ibid., 9.

¹¹⁰

Ibid., 10.

¹¹¹

Ibid., 10

¹¹²

Ibid., 14

¹¹³

50 Év—Szent Erzsébet Egyházközség, [Fifty Years—St. Elizabeth of Hungary Church], (Toronto: 1978) 8.

¹¹⁴

Ibid., 13.

The end of the World War II, as well as the Displaced Persons (DP) and European refugee crisis which followed, increased sympathy among Canadians for immigrants. Plans were made to admit up to 500,000 DP's between 1946 and 1952, most of whom were of German, Austrian, Ukrainian, Polish, Croatian and Hungarian origin.¹¹⁵ While some Canadians expressed concern over the projected number of new immigrants, a total of 165,000 refugees actually arrived in Canada as part of the DP program.¹¹⁶

The increase in immigration due to the DP crisis after the Second World War served as an important factor in the 1950 establishment of the federal Department of Citizenship and Immigration. While the government maintained a clear preference for immigrants from Great Britain, Ireland, France and the United States, an order in council issued in June 1950 created a more open policy, which allowed for the immigration of healthy Europeans in general and also removed Germans from a list of "enemy aliens."¹¹⁷ In 1951, the government opened the doors to immigration from Pakistan, India and Ceylon, but Europe still remained the primary source of immigrants to Canada and a growing proportion of new arrivals were from Mediterranean countries. Between 1956 and 1961, the proportion of Italians among new immigrants increased from five percent to 18%, while the ratio of British arrivals dropped from 44% to 27%.¹¹⁸ Canada also admitted 165,000 refugees between 1947 and 1962, with Hungarians comprising five percent of the total.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁵ Arthur Lower, "The Myth of Mass Immigration," *Maclean's*, May 15, 1949, 68.

¹¹⁶ Paul Magocsi (ed.), "Displaced Persons and Frontier Jobs, 1946–1952," *The Encyclopedia of Canada's Peoples*, (Toronto: The Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1999).

¹¹⁷ Ninette Kelley and Michael Trebilock, *The Making of the Mosaic, The History of Canadian Immigration Policy*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 324-25.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 319.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 319

In contrast to other Eastern European immigrant groups in Canada, the arrival of more than 38,000 refugees from Hungary following the Soviet suppression of the 1956 Revolution brought newfound vitality to ageing communities. The arrival of thousands of young Hungarians—most of whom first settled in Montreal, before moving to cities in southern Ontario, as well as Victoria and Vancouver, British Columbia--infused existing communities with a young generation of educated professionals and skilled workers. Churches and social clubs in both Montreal and Toronto had been founded more than a quarter century earlier, by a wave of immigrants who arrived in Canada following the First World War. In 1956, these older generations were keen to help and the Hungarian community in Toronto and managed to rally the Polish Canadian Congress and the Canadian Red Cross to assist the refugees.

What the so-called “old Canadians”—a term used by fifty-sixers—did not realize was the tension that such a large wave of new arrivals would cause within the community. Canada’s Hungarian communist movement—which owned a dozen cultural homes in Toronto and Ontario’s Tobacco belt named after the nineteenth century Hungarian revolutionary Lajos Kossuth—was the first to experience these tensions and became a strong voice urging anti-communist refugees to go home and calling on the Canadian government to restrict further immigration, in order to protect the wages of naturalized Canadians.

Despite the changes to Canada’s immigration policy, immigration was still heavily restricted and immigrants were grouped together in four categories, according to their nationality or ethnic background. These categories included British subjects, the Irish and

the French at the top of the list of preferred immigrants, a second group of western and some southern Europeans, including Greeks and Italians, a third category of other Europeans and, finally, citizens of a handful of Middle Eastern and Latin American countries, provided that they already had family in Canada.¹²⁰

The 1956 Hungarian Revolution and the influx of over 38,000 Hungarian asylum-seekers over the course of an eighteen month period helped develop a refugee policy and open up Canadian immigration. Canada offered Hungarian refugees free passage, including a program of special chartered flights, called the Air Bridge to Canada (ABC) which brought hundreds of Hungarians to Montreal's Dorval Airport, as well as the so-called "Freedom Train," which transported 350 former professors and students from the University of Sopron's forestry department in western Hungary from Halifax to Vancouver.¹²¹ In November 1956, Immigration Minister Jack Pickersgill visited refugee camps in Austria to meet with tens of thousands of refugees and made on-the-spot, discretionary decisions on the acceptance and transportation of the refugees. The arrival of the fifty-sixers put an unprecedented strain on Canada's refugee and immigration policy, as it represented the largest wave of refugees ever to arrive in such a brief period of time.¹²²

One third of all Hungarian refugees settled in Quebec, and primarily on the Island of Montreal, while smaller numbers moved to Chicoutimi to work in the lumber industry.¹²³ Major Catholic organizations in Quebec went out of their way to welcome Hungarian refugees, with prominent groups such as the Société St. Jean Baptiste publishing 20,000

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 333-334.

¹²¹ Valerie Knowles, *Strangers at Our Gates: Canadian Immigration and Immigration Policy, 1540-2006*, (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2007) 175.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 176.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 177.

copies of a free Hungarian-language prayer book, aimed at reaching out to “*nos frères hongroises*.”¹²⁴ The Société was clearly interested in ensuring that the large number of Hungarian refugees integrated into mainstream French Roman Catholic society. A list of tips near the end of the booklet warned Hungarians never to attend service at a Protestant church and never to accept Protestant tracts or bibles, despite the fact that Calvinists form a sizeable minority among Hungarian arrivals and many became active in Montreal’s oldest Hungarian Christian congregation, the Hungarian United Church of Town of Mount Royal.¹²⁵

The St. Jean Baptiste Society’s hopes of integrating immigrants into French Canadian society never materialized. With the arrival of Québec’s Quiet Revolution and the move towards secularization and a much larger state apparatus, the Society became a bulwark of Quebec nationalism and the self-proclaimed guardian of the French language. Within a decade of the Society’s publication of the Hungarian prayer book, a similar multicultural effort would have been unimaginable.¹²⁶

The deteriorating economic situation ultimately convinced the Government of Canada to halt immigration, particularly after the election of John Diefenbaker’s

¹²⁴ *Imakönyv* (Book of Prayers), Société St. Jean Baptiste, Montreal, 1957, 2.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 18.

¹²⁶ The Société St. Jean Baptiste adopted a siege mentality when it came to the protection of the French language vis-a-vis immigrants and Anglophones, even though in 1957 there was no evidence at all of this sense of linguistic paranoia. When Statistics Canada revealed in 2006 that those who spoke French as their mother tongue had slipped below 50 percent on the island of Montreal (due in part to immigration, but also because Francophones were moving in large numbers to off-island suburbs, the Society’s president, Jean Dorion, sounded the alarms in lengthy and polemical piece published in *Le Devoir*. “La thèse dominante, [...] c’est que ça va bien pour le français, que ça n’a jamais si bien été. Nous, on n’a jamais défendu cette thèse-là. Je pense que c’est un cinglant démenti au jovialisme. Le français recule à l’échelle du Canada, du Québec et de l’île de Montréal. Il recule comme langue maternelle et il recule comme langue parlée à la maison. Qu’est-ce qu’on veut de plus pour dire que ça ne va pas très bien pour le français?”

“Une source d’inquiétude, selon la SSJB,” *Le Devoir* (Montreal, QC), December 5, 2007.

Progressive Conservatives in 1957. While Canadians had sympathized with the plight of the Hungarian refugees, in particular Catholic Quebecers who felt a religious affinity with a country that they saw as primarily Roman Catholic, opposition to immigration grew as the economy weakened and as French Canadian leaders feared that their position in Canada as the largest minority group might be threatened as a result of the country's changing demographics.¹²⁷

One of the Diefenbaker government's most important steps in limiting immigration, particularly from eastern and southern Europe, was restrictions placed on the arrivals of close relatives of immigrants already in Canada, thus limiting family reunification. Immigration Minister Ellen Fairclough, Canada's first female cabinet minister, faced sharp criticism for the government's decision from the Liberal opposition, which was only beginning to discover a potential voter base among new arrivals, particularly from Italy and Eastern Europe. In addition to poor economic conditions, Diefenbaker's government cited a new, worrisome phenomenon in the processing of applications. Average processing times now spanned nearly three years, due in large part to the influx of unskilled labour from eastern and southern Europe, but most of all from Italy. Rising in parliament to address criticism that the Progressive Conservative government was discriminating against those who just a decade earlier were considered second class immigrants, Fairclough denied that racism played a role in the decision to drastically cut back on welcoming the relatives of landed immigrants.

"I cannot see how the regulation can be called discriminatory, a word which has been bandied about quite a bit lately...Discrimination existed in the past

¹²⁷

Knowles, 177-78.

in that well-qualified Italians had little or no chance of having their applications considered. ‘Cruel,’ my honourable friend says. What is more cruel than to deliberately misconstrue and misrepresent the intention of the recent amendment?’¹²⁸

Pickersgill was Fairclough’s main adversary on the issue of restricting the arrival of close relatives and the former immigration minister proved successful in swaying public opinion on the issue and pressuring the Diefenbaker government to rescind its restrictive measures in April 1959, just over a year after they were first introduced. The Liberal Party began to actively build its support among European immigrants.

In 1967, Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson’s Liberal government made one of the most significant and lasting changes to Canada’s immigration policy and procedures. Tom Kent, the Minister of Manpower and Immigration, introduced the points system, in order to make the immigration application and review process more accountable, quantifiable¹²⁹ and not so heavily based on subjective, discretionary decisions. The points system was heavily based on an applicant’s job experience, skills and on the employment situation and occupational needs in the region to which he/she intended to settle, as well as age and knowledge of English or French. The most significant change following the 1967 implementation of the points system was that nationality and ethnicity could no longer play any role in classifying potential immigrants and determining their eligibility to live in Canada.¹³⁰ The Hungarian Canadian press, including large weeklies like *Magyar Élet* and

¹²⁸ Fairclough as quoted in Knowles, 182.

¹²⁹ From a theoretical perspective, the Government of Canada’s emphasis on quantitative methods in assessing immigrant application is part of a larger twentieth century trend, which began in the 1930’s, that saw a gradual move away from the qualitative and an increased interest in applying scientific objectivity to social processes. For more on the rise of the quantitative in the twentieth century, see: Theodore Porter, *Trust in Numbers: The Pursuit of Objectivity in Science and Public Life*, (Princeton: 1996)

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 195.

Kanadai Magyarság, barely covered the transition to the new points system, beyond publishing a Hungarian translation of a Canadian Press (CP) report.

The Hungarian Canadian Jewish Community

Until 1976, Montreal was home to more Hungarians than any other city in Canada and also boasted the country's largest Hungarian Jewish community, as well as separate Hungarian Hassidic colonies.¹³¹ Montreal was the only city in North America with a functioning Hungarian Jewish synagogue.¹³² Hungarian Jews, however, were present in the city decades before the establishment of the Hungarian Martyrs Synagogue in 1958. Immigrants from Hungary established Montreal's Hungarian Hebrew Sick Benefit Society in 1909, although the only remaining records of this organization's activities are grave markers at the De La Savanne and Sauvé cemeteries.¹³³ Montreal's most prominent Hungarian Jewish institution was the Austro-Hungarian Synagogue on Milton Street, established in 1903. The congregation included Austrian, Czech and Hungarian Jews, reflecting the multiethnic nature of Austria-Hungary.¹³⁴ The Austro-Hungarian Synagogue's main shortcoming became its location, especially as Jewish immigrants from Austria-Hungary moved away from the downtown core in the late 1930s. The synagogue

¹³¹ Jacques Gutwirth, *The Rebirth of Hasidism: 1945 to the Present Day*, (London: Free Association Books, 2005), 134.

¹³² Sándor Dományi and József Halmi, *A montreali magyar zsidóság és a Montreáli Mártírok Temploma Hitközség története* [The History of the Hungarian Jewish Community of Montreal and the History of the Hungarian Martyrs Synagogue], (Montreal: Hungarian Martyrs' Synagogue, 1983), 2.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 8.

¹³⁴ Ironically, the Austro-Hungarian Synagogue held a memorial service for Tomas Masaryk, Czechoslovakia's late president, in October 1937 in honour of his commitment to peace and democracy and the establishment of the only democratic state in Eastern Europe. Yet Masaryk was also a long-time supporter of national self-determination, a concept which played a key role in the destruction of the multiethnic Austro-Hungarian Empire. "Jews honour Masaryk—Hold Memorial Service in Tribute to Great Leader," *The Montreal Gazette*, October 18, 1937, 21.

closed in 1959, when the large stone building was sold and turned into the Élysée Cinema.¹³⁵

The closure of the Austro-Hungarian Synagogue in 1959 came at a time when Montreal's Jewish community was expanding, following the arrival of more than 1,600 Jews from Hungary after the 1956 Hungarian Revolution.¹³⁶ In 1957, the Budapest Home Club became the centre of the Hungarian Jewish community and served not only as a social club, but also as a temple equipped with a cantor, Torahs and other prayerbooks. As a clear indication that the Budapest Home Club's main purpose was to cater to destitute Hungarian refugees, it offered them a space where they could pray free of charge.¹³⁷

Rabbi Miklós Schnurmacher was one of the refugees to arrive in 1957 and it was his goal to establish a synagogue in Montreal, in memory of the Hungarian Jews killed during the Holocaust. Unlike Hungarian Jews who joined Hasidic groups in Montreal, Schnurmacher's synagogue was unapologetically pro-Israel in its outlook. Shortly after the synagogue opened, Schnurmacher told his new congregation that their temple was a "tiny piece of Israel, part of our true homeland."¹³⁸

¹³⁵ Pierre Anctil, *Saint-Laurent: Montréal's Main*, (Montreal: Pointe-à-Callière--Musée d'archéologie et d'histoire de Montréal, 1999) 53.

¹³⁶ This figure does not include Hungarian Jews who joined Hasidic sects in the Montreal region, including the Satmar Jewish community based in Boisbriand, southwest of Montreal. The Satmars originated from the Kingdom of Hungary's Szatmárnémeti County (presently Satu Mare, Romania) and established a colony in Québec called Kiryas Tosh, populated primarily by Jews of Hungarian descent. Québec's Satmars are organized around the Tosh dynasty, which originated from the village of Nyirtass, in present-day eastern Hungary. The Island of Montreal is also home to two Hassidic communities of Hungarian origins, namely the Munkács group in Outremont and Lubavitch Jews in Snowdon. *Ibid.*, 9.

¹³⁷ In Jewish tradition, families must normally purchase a seat at their local synagogue, but the Budapest Home Club circumvented this custom. Internal divisions, however, dogged the organization, leading to the formation of a separate association called the Continental Social Club in 1958. *Ibid.*, 8.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 76.

The Hungarian Martyrs' Synagogue maintained cordial relations with leaders of the Hungarian community, including the city's Christian churches. Unlike many Hungarian institutions in Toronto, Montreal's community organizations were not as overtly political. As such, the presence of the anti-Semitic far right was often a marginal element on the fringes of the community, and most churches, cultural clubs and fraternal benefit societies were not averse to maintaining cordial ties with Montreal's Hungarian Jewish leaders. When the synagogue held its annual general assemblies and elections, representatives of the Our Lady of Hungary Parish, the First Hungarian United Church and the Hungarian Committee of Montreal attended as guests.¹³⁹ When in 1998 a new bimonthly newspaper, the *Montreáli Krónika*, was launched with the support of the city's Hungarian community groups, Edit Kovács, the host of a weekly Jewish radio broadcast and prominent member of the synagogue, became one of its editors and regular contributors.¹⁴⁰ This inclusiveness towards the Jewish community—and the participation of Hungarian Jews in immigrant organizations—was unheard of in Toronto, where the editors of the city's *Kanadai Magyarság* weekly and the rival *Magyar Élet* were not only firmly right-wing, but also nationalist in their political orientation.¹⁴¹

The Hungarian Jewish community experienced its most productive years during the 1960s and 1970s. Rabbi Schnurmacher's illness and death in 2004 dramatically weakened the Jewish community. The Hungarian Martyr's closed its doors and the congregation

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 46.

¹⁴⁰ When the *Montreáli Krónika* (renamed *Magyar Krónika*) celebrated its fifth anniversary in June 2003, László Pap, Hungary's consul general in Montreal, remarked that the newspaper's "diverse and objective" reporting represented a "new, refreshing" development in the immigrant press.

László Pap, "Köszöntő," (Congratulations), *Magyar Krónika*, 27 June 2003, 1.

¹⁴¹ István Vörösváry arrived in Canada in 1955, after living in Argentina. In Hungary, he worked as the editor of a fascist newspaper.

merged with the English-language Chevra Kadisha synagogue. The only remnant of an organized Hungarian Jewish community remaining in Montreal is the Golden Age Club, which functions as a literary circle for the elderly.

The only other Hungarian Jewish community in Canada existed in Toronto, but it never had the formal institutions that existed in Montreal, nor did it contend with the presence of a large Hassidic population, with strong roots in the former lands of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The biweekly Hungarian newspaper *Menóra*, however, was based in Toronto from 1966 and it remained the largest Hungarian Jewish newspaper in North America until its demise in December of 2008.¹⁴²

Catholic and Protestant Churches

In May of 1955, the Hungarian United Church purchased a large building on the border of the Anglophone, middle-class Town of Mount Royal and the multiethnic district of Park Extension, which could accommodate up to 400 worshipers.¹⁴³ With this move, the United Church became the centre of cultural activities in the Hungarian community, until the Catholic parish managed to purchase a new, larger building of its own.

Following the arrival of the fifty-sixers and subsequent waves of immigrants in the late fifties and early sixties, Montreal's downtown Hungarian Catholic church no longer satisfied the needs of the community. By 1938, 600 families belonged to Our Lady of Hungary parish and an estimated 75 percent of the church's members were peasants or

¹⁴² *Menóra* (also referred to as *Menóra-Egyenlőség—Menorah Equality*) at first included both Hungarian and Yiddish articles. As a sign of the importance of the Hungarian Jewish community in Montreal, the paper had a regular column dedicated to community stories, entitled "Montreáli Séták—Strolls in Montreal"

¹⁴³ "Hungarian Church Dedicated in City," *The Montreal Gazette*, 14 May 1955, 33.

agricultural labourers in their home country.¹⁴⁴ Their number increased to 1,450 by 1960.¹⁴⁵

Not only had the community become larger, but by the early 1960s it was also more prosperous, with a growing number of Hungarians purchasing their first homes in the suburbs. Parish priest Joseph Hajdusik commissioned János Keresztes, a Hungarian architect, to design a massive new church, which would be located on a lot in the north end of Montreal, near one of the city's major highways. In August of 1963, Our Lady of Hungary Parish took possession of the largest Hungarian church in Canada, with a capacity to sit 600 worshippers, and a parish hall which accommodated an additional 1,000 members.¹⁴⁶ By the late 1960s, the parish had 3,500 members, but in 1968 Hajdusik was transferred to serve the Hungarian community in Calgary, where he was killed in July 1970 during a house call.¹⁴⁷

The Hungarian Jesuits

In 1975, the Jesuits took over Our Lady of Hungary Parish in Montréal, at a time when the order itself presumed that assimilation, ageing and the out-migration of Hungarians from Québec due to the burgeoning separatist movement would lead to the church's closure within 10 to 15 years.¹⁴⁸ Three Hungarian Jesuits were transferred to Montreal, in order to take over the parish from the Servite Order, which had led the parish

¹⁴⁴ "Montreal Hungarian Colony hold Outstanding Religious Festival," *The Montreal Gazette*, 4 June 1938, 3.

¹⁴⁵ A Magyarok Nagyasszonya Egyház hirlevele (Bulletin of the Our Lady of Hungary Parish), January 1961.

¹⁴⁶ "Hungarian Roman Catholic Community has New Church," *The Montreal Gazette*, 10 August 1963, 11.

¹⁴⁷ *The Montreal Gazette* reported that a member of the Hungarian community killed Fr. Hajdusik after a heated religious argument. Ann Capper, "Ex-City Priest Meets Violent Death," *The Montreal Gazette*, 22 July 1970, 3.

¹⁴⁸ Ferenc Deák "Emlékek a megtett útról," (Memories from the Road Travelled), In: Ferenc Szabó, *Magyar jezsuiták vallomásai II* (The Testimonies of Hungarian Jesuits, Vol. II), (Budapest: Jézus Társasága Magyarországi Rendtartománya, 1998) 158.

since 1960. Two of the new Jesuit priests, Ferenc Deák and Károly Csókay, were both in their early fifties and due to their relative youth and commitment to increasing the parish's secular, cultural activities, the community experienced a period of regeneration. While Fr. Csókay focused his energies on building the Hungarian scouting movement, Fr. Deák concentrated on expanding the Hungarian School of Montréal, which offered weekend language instruction.

Montréal's Hungarian community, from 1975.

Father Deák played a particularly significant role in the parish's post-1975 development and in Montréal's Hungarian community as a whole. In contrast to the overwhelming majority of his compatriots, Fr. Deák spoke French fluently and this served as his working language when negotiating with the Archdiocese of Montréal and with municipal, provincial and federal authorities.¹⁴⁹ Fr. Deák's good rapport with local authorities helped him secure support for a major expansion of the church in 1984. The parish built a youth centre next to its main building, which housed the Hungarian School, Scouts and the Bokréta folklore dance ensemble, and the community managed to pay off the mortgage within five years.¹⁵⁰

While Our Lady of Hungary Parish experienced a modest renaissance during the late 1970s and in the 1980s, the community as a whole realized that the waves of Hungarian

¹⁴⁹ According to the 2006 Census, 67,805 of the 73,335 Canadians whose mother tongue is Hungarian speak English as their second language, while only 2,480 Hungarian Canadians indicated that they speak both official languages. The latest census figures show that in Québec, 4,845 of the province's 7,750 Hungarians speak only English of the Canada's two official languages. (See Appendix 1.) "Selected Demographic, Cultural, Educational, Labour Force and Income Characteristics (926), First Official Language Spoken (4)" *2006 Census of Canada*.

¹⁵⁰ Ferenc Deák, "Egyház az emigrációban—A montreali Magyarok Nagyasszonya plébánia" (Church in Emigration—Montreal's Our of Lady of Hungary Parish), *Új Ember* (Budapest: 4 August 2002), Vol. 31, No. 2818.

immigrants which had arrived in the interwar period and immediately following the Second World War were ageing and increasingly required community-based old-age services. As such, the city's Hungarian churches, the Hungária Social Club and prominent Hungarian professionals and businesspeople raised the idea of building a government-subsidized retirement home.

Montréal's newest Hungarian community, the Hungarian Presbyterian Church, played a central role in developing Canada's largest subsidized Hungarian retirement complex. The new Protestant congregation was established in 1968 after 25 families decided to leave the Hungarian United Church, gravitating instead towards the more conservative traditions of Presbyterianism. In 1972, the congregation acquired the Livingstone Presbyterian Church in Montréal's diverse, but poverty-stricken Park Extension district. A new pastor, Péter Szabó, served both the church's fledgling Hungarian congregation and the remaining English-speaking community.¹⁵¹

The Hungarian Committee of Montréal began discussing the possibility of establishing a new Hungarian cultural institution in the city in the late 1970s. Committee members justified this new investment by noting that while the community in Toronto had established the Hungarian Canadian Cultural Centre (HCCC), Montreal's Hungarian had no such cultural home, beyond the space provided by the three churches and the modest downtown facilities of the Hungária Social Club.

Reverend Szabó, however, argued that the community's priority should be the development of a retirement home for the growing number of elderly Hungarians, rather

¹⁵¹ Imre Végh, *Magyar Otthon-Foyer Hongrois*, (Montreal: Transatlantic Kiadó, 1992) 42-43.

than a cultural or entertainment centre.¹⁵² The Hungarian Committee obtained the support of all three Hungarian congregations and convinced prominent lawyer Blanka Gyulai, who emigrated from Czechoslovakia in 1948 and who served as a member of the Canadian Consultative Council on Multiculturalism and was well-respected in Liberal Party circles, to help spearhead the project, later named *Le Foyer Hongrois*.¹⁵³ Gyulai secured a system of funding, which saw the Government of Québec subsidize 75 percent of the monthly rental costs of the home's 101 residents and the Federal Mortgage and Housing Corporation provided a guaranteed loan.¹⁵⁴

The Foyer Hongrois' initial seven story building was designed by János Keresztes, a local Hungarian architect who had also worked on the Our Lady of Hungary Parish's new church, and was completed in October 1981. A second, identical building comprised of one and two bedroom flats was completed in 1985, and Reverend Szabó spearheaded the development of a central Hungarian library in the complex¹⁵⁵. This doubled the number of residents and brought the project's total construction costs to over \$5 million.¹⁵⁶ In 1992, the two buildings combined had an estimated value of almost \$15 million.¹⁵⁷ As such, the construction of the two seven story buildings near the downtown proved to be one of the most grandiose and progressive projects in the history of Canada's Hungarian

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 50.

¹⁵³ Gyulai Blanka was appointed to the Order of Canada in December 1982 for her role in the establishment of the Foyer Hongrois and for her work as a civil liberties advocate.

¹⁵⁴ In 1992, on the tenth anniversary of the retirement home's establishment, Blanka Gyulai hoped that Montréal's Foyer Hongrois—and particularly its funding model—would not only inspire other Hungarian communities in Canada, but would serve as a model for such a system in Hungary as well. *Ibid.*, 52-53.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 85.

¹⁵⁶ As a clear indication of the Hungarian community's close ties with the Québec Liberal Party and the lack of such arrangements with the Parti Québécois, Gyulai noted that following the PQ's rise to power in Québec, the provincial government only provided a 25 percent subsidy to the residents of the Foyer's second building. *Ibid.*, 64-65.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 7.

communities.¹⁵⁸ Despite initial misgivings in the community, the Foyer became hugely popular, with an average of one hundred people on the waiting list to enter the home at any given point during the 1980s.¹⁵⁹

Toronto's Hungarian community also expanded dramatically following the 1956 Revolution and moved away from being solely centred around St. Elisabeth's Parish, the Hungarian United Church and the Hungarian Baptist congregation. Many fifty-sixers were more secular than earlier cohorts of immigrants from Hungary and they sought to create a community centre which preserved Hungarian language, culture and society outside of the confines of the church. They also lived in more dispersed areas than Hungarians in Montreal, including in pockets in the downtown, particularly Bathurst, College and University, as well as along Lakeshore.¹⁶⁰ The areas around Bathurst and Spadina, as well as from College to Dundas, served as small enclaves for Hungarian restaurants, coffee shops and butchers. The city's first Hungarian Cultural Centre (Magyar Ház) opened in 1959, housed in a modest two-story building on Spadina. Re-named the Hungarian Canadian Cultural Centre (Kanadai Magyar Kultúrközpont) in 1971, the community purchased an old synagogue and the four story office building attaching to it on St. Clair Avenue, turning this into North America's largest Hungarian cultural institution.¹⁶¹ Home to the Arany János Hungarian Saturday School, the largest Hungarian library in Canada, a

¹⁵⁸ Not only was the Foyer Hongrois unique in that it provided the community with a system of subsidized housing, but it was ahead of its time in terms of its energy-efficient design, which won it an award from the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air Conditioning Engineers in 1984 and saved it \$24,000 in utility bills annually during the early 1990s. *Ibid.*, 75.

E.J. Gordon, "Home has Award-Winning Design," *The Montreal Gazette*, 10 March 1984, B-9.
¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, B-9.

¹⁶⁰ Robert H. Keyserlingk, "Introduction," *Breaking Ground: The 1956 Hungarian Refugee Movement to Canada*, ed. Robert H. Keyserlingk (Toronto: York Lanes Press, Inc., 1993), viii.

¹⁶¹ George Telch and Rózsa (Rose) Dancs-Telch, "The Hungarian Community of Toronto," *Kaleidoscope*, 2009, 3

ballroom and a restaurant, the centre served as the hub of secular community life in Toronto until the building's sale in 2011.

By 2001, the number of Canadians who spoke Hungarian had dwindled dramatically throughout Canada. This decline, however, was most felt in Québec, where only 7,315 residents still speak Hungarian, in contrast to 12,605 in 1971. Language maintenance has declined much less noticeably in Ontario, where 45,275 speak Hungarian at home, compared to 46,370 in 1971.¹⁶² Immigration from Hungary has dwindled and the vast majority of arrivals since visa free travel in 2006 are Roma refugee claimants who rarely participate in Canada's Hungarian communities.

Little remains of Canada's original Hungarian prairie settlements. The twentieth century saw a marked shift towards central Canada—especially Montreal and southern Ontario—in the settlement of immigrants from Hungary. Hungarians in Canada were always a religiously, ideologically, politically and demographically diverse community. The divisions that developed from these differences –and which were exacerbated by the political interests of community leaders and officials in Budapest—led to the creation of a myriad of community halls, churches, newspapers and other institutions, many of which were often in conflict with each other.

¹⁶²NF. Dreisziger, *Hungarians from Ancient Times to 1956*, (Toronto: Legas, 2007) 286-187.

Chapter 2: Multiple Identities and Divided Loyalties: The Politics of Identity and Canada's Hungarians during the Second World War.

Hungarian-Canadian conservative nationalists and communist patriots were at a loss as to how they might process and present the Second World War and their tenuous situation as members of an ethnic group associated with an enemy country. While Hungarian-Canadian Communists saw the War as an opportunity to dismantle Hungary's much-despised rightist, authoritarian and semi-feudal regime, Hungarian conservatives in the 1940's had to find a way to remain patriotic, whilst also realizing that their beloved homeland was at war with their host country. World War II exacerbated the existing polarization in the Hungarian-Canadian community, with Communists eager to use this as an opportunity to question the loyalty of Hungarian conservatives to Canada, while also redefining what it meant to be patriotic while in emigration.

Ethnic Identity in Emigration

The concept of ethnicity and ethnic identity has caused much debate among sociologists, anthropologists, political scientists and—more recently—historians interested in topics such as nationalism, multiculturalism, community and kinship. While in the 1960's, social historians such as E.P. Thompson immersed themselves in a class-based analysis of society that categorized individuals and communities within economic distinctions, other academics in the social sciences transformed their respective field's understanding of ethnic identity. Ethnicity is an integral element in the social history of any country or region that has any measure of cultural diversity, because an exploration of ethnic identity cuts through other existing boundaries such as class, gender, kinship and

nationality, allowing for a synthesis between different methodological approaches and branches within history itself.

While the existing scholarly literature on Canada's Hungarian communities appreciates that ethnicity is a powerful form of identification, it largely neglects the debate among western scholars who view ethnic identity as primordial and those who see this form of identity and community—like all others—as socially constructed and based heavily on human agency. The symbols, imagery, mythology and vocabulary of the Hungarian ethnic identity adopted by most Hungarian community leaders in Canada during the twentieth century was largely constructed, as it defined this identity around acquired political beliefs, politicized forms of culture and collective memory, rather than simply around language maintenance.

When a wave of Hungarian immigrants arrived in Canada following the First World War, they left their ancestral homeland due to the economic and political troubles caused by the Treaty of Trianon's stipulation that Hungary was to lose over seventy percent of its land and two thirds of its population to the newly independent countries built on the ruins of the multiethnic Austro-Hungarian empire. Despite Canadian national building efforts by anthropologists like Robert England and others in government who were concerned about the large number of seemingly unassimilated immigrants, the Slovaks, Ruthenes, Croats, Serbs and Romanians who had just shaken off the chains of Austria-Hungary were unlikely to have been interested in multiethnic cooperation or embracing a new multiethnic identity in Canada, if it was hoisted upon them from above.

Over the last nine decades since Trianon, concepts of ethnicity and ethnic identity have undergone a revolutionary transformation, with notions of constructed identity edging out the old primordialist theories in many academic circles. The constructivist approach to ethnicity and identity stems in part from postmodernist thinking which has, over the years, whittled away at notions of objectivity and introduced in its place relativism and complexity theory. For historians, postmodernist linguists and literary critics like Hayden White have caused the most grief, as they challenged the very legitimacy of history as a separate discipline and argued that historical texts were little different from works of fiction. Beginning in the 1980's, many in the historical discipline were deeply troubled by what they viewed as the creeping menace of postmodernism into a field which in the past had seen itself as a bulwark of scientific objectivity. In 1997, Richard J. Evans, a historian at the University of Cambridge, wrote one of the first apologies for the beleaguered historical discipline. While he agreed that history was in crisis thanks to the relativistic challenges of the postmodernists, Evans also rejected the notion of "scientific objectivity" in history.¹⁶³ Yet when discussing whether history stands closer to the sciences or to the arts, Evans argued that what is most unique about this discipline is that it can be both at the same time, as history is a "varied and protean discipline, and historians approach what they do in many different ways," including a reliance on both literary works for primary sources, as well as quantifiable, scientific data.¹⁶⁴ As such, history is interdisciplinary by nature.

While Evans did not discuss the phenomenon of ethnic identity and its place in historical inquiry, the exploration of ethnicity is one of several fields that necessitates an

¹⁶³ Richard J. Evans, *In Defence of History*, (London: Granta Books, 1997), 73.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 74.

interdisciplinary approach, if only because the first academics to explore the histories of various ethnic groups were often anthropologists and sociologists and before this, many of the primary sources historians can work with today were literary works.

One of the most prominent books ever written on the experiences and integration of Hungarian refugees to Canada following the failed, anti-Soviet 1956 revolution was Susan Romvary's *Zsuzsa Not Zsazsa*. Romvary explored life as a Hungarian woman in Canada during the 1950's who came from an upper middle-class family in Hungary, but found herself working as a seamstress in Montreal, in a decidedly working class milieu. Everyone confused her first name with that of Hungarian-born Hollywood celebrity Zsazsa Gabor.¹⁶⁵ It is not always clear in the book--which serves as both an autobiography, and a light-hearted, humorous take on culture shock and balancing multiple identities, written nearly four decades after Romvary's arrival to Canada—where fiction ends and memoir begins. Yet Romvary's work provides insight into ethnic relations in Quebec during the days of the Quiet Revolution and after the Parti Québécois victory in 1976. Out of a sense of idealism, Romvary assumed that she could balance her ties to Hungary with her newfound Canadian identity, and not ruffle any feathers in the process. Yet when her son was bullied in his local French school by students who chanted "*chien, chien, Autrichien*," Romvary understood that ethnic prejudice associated with the First World War and a hatred of the Central Powers somehow still resonated in Quebec society in 1957.¹⁶⁶ Thirty years later, when University of Montreal political science professor and Quebec separatist Claude Reveil visited Romvary's home, he referred to her as a "stranger" in Quebec, despite her affinity to

¹⁶⁵ Susan Romvary, *Zsuzsa Not Zsazsa: Balance With a Smile*, (Toronto, Shoreline: 1992), 16.

¹⁶⁶ Susan Romvary, "Montreal—1957-1977: Trust and Distrust," *Mozaik*, (Montreal: Corvin Kiadó:1993) 114.

and strong command of the French language.¹⁶⁷ Romvary found herself unable to change or develop her national identity, due to a new generation of “misled” Quebec nationalists who, unlike the more welcoming older generations, viewed this form of identification as unchangeable and primordial.

If ethnic identification is socially-constructed, dynamic and forever subject to change, and even volatile in nature—as sociologist Joane Nagel argues—then historians can hardly produce a history of an ethnic group without both consulting the works of sociologists, anthropologists, as well as psychologists, and incorporating some of their methodology.¹⁶⁸

The Hungarian-Canadian identity was, in significant part, constructed and maintained by politics and historic traumas. This underlines the malleable nature of ethnicity and identity, and that illustrates the characteristics and boundaries of ethnic groups are in constant flux. However fascinating this can be for sociologists, the situation can pose significant problems for historians who may use constructed ethnic categories—whether assigned by external forces or negotiated from within—without necessarily calling into question the validity of the boundaries that divide the respective group from other parts of society. A good example of this problem is how historians have treated “Yugoslav” and “Czechoslovak” émigré communities in North America. In both cases, the immigrants came from countries which were artificially created and where their respective governments attempted to paper over linguistic, cultural and religious differences in their nation-building

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 116.

¹⁶⁸ Joane Nagel, “Constructing Ethnicity—Creating and Recreating Ethnic Identity and Culture,” *Social Problems*, (Vol. 4, No. 1, February 1994), 152.

efforts. North American historians examining immigrants from these countries were confronted with a complex situation. There were individuals who considered themselves Czechoslovaks, while others saw themselves as Czechs or Slovaks, or sometimes even Moravians and Bohemians. Yet the majority society in North America did not always differentiate them. These groups sometimes shared common newspapers, national organizations, clubs or other community institutions. In the 1920's, officials from Czechoslovakia went out of their way to make explicit claims as to the existence of a Czechoslovak "race" and North American scholars got a taste of this from Jaroslav F. Smetanka, Czechoslovakia's consul general in Chicago. Smetanka wrote that the older generation of Bohemian and Slovak immigrants to the U.S. "sprang" from the "Czechoslovak race."¹⁶⁹ Smetanka's observation was patently bizarre, as it suggested that Czechoslovak identity somehow existed as a primordial ethnic category, preceding Bohemians and Slovaks.

The problem for historians of Eastern European immigration to Canada and the United States was to determine whether there may have been a constructed Czechoslovak identity within émigré communities, in addition to a Slovak and Bohemian identities. The fact that there such an organization called the Czechoslovak National Council of America and weekly newspapers with both Czech and Slovak subscribers would indicate that such a community existed.¹⁷⁰ Yet when examining the history of a group, community or society, historians always create boundaries, either implicitly or explicitly. The remarkable fluidity

¹⁶⁹ Jaroslav F. Smetanka, "Bohemians and Slovaks—Now Czechoslovaks," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences*, (Vol. 93, 1921) 149.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 150.

of ethnic identity can make this process exceedingly challenging, as it is often difficult to tell where to draw the dividing line.

Studying ethnicity within the historical discipline, however, can be a daunting and problematic task. If one accepts the view that ethnic identity is both constructed by the individual and negotiated by society, then the historian who seeks to explore the history of a specific community in a certain period of time may find him or herself superimposing contemporary, sociological concepts of constructed identity on a community which was not at all conscious of this possibility.

Examining the history of an ethnic group necessarily involves determining and defining the boundaries of that community and deciding both who is included and all those who are excluded from this group. While social historians analyzing the various classes in society must also decide questions of membership, those studying Eastern European ethnic groups face an added challenge. Should Jews from these countries be considered members of these diaspora communities?

An example of academics treating Eastern European Christians and Jewish immigrants separately—and excluding Jews from their native nation—is the work of John Kosa who, in 1956, wrote one of the earliest sociological studies of Eastern European ethnic groups in Central Canada. Kosa concentrated on the social mobility of Hungarian immigrants living in Canadian cities during the 1930's and 1940's and—perhaps not surprisingly—he did not define what he meant by ethnicity and failed to provide a description of what Hungarian ethnic identity in Canada entailed. Kosa did, however, take for granted that Hungarian Jews were not part of Canadian Hungarian communities when

he described the disintegration of the Hungarian community in Toronto's run-down Beverley area between 1945 and 1947, after Hungarian tenants had saved enough money to move out and buy their own homes in more prosperous suburban neighbourhoods.¹⁷¹ According to Kosa, Poles, Ukrainians and Jews moved into the previously Hungarian neighbourhood, but many of these Jews were, in fact, Hungarian Jewish immigrants from Transylvania, a multiethnic region in western Romania, which had belonged to Hungary before the end of the First World War and between 1940 and 1945.¹⁷² In other words, Kosa claimed rather oddly that by 1952, the Beverley area's Hungarian population had disappeared, while in fact many of the residents who moved in were Jews from Hungary's borderlands, who then formed their own community organizations in the area.

György Egri, the founder and editor of *Menorah*, a Hungarian weekly based in Toronto and the largest Hungarian Jewish publication outside Hungary and Israel, would have balked at any suggestion that his Jewish heritage precluded him from also being Hungarian. In addition to his support of Israel, Egri saw himself as a staunchly anti-communist Hungarian with a "patriotic Canadian heart."¹⁷³

Kosa's separate treatment of Hungarian Jews from the larger Hungarian émigré community was not limited to his study of social mobility, but proved characteristic of his other works as well. In 1957 he published a survey history of Hungarian immigration to North America between 1850 and 1950 and noted that up to 2.6 million Hungarians

¹⁷¹ John Kosa, "Hungarian Immigrants in North America—Their Residential Mobility and Ecology," *The Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*, (Vol. 22, No. 3, August 1956), 360-61.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, 361.

¹⁷³ György Egri, *Én különben jól érzem magam...* (Other than That, I Feel Fine), Toronto: Kensington Publishers, 1981) 208.

immigrated to Canada and the United States between 1850 and 1920.¹⁷⁴ While Kosa's primary interest lay in determining the socio-economic backgrounds of these immigrants, he also delved into the world of ethnicity. According to Kosa, the first wave of immigrants from the Kingdom of Hungary were mainly comprised of Jews and Germans, while the "rate of Magyars in the emigrant mass was less than their rate in the total population."¹⁷⁵ Kosa again assumed that Jews in Hungary constituted not only a distinct religious group, but also a separate ethnic category, even though the Jewish population spoke Hungarian as their mother tongue and had largely assimilated into the majority culture. While Kosa and other historians projected widely-held societal beliefs of Jews being separate from the majority Eastern European population and constituting a unique ethnic group, Canadian census data—which also listed Jews as a "nationality" and did not include them in the overall tally of a given linguistic, immigrant group—further promoted their separate treatment from Catholic and Protestant European immigrants of the same countries.

Despite the census results and the notion that European Jews formed a separate ethnic group, a small number of scholars did, at least, entertain for a short moment the idea that Jewish and Christian émigrés from Eastern Europe could form a single community. Abraham C. Duker made this argument in his 1955 examination of the Polish-American community. According to Duker, Catholic and Jewish Poles in the USA enjoyed good relations after 1865 and there were numerous examples of Jews participating in the life of major émigré organizations, despite "the growth of both Polish and Jewish communities

¹⁷⁴ John Kosa, "A Century of Hungarian Emigration, 1850-1950, *The American Slavic and East European Review* (Vol. 16, No. 4, December 1957), 504.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 505.

and their increasing differentiation.”¹⁷⁶ Like other scholars of this period, Duker raised no questions regarding the nature of ethnic identity, since the implicit understanding was that ethnicity was primordial, rather than constructed. He differentiated between Polish Catholics and Polish-speaking Jews, implying that they did not belong to the same ethnic, or national group. Nevertheless, unlike his contemporaries, Duker actually tried to explain the reasons behind this separateness. While German Jews in America inhabited three “cultural milieus”—namely the German, Jewish and American—Polish Jews rarely identified with their Polish origin, but saw themselves as simply Jewish and American.¹⁷⁷

The reason for this was that in contrast to the German and Hungarian cases, the lack of integration of Poland’s Jews into the national culture and mainstream society, the prevalence of an extremely virulent form of anti-Semitism among Polish peasants¹⁷⁸ and the domination of the Catholic clergy in the leadership of émigré organizations led Jews to feel out of place in Polish-American communities.¹⁷⁹ By the end of the nineteenth century, the Polish émigré clergy exasperated the situation by initiating a campaign to remove any remaining Jews from positions of leadership in community organizations, thus leading to a final break between Catholic and Jewish Poles.¹⁸⁰ By comparison, Hungarian émigré

¹⁷⁶ Abraham C. Duker, “Some Aspects of Polish Jewish Relations in the United States after 1865,” *The Jewish Quarterly Review*, (Vol. 45, No. 4, April 1955) 529.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 530.

¹⁷⁸ See Jerzy Kosinski’s highly controversial book *The Painted Bird*, which recounts the story of a boy of either Jewish or Gypsy origins, who flees his war-torn hometown during the Second World War, only to suffer constant cruelty and a total lack of compassion at the hands of rural Poles. Jerzy Kosinski, *The Painted Bird*, (New York: Grove Press, 1976).

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 531.

¹⁸⁰ Duker, 536.

communities were already more diverse than the Polish diaspora, with both Catholics and Calvinists, and a heavily *Magyarized* Jewish population.¹⁸¹

Historians and other scholars certainly did not invent this notion of Jewish separateness and their position as a unique ethnic group, which remained apart from the national cultures of Eastern Europe. Their fault, however, was that they accepted the existence of the Jewish ethnic identity as a preordained fact and as a result failed to incorporate them into their analyses of European émigré populations in North America.

Fortunately, later scholars have explored the issue of Eastern European Jewish identity, such as Laurence Silberstein, a professor of religious studies at Brandeis University. Silberstein, writing in 1974, argued that prior to the last decades of the eighteenth century—when European thinkers began to question the nature of Judaism—most Jews saw themselves as both a distinct religious and ethnic group. “Jews, in addition to sharing a basic body of sacred tradition, viewed themselves as members of a distinct people sharing common origins and a common historical lot.”¹⁸² Silberstein’s analysis is key because it demonstrates what both those who see ethnicity as primordial and those who view it as constructed agree is a key component of ethnic identity, namely the perception of a common past. By the nineteenth century, however, Jewish elites attempted to transform the identity of their communities from an ethnic, to a religious one and played down differences between their minority culture and the mainstream majority population.

European Jewish leaders tried to “counter the Hegelian image of the Jew as an alien

¹⁸¹ In 1867, the Kingdom of Hungary passed a language law making Hungarian the only official language in government and in education and restricting the rights of minorities following the creation of the Dual Monarchy of Austria-Hungary, as part of an effort to assimilate other ethnic and linguistic groups.

¹⁸² Laurence Silberstein, “Religion, Ethnicity and Jewish History: The Contribution of Yehezkel Kaufmann,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* (Vol. 42, No. 3, September 1974), 516.

element in Western civilization” and sought to integrate them into mainstream society.¹⁸³ Although Silberstein did not explicitly mention this, these Jewish community leaders were constructing a new identity for Europe’s Jews—one which saw them as an integral part of (rather than separate from) European culture. This concept prevailed in Western Europe, which had relatively small Jewish minorities—but in Eastern Europe, where most of Europe’s Jews lived—the exact opposite was taking place. The late nineteenth century saw the resurgence of Jewish nationalism, which downplayed religion as a fundamental aspect of Jewish identity and replaced it with the idea of a common culture, collective memory and history. Hungary was at the forefront of this new-found Jewish identity, as Budapest served as the home of Theodore Herzl, the founder of Zionism and an ideology of Jewish separateness from the majority population.¹⁸⁴

By the early twentieth century, Hungarian Jews were more secular than their coreligionists in Poland, Russia and elsewhere in Eastern Europe and also more closely integrated into mainstream Hungarian national culture. As such, it is also no surprise that Hungarian Jews, though constituting a sizeable portion of refugees from Hungary after 1956, waited well over a decade before opening a single, very modest synagogue in Canada, located in Montreal, and a low circulation Hungarian-language Jewish community newspaper in Toronto, in 1965. Hungary’s assimilationist policies, both during the days of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and during the interwar period, gave Jews a sense of Hungarian national identity, even though racial anti-Semitism in the years preceding the

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 517.

¹⁸⁴ Jacques Kornberg, *Theodor Herzl: From Assimilation to Zionism*, (Indiana University Press: 1993), 7.

Second War consistently called this into question and led many to never accept even the most integrated, secular Jews as “true” Hungarians.

Constructing a Hungarian-Canadian Identity

Although Hungarian Jews already lived in Montreal during the interwar period and were active in a multi-ethnic organization known as the Austro-Hungarian Synagogue, they played no role in developing a new Hungarian-Canadian identity within the community. Instead, the mantle of Hungarian nationalism and identity was taken up by a new generation of newspaper editors who had arrived after the 1925 Railroad Agreement, and during the mid to late 1930's. During World War II, Canada's two major Hungarian-language periodicals, the *Kanadai Magyar Újság* (Canadian Hungarian News) and the *Kanadai Magyar Munkás* (Canadian Hungarian Worker) became increasingly preoccupied with proving the loyalty of Canada's Hungarians to the host country and dispelling any potential myths that Hungary's gravitation to the Axis powers meant that Hungarian-Canadians might pose a risk to Canada. A nation-wide Hungarian-Canadian war effort grew out of this concern and this movement included demonstrating the most visible signs of loyalty to Canada, such as collecting donations for the Red Cross, sending supplies and clothing to Canadian soldiers in Europe and publishing lists of members of Canada's armed forces who had Hungarian roots. Yet proving loyalty was not only meant to justify the place of Hungarians in Canada to Canadian authorities, but served as a tool used by two rival political factions within the Hungarian community—namely, the left-leaning, or outright communist Hungarians, who formed the readership of the *Munkás*, and the politically conservative Hungarians who tended to rally around the *Újság*. The conservative editor of

the *Újság* and the communist editor of the *Munkás*—each allied with affiliated community organizations--sought to discredit the other by using the war and the question of loyalty on several different levels, including loyalty to the host country, loyalty to one's heritage and loyalty to democratic ideals.

The Hungarian community in the Shadow of Party Politics and Divided Loyalties: the Lead up to the War

When in April 1941 Canada severed all diplomatic ties with Hungary—after Budapest had permitted German troops to invade Yugoslavia across Hungarian soil—Canada's Hungarian population, though not yet considered enemy aliens, became associated with a country that had ceded its neutrality and sided with the Axis powers. Canadian Hungarian intellectuals—especially the editors of Hungarian periodicals—immediately assumed the task of proving to the majority population that Canada's Hungarians were loyal citizens. They did this by encouraging outward expressions of Canadian patriotism and fostering a Canadian Hungarian war effort movement, with branches in Hungarian communities across the country.

Yet World War II also exposed deep political and social divisions among Canadian Hungarians. The most important cleavage was between the conservative circles, who maintained close ties with Hungary's autocratic, right-wing regime, and the Hungarian Communists of the tobacco region in southern Ontario, who fled the very regime embraced by many of their compatriots in Canada. Between 1941 and 1945 community leaders made the question of loyalty—to Canada, to the ancestral homeland, and to a specific ideology—the most important issue, both in terms of how Hungarian-Canadians viewed their place in

the host society and how they saw their relationship with others within the community. The leaders of the two factions spearheaded the Hungarian-Canadian war effort and sought to use it to build group solidarity around their competing understandings of loyalty in order to justify the place of Hungarians in Canada and to secure their respective positions within the Hungarian community.

Although the editors of the various newspapers and periodicals, and the prominent members of churches and community organizations were, in general, politically conscious, most Hungarian immigrants—who came and settled on land in western Canada in the 1880s and who arrived later as farm labourers and industrial workers--were not. Their politicization occurred *after* their arrival in Canada, by community leaders who represented two ideologies strongly present in Hungary—authoritarian Christian-conservatism and Communism— both of which they then imported to Canada.¹⁸⁵

The interwar years became a period of significant growth for the Hungarian communities of Canada, especially those east of Manitoba. In the early 1920s, Hungary's nascent interwar government did try to discourage emigration, but was largely unsuccessful. Nevertheless, the conservative regime, led by Regent Miklós Horthy, later realized that it could do little to stop the process. Therefore, it changed its approach and began to see Hungarians living in Canada, as well as their churches, community organizations and press as a base of support for the irredentist cause—the movement aimed at revising the 1920 Treaty of Trianon, which had Hungary cede 70% of its land to the successor states of

¹⁸⁵ Carmela Patrias describes in detail the politicization of Hungarian-Canadians and argues that the community elites in the interwar period created two, polarized camps within the Hungarian communities, namely a Communist (proletarian) group and a Christian-Conservative camp, whom the author refers to as the “patriots.”

Carmela Patrias, *Patriots and Proletarians—Politicizing Hungarian Immigrants in Interwar Canada*, (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994), 230-231.

Czechoslovakia, Romania, Yugoslavia and Austria.¹⁸⁶ In 1928 the Hungarian government opened consulates in Montreal and Winnipeg in order to increase its presence in Canada and maintain closer ties with the diaspora. The Horthy regime also played a key role in the merger of several previously unsuccessful Hungarian-Canadian newspapers, in order to indirectly establish and fund a new weekly, the *Kanadai Magyar Újság* (Canadian Hungarian News) published in Winnipeg from 1929.¹⁸⁷

While the *Újság*--published twice a week--was the largest Hungarian periodical in Canada--and the largest in the entire British empire, as the editors frequently pointed out--another, smaller weekly did exist under the name *Kanadai Magyar Munkás* (the Canadian Hungarian Worker). The *Munkás* was a Communist paper--closely associated with the Communist Party of Canada--and printed in Hamilton by István Szőke.

The two periodicals were constantly at odds, as the *Újság* remained a conservative paper, held in high regard by Catholic and most Protestant communities, while the *Munkás*--continuing the deep-rooted anti-clericalism, which was often a part of the Communist movement in Hungary--shunned this press, as well as many church leaders, and saw them as reactionary and fascist.

The *Újság* assumed a paternalistic role toward Canada's Hungarian communities. The paper saw that it had a duty to integrate Hungarian Canadians into mainstream society in such a way that they could maintain their Hungarian identity--as understood by conservatives-- maintain some type of loyalty to their old homeland, and yet at the same

¹⁸⁶ *Patriots and Proletarians*, 133-134.

¹⁸⁷ Carmela Patrias, *The Kanadai Magyar Újság and the Politics of the Hungarian Canadian Elite*, (Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Ontario, November 1978) 6.

time integrate into, and be accepted by, Canadian society. The editorial line of the paper professed fervent support for the British monarchy, while French-Canadian society was seen as a major hindrance in developing a Canadian national identity.¹⁸⁸ In professing its loyalty to Canada and to the British Crown, the *Újság*, at times, truly did attempt to be perceived as more English than the English themselves.

During the thirties and the forties the *Újság* was edited by Gusztav Nemes and was published in Winnipeg. The paper was sent to about 4000 addresses across Canada, with a significant part of its subscription base at first in the western provinces, and then gradually shifting to central Canada--especially the cities and towns in southern Ontario, as well as Montreal. The cover page always featured Canadian political news, including articles based on the reports of the Canadian Press and the Associated Press. The paper focused on events in the Hungarian communities across Canada--with an emphasis on the western settlements--and regularly published obituaries, notices of recent weddings and birthday greetings. One page in the paper dealt with news from Hungary, and these articles were sent to Winnipeg directly from Budapest, where the periodical maintained an editorial office. After 1941, these pieces of news were careful to avoid making overt political statements, and the reports on current events were often apolitical, or else relatively even-handed in nature.

Nevertheless, the *Újság* did have a history of close connections with Hungary's Horthy regime and, in its early days, it was used as the mouthpiece of the autocratic Hungarian interwar regime in Canada, in a bid to win the support of the immigrant community and to propagate irredentism. The well-known Hungarian irredentist slogan appeared on the front page of each issue: "Truncated Hungary is not a country, pre-Trianon Hungary is heaven."

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 11-12.

The personal animosity between István Szőke, editor of the *Munkás* and the *Újság's* Nemes stemmed from the latter paper's close ties with the Horthy regime, which had banned the Communist Party in Hungary. Szőke asserted on numerous occasions that Nemes had been a Horthyite guards officer during the period of the White Terror of 1919-1920, when a large number of people suspected of being Communists were imprisoned or killed by Miklós Horthy's nascent regime.¹⁸⁹ Szőke's paper was associated with the Hungarian-Canadian mutual benefit societies and in 1936 it led a campaign to save Mátyás Rákosi, the imprisoned leader of the Communists in Hungary, and the man who later became the country's Stalinist dictator. Canada's Hungarian Communists claimed to have collected 11,000 signatures, which were submitted to the Consuls of Montreal and Winnipeg.¹⁹⁰ After the *Kanadai Magyar Újság* criticized the campaign, 400 left-wing supporters picketed the editor's Winnipeg office demanding a retraction.¹⁹¹

The *Újság* and the consuls of Winnipeg and Montreal were not very impressed with the petition, nor with the picketing. Szőke referred to both cities as having "Horthyite consulates" and they did represent Hungary's conservative and deeply anti-Communist interwar regime. When Consul General Charles Winter arrived to his new posting in Montreal, in 1929, he was greeted warmly by the *Újság*, which in 1931 carried an article on the birth of his child and referred to Winter's popularity across Canada.¹⁹² Winter also regularly attended mass at Our Lady of Hungary Church, as evidenced in his daily diary

¹⁸⁹ István Szőke, *We Are Canadians--the National Group of the Hungarian-Canadians*, (Toronto: Hungarian Literature Association, 1954), 84.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 67.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 67.

¹⁹² *Kanadai Magyar Újság*, (May 27, 1931), In: *Charles Winter Fonds*. Fond no. 1, "Clippings," 1910-1951. Vol. 1. National Archives of Canada.

entries, and spoke warmly of the Horthy regime and professed a fairly open disdain for the Communists. In an interview given to the *Montreal Gazette*, Winter noted that “there was little contact between the Soviets and Hungary...and no likelihood that Communism would find a foothold in Hungary. Hungary had four months of Bolshevik rule after the war, and I think that she is now immune to Communism.”¹⁹³

The *Újság* maintained its anti-Communist stance and, at least tacitly, supported the Horthy regime in the years immediately before and after World War II. For example, on the occasion of the 50th wedding anniversary of the Horthy couple in 1953—who were then living in exile in Portugal--the paper published greetings sent to the elderly former regent from 46 Hungarians living in Toronto. The greeting’s author sent a letter to Nemes thanking him for publishing their good wishes and the editor was asked to make available a copy of the paper, so that it could be mailed to the 83 year-old former regent.¹⁹⁴

In October of 1941, only weeks before Britain--and by extension Canada--was to declare war upon Hungary, the *Újság* began a campaign to raise money for the paper, as well as to attract more subscribers. At the start of the war, the paper ran into some financial difficulties and, due to cutbacks, fired five paid employees. This left Nemes and one assistant with the responsibility of mailing out the paper twice a week to 4000 addresses, as well as fulfilling all the tasks related to the editing and publishing of the semiweekly.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹³ “Hungary Victim of Slump in Wheat,” *The Gazette*, (April 8, 1931) In: *Ibid*.

¹⁹⁴ “Horthy Miklós köszönő level a torontói magyarokhoz,” [Miklós Horthy’s Letter of Gratitude to the Hungarians of Toronto], In: *Canadian Hungarian News*. Fond no. 285, “CHN Correspondence, N.D., 1945, 1950, 1951, 1958, 1961, 1971.” Vol. 15. National Archives of Canada.

¹⁹⁵ Gusztáv Nemes, “Igaz Magyarokhoz!” [To True Hungarians], *Kanadai Magyar Újság*, (November 4, 1941) 2.

In order to raise the fortunes—and funds—of the struggling paper, Nemes launched a campaign, calling on his readers to fully embrace the *Újság*, to see it as their own and to raise money for it during various community events. On November 4, 1941 Nemes published an editorial piece addressed to "the true Hungarians," in which he referred to the semiweekly, not by its name, but simply as "Our Paper." He also asserted that the *Újság* belonged to all Hungarians and was not beholden to any single ideology, or school of politics, but was simply there to serve Hungarian-Canadians.

Our statement of faith does not include the propagation of Goebbels' or Stalin's ideology, but rather the proclamation of pure-spirited Hungarian and Canadian ethics and truth. It is not our responsibility to judge the governments of our homeland or those of other countries, nor must we deny our origins, or agitate against our own. Instead, we encourage our readers to work and struggle for their own interests, for the preservation of our Canadian-Hungarian race, for our host country and for our own well-being.¹⁹⁶

These words implicitly referred to attacks appearing in the communist *Munkás*, whose editor, István Szőke, charged that Nemes's paper was fascist and served the interests of Hungary's Horthy regime. Nemes did not take the criticism from the Communists lightly and went on to be more specific, in his reference to Canada's Hungarian communists: "We have one fault, among others—one, which we are not embarrassed to admit. We do not subscribe to the time-tested ways of the Communists. We do not terrorize, we do not threaten and we do not demand...we know that our red "Hungarians" will see our honesty as a grand opportunity, but we are at peace, since our conscience is clean and our cause is just."¹⁹⁷ For Nemes, Communists were, quite plainly, not "true" Hungarians and thus their

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 2.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 2.

paper, the *Munkás*, spoke not for the Hungarians of Canada, but served as a mouthpiece of the Communist Party. By consistently referring to the ethnicity of Canada's Hungarian Communists in quotation marks, Nemes implied--not too subtly--that they lacked loyalty toward their ancestral homeland.

While Canada's Hungarian communists were allegedly disloyal to Hungary, Nemes asserted that his paper, the paper of all "true" Hungarians--hence the reference to "Our Paper"--served a noble cause. Yet what, precisely, was Nemes's plan? Three major themes can be identified in his editorial; ones which would form the ideological base for the paper's stance during World War II and the editor's view of what role Hungarian Canadians should play in the war effort. First, Canadian-Hungarians were presented, in effect, as a unique ethnic group, which must play an active role in Canadian society, whilst preserving its heritage. The concept of loyalty to Canada began to appear in the *Újság* earlier in 1941, though it was not yet as explicit as it would become once Hungary officially entered the war. Secondly, Nemes argued for solidarity among Canadian-Hungarians based upon a mutual aversion of Communism. The third theme seen throughout the *Újság* was the notion that Hungarian-Canadian Communists were not Hungarian and not part of the Hungarian-Canadian community. They were seen as traitors, who agitated against their compatriots and, by extension, would demonstrate the same degree of treasonous disloyalty for their host country, if it served their ideology and political goals.

In stark contrast to the *Munkás*, Nemes aimed to convince his readers that the *Újság* had no secret political agenda and that rather than being beholden to any single political ideology, the paper aimed simply to serve Hungarian Canadians. "With your cents and

quarters, we serve not Nazi, fascist, or internationalist communist interests, but rather the grand Canadian-Hungarian cause."¹⁹⁸

Within days, Hungarian-Canadian organizations and churches appeared to be heeding the call to support "Our Paper." A number of fundraising events were held and the proceeds were sent to Nemes's editorial office. In Toronto, the local Hungarian Cultural Centre, churches and "patriotic associations" took part in the paper's campaign, while parts of Winnipeg's Hungarian community did much the same. Nemes applauded the "willingness of patriotic Hungarians to accept sacrifices and commended them for their faith and their realization of the need to have an organ that belongs to honest, thoughtful and patriotic Hungarians, and which serves as the tie that unites us. 'Our Paper' shall survive and shall continue to fight for our Canadian-Hungarian community."¹⁹⁹

While Nemes's movement to popularize the *Újság* in Hungarian communities may have been successful, the editor soon had a new battle to fight--namely, Canada's declaration of war against Hungary and the paper's subsequent efforts to prove the loyalty of ethnic Hungarians in Canada, whilst waging an internal battle with Communist elements within the Hungarian community. Canada had already severed its diplomatic relations with Hungary in April 1941 and expelled the two Hungarian consuls from the country. When on April 8 Prime Minister William Lyon MacKenzie King rose in the House of Commons to declare the decision, he noted that "the overwhelming majority of the Hungarians in this country, including both Hungarian nationals and those who have become naturalized, are loyal and law-abiding citizens. They will not be disturbed so long as their conduct conforms

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 2.

¹⁹⁹ Gusztáv Nemes, "A 'Mi Lapunk' önzetlen munkásai," *Kanadai Magyar Újság*, (November 18, 1941) 3.

to our laws and is consistent with the allegiance which, under the law of Canada is due from all residents, irrespective of their national status or origin.”²⁰⁰

Britain declared war against Hungary on December 6, 1941. Three days later, Nemes's paper concluded that Canada would follow suit, but aimed to reassure its readership that the Canadian government would not detain Hungarian-Canadians, so long as they "do not engage in any type of treasonous activity."²⁰¹ Reflecting the editor's anti-Communist and anti-Soviet stance, the *Újság* saw Britain's declaration of war against Hungary--as well as Finland and Romania--as insulting, and ultimately the result of pressure from the Soviet high command.²⁰² Nemes tried to calm nervous Hungarians by quoting MacKenzie King who assured the immigrants that they would not be singled-out, as long as they abided by the laws of the land. Despite this, Nemes felt that the problem was less with the government and more with average Canadians, who now might prove even more suspicious of Hungarians in their midst than before. According to the editor, nothing could really be done to avoid this problem altogether, though he did introduce the idea of "taking part in a fair share of the work related to the war effort."²⁰³

While Nemes hoped that innocent Hungarians would not be targeted by unfair government measures, he did, however, express the hope that Communist Hungarians in Canada would be faced with the wrath of the Canadian government. He also hoped that

²⁰⁰ MacKenzie King (April 8, 1941) In: *Official Report of Debates, House of Commons*. 1941, Vol. III. (Ottawa: 1941) 2250-2251.

²⁰¹ "Anglia háborút üzent Magyarországnak," [England's Government Declares War Against Hungary] *Kanadai Magyar Újság*, (December 9, 1941) 1.

²⁰² "Hadüzenett előtt," [Before the Declaration of War], *Kanadai Magyar Újság*, (December 9, 1941) 2.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, 2.

Canadians would not be misled by Communist agitation and would deride them for only supporting Canada's war effort after the Soviet Union had been attacked by the Germans.

There can be no doubt among Canada's leaders, that those "Hungarians" who, during the first two years of the war, felt no sense of patriotism, even agitated against the interest of their host country, and yet now all of a sudden listen to their conscience and have become "patriots" since the Soviet war...simply continue to spread Communist propaganda and participate in treasonous behaviour. Those who hear the sweet words of the travelling red agitators and join these recently awakened "patriots" should not deceive themselves by thinking that the Canadian authorities won't be watching their every move.²⁰⁴

While Nemes was convinced that the RCMP had set its sights on the Communists, the Communists themselves were equally convinced that the editor of the *Újság* would soon be put out of business and arrested, by these same vigilant Canadian authorities. Nemes, however, advised the followers of these "red knights" to "flee the rat hole and instead congregate in our churches and our truly patriotic associations."²⁰⁵

In contrast to the Communists, Nemes went on to point out that conservative Hungarians had actively supported the war effort, not only since the invasion of the Soviet Union, but from the very beginning of the war. "I do not think that there is another ethnic paper, and perhaps not even an English one, which would advertise, for several years, the War Savings movement and the Red Cross, the way in which 'Our Paper' has done."²⁰⁶

On December 12, 1941, MacKenzie King confirmed Canada's declaration of war against Hungary, Finland and Romania in the form of a radio address. On that day, Nemes

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 2.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 2.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 2.

tried to calm his readers by observing that no Hungarians had been interned, not even Szőke, who happened to be touring the western provinces.²⁰⁷

The campaign to actively involve Hungarians in the war effort entered into full force once Canada and Hungary were in a state of war. In Saskatchewan's Hungarian settlement of Békevár, a local branch of the Red Cross was established, with the involvement of the Hungarian Baptist Church and its pastor, Gábor Mentő. The *Újság* hailed the establishment of the Red Cross and noted that "under the present circumstances it is necessary that we express our sincere loyalty toward our host country. Today, we must offer a helping hand to our government by establishing a Red Cross Association in every Hungarian community."²⁰⁸

By December 30, 1941, Montreal's Hungarian community had donated \$400 to the Red Cross and the city's Hungarians established the Grand Committee of Hungarians--an umbrella organization that included within its membership the Our Lady of Hungary Roman Catholic Church, the Hungarian United Church and a number of organizations and associations.²⁰⁹ The Committee played a key role in the war effort, by its consistent encouragement of local Hungarians to donate to and support Canada's military. One of the major figures in the war effort in Montreal was Bela Eisner, an employee of the Sun Life insurance company and an active member of the Hungarian United Church.

²⁰⁷ "Kanada nem internálja hű polgárait," [Canada will not Intern its Loyal Citizens], *Kanadai Magyar Újság*, (December 12, 1941) 1.

²⁰⁸ "Megalakult a Vörös Kereszt Egylet Békeváron," [The Red Cross Association is Established in Békevár] *Kanadai Magyar Újság*, (December 19, 1941) 3.

²⁰⁹ Több mint 400 dollárt adtak Montreal magyarjai a Red Cross-nak," [Montreal's Hungarian gave more than 400 Dollars to the Red Cross], *Kanadai Magyar Újság*, (December 30, 1941) 3.

Nemes applauded the Hungarians of Montreal and noted that "it is by these and similar acts and deeds that we will be judged by the leaders of our host country."²¹⁰ In January 1942, the Hungarian community of Windsor, Ontario followed Montreal's example and established a Hungarian Grand Committee, with the goal of raising money for the Red Cross through a yearly fundraising event.²¹¹

By January 1942, Winnipeg's Hungarians also became active in the war effort, by establishing the so-called "Hungarian Roman Catholic War Unit." The organization was run by Mrs. Imre Duha, the president of Winnipeg's Hungarian Catholic Women's Association. The Catholic War Unit's members met every two to three weeks in various local Hungarian homes and established knitting circles for the benefit of the Red Cross. According to Nemes, the good deeds of the women of Winnipeg showed "just how much they took to heart their host country's war aims."²¹² On January 13, 1942, the *Újság* reported that the Hungarian Women's Association of Vancouver gave the profits of its New Year's Eve ball to the Red Cross.²¹³ In almost each issue, the paper reported on the activities of the various Hungarian organizations, their participation in the war effort and even listed the amount of their respective donations to the Red Cross.

Although various Red Cross associations sprang up throughout the country's Hungarian communities, Nemes and some associated supporters of the war effort realized

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 3.

²¹¹ "Hazafias célt szolgáló egyház és egyettközi nagybizottság alakult Windsorban." [A Patriotic Grand Committee of Churches and Associations has been formed in Windsor], *Kanadai Magyar Újság*, (January 13, 1942) 2.

²¹² "Hungarian Roman Catholic War Unit alakult Winnipegben," [A Hungarian Roman Catholic War Unit is Established in Winnipeg], *Kanadai Magyar Újság*, (January 13, 1942) 2.

²¹³ "Vörös Kereszt javára dolgoznak Vancouver Magyar asszonyai is," [Vancouver's Hungarian Women are also Working for the Red Cross], *Kanadai Magyar Újság*, (January 13, 1942) 3.

that so much more could be done to prove to the Canadian government and to the public that Hungarians were loyal citizens. A prominent Hungarian artist from Toronto, Miklós Hornyánsky, sent a letter to the editor in which he called on the paper to publish a book with information on all that Hungarian immigrants had contributed to the war effort and to Canadian society in general. According to Hornyánsky, this publication would have a double effect--it would raise solidarity within the Hungarian community and inspire Hungarian youth, but would also portray Canada's Hungarians in a favourable light.²¹⁴ Hornyánsky wrote: "Let those be proud who, by their own blood and sweat, and that of their sons, daughters and wives, contributed to the winning of the war."²¹⁵ The painter called for the compilation of statistics concerning Hungarian military recruits, as well as information on how many Hungarians participated in the production of ammunition, other weaponry, and contributed to the Red Cross.

At first, Nemes was not terribly enthusiastic about the idea. He seemed somewhat exhausted by having to edit, publish and distribute his paper essentially by himself and lacked the energy and time to create such a book. But he did warm to the idea, and launched a new column in his paper entitled "What Have Hungarians Done for Canada?" According to Nemes, this was necessary because "we work and fight, morning to night, so that our reputation might be clean, so that Canada's leaders and citizens would see us not as agitators, but honest, sincere and true nation-builders."²¹⁶

²¹⁴ "Diszkönyvet magyar névsorral Ottawának! Mit végez a magyarság Kanada érdekében?" [A Special Album with a List of Hungarian Names for Ottawa! What are Hungarians doing for Canada] *Kanadai Magyar Újság*, (January 23, 1942) 1.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 1.

²¹⁶ Gusztáv Nemes, "A Szabadság," [Freedom]. *Kanadai Magyar Újság*, (January 23, 1942) 2.

Letters began slowly trickling in to the editor about Hungarians participating in the various facets of the war effort. At first, this column included lists of people who donated to the Red Cross, or who bought War Savings Certificates, or Victory Bonds. There were also letters from fathers whose sons served in the Canadian military, as well the names of girls who volunteered in the production of weapons and other military equipment. The Winnipeg Catholic Women seemed especially busy with the war effort. In addition to their knitting circle, they also participated in the Knights of Columbus War Savings Fund, by going door to door collecting donations²¹⁷. The Hungarian Catholic Church in Winnipeg also purchased \$716 worth of War Savings Certificates.²¹⁸ In Montreal, the Hungarian Social Club's Women's Alliance donated 20% of its income to the Red Cross.²¹⁹

The column on Hungarian contributions to the war efforts also featured letters of parents who had sons in the armed forces. These aimed at inspiring the readers of the paper. The letters came from all across Canada and were often from families which sent more than one child to fight in Europe. One mother from Creston BC, wrote that after her two older sons were sent off, her third son had just been recruited.²²⁰ By 1942, Winnipeg's Hungarian community had contributed 18 soldiers, while the small Hungarian communities of Saskatchewan had five soldiers fighting in the war by March, 1942.²²¹

²¹⁷ "Mit végez a magyarság Kanada érdekében?" [What are Hungarians doing for Canada?] *Kanadai Magyar Újság* (February 3, 1942) 2.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 2.

²¹⁹ "A Hungária Nőszövetség egy éves évfordulója," [The First Anniversary of the Hungaria Women's Alliance] *Kanadai Magyar Újság*, (February 20, 1942) 3.

²²⁰ Mrs. Vilmos Tamás, "Mit tett a magyarság Kanada érdekében?" [What Have Hungarians done for Canada?] *Kanadai Magyar Újság*, (March 3, 1942) 3.

²²¹ "Mit tett a magyarság Kanada érdekében – Katonáink Winnipegről," [What Have Hungarians done for Canada? Our Soldiers from Winnipeg], *Kanadai Magyar Újság*, (March 6, 1942) 3.

Communist Hungarians also participated in the war effort and the *Munkás* encouraged its readers to support Canada in the hope of liberating Hungary as soon as possible and doing away with the Horthy regime. On the occasion of a theatrical performance held in Montreal in January 1944, Béla Lugosi--the actor who had played the role of Dracula in the Hollywood film—was invited as a guest of honour, but was not able to travel to Canada due to the war. Nevertheless, Lugosi sent a message to Hungarians in Montreal, which was published in the *Munkás*. He urged unity among anti-fascist Hungarians so that “we may provide assistance to the Allies, in order for them to prove victorious over the Hitlerite-Horthyite bandits.”²²²

The *Munkás* saw the significance of the war effort partly in terms of proving the loyalty of Hungarian-Canadians to Canada, but much more so as an opportunity to bring about a quick allied victory and thus effect a change in regime in Hungary. As a direct consequence of this regime change, it also aimed to strike a blow against conservative Hungarians in Canada. According to Szőke, “the rapidly approaching fall of Hitlerism and Horthyism will mercilessly shock thousands of Canadian Hungarians in the near future.”²²³ Szőke embarked on a campaign to increase the number of subscribers to the *Munkás* by 500, as part of preparations for the new postwar era, when—he believed—the editor of the *Újság* will have lost all credibility due to his connections with the Horthy regime. Szőke claimed to have received 450 new subscriptions at the end of 1943 and the beginning of 1944.²²⁴

²²² “Jólsikerült szinelőadás—Lugosi Béla üzenete Montreál magyarságának,” [A Successful Theatrical Performance—Béla Lugosi’s Message to Montreal’s Hungarians.] *Kanadai Magyar Munkás*, (January 6, 1944) 15.

²²³ István Szőke, “Nem száz százalék,” [Not One Hundred Percent], *Kanadai Magyar Munkás*, (January 6, 1944), 16.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, 16.

Like their conservative counterparts, Hungarian-Canadian Communists also participated in the war effort, even though they were motivated by different factors. The *Munkás* reported that Hungarians in Cumberland, B.C, under the aegis of the Democratic Hungarian Circle of Cumberland, raised \$53 worth of clothing for Soviet soldiers, weighing a total of 35 pounds.²²⁵ Left-wing Hungarians in Newcastle, Alberta, who were affiliated with the (Communist) Alliance of Canadian Democratic Hungarians, performed significantly better and collected 350 pounds of clothing for the Soviets, including 6 boxes of new garments.²²⁶ Some Hungarians in Hamilton also participated in the clothing drive for Soviet soldiers and raised \$150 worth of goods.²²⁷

The Alliance of Canadian Democratic Hungarians also initiated a campaign to send cartons of cigarettes to Hungarian-Canadian soldiers fighting in Europe. One soldier was sent 600 cigarettes by Canada's Hungarian Communists and, according to the *Munkás*, one could tell from their words of gratitude that all recipients of the tobacco "had faith in a speedy victory and despised Fascism."²²⁸

In addition to participating in the war effort through the Red Cross and by purchasing Victory Bonds, inculcating Hungarian national celebrations with a sense of loyalty to Canada and a cautious neutrality to politics in Hungary was an important way of demonstrating a dual sense of loyalty and patriotism—one to the new host country and one to a general understanding of Hungarian culture and heritage. The commemoration of the March 15, 1848 Hungarian revolution against the Habsburgs served this purpose.

²²⁵ "53 dollár értékű ruha a szovjet harcosoknak," [\$53 worth of clothing for Soviet fighters], *Kanadai Magyar Munkás*, (January 13, 1944) 14.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, 14.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, 14.

²²⁸ "Köszönik a cigaretta küldeményt." [They say 'thank-you' for the cigarettes], *Kanadai Magyar Munkás* (March 9, 1944) 14.

According to the *Újság*, the commemoration meant that Hungarian-Canadians could “think respectfully of their place of birth—but not through the lens of politics—as well as think about their race, their loved-ones back home and use the opportunity to become law-abiding, self-sacrificing and loyal citizens of Canada.”²²⁹

Yet Hungarian-Canadian commemorations during the war served not only as an opportunity to reconcile divided loyalties between the ancestral homeland and the home country, but they also highlighted existing divisions within the Hungarian community and competing understanding of loyalty and patriotism among Hungarians. Ferenc Baumann, the president of the Hungarian Catholic community in Toronto, was one of the organizers of a commemorative event held on the anniversary of the 1848 revolution in 1942.

Immediately after the event, Baumann wrote an open letter to Ambró Czakó, the leftist minister of Toronto’s Hungarian United Church, chastising him for breaking bread with the Communists. Baumann referred to Czakó as the leader of the “internationalist community’s ‘Hungarian’ section.” The president of the Catholic community was livid that a minister, such as Czakó, joined ranks with the Communists. “Everyone knows that the priestly robe does not go with the red, internationalist, God-denying materialism. In no way can one reconcile preaching faith in God in the morning, with attending the meetings of God-denying gangs in the afternoon.”²³⁰

Indeed, Czakó’s monthly magazine, *Tárogató*, published by the United Church of Canada, contained material more becoming of an outright Communist paper than one

²²⁹ “Március idusa régen és ma” [The March Spring, Yesterday and Today] *Kanadai Magyar Újság*, (March 12, 1942) 2.

²³⁰ Ferenc Baumann, “Meddig tűrjük még, kérdeztük március idusának ünneplésén Torontóban?” [‘How long will tolerate this?’ we asked during the celebration of March Spring in Toronto.] *Kanadai Magyar Újság*, (March 31, 1942) 2.

published by a church press. One of Czakó's regular contributors was Alexander Finta, a Hungarian-Canadian Communist poet and propagandist. In the April 1944 issue of the *Tárogató*, Finta wrote a poem in which he saw a "red dawn" on the not-too-distant horizon. In his poem, Finta predicted the end of the upper class, at the hands of the infuriated and emboldened working poor, once the war came to a close.²³¹ Czakó also awaited the end of the war—although he was much more circumspect than Finta in publicly musing about any impending social revolution—and placed the well-known slogan "God save the King" in large letters on the first, English-language page of his journal. Czakó warned that Canadian-Hungarians must not comfort themselves by thinking that the war was over. "The last stages of the war need all our efforts. Let us show our willingness to sacrifice by doing our utmost for the sake of freedom and humanity."²³² In contrast to the reasoning behind the *Újság's* war effort movement, Czakó did not call upon the patriotic fervour of his readership, nor did he summon a specific loyalty to Canada, but rather referred to a commitment to humanity as being the most compelling reason behind expediting an Allied victory. Czakó's emphasis on humanity and intercultural cooperation may have been linked to his activities in the United Church of Canada, which was among the most active among Protestant denominations in Canada to reach out to new immigrants and either invite them to form their own congregation, or to participate in the All Nations churches that existed in Toronto and Montreal. Nevertheless, including Czako, the leftist camp did not shy away from questioning the loyalty of Canada's conservative Hungarians to their host country and used the latter's sympathies toward the Horthy's regime to this end.

²³¹ "Vörös hajnal," [Red Dawn], *Tárogató*, (April 1944) 7.
²³² *Tárogató*, (April 1944) iii.

Yet for Baumann, Nemes and others in the conservative camp, the real problem was the audacity of Hungarian-Canadian leftist leaders such as Czakó and Szőke to condemn Hungary—and thus demonstrate disloyalty to their country of birth—while preaching loyalty to Canada. The two were mutually exclusive. According to the editors, readers and supporters of the *Újság*, the lack of patriotism demonstrated by Hungarian-Canadian Communists to their ancestral homeland meant that their Canadian patriotism and loyalty to their host country was, at best, shallow. Writing about the *Munkás* and its editors, Baumann observed that, “they purport to speak in the name of Hungarians in their tabloid paper... They, who would be ready to commit treason against their new homeland, Canada, in any moment dare to claim that ‘he who is not with us, cannot be a good Canadian... and is an enemy of Canada!’”²³³ Hungarian and Canadian patriotism were deeply intertwined, in the opinion of the *Újság*’s editors and for many of its readers. Patriotism was a personal quality and one either possessed it, or did not. According to the *Újság*, the Communists clearly did not have this characteristic and thus their alleged expressions of loyalty to Canada were merely perfunctory.

Nemes had a deeply troubled relationship with the *Kanadai Magyar Munkás* and its editor, but during the war he also entered into a public feud with Czako. Czako had participated in the 1918 autumn roses revolution in Hungary, where a group of social democrats and socialists, under the leadership of Count Mihály Károlyi, seized power for a brief six months. Czako was a social democrat, and he left the Catholic Church, immigrated to Canada and eventually became the Hungarian minister for the United Church in Toronto.

²³³

Ibid., 2.

Nemes, who himself also served as a part-time Protestant pastor, saw Czakó as a renegade, due to his alliance with the Hungarian communists in Ontario.

Nemes became enraged when he found out that Czakó referred to the *Újság* as a Fifth Column in Canada and when he heard that Czakó and the Communists in Hamilton sent a telegram to the government, asking the authorities to shut down the conservative Hungarian semiweekly. Nemes's main problem with Czakó was that he hindered the solidarity of Hungarian Canadians. According to Nemes, "Our Paper is the periodical for the majority of Hungarian Canadians. The churches and patriotic associations anxiously and respectfully await those to join our ranks, who up until now played their childish games without any respect for God, country and King."²³⁴

The Hungarian-Canadian war effort movement served both internal and external purposes. Internally, it aimed to augment solidarity within Hungarian communities around the *Kanadai Magyar Újság* and associated conservative organizations. All of these groups shared a common disdain for Communists and together tried to counterbalance the influence of the left in Hungarian communities. Externally, the leaders of Hungarian community organizations attempted to justify the presence of Hungarians in Canada, by pointing to their strong work-ethic and generosity in raising funds for the Red Cross and buying Victory Bonds, as well as their valour and patriotism in fighting in the war. Both of these two factors behind the Hungarian Canadian war effort from 1941 to 1945 ultimately were about issues of loyalty. In the battle with the Communists, it was a question of loyalty to one's Hungarian heritage, faith and traditions--which the conservatives believed the

²³⁴ "Nyílt levél Dr. Czakó Ambró lelkesznek," [An Open Letter to Pastor Dr. Ambro Czako] *Kanadai Magyar Újság*, (February 27, 1942) 3.

Communists lacked. They also contended that if the "red Hungarians" were not loyal to their own roots, they were liable to be equally disloyal to their host country. The two seemed to go hand in hand for people like the editor of the *Újság*. The Communist *Munkás*, however, pointed to a commitment to democratic ideals and to the condemnation of Hungary's rightist regime and its affiliation with the Axis powers as forming the basis of loyalty to Canada during the war. Yet despite the internal feuds over the precise meaning of "loyalty," the organized involvement of Hungarians in the war effort—which was strongly encouraged by both the *Újság* and the *Munkás*—aimed to show that Hungarians had a stake in Canada, that they had contributed to Canadian society and had earned the right to be full citizens of the host country by their very overt expressions of patriotism and loyalty.

Chapter 3: Mutual Suspicions--Hungarian State Security in Canada

Canada was home to the second largest population of Hungarian immigrants of any country in the world during the post-war period and this served as the most important reason for Hungary's interest in Canadian society. While détente between the two superpowers helped ease Cold War hostilities, the activity of Hungarian intelligence officers in Canada actually increased during this period out of concern that right-wing immigrant groups were plotting against the regime in Hungary. The intelligence officer also wished to gain information on these groups, in order to infiltrate them, weaken right-wing organizations internally and help "loyal" (communist) Hungarian émigré organizations gain the upper hand. This increase in state security activity was also a response to the more aggressive and systematic tactics used by Canadian counter-espionage units in an effort to uncover agents from the Eastern bloc countries.²³⁵ Hungary's state security agency used informants and intelligence officers, as well as the assistance and cooperation of Hungary's diplomatic missions, to gather information on Hungarian communities in Canada, collect data on individuals seen as either "friendly" or "hostile" to Hungary's one-party communist regime, ascertain if these immigrants had any prominent contacts in Hungary and to determine Canada's political and military position in the Cold War. The embassy in Ottawa and state security agents were most concerned with the activities of Hungarian Canadian

²³⁵ A handful of books have examined the development of the RCMP's Security Service and the activities of Soviet bloc agents in Canada. John Sawatsky's *Men in the Shadows: The RCMP Service* (Toronto: Doubleday Canada, 1980) is among the most prominent of these works. Sawatsky consulted with professional RCMP historian Stan Horrall, when researching this book, as well as published primary sources and material from the Parliamentary Library. This book, however, is more a journalistic piece than a scholarly historical examination, in light of the author's career as an investigative reporter. An academic alternative, especially in terms of examining the early postwar period, is Reg Whitaker's *Cold War in Canada: the Making of a National Insecurity State, 1945-1957* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994).

right-wing organizations because their members were often the leaders of larger, national organizations, they maintained close ties with the federal government and tried to prevent Canada from establishing diplomatic relations with Hungary. Equally troubling for Hungary was the fact that right-wing groups tried to use the large numbers of 1956 refugees in their anti-Communist campaigns. As such, Hungary's counter-intelligence efforts and the embassy's activities within Canada focused on these "enemy" groups and aimed to embolden the left-wing diaspora.

Hungary opened its Ottawa embassy in 1964, after Canada decided to establish diplomatic relations with the country's communist regime, despite protests on the part of right-wing Hungarian Canadians. Earlier in the Cold War, Canadian authorities listened closely to the opinions of the most radically anti-communist elements in the Hungarian community, despite their connections to the most dubious remnants of Hungary's former authoritarian regime and the fascistic Arrow-Cross movement. For instance, Hungarian Nazi leader Ferenc Szálasi's former personal bodyguard, Gyula Detre, arrived in Canada in 1949 as a displaced person. Detre had been among the last to see Szálasi after he fled Hungary with only his closest circle of loyal supporters due to the Soviet invasion.²³⁶ In early 1957, the RCMP tasked him with monitoring the activities of newly-arrived Hungarian refugees following the Hungarian Revolution at the Canadair aeronautics factory in Montreal, where a large number of Hungarians found employment, both as skilled workers, and later as engineers.²³⁷ The RCMP was aware of Detre's past connections to Hungary's executed Nazi leader, something which he never concealed, and it was precisely

²³⁶ Gyula László Detre, *Történelem Közelről* (History Experienced Up-Close), (Montreal: S.N., 2004) 18.
²³⁷ Library and Archives Canada, RCMP Files - RG25, A3b, Vol. 4309, File 11387-40, Pt. 2

this right-wing past, which made the recently arrived Hungarian DP reliably anti-communist. RCMP officials visited his home in Montreal twice between February and June of 1957, in order to gather information on left-wing Hungarian employed by the Canadair factory in Montreal, where Detre worked as a production supervisor. Detre, however, seemed more concerned with the activities of a handful of Hungarians associated with the Hungarian Social Club on St. Lawrence Boulevard, all of whom had arrived in Canada before World War II and some of whom were subscribers to the *Munkás*, than expressing any concern over the politics of 1956 refugees, with whom he sympathized.²³⁸

The RCMP likely had far less to fear from the 1956 arrivals, even though it suspected that Communists likely slipped in as well, than from the activities of the newly opened Hungarian embassy in Ottawa and the state security who agents reported to the ambassador. One of the mission's main goals for nearly two decades was to play a subversive role within Canada's Hungarian communities. This mission included weakening and isolating right-wing Hungarian Canadian organizations from the more centrist or apolitical majority. The embassy drafted a detailed report on Canada's Hungarians in January of 1971 and divided them into three cohorts. These included the pre-World War II immigration, those who arrived in the late 1940s and early 1950s, and Hungarian refugees who sought asylum after the suppression of the 1956 Revolution in Hungary. The embassy and officials in Hungary's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (KÜM) viewed the second cohort as especially hostile and potentially dangerous.

²³⁸ RCMP - Reports submitted to External Affairs by RCMP on immigrants to Canada. RG25-G-2, 1954/04/02-1963/07/17., 048.

Many of those who came to Canada in the years following the Second World War were former officers of the Hungarian army, aristocrats, former members of authoritarian interwar Hungary's gendarmerie and some had been associated with the Arrow-Cross, the Hungarian fascist party. The embassy's main concern focused on the section of this group which participated in the Hungarian Canadian community, rather than on aristocrats and former military officers who built successful professional careers and had little interest in émigré organizations.²³⁹ In the 1960s, both the embassy and KÜM realized that one way to weaken the hold of right-wing organizations on Hungarian Canadian communities was to make it easier for immigrants to travel to Hungary. Embassy officials found that, starting in 1965, this policy served as a blow to the right's power. According to the 1971 report on Hungarian Canadians, the right-wing "tried to scare those who wanted to travel back home with horror stories of arrest and by applying political pressure" on members of the community who planned to visit the home country.²⁴⁰ The anti-communist right-wing, however, was unsuccessful in dissuading immigrants from visiting Hungary. Their political standing within the community was further weakened in 1968 and in 1969 when entire associations and churches decided to organize group trips to Budapest.²⁴¹

Although the embassy believed that by the late 1960s the anti-communist position had weakened within the Hungarian community, Hungarian officials were still concerned by their vocal hostility to Hungary's one-party communist regime. The embassy was convinced that these organizations spearheaded campaigns against Hungary and that they

²³⁹ "Beszámoló a Kanadában élő magyarság helyzetéről, s a nagykövetségnek az emigráció körében kifejtett tevékenységéről," (Report on Hungarians living in Canada and the embassy's activities in immigrant circles), XIX-J-1-j—Kanada, 19-00509/5-1971, p1, Állambiztonsági Szolgálati Történeti Levéltára-ÁBTTL—The Archives of Hungarian State Security.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p3.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p3.

planned the “overthrow of socialism and the people’s democracy.”²⁴² The embassy was less concerned about a handful of fairly small and isolated groups, but was very worried about the power of the Hungarian Canadian Federation (KMSZ), which maintained important political ties with both Liberal and Progressive Conservative politicians. Domokos Gyalai-Pap, the Federation’s president, was a prominent member of the Liberal Party’s ethnic wing. The embassy believed that the Canadian government and the KMSZ cooperated on a number of fronts. They sought to isolate Hungarian diplomats and to infuse public opinion with anti-communist rhetoric, even while the government expanded diplomatic and commercial relations with Hungary.²⁴³

Prior to the opening of the Hungarian embassy in Ottawa, the Hungarian communist regime’s state security focused on gathering intelligence on displaced persons (DPs), members of the fascistic interwar gendarmerie and the Canadian branch of the World Federation of Hungarian Veterans (MHBK). The concern that Hungarian authorities had around the MHBK was generally justifiable. The MHBK’s members included skilled military intelligence officials of the Hungarian army during the Second World War, who were familiar with intelligence gathering and built connections after the War with intelligence agencies in the West. A significant part of their membership had also been involved in the nazi Arrow-Cross movement. The MHBK cooperated with western intelligence organizations, even sending some of its members to Hungary as intelligence officers employed by the French, British and the Americans²⁴⁴. The CIA had extensive information on the MHBK and also noted that some of its members were “still sympathetic

²⁴² *Ibid.*, p12.

²⁴³ *Ibid.*, p15

²⁴⁴ Richard Breitman et. al, *US Intelligence and the Nazis* (Cambridge Univesity Press, 2005), p.231.

to the fascist principles” of the Arrow-Cross movement.²⁴⁵ László Ágh, who served as the president of MHBK’s American branch from 1949, was also a “periodic source of information” for the FBI’s New York offices during the 1950s, despite concerns about his far right political views and the possibility that he had committed war crimes.²⁴⁶

Hungary’s state security agency became aware of the establishment of the Canadian branch of the MHBK in 1952 and that the organization’s Hungarian-Canadian members were in “close contact” with the MHBK headquarters in Europe, which pursued “active intelligence activities against the Soviet Union and the People’s Republic of Hungary.”²⁴⁷ According to the report, the Canadian branch had its own “counter-espionage unit,” headed by L.D., a former veteran of the Hungarian army and mainly as a result of these activities, authorities in Hungary felt the need to “uncover and block” the organization.²⁴⁸ As part of this mission, state security compiled a basic list of those who played leading roles in the MHBK’s Canadian branch. The list included personal and physical information on leaders whenever this data was known.²⁴⁹

One informant in particular, who used the pseudonyms “Millott” and “János Benedek,” provided authorities in Hungary with the most detailed information on the activities of Hungarian veterans, and former members of the interwar Gendarmerie. Benedek’s decision to cooperate with state security by reporting on Hungarian-Canadians

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 231-232

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 232.

²⁴⁷ Kanyó András, *Határozat* (Decision), Budapest, September 24, 1952, 24, In: 0-8-022 ÁBTL, Budapest.

²⁴⁸ Initials, rather than the complete names of individuals mentioned in the Archives of Hungarian State Security, are used throughout this chapter. Agents and informants are referred to by their pseudonyms. Complete names, however, will appear if the individual that was monitored by Hungary’s state security was also a public figure, or if they are mentioned in material stored at the Hungarian National Archives. *Ibid.*, 24.

²⁴⁹ Kimutatás, Budapest, December 8, 1955, 54-55, In: 0-8-022 ÁBTL, Budapest.

was largely motivated by fear. The agent was approached by the state security agency in early 1957, at which point he was coerced into active service after being confronted with “incriminating evidence” against him.²⁵⁰ Benedek had been a former member of the gendarmerie during Hungary’s interwar regime, and this compromising past led the informant to live a secluded life from 1950 onward, until he was confronted by state security in 1957.

János Benedek was hardly the only one coerced into cooperating with Hungary’s state security agency. The unexpected “discovery” of compromising evidence against someone, which could lead to a conviction and a prison sentence, was a tactic frequently used against people that state security wanted to recruit. Another informant who ended up cooperating in much the same way as Benedek was “Károly Füredi,” also known as “Floguet,” who worked as an electrician in Budapest. In 1951, Floguet was stopped by state security officers in Budapest on his way home from work and after asking for his identification, the officers took him to a nearby police station and charged him with sabotage and collusion with the Americans. After hearing the accusations, Floguet was given the option of “making amends for his mistakes, by proving his loyalty to the people’s democracy.”²⁵¹ Floguet did end up serving as an informant during the 1956 revolution, but then escaped to Italy in 1957. Officials tried to contact him and convince Floguet to move to the Federal Republic of Germany and serve as an informant there. Floguet, however, refused and relocated to Montreal in 1958. Hungarian officers spent the next six years

²⁵⁰ László Kovács, Jelentés (Report), „Benedek János fedőnevű ügynökünk,” Budapest, May 2, 1957, In: „Millott,” BT-641/1, ÁBTL, Budapest.

²⁵¹ „Beszervezési javaslat,” (Involvement Proposal), September 22, 1951, In: BT-827 (Floguet), ÁBTL., Budapest.

trying to track him down, as they feared that Floguet's silence meant that he had been hired by a Western intelligence agency. Hungarian intelligence officials tracked down four of Floguet's home addresses in Montreal, but even with the active assistance of the Hungarian Embassy in Washington DC, they failed to find him and in 1966 finally gave up.²⁵²

Unlike Floguet, Benedek cooperated with state security for several years and received a very comprehensive assignment before he was sent to Canada. This involved collecting information on MHBK's Montreal branch, as well as on other right-wing organizations established by Hungarian veterans and members of the gendarmerie. He was also directed to befriend those individuals who were "engaged in direct, or indirect hostile activity" against Hungary.²⁵³ The informant's own interwar past, as well as the presence of his uncle in Montreal, who was a leading figure among right-wing immigrants, allowed Benedek to obtain inside information on the functioning of the MHBK and similar groups in Canada. Benedek's orders involved taking part in the activities of the local Hungarian community, but he was to do so in such a way as not to attract too much attention or suspicion. On a grander scale, state security also asked that Benedek observe any political and military cooperation between Canada and the US, and uncover the locations of ammunition depots.²⁵⁴

Benedek was provided with a contact, "Zoli," to whom he addressed most of his letters, which contained detailed observations on Montreal's Hungarian community, as well as shorter observations on communities in Toronto, Hamilton and Calgary. All

²⁵² Jelentés (Report), Washington, October 14, 1964, In: BT-827 (Floguet), ÁBTL., Budapest.
²⁵³ Felhasználási terv (Application Plan), Budapest, October 28, 1958," In: BT-641/1, ÁBTL., Budapest.
²⁵⁴ Ibid., BT-641/1.

correspondence, however, was written in a friendly, colloquial manner, so as not to draw attention or suspicion. The majority of Benedek's reports seemed "benign" in nature, as he tended to argue that the veterans and former gendarmerie officials in Montreal were largely inactive, ageing and exhausted. When reporting on his own uncle, Benedek painted a portrait of a "tired, old gentleman, who approaches his past in Hungary's gendarmerie as nothing more than a nice memory," and shies away from overt politicizing.²⁵⁵ Yet Benedek's reports do provide information on tension and conflict within the Montreal community, and even among veterans and former gendarmerie officers, which was often based on a hostility between lower and higher ranking officers.²⁵⁶

Benedek reported that there were five separate groups of former gendarmerie officers in Canada and their total membership stood at around 250, but many of them were not believed to have been active within the community.²⁵⁷ In general, however, Benedek seemed to avoid polemical language when describing the Hungarian community in Montreal, perhaps in part because he did not want to implicate his elderly uncle, or other people in the community who were oblivious to his true role and had learned to trust him. Politically, Benedek portrayed Montreal's Hungarians as having been comprised of relatively reasonable people who rejected the extremist, fascist politics that had existed in Hungary during World War II. For example, Benedek noted how the Hungarian Committee of Montreal decided not to elect Gyula Detre., the MHBK's local president, due to his "Arrow-Cross gravitations" and his "widely known connections with Ferenc Szálasi,"

²⁵⁵ Benedek's first letter to "Zoli," 68, In: MT-539/1, ÁBTL., Budapest.

²⁵⁶ Ibid., 68.

²⁵⁷ Ibid., 69.

Hungary's late Arrow-Cross leader.²⁵⁸ Ultimately, Benedek's reports on Hungarian-Canadians led state security to open dossiers on four people affiliated with the gendarmerie and veteran associations.²⁵⁹

The MHBK was hardly the only deeply right-wing and anti-communist organization in Canada during the 1950s and 1960s, nor was it the most radical. Another group, for example, printed a monthly newsletter in Montreal entitled *The Hungarist Bulletin*, was named after the former Hungarian fascist movement and was openly anti-Semitic. Miklós Újlaki, the paper's editor explained in the first issue, that he had no choice but to start this publication after a Hungarian fascist periodical printed in London was shut down. The vast majority of this relatively small group's members were veterans of the Second World War, but Újlaki noted that one of the paper's contributors was a 15 year old "freedom fighter" who arrived in Canada in 1956.²⁶⁰

As with most conspiratorial organizations, the group made a point of not mentioning the names of most ordinary members in their publications. This did not, however, mean that Hungarist groups remained underground within the community. For example, the editors of the *Hungarist Bulletin* openly sympathized with János Máhig, a Roman Catholic priest in Montreal who fled Hungary in 1956. Unlike his counterpart in Toronto, Máhig celebrated a special mass for the Hungarists in memory of the former fascist leader, Ferenc Szálasi. This sparked criticism from more liberal quarters within the community.²⁶¹ Zoltán Klár, editor of the New York-based weekly *Az Ember* (Man), sent a letter to Prime Minister John

²⁵⁸ Benedek's second letter to „Zoli” (handwritten), 26., In: MT-539/1, ÁBTL., Budapest.

²⁵⁹ József Kira, Jelentés (Report), August 6, 1963, 78, In: MT-539/1, ÁBTL., Budapest.

²⁶⁰ *Hungarista Tájékoztató* (Hungarist Bulletin), November 1957, p1.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p.5

Diefenbaker in 1959, calling on the government to ban a new far-right para-military organization formed in Montreal, under the name “Hungarist Legion.”²⁶² Újlaki answered by writing his own letter to Diefenbaker, justifying the mass by arguing that Szálasi was “Hungary’s last constitutional leader.”²⁶³ The Hungarist Legion was never banned, but it disintegrated by the early 1960s due to in-fighting and many of its members simply merged into the MHBK or took part in the work of other community organizations in Montreal.

One of the first major studies written by a Hungarian state security agent on Canada’s political, economic and socio-cultural fabric, and Hungarian immigrant communities was by an informant known as “Du Garde.” Du Garde, a former Communist Party functionary from Baranya County, left after the 1956 revolution and agreed to cooperate with Hungarian state security and collect information on his friends, family and acquaintances in Canada and the United States, in exchange for being allowed to return home.²⁶⁴ Du Garde recorded his experiences while in Canada four months after having relocated to Vienna in November of 1963. Having spent six and a half years in Montreal and Toronto, Du Garde’s observations are among the most detailed of any Hungarian state security agent, especially as they relate to Canadian party politics within the context of the Cold War. They also detail everyday life in Canada and the activities of Hungarian communities, as well as his relationship with colleagues, friends and acquaintances. When writing about the Liberal Party, Du Garde observed that it was a “right-wing, civic movement” and that it served as a “tool in the hands of American capitalists aimed at taking

²⁶² *Hungarista Tájékoztató* (Hungarist Bulletin), August 1959, p.3-4.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, 4.

²⁶⁴ Du Garde, Jelentés (Report), A.K., February 26, 1964, 117-118, In: MT-182 ÁBTL., Budapest.

control of political power in Canada.”²⁶⁵ While Du Garde felt that, of all political parties, the liberals “best represented the interests of American big money and the aggressive powers,” the agent saw the conservatives under John Diefenbaker in a much more benign light, noting that rather than being associated with US interests, the party had stronger ties with Britain, included within itself the “pacifist tendencies of certain Protestant religious sects,” and that it was more inclined to sell grain to China and to the Eastern Bloc countries.²⁶⁶

Not surprisingly, the left-leaning New Democratic Party (NDP) was portrayed in the most sympathetic light. Du Garde observed that under its leader, Tommy Douglas, the NDP was closely linked with Britain’s Labour movement, that it supported entering into dialogue with the Soviet Union, called on the banning of atomic weapons and enjoyed the support of the Communist Party of Canada in those ridings where the latter did not field its own candidates.²⁶⁷ Du Garde also took note of what he felt was an over-complicated and disunited political system in Canada, where the make-up of provincial legislatures did not represent the composition of the federal parliament in Ottawa. The Hungarian informant suggested that these extenuated political, ideological and regional conflicts could be used to the Eastern bloc’s advantage, especially in terms of getting the West to support “peaceful co-existence” with the Soviet Union and to slow down the “advance of American imperialists.”²⁶⁸

²⁶⁵ Du Garde, “Kanadai Tapasztalatok,” (Experiences in Canada), 8. In: MT-182 ÁBTL., Budapest.

²⁶⁶ Ibid., 9.

²⁶⁷ Ibid., 9-10.

²⁶⁸ Ibid., 12.

In addition to taking advantage of political and regional tensions within Canada, Du Garde also suggested that the country's Protestant churches—several of which supported pacifist causes—be used to promote a ban on atomic weapons and to develop peaceful co-existence between the two sides in the Cold War. The agent felt that the Unitarians and the United Church of Canada were most open to these causes. Du Garde became very familiar with the United Church, as he joined Toronto's Deer Park congregation in 1961 and became an active member of the local men's association.²⁶⁹ Du Garde stood out not only as the church's only Hungarian, but also as the sole immigrant, in a congregation dominated almost exclusively by people with English and Scottish heritage. The informant suggested that he earned the pastor's trust in part because of this.²⁷⁰ The story that Du Garde used when explaining his arrival to Canada to Pastor John Wilkie and others at the church, was that he was forced to flee Hungary in 1956, due to the country's communist regime. He also played devil's advocate by challenging Pastor Wilkie in terms of his belief that the West must learn to co-exist with the Soviets and that it must take the first steps towards nuclear disarmament. Du Garde argued that this was unrealistic, because the Soviets would not reciprocate by also banning atomic weapons. Yet it becomes clear from his reports, that Du Garde was impressed by Wilkie's answer when the pastor noted that "Christ would never allow the use of these weapons."²⁷¹ The agent saw in Wilkie someone who could potentially be used to help propagate these ideas and he was keen on contacting the pastor upon his return to Canada.

²⁶⁹ Ibid., 16.

²⁷⁰ Du Garde, Jelentés (Report): Mr. John Wilkie, March 4, 1964, 131, MT-182, ÁBTL., Budapest.

²⁷¹ Ibid., 131-132.

Although Du Garde identified himself as a secular Jew, he explained his decision to join the United Church by noting that he believed it would help further his application for Canadian citizenship and Pastor Wilkie did, indeed, serve as one of his references.²⁷² Du Garde also tried to get closer to Wilkie by enrolling his son in the Sunday school where the pastor taught and encouraging his child to befriend the pastor's own son, who was of a similar age.

As was common practice with other agents, Du Garde regularly modified his immigration and arrival story, depending on the people he met. For example, while members of the United Church were told that he fled Communism, when he met with A.D., a Polish Jew with whom he worked for six months at a store in Scarborough, Du Garde explained that he had to escape in 1956, because "fascists once again rose to prominence during the revolution and all Jews had to leave the country."²⁷³ Only a small handful of people knew of his past membership in Hungary's Communist Party and those who did had sometimes been members themselves. After Canadian authorities visited his apartment to inquire about his past, Du Garde observed that a female acquaintance of his had also been a Party member, but received citizenship without any problems and with no questions, apparently because Canadian authorities were not interested if women were once party members.²⁷⁴

Du Garde believed that by "sending in the appropriate people, these religious organizations can offer fertile ground to propagate the politics of peaceful co-existence."²⁷⁵

²⁷² Du Garde, Jelentés (Report): Mr. John Wilkie, March 4, 1964, 131, MT-182, ÁBTL., Budapest.
²⁷³ Du Garde, Jelentés (Report): Mr. A.D., February 23, 1964, 103, MT-182, ÁBTL., Budapest.
²⁷⁴ Du Garde, Jelentés (Report): S.Z. és O., February 23, 1964, 107-108, MT-182, ÁBTL., Budapest.
²⁷⁵ Kanadai Tapasztalatok, 16.

Du Garde also singled out Jewish congregations and observed that despite the presence of a “strong Zionist influence,”—which he found to be entirely disagreeable--left-wing groups could still propagate their values within these organizations, especially by working together with those rabbis who opposed the development of nuclear weapons.²⁷⁶

Some of Du Garde’s most important observations were on Canada’s Hungarian communities, even though his general views on the different cohorts of Hungarian immigrants to Canada reflected the beliefs widely held by most officials in Hungary. Du Garde presented those primarily peasant and working-class Hungarians who immigrated to Canada during the 1920s and 1930s in the most positive light, noting that the majority of them “remain patriotic and feel a sense of nostalgia for Hungary.”²⁷⁷ According to Du Garde’s observations, most of these immigrants were also positive about the more recent developments in Hungary, such as the post-1945 land reform and even the nationalization of factories. As such, this group of Hungarians (some of whom were, indeed, members of communist organizations, or subscribed to the weekly *Canadian Hungarian Worker* weekly newspaper) were classified as being “friendly” to the new regime.

The way in which post-World War II immigrants were presented by Du Garde, however, contrasted starkly with the portrayal of the interwar generation. Those who immigrated between 1945 and 1956 were scorned, and those that came between 1945 and 1946 (many of whom were DP’s) were classified as “enemies” of the new order in Hungary. According to Du Garde, “this group forms the Hungarian immigration’s most

²⁷⁶

Ibid., 17.

²⁷⁷

“Kanadai tapasztalatok,” 58.

reactionary core, and they are strongly anti-communist.”²⁷⁸ Yet Du Garde felt that this group posed a very limited threat to Hungary’s interests, despite the fact that a range of veteran and far-right associations existed well into the 1960s, such as the “Hungarist Legion, a particularly extreme group of World War II veterans in Montreal who broke away from the MHBK, the main veteran organization.” Most of these organizations, however, were relatively small, they had limited financial resources and Du Garde felt that their membership was slowly dying out, as most of them were well over 50.²⁷⁹

Du Garde’s attitude towards those who fled Hungary after the 1956 Revolution was mixed and ambivalent, and this closely reflected the views of most communist officials in Hungary. The fifty-sixers were seen as being the most heterogeneous of all immigrant cohorts, in terms of profession, class, educational background and ideological beliefs. According to Du Garde, “there are many valuable people, who integrated into Canadian society—albeit with difficulty--and distance themselves from all propaganda directed against Hungary.”²⁸⁰ At the same time, the agent also reported that there were “many common criminals” among the fifty-sixers, some of whom were serving prison sentences.²⁸¹ This was also in line with what officials in Hungary tended to proclaim about those who fled in 1956. Yet Du Garde suggested that the “majority” of recent immigrants who had not succeeded economically in Canada, who felt disappointed and did not join Hungarian community organizations, could be brought into closer contact with contemporary Hungary.²⁸² Du Garde also noted that the Hungarian-Canadian communist community—

²⁷⁸ Ibid., 59.

²⁷⁹ Ibid., 62.

²⁸⁰ Ibid., 62.

²⁸¹ Ibid., 62.

²⁸² Ibid., 63.

largely based around Toronto, Hamilton and Ontario's Tobacco belt-- could not be counted on in their current form as being of any assistance in this venture, as their newspaper—the *Kanadai Magyar Munkás*—suffered from a declining readership, while affiliated associations were “sectarian” and unwilling to reach out to disenchanted fifty-sixers.²⁸³ Yet at the same time, Du Garde recommended the establishment of a “progressive mass newspaper, as the immigration's most reactionary groups are demoralized and are in the process of falling apart.”²⁸⁴

Du Garde suggested that the best way for Hungarian agents to weaken “enemy” groups within Canada's Hungarian communities, was to take advantage of already existing rivalries and conflicts and to exacerbate them whenever possible. This was the approach he suggested when dealing with Canada's most influential Hungarian weekly papers—*Magyar Élet* and *Kanadai Magyarság*—both of which were generally right-wing and anti-communist, but were also in fierce competition with each other. Their respective editors, Márton Kiss Kerecsendi and István Vörösváry, occasionally initiated lawsuits against each other, as well as diatribes on the pages of their papers.²⁸⁵

Du Garde produced reports on approximately 27 friends and acquaintances in Canada, as well as two relatives, five acquaintances in the US, eight in Austria and one in Israel. This was in addition to the names of Hungarian community leaders and members he mentioned in his lengthy reflections on his experiences in Canada, as well as brief lists containing the names, employment information, home addresses, family situation and date

²⁸³ Ibid., 64.

²⁸⁴ Ibid., 64.

²⁸⁵ Ibid., 63.

of immigration of 121 Hungarian engineers in Ontario.²⁸⁶ Similar lists were also compiled for 13 Hungarian engineers in Montreal,²⁸⁷ as well as 17 professional engineers working for government agencies in Ontario.²⁸⁸ The vast majority of written material was created between 1964 and 1967, during which time Du Garde lived in Vienna. The informant reported his findings to his superiors at the Interior Ministry when he visited Budapest in March 1967.²⁸⁹

Du Garde followed a detailed set of guidelines when compiling information on his friends, colleagues and acquaintances. In each case, he would try to discover any connections they might have in Hungary and abroad, as well as information on their political and party affiliations, their ideological beliefs, association memberships, business connections, their circle of friends, personal data relating to their place of birth, citizenship, ethnic and religious origins, marital status, home address and current employment.²⁹⁰ Du Garde was also interested in the level of knowledge that people he was observing had in terms of domestic and international politics and specific beliefs on key issues, such as world peace, the Cuban crisis, the fate of Berlin, anti-fascism and racial or ethnic questions.²⁹¹

While the majority of people that Du Garde reported on were community leaders, businesspeople, or prominent members of cultural and religious organizations, a few of his reports focused on Hungarian-Canadians with no prominent position. For example, G.H.

²⁸⁶ Mérnökök—Ontario (Engineers—Ontario), 190, In: MT-182, ÁBTL., Budapest.

²⁸⁷ Mérnökök—Montreal (Engineers—Montreal), 190, (Handwritten note) MT-182, ÁBTL., Budapest.

²⁸⁸ Köztisztviselők—Ontario, (Civil Servants—Ontario), 190 (Handwritten note), In: MT-182, ÁBTL., Budapest.

²⁸⁹ Istvan Varga. R. szds. Jelentés (Report), Budapest, March 31, 1967, MT-182, In: ÁBTL., Budapest.

²⁹⁰ Du Garde által jelentett személyek (Du Garde's Reports on Individuals), 190 (Handwritten note), In: MT-182, ÁBTL., Budapest.

²⁹¹ Ibid., 190.

and E.H. were two sisters who rented an apartment in Toronto. They had fled Hungary in 1957 and worked as seamstresses in a garment factory and in other low paying jobs.²⁹² Du Garde became acquainted with the two women in 1957, when he worked at the same garment factory. The informant reported that both were “reactionary” and that E.H. may have been involved in the Arrow-Cross movement, during World War II, although she would have been very young at the time.²⁹³ Despite having produced a detailed report on the sisters, and while a certain level of trust and friendship had developed between the three of them, he felt that upon his return to Canada there would be no compelling need to remain in contact with them, due to their low societal standing, unless the two could be of help “as part of a special assignment.”²⁹⁴ Du Garde arrived at the same conclusion in the case of another working-class couple from Toronto, J.T. and Z.T, both of whom fled Hungary in 1956 and whom the informant classified as “remarkably reactionary.”²⁹⁵ The only difference was that unlike the sisters, J.T. and Z.T. were aware of Du Garde’s past as a Party functionary in Baranya County, since they also originated from the same area.²⁹⁶ Yet Du Garde rapidly determined that they were not likely to “out” him, as the couple lived a secluded life, had few friends and thus posed no risk.

Perhaps due to his friendship with Pastor Wilkie and his warm reception at the Deer Park United Church, Du Garde placed a special emphasis on maintaining contacts with prominent members of this Protestant community, and gathering information on them. That is why he suggested that upon his return to Canada, he might “further develop his

²⁹² Du Garde, Jelentés (Report), H.G. és H.E., February 24, 1964, 147, In: MT-182, ÁBTL., Budapest.

²⁹³ Ibid., 147.

²⁹⁴ Ibid., 148.

²⁹⁵ Du Garde, Jelentés (Report), T.J. és Z., March 4, 1964, 149., In: MT-182, ÁBTL., Budapest.

²⁹⁶ Ibid., 149.

relationship” with Mrs. A, who left Hungary in 1956 and worked for the United Church’s main offices in Toronto.²⁹⁷ Du Garde believed that although Mrs. A and her husband were both conservative, they did not make hostile comments about the regime in Hungary and Mrs A in particular maintained important ties with United Church leaders, such as Pastor Wilkie and other key figures. Yet it appears as though those reading Du Garde’s report in Budapest were unsure of what to make of the fact that he maintained “especially warm contacts” with Mrs. A, even after he left Canada. A question mark in the margins of the report and the underlining of these words suggest that officials in the Interior Ministry may have felt that there was more motivating Du Garde’s intentions and interest in Mrs. A than met the eye, especially since the agent was in the process of getting a divorce from his own wife at roughly the same time.²⁹⁸

Du Garde returned to Canada in 1965, and visited the recently opened Embassy of the People’s Republic of Hungary in Ottawa. There he met with “B,” and furnished him with several lists of names and addresses of individuals that the informant thought might be of interest, as well as a directory of groups that Hungarian state security could keep in contact with.²⁹⁹ These lists included the directory of the Deer Park United Church, the leaders of Toronto’s Hungarian Jewish Alliance, as well as the North Toronto Business Association’s list of members. Yet B was not interested in these lists, noting that the latter had almost no value, as the data was completely legal and publicly available. B was,

²⁹⁷ Du Garde, Jelentés (Report), P.A. és A.A., February 27, 1964, 122, In: MT-182, ÁBTL., Budapest.

²⁹⁸ Du Garde, Jelentés (Report), A. K., February 26, 1964, 117-118, In: MT-182, ÁBTL., Budapest.

²⁹⁹ B., Jelentés (Report), Du Garde által hozott anyagok és konkrét feladatai végrehajtása, (Du Garde’s material and the execution of his assignments), July 23, 1965, 171, In: MT-182, ÁBTL., Budapest.

however, interested in five individuals that Du Garde had reported on, and asked him to try to follow leads in each case.

One of Du Garde's final assignments involved producing a detailed guide in 1967, geared towards helping future informants immigrate to, and settle in Canada. The eleven page, typed document examined all aspects of arrival and integration in Canada, including passing through customs and passport inspection, renting an apartment, finding employment and even the importance of joining a community club, as well as the "necessity" of being a member of a church.³⁰⁰ "In Canada you must belong to a church, whether you want to or not. Which church you decide to join does not matter, but you must belong to one."³⁰¹ When Du Garde's superior in Hungary read the report, he felt that the agent "exaggerated" the central role of churches in Canadian society, but noted that the document could be useful when sending new informants to Canada.³⁰² The existence of such an extensive study suggests that Hungarian state security had every intention of sending agents to Canada, even in the late 1960s and 1970s.

Tensions between Canada and Hungary continued unabated during the late sixties and early seventies, with the RCMP keeping tabs on people suspected of colluding with authorities in Hungary and Hungarian officials increasingly concerned that Canada was stepping up its counter-espionage activities. When E.L., the Montreal-based Hungarian Trade Commission's secretary and a citizen of Hungary, unexpectedly quit her job in January 1969, vanished from her apartment and only contacted her workplace after a week

³⁰⁰ Du Garde, Tervezet (Plan), March 29, 1967, 211, MT-182, ÁBTL., Budapest.

³⁰¹ Ibid., 211-212.

³⁰² Ibid., 213.

had elapsed, in order to inform her employers that she has been permitted to settle in Canada and was given a work permit, Hungarian officials presumed that she had been in contact with Canadian counter-espionage officers for years.³⁰³

After reading the embassy's report in 1971, officials in Hungary drafted a plan aimed at both increasing the embassy's influence within Hungarian Canadian communities and also weakening right-wing elements. Hungary's Immigration Committee was especially blunt about the regime's goals and noted that the government had to "do more to disrupt the right-wing."³⁰⁴ In order to expedite this process and to expand the embassy's relationship with the Hungarian Canadian community, Hungary sent an additional diplomat to take over this file. The embassy found that the best way to "disrupt" the right was to convince apolitical Hungarian community organizations to cooperate with the embassy or accept assistance from them and to prove to Canadian authorities that the KMSZ did not represent the majority of Hungarians in Canada.

Complementing its subversive work on the diplomatic front, the Hungarian embassy also played a central role in Hungary's intelligence operations in Canada. Informants and agents often met with embassy officials, and diplomats communicated the findings of investigations with authorities in Hungary. In 1969, for example, a number of Hungarian agents travelled to Hamilton where they spoke with a local Hungarian priest who had served as the embassy's contact for several years.³⁰⁵ Many informants and agents that worked in Canada would be summoned to the embassy on occasion, for debriefing, or to

³⁰³ Viktor Csapó, "Kivonat az ottawai jelentésből," (Summary of the Report from Ottawa), February, 28, 1969, 31. In: 13-OD-3740, ÁBTL, Budapest.

³⁰⁴ Budapest's response to the embassy's report, 5 January 1972, XIX-J-1-j—Kanada, 19-00509/5-1971.

³⁰⁵ "Ottawai munkatársunk jelentése," Budapest, December 22, 1969, 38, In: O-20071, ÁBTL, Budapest.

deposit any material they gathered, which would then be transmitted to Hungary by diplomatic courier.

Hungary closely monitored changes in the way in which Canada conducted its counter-espionage activities in 1969-70, partly because Hungarian officials working at the embassy in Ottawa, as well as at the trade commission in Montreal, reported that they were being much more closely watched. One Hungarian official visiting Montreal found that his hotel room had been thoroughly searched while he was out and that his wife had been followed by Canadian officers.³⁰⁶ Around the same period, two RCMP officers visited the workplace of a Hungarian immigrant who was a close acquaintance of a Hungarian intelligence officer, affiliated with the Trade Commission in Montreal. The acquaintance noticed that the RCMP officers produced a complete list of all people associated with the Trade Commission during the meeting and many of the questions had to do with the end of the current consul's mandate and his return to Hungary in August of 1969.³⁰⁷ Although it was seen as standard practice for the RCMP to increase its interest in the work of an Eastern Bloc country's mission when high-ranking diplomats were preparing to leave, authorities in Hungary were finding that activities of Canadian counter-intelligence officials were becoming more systematic, orderly and thorough.³⁰⁸

The Hungarian Embassy in Ottawa soon learned this first-hand when on January 10, 1970, János Hegedüs, the mission's First Secretary in charge of commercial affairs, found

³⁰⁶ Viktor Csapó, "Kanadai munkatársunk jelentése az elhárítás tevékenységéről," (Our Canadian Colleague's report on Counter-Espionage Activities), 32, In: 13-OD-3740, ÁBTL, Budapest.

³⁰⁷ Ibid., 33.

³⁰⁸ Viktor Csapó, "Ottawa-i munkatársunk jelentése," (Our Ottawa-based Colleagues Report), December 19, 1969, 38, In: 13-OD-3740, ÁBTL, Budapest.

himself accused by the RCMP of espionage and was promptly expelled from the country.³⁰⁹ Hungary ended up “retaliating” soon after, by expelling a Canadian diplomat who worked at the Canadian embassy in Budapest. Hungarian authorities continued to closely monitor the activities of Canadian diplomats in Budapest even into the early 1980s, by interviewing neighbours in their respective apartment blocks and rummaging through their garbage.³¹⁰

When it came to the activities of Hungarian diplomatic missions in Canada, the RCMP was correct in suspecting that the Hungarian Trade Commission in Montreal was involved in collecting intelligence and that several of its high ranking employees were, in fact, in contact with Hungarian State Security. The most prominent was A.S., who was also referred to as “Maclou.” Maclou originally served as the director of the state-run Kultura Foreign Trade Corporation, which dealt with the sale and distribution of Hungarian books and magazines abroad. The ÁVH contact first visited Canada and the US in 1959 and he was asked by Hungarian State Security to engage in research that might be of use to future agents, such as the relationship and cooperation between Canadian and American intelligence officers, how business circles viewed the detente between the USA and the Soviet Union and the degree of influence that the Hungarian immigration’s “fascist and progressive movements” each have within the host country.³¹¹

Yet Maclou’s relationship with Hungarian State Security was ambivalent and strained from the start. Although he was not an official intelligence officer, Maclou did serve as one of the agency’s official contacts. He did, however, place limits on his

³⁰⁹ John Sawatsky, *Men in the Shadows: The RCMP Security Service*, Doubleday Canada Ltd., Toronto: 1980, 291.

³¹⁰ Objektum dosszié, O-18747, ÁBTL., Budapest.

³¹¹ Ervin Kassai, “Feladat-terv,” (Assignment), “Maclou,” December 3, 1959, 40-41, In: K-655/67.

cooperation and noted that he would only participate in assignments that did not endanger him, or his foreign trade activities in any way.³¹²

Despite this condition, Maclou was well respected and intelligence officers in Hungary felt that, since he was discreet and cautious, he could handle the task at hand. Perhaps this explains why Maclou was chosen to lead the Hungarian Trade Commission in Montreal, when it was first established in 1964. The Trade Commission was meant to play a key role in Hungary's intelligence operations in Canada and authorities felt that this new office could help gather sensitive information on Canada and the USA.³¹³ Initially, the Montreal Trade Commission was to have three employees, including a trade counsel, an administrator and a secretary, but the government of Hungary and the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (MSZMP) agreed, that additional staff members would be added in the future.³¹⁴ Maclou was appointed to lead the Trade Commission and he began his mandate in October of 1964.

Hungarian authorities miscalculated when they appointed Maclou to head the commission. The commissioner provided the Interior Ministry with virtually no useful information and refused to cooperate with the Hungarian Embassy in Ottawa. In 1965, "B" from the embassy complained that, when he invited Maclou to Ottawa, the commissioner was "secretive" and that he "did not accept any advice given to him, nor did he heed warnings."³¹⁵ Even more troubling was that Maclou regularly went on official trips without consulting with the embassy beforehand, often spent his weekends with 1956 dissidents in

³¹² Ervin Kassai, „Jelentés” (Report), „Maclou,” December 8, 1959, 43-44, In: K-655/67.

³¹³ Tamás Szabó, „Feljegyzés” (Notes), September 9, 1964, 55, In: K-655/66, ÁBTL, Budapest.

³¹⁴ Ibid., 55.

³¹⁵ “B,” Jelentés (Report), Ottawa, April 22, 1965, 43., In: K-655/67, ÁBTL, Budapest.

Montreal whom he had befriended, and even called into question whether Canadian authorities were engaged in counter-intelligence work against the embassy and the trade commission.³¹⁶ According to ‘B,’ Maclou “wanted to avoid providing a detailed account of his work and stated that, although he knows many people, he only has basic information on them, but nothing that would be of interest” to the embassy.³¹⁷ Maclou, it appeared, was intent on providing “benevolent” reports on individuals, and was not comfortable releasing too much information to embassy officials in Ottawa, nor to authorities in Hungary. In the end, “B” informed Maclou that he intended to travel to Montreal in the near future, and that he expected to discuss all his Canadian and Hungarian acquaintances, but the commissioner was not at all enthusiastic about the idea.³¹⁸

The situation at the Trade Commission continued to unravel when I.K., a military attaché and informant, was assigned to Canada and asked for Maclou’s help should he stumble upon any problems or face challenges while getting accustomed to his new posting.³¹⁹ Maclou was unwilling to help and “prohibited” I.K. from providing any information to the embassy in Ottawa on the Trade Commission’s programs and plans, because the commissioner would “only communicate what he sees fit.”³²⁰ When Maclou demanded to see the operational reports that I.K. had written, the latter refused, which led to a heated argument and “scandalous scenes” at the Trade Commission.³²¹

³¹⁶ Ibid., 43.

³¹⁷ Ibid., 44.

³¹⁸ Ibid., 44.

³¹⁹ „B.,” Jelentés (Report), Ottawa, May 30, 1965, 47., In: In: K-655/67, ÁBTL, Budapest.

³²⁰ Ibid., 48.

³²¹ Ibid., 48.

Hungarian authorities gave up on trying to acquire valuable intelligence from Maclou in March of 1967, noting that the commissioner was only willing to “maintain the most basic levels of official contact” with the Interior Ministry.³²² Maclou’s unwillingness to cooperate and provide compromising information on his acquaintances in Montreal demonstrates that informants did enjoy a certain level of agency, and what information they passed on to their superiors was, at least in part, their personal choice.

Maclou’s was reticent to cooperate with Hungarian authorities, yet the RCIA still considered the Trade Commission’s original purpose to be the gather of intelligence in Canada. Hungarian officials in Ottawa and in Budapest were convinced that the RCMP was actively involved in counter-espionage activity directed against the embassy and the commission, well into the late sixties and seventies. For example, Hungarian authorities believed that when on September 20, 1965, the Trade Commission was broken into--but the intruders only seemed interested in searching through the files and papers--the RCMP was behind the action and that it also kept the embassy’s building under direct surveillance that same night.³²³

Hungary’s heightened interest and concern regarding what it saw as increased and more effective counter-intelligence activity on the part of the RCMP led authorities at the Interior Ministry to prepare a report on intelligence and counter-intelligence operations in Canada in 1981. The material in the report was partly based on Soviet findings and included detailed information on how the RCMP monitored the activities of Eastern bloc embassies

³²² István Varga, *Határozat* (Decision), Budapest, March 24, 1967, 62, In: K-655/66., ÁBTL, Budapest.

³²³ Béla Mészáros, et. al. *Összefoglaló jelentés* (Comprehensive Report), Budapest, July 21, 1970, 50, In: 13-OD-3740, ÁBTL, Budapest.

and how the unique characteristics of specific cities—such as the relatively depopulated streets of downtown Ottawa—were used to their advantage.³²⁴

Even if Canada stepped up its counter-intelligence activities, Hungary was not dissuaded from sending informants to Canada during the mid-eighties. “István Kovács,” for example, was one such informant, who visited Andrew László, the editor and publisher of *Magyar Élet* (Hungarian Life), a weekly newspaper in Toronto, but distributed widely throughout Canada and the United States. The paper had a reputation of being both conservative and staunchly anti-Soviet, and László also seemed to have contacts in President Ronald Reagan’s administration. Kovács spent one month in Canada, in November 1982, and his assignment was to gather information on László, his paper and other Hungarian immigrants in the editor’s entourage, as well as to detect differences and tensions within the community, especially among those who found the editor’s politics and style too extreme.³²⁵ Kovács was systematic in the way in which he collected information and his report aimed to shed light on what he believed were László’s connections with underground opposition leaders in Hungary, his contacts with Hungarian immigrants living in Western Europe, and plans that he and other immigrants may have had to weaken the Hungarian regime and the Soviet Union’s authority in Eastern Europe by funding or otherwise supporting the opposition. Despite the fact that László did not fully trust Kovács, the informant was able to gather a significant amount of information which interested Hungarian authorities. László claimed that *Magyar Élet* received funding from Canadian and American governmental sources, as well as directly from the “secret service,” due to

³²⁴ „Kanada operatív helyzete,” (The Operational Situation in Canada), Budapest, 1981, 101-102., In: 13-OD-3740, ÁBTL, Budapest.

³²⁵ Török Sándor, et. al., Jelentés (Report), Szolnok, February 15, 1983, 72., In: M-40277, ÁBTL, Budapest.

the paper's reputation for being strongly anti-Soviet and broadly supportive of US foreign policy, especially under the Reagan administration.³²⁶ According to Kovács's report, László's daughter, "Dudu" was responsible for keeping in touch with the "Secret Service."³²⁷

In addition to his political contacts in the USA, Western Europe and with opposition figures in Hungary, László also claimed to know a lot about the Hungarian Embassy in Ottawa, and asserted that "only spies work there," specifically referring to "Sz," one of the more prominent diplomats, who was apparently being closely watched by the RCMP.³²⁸ Kovács painted a disturbing image of László, noting that he had an "important role in the Hungarian immigrant community."³²⁹ Kovács's findings led Hungarian authorities to follow up on the intelligence and verify some of the most controversial statements, such as the alleged public funding that *Magyar Élet* received and László's contacts with opposition figures in Hungary.

Kovács's reports on Hungarians in Canada and *Magyar Élet* were "malevolent," especially when compared with the mundane observations produced by some other informers. Some of the agents assigned to Canada were themselves victims of coercive tactics used by Hungarian state security, but a few demonstrated a significant degree of agency, by writing "benign" reports that would not likely endanger people being named and providing officials in Hungary with limited and selective information. At times, this lack of 'useful' information frustrated Hungarian authorities, but it did not dampen their interest in

³²⁶ Ibid., 73.

³²⁷ Ibid., 76.

³²⁸ Ibid., 76.

³²⁹ Ibid., 77.

Canada's Hungarian right-wing organizations and newspapers, or in the Canadian government's Cold War politics. Canada's position as America's northern neighbour, its close political, economic, social and military ties with the US, as well as the existence of large populations of Hungarian immigrants in major urban centers like Toronto and Montreal with small but powerful right-wing organizations, made it fertile ground for gathering information during the Cold War and also convinced authorities in Budapest that these communities posed a threat and had to be subverted.

Chapter 4: The Hungarian Canadian Communist Movement: Patriots, After All?

Hungarian communists, and other left-leaning immigrants from Eastern Europe, formed an integral part of the membership of the Communist Party of Canada. The CPC's relative acceptance of immigrants who were not of Anglo-Saxon background proved to be a more significant factor in drawing poorly-educated Eastern Europeans of peasant and working class background into the CPC than any affinity that these ethnic minorities may have felt towards Marxist ideology. Hungarian-Canadian communists, including both the leaders of the CPC's Hungarian faction and the editors of the *Kanadai Magyar Munkás* (Canadian Hungarian Worker) weekly newspaper, used the rhetoric of class warfare only in its quarrels with right-wing Hungarian-Canadians and sometimes in squabbles with each other, but otherwise fully embraced a patriotic rhetoric that was almost identical to that used by conservative immigrants. It was often the seemingly anachronistic patriotic language that perplexed both the CPC's Central Committee, as well as officials in Hungary. While Budapest was, at first, supportive of the Hungarian-Canadian communist movement's efforts to serve as the guardians of Hungarian patriotism and identity in Canada, Hungary's communists were troubled by their almost hermetic insularity after the 1956 revolution and their disinterest in reaching out to left-leaning fifty-sixers, their latent hostility towards the ruling Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party and vicious internal feuds.

East/Central European Communists and Ethnic Loyalties in the CPC

From its founding in 1921, the Communist Party of Canada was comprised of a largely autonomous, federated organizations, many of which were formed by Eastern European immigrants. The CPC's development was also intrinsically linked to events in Soviet-dominated

East/Central Europe and the subsequent flow of refugees and immigrants to Canada, especially after 1956 Hungarian Revolution, Prague Spring of 1968, and the Soviet repression that followed both uprisings. Ukrainians, Finns and Jews formed the bulk of the party's non-Anglophone base, but Hungarians, Czechs, Slovaks and Yugoslavs were also present in large numbers, particularly starting in the late 1920's. Until 1924, left-wing ethnic organizations were permitted to join the CPC en bloc, but in what proved to be a largely unsuccessful effort to build political and organizational unity, the Party required individual members to join separately, even if they decided to be active in one of the CPC's federated sections.³³⁰

The Hungarian section of the CPC became active in 1929, at a time when the Party counted 4,000 registered members, but lacked a coherent program and philosophy that would be acceptable to its ethnically and linguistically diverse membership, and was also divided between Stalinists and Trotskyites.³³¹ In the 1930's and 1940's the party relied on vague political slogans and mawkish, populist rhetoric, almost completely devoid of any intellectual discourse or foundation.³³² In the first issue of the *Kanadai Magyar Munkás*, István Szőke, the paper's editor-in-chief and leader of the CPC's Hungarian faction, directed his words to Hungarian workers in southern Ontario's Tobacco Belt and the fledgling communities of Toronto and Montreal. In a nod to Leninism, Szőke spoke both to agricultural workers in the West and industrial workers in the East, recognizing the poverty in which they lived, but making no effort to provide ordinary workers with any real political education. "We are a workers' newspaper published in Hungarian ... We speak to you, who work with filthy hands, dressed in tattered coats; you who bake bread,

³³⁰ Malcom and Paul Saba, "A History of the Communist Party of Canada," *Mobilisation*, Vol., No. 4, 1975,

18.

³³¹ *Ibid.*, 20

³³² *Ibid.*, 21.

produce fabrics, manufacture automobiles, yet are forced to live in shacks with bare cupboards.”³³³

In a wave of idealism, the *Munkás* in its initial issue emphasized that a worker's primary identity must be tied to his/her social class, rather than his/her ethnic background and Szőke relied on the most militant rhetoric of Bolshevik class warfare and expressed loyalty to Stalin's policy of building and protecting socialism in the Soviet Union, rather than focusing on worldwide revolution. “We aim to unify workers without any regard for language or nationality....and we stand in awe of the Soviet workers, who have created peace and well-being for 150 million people. But the capitalists want to attack the Soviet state, so that they can once again rob blind the working class and torture ordinary workers. We too must line up to defend workers' state.”³³⁴ Despite the initial waves of heated internationalist rhetoric, the paper, however, rapidly moved away from this language in future issues, focusing instead on quarrels between the left and right in the Hungarian community, and on news from Hungary.

The prominence of ethnicity and even nationalism in the rhetoric and politics of Canada's Hungarian communist movement was representative not only of the *Kanadai Magyar Munkás*, but also of communist papers published by other eastern European communities, particularly the Ukrainians. The *Robitnytsia* (The Worker) Ukrainian -Canadian communist weekly newspaper and the Ukrainian Labour Farmer Temple Association (ULFTA) both found themselves in conflict with the CPC's Anglophone leaders, who felt that Ukrainian party activists were too insular and focused on their ethnic identity, rather than on building a sense of class

³³³ “Beköszöntő” (Introduction), *Kanadai Magyar Munkás*, July 16, 1929, 1.

³³⁴ *Ibid.*, 1.

consciousness.³³⁵ While Hungarian-Canadian communists perplexed CPC leaders by reverting to nationalist themes, such as Hungary's territorial truncation after the First World War, Ukrainian communists angered their Anglophone comrades by stubbornly singing the national anthem at their events, resisting the idea of transferring authority from linguistic and ethnic groups within the party, to sections based on each member's workplace and failing to ensure that members of the ULFTA's youth wing read Marxist literature.³³⁶

When Hungarian, Ukrainian and Finnish communists were at odds with the CPC's Anglophone leadership based in Toronto, they quickly pointed to the fact that Eastern Europeans formed the bulk of the party's active membership and that the less overtly Bolshevik, rhetorically more moderate Eastern Europeans could help the CPC attract politically "less mature" English Canadians who might be turned off by the heated rhetoric of class warfare.³³⁷ By the early 1940's the CPC's Anglophone leadership came to appreciate the fact that the Finns and Eastern Europeans were increasing the number of active party members, they remained unimpressed with suggestions that the party take a more incremental approach to introducing the masses to the finer details of Marxist thought.³³⁸ The CPC's political programs failed to take into consideration the needs of the less militant and orthodox political needs of its ethnic members.

Ethnic Loyalty, Party Loyalty and Class Warfare

³³⁵ Joan Sangster, "Robitnytsia, Ukrainian Communists, and the 'Porcupinism' Debate: Reassessing Ethnicity, Gender, and Class in Early Canadian Communism, 1922–1930," *Labour/Le Travail*, Fall 2005, 56.

³³⁶ *Ibid.*, 57.

³³⁷ LAC, Communist Party of Canada Fonds, H-1610, Vol. 44, file 52, National Group Policy.

³³⁸ LAC, Political Programs – Communist Party of Canada, 1938-1947, File 927, Part 1.

During the Second World War, CPC activists of East/Central European descent formed a disproportionately large number of party members arrested and interned in Kananaskis and Petawawa. The Kananaskis Internment Camp, opened by the Department of Defence in 1939, housed 700 German enemy aliens and a handful of Italians and Slovaks.³³⁹ Of the 39 communists interned in Kananaskis in 1940, 25 were members of the Ukrainian community—including the editors of the *People's Gazette* and *Farmer's Life* newspapers—two were Germans and one was George Balint, a Hungarian communist.³⁴⁰

While only a small number of Hungarian communists found themselves in internment camps or under suspicion during the Second World War, some prominent leaders in the movement served as agents for British intelligence during the war. Most notable among them was Andrew Durovecz, who served as a counter-espionage agent under the nom-de-guerre Andy Daniels and was trained at Camp X, near Whitby, Ontario, before leaving for his intelligence-gathering mission in wartime Hungary. Durovecz was one of eight others Hungarians trained at Camp X who was then sent with his compatriots to the Canadian National Exhibition Grounds in Toronto, where Canadian officials decorated one of the barracks in Hungarian folk themes, served them traditional Hungarian dishes and Hungarian wine.³⁴¹

Not for a moment did this taste of Hungarian patriotism seem foreign to most Hungarian-Canadian communists schooled in the vocabulary of internationalism and class consciousness. Durovecz, for instance, was especially well known for publishing distinctly patriotic pieces in the *Munkás* after the War, despite the misgivings of a CPC leadership, which saw this as

³³⁹ Peter Krawchuck, *Interned Without Cause, The Internment of Canadian Anti-fascists during World War Two*, Toronto: Kobzar Publishing, 1985, 59.

³⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 59.

³⁴¹ Lynn-Philip Hodgson, "A Day in the Life of a Secret Agent," *Camp X*, Toronto: Blake Books, 2005, 24.

regressive. In his 1948 New Year's column, Durovecz spoke about how scores of Hungarian Canadian communists "have fond childhood memories of their cradle, which rocked on Hungarian soil, while even second generation Hungarian-Canadians born in foreign soil learn about the Hungarian past and about the Hungarian homeland...They too know about the land of their ancestors, even if they cannot fully appreciate the beauty of blooming locust trees in unforgettable Hungarian valleys."³⁴²

Hungarian-Canadian communists were often just as likely gravitate to Hungarian patriotic language and themes as their right-wing compatriots—much to the chagrin of the CPC's Anglophone leadership—even if they managed to supplement this with a basic, superficial appreciation of class consciousness. For instance, Durovecz believed that one of the reasons why Hungarians and non-Hungarian officers in Camp X got along so well and that the camp's ethnic divisions were overcome was that the Anglophones in charge also came from a peasant background.³⁴³ Yet nationalism was always a far more powerful force in uniting Hungarian-Canadian communists than class consciousness, internationalism or any other form of self-identification. Durovecz's nationalism was not an anomaly in the Hungarian-Canadian communist movement. National Hungarian historic events and holidays, in particular the 1848 revolution led by republican Lajos Kossuth against the Habsburgs, was celebrated with much patriotic pageantry in Hungarian-Canadian communist cultural meetings. This was especially evident during the revolution's centennial celebrations at Niagara Falls. The Hungarian national anthem replaced the communist movement's favoured rallying cry, "The International" and the Hungarian communist movement's spoke about the importance of helping "the heroic Hungarian

³⁴² András Durovecz, "Ifjúság és 1848," (Youth and 1848) *Kanadai Magyar Munkás*, January 1, 1948, 12.
³⁴³ *Ibid*, 26.

people, who are now building a brighter future for our homeland.”³⁴⁴ The constant references to the “Hungarian homeland” and the survival of a “Hungarian consciousness” in Canada were almost identical to the rhetoric used by conservative, anticommunist Hungarians.

Although within the context of the Second World War, Durovecz's primary political loyalties lay with the Soviet Union, he was never averse to Hungarian patriotic rhetoric and sharing his emotional ties to Hungary and his Hungarian heritage. After the War, the Hungarian-Canadian communist leader returned to Hungary numerous times and conducted revisionist research, to demonstrate that the humanitarian contributions of Swedish diplomat Raoul Wallenberg-- credited with saving tens of thousands of Hungarian Jews in Budapest during the Holocaust and who was captured and taken prisoner by the Soviets— were severely exaggerated. According to Durovecz, noticeably preoccupied with this topic, Wallenberg was a pawn of the CIA, whose only purpose in Hungary was to delay the advance of the advancing Red Army and then lay the foundation of an American occupation.³⁴⁵ Durovecz--whose militant outspokenness and over-the-top conspiracy theories eventually caused significant consternation in the CPC's Central Committee and eventually widened a rift among Hungarian Canadian communists-- believed that “the Western capitalists and the Chamberlain gang, including the British royal family and the Wallenberg family had financed Hitler,” and he never hesitated to air these views in public.³⁴⁶

1956 and Canada’s Hungarian Communists: Patriotism Put to the Test.

³⁴⁴ Ibid., Magyar önézettel hallgatták Tildy Zoltán szavait elnök szavait (They Listened to President Zoltán Tildy with Hungarian self-consciousness,” Kanadai Magyar Munkás, April 1, 1948, 13.

³⁴⁵ Video Interview with Andrew Durovecz, Shoah Foundation Institute, Visual History Archive, 1986.

³⁴⁶ Ibid., Part 2.

The 1956 Hungarian Revolution and the arrival of 38,000 refugees to Canada presented the country's Hungarian communist immigration with a dilemma that they were never able to handle and which contributed to the demise of their movement. While the Hungarian Canadian immigration represented a formidable faction within the broader Hungarian émigré community and within the Communist Party of Canada (CPC) during the 1930s and 1940s, it became clear to the movement's leaders and officials in Hungary that, after 1956, the movement was in a process of gradual decline. This decline could be traced to three inter-related factors: Hungarian Canadian Communists who had arrived to Canada in the late 1920s were slowly dying out; the movement's leadership proved incapable of attracting new, younger members due to their own uncompromising, sectarian approach; as well as the prolonged and highly destructive internal feuds that not only bankrupted the entire movement, but also threatened to damage the CPC and compromised officials in Hungary's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (KÜM).

Although the Hungarian communist movement in Canada entered a period of decline after 1956, it remained a formidable force within the CPC and was among the top three most prominent Hungarian communist émigré communities in the world, after those in France and the United States. The movement's main organization, the Toronto-based Kossuth Sick Benefit Society, still counted 5,000 members in 1964, with 10 club houses, one main Hungarian cultural centre, a sports facility in Pickering, a major park on the

shores of Lake Erie, near Niagara, and 29 local branches.³⁴⁷ Additionally, the *Munkás* had an estimated 1,800 subscribers, but the paper's readership was falling.

The Impact of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution

The refugee crisis following the 1956 Hungarian Revolution initiated a time of change, growth and transformation for Canada's Hungarian communities. The arrival of more than 38,000 refugees in 1956/57 had a significant impact on the Hungarian-Canadian press, and newspapers found themselves with the possibility of attracting thousands of new readers, from a group that reflected great cultural, class, educational and political diversity. The *Kanadai Magyar Munkás* (Canadian-Hungarian Worker), the second largest Hungarian weekly printed in Canada, one that was still openly affiliated with the country's Communist Party after 1956 and was a supporter of Hungary's postwar regime, found itself in a very delicate situation following the 1956 Revolution. Canada's two major anti-Communist, conservative weeklies were, at first, in a celebratory mood at the apparent fall of Hungary's communist regime, but this was followed by ferocious indignation after the Soviet repression of the revolt, on November 4, 1956. The *Munkás*, however, was unsure how to handle the situation and how, in retrospect, it would explain its jingoistic support for Hungary's discredited Stalinist regime, as well as what approach it would take when faced with the wave of refugees arriving in Canada. At first, the *Munkás* found itself having to explain to its readers why the paper had been so supportive of a Stalinist regime by then discredited by Nikita Khrushchev, through his speech at the Twentieth Party Congress in February of 1956. This, however, was followed by a campaign aimed at encouraging the

³⁴⁷ „Feljegyzés—A MVSZ-nek a kanadai magyar emigrációban lévő kapcsolatairól, ismereteiről,” 66.053/1964, Kanada TÜK iratok—1952-1964, XIX-J-1-j, MOL.

1956 refugees to return home. The *Munkás* asserted that the refugees had been victimized by Canadian authorities and their Hungarian-Canadian collaborators, while trying to convince them that they were unwanted by the country's working class and offering the asylum-seekers assurances that repatriation to Hungary was their best option.

As with most east European ethnic groups in Canada during the interwar period, Hungarian communities across the country—especially those in industrial areas of southern Ontario and a few districts in Winnipeg—were also home to declared Communists and Communist organizations. In the case of the Hungarians, however, the 1956 revolution and the arrival to Canada of tens of thousands of refugees from Hungary reshaped previously existing Hungarian communities and caused significant consternation for Canada's staunch Hungarian Communists. The *Munkás* had published editorials similar to the rhetoric and agitprop produced by the central organ of Hungary's Communist Party, even during the harsher, Stalinist dictatorship of Mátyás Rákosi. The paper's initial approach to the 1956 revolution reflected this attitude as it attempted to explain away the "tragic October events" as a brief episode of fascist, reactionary behaviour.³⁴⁸ Nevertheless, the paper's largely uncritical support of political developments in Hungary from 1947 to 1956, served as a source of great embarrassment after the revolution.³⁴⁹

The *Kanadai Magyar Munkás* originated in 1929 in Hamilton and served as one of two major Hungarian weekly newspapers in Canada, the other being the *Kanadai Magyar Ujság*, or Canadian Hungarian News, during the interwar period and the years before the

³⁴⁸ "Ellenforradalom," (Counter-Revolution), *Kanadai Magyar Munkás*, November 8, 1956, 1.

³⁴⁹ Canada and the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 - [A Canadian Chronicle](http://www3.sympatico.ca/thidas/Hungarian-history/chronicle.html)," *Hungarian Studies* 12, Nos. 1-2 (1997), Online Source: <http://www3.sympatico.ca/thidas/Hungarian-history/chronicle.html> Accessed on: April 12, 2007.

1956 Revolution.³⁵⁰ During the interwar period, these two paper served to divide the Hungarian communities of Canada, based on political and ideological lines, with the *Újság* representing a nationalist-conservative ideology, generally loyal to Hungary's authoritarian interwar regime, and the *Munkás* representing left-leaning, secular forces, with close ties to both Communists in Hungary, as well as trade unions and the Communist Party of Canada.³⁵¹

The *Munkás* was an out-and-out communist paper published during this period by István Szőke, who also wrote a book on Hungarian Canadians, ran literary organizations in Toronto and stood at the head of Canada's "progressive" Hungarian émigré communities. The paper's key goal was to encourage Hungarian immigrants to rally under the banner of the Communist Party of Canada and affiliated trade unions, ostensibly in an effort to improve working conditions.³⁵² The founders, first editors and journalists of the *Munkás* were Hungarian Communists who had been involved in the short-lived Hungarian Soviet Republic of 1919, and had fled to the United States, following its collapse and the subsequent establishment of a conservative, anti-Communist regime in Hungary, in 1920. With the founding of the *Munkás* in 1929, several of these left-leaning émigrés moved to Canada in the hope of winning over members of the fast-growing Hungarian-Canadian

³⁵⁰ The *Kanadai Magyar Újság* was, in fact, the product of the merger of two smaller newspaper, namely the *Kanadai Magyar Farmer* (1918) and the *Kanadai Magyar Hírlap*. The paper received subsidies from Hungary's interwar regime, led by Regent Miklós Horthy, thus explaining the editorial board's overall support for Hungarian politics, until 1944.

Carmela Patrias, *The Kanadai Magyar Újság and the Politics of the Hungarian Canadian Elite*, Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Ontario, November 1978. p.6.

³⁵¹ For an in-depth analysis of the ideological divide between Hungarian-Canadian conservatives and Communists, see Carmela Patrias's book *Patriots and Proletariats, Politicizing Hungarian Immigrants in Interwar Canada*, McGill-Queen's University Press. Montreal. 1994.

³⁵² Carmela Patrias, *The Hungarians in Canada*. The Canadian Historical Association, Canada's Ethnic Group Series Booklet. No. 27., 1999., p. 16.

communities to the Communist cause and drawing them into the wings of the Communist Party of Canada.³⁵³

After the 1956 Revolution broke out, the *Munkás* subtly aligned itself with the peaceful student demonstrations of October 23, 1956, all the while arguing that these had been hijacked by “reactionary” forces. Szőke noted that he and his paper “observed with great sorrow and anxiety, how certain groups and elements have turned the demonstrations, aimed at hastening the just demands of the people, into a bloody war.”³⁵⁴ The paper appeared to also offer lukewarm support for Prime Minister Imre Nagy’s new government, mainly for its calls to halt the violence on the streets, but was not impressed by the prime minister’s decision to create a coalition with non-Communist parties and politicians. As such, the Soviet suppression of the revolt, the fall of the Nagy government and the establishment of János Kádár’s regime served as a welcome relief for the editors of the *Munkás*. “With Soviet help, the attempt to turn the Hungarian uprising into a counter-revolution was brought to an end. Moreover, the Nagy government, which tolerated an orgy of white terror, has been removed from power by Kádár’s government of socialist independence.”³⁵⁵ This was the only time that the paper referred to the demonstrations of 23 October as an “uprising,” terminology which would not be used again.

The paper’s standard interpretation of the events in Hungary was published on 15 November 1956 and this was the version that appeared again, in different words, on a number of occasions.

³⁵³ *Ibid.*, 18.

³⁵⁴ „Segélyt a magyar népnek a vöröskereszten át,” *Kanadai Magyar Munkás*, November 1, 1956, p1.

³⁵⁵ *Kanadai Magyar Munkás*, November 8, 1956, p.1.

The just and peaceful movement of the people was utilized by reaction for counter-revolutionary purposes... Imre Nagy could not and did not want to wage a struggle against the dark forces of reaction... But the working people of Hungary did not permit the internal and external counter-revolution to trample upon their great socialist gains. They resolutely said “no!” to all those who wanted to utilize the legitimate and just demands of the working people and the serious errors of the past leadership in order to swerve the country from the path of socialism.³⁵⁶

The Munkás’s interpretation of 1956 as an attempt to destroy socialist gains and trample on the rights of the working class had more to do with pure, undiluted agitprop than with reality. In 1958, when Paul Zinner, a political science professor at the University of California, travelled across North America to conduct 250 interviews with 1956 refugees, he discovered that fifty-sixers of nearly all social classes supported the efforts at social emancipation (including the redistribution of land to peasants) that had become the hallmark of Hungary’s first post-war coalition government in 1945.³⁵⁷ Especially problematic for the Hungarian Canadian communist movement was the fact that 1956 refugees, particularly from working class or peasant backgrounds had benefited greatly from the Hungarian Communist Party’s emphasis on free, universal public education.³⁵⁸ While the propagandistic polemics of the *Munkás* might have satisfied a less educated earlier cohort of immigrants arriving in Canada, they no longer spoke to working class fifty-sixers.

³⁵⁶ *Kanadai Magyar Munkás*, November 15, 1956, p12.

³⁵⁷ Paul E. Zinner, *Revolution in Hungary*, (New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1958), 354.

³⁵⁸ According to Zinner, the dramatic increase in the political consciousness of the working class—largely as a result of Communist efforts at improving public education--served as an important precondition of an uprising in which workers often proved to be the staunchest, most uncompromising revolutionaries. As such, a large contingent of the refugees arriving in Canada were industrial workers who were first bewildered and then irritated by the Hungarian Canadian communist movement. Zinner argued that the working class proved to be the Party’s greatest adversary during the revolution, while the overall mood among intellectuals was much more muted. The intelligentsia found the revolution to be unsettling and, unlike the workers, they were generally reserved during the first half of the uprising.
Ibid., 360.

The *Munkás*'s most important activities during the revolution and immediately, however, focused on relief efforts organized by the Red Cross. Through various community fundraisers, usually spearheaded by the Kossuth Fraternal Benefit Society, a federation of local chapters closely associated with the *Munkás*, Canada's Hungarian Communist organizations raised over \$7000 within six weeks.³⁵⁹

Following the 1956 Revolution the *Munkás* was, quite literally, at a loss for words. Due to its earlier support of Stalinism, the paper found itself in a rather prickly situation. It took several weeks for the paper to formulate a coherent, detailed response, as well as an *apologia* to claims that it had misled its readers regarding the situation in Hungary. The paper launched a series entitled "The Hungarian Question" starting on January 3, 1957, in which the paper provided its viewpoint on the "October events," and tried to explain the paper's support for the old Rákosi regime. There was a sense of betrayal among some readers of the *Munkás*—and the paper's editors admitted as much—but from simply reading the journal, it is difficult to determine how significant this was, as the weekly did not publish any critical letters from its readers. It did, however, concede that some subscribers believed that "everything that we wrote about Hungary was false and that we attempted to conceal reality."³⁶⁰

One of our errors, which we cannot deny, was that while we praised the grand results, we did not mention clearly enough that the road to socialism in these (Eastern European) countries is a long and painful process and it is nowhere near complete. Reactionary forces must be defeated one step at a time. In our efforts aimed at dispelling the accusations found in reactionary

³⁵⁹ *Kanadai Magyar Munkás*, December 6, 1956, p.12.

³⁶⁰ "A Magyar kérdés!" (The Hungarian Question), *Kanadai Magyar Munkás*, January 3, 1957., p3.

propaganda and appropriately assessing the successes of socialism, we presented this development in a one-sided, uncritical way.³⁶¹

The editors of the *Munkás* were walking on precarious ground as they had to demonstrate a certain amount of humility and regret for not having presented the “full picture” vis-à-vis Hungary, yet it was also important that they convinced their readers that this was, at most, an innocent error of omission and nothing more sinister.

Despite this apparent apology and the fact that the editors agreed that the demonstrations on 23 October 1956 started off as a legitimate protest, before being hijacked by reactionary, rightist elements, the paper was fully supportive of the Soviet intervention of 4 November 1956. It had harsh words for Hungarian-Canadians who supported the revolt, especially those who vowed to return to Hungary to fight with the revolutionaries. Nevertheless, the *Munkás* was by no means the only paper to publish polemical editorials on the 1956 Revolution, the subsequent refugee crisis and the way in which Hungarian-Canadians of differing political persuasions reacted to the crisis. *Kanadai Magyarság*, a Toronto-based weekly founded in 1951 by László F. Kenesei—who arrived in Canada in 1949--was perhaps the most vehemently anti-Communist in its critique of left-leaning Hungarian-Canadians and their primary press organ.³⁶² On November 17, 1956, less than two weeks after the Soviet suppression of the uprising, Kenesei launched one of several diatribes against Canada’s Hungarian Communists.

Here in Canada there are a couple of evil-doers, who edit a Hungarian-language newspaper, which portrays these heroes (of 1956) as ‘reactionary and racist

³⁶¹ Ibid., 3.

³⁶² At first, the *Magyarság* was quite popular among the recently arrived DPs, who tended to embrace more radical, right-wing views and for a short time, the paper even catered to those who supported the by then defunct Arrow Cross Party and Hungary’s former Nazi leader, Ferenc Szálasi. Patrias, 25.

elements.’...Anyone who gives money to a Communist newspaper also supports the murderers of the Hungarian people...God will punish you, you ignominious quislings. Yes, *He* will punish you, because we won’t so much as dirty our hands with you. At most, we will spit in your face, if we see you on the street. We must not spend another day negotiating with the red butchers, but rather send them straight to the gallows, or line them up before the barrels of guns. The weapons are already loaded and tomorrow comes the day of reckoning. But until then, we demand that the Canadian government lock up these dirty, red creeps, or send them off to Russia.³⁶³

Kenesei boasted that the *Magyarság* was the most consistently anti-Communist Hungarian paper in the entire world and in an editorial he claimed that his publication was successfully dividing the Hungarian-Canadian Communist community. Szőke responded in short order to Kenesei’s call to deport and execute Communists by calling him a “scoundrel” who “clings on desperately” to a crushed uprising and all the vain hopes associated with it.³⁶⁴ Despite all this, Kenesei was convinced that “a significant proportion of former Hungarian Canadian Communists have been cured of the red curse, they have joined other readers of our paper and are fighting together with us until the final victory.”³⁶⁵ Kenesei continued to publish *Magyarság* until 1963, when the paper was bought by István Vörösváry, who maintained the paper’s right-wing, staunchly anti-Communist profile.³⁶⁶

Canada’s third major Hungarian weekly, *Magyar Élet* (Hungarian Life) was also an essentially conservative journal, but started off on a much less combative footing. The

³⁶³ László F. Kenesei, “Népünk gyilkosait dicséri a Kanadai ‘Magyar’ Munkás,” (The Canadian ‘Hungarian’ Worker applauds the Murderers of our People,) *Kanadai Magyarság*, November 17, 1956, p3.

³⁶⁴ *Kanadai Magyar Munkás*, November 22, 1956, p3.

³⁶⁵ Editorial, *Kanadai Magyarság*, December 22, 1956, p.4.

³⁶⁶ István Vörösváry (b. 1913) once published a radical right-wing paper in Hungary, with ties to the Arrow-Cross Party. He left Hungary in 1948, first settling in Argentina and eventually establishing a Hungarian paper in Buenos Aires entitled *Magyarok Útja*. Vörösváry moved to Toronto in 1955.

Gyula Borbándi, *Nyugati Magyar Irodalmi Lexicon és Bibliográfia*, Budapest: Hittel, 1992.

paper had been printed in Buenos Aires since 1948, but was transferred to Toronto in early 1957. Its first editorial, published on March 9, 1957, *Magyar Élet*'s editors called on the entire Hungarian immigration to unite and rally around 1956, claiming that the revolution served as a common cause that could effectively breakdown all ideological, political and class divisions among immigrants.³⁶⁷ During the first several months of publication, the paper's editors, themselves recent immigrants to Canada, were seemingly oblivious to the long history of conflict between Canadian Hungarian Communists and the more conservative immigrants.

In December 1956, once tens of thousands of refugees had already poured into Austria and were awaiting asylum in Western Europe and North America, the *Munkás* was becoming increasingly alarmed at the prospect of a large wave coming to Canada. The paper's campaign began to shift from collecting donations for the Hungarian Red Cross and serving as an apologist for Hungary's new post-revolution Kádár regime, to sounding the alarm bells in terms of what the refugee crisis would mean for Canada. "It is clear from the Canadian government's propaganda and actions that it is not only helping the fleeing fascists and the remains of the generally well-dressed and portly capitalists, but that it is also trying to tempt young men and women, workers, peasants and athletes filled with doubt about fleeing by providing them with aid."³⁶⁸ Szőke and most Communist leaders were not only concerned about the arrival of anti-Communist crowds to Canada, but also (at least ostensibly) about an impending brain drain, caused by the exit of thousands of skilled laborers, intellectuals and others from Hungary. "Experienced fascists and Horthyites—who

³⁶⁷ *Magyar Élet*, March 9, 1957, p.2.

³⁶⁸ Editorial, *Kanadai Magyar Munkás*, December 13, 1956., p. 12.

dared not remain for fear of the consequences of their counter-revolutionary actions--are not the only ones who fled to Austria, but also hundreds, possibly thousands, who left amidst great doubts.”³⁶⁹

Beginning in February of 1957, the *Munkás* made the case on numerous occasions that a significant number of 1956 refugees wanted to go home, *en masse*, due to their ill treatment in Canada, a lack of employment and crushed hopes. Quoting an unnamed “well-informed Hungarian newcomer,” the *Munkás* claimed that more than half of all refugees in Montreal and Toronto yearned to go home and that they would proceed to make their travel plans once they were “permitted contact with the Hungarian government.”³⁷⁰

The paper’s coverage of the wave of refugees willing to return to Hungary included headline articles alleging that several thousand Hungarians who had fled to Western Europe, the US, Canada and Australia were considering repatriation. For example, the *Munkás* knew of some thirty refugees living in Windsor, who planned to return home, after a disappointing stay in Canada.³⁷¹

Occasionally, the paper also published letters to the editor from refugees who desired to return to Hungary, but who had inadequate funds for the trip. The *Munkás* published the letter of one such anonymous refugee, staying in Calgary, who begged the paper’s editors to help him return and offered a humble *mea culpa* for having left Hungary in the first place.

³⁶⁹ Ibid., p.12.

³⁷⁰ “Refugees: ‘We Want to Go Home,’” *Kanadai Magyar Munkás*, February 7, 1957, p.8.

³⁷¹ “Hazatérnek Magyarországba,” (They are Returning to Hungary), *Kanadai Magyar Munkás*, February 21, p.1.

I have only been here a few weeks, but I have made a very, very grave mistake, like so many of my compatriots...I have had enough of life here and wish for nothing more than to find myself in my home country again. I will never leave Hungary again, nor will I listen to others. I know that your paper represents the working-class, of which I am a part. I made a mistake, but I dare not turn to anyone else. Please do everything in your power to help me return home. I want to live in my home country, even if they will lock me up for having left. But I know that they will understand and that they will forgive me for my mistake.³⁷²

In the June 27, 1957 issue of the *Munkás*, the paper noted the number of letters it had received from refugees who had been 'led astray,' but who later realized that it had been a mistake to leave Hungary. As usual, the *Munkás* continued to published anonymous letters, ostensibly because the paper did not want them to "suffer further disadvantage and discrimination at the hands of Hungarian counter-revolutionary terrorists."³⁷³ One of the letter writers, from „a large city in Western Canada,” expressed the familiar themes of regret, sorrow, shame and forgiveness. “Today I see, as do so many other honest, misled people, that we have been shamefully tricked. Many of our Hungarian brothers are languishing in camps throughout Canada, instead of experiencing all the shiny, hopeful promises...I see nothing else in Canada, other than the scramble and mad rush for the dollar...My only comfort is that here as well, progressive forces are fighting for a better existence.”³⁷⁴

The theme of Hungarians who had made mistakes out of poor judgement, or because they were 'led astray' by seditious forces, but were just as willing to admit their errors and

³⁷² “Az itteni életet megelégelte,” (He has had Enough of Life Here), *Kanadai Magyar Munkás*, May 18, 1957, p.12.

³⁷³ “Hibák voltak...tévedtünk...becsaptak...szégyeljük magunkat és félünk is” (We Made Mistakes....We Were Cheated....We are Ashamed of Ourselves and We are Scared,” *Kanadai Magyar Munkás*, June 27, 1957, p.10.

³⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p.12.

mend their ways, was present not only in the communist press, but also among anti-communist, conservative Hungarians. Kenesei and his weekly *Kanadai Magyarság* asserted that the paper helped Hungarian Communists see the light. “We know of several Hungarian Canadian Communists who, after they realized their mistake, have waged the most dedicated battle against those who led them astray. These people are now church-going, good Hungarians, who respect our paper as they do the Bible...we are pleased that we are able to bring so many Hungarians into respectable society.”³⁷⁵ *Magyarság* and the *Munkás* both framed the revolution, the refugee crisis and the ideological divide in the most dramatic and apocalyptic terms. The frequent polemics of both newspaper editors suggests that there was a battle, if not purely on ideological grounds, but also to attract new readers and subscribers during a time of great change.

The editors of the *Munkás* were, indeed, quite willing to help refugees return home and they offered to forward repatriation requests on behalf of their readers to the Hungarian Division of the Polish Legation in Ottawa.³⁷⁶ By May 1957, the *Munkás* asserted that „several hundred” were interested in returning to Hungary and cited the same three reasons given by the anonymous letter writer from Calgary. “An ever increasing number of people are demanding forcefully that they be transported back home, partly because they had regretted their poorly thought-out decision to leave and also because despite all the rosy promises, they have found only unemployment, dupery and misery.”³⁷⁷

³⁷⁵ Editorial, *Kanadai Magyarság*, December 22, 1956, p.4.

³⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 12.

³⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 12.

The experience of great disappointment allegedly felt among refugees upon their arrival in Canada was presented as the standard refugee story on the pages of the *Munkás*. A series of anonymous statements, letters and recollections from refugees were meant to demonstrate how so many refugees were duped into coming to Canada and how disenchanting it was when the promises of material wealth and well-being did not immediately materialize. One such refugee writing from British Columbia, who signed his article as „S.G.” wrote about how he and his dreams were shattered almost immediately after landing on the shores of Canada.

It is only now that we truly understand what our homeland meant. It is only now that we found out what it meant to work for each other, for our homeland, our well-being, peace and for our freedom. Now we have to work, so that the capitalists can make more money. It was obvious that the Canadian workers did not like us very much, because they knew that with us the number of unemployed will increase and that wages will go down. Many of us, at first, lost track of what was important, as we saw that Canadian workers own cars and televisions...But where are their social and recreational institutions? Where are their factory libraries and their cultural institutions? Our life was not based on a car and a castle built of cards. Our work was a strong bastion and it offered a secure existence. This is what we threw away.³⁷⁸

The *Munkás* used the testimonies of unnamed refugees to create the impression that a very significant number of Hungarian refugees were so deeply disappointed with Canada that they seriously contemplated returning to Hungary. One such anonymous refugee observed that „we, who were not counter-revolutionaries can see with our own eyes, what is behind the bewildering propaganda...We can see that everything here is business, including

³⁷⁸ “Az álom és a valóság,” (The Dream and the Reality), *Kanadai Magyar Munkás*, May 30, 1957, p.10.

human rights, health care, employment and the only reason we were accepted by Canada is to provide cheap labour for employers.”³⁷⁹

Yet if Hungarian refugees felt unwanted and sometimes abused in Canada, the *Munkás* tended to reinforce this perception by publishing articles that implied that Canadian workers and labour unions did not appreciate the presence of so many refugees. The paper pitted the Liberal government of Louis St. Laurent, which they believed aligned itself with the refugees, against labour unions, Canadian workers and the Labour Progressive Party. For example, the paper quoted a group of Hungarian refugees in Vancouver who allegedly proclaimed that there is „no need to worry about trade unions, because we are under the protection of the Canadian government.”³⁸⁰ The implication was that both the Hungarian refugees and the St Laurent government were in a strategic alliance to marginalize the unions. The *Munkás* also quoted an article from *Ship and Shop*, a Vancouver-based paper, published by dockyard workers, which asserted that Hungarian refugees were “used as tools in European conflicts and when that thing called the ‘freedom fight’ ended, they dumped them here among us. Now [the government] is trying to use them as tools against Canadian workers.”³⁸¹

By June 6, 1957, a front page headline in the *Munkás* declared that the “outcry is growing” regarding the continued arrival of refugees, as well as their alleged poor treatment in Canada. According to the communist weekly, just about everyone, on all sides of the

³⁷⁹ “Miért akarunk hazamenni?” (Why do we Want to go Home?) *Kanadai Magyar Munkás*, May 30, 1957, p.10.

³⁸⁰ “Szakszervezeti vélemény magyar emigránsokkal kapcsolatban,” (The Opinion of Trade Unions in Regards to the Hungarian Immigrants,” *Kanadai Magyar Munkás*, May 30, 1957, p.11.

³⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 11.

crisis, was unhappy with the situation. The paper insinuated that scores of refugees desired to return to Hungary, but were unable to do so, due to a lack of funds, the obstructionist tactics of Hungarian Canadians involved in the relief effort and alleged unwillingness of Canadian authorities to transport them back to their home country. The *Munkás* illustrated this point by referring to the case of Lajos Rajki, a young Hungarian actor, who left his 23 year old wife, family and career in Budapest, and ended up committing suicide in Montreal “due to the hopelessness of his situation.”³⁸² The *Munkás* claimed that a member of the local Hungarian community who—according to the paper—was once a “fascist captain” of the Hungarian military and now served as a translator at a refugee camp in Montreal, where he “maintained a state of terror against those refugees that wish to return to Hungary.”³⁸³

According to the *Munkás*, the refugees, therefore, were victims of three forces. First, they had fallen prey to people who encouraged them to flee to the West in the hope of a better life. Second, their return to Hungary was obstructed due to pressure from anti-Communist Hungarian-Canadians and the unwillingness of Canadian authorities to help them in returning home. Third, the St. Laurent government used the refugees as pawns in a Cold War struggle against Communists abroad, and left-leaning, pro-communist unions in Canada, by “flooding” the country with workers who would be loyal to the government, rather than to the trade unions. The fourth victim of these alleged political machinations was the Canadian workforce, as well as unions in general.

³⁸² “Nő a felháborodás és tiltakozás a menekültek ügyében,” (Growing Outcry over the Situation of the Refugees), *Kanadai Magyar Munkás*, June 6, 1957, 1.

³⁸³ *Ibid.*, 1.

As the federal election of 1957 approached, the paper's critique of the St. Laurent government also increased, for undermining Canada's unions and for augmenting Cold War rivalries. The *Munkás*, however, reserved even stronger criticism for the Conservative Party and John Diefenbaker who, according to Szőke, maintained contacts with the most extremist, anti-Communist Hungarians.³⁸⁴ At the same time, the paper campaigned openly for the Labour Progressive Party, which ended up garnering 7,760 votes, as well as for the Co-Operative Commonwealth Federation.

The defeat of St. Laurent's government was the *Munkás*' most evident goal, in terms of Canadian politics, mainly because the editors felt that it would serve to repudiate the government's approach to Hungarian refugees. At the same time, the paper was no more pleased with John Diefenbaker who, Szőke charged, had broken bread with reactionaries and former fascists at Hungarian community events.³⁸⁵ Once the Tories ended 22 years of Liberal government, the *Munkás* credited this to the party's demagogical approach during the campaign.

The 1956 refugees and what Canada's Hungarian Communists could do with them, however, remained the paper's long-term concern. Interestingly, almost no efforts were made to try to convince some of them—who may well have been left-leaning—to join their ranks and take part in an array of affiliated social clubs and organizations. Instead, the *Munkás* simply wanted them to return home, something that the Hungarian government also tried to support in the case of many refugees, during the years following the revolution. The paper used a dual approach. First, it tried to convince the refugees that many of their

³⁸⁴ *Kanadai Magyar Munkás*, June 2, 1957, 1.

³⁸⁵ *Kanadai Magyar Munkás*, May 28, 1957, 1-2.

compatriots were deeply dissatisfied with their situation in Canada and wanted nothing more than to return to Hungary. Second, the *Munkás* attempted to demonstrate that the refugees were unwanted and disliked by ordinary Canadian workers, who saw them as part of the government's Cold War plot to weaken unions at home and strike a blow at the Soviet Union abroad. Despite all their efforts, the vast majority of Hungarian refugees remained in Canada and *Munkás* struggled with what to do with them, if anything, until the paper's demise a decade later.

By labelling the 1956 refugees as insidious fascistic elements and by referring to the anti-Soviet and anti-communist revolution as a nefarious, far right-wing “counter-revolution,” the Hungarian Canadian communist press simply repeated verbatim the official communist party line that prevailed in Hungary until 1989. The *Munkás* took the words of communist party historians and propagandists at face value, including the works of János Berecz, who remained one of the most committed Communists, even a couple of years before the collapse of the one party regime in Hungary.

As late as in 1986—on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the revolution—MSZMP-commissioned historians and other academics, working in tandem with the Academy of Sciences, produced polemical works on the Hungarian uprising which amounted to little more than communist agitprop. János Berecz's book *1956—Counter-Revolution in Hungary, Word and Weapons*, the 1986 English translation of an earlier work became the official textbook on 1956, used by the *Munkás*, as well as teachers in Hungary. Berecz, a historian, publicist and member of the MSZMP's Central Committee from 1985 to 1989 published the English edition of his book three years before the collapse of the

regime because he felt that it was the “intention of the class forces hostile to socialism to use every means in their power everywhere to discredit socialist society...and the émigré reactionaries who lament their wrecked hopes, continue to pursue a blindly incorrigible approach, deploring the passing of the ultimate opportunity for a take-over of Hungary.”³⁸⁶

Berecz provided the orthodox, official party line on the revolution, in an effort to counter-balance the much richer body of literature produced by western historians. Serving as a source for the *Munkás* during the late fifties and early sixties, Berecz argued that the events in Budapest did not constitute a spontaneous, leaderless revolt, but were part of a meticulously planned, imperialist conspiracy-- spearheaded by Hungarian emigres and the western powers—to „move their headquarters to a location closer to Hungary.”³⁸⁷ Those who actually took part in the fighting between October 23 and November 4 were composed of crypto-fascists, „lumpen proletariat and criminal elements” as well as „hard-core enemies of people’s power.”³⁸⁸ Berecz argued that even during the peaceful student demonstration of October 23, there was an atmosphere of „extreme one-sidedness and a dictatorial rejection of any sober thought” on the part of the protesting university students.³⁸⁹

The *Munkás*’s reliance on Berecz’s unconvincing explanations of the 1956 Revolution put it in an uncomfortable position, as a large number of intellectuals—including prominent journalists—were among the refugees and could not only speak about

³⁸⁶ János Berecz, *1956 Counter-Revolution in Hungary, Word and Weapons*, (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1986) 7-8.

³⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 76.

³⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 106.

³⁸⁹ A dramatic transformation took place in how historians wrote about 1956 when on January 28, 1989 Imre Pozsgay, a member of the MSZMP’s Central Committee went on state radio and referred to the revolution as a “popular revolt.” Following this, the June 1989 rehabilitation and burial of Imre Nagy and his proclamation as a martyr served as the final blow Berecz’s (and the MSZMP’s) concept of 1956 as a reactionary counterrevolution. *Ibid.*, 99.

what occurred in Budapest and in other Hungarian cities firsthand, but had the ability and professional connections to publish their views. George Mikes, a Hungarian writer and journalist who immigrated to Great Britain after the Second World War and then travelled back to Budapest in October 1956 as a BBC reporter, made no secret of his conservative and anti-communist political views. Mikes became the first to not only publish major English-language works on the Hungarian revolution—which were widely circulated and sold in Canada thanks to Montreal’s Delibáb Studio Hungarian bookstore—but also took on Hungarian communists who toed the official party line, both in Hungary and in western émigré communities. Mikes never minced his words, arguing that 1956 and, in particular the Soviet intervention that the *Munkás* not only supported, but considered too gentle, served as the “Stalingrad of communism,” shaking the faith of Marxist intellectuals in the West.³⁹⁰

Mikes was absolutely right. The 1956 revolution did far more than simply shake the foundations of already ageing Hungarian communist communities, the largest of which were still in Canada and France. It also shook the prominent left-wing intellectuals that Szőke referred to prior to the revolution, to indicate the extent of support for anti-capitalist thought, even in the West.³⁹¹ Jean-Paul Sartre, the existentialist French philosopher and Communist fellow-traveller immersed himself in the history of the Hungarian revolution and tried to grasp the nature of what he viewed sympathetically as a democratic, though partially nationalistic, uprising. As he explored the revolutionaries and their political

³⁹⁰ George Mikes, *The Hungarian Revolution*, (London: Collins Books, 1957), 185.

³⁹¹ István Szőke, “Nyugati osztályharc,” (Western Class Struggle), *Kanadai Magyar Munkás*, December 14, 1949, 3.

demands, Sartre attempted to reconcile what had happened with his own convictions.³⁹²

Sartre was joined by prominent Hungarian professor, turned émigré journalist Ferenc Váli in emphasizing the nationalistic nature of the revolt, although the latter author's conservatism meant that he saw this Hungarian nationalism in a generally positive light.³⁹³ Yet even after Szőke admitted on the pages of his paper that many had turned away from the movement due to its controversial and admittedly insensitive take on 1956, he continued to view the revolution as an attempt to turn back the clock to the irredentist, authoritarian nationalism of the interwar period.

To some degree, the 1956 Revolution fell victim to the ideological struggles and divide of the Cold War, with both conservatives and communists using it in contrasting ways to bolster the justness of their cause. In the immediate aftermath of the revolution, only a very small handful of Hungarians immigrants in the West had any desire to take a politically dispassionate and centrist approach to what was a very traumatic event in the lives of 200,000 refugees and their families. Francis S. Wagner, a former employee of the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and after 1956 a refugee in Canada, and later a scholar in the United States, was disgusted by how the left and right in North America were using the memory of 1956 for their own political ends.³⁹⁴

³⁹² Sartre concluded that the first Soviet intervention of October 24th, 1956, turned a revolt that had been social democratic in nature in a much more nationalistic affair. Jean Paul Sartre, *The Spectre of Stalinism*, (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1965), 23.

³⁹³ Ferenc Váli, *Rift and Revolt in Hungary, Nationalism versus Communism*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1961) 14.

³⁹⁴ While Wagner's purpose in publishing his 1967 book on the revolution was to challenge what he saw as a "wishful thinking attitude" among the "overwhelming majority" of the literature on 1956, where the authors sought justification for their own ideological biases (such as communists or virulent anticommunists) in the Hungarian uprising, his own views seem to indicate a relatively conservative reading of events. Wagner sees the revolution as a struggle between national patriotism and communist internationalism.

The Hungarian Canadian Communist Movement Post-1956.

The communist movement had already shown signs of ageing and had difficulty attracting young Hungarians before 1956. The revolution, and specifically the reaction of István Szőke, editor of the *Kanadai Magyar Munkás* weekly, to the events in Budapest aggravated this situation, making it exceedingly difficult for the paper to attract new readers among the fifty-sixers or indeed incorporate left-leaning refugees into the movement. In a 1957 letter to Lajos Biró, the Secretary General of the World Federation of Hungarians (MVSZ), an organization closely linked to the ruling Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, which aimed to strengthen ties between immigrants and the home country, Szőke explained how he found the “so-called ‘Soviet intervention’ rather late” but had certainly never opposed it.”³⁹⁵ Szőke recognized that his paper’s approach to 1956 caused a backlash even among his own followers and subscribers and told Biró that a number of readers had become “rather cold and dismissive” towards the movement’s leaders and Szőke already predicted that the movement’s leaders would have some difficulty changing this perception.³⁹⁶

The negative impact of 1956 on the Hungarian communist movement and its inability to attract younger members concerned the MVSZ and KÜM officials shortly after the uprising. Budapest appeared keen to help the *Munkás* and communist organizations weather the storm. In 1958, the MVSZ sent the *Munkás* ten new subscriptions from

Francis S. Wagner (ed.) *The Hungarian Revolution in Perspective*, (Washington DC: F.F. Memorial Foundation, 1967), 9.

³⁹⁵ István Szőke’s letter to Lajos Biró (March 28, 1957), In: Kanada—Egyesületek A-V (Canada—Organizations, A-V), Magyarok Világszövetsége—P975, XXVIII-7-2.

³⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

Hungary and Ottó Beőthy, the Federation's Secretary General, tried to reassure the *Munkás* that Budapest had "no other goal or desire, but to assist" the paper.³⁹⁷

One way that Budapest tried to increase the *Munkás*' credibility among skeptical Hungarian Canadians was to permit 5,000 Hungarians—who had immigrated prior to 1938—to visit Hungary. Since this cohort represented the core of the Hungarian Canadian communist movement, Hungary was clearly trying to ensure the loyalty of these immigrants and undo any damage that the 1956 revolution or the *Munkás*' reaction might have caused. Since Hungary did not yet have an embassy in Canada, officials sent all visa application forms to the communist movement's leaders, also allowing them to decide how and to whom they distribute these forms, with the understanding that they would "naturally not provide those who oppose our Peoples' Republic with applications."³⁹⁸ By placing the communist movement at the centre of Hungary's visa application process, Budapest clearly attempted to restore the prestige and power of both the leadership and the organization in the eyes of the immigrant community.

The problem, however, was that even if Szőke may have been able to restore his tattered reputation among his paper's subscribers in the years following 1956, he proved unwilling to reach out to the fifty-sixers. This was precisely what both the MVSZ and KÜM wanted him to do, in order to breathe new life into a declining movement and also bring left-leaning or apolitical refugees into closer contact with Hungary. Szőke, however, simply resigned himself to the fact that it was impossible to reach fifty-sixers and, during a

³⁹⁷ Ottó Beőthy's letter to Sándor Megyesi (December 13, 1958), In: Kanada—Egyesületek A-V (Canada—Organizations, A-V), Magyarok Világszövetsége—P975, XXVIII-7-2.

³⁹⁸ Lajos Biró's letter to István Szőke (May 30, 1957), In: Kanada—Egyesületek A-V (Canada—Organizations, A-V), Magyarok Világszövetsége—P975, XXVIII-7-2.

lengthy discussion with László Sárkány, Hungary's ambassador in Washington DC, indicated that he had no intention of going after this increasingly important group. "We have no formal connection with those who left Hungary after the counter-revolution. We do not believe that they comprise a distinct political group, they are scattered throughout the country and are only politically active in larger cities. Groups of various political stripes are trying to reach them and the loudest are the fascists. Yet they have little influence over them."³⁹⁹ Sárkány, however, urged Szőke not to give up on the fifty-sixers, but recognize that these refugees did not form a homogeneous political group and that the majority were not fascistic or right-wing, nor did they appear to be hostile towards Hungary. Sárkány tried to convince Szőke that many simply fled Hungary out of a "sense of adventure, confusion or for family reasons" and that an increasing number of these refugees became disappointed and jaded. Sárkány felt that those people who found themselves in a precarious situation were "grateful for any assistance at all and this represented a good opportunity to work among them."⁴⁰⁰ Szőke, however, was clearly not interested and told Sárkány that the real solution for the Hungarian Canadian communist movement would be if the economic situation in Canada took a downward turn and if unemployment started to rise. Sárkány, however, later told ministry officials that he found it "strange" that Szőke wanted to "see the relatively consolidated lives of Canadian workers come to an end as soon as possible, because this is what they expect will improve the fortunes of the movement."⁴⁰¹ Sárkány

³⁹⁹ "Feljegyzés a kanadai magyar haladó mozgalom vezetőivel folytatott beszélgetésről" (Notes on the meeting with the leaders of the Hungarian Canadian movement), December 14, 1957, 265/1957, In: Kanada TŰK iratok—1952-1964, XIX-J-1-j, MOL.

⁴⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰¹ *Ibid.*

also noted that Szőke's rigid approach to the fifty-sixers and his unwillingness to reach out to them characterized the entire Hungarian Canadian left-wing movement.

Roy Adam Schaeffer, who had immigrated to Canada in the 1930s as a 20 year-old and would take over as editor of the Hungarian-Canadian communist weekly in 1962, following Szőke's retirement, came across as being just as "sectarian" as his predecessor to officials in Budapest. They met with him in March 1960, during one of his trips to Hungary.⁴⁰² Schaffer also appeared to be suspicious of officials in Hungary and the relatively cool (and later outright troubled) relationship between Budapest and the Hungarian Canadian communist leaders proved to be representative of the entire post-1956 period. During his 1960 visit to Budapest, for example, Hungarian officials noticed that Schaeffer was "conspicuously searching for faults and contradictions that might expose" the government, or raise uncomfortable questions.⁴⁰³ While having breakfast in a restaurant, Schaeffer found that he had not been given milk for his coffee and he asked the waiter whether there was a shortage, or if distribution was so badly organized that the restaurant did not receive any.⁴⁰⁴ Schaeffer also seemed perfectly willing to openly critique his hosts and their quality of life, noting—among other things—that "only newly arrived 1956 dissidents drive cars like that."⁴⁰⁵ Officials in Budapest, however, took copious notes of all of Schaeffer's remarks and concluded that an apparently suspicious and perhaps even somewhat hostile attitude on his part might complicate Hungary's cooperation with the movement.

⁴⁰² István Straub, "Schaffer elvtárssal történt találkozásaim néhány fontosabb tapasztalatáról," (A few observations from my meetings with Comrade Schaffer), 7129/1960, In: Kanada TÜK iratok—1952-1964, XIX-J-1-j, MOL, p25.

⁴⁰³ *Ibid.*, p23.

⁴⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p23.

⁴⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p24.

In addition to a certain degree of hostility on Schaeffer's part, officials in Hungary were also concerned that the Hungarian Canadian communist leader's own ideologies were strangely hybrid. They reflected a high level of nationalism and irredentism, much more becoming of the right. Schaeffer caused a stir when he told officials in Budapest and a local journalist that Hungary should take back southern Slovakia and Transylvania, because both of these lands were "Hungarian to the core."⁴⁰⁶ MVSZ officials found Schaeffer's views to be "disturbing" and his behaviour and mentality came across as "foreign."⁴⁰⁷

Schaeffer's tenuous relationship with officials in Hungary proved to be representative of how other Hungarian-Canadian communist leaders acted during their visits to Budapest. When János Dózsa, the secretary of Windsor's Kossuth Club, visited Budapest in March of 1961, he seemed suspicious of officials in Hungary, even if he came across as more tactful than Schaeffer.

Dózsa displayed a significant degree of distrust towards us, or perhaps he was driven by other motives. For example, whenever an opportunity presented itself for him to take pictures, he said that he did not bring his camera with him, because he did not know what he was permitted to photograph. His wife, who was more direct and immediately noted perceived shortcomings, was criticized by Dózsa, who would tell her that she 'must not talk like that,' that this 'represented the internal affairs of Hungary,' and that she is 'not at home.'⁴⁰⁸

Despite concerns about the distrustful behaviour exhibited by Hungarian Canadian communist leaders, officials in Hungary had little choice but to cooperate with Schaeffer. This was especially true after Szőke returned to Budapest in 1962 at age 60 and in relatively

⁴⁰⁶ Feljegyzés – RA Schaffer (Canada) látogatásáról) Magyarok Világszövetsége 7131/1960, Kanada TÜK iratok—1952-1964, XIX-J-1-j, MOL, p5.

⁴⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁴⁰⁸ Feljegyzés Dózsa János látogatása tárgyában (Notes on János Dózsa's visit),

poor health, and was in need of the government's help to find appropriate housing.⁴⁰⁹ Even if cooperation with Schaeffer was not always simple—due to simmering internal rivalries within the movement, as well as suspicion towards Hungary, Schaeffer did provide authorities with useful information on the state of the immigration. Schaeffer conceded that 1956 proved to be hugely damaging to the entire union. “It paralyzed our organizations, the level of activity decreased and reactionary groups attempted to take over the Kossuth Sick Benefit Society, destroy our press and threatened to report us to Canadian authorities,” Schaeffer explained to officials during his visit to Budapest.⁴¹⁰ Schaeffer also reported that the *Munkás* lost “hundreds” of subscribers following the revolution and a thousand members of the Kossuth Sick Benefit Society decided to leave the movement.⁴¹¹ A number of Hungarian Canadian communists believed that the Hungarian government had been repressive prior to the revolution, despite what they were being told by Szőke and others who had written favourably about the regime in the *Munkás*.

After taking over as editor-in-chief of the *Munkás* in 1962—with the tacit support of officials in Budapest who resigned themselves to the fact that they could not find anyone else—Schaeffer introduced some cosmetic changes to the paper, in order to reverse its dismal fortunes. The most obvious such reform was a 1967 change in name, when the *Munkás* became known as *Új Szó* (New Word). The paper's content, however remained just as sectarian. No attempt was made to include material that might interest apolitical or left-leaning fifty-sixers, despite the fact that officials in Budapest thought that they would be

⁴⁰⁹ Feljegyzés Szőke István ügyében, (Notes on István Szőke), 26034/1962, In: Kanada TÜK iratok—1952-1964, XIX-J-1-j, MOL.

⁴¹⁰ Feljegyzés a R.A. Schaffer elvtárssal folytatott beszélgetésről,” (Notes on the discussion with RA Schaeffer), 7130/1960, In: Kanada TÜK iratok—1952-1964, XIX-J-1-j, MOL.

⁴¹¹ *Ibid.*, 39.

able to convince the editors to change their approach, by providing them with regular funding through the Hungarian Embassy in Ottawa.

The paper and the movement both continued to decline, despite the active financial support of the Hungarian regime. The inability to attract fifty-sixers was a key problem, but even more troublesome was widespread in-fighting within the movement and petty—though destructive-- power struggles. By November of 1972, divisions, personal conflicts and the subsequent rancour within the Hungarian Canadian communist movement threatened to destroy *Új Szó*, the affiliated fraternal benefit society and the CPC's Hungarian faction. These problems led Ambassador János Bartha to arrange a meeting with William Kashtan, secretary general of the CPC in Toronto on November 24, to which he also invited János Koronyi, the Independent Mutual Benefit Federation's (IMBF) secretary general, as well as László Tömössy, one of the IMBF's key organizers. Although Schaeffer had been invited as well, he turned down Bartha's request, noting that he "refused to sit at the same table" with his archrival, Koronyi⁴¹²

Yet another factor may have also convinced Schaeffer not to attend the meeting. *Új Szó*'s editor had apparently used the paper's most recent conference in Hamilton to organize a separatist faction within the Hungarian communist movement, and convinced ten members to join him, who then issued a written statement in which they pledged to cancel their CPC membership.⁴¹³ Hungarian officials who were present alongside Bartha during the meeting also indicated that several of the articles appearing in *Új Szó* expressed views

⁴¹² János Bartha, "A KKP vezetőivel történt megbeszélés," (Discussion with the leaders of the CCP), 4 December, 1972, OO477, Kanada 1973, Box 63, XIX-J-1-j, MOL, p1.

⁴¹³ *Ibid.*, 2.

critical of the CPC. Kashtan, however, had been unaware of these development and it led him to inform Bartha that he wanted Schaeffer removed from the helm of the Hungarian communist paper. At the same time, the CCP remained keen on continuing to publish *Új Szó*, despite the fact that the American Communist Party had been trying to convince Kashtan to fold the publication and cooperate in printing a single Hungarian communist newspaper.⁴¹⁴ Yet Kashtan had no suggestions as to who might be qualified to replace Schaeffer and he did not support Bartha's suggestion of setting up a temporary editorial committee.⁴¹⁵ The Hungarian officials asked Kashtan to look for a suitable new editor and they promised that Hungary would continue to provide *Új Szó* with subventions once one had been found.⁴¹⁶ They also asked the CCP to convene a meeting of Hungarian communists in Ontario, in order to quell the increasingly damaging internal disputes and divisions.

The problems in the movement, however, intensified on 26 November 1972, when the Kossuth Association elected a new leader, who removed Schaeffer and his supporters and appointed János Koronyi as the organization's secretary general. Officials at the embassy, however, had been taken by surprise when they heard of the leadership change at the helm of the mutual benefit society, considering that Koronyi had failed to inform Bartha of the planned election, when they met only two days earlier.⁴¹⁷ This suggests that despite their internal differences, Koronyi's relationship with the embassy was similar to

⁴¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁴¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁴¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁴¹⁷ János Bartha, "A baloldali magyar mozgalom helyzete," (The state of the Hungarian left-wing movement), 5 January 1973, OO477/2, Kanada 1973, Box 63, XIX-J-1-j, MOL, p1.

Schaeffer's; both remained circumspect in the information they conveyed to Hungarian authorities, implying a lack of trust.

The CPC's Political Committee, however, continued to try to find a solution to the increasingly destructive rivalry between Koronyi and Schaeffer during a meeting on 29 November 1972. Yet Koronyi refused to provide the near-bankrupt *Új Szó* an emergency loan, despite Kashtan's pleas, and informed the CCP—much to its surprise—that Schaeffer had used the paper to initiate a campaign against the rival faction. This led Kashtan to order Schaeffer to stop publishing compromising articles on the Party's internal affairs.⁴¹⁸

The embassy, however, by now saw *Új Szó* and the communist movement in a very different light than it had in the past. While previously the embassy was willing to financially support the movement--despite its ineffective, sectarian ways--Bartha and Kocziha both realized that Canada's Hungarian communists might not be as benign as had been originally assumed. This became apparent when the CPC's Political Committee discovered that a faction within the Hungarian section had threatened to "out" both the embassy and the World Federation of Hungarians by leaking information to right-wing Hungarian Canadian newspapers about Hungary's "attempted interference" in the communist movement, in order to "get the Hungarian diplomats expelled from Canada."⁴¹⁹ When Bartha found out about this threat, he decided to freeze all financial support that the embassy provided to *Új Szó* and also suspended all contact he had maintained with Schaeffer.⁴²⁰

⁴¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁴¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁴²⁰ *Ibid.*, 2-3

The CPC did, in fact, convene a meeting of its Hungarian section on 7 January 1973, in an attempt to resolve the conflict. The Party's Hungarian faction included 26 members and the majority took part in the five-hour long meeting, which aimed to resolve the divisions that were tearing apart the Hungarian Canadian communist movement. Schaeffer, however, was not present, and János Meister, one of the group's leaders, claimed that he had been hospitalized and as such, all editorial responsibilities had been passed to him.⁴²¹

Yet *Új Szó* was in dire financial straits and Meister told the CPC that the situation had become so desperate that Schaeffer and Durovecz had not been able to collect their salaries for the past several weeks. *Új Szó*'s prospects seemed especially grim, considering that the bank had frozen the Kossuth Association's funds, thus making it impossible for the organization to bail out the paper. Meanwhile the Hungarian Embassy refused to offer any more support, especially after the harsh criticism that the paper directed at both the Hungarian representation, as well as the MVSZ in its previous issue, and the recently revealed threats against Hungary's diplomats. Kashtan had been clueless about the infamous article in question until the meeting, when the rival factions of the CPC's Hungarian section clashed over the paper and the movement's general direction.⁴²² Representing the desperately divided state of the Hungarian Canadian communist movement, Durovecz accused the members of the rival faction of being "gangsters."⁴²³

The rancour between the two factions likely did little to endear the section's newest member, József Pozsonyi, who arrived to Canada after 1956. He criticised the group for

⁴²¹ János Bartha, "Az ontarioi magyar nemzetiségű kommunisták tanácskozása," (The meeting of Ontario's Hungarian communists), 9 January 1973, OO477/1, Kanada 1973, Box 63, XIX-J-1-j, MOL, p1.

⁴²² *Ibid.*, 1-2.

⁴²³ *Ibid.*, 2.

failing to reach out to other fifty-sixers and for spending most of their energies engaged in internal bickering.⁴²⁴

The meeting proved unsuccessful in bringing the two parties together. It led Kashtan to indicate that the CCP's leadership would have to discuss the problem and would recommend changes to the Hungarian movement's leadership, which all members would have to accept, or else face expulsion from the Party.⁴²⁵ Most troubling for the movement, however, was that *Új Szó* teetered on the brink of insolvency and no resolution had been found. Tömössy, however, suggested to Miklós Kocziha that, since nothing could be done to save the paper, he would be willing to establish an "outwardly liberal" publication, provided that the embassy could guarantee its financial support, though the diplomat remained noncommittal.⁴²⁶

Following this meeting, 44 members of *Új Szó*'s editorial team and board held their own conference at Niagara Falls, on 14 January 1973. The main topic was the embassy's refusal to provide the paper with funds, after years of guaranteeing regular subventions. They also discussed whether or not the embassy and the MVSZ were interfering in the affairs of the movement, as Durovecz argued, or if it was simply providing "advice," according to Koronyi's explanation.⁴²⁷ Bartha and Kocziha, however, were both concerned about the direction that the conflict was heading. The ambassador informed Hungary's Foreign Ministry of the possibility that Schaeffer and his supporters would, "out of revenge,

⁴²⁴ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁴²⁵ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁴²⁶ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁴²⁷ "Új Szó konferencia," (Új Szó conference), Minutes, 14 January 1973, OO477/3, Kanada 1973, Box 63, XIX-J-1-j, MOL, p1.

try to convince honest, steadfast left-wing veterans to turn against (the embassy).”⁴²⁸ Bartha also appeared unimpressed with the CCP’s inability to put its own house in order and suggested that the party needed to be more decisive in dealing with its dysfunctional Hungarian wing and especially with Schaeffer. Bartha argued that the CCP was “only interested in the paper, despite the fact that until Schaeffer does not become the undisputed leader of Kossuth, until he does not occupy the post currently held by Koronyi, along with the car, the secretary, a good salary and an office, he will not end the battle.”⁴²⁹

The on-going uncertainty around *Új Szó* and the CCP’s apparent enthusiasm for saving the paper, led Bartha to suggest that the Foreign Ministry authorize the embassy to give the CCP the \$1,500 in support that Hungary had originally planned on giving directly to the publication.⁴³⁰ The MVSZ, the MSZMP and Hungary’s Foreign Ministry convened a meeting in Budapest shortly after receiving Bartha’s report and determined that the best solution would be to forward the \$1,500 in support that *Új Szó* normally received directly to the CCP, in order to give the Party more direct control over the paper.⁴³¹

Despite Hungary’s attempts to resolve the on-going conflict within the left-wing movement and establish the CCP’s authority over *Új Szó*, by April of 1973, Kashtan and the party’s Political Committee admitted that it could no longer control the situation and the complete chaos that now engulfed the entire left-wing Hungarian immigration.

Additionally, Bartha asserted in a report sent to Hungary’s Foreign Ministry that the

⁴²⁸ János Bartha, “A baloldali magyar mozgalom helyzete,” (The state of the Hungarian left-wing movement), 7 February 1973, OO477/3, Kanada 1973, Box 63, XIX-J-1-j, MOL, p1.

⁴²⁹ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁴³⁰ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁴³¹ József Kárpáti, “A kanadai baloldali magyar mozgalom helyzete,” (The state of the Canadian Hungarian left-wing movement), 6 March 1973, OO477/4, Kanada 1973, Box 63, XIX-J-1-j, MOL, p1.

embassy had “obvious evidence” proving that “Canada’s police authorities are engaged in a conscious, concerted effort against the progressive Hungarian movement, aimed at unravelling, discrediting this movement and also paralyzing our embassy’s work among émigré communities.”⁴³² Bartha alleged that Schaeffer and one of his colleagues, Bálint Illés, conspired with Canadian authorities, arguing that the police had “clearly used Schaeffer’s significant pride, who will not rest until he does not become the sole leader of the entire movement.”⁴³³ Bartha was also suspicious of the Schaeffer faction’s other two leaders—namely Durovecz and Meister—but he had no evidence that would have indicated their involvement with Canadian authorities.

What the Hungarian diplomats found troubling, and what they also saw as clear evidence of the machinations of Canadian authorities, was a protest letter and petition circulated by Illés and a Toronto-based branch of the Kossuth Society. In addition, at a meeting with embassy officials during a reception, Illés suggested that Hungarian officials engaged in “activities that contravene Canadian law, in that certain members interfere in the internal affairs of Új Szó and the Kossuth Sick Benefit Society,” noting as well that the activities of Consul Kocziha and Cultural Attaché Tisovszky “may have consequences.”⁴³⁴ Illés also hinted--during a discussion with István Fedor, the embassy’s secretary—that his words served as a warning from Canadian counter-espionage, leading the embassy to

⁴³² János Bartha, “A kanadai baloldali mozgalom helyzete,” (The state of the Canadian Hungarian left-wing movement), 24 April 1973, OO477/5, Kanada 1973, Box XIX-J-1-j, MOL, p1.

⁴³³ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁴³⁴ István Fedor, “Illés Bálint szóbeli megjegyzései az átadott tiltakozó levélhez,” (Bálint Illés’ verbal commentary attached to the forwarded protest letter), OO477/4, Kanada 1973, Box 63, XIX-J-1-j, MOL, p1.

suggest that it would have to “re-evaluate its activities among Hungarians and must develop new methods.”⁴³⁵

In the protest letter—signed by 39 members of the Hungarian left—Illés observed that Miklós Koczha and János Tisovszky behaved in an antagonistic manner towards Schaeffer’s faction, while favouring Koronyi’s group.⁴³⁶ Bartha, however, recommended that the embassy break all ties with both factions, until an “honest, unified guard does not take over the movement’s leadership.”⁴³⁷ Meanwhile, the conflict between the two factions became increasingly acrimonious, when Schaeffer and Helen Illés—Bálint’s wife—lodged a lawsuit with the Supreme Court of Ontario on 27 March 1973 against Koronyi, on behalf of all members of Kossuth’s 12th branch for funds that allegedly belonged to the organization.⁴³⁸

The dispute among left-wing Hungarians and the alleged involvement of Canadian authorities in this conflict concerned not only the embassy in Ottawa, but also the MVSZ’s leadership in Budapest. József Kárpáti felt that the Schaeffer-Illés faction’s activities seriously damaged the ability of Hungarian diplomats to function throughout Canada and might also threaten the future of the entire Kossuth movement. Kárpáti, however, felt that Hungary could not simply withdraw from the Canadian movement, but should aim to “isolate and discredit the leaders of the provocative faction.”⁴³⁹ As a clear indication of how

⁴³⁵ *Ibid.*, p2.

⁴³⁶ Petition, 25 March 1973, OO477/4, Kanada 1973, Box 63, XIX-J-1-j, MOL, p1.

⁴³⁷ János Bartha, “A kanadai baloldali mozgalom helyzete,” (The state of the Canadian Hungarian left-wing movement), 24 April 1973, OO477/5, Kanada 1973, Box XIX-J-1-j, MOL, p4-5.

⁴³⁸ Helen Illes and Ray A. Schaeffer vs. John Koronyi, 27 March 1973, OO477/5, Kanada 1973, Box XIX-J-1-j, MOL.

⁴³⁹ József Kárpáti, “Feljegyzés a kanadai provokációs események tárgyában,” 12 May 1973, OO477/6, Kanada 1973, Box XIX-J-1-j, MOL, p1.

seriously officials in Hungary took the problems in Canada, the MVSZ's secretary general suggested that the Central Committee of the MSZMP's Foreign Department and the Foreign Ministry set up an urgent meeting to discuss these matters, in order to develop a "well thought-out, detailed plan of action."⁴⁴⁰ Kárpáti recommended that the embassy limit its direct contact with both factions and, most crucially, he called for a "review" of the financial support that Hungary provides *Új Szó*, as he felt that the paper served as a "dangerous tool against the progressive movement and against the People's Republic of Hungary."⁴⁴¹ The Foreign Ministry ultimately agreed with Kárpáti's recommendations and also added that the embassy should "differentiate" when it came to consular dealings with individuals associated with the two factions. While members of the Koronyi group should have their consular issues dealt with according to the "current practices," those associated with Schaeffer should not receive any preferential treatment when it came to their visa and travel requests.⁴⁴²

In accordance with specific directives from Budapest, Fedor sat down with Illés in order to respond to the accusations found in his protest letter in verbal, rather than in written format. During this discussion, however, Illés elaborated on the original accusation concerning the embassy's meddling in the left-wing movement's affairs, by arguing that the MVSZ was using the Koronyi group in order to take over control of the Kossuth's real estate and funds, claiming money had already been transferred from the society's account to the MVSZ, as well as to the CCP.⁴⁴³ After the meeting, Fedor sent a telegram to Budapest,

⁴⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁴⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁴⁴² "A kanadai baloldali mozgalom helyzete," (The state of the Canadian left-wing movement), 12 June 1973, OO477/6, Kanada 1973, Box 63, XIX-J-1-j, MOL., p2.

⁴⁴³ Feljegyzés – Távirat, (Telegram), 12 June 1973, OO477/10, Kanada 1973, Box 63, XIX-J-1-j, MOL.

noting that the “loyalist Hungarian movement has been penetrated by the RCMP” and that Canadian authorities “probably know of the embassy’s every move.”⁴⁴⁴

In July of 1973, the conflict between the two factions turned from verbal insults and lawsuits to the threat of physical violence. A Toronto resident who happened to be travelling in Budapest met with MVSZ officials while in Hungary and informed them of an alleged plot to physically “do away with” Tömössy, who was a leader of the Koronyi faction and a possible successor to Schaeffer at the *Új Szó*. According to the allegations, Durovecz and Meister had hired an unknown individual and gave him \$1,200 to either physically intimidate or kill Tömössy.⁴⁴⁵ Meister, however, travelled to Ottawa and informed Bartha about the alleged plot, and about how he was considering contacting the police, but wanted to first ask the ambassador’s opinion.⁴⁴⁶ Bartha, not surprisingly, refused to provide any instructions on what Meister should do, instead asking him to do what he thought was required of him, based upon Canadian law.

Meister did in fact report the plot to the police, allegedly “upon the advice of his friends in Ottawa.”⁴⁴⁷ Durovecz was arrested and interrogated by police, while Meister handed over the \$1,200 to authorities, who apparently guaranteed Tömössy his safety.⁴⁴⁸ The MVSZ, assuming that several people might have been behind the plot, suggested that the CCP convince Durovecz to provide written testimony, which would allow the party to initiate disciplinary action against all those Hungarian members who were involved in it,

⁴⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁴⁴⁵ József Kárpáti, “Tömössy László—Kanada—ügyében,” 19 July 1973, OO477/12, Kanada 1973, Box 63, XIX-J-1-j, MOL.

⁴⁴⁶ “Beszélgetés Meister Jánossal,” 5 July 1973, OO477/13, Kanada 1973, Box 63, XIX-J-1-j, MOL, p1.

⁴⁴⁷ “Beszélgetés Koronyi és Tömössy elvtársakkal,” 13 July 1973, OO477/14, Kanada 1973, Box 63, XIX-J-1-j, MOL.

⁴⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 1.

after which *Új Szó*'s readership could also be informed about the plot.⁴⁴⁹ This MVSZ plan demonstrates that Hungarian authorities wanted to use the failed plot in order to weaken the Schaeffer clique's hold over the newspaper.

Although in October of 1973 it appeared as though the Koronyi and Schaeffer factions had come to a "modus vivendi" and might have been able to avoid a major court case which already cost both sides thousands of dollars, the consensus fell apart in November, even though both sides seemed exhausted by the prolonged dispute.⁴⁵⁰ During a meeting with Kocziha, Schaeffer noted his disillusionment with the CPC, mentioning that he has started attending NDP meetings instead. He also asked Kocziha whether or not *Új Szó* should fold, but the diplomat told him to discuss this with the CPC instead.⁴⁵¹ Bartha, however, seemed relieved to observe that the Schaeffer faction was unravelling, especially after Durovecz and Meister had been banned from the group.⁴⁵²

The legal case between the two factions, however, proceeded as planned. On 24 January 1974, the Supreme Court of Ontario suspended the activities of both Kossuth's 12th branch—led by Koronyi—and Schaeffer's involvement in the movement, banning the local chapter from holding any meetings. Lawyers for both sides recommended that the factions reconcile by holding a general assembly, involving all members who had been expelled from the movement during the in-fighting.⁴⁵³

⁴⁴⁹ "Feljegyzés a kanadai baloldali magyar mozgalommal kapcsolatos legujabb események tárgyában," 21 August 1973, OO477/15, Kanada 1973, Box 63, XIX-J-1-j, MOL.

⁴⁵⁰ János Bartha, "A baloldali magyar mozgalom helyzete," 14 November 1973, 75-OO477/17, Kanada 1973, Box 63, XIX-J-1-j, MOL.

⁴⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁴⁵² *Ibid.*, 2.

⁴⁵³ János Bartha, "A baloldali magyar mozgalom helyzete," 21 February, 1974, 75-OO2137, Kanada 1974, Box 61, XIX-J-1-j, MOL., p1.

This hardly meant that the two sides were willing to put past rivalries behind them. During a February 1974 visit to the embassy, Koronyi handed Kocziha a private letter written by Schaeffer to one of his friends. In the letter, Schaeffer claimed that the Koronyi faction wanted to maintain its control over the IMBF's financial resources, as well as their relationship with the CPC's leadership and the Hungarian embassy where Koronyi "has won friends, at the organization's expense."⁴⁵⁴ Kocziha and Bartha, however, maintained a relative distance from the movement for part of 1974, acting on the directives of Hungary's Foreign Ministry. They did not meet with Schaeffer and embassy officials only spoke with Koronyi once every few months. Kocziha did, however, attend a dinner organized by the IMBF in Toronto, on 23 March 1974. As a goodwill gesture, Koronyi sent out invitations to members of both rival factions, but this proved to be largely in vain, as only a couple of people showed up from the Schaeffer group.⁴⁵⁵ Bartha justified Kocziha's presence at the IMBF dinner by arguing that this served as a clear signal that the embassy did not plan to "distance itself from the old, honest left-wing movement."⁴⁵⁶

Schaeffer, however, found it difficult to move beyond old wounds and even though he tried repeatedly to restore relations with the embassy, Kocziha made it clear that this could not happen until *Új Szó's* editor did not officially withdraw his 1973 memorandum, in which he accused the embassy on interference in the left-wing movement.⁴⁵⁷ Bartha,

⁴⁵⁴ Ádám Schaeffer's letter, 27 January 1974, 75-OO2137, Kanada 1974, Box 61, XIX-J-1-j, MOL.

⁴⁵⁵ János Bartha, "A kanadai baloldali magyar mozgalom helyzete," 26 March 1974, 75-OO2137/1, Kanada 1974, Box 61, XIX-J-1-j, MOL., p1.

⁴⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁴⁵⁷ János Bartha, "A kanadai magyar baloldali mozgalom helyzete," 12 June, 1974, 75-OO2137/2, Kanada 1974, Box 61, XIX-J-1-j, MOL., p1.

however, thought that Schaeffer's days in the movement were numbered, as the publication of repeated allegations in *Új Szó* might result in his arrest, for contravening a court order.⁴⁵⁸

Bartha accurately predicted Schaeffer's fate. The veteran leader of the left-wing movement resigned as *Új Szó*'s editor on 13 October 1974 and withdrew from the entire left-wing movement, partly due to divisions within his own faction and an alleged deal between Durovecz and Illés not to fight any attempt on the part of authorities aimed at arresting Schaeffer.⁴⁵⁹

With Schaeffer's departure and Durovecz's ascension, the left-wing movement entered a period of further decline. This process was expedited by the fact that, for the first time, authorities in Budapest began to keep their distance from all factions and started building contacts among non-aligned, apolitical and left-leaning Hungarians, including some fifty-sixers. With Hungary effectively circumventing the left-wing movement, both Kossuth and *Új Szó* now risked extinction.

The Battle for Patriotic Credibility.

While the stunning violence of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, including gruesome scenes of public lynchings in Budapest, allowed for the Munkás and for the CPC leadership in Toronto to initially label the revolt as a fascistic, reactionary "counterrevolution," the passive resistance of those who stood up to the Soviet invasion of Prague in 1968 made it far more difficult to paint the Czechs and Slovaks as anything other than victims of repression. The uprisings in Budapest and Prague served as double blow for the CPC, which had relied so

⁴⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁴⁵⁹ András Kasnyik, "Kanadai baloldali magyar mozgalom helyzete," 6 November 1974, 75-OO2137/3, Kanada 1974, Box 61, XIX-J-1-j, MOL.

heavily on immigrant from Eastern Europe for its membership. The Hungarian revolution dealt a blow to the Munkás and Hungarian-Canadian communist leaders from which they never recovered and after which their struggle to appear as patriotic Hungarians increasingly hopeless. The Prague Spring, on the other hand, had a similar impact on the CPC as a whole. The Soviet-initiated Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968—in which Hungary actively participated—resulted in a major rift in the CPC, with key party members writing letters of protest to the CPC's Central Executive Committee in Toronto. John Boyd, the leader of the CPC's Young Communist League and key party organizer for four decades, cancelled his membership in the Party after it became clear to him that General Secretary Bill Kashtan and others on the Central Executive Committee did not tolerate views that were critical of the Soviet Union's actions in East/Central Europe.

Boyd was labelled an “imperialist agent” and a Trotskyite, with the Central Committee prohibiting him from presenting his impressions of Czechoslovakia, following a three year stay in Prague. In 1971, Boyd's description of the CPC as “sectarian, dogmatic and cliché-minded”⁴⁶⁰ mirrored perfectly the image that the Hungarian embassy in Ottawa and KÜM in Budapest had of the Party's Hungarian section, with government officials using the exact same words to describe the behaviour of inward-looking, increasingly isolated and politically rigid Hungarian-Canadian communists.

In the 1970's, the *Munkás* struggled to survive due to its dwindling, ageing readership and the post-1956 mainstream Hungarian-Canadian community that had completely ostracized communists and left-wingers, following the tenth anniversary of the 1956 anti-Soviet revolution. In

⁴⁶⁰ LAC, Communist Party of Canada Fonds, Correspondence,

an appeal for donations, Durovocecz and Ádám Schaeffer tied key tenets of communist thought to a commitment to Hungarian patriotism. “Our newspaper serves as the guardian of the working class, so it cannot expect to attract everyone's support and sympathy. It can never be the favoured paper of war-mongers, racists, those who besmirch Hungary and those who desire to transform Canada into the colony of foreign interests. (...) We are anti-war democrats who respect our socialist country of birth; we are patriots who also love the people of Canada.”⁴⁶¹

⁴⁶¹ “Lapjunk gondjai” (Our Paper's Problems), *Kanadai Magyar Munkás*, November 10, 1966, 8.

Chapter 5: The Anti-Communist Far-Right.

The Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (KÜM) and the communist government's World Federation of Hungarians (MVSZ)—shared a common goal throughout much of the Cold War. Both organizations were opposed to the right-wing, anti-communist immigrant organizations. In 1971, both organizations sought to “isolate right-wing associations” from the rest of the immigrant community and to “remove right-wing leaders from the helm of the neutral or apolitical immigration.”⁴⁶² Hungary's State Emigration Committee felt that the government had to focus its efforts on Hungarians living in Canada, due to the sheer size of the community.

The Hungarian Canadian attitude towards the Peoples' Republic of Hungary is important to us, as this is the second largest immigrant bloc, after Hungarians living in the United States. It is also important for us to determine to what degree we can remove the wider émigré community from the far-right, enemy emigration and how we can gradually decrease the right-wing's influence over other layers of the community.⁴⁶³

The Hungarian Embassy in Ottawa played a key role in implementing this policy. In fact, a directive issued by the MVSZ in 1972 went even further, noting that the goal was to “subvert and isolate the right-wing.”⁴⁶⁴ Anti-communist Hungarian immigrant groups had long claimed that embassy officials aimed to subvert and disrupt their organizations, and this often led to suspicion and tension within the community. Directives issued by the MVSZ and passed on to the embassy show that these suspicions were well-founded, even if

⁴⁶² “Munkaterv Kanada területére az 1971-es évre,” (The 1971 Plan of Action for Canada), 16 March 1971, 00509/2, XIX-J-1-j, KÜM-TÜK, Magyar Országos Levéltár (National Archives of Hungary)—MOL.

⁴⁶³ “Beszámoló az Állami Bizottság előtt a Kanadában élő magyar emigrációról,” (Report to the State Committee on the Hungarian Canadian Emigration), 12 January 1971, 00509/1971, XIX-J-1-J, KÜM-TÜK, MOL.

⁴⁶⁴ “Munkaterv Kanada területére az 1972-es évre,” (The 1972 Plan of Action for Canada), 14 April 1972, 00509/1, XIX-J-1-j, KÜM-TÜK, MOL.

a level of paranoia within some community organizations and the belief that all internal dissension was somehow linked to this policy caused the most problems.

The Hungarian government tried to achieve its goals by monitoring and recording any political changes within the Hungarian Canadian community and “immediately influencing” these tendencies whenever they arose.⁴⁶⁵ This could be achieved by providing direct support to avowedly left-wing organizations and building ties with cultural groups and Hungarian sports clubs in Canada. The MVSZ noted that a large cross section of the Hungarian Canadian community fell into the “partially loyal” category, which usually meant that they were either apolitical or not openly hostile to the country’s regime. The MVSZ believed that this group’s leadership posed a significant problem, as it was usually right-wing and opposed any formal contact with Hungarian governmental organizations. MVSZ officials, however, believed that a significant portion of this group preferred a more conciliatory approach and dialogue with Hungary.⁴⁶⁶ As such, Hungary’s goal was to drive a wedge between community leaders and the masses.

In addition to the embassy’s role in implementing Hungary’s émigré policy, the MVSZ engaged in regular correspondence with Hungarian Canadian immigrants. It promoted organized and personal travel to Hungary, and sought to win the support of community schools by providing them with much needed textbooks, or inviting teachers to government-sponsored conferences.⁴⁶⁷ In 1971, the Hungarian Embassy reported that building ties with apolitical or non-hostile Hungarian Canadians was weakening right-wing

⁴⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁴⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁴⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 5.

organizations. In 1965, Hungarian immigrants and former 1956 refugees began to visit Hungary in growing numbers, even though right-wing associations strongly discouraged their members from travelling home and attempted to strike fear in them by warning that they might be arrested by communist authorities. Despite these warnings, the number of visits grew over the years and the embassy noted with satisfaction that churches and community associations encouraged organized, group travel as well.⁴⁶⁸

Yet the embassy felt that it was waging an uphill battle. Right-wing immigrant groups maintained close contacts with both federal and provincial politicians and were often able to convince parliamentarians that they could sway Hungarian votes through anti-communist rhetoric and by their opposition to Hungary's one-party regime.⁴⁶⁹ The embassy also observed that the influence of immigrants on Canadian politics was stronger than in other countries, with many groups receiving both financial and political support from government sources.⁴⁷⁰ As such, one of the embassy's key objectives was to prove to Canadian political leaders that the staunchly anti-communist Hungarian-Canadian Federation represented but a minority of Hungarians.⁴⁷¹ By successfully isolating right-wing, hostile leaders and organizations, the embassy believed that it could convince Canadian leaders to extend their political, economic and cultural ties with Hungary.

KÜM and embassy officials were very cautious never to unwittingly strengthen or embolden right-wing immigrant groups during their subversive activities. This meant that the

⁴⁶⁸ "Beszámoló a Kanadában élő magyarság helyzetéről, s a nagykövetségnek az emigráció körében kifejtett tevékenységéről," (Report on the State of Canada's Hungarians and the Embassy's Activities in Immigrant Circles), 19 August 1971, 00509/5/1971, XIX-J-1-j, KÜM-TÜK, MOL.

⁴⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 13.

⁴⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 14.

⁴⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 14.

embassy did not initiate contact with the most anti-communist, right-wing or political active community leaders and would often refuse any cooperation with such individuals, if they contacted the embassy for any reason. For example, until 1972, the embassy refused any cooperation with the staunchly anti-communist Movement of Hungarian Freedom Fighters. The Movement maintained official ties with a similar organization in the USA and was affiliated with the far-right *Szittyakürt* newspaper, published in Cleveland. The Canadian branch of the Movement did, however, seek contact with the embassy, in order to seek assistance for exhibits or other cultural events. The embassy, however, rejected any such rapprochement. Nevertheless, the Movement—through Ádám Schaeffer, the editor of the communist *Új Szó* weekly—essentially deceived one of the embassy’s diplomats into meeting with the group’s representatives in November of 1972. Schaeffer invited Hungarian diplomat Miklós Kocziha to a “discussion” in Montréal, in order to determine how the loyal, communist immigration might build bridges with refugees who arrived after the suppression of the 1956 Revolution.

The Hungarian Embassy had long called on reticent communist Hungarian Canadians to reach out to left-leaning “fifty-sixers,” but to no avail. As such, the embassy was surely pleased to detect this apparent change in attitude. What Kocziha did not realize was that he would be meeting with the Movement that the embassy had tried so desperately to avoid. Schaeffer was friendly with Ottó Hommonay, one of the Movement’s leaders, who in the 1960s had been involved with the left-wing Kossuth Sick Benefit Association.⁴⁷²

⁴⁷² Ambassador János Bartha referred to Hommonay as a “political prostitute” in his report to the Hungarian government on Kocziha’s meeting. János Bartha, “A Magyar Szabadságharcosok Forradalmi Tanácsa vezetőinek kapcsolatfelvételi kezdeményezése,” (The Contact Initiative by The Hungarian Freedom Fighters Revolutionary Council), 15 november 1972, 005/3/1973, KÜM-TÜK, MOL.

During the meeting, Hommonay told Kocziha that his group wanted “Hungarian-style socialism” and have “reviewed” their previous policy of no contact with Hungarian authorities, in order to allow for future cooperation.⁴⁷³ Hommonay’s more immediate objective, however, may have been to organize a Canadian celebration of Sándor Petőfi, Hungary’s most prominent 19th century national poet and to cooperate with the embassy on this project.⁴⁷⁴ The celebration would have involved the participation of artists and performers from Hungary and the Freedom Fighters would have arranged their trans-Canada tour. Kocziha, however, refrained from committing himself to any of these plans and simply stated that “all Hungarians have a right to celebrate Petőfi, but in what context and through what perspective people celebrate the poet is quite a different matter.”⁴⁷⁵

Kocziha and Ambassador Bartha reported to KÜM officials that, although Hommonay’s suggestion was worthy of discussion, the embassy would proceed with caution and would “maintain very cautious contact so that if nothing else, [the embassy] may divide the right.”⁴⁷⁶ Neither Kocziha nor Bartha, however, were excited about the Petőfi suggestion, noting instead that they would “rather than nothing at all be organized in Canada than lend our name to a fascistic group.”⁴⁷⁷ The embassy wanted to ensure that its subversive activities vis-a-vis the right were not undone by providing it with legitimacy through such formal and public events.

⁴⁷³ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁴⁷⁴ Sándor Petőfi (1823-1849) was a Hungarian poet and author, who wrote a patriotic poem which helped rally revolutionaries in Hungary in 1848, during their battle against Austria’s imperial rulers.

⁴⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁴⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁴⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 3.

Upon receiving the embassy report, KÜM officials warned Kocziha to be more careful, so as to avoid similar meetings in the future. Budapest even instructed the embassy to sever all contacts with the Freedom Fighters, in spite of Bartha's suggestion that such connections might help them disrupt the right.⁴⁷⁸ KÜM believed that right-wing organizations had little choice but to change their tone, because they were no longer able to attract large audiences to their commemorations and other events.

The embassy's approach to Toronto's Hungarian Canadian Cultural Centre (HCCC) was similar, in that Hungarian diplomats were hesitant to offer any cooperation with what they saw as a primarily right-wing organization. The MVSZ indicated that Hungarian officials should only maintain very cautious contact with individuals associated with the HCCC—rather than on a more formal level—and that these connections should be used to convince the Centre's leaders not to rent space to “extremist, fascist groups.”⁴⁷⁹

The right-wing remained staunchly anti-Communist and hostile to the Hungarian regime throughout the 1970s, even if some realized that cooperation with the embassy might lead to material gain, or offer legitimacy in the eyes of apolitical Hungarians. Yet a handful of prominent incidents in the 1970s and 1980s suggested that the right still had significant sway and could attract media attention.

The Hungarian-Canadian right attracted the most media attention and notoriety when a young Hungarian immigrant attacked Soviet Prime Minister Alexei Kosygin during

⁴⁷⁸ József Németh, “A Magyar Szabadságharcosok Forradalmi Tanácsa vezetőinek kapcsolatfelvételi kezdeményezése,” (The Contact Initiative by The Hungarian Freedom Fighters Revolutionary Council), 3 January 1973, 00513/1973, XIX-J-1-j, KÜM-TÜK, MOL.

⁴⁷⁹ “Az ottawai külképviselet Torontói Magyar Ház tárgyu jelentéséhez,” (Response to the Ottawa Mission's Report on the Toronto Hungarian House), 27 December 1972, 00512/6/1973, XIX-J/-1-j, KÜM-TÜK, MOL.

his November 1971 official visit to Canada. Géza Mátrai, a 27 year old Hungarian, jumped onto Kosygin's back from behind, almost pulling him to the ground, as he walked with his entourage in downtown Ottawa, near the Château Laurier hotel.⁴⁸⁰ The Hungarian Embassy suspected that this attack was not an isolated incident, but part of a right-wing conspiracy aimed at taking public attention away from rapprochement between Canada and the Soviet Union. Hungarian diplomats believed that the arrest of two Hungarians prior to Mátrai's attack for making bomb threats against the Soviet Embassy signalled a concerted right-wing campaign.⁴⁸¹ Mátrai—who ran as a Social Credit candidate in Ontario's provincial election—became an icon for the most staunchly anti-communist groups in Canada and was elected as general secretary of the Alliance of Hungarian Freedom Fighters, following his release from police custody.

While events in the early 1970s, such as the attack on Kosygin, troubled the Hungarian Embassy, the tenth anniversary of the 1956 Revolution and its suppression by Soviet forces was of particular importance to Hungarian Canadian organizations of all political stripes. Understandably, the most conservative and anti-communist groups used the anniversary in 1966 to ensure that the Canadian public did not forget about the Soviet reinvasion of Hungary. From the perspective of the Hungarian Embassy in Ottawa, the potentially most troubling event was a planned automobile demonstration in front of their building on 5 November 1966. The Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs warned the

⁴⁸⁰ Colin Kenney, Director of Operations in the Office of the Prime Minister during Pierre Trudeau's premiership, recounted the Kosygin incident in the *National Post* on 12 January 2009, following the international media attention surrounding the Iraqi journalists who gained infamy for throwing a shoe at former US President George W. Bush. It was revealed that Mátrai is now a social worker in Toronto.

Colin Kenney, "The Man who Attacked Kosygin," *National Post*, 12 January 2009.

⁴⁸¹ István Sándor, "A szélsőséges magyar emigráció tevékenysége Kosygin elvtárs kanadai látogatása idején," (The Activities of the extremist Hungarian emigration during Kosygin's Canadian Visit), 19 November 1971, 00513/1/1971, XIX-J-1-j, KÜM-TÜK, MOL.

embassy that it should expect the participation of between 150 and 200 vehicles.⁴⁸² The demonstration, however, was smaller than what the organizers had hoped for, with only 41 cars participating in a protest, which included driving by the Soviet Embassy and the Parliament of Canada.⁴⁸³ Based on the license plates of the vehicles, the embassy determined that most of the protesters were from Montréal and were likely affiliated with the right-wing Federation of Hungarian Veterans (MHBK). The Veterans had decided to spearhead the protest after the Hungarian Committee of Montréal—the community’s umbrella organization—was divided over this issue.⁴⁸⁴ While only the most conservative and politically active Hungarians took part in this protest, masses and religious services commemorating the revolution and Soviet invasion in both Toronto and Montreal attracted larger crowds.⁴⁸⁵

The largest commemoration occurred in Toronto’s Budapest Park, on the shores of Lake Ontario. An estimated 2,500 Hungarians were present for the unveiling of a monument commemorating the 1956 Revolution.⁴⁸⁶ The embassy conceded that this represented “a certain success for the right-wing immigration,” while also pointing out that the majority of the estimated 50,000 Hungarians living in the Greater Toronto Area stayed home. More troubling from the embassy’s perspective was Transportation Minister Jack Pickersgill’s speech at Montréal’s Windsor Hotel on 7 October 1966, in which he told a crowd of 400 local Hungarians that the Government of Canada’s decision to open the doors

⁴⁸² “A kanadai emigráció megmozdulásai az ellenforradalom leverésének évfordulóján,” (The Canadian Emigration’s Activity’s on the occasion of the Suppression of the 1956 Counter-Revolution,) 28 November 1966, 226/1966, 003215/4, XIX-J-1-j, KÜM-TÜK, MOL.

⁴⁸³ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁴⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁴⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁴⁸⁶ “Kanadai emigráns szervezetek ellenforradalmi rendezvényei,” (The Counter-Revolutionary Commemorations of Canadian immigrant organizations), 28 October 1966, 003215/3, XIX-J-1-j, KÜM-TÜK, MOL.

to Hungarian refugees in 1957 was based not only on the hope that they might start a new life in their host country, but to allow them to “continue the struggle for their homeland’s freedom.”⁴⁸⁷ Pickersgill then gave a similar speech at Ottawa’s Chateau Laurier on 22 October 1966, but omitted his more controversial comments about freeing Hungary from Soviet and communist rule.⁴⁸⁸ The initial statements, however, confirmed a widely accepted belief among Hungarian officials that Canadian authorities encouraged the anti-communist politics and rhetoric of right-wing immigrant groups. The fact that city halls in both Ottawa and Toronto flew the Hungarian revolutionary flag—namely the tricolour, with a gaping hole in the middle, representing the removal of the communist emblem—only provided further evidence of this apparent collusion.

The Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs kept a close eye on all events relating to the commemorations of the 1956 Revolution, including those which were more cultural, rather than overtly political. For example, when the conductor of a choir from Toronto agreed to participate in a commemorative event at Ottawa’s Chateau Laurier, ministry officials discussed whether they should reconsider Hungarian government support to the choirmaster and if it would be best to sever any future contact.⁴⁸⁹ The ministry officials requested that the embassy determine whether Canada’s most prominent Toronto-based Hungarian choir—led by György Zadubán—participated in similar commemorative events.

Hungarian diplomats maintained Canadian political connections, with groups they viewed as loyal and potentially damaging to right-wing community organizations. György

⁴⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁴⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁴⁸⁹ Pál Korbacsics, “A kanadai emigrációs szervezetek ellenforradalmi rendezvényei,” (The Counter-Revolutionary Commemorations of Hungarian Immigrant Organizations), 9 December 1966, 003215/3, XIX-J-1-j, KÜM-TÜK, MOL.

Steiger, a Toronto city councillor affiliated with the New Democratic Party (NDP) and the Canadian Auto Workers Union, played a key role in halting anti-communist Hungarians from renaming one of the city's main public areas "Budapest 1956 Square."⁴⁹⁰ Steiger kept in regular contact with embassy officials, receiving publications from Hungary's National Council of Trade Unions (SZOT) and the promise of a state-subsidized summer vacation for up to 90 Canadian trade unionists.⁴⁹¹

Hungarian Canadian political organizations were particularly concerned about the embassy's activities in Canada and many were convinced that even in the early 1980s, diplomats actively tried to subvert or otherwise weaken their organization. Such subversive activity did, indeed, form part of the embassy's mandate since the mission's establishment in 1964. One of the last controversies to erupt occurred in 1981, when the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs summoned the Hungarian ambassador to a meeting, after complaints that Hungarian diplomat Gyula Szomathelyi had tried to cause divisions with the Hungarian Canadian community. Foreign Affairs decided to act after receiving complaints from the community. A consequent investigation showed that Szombathelyi had "indeed generated controversy and suspicion within the Hungarian Canadian community" and that the diplomat's "primary mission in Canada was to damage by discrediting or otherwise neutralizing well-respected and well established Hungarian Canadian organizations."⁴⁹² Even more troubling to Foreign Affairs was the discovery that Szombathelyi had allegedly "tried very actively to elicit the cooperation of a Canadian

⁴⁹⁰ Pál Korbacsics, "Megbeszélés Steiger György elvtárssal," (Discussion with Comrade György Steiger), 8 September 1966, 003071/2, XIX-J-1-j, KÜM-TÜK, MOL.

⁴⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹² Department of Foreign Affairs, "Talking Points," (1981), XIX-J-1-j, KÜM-TÜK, MOL.

government official in pursuit of his objectives.”⁴⁹³ Foreign Affairs warned that another similar incident would “have severe consequences” for relations between Canada and Hungary.⁴⁹⁴

The incident may have been partially connected to the embassy’s contact with Judy Young, an employee at the Department of Multiculturalism. Young visited the embassy in Ottawa on 23 September 1981 and noted that right-wing community organizations had focused their attacks on Canada’s relationship with Hungary.⁴⁹⁵ As a result of this pressure Foreign Affairs decided to cancel Young’s trip to Hungary, thus ensuring that the Department of Multiculturalism was not represented at a Hungarian language conference organized in Budapest. Young suggested to Ambassador Gyula Budai that the embassy should consider temporarily suspending its activities among Hungarian Canadian immigrant groups, as some politicians tended to accept complaints submitted by right-wing groups without question, so as to perform better in elections.⁴⁹⁶ Budai, however, suggested that the embassy continue cultivating connections with the Department of Multiculturalism, despite the Szombathelyi incident. The ambassador did, however, note that the embassy had to be “more cautious with Judy Young, because we do not know her role in the charges brought against Comrade Szombathelyi. We must either protect her from attacks, or must protect ourselves from her.”⁴⁹⁷

⁴⁹³ *Ibid.*, 1

⁴⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁴⁹⁵ “Beszélgetés Judy Young-gal utaztása elmaradásáról,” (Discussion with Judy Young about the Cancellation of her Trip), 005949, XIX-J-1-j, KÜM-TÜK, MOL.

⁴⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁴⁹⁷ “A KÜM észrevételei emigrációs tevékenységünkről,” (Foreign Affairs’ Observations Concerning our Emigre Activities), 22 September 1981, 005949, XIX-J-1-j, KÜM-TÜK, MOL.

While Hungarian right-wing groups still enjoyed political clout among federal and provincial politicians, they also raised concern in Hungarian diplomatic circles for allegedly plotting to overthrow Hungary's one-party regime. The Western Guard, a newly formed multi-ethnic organization, particularly worried the embassy during the early 1980s. KÜM first became aware of the Western Guard in 1979, but the group's activities attracted more attention among diplomatic circles in 1981. Officials in Budapest knew virtually nothing concrete concerning the organization's size, but they did believe that it was a "terrorist" group which might soon threaten the entire Eastern bloc.⁴⁹⁸ According to Szombathelyi's report, the Western Guard paramilitary group operated in both Canada and the United States, had been established by the CIA and had up to 300 members.⁴⁹⁹ The Guard—comprised of Hungarians and other Eastern European immigrants—was most active in Windsor and Orono, Ontario, as well as in Miami and New York. The Ontario locations reportedly included camps equipped with facilities for shooting practice. The embassy believed that the Guard's goal was to cause unrest throughout Eastern Europe, similar to the protests by the opposition group Solidarity at the time in Poland.⁵⁰⁰ The Western Guard's Hungarian branch reportedly included prominent conservative Hungarian leaders, including Domokos Gyallay-Pap, the president of the Canadian Hungarian Alliance, as well as lesser known and more radical Hungarians, such as a bookstore owner in Toronto who was once the personal secretary of Hungary's fascist leader, Ferenc Szálasi.⁵⁰¹ As such, Hungarian

⁴⁹⁸ "Western Guard elnevezésű terrorista szervezetről szerzett információk," (Information Concerning the Western Guard Terrorist Organization), 13 April, 1981, XIX-J-1-j, KÜM-TÜK, MOL.

⁴⁹⁹ Szombathelyi based much of his report on information received from Hungarian-Canadian communist leaders, including the outspoken András Durovecz. *Ibid.*, 2.

⁵⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 2.

officials believed that the Western Guard represented the merger of the Hungarian right with the most extremist, fascistic and militant elements.

One of the last and most prominent voices of the Hungarian Canadian far right was Judit Tóth of Montreal. Tóth can be seen as an anomaly on the far right, as she arrived in Canada with her parents in July 1957, following the suppression of the 1956 Revolution, as a 15 year-old high school student. The far right attracted relatively few “fifty-sixers” and even fewer immigrants who settled in Canada at such a young age. In an autobiography published three years before her death, Tóth implied that the experience of having to flee her birthplace, Uzghorod (Ungvár)—a town in western Ukraine which had once belonged to Hungary—following the end of the Second World War and her father’s arrest and imprisonment by Soviet forces meant that her subsequent patriotism and staunch anti-communism may have had their origins in personal experience.

Yet Tóth’s political “awakening” came decades later, when she returned to Montréal with her engineer husband, after spending many years in Winnipeg. Before the early 1980s, Tóth had participated in Hungarian folklore dance and music groups in both Winnipeg and Montreal, and had been an active member of Winnipeg’s Hungarian Catholic community. She lived out her Hungarian identity through music, arts and folklore. According to Tóth’s recollections, her interest in politics started during her visits to English university libraries in Montréal, where she discovered numerous books on Hungarian history, written by “spiteful Jewish, Slovak and Romanian historians.”⁵⁰² While Tóth claimed that these biased

⁵⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁵⁰² Judit Tóth, “Ungvártól Montreálig,” (From Ungvár to Montréal), *Hazánkért*, May 2005, www.hazankert.com/05may_biogr.html (Accessed: 20 January 2009).

publications on Hungary “opened her eyes” to a new political reality, her entry into far-right circles began when she launched a weekly Hungarian radio programme in 1983 and came into conflict with Montréal’s Hungarian community. During her decade-long work as a radio host, Tóth determined that the Hungarian Committee of Montréal—the city’s Hungarian umbrella organization—the scouts and the Our Lady of Hungary Parish, were unpatriotic in her understanding of the term and completely unreceptive to her right-wing views. In 1985, Tóth criticized Hungarian scout leaders for organizing a ball and Gypsy music concert on 26 October, three days after the annual commemoration of the 1956 Revolution, to which community leaders responded by suggesting that the renegade radio host was trying to cause division among Hungarians.⁵⁰³ Tóth later claimed that Hungarians from Montreal were prohibited from demonstrating in front of the Czechoslovak and Romanian embassies in Ottawa, because the scouting organization’s leader was employed by Czechoslovak Airlines (CSA).⁵⁰⁴

As Tóth’s radio broadcasts ventured ever further onto far right and anti-Semitic territory, her relations with the Hungarian community strained to the breaking point. When Tóth lent a book about an alleged Jewish conspiracy to take over the United States to a Hungarian Jesuit priest in Montréal, he suggested that Tóth not consume her thoughts with such things. The Our Lady of Hungary Parish also prohibited the distribution of Tóth’s anti-Semitic and fascist pamphlets on church grounds.⁵⁰⁵ The community boycotted the weekly radio broadcast and those who opposed her politics eventually convinced the programme’s advertisers to pull their support. Yet the end of Tóth’s radio broadcasting career hardly

⁵⁰³ *Ibid.*, “A cserkészcsapat és 1956,” (The Scouts and 1956).

⁵⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, “A cserkészcsapat és 1956,” (The Scouts and 1956).

⁵⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, “A Magyar radio műsor ‘tulajdonosai,’ (The Hungarian radio show’s “owners).

convinced her to give up on her far-right politics and media presence. Tóth's website, *Hazánkért*--established in 1996--was among the first Hungarian-Canadian sites during the fledgling days of the internet. The self-made Hungarian publicist also established a monthly print journal under the same name. Tóth spoke endlessly about an alleged international Jewish-Zionist conspiracy, called for the revision of Hungary's borders at the expense of neighbouring countries, wrote in a positive light about Hungary's late fascist leader, Ferenc Szálasi and published staunchly anti-communist diatribes.

Tóth's conflict with the Hungarian Committee of Montréal began in 1985, when her uncompromising conviction that immigrant organizations refuse all ties—including cultural—with Hungary put her at odds with most community leaders. Yet Tóth remained defiant and in a statement sent to the Hungarian Committee of Montréal's president, László Korsós, she indicated that she “will not cooperate with the current Hungarian government, nor with its affiliated political and other organizations or its representatives living abroad.”⁵⁰⁶

Tóth also wrote a letter to Korsós in which she complained that the city's Hungarian-language television broadcast showed signs of cooperation with communist Hungary, as did many of the city's Hungarian leaders. In fact, in August 1984, Korsós agreed with concerns that Tóth had raised about the city's Hungarian television host, Imre Neumüller. In 1984, Neumüller announced the launch of a Hungarian television programme in Montréal, but Korsós argued that as a radio broadcaster, he often relied on material sent

⁵⁰⁶ Judit Tóth, Nyilatkozat (Statement), 13 June 1985, László Korsós Collection, Montreal Hungarian Historical Society (MHHS)

from Budapest and frequently aired these without selection.⁵⁰⁷ Korsós also maintained that, if Neumüller launched an ethnic television program, it fell under the Hungarian Committee's mandate to review the broadcast and ensure that it represented the diverse views and voices of the city's Hungarian community, rather than simply that of a small elite.⁵⁰⁸ At the time, Tóth still cooperated with Korsós. The soon-to-be radio host took it upon herself to visit Father Ferenc Deák, Our Lady of Hungary's Jesuit parish priest, who would view and approve all of Neumüller's material, before he aired it on television. Tóth informed Deák that this responsibility belonged to the Hungarian Committee of Montréal, but the priest alluded to the fact that new immigrants and refugees relied on the city's Hungarian churches--and not on the Committee--when seeking assistance, thus giving religious institutions a natural leadership role in the community⁵⁰⁹.

In June of 1985—once Tóth's relationship with Korsós and the Committee showed signs of strain—the radio host argued that her critical views were “completely superfluous, seeing that the Hungarian immigration is already at the mercy of Hungary's regime.”⁵¹⁰ Tóth remarked that while Hungarian United Church pastor Aladár Komjáthy sent a letter to the city's ethnic channel indicating the community's satisfaction with what the radio host referred to as “the Neumuller show,” she received much more positive feedback from the

⁵⁰⁷ László Korsós, Handwritten notes dated 10 August, 1984, László Korsós Collection, MHHS.

⁵⁰⁸ Korsós noted that a number of people in the community were of the opinion that Neumüller had “served” the interests of the Hungarian government as radio host. These concerns had reportedly led the RCMP to contact Neumüller and review his activities.

Ibid., 4.

⁵⁰⁹ Korsós' notes suggest that there had been a degree of conflict between him and Father Deák. Korsós particularly opposed the Jesuit priest's suggestion that he would screen and approve Neumüller's television programme. Yet the apparent conflict may have been based on the wider issue of the parish priest's role within the broader Hungarian community and the power of the laity within church-based organizations. Korsós quoted Father Deák as saying that the Catholic Church “is not a democracy” and that the “parish priest's word is authoritative in all issues concerning church-based groups.”

Ibid., 2-3

⁵¹⁰ Judit Tóth's letter to László Korsós, 13 June 1985, László Korsós Collection, MHHS.

Hungarian community's grassroots listeners. The host noted with a degree of cynicism that "Father Deák's letter will not be late either" and that "whenever a priest comments, everyone accepts and falls silent."⁵¹¹ Tóth was particularly critical of Neumüller's decision to air material he had received from the Kádár regime's World Federation of Hungarians (MVSZ).

Montréal's Hungarian community clearly felt that Tóth's political views were unacceptable and the most prominent churches and organizations quickly distanced themselves from her. In 1986, after initially supporting the broadcast and even providing \$400 in funding, the Hungarian Committee of Montréal sent a petition with 26 signatures to CFMB Radio's directors, informing them that Tóth's politics caused "divisions" within the community.⁵¹²

The most prominent Hungarian to protest Tóth's radio program was Blanka Gyulai, a recipient of the Order of Canada and co-founder of the Foyer Hongrois retirement home. On 20 January, 1986, Gyulai wrote to CFMB Radio's directors, asking that they convince Tóth to change her tone and avoid divisive politics, so as to ensure that the community does not reject the programme en masse. Gyulai, who had initially supported the establishment of Tóth's programme, argued that she "nauseated the Hungarian listeners, who do not wish to hear or in any way be involved in personal attacks in the radio, or in any peanut politics."⁵¹³

⁵¹¹ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁵¹² The Hungarian Committee of Montréal's Petition (1986), László Korsós Collection, Montreal Hungarian Historical Society (MHHS)

⁵¹³ Blanka Gyulai's letter to Anne-Marie Stanczykowski, 20 January 1986, László Korsós Collection, MHHS.

Yet CFMB's director, Georges Sisto had already written to Tóth (to no avail) on 12 December 1985, asking her to change her programme's tone and—in part—responding to the host's initial letter to the radio, sent two weeks before. Tóth justified her confrontational approach by arguing that she found the policy of rapprochement adopted by some community leaders as unpalatable due to her own experiences during the 1956 Revolution and also argued that the media had a responsibility to inform the wider community of such tendencies.

The truth of the matter is that of late certain members of this group of community leaders have exhibited stronger and stronger signs of their readiness to cooperate with the propaganda organizations of the current Hungarian communist government, which is, as you know, under Soviet domination. A very large segment of the Hungarian community in Montreal is, in fact, here because of the very same Soviet domination from which they have escaped since World War II, and especially since 1956...The Hungarian Committee of Montreal issues no reports nor communications to inform the public at large of their activities...Therefore, the Hungarian radio program has a vital role in informing the public. That role it must fulfil in the interests of its audience, even if in doing so it 'upsets' certain people who wish to keep certain activities under cover.⁵¹⁴

Sisto responded to Tóth's rationale and to the Committee's concerns by asking the host to alter her tone and to accept that the community leaders she so vehemently disagreed with had been elected democratically.

Notre oeuvre en ondes n'est pas de juger les tendances ou croyances des membres de la communauté. Chaque individu a le droit de croire en la religion et de s'identifier au parti qu'il veut. Vos 'leaders' ont été élus démocratiquement par les membres de votre communauté. Si ces membres ne sont pas d'accords avec ces politiques, ils pourraient soit l'exprimer lors des prochaines elections...Vos convictions personnelles ne doivent pas en aucune mesure faire partie de vos emissions...Nous sommes pas la pour inciter ou créer des malentendus entre les communautés et le public.⁵¹⁵

⁵¹⁴ Judit Tóth's letter to George Sisto, 30 November 1985, László Korsós Collection, MHHS.

⁵¹⁵ Georges Sisto's letter to Judit Tóth, 12 December 1985, László Korsós Collection, MHHS.

Tóth's divisive political broadcasts continued and she attacked members of the Hungarian community on the air, who she believed were colluding with Hungary's communist authorities. In January 1986, László Korsós, the Committee's president, ultimately convinced CFMB's directors to provide him with air time, in order to respond to Tóth's allegations. Before explaining why the Hungarian community had to take a pragmatic approach in its relationship with Hungary's Kádár regime, the 62 year old Korsós confirmed his patriotic credentials as a "Hungarian who loves his homeland" and pointed to his military experience during Hungary's conservative and authoritarian pre-1945 regime.⁵¹⁶ Korsós believed that "all who live here in immigration are anti-communists" and that the "freedom-loving, individualist Hungarian people could never accept that dictatorial, horrendous and violent regime."⁵¹⁷ Despite Korsós' personal anti-communist position and the Committee's initial cooperation with Tóth, he explained that opposition to the Kádár government should not preclude immigrant communities from developing ties with writers, artists, musicians and cultural figures in Hungary, nor should it cast a shadow of suspicion over visitors, simply because they lived in the Eastern Bloc.

Whether we like it or not, we have to accept that the Hungarian people live at home and that the Hungarian homeland is still in the Carpathian Basin... We are left with two choices. We can either assimilate among the host country's peoples—in which case it is not important whether we maintain any connection with our homeland—[or], if we want to preserve the culture that we inherited from our ancestors...and if we want to pass this on to our children and to our generous host country, we must build a "narrow footbridge" between us and our homeland...I call this a "narrow footbridge" in order to ensure that we only let those cross who truly have the interests of the Hungarian people at heart.⁵¹⁸

⁵¹⁶ László Korsós, "Válasz a CFMB Rádió magyar adásán elhangzott vádakra," (Response to the Allegations Aired on CFMB Radio's Hungarian Broadcast), 4 January 1986, László Korsós Collection, MHHS.

⁵¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁵¹⁸ László Korsós, "Válasz a CFMB Rádió magyar adásán elhangzott vádakra,"., 5.

Reverend Mihály Fehér of Montréal's Hungarian United Church first used the image of a narrow footbridge connecting Hungary and Hungarian communities in Canada to describe a healthy relationship between immigrants and their ancestral homeland. The Gábor Bethlen Literary Circle—a community organization affiliated with the Hungarian United Church—adopted this policy in 1974, at the behest of the church's pastor. Fehér and Korsós believed that this would allow the Hungarian community to build a new relationship with Hungary, while not selling out to the Kádár regime.

Tóth, however, remained unconvinced and as with other vocal spokespeople of the right-wing, she regarded all such contacts with Hungary or personal visits as anathema and tantamount to collusion with the despised communist regime. Korsós, however, could never accept that Tóth and others on the far right seemingly failed to differentiate between the Kádár regime and Hungary's population.

We know that crossing the “narrow footbridge” is not without risk. Not only is it easy to fall off, but there are many people who do everything they can—for various reasons—to plunge those who cross into abyss... What sort of Tower of Babylon do we inhabit that we can no longer understand each other's language? What kind of nefarious intrigue haunts us, blinding us so that we confuse the Hungarian people with the communist government and fail to see the extended arms or hear the cry for help: ‘help us, free West.’⁵¹⁹

Yet the Hungarian Committee of Montréal's pragmatic and more liberal approach also sparked debate among the ranks of the Canadian Hungarian Alliance (KMSZ), which maintained a more rigid policy. Tóth became especially critical of the Korsós-led Committee when in 1985 it suggested that the KMSZ modify its by-laws and no longer discourage the travel of Hungarian community groups to Hungary or prohibit the invitation

⁵¹⁹

Ibid., 5.

of Hungarian cultural figures or performers from Hungary to Canada. Korsós felt that one particular clause was frequently abused, as it allowed for more militant Hungarian leaders to label those who sought connections with Hungary as “fellow-travellers.”⁵²⁰ Korós believed that the younger generations viewed the KMSZ’s unbending stance as “incomprehensible nonsense” and that they would be dissuaded from participating in such community organizations and eventually replacing the ageing leadership.⁵²¹ Korsós observed that, even if the western immigrant could never accept the Kádár government, all immigrants must accept that the Hungarian Socialist Workers’ Party (MSZMP) currently represents Hungary. The Committee president pointed out that no one could change this reality—“not us, not the United States and not even the United Nations. Only time can change this situation. The moment will arrive when the only authorized forum, the Hungarian people, will determine whether the government is legitimate, or if it should resign.”⁵²²

The Hungarian United Church’s pastor, Aladár Komjáthy, challenged the KMSZ’s ban on formal contacts with Hungary in an even more overt way when he accepted an invitation by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences to attend a conference in Budapest. Komjáthy consulted with Korsós before accepting the invitation, probably assuming that his participation might stir controversy and, in fact, it did. The Ohio-based paper *Katolikus Magyarok Vasárnapja* (Catholic Hungarians’ Sunday), published an article implying that Komjáthy travelled to Budapest at the Hungarian government’s expense and it also quoted the United Church pastor as saying that it was “very important for those living in Diaspora

⁵²⁰ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁵²¹ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁵²² *Ibid.*, 7.

to become familiar with contemporary Hungary” rather than clinging to an “imaginary country.”⁵²³ As could be anticipated, Tóth attacked Komjáthy’s decision to attend the conference during her radio broadcast, whilst also calling into question in the same broadcast the decision to reward a Hungarian student who majored in Russian at McGill University.⁵²⁴

Following Korsós’s radio broadcast, he telephoned CFMB Radio and spoke with Sisto, as well as the station’s president, Andrew Mielewcyk. The station’s president, however, noted that he regularly received letters from listeners who favoured Tóth’s broadcasts, but Korsós suggested that these people were probably “extremists.”⁵²⁵ Korsós also argued that Tóth’s political positions had become more radical since 1984—when the Hungarian Committee openly supported and helped her launch the weekly broadcast. Korsós believed that Tóth had fallen under the influence of an unnamed “extremist,” but apparently this was not enough to convince Mielewcyk.⁵²⁶ The radio’s president suggested that the program continued to attract a sizeable audience and he told Korsós that he was “not convinced that it hurts the community.”⁵²⁷

In January 1986, the Committee decided to circulate its petition in three languages. While Korsós had the support of Our Lady of Hungary’s Father Deák and Father Károly Csókay, the two Jesuit priests urged restraint and caution in dealing with the prickly radio

⁵²³ László Korsós’s letter to *Katolikus Magyarok Vasárnapja*, 7 February 1985, László Korsós Collection, MHHS.

⁵²⁴ “The Attacks Made on the Hungarian Community in Montreal, P.Q.” (1986) László Korsós Collection, MHHS.

⁵²⁵ Telephone Conversation with CFMB Radio 1410 Montreal, 21 January 1986, László Korsós Collection, MHHS.

⁵²⁶ *Ibid.*, 2-3.

⁵²⁷ *Ibid.*, 2.

issue. Deák and Csókay feared that if not handled properly, the Committee's opposition to Tóth could backfire and turn the church into "the scene of further tension."⁵²⁸ As such, the two priests suggested that Korsós contact the radio's directors and convince them to "modify the Hungarian broadcast's polemical and politicized tone," while "acknowledging that segments dealing with cultural issues are much more "valuable."⁵²⁹

The majority of the Hungarian community's leaders openly opposed the divisive nature of Tóth's radio broadcast. They included the Hungarian parish's two priests, the United Church's pastor, the Committee's president, the Hungarian television show's host and the Foyer Hongrois's co-founder. Yet all of these leaders also realized that a sizeable segment of the community's roots may have still listened to the programme and some certainly shared Tóth's uncompromising views on contacts with Hungary. The fact that the two Jesuit priests suggested that the Committee act cautiously, so as not to unnecessarily increase tensions within the community, or when the radio station's president indicated that Tóth was popular among listeners, both demonstrate that the community was not monolithic in its condemnation of her radical politics. Yet it is significant that community leaders across such a broad spectrum decided to stand up against right-wing political views and called for a more pragmatic and moderate approach to the Diaspora's relationship with Hungary. Even more significant is that they challenged not only the views of a local radio host, but also the by-laws of the Canadian Hungarian Alliance in the process.

The rejection of far-right politics by the moderate Hungarian majority was ultimately based on pragmatic reasons and on local realities. While the city's Hungarian

⁵²⁸
⁵²⁹

Károly Csókay's letter to László Korsós, 17 January 1986, László Korsós Collection, MHHS.
Ibid., 2.

community was organized around the Catholic parish, the Hungarian United Church, a separate Presbyterian congregation and the Hungarian Martyrs' Synagogue, all of these religious groups were represented on the Hungarian Committee of Montréal. The involvement of the Hungarian Jewish community, and Rabbi Miklós Schnurmacher in particular, meant that the Hungarian community was more integrated in Montréal, than in other Canadian cities. As such, overt and vitriolic displays of anti-Semitism were not tolerated by mainstream organizations.

Following the demise of her radio broadcast, Tóth withdrew completely from the local Hungarian community and continued her political activities from self-imposed exile. Tóth viewed the prominent members of the community as "Goulash Hungarians," who were more interested in "Gypsy music and Kádárist⁵³⁰ variety shows" than the 1956 Revolution, Hungary's loss of territory following 1920 Treaty of Trianon and were "fellow travelers" when it came to their relationship with Budapest.⁵³¹

⁵³⁰ Hungary communist leader, János Kádár, had a relatively liberal cultural policy often referred to in Magyar as "tilt, tűr, támogat" (to ban, tolerate and support). This policy allowed for limited criticism of the communist regime and the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, which often took the form of humour. Hungarian comedian Géza Hofi was among the most vocal critics of the regime and his satirical skits were popular in both Hungary and in the West.

⁵³¹ Judit Tóth's letter to Christopher Adam, 16 July 2006, MHHS Administrative Collection
I contacted Tóth as president of the Montreal Hungarian Historical Society, in the hope that she would provide our organization with her radio programme's sound recordings and any other documents pertaining to her community involvement, for the purposes of archiving. While Tóth confirmed that she had preserved the sound recordings of all broadcasts, she refused to let us archive this material and noted that she would "rather destroy all of the cassettes," along with her publications. Tóth explained that she did not want to provide "Goulash Hungarians who hated (her) because she dared speak the truth" another opportunity to listen to her radio programs, nor did she want her name to be associated with the most prominent community organizations, including the St. Stephen's Ball, the Engineers' Association, the Hungarian Committee and the *Magyar Krónika* biweekly newspaper. In a subsequent letter I suggested that she should consider depositing her material with Library and Archives Canada. Tóth responded that she would consider this and might also deposit a range of other Hungarian books in her possession. Tóth, however, died of cancer in July 2008 and the only material that appears to have been deposited include print copies of her two publications, namely *Hazánkért* and *24 Óra* (Twenty-Four Hours).

Similar to Montréal, Toronto's Hungarian community also experienced internal conflict over the activities of right-wing groups. In contrast to the Hungarian Committee of Montréal's problems with the far-right, however, the conflict in Toronto spilled over into the city's mainstream English press and received much more media attention. The controversy erupted when the Toronto-based Hungarian Canadian Cultural Centre (HCCC) decided to open a museum exhibit in its St. Clair Avenue building dedicated in part to Hungary's World War II Gendarmerie. Charles Szatmáry, a former member of the Gendarmerie who immigrated to Canada in 1951, donated his personal memorabilia to the HCCC. The display was particularly contentious, considering that members of the Gendarmerie assisted in the deportation of Hungarian Jews following Hungary's occupation by German forces in 1944. The fact that the HCCC's building was a former synagogue helped fuel the controversy. While József Ormay, the HCCC's president, confirmed that there had been opposition to the exhibit within the community, he also observed that the contentious display "was here to stay" and that it was "not directed against anyone in particular."⁵³² The exhibit did, however, raise painful memories among Hungarian Holocaust survivors, including Vilmos Kosaras, editor of the short-lived monthly publication *Torontói Tükör* (Toronto Mirror) and the director of a local Hungarian theatre company. Kosaras became a vocal critic of the HCCC's exhibit.

My problem is not so much that the Gendarmerie took away my father when I was only two and I never knew him, or that I saw them take away my old grandparents. My problem is that today, here in Canada, their ghost is resurrected by the Hungarian Cultural Centre and it continues to haunt me and my family. The question is, would the German community here in Toronto open a museum commemorating the memory of the Gestapo or the Italian community open an exhibit glorifying Mussolini's fascist police?

⁵³²

Zoltan Kaslik, "Exhibit on pro-Nazi police raises ire," *The Globe and Mail*, 30 April, 1986, A14.

What they want to do is brainwash Canadians by telling them this museum is a great Hungarian heritage.⁵³³

Despite opposition from some quarters, the exhibit remained in place and the controversy continued. Some opponents were especially troubled by the revelation that Employment and Immigration Canada had provided the HCCC with a \$40,800 grant in 1984, in order to pay for both a permanent museum, as well as help fund general repairs to the building.⁵³⁴ Hungarian Jewish columnist and writer George Jonas used the HCCC controversy to bolster his vocal opposition to federal government's practice of funding a range of projects promoting multiculturalism.⁵³⁵

Leslie Endes, who by 1988 had taken over as president of the HCCC, defended the exhibit, as had his predecessor. Endes responded to criticism that the portrayal of Hungary's Gendarmerie failed to mention its role in the deportation of an estimated 450,000 Jews by noting that the "museum is for the army and not for the Jewish people or the other Hungarians who were rounded up and killed during the war."⁵³⁶ Kosaras, however, maintained his opposition to the exhibit, but he may have moderated his position somewhat by 1988. Kosaras felt that the exhibit "glorified" the Gendarmerie and that if it was created in the first place, it should provide a broader historical context, including the organization's role during the 1944 deportations.⁵³⁷

The controversy surrounding the exhibit continued unabated, in large part because it coincided with the first war crimes trial ever held on Canadian soil, which further divided

⁵³³ *Ibid.*, A14.

⁵³⁴ John Ferri, "Hungarians say fascist flavor of displays in bad taste," *Toronto Star*, 24 January 1988, A14.

⁵³⁵ George Jonas noted that the federal government "should not be involved in three quarters of the things that have come under the heading of multiculturalism." *Ibid.*, A14.

⁵³⁶ *Ibid.*, A14.

⁵³⁷ *Ibid.*, A14.

Toronto's Hungarian community, forcing it to examine its relationship with right-wing groups and ideologies. In December 1987, police arrested Imre Finta, a one-time captain of Hungary's Gendarmerie who immigrated to Canada in 1948, on charges of kidnapping and forcible confinement relating to his role in the deportation of 8,615 Hungarian Jews. The 76 year old Finta had no money to pay for his defence during the Ontario Supreme Court Trial and as such, the HCCC decided to contribute \$30,000 towards his legal expenses.⁵³⁸ The HCCC's contribution to Finta's case formed part of a campaign entitled "Innocent Until Proven Guilty," through which the community organization collected donations from Canada, the United States, Australia and Western Europe. In February 1988, Ormay joined Endes, the HCCC's current president, in holding a news conference where Ormay described the campaign as a "spontaneous, grassroots initiative" and also tied in the Gendarmerie exhibit, noting that the HCCC had "nothing to apologize for" and "no skeletons in (its) closet."⁵³⁹

Nevertheless, those in the Hungarian community who supported the exhibit and the war crimes charges against Finta, felt that the local English media displayed an overt bias against them. In 1988, Louis Horvath—who had participated in the 1956 Revolution--submitted a complaint against the *Toronto Star* to the Ontario Press Council. Representing a view of the Hungarian national identity which was broadly accepted among right-wingers, Horvath argued that the *Toronto Star's* story was one-sided, as those opposed to the museum "were Jews, not Hungarians."⁵⁴⁰ The Press Council rejected Horvath's complaint,

⁵³⁸ Dana Flavelle, "Defence fund set for war crimes accused," *Toronto Star*, 9 February 1988, H8.

⁵³⁹ Ibid., H8.

⁵⁴⁰ Ron Lowman, "Council dismisses complaint over Star story about museum," *Toronto Star*, 18 July 1988, A3.

but it did find flaw in the *Star*'s use of the term "fascist flavour" in the original article's headline, noting that this was "imprecise."⁵⁴¹ *The Star* also responded, observing that "the fact that Mr. Horvath apparently can't recognize that Jews can also be Hungarian speaks for the validity of his complaint."⁵⁴² What *The Star*, however may have failed to realize is how widespread Horvath's views on Hungarian national identity were among conservative Hungarians and even among some who otherwise preferred centrist politics.

Finta's war crimes trial continued until 25 May 1990, when the jury acquitted the former Gendarmerie officer after more than 12 hours of deliberation.⁵⁴³ Throughout the trial, Finta's defence argued that the former officer never personally participated in loading Hungarian Jews awaiting deporting into train cars, even if he had been present when deportees had their belongings confiscated by Hungarian authorities.⁵⁴⁴ Nevertheless, Erzsébet Pudler, a 64 year old eyewitness who testified before a Canadian judge in Budapest, recalled that in June 1944, Finta "was screaming like a beast" as he ordered Jews detained in the Hungarian city of Szeged to hand over their valuables and threatened that the deportees would "all drop dead, perish like animals."⁵⁴⁵ Defence lawyer Douglas Christie—who gained name recognition for having defended the German-Canadian Holocaust-denier Ernst Zündel in 1984—frequently pointed to Finta's heart problems and erratic pulse—which on one occasion was taken by a nurse in the courtroom and this may

⁵⁴¹ *Ibid.*, A3.

⁵⁴² *Ibid.*, A3.

⁵⁴³ "Imre Finta acquitted of war crimes charges Verdict leaves Jews in shock," *Toronto Star*, 26 May, 1990,

A1.

⁵⁴⁴ Paul Moloney, "I am not a murderer' says freed Imre Finta," *Toronto Star*, 26 May 1990, A13.

⁵⁴⁵ Paul Moloney, "Officer ridiculed Jews, former victim testifies," *Toronto Star*, 16 January 1990, A4.

have influenced the jury's verdict.⁵⁴⁶ The Crown submitted an appeal following Finta's acquittal, but in 1992, the Ontario Court of Appeal decided to uphold the initial verdict.

The approach taken by community leaders in Toronto and Montréal to right-wing actions, ideologies and leaders differed markedly. Montréal's umbrella organization—the Hungarian Committee—stared down challenges from the city's right-wing and divisive radio host and spearheaded a campaign aimed at de-politicizing a program that had veered too far to the right. The Committee also challenged the Canadian Hungarian Federation's ineffective and intrusive policy of banning all contact between member associations and organizations or officials in Hungary. The Committee attempted to push the alliance closer to the centre of the political spectrum and guarantee affiliated groups a higher degree of autonomy. In stark contrast to the pragmatism displayed by the Hungarian Committee of Montréal, the HCCC—Toronto's main umbrella organization—embraced the right-wing, both in agreeing to exhibit Gendarmerie memorabilia and in its initial campaign of support following Finta's arrest. Both of these actions mired the Hungarian community in a polemical debate on Hungary's World War II past, opening up old wounds. As such, while the Hungarian Committee debated how to approach the prickly issue of contacts with Hungary's communist regime—and ultimately decided that cautious contacts were desirable—the HCCC found itself in the midst of a widely publicized controversy surrounding Hungary's long defunct interwar regime.

Two key reasons may explain this noticeable difference in approach between Hungarian communities in Montréal and Toronto. First, the Hungarian Committee of

⁵⁴⁶ "I am not a murderer" says freed Imre Finta," A13.

Montréal's formal integration of the city's Hungarian synagogue—through Rabbi Schnurmacher—meant that non-Jewish Hungarians were more sensitive to the interests and needs of Hungarian Jews. While formal, institutionalized contacts helped integrate Jews into Montréal's broader Hungarian community, those in Toronto often maintained personal, rather than formal ties.

The second factor behind the political differences between Montréal and Toronto was due to the city's long-standing history of deep and institutionalized ideological divisions within the community. Toronto had been the home of Canada's communist immigration and in the 1980s, it was where two of the most anti-communist weekly papers were published. The unwaveringly anti-communist Canadian Hungarian Alliance also had its headquarters in Toronto. As such, while lone wolves, such as Montreal's Judit Tóth, represented the most extreme fringes of the far right, Hungarian embassy officials perceived Toronto as more of hornet's nest of the broader Hungarian fascist émigré community.

The cancellation of Tóth's radio broadcast in 1992 and the demise of her monthly publication in 2006, due to declining subscriptions, represented the end of the Hungarian Canadian far-right immigration. Right-wing, patriotic and deeply anti-communist groups continued to exist after 1989—including the Federation of Hungarian Veterans (MHBK)--but these rapidly dwindling associations did not openly and officially identify with Szálasi or Hungary's fascist movement and as such cannot be mentioned in one breath with Újlaki's *Hungarist Bulletin*, Tóth's activities or with the reportedly militant Western Guard.

Conclusion

From the arrival of the first Hungarian settlers in Canada in the 1880's to the influx of economic migrants following the First World War, Displaced Persons (DP's) after the Second World War and nearly 40,000 refugees after the suppression of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, Hungarian-Canadian communities were seen as pawns on a chessboard drawn up by politicians and political elites in Hungary and abroad. When Paul Oscar Esterházy, a travel agent based in New York and former rebel fighter in the 1848 Hungarian Revolution and War of Independence against the Habsburgs, convinced Hungarian coalminers in Pennsylvania to relocate to regions of the Northwest Territories that would in 1905 become Saskatchewan, he did so out of a desire to create a "new Hungary" on the Canadian prairies; a Hungarian society based on the values of popular democracy that he had hoped would prevail in 1848. The southern Saskatchewan town of the Esterhazy, established in 1886, and a nearby Catholic stone church in the now abandoned village of Kaposvar, are the two remaining signs of Esterházy's efforts.

When Hungarian intellectuals arrived in Canada from Hungary following the devastation of the First World War and the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, they brought with them the polemics and warring ideologies that tore Hungary apart in 1918-19. This had been a period of competing socialist, communist and conservative revolutions. They established two newspapers which transported the political battles of Central Europe to rapidly-growing Hungarian immigrant communities in Canada, with each side using fraternal benefit societies, community groups and churches to bolster their causes. The conservative *Kanadai Magyar Újság* (Canadian Hungarian News), established by editor

Ivan Hordossy in 1924--just three years after immigrating to Canada--and based in Winnipeg, received direct financial assistance from Hungary's authoritarian interwar regime, thanks to its close relationship with the Kingdom of Hungary's consulate general in the Manitoban capital. Gusztav Nemes, took over the paper in 1939 and continued publishing it until its demise in 1976. He strengthened its ties with Regent Miklós Horthy's regime, even while carefully avoiding any indication of disloyalty to Canada during the Second World War. The *Újság* featured the irredentist slogan "Truncated Hungary is not a country, pre-Trianon Hungary is heaven" on the front page of each issue, in an effort to keep alive the hope that the Hungarian government might still recover territories lost after the First World War.

As in interwar Hungary, Hungarian settlers on the prairies and recent working class immigrants arriving in Montreal and Ontario's Tobacco Belt were seen by elites and intellectuals as politically immature, lacking any adherence to a coherent political ideology. The editors of the *Újság* saw their role as an instructive one, infusing politically clueless peasants and workers with a vague loyalty to conservatism, Hungarian patriotism, irredentism and a visceral disdain of Communists. With offices in both Winnipeg and Budapest, the *Újság* maintained strong ties with the Hungarian government, even during the Second World War, when Nemes launched a campaign aimed at demonstrating his paper's loyalty to Canada, a disdain of Nazism, fascism and Communism, as well as the belief that he could craft a Hungarian-Canadian worldview.

Nemes needed an opponent that he could define himself against and he found one in the *Kanadai Magyar Munkás* (Canadian Hungarian Worker), Canada's second largest and

openly communist Hungarian weekly. While Nemes actively and successfully politicized most Hungarian churches and community organizations, the *Munkás* built up an entirely separate network of fraternal benefit societies and community halls, named after Lajos Kossuth, the radical revolutionary from the 1848 War of Independence and a favourite hero of Hungarian communists in both Hungary and abroad. Based in Hamilton, the *Munkás* set the tone in its inaugural July 16, 1929 issue, when it spoke in openly violent terms of how feisty workers and oppressed working class women would strike a blow against Hungarian aristocrats and capitalists. The paper also took the fight directly to Winnipeg, the home of both the *Újság* and the Hungarian consulate general, where it organized demonstrations and submitted petitions for the release of Hungarian communist Mátyás Rákosi, who languished as a political prisoner in Hungary. Following the Soviet take-over of Hungary after the end of the Second World War, Rákosi became the country's repressive Stalinist dictator and the *Munkás* offered him its unequivocal support, even after Joseph Stalin's death.

Newspapers were hardly the only institutions of the Hungarian Canadian immigration that were deeply politicized, due to the ideological struggles in Hungary. Ambrosius Czako, a former Roman Catholic priest and later a United Church of Canada minister who had actively participated in Hungary's 1918 socialist revolution, opened his own Hungarian congregation in Toronto and launched a monthly magazine entitled *Tárogato*. Both spoke out strongly against Hungary's interwar government and in favour of social justice for the working poor. Czako referred to Nemes and his conservative paper as the authoritarian Hungary's Canadian fifth column and allied himself with the *Munkás* in an effort to convince the Government of Canada to shut down their paper during the Second World War.

Both the *Munkás* and the *Újság* survived the War, yet each found itself struggling to survive in the postwar world. The *Munkás* was both unwilling and ultimately unable to extend its readership to the newly-arrived 1956 refugees, which injected ageing communities with vitality and youth during the late fifties and 1960's. Additionally, the paper's existing readers began turning away from the editor's harsh, Stalinist stance and found his overt support of the Soviet invasion of Hungary insulting. When in 1967 the *Munkás* renamed itself to *Új Szó* (New Word) and tried to build a more moderate, left-leaning image, in order to appeal to a larger audience and to also appease its primary financial supporter, János Kádár's relatively liberal and pragmatic Hungarian communist government, factionalism and internal rivalries tore the paper apart and divided even its rapidly shrinking and ageing base of supporters.

The *Újság* also struggled after 1956, despite its patriotism and conservatism. Based in Winnipeg, Nemes Gusztáv was never able to build a large readership in Central and Eastern Canada, which became the centre of the Hungarian community after the War and particularly following 1956. Rival weekly newspapers edited in Toronto by new arrivals, most notably *Magyar Élet* (Hungarian Life) and *Kanadai Magyarorság* (Hungarian Canadians) had access to the country's largest Hungarian communities, churches, community centres and businesses, while Nemes found himself increasingly isolated among an older generation of immigrations in the West. Nemes was strongly supportive of the 1956 Revolution, but his paper's focus on Canadian news extracted from Canadian Press reports and his ties to the interwar Horthy regime made it appear as tired, anachronistic and uninteresting. Nemes' main financial supporter, the Horthy regime, was long gone, as were many of the small, western Hungarian communities that the paper

originally served, when the longstanding editor finally threw in the towel and ended his publication in 1976. The *Új Szó* survived until 1987, although in the 1980's, its poor financial situation and almost completely evaporated readership base meant that it had no choice but to cut down on its issues and turn into a monthly publication. After 1986, the Hungarian Embassy in Ottawa focused on building ties with non-political cultural groups in Canada's Hungarian community and the Hungarian government was no longer interested in the final remnants of the financially and ideologically bankrupt Hungarian Canadian communist movement.

The 1956 Hungarian Revolution injected not only new life into Canada's ageing Hungarian communities, but also political and generational conflict. Those who had arrived to Canada decades earlier were often excited and eager to help the fifty-sixers integrate into their existing churches and community associations. But each cohort of immigrants left Hungary with a very different image of the home country than earlier arrivals, especially considering that Central Europe went through such seismic political change and turmoil during the twentieth century.

The fifty-sixers were a much better educated group of immigrants than those who arrived in Canada during the first half of the twentieth century. A greater percentage were secular urbanites who, in stark contrast to Hungarians in western Canada, had no experience in farming and rural life, and had limited interest in the church. Fifty-sixers had often come of age in the last years of the war or during the early communist period and unlike earlier arrivals to Canada, they had little personal experience with Miklós Horthy's interwar regime and its focus on irredentist nationalism, clericalism and a semi-feudal economy

based on privileged classes and an oppressed, largely landless peasantry and working class. The immigrants of the 1920's and 1930's came to Canada from a vastly different Hungary than the fifty-sixers and they also arrived in a host country that gave them a much cooler welcome than those who had to flee their homeland due to a moving revolution that Canadians knew about from their newspapers, radio and from television. As early as 1958, the fifty-sixers began building their own community and professional organizations, the largest of which became the Hungarian Canadian Engineers Association, with chapters in Montreal and Toronto. In Montreal, fifty-sixers organized the city's largest annual European ball and quickly decided to move their event from the basement of Our Lady of Hungary Parish, which occasionally attracted a rougher crowd, to the ballrooms and banquet halls of the far more exclusive Windsor Hotel.

Hungary's communist government was aware of both generational and political dividing lines in Canada's Hungarian communities and it used its diplomats in Ottawa to exacerbate these divisions. Such meddling in the community's affairs weakened the most vehemently anti-communist and right-wing elements. The Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs quickly realized that, rather than continuing to alienate fifty-sixers and treating them as a monolithic block of rabid anti-Communists, they should be seen as a politically diverse group, which included a large contingent that was willing and interested in maintaining its ties with Hungary. By actively encouraging more centrist fifty-sixers to visit Kádár's Hungary and taste Goulash Communism first-hand, the regime's goal was to discredit the most staunchly anti-communist right-wing (comprised largely of DP's) and show the level of development and economic well-being in their home country. The embassy's overt promotion of tourism to Hungary put right-wing organizations, community leaders and

polemical newspapers like *Magyar Élet* on the defensive, often leading them to use public pressure tactics, including claims of communist collusion or sympathy, to discourage community members from visiting Hungary while the despised Kádár, the man who betrayed the revolution, was in power.

As the Hungarian Embassy's mandate of identifying and disrupting right-wing emigre organizations in Canada ended, so did the activities of Hungarian state security agents in Canada. The warming of relations between Hungarian diplomats and the community, and a generally positive image of Hungary that Kádár's reforms and liberalizations created in the West diminished the political mission of many Hungarian community organizations, leaving the staunchest expressions of anti-communism to dwindling number of far right groups.

Can an émigré community largely built around politics survive if the enemy that unites otherwise disparate groups and people finally retreats? The history of Hungarian-Canadians demonstrates that fear of the "other" was a powerful unifying force in disparate political camps that had such intensive and ingrained animosity towards each other that any hope of co-existence within a single community was profoundly unrealistic. Albert James Bergerson, an American sociologist, made a distinction between what he saw as politically motivated ethnic solidarity and what he simply called "ethnic."⁵⁴⁷ To be "ethnic" is to cling to one's perceived heritage, folklore, ancient customs, cuisine, neighbourhood networks and

⁵⁴⁷ Bergerson argues that ethnic groups can decide to "opt out" of the melting pot not just when they are still fighting conflicts imported from their home country, but also when they feel threatened by other ethnic groups in their host society. In the United States, the perceived threat posed by another minority led European ethnic communities to reclaim their identity at a time when it was waning. Albert James Bergerson, "Neo-Ethnicity as Defensive Political Protests," *American Sociological Review*, (Vol. 42, 5 October 1977) 823.

language. According to Bergerson, the creation of politicized ethnic identities in the United States arose in part as an extension of conflicts imported from home countries, but also as a form of protest among white ethnic groups in the 1960's and 1970's who felt threatened by the American federal government's "intrusion" into local, municipal affairs, where ethnic communities often held significant political clout), all in an effort to improve the lot of African Americans.⁵⁴⁸ If Bergerson's theory and terminology were applied to Hungarians in Canada, we can conclude that ethnic solidarity was politically motivated.

Among Canada's Hungarians, anti-communism, rather than a protest against any aspect of Canadian government policy, remained the central unifying force until 1989 and served as the foundation of the community's sense of ethnic solidarity. Political conflict with Hungary's communist government and the trauma of 1956 gave Canada's Hungarian communities a *raison d'être*, beyond a simply nostalgic attachment to certain aspects of Hungarian culture, such as cuisine, folk dance or music. Politics kept Hungarians attending commemorations of the 1956 Revolution in church basements across the country, at a time when mention of the uprising in Kádár's Hungary was anathema. Political conflict among Hungarians about what kind of relationship to build with the regime in Budapest at any given time and ownership over the legacy of the 1956 revolution not only served as deeply divisive factors among Canada's Hungarian communities, but also helped build institutional completeness and led to a plethora of newspapers, each speaking to specific audiences and segments of the emigration. Hungarian community leaders bemoaned these divisions and were justified in their anger at Budapest's political meddling, representing a long, inglorious history of treating immigrants and their organizations as pawns. Yet it is

⁵⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 824.

precisely this diversity which may have drawn Hungarian Canadians of all political persuasions into the life of the community and into impassioned debates on their heritage and homeland. Politics and the living memory of 1956 gave Hungarian immigrants and their children a tangible narrative of identity that went far beyond a vague attachment to ethnic food, folk dance and attire, often referred to as “situational ethnicity.”⁵⁴⁹

While the Foreign Ministry ended its overt policy of infiltrating and disrupting Hungarian Canadian community organizations in 1986 and turned away from overt political meddling in émigré affairs, a real détente in Hungary’s strained relationship with Hungarians in Canada only came later. The Hungarian Socialist Workers’ Party (MSZMP) decided in early 1989 to finally recognize 1956 as a revolution with just cause. On January 28, 1989 Imre Pozsgay, a member of the MSZMP’s Central Committee went on state radio and referred to the revolution as a “popular revolt” and in June of 1989, the remnants of the communist government created the Institute for the History of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, which worked with Hungarian refugees living abroad to collect archival records and construct an oral history of the revolt.⁵⁵⁰

⁵⁴⁹ Joane Nagel, “Constructing Ethnicity—Creating and Recreating Ethnic Identity and Culture,” *Social Problems*, (Vol. 4, No. 1, February 1994) 154-57.

⁵⁵⁰ Little over twenty years after its establishment, Hungary’s right-wing Fidesz government completely eliminated the public Institute’s funding. The official reasoning behind the Institute’s shuttering had to do with the country’s austerity measures and the large deficit and government debt, but the organization’s liberal and left-leaning connections likely played a role, just like in 1999, when the first Fidesz government also cut the organization’s funding.

Az 1956-os Magyar Forradalom Történetének Dokumentációs és Kutatóintézete Közalapítvány honlapja, (Official Website of the Institute for the History of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution), <http://www.rev.hu/>

Agency or victimhood?

The seminal works of Carmela Patrias, N.F. Dreisziger and John Kosa on Hungarian Canadians all conclude that successive regimes in Hungary exerted political influence over the diaspora and interfered politically in their affairs. While Patrias was the only historian to explore in depth the political interests that tied Montreal, Toronto, Hamilton and Winnipeg with Budapest, scholars of Hungarian-Canadian history have not yet grappled with the question of whether Hungarian immigrants were the victims of the cold, calculating machinations of Hungarian dictatorial regimes, or if they in fact had agency to define their own politics and destiny, regardless of what Hungary expected of them. An analysis of archival material in Budapest made available to researchers in the last twenty years shows that not only did Hungarian community leaders have the ability to go against the directives of their political allies—and sometimes financiers—in Budapest, but that Hungarian officials had little choice but to accept these deviations, so as not to risk alienating much-needed allies abroad.

Officials in Budapest were riled at flagrant displays of interwar nationalism and even irredentism on the part of Hungarian Communists in Canada. Yet they had no ability to correct these wayward views. The relationship between Budapest and their political allies in Hungarian communities was one of mutual vulnerability. Budapest held the purse strings, but—as with most authoritarian and politically isolated regimes—it placed great emphasis on reaching out to potential allies within the diaspora, even when those allies were not entirely reliable, largely ineffective in their politics and sometimes a significant liability.

Balancing identities

It is also important to dig deep into the rhetoric and labels of Hungarian-Canadian politics and question the language of the polemical discourse. Patrias spoke primarily of conservative patriots and communist proletarians in the Hungarian community; two diametrically opposed groups involved in verbal battle. Yet by extending Patrias' exploration of the interwar period to the Second World War and the Cold War, it becomes clear that the initial burst of internationalist and class-based enthusiasm on display during the early days of the Hungarian-Canadian communist movement quickly gave way to expressions of Hungarian patriotism—sometimes even ethnic nationalism—among those who believed that the primary form of self-identification had to be based around working class solidarity.

Ethnic and national identification proved far more salient among Hungarian-Canadians—including Communists—than their class identity. Hungarians in Canada were not divided between patriots and proletariats, but between nationalists on both sides, who fought for ownership of Hungarian national symbols, history and leadership of Hungarian-Canadian communities. The most pertinent question, therefore, has little to do with whether one group is more patriotic than the other. Hungarian-Canadian historians should instead ask themselves: how did the two sides attempt to define the nature and scope of Hungarian nationalism and identity in Canada, and whose view prevailed? While it is clear that the community's conservative, anti-communist mainstream came out victorious in 1989 and that by that point the communist movement had completely disintegrated, the Hungarian-

Canadian left never ceded the discourse of patriotism to the right. They simply supplemented their nationalism with increasingly unenthusiastic and largely unconvincing lip service to the tenets of class warfare and internationalism.

POSTSCRIPT

While the Hungarian left did its fair share to divide politically the Hungarian Canadian community and import political struggles and class grievances from Hungary to Canada, the Hungarian right-wing was always far more inclined to see any criticism of the Hungarian interwar regime and—after 1989—right-wing governments in Budapest as not only unpatriotic, but also nefarious in its attempt to hinder efforts aimed at building political uniformity in the Hungarian-Canadian community. Hungarian conservative governments following the collapse of Communism continued the time-honoured tradition of treating Hungarian-Canadian communities as political pawns, viewing churches and cultural groups as political units, even when party politics had nothing to do with their mandate.

When in June 2011 Hungarian Ambassador László Pordány gave an interview to the *Magyar Krónika* (Hungarian Chronicle) online newspaper in Montreal, he claimed that Hungarian Canadians “drink from the same political cup” and were broadly supportive of the current right-wing government, despite the international concern surrounding Budapest’s increasing disregard of press freedoms, an independent judiciary, as well as other parliamentary checks and balances.⁵⁵¹ Planned legislation in Hungary that would give Hungarian Canadians, Hungarian immigrants in other countries and Hungarian minorities in Slovakia, Ukraine, Romania and Serbia the right to vote will only further augment the

⁵⁵¹ László Pordány previously served as ambassador in Australia and in his interview, he also noted that the Hungarian Australian community was very politically active” and closely monitored events in Hungary. The ambassador referred to political active Hungarians living abroad as the “national emigration,” implying that liberal or apolitical immigrants are less patriotic.

“Dr. László Pordány—Hazánk új kanadai nagykövete,” (Dr. László Pordány—Our Homeland’s New Ambassador in Canada,” *Magyar Krónika*, June 17, 2011, http://www.magyar kronika.com/kanadai_hirek/2011/0617.html .

politicization of these communities, much of it in the form of explicit political meddling from Budapest.

The activities of Canada's second largest circulation Hungarian weekly, *Magyar Élet* (Hungarian Life), a paper with open ties to Hungary's governing Fidesz party, whose editor received the most prominent national distinction awarded to Hungarians living abroad, confirm that the politicization of the Hungarian-Canadian community and political interference from Budapest continues, more than twenty years after the fall of communism. *Magyar Élet* launched a petition in January 2011 protesting the "malicious and insulting media campaign" against the Hungarian government--which is simply showing its commitment to the "unity of the Hungarian nation"—while also declaring that "Hungarian Canadians fully support the aims and objectives of the newly elected Hungarian government, under the most talented and committed leadership of Mr. Viktor Orbán."⁵⁵² With the "Justice for Hungary" slogan, overtly associated with the interwar irredentist protest against the Treaty of Trianon, printed at the top of the petition, the Hungarian government diaspora policy of explicit politicization has come full circle.

As the clearest sign of precisely how deep Budapest's politicization of Hungarian Canadian communities continues to run, the Christian Democratic Peoples' Party, a wing of Hungary's governing Fidesz party, re-published on its website a vitriolic piece originally appearing in *Magyar Élet*. It claimed that there was an "anti-Hungarian bureau" comprised of liberal Hungarians in Canada, and that it was time for Hungarian-Canadian communities

⁵⁵² Péter Kaslik, "Justice for Hungary! Protest against the malicious, and insulting media campaign against Hungary, and Hungarians everywhere," *Magyar Élet*, January 31, 2011, <http://www.magyarélet.ca/petition/>.

to “cast out the Quislings” living in their midst⁵⁵³. While the publication of a vitriolic article in a Hungarian Canadian paper boasting a long history of polemical articles and right-wing populism may serve as no surprise, the fact that the Hungarian governing party embraces the idea of ridding Canada’s Hungarian communities of “treasonous” liberals, or of anyone critical of the Hungarian prime minister, suggests a marked radicalization in the politicization of Hungarian-Canadian communities that has a history stretching back to the days of the 19th century prairie settlements.

Hungarians in Canada still form a numerically significant community and for the first time ever, the Hungarian government has decided to give them the right to vote in Hungary parliamentary elections, as long as they apply for Hungarian citizenship. As a new voting block potentially comprised of as many as 315,510 voters, the politicization of émigré communities may be more pronounced than ever before in the run-up to the 2014 parliamentary elections.⁵⁵⁴ While larger Hungarian minorities in both Slovakia and Romania will also see Hungarian politics descend upon their communities more than ever before, Canada may be a more fertile ground for the populist-nationalist governing party. It has generally poor relations with the leading Hungarian political party in Slovakia, known as Most-Híd (Bridge), and a history of tensions with the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (RMDSZ). In Slovakia, Budapest interfered in the 2010 Slovak elections by publicly favouring one ethnic Hungarian political party over the centrist and conciliatory

⁵⁵³ Peter Kaslik, “Megint jönnek, jelentgetnek,” (They Are Coming Again and They Are Reporting On Us”) *Christian Democratic Peoples’ Party* (KDNP) Source: <http://kdn.hu/publicisztika/megint-joennek-jelentgetnek%E2%80%A6>

⁵⁵⁴ “Ethnic origins, 2006 counts, for Canada, provinces and territories - 20% sample data,” *Statistics Canada*, Source: <http://www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/hlt/97-562/pages/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo=PR&Code=01&Data=Count&Table=2&StartRec=1&Sort=3&Display=All&CSDFilter=5000>

Most-Hid, as it was perceived as more firmly right-wing and radical in its Hungarian patriotism and burned its own bridges after its favoured political formation failed to pass the five percent threshold necessary to enter parliament.⁵⁵⁵ In contrast, there is no party or even a single national organization that claims to represent Hungarians in Canada, but Fidesz does have the second largest Hungarian weekly newspaper printed in Canada firmly in its grasp and the legacy of Communism, which will likely keep most Hungarian Canadian from voting for the largest opposition party, the Socialists.

The continued politicization of Canada's Hungarian communities, especially in light of the next elections, is not the only aspect in Hungarian Canadian studies that provides an opportunity for future research. The fact that in 2009 Hungary was the second largest source of refugees to Canada—primarily from the country's Roma minority—provides an opportunity for quantitative research on these surprising figures, as well as a chance for oral interviews with claimants.⁵⁵⁶ The Hungarian community is also growing thanks to the emigration of high-profile, openly left-leaning media personalities and intellectuals from Hungary, following the right wing's two third parliamentary majority and near total collapse of the left. József Orosz, an outspoken and popular Hungarian television and talk radio host associated with liberal politics immigrated to Montreal in May 2010, just weeks after Fidesz won the elections.⁵⁵⁷ While there are no left-leaning newspapers in Canada yet, the *Amerikai Népszava* (American People's Voice), a social democratic paper established in 1891 and the oldest Hungarian weekly publication still printed outside of Hungary, was

⁵⁵⁵ "Another Direction," *The Economist*, June 13, 2010, 24.

⁵⁵⁶ A total of 2,512 Hungarian citizens claimed refugee status in Canada in 2009, compared to 7,575 from Mexico and 2,161 from the United States.

"Refugee Statistics for 2009-2010," Open Data Project - Government of Canada.

⁵⁵⁷ "Orosz József belefáradt a Kontrába és Kanadába megy," (József Orosz is tired and he is going to Canada) HVG, April 16, 2010, Source: http://hvg.hu/itthon/20100416_orosz_jozsef_kontra_kanada .

purchased by prominent Hungarian journalist László Bartus, who immigrated to the United States and given a new lease on life when it went online with a daily version, dramatically expanded its content and convinced top publicists, thinkers and academics from Central Europe to become regular contributors.⁵⁵⁸ Although by no means a communist paper, *Népszava*'s strong rhetoric and unforgiving criticism of the current Hungarian government is reminiscent of the fiercely polemical language used by publications during the Cold War.⁵⁵⁹

From a theoretical and methodological perspective, the history of the Hungarian Canadian community offers an array of options for future research, considering the traditionally political nature of most survey historians produced to date. Microhistory in particular may provide an opportunity for historians to explore the culture and thoughts of “ordinary” Hungarian Canadians and how they viewed their place in Canada and their multiple identities, rather than focusing on community and church leaders. Microhistory allows historians to explore a single community group or individual in a specific place and time, while arriving at much broader conclusions from an otherwise narrowly focused piece of history. Italian historian Carlo Ginzburg's monograph *The Cheese and the Worms* provides for the basis for all microhistory, by exploring the culture of subordinate classes and arguing that they were capable of developing and embracing their own ideas about their

⁵⁵⁸ “Az Amerikai Népszava és a Kohányi Társaság bemutatása,” (Introducing the American Peoples' Voice and the Kohányi Society), Source: <http://nepszava.com/2011/06/magyarok-amerikaban-informacios-portal/a-kohanyi-tarsasag-bemutatasa.html> .

⁵⁵⁹ In an op-ed piece, *Népszava* compared Prime Minister Viktor Orbán government to a fascistic regime. László Bartus: “Az Unió első fasiszta állama,” (The Union's First Fascist State), *Amerikai Népszava*, May 18, 2011, Source: <http://nepszava.com/2011/05/uncategorized/bartus-laszlo-az-unio-elso-fasiszta-allama.html> .

community and the world, independent of their political or financial leaders.⁵⁶⁰ A key problem for researchers, however, is that for much of history the culture of the lower classes was largely oral, so finding an archival paper trail upon which to base one's research is difficult. This applies to the Hungarian Canadian community as well, whether we explore the culture of late nineteenth century peasants in Kaposvár, Saskatchewan or Hungarian workers in the Tobacco Belt region. There are, however, unexplored sources that could be used in producing a microhistory of Canada's Hungarian communities, including a set of recorded interviews conducted in 1978 by historian Susan Pap on the last survivors of the earliest Hungarian settlements in Saskatchewan, as well as a series of interviews from 2006 with "ordinary" fifty-sixers on how they experienced life as a refugee in Canada.

The opening of archives in Hungary over the course of the past decade also provides an opportunity for research that historians of Hungarians in Canada have only recently started using. The National Archives of Hungary's Foreign Ministry collection (including the complete archives of the former Embassy of the Republic of Hungary in Ottawa) was consulted widely when researching this paper, as well as the Historical Archives of Hungarian State Security. Both offer a depth of information on Hungarians in Canada, intra-community conflicts and detailed backgrounders on community leaders, major publications and institutions not available anywhere else.

The Hungarian identity in Canada was both politically constructed and politically maintained by the interventions of Hungary's successive governments and regimes, as well

⁵⁶⁰ As a pioneer in microhistory, Ginzburg examines the life and peculiar religious views of a sixteenth century miller in Friuli (a region in northern Italy) and draws larger conclusions about popular culture in sixteenth century Europe. Carlo Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms*, (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1997) 9.

as by the immigrants who brought with them the political and historical baggage of the specific era that they left behind. While the Hungarian government tried to exercise its influence over the community, Hungarian Canadians demonstrated agency by negotiating their own identities around events and experiences, and in opposition to the political values that they found unsavoury. The Hungarian government had money, influence and an official government policy of political meddling at its disposal, yet it still had to contend with seemingly friendly Hungarian-Canadian communists who in reality were suspicious of Budapest and often uncooperative, as well as a little too nationalistic for the liking of Hungary's party elites. From the staunch internationalist communists who patriotically condemned the Treaty of Trianon to the fifty-sixers that Budapest first shunned, then wooed, even while they celebrated their taboo revolution. Hungary never left immigrants to their own devices, but on occasion, Canada's Hungarians also found the will to fling Budapest's political chessboard off the table.

Appendix 1.

Hungarians in Canada, by province (1941)⁵⁶¹

Province	Hungarian Population
Alberta	7,892
Bristish Columbia	2,893
Manitoba	2,418
New Brunswick	77
Nova Scotia	554
Ontario	22,039
Prince Edward Island	--
Quebec	4,134
Saskatchewan	14,576
Yukon and Northwest Territories	15

⁵⁶¹ The figures presented in the table represent the results of the 1941 Census, as presented in Dr. Pál Sántha's study of the census findings, as they relate to Hungarians in Canada.

Pál Sántha, *Kanada magyarsága* [Canada's Hungarians], (Winnipeg: Kanadai Magyar Újság, 1946) 10.

Appendix 2: Denominational Breakdown of Hungarian Canadians (1941)⁵⁶²

Denomination	Number of faithful	Proportion of Hungarian-Canadian population
Roman Catholic	38,154	69.88%
Presbyterian	5,596	10.24%
United Church	4,501	8.24%
Lutheran	2,612	4.78%
Baptist	987	1.80%
Anglican	790	1.44%
Pentecostal	404	.74%
Greek Orthodox	315	.58%
Other*	1,187	2.17%

*Other: Includes a wide variety of Protestant groups and denominations, including Evangelicals, Mennonites, Mormons, Christian Scientists, Seventh-Day Adventists, 'Bible-Learners,' "Christians," members of the Salvation Army and 468 people who either belong to an unnamed 'sect,' or whose religion is unknown. Only 10 people wrote that they were Jewish. The total number of Hungarian Canadian Jews in 1941 remains unknown, as the Canadian Census treated Jews as a separate ethnic group.

⁵⁶²

Ibid., 18.

Appendix 3: The Refugees of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution
(Arrivals to Canada between November 1956 and June 1960)⁵⁶³

Hungarian arrivals to Canada through:	Numbers
Austria	25,620
United Kingdom	5,250
France	3,070
Yugoslavia	1,770
Italy	1,540
Federal Republic of Germany	700
Switzerland	120
Other or unspecified	1,120

⁵⁶³ Report of the Statistical Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Library and Archives Canada, RB 25: 86-87/336.

Appendix 4: Hungarian places of worship and faith communities in Canada

Province/City	Church's Name	Denomination	Established
Alberta/Calgary	Szent Erzsébet / St. Elizabeth Parish	Roman Catholic	1953
Alberta/Calgary	Kálvin Magyar Református Egyház/Calvin Hungarian Church	Presbyterian	1930
Alberta/Edmonton	Szent Imre/Saint Emeric	Roman Catholic	1957
Alberta/Edmonton	Kálvin Magyar Református / Calvin Hungarian Church	Presbyterian	1951
British Columbia/Vancouver	Magyarok Nagyasszonya/ Our Lady of Hungary	Roman Catholic	1962
British Columbia/Vancouver	Első Magyar Református Egyház/ First Hungarian Presbyterian Church	Presbyterian	1955
Manitoba/Winnipeg	Páduai Szent Antal / St. Anthony of Padua	Roman Catholic	1929
Manitoba/Winnipeg	Hungarian United Church	United Church	1906 ⁵⁶⁴
Ontario/Delhi	Szent György / St. George	Greek Catholic	1953
Ontario/Delhi	Szent László / St. Ladislaus	Roman Catholic	1950
Ontario/Delhi	Kálvin Magyar Református / Calvin Hungarian Church	Presbyterian	1951
Ontario/Hamilton	Szent István / St. Stephen	Roman Catholic	1944
Ontario/Hamilton	Kálvin János Magyar Református / Calvin John Hungarian Presbyterian	Presbyterian	1937
Ontario/Hamilton	Szent Mihály / St. Michael's	Greek Catholic	1935
Ontario/Ottawa	Magyar Katolikus Misszió/ Hungarian Catholic Mission	Roman Catholic	1958
Ontario/Toronto	Szent Erzsébet / St. Elisabeth	Roman Catholic	1928

⁵⁶⁴ This congregation was known as the Hungarian Reformed Church until 1927, at which point it joined the newly formed United Church of Canada.

Ontario/Toronto	Első Magyar Református / First Hungarian Presbyterian	Presbyterian	1929
Ontario/Toronto	First Hungarian Baptist	Baptist	1932
Ontario/Toronto	Magyar Református Evangélikus Keresztyén /Hungarian United Church	United Church	1929
Ontario/Toronto	Beth Hazikaron-Hungarian Synagogue	Jewish	1964
Ontario/Welland	Keresztelő Szent János /St. John the Baptist	Greek Catholic	1950
Ontario/Welland	Magyarok Nagyasszonya / Our Lady of Hungary	Roman Catholic	1928
Ontario/Welland	Magyar Református Egyház/Hungarian Presbyterian Church	Presbyterian	1927
Ontario/Windsor	Szent Antal / St. Anthony	Roman Catholic	1932
Ontario/Windsor	Szabad Magyar Református Egyház /Free Hungarian Reformed Church	Calvinist (unaffiliated)	1934
Québec/Montreal	Első Magyar Református Egyház / Hungarian United Church	United Church	1926
Québec/Montreal	Magyarok Nagyasszonya / Our Lady of Hungary	Roman Catholic	1928
Québec/Montreal	Magyar Prebiteriánus Egyház / Hungarian Presbyterian Church	Presbyterian	1972
Québec/Montreal	Beth Hazichoron Magyar Mártírok / Beth Hazichoron Hungarian Martyrs	Jewish	1968
Saskatchewan/Esterhazy	Our Lady of Victory	Roman Catholic	1906
Saskatchewan/Kaposvár	Magyarok Nagyasszonya	Roman Catholic	1887
Saskatchewan/Kipling	Békevár Church	Calvinist	1910
Saskatchewan/Lestock	Szent József / St. Joseph	Roman Catholic	1923
Saskatchewan/Quinton	Máriavölgy / St. Mary's	Roman Catholic	1914
Saskatchewan/Regina	Szent István / St. Stephen	Roman Catholic	1914
Saskatchewan/Simpson	Szent Anna / St. Anne	Roman Catholic	1911
Saskatchewan/Stockholm	Szent Erzsébet / St. Elizabeth	Roman Catholic	1904

Appendix 2: Hungarian Weekly and Monthly Publications in Canada

Title	Location of publication	Years of publication/Frequency	Political Orientation
24. Óra (24th Hour)	Brossard (QC.)	1995-2000 – (Monthly)	Fascist
Canadai Magyar Farmer (Canadian Hungarian Farmer)	Simpson (SK.) & Winnipeg (MB)	1910-1921 (Weekly)	Agrarian / Conservative
Hungarista Tájékoztató (Hungarist Bulletin)	Montreal (QC)	1957-1961 (Monthly)	Fascist
Kanadai Magyarság (Hungarian-Canadians)	Toronto (ON)	1951 – present (Weekly)	Conservative / Anti-communist
Kanadai Magyar Munkás (Canadian Hungarian Worker)	Hamilton (ON)	1929-1967 (Weekly)	Communist
Kanadai Magyar Újság (Canadian Hungarian News)	Winnipeg (MB)	1924-1976 (Weekly)	Conservative / Anti-communist
Magyar Élet (Hungarian Life)	Buenos Aires (Arg.) Toronto (ON)	1948-1957 (Weekly) 1957 - present	Conservative / Anti-communist
Menóra	Toronto (ON)	1962-2008 (Bi-weekly)	N/A – Hungarian Jewish community
Tárogató	Vancouver (BC)	1973 – present (Monthly)	N/A – Cultural
Tárogató	Toronto (ON)	1945-1949 (Monthly)	Social democratic / United Church
Új Szó (New Word)	Toronto (ON)	1967-1986 (Weekly)	Communist

Bibliography

Archives

Historical Archives of Hungarian State Security

Floguet Collection. Fond: BT-827.

Maclou Collection. Fond: 13-OD-3740

DuGarde Collection. Fond: MT-182.

János Benedek Collection. Fond: BT-641.

Kovács István Collection. Fond: M-40277

Millott Collection. Fond: 0-8-022.

Objektum Dosszié Collection. Fond: O-20071.

Report on Hungarians living in Canada and the embassy's activities in immigrant circles.
Fond: Kanada, 19-00509.

Library and Archives Canada

"An Act respecting the Public Lands of the Dominion, 1872." Acts of the Parliament of the Dominion of Canada, NLC-12420.

Canadian Hungarian News. Fond no. 285.

Charles Winter Fonds. Fond no. 1, "Clippings," 1910-1951. Vol. 1.

Communist Party of Canada Fonds, H-1610 – National Groups Policy.

Political Programs – Communist Party of Canada, 1938-1947.

Department of Citizenship and Immigration, Record of the Privy Council Office, Box 862, File no. 555-54-565.

RCMP: Émigré Organizations- Iron Curtain Countries- Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, Albania, Bulgaria, Romania, Yugoslavia- General, RG25, A3b, Vol. 4309, File 11387-40.

RCMP: Reports submitted to External Affairs by RCMP on immigrants to Canada, RG25-G-2, 1954/04/02-1963/07/17.

Montreal Hungarian Historical Society

László Korsós Papers, 1970-1992.

National Archives of Hungary

Magyarok Világszövetsége (World Federation of Hungarians). Fond: P975.

The Papers of the Embassy of the Peoples' Republic of Hungary in Ottawa, 1964-1989.
Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Fond: TÜK-KÜM, XIX-J-1-j—Kanada.

Online Archives

George Washington University Online National Security Archives: Meetings of the
National Security Council (1956)

Hungarian Periodicals:

Hazánkért (2004-2006)

Hungarista Tájékoztató (Montreal): 1957-1961.

Kanadai Magyarság (Toronto): 1956-1970.

Kanadai Magyar Munkás (Hamilton): 1929-1967.

Kanadai Magyar Újság (Winnipeg): 1927-1956.

Magyar Élet (Toronto): 1956-1983.

Magyar Krónika (Montreal): 2000-2011.

Menóra Egyenlőség (Toronto): 1963-1975.

Tárogató (Toronto): 1945-1949.

Új Szó (Toronto): 1968-1987.

Non-Hungarian Canadian Periodicals:

Montreal Gazette (1956-1992)

Toronto Star (1988-1992)

Other Published Primary Sources:

50 Év—Szent Erzsébet Egyházközség, [Fifty Years—St. Elizabeth of Hungary Church].
Toronto: 1978.

A Magyar Református Egyház Jubileumi Emlékkönyve, 1926-2001, [The Jubilee Album of the Hungarian United Church, 1926-2001.] Montreal: 2001.

Békevár: The Golden Jubilee, 1900-1950, Kipling, SK: 1950.

Deák, Ferenc. “Egyház az emigrációban—A montreali Magyarok Nagyasszonya plébánia” (Church in Emigration—Montreal’s Our of Lady of Hungary Parish), *Új Ember*. Budapest: 4 August 2002.

Gyula László Detre, *Történelem Közről* (History Experienced Up-Close), Montreal: S.N., 2004.

Egri, György. *Én különben jól érzem magam...* (Other than That, I Feel Fine). Toronto: Kensington Publishers, 1981.

Ethnic origins, 2006 counts, for Canada, provinces and territories - 20% sample data. *Statistics Canada*.

Krawchuck, Peter. *Interned Without Cause, The Internment of Canadian Anti-fascists during World War Two*, Toronto: Kobzar Publishing, 1985.

Magyarok Nagyasszonya Egyházközség, 1928-2003, [Our Lady of Hungary Parish, 1928-2003], Part I. Montreal: 2003.

Mátrai, Géza. *The Cause and the Passion*. Mississauga, SN. 2006.

Paizs, Ödön. *Magyarok Kanadában—Egy most készülő országról*, [Hungarians in Canada—About a Country in the Making]. Budapest: Athenaeum Kiadó, 1928.

Romvary, Susan. *Zsuzsa Not Zsazsa: Balance With a Smile*. Toronto, Shoreline: 1992.

Selected Demographic, Cultural, Educational, Labour Force and Income Characteristics (926), First Official Language Spoken (4)” *2006 Census of Canada*.

Smetanka, Jaroslav F. “Bohemians and Slovaks—Now Czechoslovaks,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences*. Vol. 93, 1921.

Szőke, István. *We Are Canadians--the National Group of the Hungarian-Canadians*, Toronto: Hungarian Literature Association, 1954.

Végh, Imre. *Magyar Otthon-Foyer Hongrois*. Montreal: Transatlantic Kiadó, 1992.

Monographs:

Anctil, Pierre. *Saint-Laurent: Montréal's Main*. Montreal: Pointe-à-Callière--Musée d'archéologie et d'histoire de Montréal, 1999.

Avery, Donald. *"Dangerous Foreigners:" European Immigrant Workers and Labour Radicalism in Canada, 1896-1932*. Toronto: 1979.

Avery, Donald. *Reluctant Host: Canada's Response to Immigrant Workers, 1896-1994*. Toronto: 1995.

Bakó, Ferenc. *Kanadai Magyarok* (Hungarian Canadians), Budapest: Gondolat.

Baráth, Tibor *A külföldi magyarság ideológiája*, (The Ideology of Hungarians Abroad), Montreal: Sovereign Press, 1975.

Békés Csaba and Rainer János. *The 1956 Revolution*, Budapest: Central European University Press, 2002.

Berecz, János. *1956 Counter-Revolution in Hungary, Word and Weapons*. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1986.

Blumstock, Robert (ed.). *Békevár: Working Papers on a Canadian Prairie Community*. Canadian Centre for Folklore Studies. No. 31. Ottawa. 1979.

Borbándi, Gyula. *A magyar emigráció életrajza, 1945-1989*, (The Biography of the Hungarian Immigration), Budapest: Európa Kiadó, 1989.

_____. *Nyugati Magyar Irodalmi Lexicon és Bibliográfia*, (Encyclopedia and Bibliography on Western Hungarians. Budapest: Hittel, 1992.

Breitman, Richard. *US Intelligence and the Nazis*. Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Burger, Anne. *The Communist Party of Canada During the Great Depression—Organizing and Class Consciousness*. Simon Fraser University, 1980.

Creighton, Donald. *Canada's First Century: 1867-1967*. Toronto: Macmillan, 1970.

Deak, Istvan. *The Lawful Revolution: Louis Kossuth and the Hungarians, 1848-1849*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979.

Dégh, Linda. *People in the Tobacco Belt: Four Lives*. National Museums of Canada. Ottawa. 1975.

_____. *Folktales and Society: Storytelling in a Hungarian Peasant Community*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1969.

Dojcsák, G.V. *A kanadai Esterházy története* (The Story of the Canadian Esterhazy), Magvető. Budapest. 1981.

Dományi, Sándor. and Halmi, József. *A montreáli magyar zsidóság és a Montreáli Mártírok Temploma Hitközség története* [The History of the Hungarian Jewish Community of Montreal and the History of the Hungarian Martyrs Synagogue]. Montreal: Hungarian Martyrs' Synagogue, 1983.

Donskov, Andrew. et. al., *The Doukhobor Centenary in Canada: A Multi-Disciplinary Perspective on Their Unity and Diversity*. (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2000.

Dreisziger, Nándor. *Hungarians from Ancient Times to 1956*, Ottawa: Legas Publishing, 2007.

_____. *Struggle and Hope--The Hungarian-Canadian Experience*, (Toronto: McLelland and Stewart, 1982.

England, Robert. *The Central European Immigrant in Canada*. Toronto: MacMillan, 1929.

Evans, Richard. *In Defence of History*. London: Granta Books, 1997.

Fejtő, Ferenc. *La Tragédie hongroise: Ou un revolution socialiste anti-Sovietique*. Paris: Ed. Pierre Horay, 1956.

Francis, Daniel. *The Red Scare of 1918-1919: Canada's First War on Terror* (Toronto: Arsenal Press, 2010.

Foucault, Michel. *Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, Sussex: The Harvester Press, 1982.

Ginzburg, Carlo. *The Worm and the Cheese*, (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1997.

Gough, Roger. *A Good Comrade: János Kádár, Communism and Hungary*, London: I.B. Taurus, 2006.

Gutwirth, Jacques. *The Rebirth of Hasidism: 1945 to the Present Day*. London: Free Association Books, 2005.

Kögler, Hans Herbert. *The Power of Dialogue: Critical Hermeneutics After Gadamer and Foucault*, MIT Press: 1999.

Habermas, Jürgen. *Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy*, Boston: Blackwell Publishers, 1996.

Hodgson, Lynn-Philip. *Camp X*, Toronto: Blake Books. 2005.

Iacovetta, Franca, et.al. *A Nation of Immigrants: Women, Workers and Communities in Canadian History, 1840's-1960's*. Toronto: 1998.

Izsák, Gyula, *A Szamaritánus* (The Samaritan), Toronto: s.n., 1950.

Kelley, Ninette and Trebilock, Michael. *The Making of the Mosaic, The History of Canadian Immigration Policy*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010.

Kolasky, John. *Prophets and Proletarians—Documents on the History of the Rise and Decline of Ukrainian Communism in Canada*. Toronto: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1998.

Kordan, Bohdan. *Enemy Aliens: Prisoners of War: Internment in Canada During the Great War* Montreal-Kingston: Queen's University Press, 2002.

_____. *In the Shadow of the Rockies, Diary of the Castle Mountain Internment Camp, 1915-1917*, (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1991.

Knowles, Valerie. *Strangers at our Gates—Canadian Immigration and Immigration Policy, 1540-2006*, Toronto: Dundurn, 2007.

Kornberg, Jacques. *Theodor Herzl: From Assimilation to Zionism*. Indiana University Press: 1993.

Kovacs, Jason, F. *Establishing a Place and Constructing Identity: A Case Study of Place-Making in Esterhazy, Saskatchewan*, Queen's University (Thesis). 2003.

Kovács, Martin. *Esterhazy and early Hungarian immigration to Canada : a study based upon the Esterhazy immigration pamphlet*. Regina : Canadian Plains Research Center, University of Regina, 1974.

_____. *Peace and Strife : Some Facets of the History of an Early Prairie Community*. Kipling District Historical Society, 1980.

_____. *Roots and Realities Among Eastern and Central Europeans*, Central and East European Studies Association of Canada. Edmonton. 1983.

Kymlicka, Will, *Finding Our Way: Rethinking Ethnocultural Relations in Canada*. Toronto, 1998.

Lipton, Charles. *The Trade Union Movement of Canada, 1827-1959*. Toronto: NC Press, 1973.

Mikes, George. *The Hungarian Revolution*. London: Collins Books, 1957.

Palmer, Howard, ed., *Immigration and the Rise of Multiculturalism*. Toronto: 1975.

Papp, Susan. *1956 Hungarian Memorial Oral History Project*, Multicultural History Society of Ontario, Multicultural Canada. n.d.
<http://www.multiculturalcanada.ca/node/1521>.

_____. *Outcasts*, Gibson Library Connections. Toronto. 2009.

Patrias, Carmela. *Patriots and Proletarians: Politicizing Hungarian Immigrants in Interwar Canada*, Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994.

Porter, Theodore. *Trust in Numbers: The Pursuit of Objectivity in Science and Public Life*. Princeton: 1996.

Radecki, Henry. *Ethnic Organizational Dynamics—The Polish Group in Canada*, (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1979.

Sántha, Paul. *Three Generations, 1901-1957—The Hungarian Colony at Stockholm*, Stockholm, SK: 1959.

Sartre, Jean-Paul. *The Spectre of Stalinism*. London: Hamish Hamilton, 1965.

Sawatsky, John. *Men in the Shadows: The RCMP Security Service*, Doubleday Canada Ltd., Toronto: 1980.

Sheffer, Gabriel, *Diaspora Politics—At Home Abroad*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Török, István. *Katolikus magyarok Észak-Amerikában*, (Catholic Hungarians in North America), Youngstown: Katolikus Magyarok Vasárnapja, 1978.

Tóth, Tibor. *A Hungarista Mozgalom Emigrációtörténete*, [The Hungarist Movement's Immigration History]. Debrecen: Debrecen University Press, 2008.

Vali, Ferenc. *Rift and Revolt in Hungary, Nationalism versus Communism*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1961.

Wagner, Francis S. *The Hungarian Revolution in Perspective*, (Washington DC: F.F. Memorial Foundation, 1967.

Walker, Barrington. *The History of Immigration and Racism in Canada*, Toronto: Canadian Scholars Press, 2008.

Walker, James G. "Race," *Rights and the Law in the Supreme Court of Canada—Historical Case Studies*, (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1997.

Whitaker, Reg. *Cold War in Canada: the Making of a National Insecurity state, 1945-1957* (University of Toronto Press, 1994.

Zinner, Paul. *Revolution in Hungary*. New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1958.

Essays:

Bergerson, James Albert. "Neo-Ethnicity as Defensive Political Protests," *American Sociological Review*, (Vol. 42, 5 October 1977.

Dancs, Rozsa, "The Hungarian Community of Toronto," *Kaleidoscope*, Toronto. 2009.

Dégh, Linda. "Uses of Folklore as Expressions of Identity by Hungarians in the Old and New Country," *Journal of Folklore Research*, Vol. 21, no. 2-3, 1984.

Dojcsak, G.V. "The mysterious Count Esterhazy," *Saskatchewan History*, 26. 1973.

Dreisziger, Kálmán. "Hungarian Community Folk Dance Groups in Canada." *Lectures and Papers in Hungarian Studies*. Hungarian Studies Association of Canada. 1994.

Dreisziger, N.F. "The Quest for Spiritual Fulfilment among Immigrants: The Rise of Organized Religious Life in Pioneer Hungarian-Canadian Communities, 1885-1939," *Magyar Egyháztörténeti Vázlatok – Essays in Church History in Hungary*, 16, 3-4 (Fall-Winter 2004.

Duker, Andrew C. "Some Aspects of Polish Jewish Relations in the United States after 1865," *The Jewish Quarterly Review*. Vol. 45, No. 4, April 1955.

Earle, Michael. "The Mounties and the Red Menace," *Acadiensis*, XXX. No. 2. Spring 2001.

Fishman, Joshua. "The Non-English and the Ethnic Group Press, 1910-1960," *Language Loyalty in the United States*, London: Mouton & Co. 1966.

Flynn, Jeffrey. "Communicative Power in Habers's Theory of Democracy," *European Journal of Political Theory*, September, 2007.

Gamlen, Alan. "Diaspora Engagement Policies: What Are They and What Type of States Use them," Centre of Migration Policy and Society Working Papers, Vol. 32, 2006.

Jedwab, Jack. "Leadership. Governance and the Politics of Identity," *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, Vol. XXXIII, No. 3, 2001.

Harney, Robert F. "The Ethnic Press in Ontario," *Polyphony*, (Vol. 4, No. 1), 1982.

_____. "Boarding and Belonging," *Urban History Review*, Vol. 2-78. October 1978.

Hollos, Marida. "Families through Three Generations in Békevár," R. Blumstock (ed.) *Békevár: Working Papers on a Canadian Prairie Community*. National Museums of Canada. Ottawa. 1979.

Kealey, Gregory S. "The RCMP, the Special Branch and the Early Days of the Communist Party of Canada," *Labour / Le Travail*, Vol. 30. Fall 1992.

Keyserlingk, Robert. "Introduction," *Breaking Ground: The 1956 Hungarian Refugee Movement to Canada*, ed. Robert H. Keyserlingk. Toronto: York Lanes Press, Inc., 1993.

_____. "How the 'Reds' Got Their Man - The RCMP Unmasks an RCMP Spy," *Labour / Le Travail*, Vol. 40, Fall 1997.

Kirschbaum, J.M. "The Ideological Orientation of the Canadian Slavic Press," *Slavs in Canada* (Vol. 3) Inter-University Committee on Canadian Slavs, 1971.

Kosa, John. "A Century of Hungarian Emigration, 1850-1950," *The American Slavic and East European Review*. Vol. 16, No. 4, December 1957.

_____. "Hungarian Immigrants in North America—Their Residential Mobility and Ecology," *The Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*. Vol. 22, No. 3, August 1956.

Kovács, Martin L. "From Industries to Farming," *Hungarian Studies Review*, Vol. VIII, No. 1, Spring 1981.

Lalande, Julia. "The Roots of Multiculturalism: Ukrainian Canadian Involvement in the Multiculturalism Discussions of the 1960's as an Example of the Third Force," *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, Vol. XXXVIII, No. 1, 2006.

Lee, John Allan. "The RCMP's Real Dilemma," *The Canadian Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 6, No. 1, 1981.

Marchbin, Andrew A. "Early Immigration from Hungary to Canada," *Slavonic Review*, Vol. 13, 1934.

Nagel, Joanne. "Constructing Ethnicity—Creating and Recreating Ethnic Identity and Culture," *Social Problems*. Vol. 4, No. 1, February 1994.

Olzak, Susan. "Ethnic Conflict and the Rise and Fall of Ethnic Newspapers," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 56. No. 4. Aug. 1991.

Papp, Susan M. "Hungarians in Ontario," *Polyphony*, Multicultural History Society of Ontario. Toronto. 1980.

Patrias, Carmela. *The Kanadai Magyar Újság and the Politics of the Hungarian Canadian Elite*, Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Ontario, November 1978.

Rummens, Joanna Anneke. "Conceptualising Identity and Diversity," *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, Vol. XXXV, No. 3, 2003.

Saba, Paul. "A History of the Communist Party of Canada," *Mobilisation*, Vol., No. 4, 1975.

Sangster, Joan. "Robitnytsia, Ukrainian Communists, and the 'Porcupinism' Debate: Reassessing Ethnicity, Gender, and Class in Early Canadian Communism, 1922–1930," *Labour/Le Travail*, Fall 2005.

Schlesinger, Arthur M., "The Significance of Immigration in American History," *The American Journal of Sociology*, 27 (July, 1921).

Silberstein, Laurence. "Religion, Ethnicity and Jewish History: The Contribution of Yehezkel Kaufmann," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*. Vol. 42, No. 3, September 1974.

Stolarik, Mark. "Slovaks" in *The Encyclopedia of Canada's Peoples*, (Paul Magocsi, ed.), Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1999.

Vertovec, Steven. "The Political Importance of Diasporas," *Centre of Migration Policy and Society Working Papers*, Vol.05-13, 2005.

Wipper, Audrey. "Ontario's Hungarian Community Responds to the Revolution and the Refugee Crisis: The Fund-Raising Drive." *Hungarian Studies Review*, Vol. XXXV, No. 1, Budapest: 2008.