

As a Nationality among the “Internal Enemies” of State Socialist Hungary, Reasons and Everyday Life in the Fifties, especially regarding Zala County¹

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The 620-kilometer-long Yugoslav-Hungarian border was an area of the so-called Little Cold War in the 1950s. The aim of the study is to present the social and political characteristics of the fifties along the Mura, based on the example of Zala County. In addition to describing world political events, he presents the functioning of the internal affairs bodies of the authoritarian system. He describes in detail the preparations for fortification for the war clash. In addition, his knowledge of the 56 events that brought about domestic political change.

[Small Cold War; Zala County; Fortification Works; Military Defence Systems; Events in 56]

Introduction

In terms of the short twentieth century, the fifties, also the first half of it, were perhaps the most critical period for domestic nationalities. The aim of the study is to present the historical environment of Hungary at the time and the direct domestic and foreign policy antecedents of its development by presenting some case studies. The accommodation area of the Hungarian South Slavic² nationality in Hungary was concentrated on the former 620 km Yugoslav-Hungarian border area. It had therefore

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² I used the terminology of the era in the text. It meant the uniform name of the Croatian, Serbian, Slovenian population, in line with the nationalist policy of the state socialist Tito Yugoslavia.

a significant impact on the people's daily lives who lived here. An agrarian population with a low level of bourgeoisie did not have a leading intellectual. The region was the activity zone of the little Cold War, so in addition to the defence aspects of the military confrontation, I also present the socio-economic aspects.

Historical Background

On December 21, 1944, the Provisional National Assembly held its inaugural meeting in Debrecen, which elected the Provisional National Government. The President of the National Assembly was Béla Zsedényi, a university professor, and the chairman of the government was Miklós Bála Dálnoki. Due to the transport and communication difficulties caused by the war situation, a 23-member Political Committee was elected, which replaced the parliament with broad powers. It had powers of legality and the members automatically accepted the decisions of the organization with the members of the National Assembly. So democratic values have been damaged from the very beginning. After the formation of the new political constellation, Hungary declared war on Hitler's Germany on December 28, and on January 20, 1945, a delegation led by Foreign Minister János Gyöngyösi signed a ceasefire agreement in Moscow. As part of this, \$ 200 million in compensation was paid by the Soviet Union, 70 million to Tito's Yugoslavia and 30 million to Czechoslovakia. The size of the Hungarian army was limited to 8 divisions, and we undertook to ban far-right organizations. The first free elections, held on November 4, 1945, were won by the Independent Smallholders' Party, because of which Zoltán Tildy became the head of government on November 15. One of the most important measures of the new National Assembly on February 1, 1946, was the establishment of the state form of the republic. Under pressure from the FAO,³ the Communists and Social Democrats took part in the government, overrepresenting their election results. István Dobi, Mátyás Rákosi and Árpád Szakasits became state ministers. The last two also reached the rank of Deputy Prime Minister later.⁴

³ Federal Audit Office.

⁴ K. SALAMON, *Hungarian history 1914–1990. National Textbook Publisher*, Budapest 1998, p. 322.

Political Lawsuits projecting Proletarian Dictatorship

The Hungarian Brotherhood, founded in the early 1930s, was the first victim of the conceptual lawsuits. The aim of the organization was the political upliftment of the Hungarians and the service of their socio-economic progress. Several old military officers and generals were members of the organization, making it easy to charge them with a conspiracy to have a military line. Therefore, at the end of 1946, the State Defense Department (SDD), together with the Military Policy Department of the Armed Forces, carried out an investigation in which several smallholder politicians were involved. On January 5, 1947, the *Szabad Nép* wrote the following in their article on the matter: *"We don't know what else will turn out. But it is already obvious that the conspirators tried to make contact with the reactionary wing of the smallholder party, trying to use the smallholder party as a legal cover. And that this could have happened, the leadership of the smallholder party is not innocent."*⁵

The Communists, led by László Rajk, pushed the matter until 11 deputies were expelled from the Independent Smallholders' Party. On February 14, Béla Kovács, the general secretary of the smallholder party, was suspected by Rajk of knowing about the conspiracy. The faction refused to waive his immunity, he voluntarily participated in the FAO investigation, after which he was taken by Soviet military authorities to the Soviet Union, where he was imprisoned for 8 years. After that, it became clear that the liquidation of a smallholder headquarters was the goal of the Communists. The last victim was the Prime Minister Ferenc Nagy, who was also accused during his trip in May 1947 of being involved in the conspiracy. The prime minister, who feared his little boy, after receiving his child, signed his resignation statement, making the largest parliamentary party, the political elite of smallholders, and his party was completely destroyed by the Rákosi-led clique. During the "blue-card" elections held on August 31, 1947, the Communist-led Electoral Alliance of the Hungarian National Independence Front won 61% of the vote, making it the sole leader of political life. He strove the complete liquidation of the opposition and the full service of the Soviet Union. The Information Office of the European Communist Parties, Cominform, was established in September 1947, with the task of promoting the establishment of European proletarian dictatorships.⁶

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 183.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 332.

Development of Soviet-Yugoslav Relations and their Impact on the Hungarian-Yugoslav System of Relations

After World War II, Yugoslavia authentically copied the Stalinist system, becoming one of its most loyal followers. This can be explained primarily by the fact that the Yugoslav party leader Tito, had not returned until the German occupation, was an employee of Cominform from 1935 and successfully learned the “profession” alongside Stalin. He was among the first to build the Soviet model. As early as April 11, 1945, the two countries signed a treaty of friendship and cooperation, and in January 1946, the Soviet-style constitution of the Federal People’s Republic of Yugoslavia was ratified.

At the twilight of the new bipolar world order, Tito’s longing for regional leadership in south-eastern Europe was soon deteriorated. This was compounded by its financial disputes with the US, which led the Americans to use their air force as a means of exercising their pressure. They violated Yugoslav airspace several times, at least once the South Slavic Air Force shot down a plane. In addition to the West, the initially friendly Soviet Union also watched with increasing criticism of Josip Broz’s policy, whose main supporter in the multi-ethnic country was a force with a partisan ideology estimated at nearly 700–800 thousand people, which represented significant military potential. There are several conceptual confusions in the analysis of the development of the Soviet-Yugoslav conflict. We must point out that the outbreak of the conflict is connected to Stalin’s name. Although Tito looked up at him and was afraid of him, he nevertheless became too autonomous, thus posing a threat to the Soviet sphere of interest in the Balkans. He intervened in the conflict in Greece, provided financial support to Albania and attempted to form a confederate alliance with Bulgaria and Albania.⁷

The actual deterioration of Yugoslav-Hungarian relation began with the Rajk trial and then with the exclusion of Yugoslavia from Cominform. On September 30, 1949, like the other socialist countries, we terminated our agreement on cooperation and mutual assistance with Yugoslavia, and from 1950 onwards, a hostile relationship was established between the two countries, laden with minor military conflicts. In the daily press, the subject was constantly on the table either civilized or sometimes

⁷ Z. MÉSZÁROS, The turn of 1948 in the relations between the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, in: S. A. TÓTH (ed.), “*At the southern ends...*”. *Studies on the Cold War conflict between Hungary and Yugoslavia in the Bačka Region*, Budapest 2009, pp. 67–72.

less civilized way. Tito was given the following adjectives: "enemy of the Hungarian people", "imperialists' chain dog", "mercenary of imperialists and fascists". One of the unfortunate results of the negative political processes was that a tense political atmosphere became commonplace in the counties on the southern state border and had an impact on the daily lives of the population living there.⁸

Clashes between the SSD and the UDB on the Zala Section of the Hungarian State Border, as well as other Aspects of Insurance

The Yugoslav-Hungarian political and military opposition, already presented above, had affected the daily lives of people living along the state border. As I mentioned earlier, more than 3,400 people had been deployed from the 15 kilometres border strip. First and foremost, the system considered enemies: officials from the Horthy era, priests, nuns, kulaks, former gendarmes. It was only possible to stay in the security lane with a separate entrance. Those who may have dissociated into Yugoslavia jumped out from a frying pan into the fire, as the UDB soon, several times by force, recruited them and made them return to Hungary as a forced spy. The following is a more detailed detail about the deportations:⁹ *"The eviction of unreliable individuals from the border area began at dawn on June 23 in our county. The population in the villages became aware of the incident only in the morning, when the people to be evacuated were packing and leaving for the loading place. At the start of the deportees, smaller and larger groups gathered in some places in the villages and stations, who watched the deportees as spectators and then went to the daily field work. By providing adequate assets in the affected villages under the direction of the County Committee and the District Committee, the local Party Organizations mobilized the folk educators (agitators) in the early hours of the morning to adequately inform the population about what had happened [...]."*

Seeing the population to be evicted, in the village of Semjénháza in the district of Letenye, a resident of Semjénháza Trojkó Risó ran around the village and mobilized the women not to let the priest be taken away when they learned that it was not the priest who wanted to be taken, they calmed down, but they were still telling that if the

⁸ Z. HAJDÚ, Hungarian-Yugoslav relations in the period of the Cold War (1948–1955), in: *The State Border of Baranya in the XX. Century*. HM Military History Institute and Museum, Pécs, Budapest 2008, pp. 69–77.

⁹ A. MOLNÁR, Historical reading book of Zala county. Expulsion from the Yugoslav border. Report of the County Committee of the MDP to the Central Management on the course of the deportations and the related mood of the population (details) June 23, 1950 Zala County Archives. Zalaegerszeg, 1996, pp. 346–348.

priest had been taken away, they would have lied in front of the car. There is peace in the villages everywhere, in most places the usual daily work is being done. Most of the deportees were missing by relatives and neighbors [...].

In the village of Tótszentmárton, where a kulak was evicted, who was a member of our Party until 1948, an enemy organized group about 15 people were standing in front of the village hall shouted that there was an Nyilas' rule, the old communists were taken away. At this as well as in all other actions, the enemy tried to create an atmosphere, so e.g. when the deportees went to the standing ones one of the kulaks said, 'today to me, tomorrow to you' [...].

The mood is particularly dangerous, which manifests in places by this notion of 'good kulaks', where it is said that he was not a bad person. This is what the reactionaries are trying to do with it and thereby feeling pity for the displaced. Especially in the morning, while the emigrants were able to get in touch with the villagers, they themselves tried to intimidate the population. In Leteny e.g. one of the kulaks said, 'The same is waiting for us as in '44 for the Jews.' In Csömödér village, a larger group was watching the evacuated people at the railway station, then they dispersed and went to work at the request of the outside army. Resistance was expressed by the displaced in the form of escaping. Thus e.g. from Murarátka, Ramocsa, Nemespátro, Csömödér evicted people escaped, in the morning, from whom several were arrested by the police and the eviction was carried out.

In an urban context, voices could be heard in the market in Nagykanizsa, where the women entering from the village were speaking in whispers about the deportation. In general, there is a lot of surprise among the right-side parties, and so in Szeptenek and Szentgyörgyvölgy, the kulaks who are not marked for deportation also said that they would pack up because they did not know when it would be their turn [...]. In Nagykanizsa, there is a particularly strong confusion in the groups of lawyers. Officials from MAORT factory, who are usually quite volatile, also refrain from expressing an opinion.

The deportation was received with enthusiasm by the poor peasantry and thus mainly by the PA. In Letenye e.g. PA members say this should have been done a long time ago. In Nemesnép and Szentgyörgyvölgy, comrades and non-partisan agricultural proletarians are almost despising the fact that not all the kulaks were taken away [...]."

An armed incident occurred near Rédics on August 17, 1953, at 1:30 p.m. From the Yugoslav side, a fire was opened to border guards János Kaitszki and László Tiliczki from an MG-42 machine gun. The firefight was ended by Tiliczki, who fired the Yugoslav machine gunner. On the same day, Imre Gőz the SSD boarder guard was shot from the other side in Tótszerdahely. Perhaps the biggest incident publicity occurred on

December 19, 1951, at Letenye on the island of Mura. Where 10 Yugoslav citizens felled trees on the island under four internal protections. An exchange of diplomatic notes took place, and until the summer of 1952 the debate was on the table. The Szabad Népe reported on it.¹⁰

Military Political Aspects of the Yugoslav-Hungarian Little Cold War

The short democratic period after World War II proved to be short for cross-border cooperation between the two states to begin. From 1949 onwards, bilateral relations deteriorated, and in the 1950s the 621 km long Yugoslav-Hungarian border¹¹ was almost completely cut off¹² and



Figure 1. Protection lanes in the southern defence system.

Source: SRÁGLI, p. 59.

¹⁰ J. JAKUS, Secret War along the Southern State Border in the Early 50s, in: *Central European Publications*, 16, 2012, pp. 42–54.

¹¹ On December 1, 1918, the Kingdom of Serbia-Croatia-Slovenia was exhibited, which from 1929 was called the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. From 31 January 1946 to 28 April 1992, it was the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

¹² The Soviet Union rejected Yugoslav confederate aspirations in the Balkans. As a result of tensions, on June 21, 1948, Cominform sentenced Tito, whom he had already called an imperialist spy in 1949, in a decision made in Bucharest. As a result of the former events, Hungary terminated its five-year economic agreements with Yugoslavia in June 1949.

became an area of open military and political confrontation. In the summer of 1951, fortification work began, a 430 km long protection zone was established, which was reinforced with minefields, wire fences and concrete fortifications. As a result, none of the previously planned socialist heavy industry developments were realized in the border areas.¹³

The ideas of Hungarian force development had been constantly changing with the deterioration of bilateral relations. In the autumn of 1949, the draft “Petőfi” military plan envisaged an army of 53,000, in the spring of 1950, “Rákóczi” defined it as 65,000, and then in the same year, “Kossuth” defined it as 135,000. The official name of the army became the Hungarian People’s Army, which already in 1952 held nearly 230,000 soldiers with weapons. In addition, the SSD, the police, and the border guard also assisted in defence activities with almost 50,000 people. A new security factor, not yet known in military policy, had been introduced, the so-called border guard. This resulted in the creation of an area of 9,000 km² involving six counties, 15 districts, 310 settlements, where nearly 300,000 people were affected because of various internal security measures. Significant evictions had been carried out among social groups that were unreliable to the system. In two phases, more than 3,400 residents over the age of 16 were displaced, several of whom resided in Yugoslavia. The rear border of the narrower border area was at a depth of 15 km, and there were also a 2 km, a 500 m, and a 50 m lane where only border guards could move.¹⁴

Draft Military Geographic and Operational Direction of the Southern Battlefield, with Special Regard to Zala County

In the study area, only the Drava and the Mura constitute an actual military barrier. Both come from the central and peripheral areas of the Alps. The largest body of water is discharged in late spring and summer. There is snowmelt in the Alpine catchment in May, and the weak secondary autumn maximum is caused by Mediterranean cyclones. The ever-fluctuating water level and the rapid, swirling flow of the rivers were a major obstacle, would have been crated, especially in the event of an attack involving a significant infantry stock. In addition, the meridional

¹³ HAJDÚ, pp. 69–77.

¹⁴ L. SRÁGLI, *Fortress. History of the Establishment and Dismantling of the Southern Defense System 1948–1958*. Association of Town and Village Defenders. Hungaria Nostra. Budapest 2007, p. 136.

valley, and the hill network of the Zala Hills are unfavourable. Due to the geomorphological features, the road network is winding, the superstructures are usually narrow. Unsuitable for the rapid movement of heavy vehicles and troop vehicles, the denser-than-average forest cover could have been a good disguise for the Zala and Vas units of the Hungarian People's Army.¹⁵

Military defence plans in the 1950s also included an attack on Yugoslavia in terms of protecting the southern border. The ways in which the war would have been broken out, were imagined by the Hungarian warlords in the following ways:¹⁶

"1. Western powers are launching offensive operations on the main battlefield, from the west, against the peace camp to which Yugoslavia will join from the south.

2. The imperialists begin their attack on the socialist countries at the same time as Yugoslavia.

3. Yugoslavia will start military operations on its own, primarily against Hungary, to which the Western imperialists will join in time."

As a result, the Hungarian People's Army envisioned a southern operational direction and a southwestern operational direction. From the point of view of Zala and Vas counties, the latter contained priorities. I will focus on the immediate border zone later. The Szentgotthárd-Muraszemenye section is 70 km long. The topography has significant relief energy and is covered with forests. Only auxiliary Yugoslav attacks were anticipated. The other section of the Muraszemenye-Barcs facial line was 98 km long. The border is protected by the Mura and the Drava, on the Gola-Bjelovar section on the left bank of the Drava the river provides a Yugoslav bridgehead. The tactical activity of our southern neighbor was expected on the Goričan-Kotor-Drava line on a 20–25 km front line. On the Hungarian side, this is practically the Letenye-Tótszerdahely-Molnári-Murakeresztúr section. We will cover the shootings and spy activity here later. In the ideas of 1950, VII. number of protection areas had been designated, of which the Murakeresztúr-Gyékényes-Somogyudvarhely 46 km section is relevant for the Zala section. In contrast, the final division of the district

¹⁵ J. SUBA, *A deli védelmi rendszer. I. Ravasz. (szerk.) Betonba zárt hidegháború: Az 1950-es években épített déli védelmi rendszer kutatása és feltárása Budapest, Magyarország: HM Hadtörténeti Intézet és Múzeum 2010, pp. 91–162.*

¹⁶ J. JAKUS, Conflict Situation between Hungary and Yugoslavia at the Beginning of the Cold War. The State of the Hungarian People's Army and its War Plans against Yugoslavia in the early 1950s, in: S. A. TÓTH (ed.), *"At the southern ends..." Studies on the Cold War conflict between Hungary and Yugoslavia in the Bačka Region, Budapest 2009, p. 79.*

was completed, which was concentrated between the Danube and the Tisza and in the direction of Lenti-Nagykanizsa.

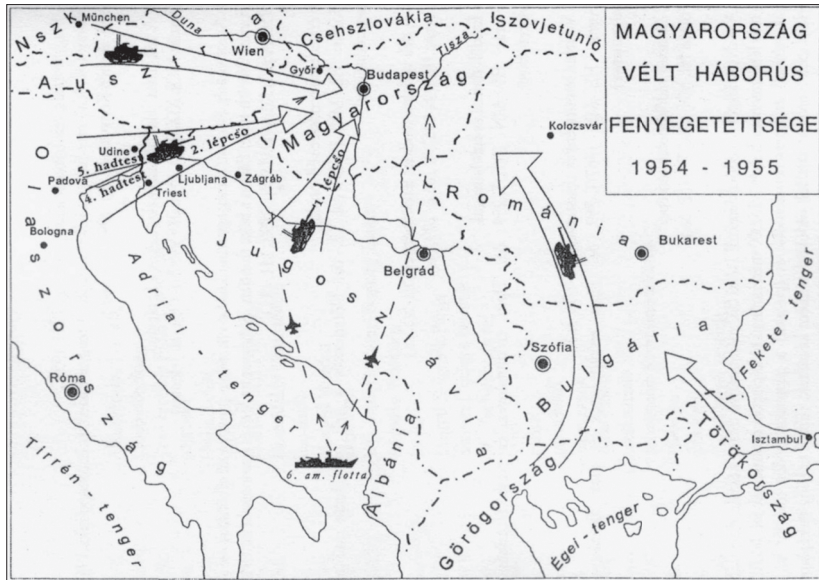


Figure 2. The perceived threat of war to Hungary in the early fifties.

Source: SRÁGLI, p. 56.

The last-mentioned district was important from the point of view of national economy. The area of Bázakerettye provided the backbone of Hungarian oil production at this time. In a war situation, its loss would have temporarily paralyzed the functioning of the country and the army. The main elements of the system of technical fortifications were reinforced concrete elements, expanded with earth-wood firing stations, the objects of the SPS (Southern Protection System) can be grouped according to the following: artillery fortifications (firing stations), minesweeper firing stations, machine gun fortifications, tank and assault rifle firing stations, observation posts, shelters, battle and traffic trenches, technical obstacles, sham fortifications. Their raw materials are usually: adobe bricks, sticks, bricks, stone, reinforced concrete, natural stone-concrete. A total of 91 protection districts were built out of the planned 223. Two of them were completed in Vas County and 2 in Zala.¹⁷

¹⁷ SUBA, pp. 91–162.

The protection zones implemented in Zala and Vas counties are listed below. The number in front of the code number is the four digits of the battalion's defensive district, the slashed letters are the centre's outposts.

Table 1. Established districts and supports of the first defence zone (main protection belt) in Zala and Vas counties (SUBA, p. 113.)

1000 Óriszentpéter	1019 Tótszentmárton
1002 Bajánsenye	1021 Semjénháza
1005 Nemesnép	1025 Murakeresztúr – DK – 2 Km
1006 Resznek	1027 Zákány
1007 Belsőárd	1010 Kútfej – K – 2 km
1008 Rédics	1011/a Lovászi-K-2 km
1012 Tornyiszentmiklós	1013 Ri
1015 Murarátka	1017 Letenye

Table 2. Established protection districts and supports of the first and second positions of the first defence zone in Zala and Vas counties (SUBA, p. 114.)

1129/a Lovászi	1130/a Tormafölde
1175 Csesztreg	1176 Lenti
1179 Szepetnek	1180 Bajcsa

Table 3. Established protection districts and supports of the second and third defence zone in Zala and Vas counties (SUBA, pp. 115–116.)

1242 Csömödér	1226 Galambok	1243 Nemesvid
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Zala County

On the Zala section, they were prepared for an attack from the southwest. In the first place, aggression was expected from the Rijeka-Trieste direction. The border area of the county is with full small villages, its two most important cities are Nagykanizsa and Zalaegerszeg. The production and processing of crude oil in Zala was one of the greatest importance at the level of the national economy. The battalion protection districts and mile-

stones were established in the county as we can see in the followings.¹⁸

Table 4. The battalion protection districts and milestones established in the county were as follows (SUBA, p. 138.)

I-006 1005 Nemesnép	I-007 1006 Resznek
I-008 1007 Belsőárd	I-009 1008 Rédcis
I-011 1010 Kútfej-K-2 km	I-012 1011/a Lóvászai-K-2 km
I-013 1012 Tornyiszentmiklós	I-014 1013 Dobri
I-016 015 Murarátka	I-017 1017 Letenye
I-019 1019 Tótszentmárton	I-021 1021 Semjénháza
I-023 1023 Fityeháza	I-024 1025 Murakeresztúr-DK-2 km
I-1-04 1129/a Lovászi	I-1-05 1130/a Tormafölde
I-2-02 1175 Csesztreg	I-2-03 1176 Lenti
I-2-07 1179 Szepetnek	I-2-07 1180 Bajcsa
II-01 1242 Csömödér	III-05 1226 Galambok

Most of the battalion defences and squadrons followed a 15-kilometer border. Their primary goal was to secure the Lenti-Murakeresztúr section. There were several important transport lines to be protected in terms of team movements: the main road connecting Letenye with Nagykanizsa, the Murakeresztúr-Gyékényes railway main line running near the border line, and the MAORT facilities in Nagykanizsa, Lovászi, Bázakerettye, Budafa.¹⁹

Characteristics of Everyday Existence as a Nationality on the Border

The daily lives of people living along the border were significantly determined by the nature of the state border and the way it was guarded. I have already analysed the specifics of the method of guarding above, but the political geographical nature of the border must also be addressed. The international literature distinguishes between two types of boundaries: “*frontier*” and “*boundary*”. The term frontier is perhaps closest to our word turf, but we don’t usually use it in common parlance. And the content of the report is much broader than our turf term. The meaning of boundary is simply limited to the boundary line. In the Hungarian interpretation,

¹⁸ SUBA, pp. 91–162.

¹⁹ Ibid.

the frontier is nothing more than a border zone of different quality, a demarcated area. Everyday life on the Yugoslav-Hungarian border was defined by a 15-kilometer frontier and the distance from it. In the so-called border zone, entry and exit were restricted by administrative means, and the detention of the detention facilities was continuous. Approaching the border itself was strictly forbidden, and a pressure lane and other technical equipment were used to prevent it. Border areas have been avoided by major infrastructure and industrial investments. Obviously, our areas along Yugoslavia are small villages, with no or only partial centre settlements. Therefore, the political considerations of the settlement of the age, the underdevelopment of small villages, the pumping of capital into industry, exponentially worsened the sense of comfort and living standards of the population in the fifties. The events of '56 aimed at overthrowing the proletarian dictatorship could be traced back to these processes, among others.²⁰

1956 Events and Some Aspects of their Retaliation in Zala

In the October 24 issue of the daily newspaper run by the county organization of the HDP, the events of the previous day were assessed as counter-revolutionary activity, even just in the first issue of the following day. The day featured two issues, the second with a nationally coloured frame and commenting on reality faithfully. The biggest demonstration in Nagykanizsa was on October 26, which was attended by students of the city as well as employees of MÁV and Post, as well as a section of the Défense Forces. The crowd invigorated the events in the capital and demanded the resignation of Rákosi and Gerő. During the parade, Kosuth's song was sung, and the Anthem was recited at the 48th statue. On October 26 was also marked by peaceful demonstrations in Zalaegerszeg. On the 27th, however, bloody events also took place in Zalaegerszeg and Nagykanizsa. At the county seat, the crowd demanded that István Dénes, the first secretary of the County Committee, come out of the headquarters of the party committee and stick with them. He refused to do so and threatened the crowd to retreat and form a workers' council. Even after this was formed, they refused to retreat, to which the answer was a gunpowder, in which seven were wounded and two died. In front of the building of the party committee in Nagykanizsa, young people

²⁰ T. HARDI – Z. HAJDÚ – I. MEZEI, *Borders and Cities in the Carpathian Basin*, Pécs, Budapest 2009, p. 374.

demanding guns were opened fire, and several were wounded. In front of the Pannonia Hotel, a young woman was shot dead by the army units.²¹

The Kádár consolidation was not the friendliest in its initial stages. After the defeat of the revolution by the Soviets, only the police units were in good condition to secure the new order, but they proved to be few. The SSD disbanded, the army was not completely reliable. Therefore, a new army organization called “puffs” was formed from trusted communists, former Hungarians called “ÁVOSOK”, loyal police and military officers. Their duties were later taken over by the Workers’ Guard, which was formed in February 1957. Below I quote the meaning of some of the actions of puffins to illustrate the nature of their activity and their habitus:²²

“1956. XII. 13. Crushing a women’s demonstration. The first act of the newly formed army century. The Armed Forces together with the use of weapons (alarm shooting) and then it was necessary to shoot among the crowd in the evening, when the crowd wanted to free the detainees. The demonstration was disrupted by the century together with the army.

On May 14, 1957, together with the army, the border guard, and the headquarters, we combed the Nagykapornak forest in search of counter-revolutionaries. During this certification, Army Captain Ferenc Sényig was wounded by a counter-revolutionary bandit, who then died of his injury.

On March 14, 1957, the General Staff, the Army, the Border Guard, and the Squadron carried out a demonstration procession in the county with full armament, which the workers received with great reassurance, seeing the strength.”

The above quotations show well that the army with brute force, not estimating human life, retaliated against the events of October 56th. The language of the reports reveals low-skilled, uneducated people. In several cases, they came from the low social classes (servants, day laborers, workers) of the short civil period before and after World War II.

Since the late 1950s, there had been easing between the countries of the socialist bloc and the “separate traveller” Yugoslavia. Opening to Western Europe had also begun. This opening to the west connected our southern neighbour as an intermediate country in Hungary’s export-import system: many products that could not be imported directly for Hungary, mainly retail consumer goods, came to Hungary through Yugoslav private imports. Thus, from the mid-1960s, cross-border relations revived. We distinguish two types of these, in relation to the

²¹ MOLNÁR, pp. 346–348.

²² *Ibid.*, pp. 372–373.

two countries, they are organized locally and centrally. To develop the cooperation, several centrally organized fact-finding and suggestion courses were held.²³

Summary

In socialist state Hungary in the 1950s, the armed and geopolitical confrontation with Yugoslavia determined the lives and everyday lives of the South Slavic nationalities living along the border. The "big politics", the confrontation between the blocs, the exclusion of our southern neighbour from Cominform also left its mark on the lives of everyday people. Preparations for war and the horrible sums spent on armed defence hindered the country's socio-economic development. In addition, our Croatian, Slovenian, Serbian nationalities were stamped by Tito's chain dog, degrading them to an anti-regime, second-class citizen. A historical snapshot of contemporary archival sources are testimonies of how the state power acted against them and how it encouraged the majority society to do so. The two-sided change of attitude after '56 was only slowly being reflected in everyday socio-economic life. Actual relief did not begin until the 1960s.

²³ P. GOLOBICS, *Possibilities of Cooperation of Border Regions in Southern Transdanubia*, Pécs 2001, pp. 28–29.

