

**Moral and Stability: The Image of János Kádár and
Urho Kekkonen in the West from 1956 to the early
1970s**

Vesa VARES

1 Introduction: Two Statesmen as Symbols and Images

1.1 The Countries Personified

In 1975, as President of Finland, Urho Kekkonen, became 75 years old – and was as powerful as ever and as his era and political line seemed to go on indefinitely – a book *Urho Kekkonen – a Statesman for Peace* was published. It consisted of 12 articles and a foreword. Some of the writers were active politicians and diplomats, some were scholars, some of them were both. Four of the writers were Scandinavians. The book was to celebrate Kekkonen's career and role in world policy.

As such, the book naturally was not to be very critical – one Danish article perhaps excluded – but not hagiographic in any Eastern European sense either. Nevertheless, it was intended to influence foreign opinion and to disgrace the rhetoric of 'finlandization' in the West – it was originally in Finnish but translated into English. The foreword, written by a Foreign Ministry official and a university Professor, began a bit pompously and later went on to also praise the future of the statesman:¹

The name of Urho Kekkonen, the President of Finland. Belongs to a category of names of European statesmen, who symbolize their country. Kekkonen is part of Finland's international image. Finland's foreign policy is synonymous with Kekkonen's foreign policy.

Although Urho Kekkonen has already made history, he has, by no means, given up his active role. His vitality appears undiminished and he continues to remain an innovative statesman. At the moment it appears as if Kekkonen will continue to place his uniquely personal stamp on Finnish politics for a long time to come.

Other articles went on to describe the difficulties, prejudices and opposition which Kekkonen had confronted, and how he had conquered them practically all, acquired historical wisdom and was now one of the true leading statesmen in Europe – in fact, one, who played an even wider role in world politics and was specifically advancing *détente* and world peace. It was in part a dialogue on the conditions for communication between states with different social systems and its goal was to ‘break the iron ring of fear and hate’.² Kekkonen was in a unique position: the West had recognized Finland’s neutrality, he had special relations with Soviet leaders and could convey Western viewpoints to the East and Eastern viewpoints to the West. Under Kekkonen, Finland had reached all the goals in foreign policy which it had set.³

In short, Kekkonen was the symbol and guarantor of Finland. Even the slightly critical Dane, who expressed worries of what would come after Kekkonen – as he had become so indispensable – actually emphasized Kekkonen’s importance and symbolic value; was it at all possible that anyone could replace him and be able to satisfy the Soviets as he had done?⁴

Another, although smaller, example of the same kind, also published in 1975, was the issue number 2 of the Finnish periodical on foreign policy, *Ulkopolitiikka*. It was dedicated to Kekkonen on his 75th birthday, and among the writers one can find the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of the previous government (the government in office at the time was a civil servant government), the Swedish Prime Minister and the Editor of *Izvestija* (also a member of the Supreme Council of the Soviet Union), and there were congratulations of many big firms and businesses. Also 1000 hardbacks were issued.⁵ Also this can be seen as a part of an image-building project: Kekkonen was Finland.

In the same way János Kádár was Hungary. The similarity was even more underlined by the fact that both Kekkonen and Kádár had risen to power in the same year 1956, had become father figures and seemed to go on indefinitely without a serious domestic challenge. Both were believed to be genuine father figures in their respective nations – without any real official personality cult, if one compared it to, for example, Rumania or East Germany, let alone North Korea.

Even a *Leaders of the World* series, which was published in the West and edited by Robert Maxwell, issued in 1985 a short biography of Kádár and published many of his speeches. The author also had had a chance to interview and follow Kádár for three days; so the message got more authority. Maxwell's introduction raised Kádár to an exceptional international level and thus helped very much to build the image of a real statesman, especially in Western eyes:

Last year there was a stream of visits between senior Western leaders and Mr. János Kádár, First Secretary of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party. These were an indication of his stature as an Eastern bloc leader willing to forge closer links with the West, and to adopt the profit motive wherever possible to help make the Marxist Socialist State more efficient and productive.

Sir Geoffrey Howe's first official visit as the British Foreign Secretary was to Hungary, as was Margaret Thatcher's first visit to a Warsaw Pact country. Other Western leaders to travel to Budapest in 1984 have included Chancellor Kohl of the Federal German Republic and Signor Craxi, the Prime Minister of Italy. Mr. Kádár's own highly successful visit to France was the first from a top-level Warsaw Pact leader to President Mitterand, and followed a visit to President Giscard d'Estaing in 1978. [...]

Steeled by a life of tumult, this tall, modest man with simple tastes has introduced changes over the last 20 years which are the marvel of his people and the envy of his neighbours. [...]

Kádár has given Hungary political stability and a high standard of living. Domestic reforms under his rule mean that there are now no political prisoners in Hungary, and internment without trial has been abolished. These advances have persuaded many of the emigrés of 1956 to return home. Kádár's popularity is now at its height, and if a Western-style pluralist poll were to be held in

Hungary it would undoubtedly result in his re-election with a massive majority. [...]

He points out that Labour and the Conservatives in Britain and Democrats and Republicans in the USA share the same basic principles and views about the organisation of their State and its defence alliances, while the debate between them is restricted to the arrangements for distribution of wealth and power within the State.

Even the fact that Kádár had 'invited' the Soviet army to Hungary in 1956 was explained according to the official version: it had been the only alternative to prevent a Civil War.

Also the *Introductory Biography* section of the book (150 pages) painted a picture of a modest and principled, but extremely wise, cunning and pragmatic man. 'He is a type mostly to be found among wise, old peasants who have lived to see much. [...] Modesty of the spirit is an inner imperative as strong as that of the body.' Only his sense of duty accounted for the fact that he had been a leader since youth. It was also noted how Kádár had turned the tables also as far as the Western viewpoint was concerned; the despised man of 1956 was now treated with respect. Among the Hungarians, his popularity was presented as genuine and natural: 'People do not adulate Kádár, do not idolize him, do not celebrate him. They love him. With an intimate, joyful respect. Not only has Kádár identified with the country, the country has also identified with him. This is why I dare to write the bombastic sentence: János Kádár is Hungary.'⁶

The images were of course uncritical, and the image of modesty and of simple, self-sacrificing nature of the true statesman belongs to the oldest political commercial there is. But it can hardly be denied that they served their purposes both in Finland, Hungary, in the Soviet Union and in the West. Kekkonen and Kádár were forces which were stable and well-suited in the big picture, especially during the détente, but also during the Cold War. Identifying Kekkonen with Finland and Kádár with Hungary also made everything much simpler and prevented all unpleasant surprises.

But how did these images come about, and were these persons originally respected or at least regarded as useful?

1.2 Kekkonen and Kádár as Objects of Research

First of all, it must be noted, that this is not a study of Kádár and Kekkonen as such; no attempt will be made to clarify what kind of politicians they were and what kind of policy they actually pursued. That issue is still very controversial in their countries and the sources available for this study do not offer a possibility to answer those questions. The purpose is to clarify the *image* they had in the West – the ‘West’ meaning in this case the United States and Britain.⁷

The opposite direction – image-building was only briefly referred to in the beginning. Finland and Hungary did indeed try to use the personalities of Kekkonen and Kádár as symbols both to the East and the West: guarantors of good, reliable relations with the Soviet Union, but simultaneously letting the West know that actually the aims of Finland and Hungary also served its interests, or at least the interests of the world community. According to the famous phrase by Kekkonen, Finland ‘did not want to be a judge, but a doctor’.

This emphasis on the Western ‘feedback’ aspect also means that the results are not results on Kekkonen or Kádár as such, but on the Western superpowers. The Western opinions and views on these persons are the object. Kekkonen and Kádár are spectres and mirrors through which the Western policy is illuminated rather than the actual object of the research. The often very critical assessments on Kekkonen and Kádár are not taken as any value as such – the truth or falseness of those assessments is not as interesting as the attitudes which can be seen lurking behind them. The similarity between reality and the image is of minor importance, because it was the image, not the actual reality which stipulated the Western political line towards Finland and Hungary. In this sense the image *was* reality to the West, even if it was – as it often was – actually erroneous or at least one-sided. This image was based on the information the West had available – not on archives nor on benefit of hindsight.

Kekkonen and Kádár are in fact quite good ‘tools’ for this kind of research. Neither Finland nor Hungary was a question which would have been crucial to Western interests, and both were geographically and also in many cases mentally distant.

Prejudices and expectations often prevailed and precise knowledge was often lacking and gave way to stereotypes, so the statements reveal better the mental climate. Both Finland and Hungary were – as Neville Chamberlain notoriously commented on Czechoslovakia in 1938 – distant countries, of which the British knew nothing – peculiar as such. And at the same time they were easily seen only in the light of the big powers, the assessments on them actually concentrated very easily on stereotypes of Russia or Germany. They were the ‘Others’ – a theme very up-to-date today, seldom passed by referring to such authorities as Stuart Hall, Benedict Anderson or Hugh Honour.⁸ It can also be asked whether Kádár and Kekkonen became kinds of scapegoats in the Western psychology – especially Kádár for the tragedy and failure of the 1956 uprising but also Kekkonen in ‘wasting’ the Paasikivi heritage and letting the Soviets to also interfere in Finnish internal affairs.

However, one cannot talk about a real ‘enemy image’ or a method with which the own bloc is made more solid by ‘creating enemies’. Both Kekkonen and Kádár were, after all, too insignificant for this from the American or British viewpoint; the Soviet Union and world Communism were the credible enemies. Finland and Hungary were only small pawns in the game, although Kádár especially also could be made ‘evil’ – responsible for the atrocities after 1956. Mainly one can say that there were expectations for both Kádár and Kekkonen, and their images differed in various periods, depending on how these expectations were fulfilled. Did the two statesmen live up to the expectation that they would at least try to keep the Soviet influence as low as possible with all the means at their disposal? Or did they let the bear in?

The period in question extends from 1956 to the mid-1970s, since the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) marked an end of one period. The next phase of the Cold War in the 1980s was another matter for both Finland, Hungary and the super-powers and it was also ended with a totally new constellation, i.e. the collapse of the Soviet Union. The study becomes even more illuminating by the fact that,

during the period under research here, there were remarkable similarities in Kekkonen's and Kádár's careers. As already mentioned, both Kádár and Kekkonen rose to power in 1956, the former after the Hungarian uprising was crushed, the latter less dramatically in a Presidential election. Both had also previously been among the prominent political elite in their respective countries. In 1975, during the CSCE, both Kádár and Kekkonen were still in power, seemed very likely to remain in power for a long time and in fact did, and the international situation had reached a new stage in which there was a real possibility that these former foes could be seen in a new role, as moderate stabilisers. This was even more so because the invasion of Czechoslovakia had first marked a much more dangerous future which had then given way to a spirit of détente, and as the West was not thinking its strategy as aggressively and was not as confident of changes to its benefit in the near future as it had still been in the early 1960s.

This research can be defined as a history of diplomacy and international relations. As such it might represent the very thing which the so called post-modern philosophy abhors as old-fashioned and elitist. Even though there can be truth in this, at least so far that concentrating on just diplomatic history would indeed be one-sided and neglect many valuable aspects, it must also be borne in mind that even 'new histories' sometimes become 'old', and one should remember that a new trend cannot change the past as such. Finland and Hungary in Western policy actually do represent this old-school history of old-school diplomacy at a time when the aspects popular today were not yet considered as important by the contemporaries – especially during the Cold War years. A post-modern effort to stress contacts of 'civil societies' in these cases and periods would be too trendy to be real. However, from the 1970s there are undoubtedly new possibilities in this area, but these will have to be considered in possible future studies. The fact is that the case for the study now at hand is 'traditional' because it would be quite artificial to pretend that any post-modern or other state of affairs would have existed in this kind of case in 1956–75.

It must also be added that the old controversies of *Primat der Aussenpolitik* or *Primat der Innenpolitik* do not come to the forefront either. Domestic events in the United States and Britain are of course important when the overall picture of the Cold War is concerned but they did not play a big role in the analysis of the motives of these countries on issues concerning Finland and Hungary. This is due to the fact that the circles which had opinions on Finnish and Hungarian issues were very small and even these people knew that the Finns and the Hungarians did not actually decide the big issues, not on world policy and even not always in their own policy either. Domestic changes in the United States and in England influenced only bigger issues, like the Cold War, fear of Russia and Communism, Germany, the Third World and imperialism etc. In fact, it does not seem that the Western policy line was particularly dependant on the fact of which party – Democratic or Republican, Conservative or Labour – was in power in the United States or in England. Because Finland and Hungary were not vital to the West, the policy concerning them was usually decided by the desk officers in the State Department and Foreign Office; these issues seldom required a Ministerial decision or comment. And since it was also evident that not much could be done to help the Finns or Hungarians (or to change their leadership to a more pro-Western one), continuity in these relations was very striking.

As previously noted, the study ends in the mid-1970s. It must, of course be confessed that also the sources set the end to the early 1970s, and the CSCE can be seen as the one final point. The American material was first taken from the FRUS-Online series (Foreign Relations of the United States) from the web-sites and the original documents have been consulted at College Park in 1997 and 2002. Whereas the British material is concerned, the original papers on Finland and Hungary in the Public Record Office, Kew Gardens, have been consulted. Finnish and Hungarian⁹ documents have not been used since this would have required a new set of questions and themes for the research, and the limit of resources for the project did not allow this.

2 The Hard Line of the Cold War (1956-62): A Quisling and a Tenderfoot

2.1 Hungary

2.1.1 Aspect of the Cold War: Traitors to be Ostracized

The factual events of the 1956 uprising and the biographical, personal history of Kádár will not be described here, since it can be assumed these are already known and since this study has to do with image, not with the actual events. More important is to remember the starting points of the West: Hungary was a country which had had a very strict stalinist control and which was in the enemy camp. Against such a country there could not be many causes for dissent between the Western countries. Even the simultaneous disagreements of crisis such as the Suez Canal were not relevant in the case of Hungary, where the West thought it could see the Cold War re-emerge violently from the Soviet side.

After the national uprising was crushed it was crystal clear to the West who were the heroes and who were the foes. The Hungarian communists were considered Moscow's puppets and henchmen, the real aggressor being the Soviet Union. The uprising was seen, as the British Envoy Leslie Fry defined it, as a 'revolt of a nation', and it had been directed against Soviet exploitation and communist oppression.¹⁰

An American press release, issued to the Legation in Budapest, was very typical:¹¹

In a joint declaration with the Soviet Government at Moscow on March 28th the Kádár regime has again denied the competence of the United Nations in the problem of Hungary. It has again falsified the record by alleging that the Hungarian uprising of October-November was a fascist counter-revolution unleashed by the United States.

But the record is clear. The uprising was spontaneous. It was supported by the entire nation. It was crushed only by the intervention of Soviet armed forces. In these circumstances, the continued presence of Soviet forces in Hungary and the systematic repression of the Hungarian people constitute an open confession by

the Kádár regime that it does not have the confidence of the people and cannot exist without the protection of the Soviet troops.

The Kádár regime has vengefully sought to identify, seize, and punish those who took any part in the uprising of October-November. It has carried out arrests of Hungarian citizens on a mass scale. It has re-instituted by decree the cruel practice of banishment. It has ordered all residents of Hungary to report to the police for a check of identity cards. It has made clear in public statements that Soviet troops will remain in Hungary indefinitely for the purpose of protecting the regime and intimidating the Hungarian people.

These events can only be regarded as further steps toward the complete suppression of all human rights and liberties in Hungary. They mark a reversion to some of the worst practices of the Stalinist terror in that country and stand in ironic contrast to the celebration by the Communists on April 4 of the 'Liberation' of Hungary by Soviet Armed Forces in 1945.

We believe that these developments will be of concern to the Special Committee established by the United Nations General Assembly on January 10 to investigate the problem of Hungary. The Committee will report its findings to the General Assembly, which remains seized by the problem of Hungary.

In practice, the new Hungarian leaders, Kádár included, were boycotted after the crushing of the uprising. Especially the United States aimed to deny credentials from the Hungarian UN Delegation because of the atrocities in crushing the uprising. The American view can also be seen from the motivations for a UN solution which the US Legation made known to its British counterpart in Budapest:

- a) It should comprise a series of steps, and not be a 'package' proposal.
- b) The measures proposed should be such that no formal acceptance of them either by the Russians or by the Hungarians was necessary.
- c) It should appeal to the 'uncommitted' nations.
- d) It should consist of measures which could be carried out within the existing Hungarian constitution.
- e) It should, if possible, be able to show some advantage to the Soviet Government.

As such, there was also an angle of *Realpolitik*; it was perceived that not much could be done and that the Russians would need some face-saving measures. But on the whole the American line was strict. The American Legation suggested that it would also be demanded that Hungary would withdraw such legislation (it is illuminating that the word legislation was in parentheses) which made arbitrary arrests, incarcerations, summary trials etc. possible. The UN should also demand new negotiations about the stationing of the Soviet troops in Hungary, more cultural freedom, reducing the pressure of the party in schools, increasing the number of workers' councils and widening of the government. It was of course taken for granted that these conditions would not be met, but as the Soviets would reject them, it would be a propaganda victory for the West.¹²

The American National Security Council – which drafted the policy lines to be approved by the President – also claimed that the uprising was a moral victory against Communism in the long run. This, of course, was partly an ideologically 'compulsory' interpretation and revealed in fact that the West had no means to influence events behind the Iron Curtain. The NSC considered, however, that there were possibilities for evolutionary development of the satellites, and thus they could distance them more and more from old-time stalinism and the influence of Moscow. The future looked most promising in Yugoslavia and in Gomulka's Poland.

Compared to them, Hungary was totally black:¹³

The present Communist regime in Hungary, in consolidating its physical control of the nation, has followed a policy of terror and intimidation clearly intended to wipe out all resistance. Although the Hungarian people continue to despise this regime, a surface calm prevails and the normal pattern of life under Soviet Communism has resumed. [...]

Because Hungary has become an important psychological factor in the world-wide struggle of the free nations against expansionist Soviet Communism, U.S. policy must maintain a delicate balance; it must seek to encourage the same evolutionary developments as in the other nations of Eastern Europe, without compromising the symbol which Hungary has become. More restraint will be required in dealing directly with regime officials than in certain

other nations of the area, and the timing of U.S. moves will be of great importance.

In 1958–59 the NSC defined the Western goals in the Soviet-dominated Eastern Europe. The general line was not totally militant without any shades. Of course, there would be a continuing refusal to accept the *status quo* of Soviet domination over the nations of Eastern Europe as permanent, and there would be a continuing affirmation of the right of the dominated peoples to national independence and to governments of their own free choosing. However, simultaneously it was assumed that the West had to deal with the present communist governments, not to expect them to be overthrown in the foreseeable future. Even so, also in this document Hungary was presented in the most negative light:¹⁴

There has been no progress toward the achievement of U.S. policy objectives in Hungary. In the absence of any favourable change in the Hungarian regime's defiant and uncooperative attitude toward the UN and its efforts to deal with the problems arising from the 1956 revolution, U.S. relations with Hungary remain strained, and the United States has continued successfully its efforts to keep the Hungarian situation before World opinion and under active consideration at the UN.

In the UN itself, the outline was naturally more emotional, principled and strict. The US UN Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge referred in his speech in December 1959 several times to Kádár's speeches as evidence of the dictatorship and added: 'And to the brave and suffering people of Hungary this resolution says: You are not forgotten.' Another US representative put it even more plainly about a year later, throwing a sarcastic comment to the Soviet side: 'Freedom and peace are indivisible. The day of freedom must come – not only in Asia and Africa, where it has been arriving with dramatic suddenness – but also in those areas of Europe and Asia which have been subjected to the new domination of alien matters'.¹⁵

The British may not have disagreed with the general line but having far less superpower resources, they could usually rec-

commend no action. Sheer propaganda would not help much if nothing concrete would be achieved. As the British Ambassador in Moscow, Sir Patrick Reilly, pointed out to the Foreign Office, the Soviet Union would not care about international pressure, and if the UN tried to deny the Hungarian credentials in the UN, it would only reveal the impotence of the UN. The only possible way to get any results would be high level talks with the Soviets, for example, between the Secretary General of the UN and the Soviet Ambassador in the UN.¹⁶

It is hardly surprising that Reilly's colleague in Budapest, Leslie Fry, emphasized more the moralistic view, connected to the pragmatic one: 'While I agree that the Russians should logically be our main target, it seems to me to be going too far to say that "to take action against the Hungarians would be hitting the wrong target".' There was nothing illogical about hitting the secondary target, 'the Hungarian puppets', if you could not hit the main one, 'their Russian masters'. Fry did not take very seriously the threat that Hungary would in return expel the Western Legations from Budapest either.¹⁷ The atrocities which he had witnessed in Budapest clearly made him the most militant representative of the British diplomatic corps.

When Fry wrote to his superiors a critical evaluation of the UN plan of the Americans, he seems to have thought that even that was too moderate. According to him, the UN representative or group should not have been a negotiator in any normal sense of the word, but 'an "educator" seeking to convince the Russians that concessions should be made to the Hungarian people'. Of course, the Russians would not accept proposals put to them; but they might initiate something else if they were convinced that world opinion demanded it and that they would not lose thereby.¹⁸

On the whole, however, the British were more moderate or at least less convinced of the usefulness of propaganda gestures. This became evident in a small scale when the Inter-Parliamentary Union was summoned in London in 1957 and Hungary planned to send a hard-liner communist Sándor Rónai as the Hungarian representative. Fry recommended that he

should be turned out, and his further advice of how the Hungarians should be approached was not particularly diplomatic. He recommended to be expressed 'that, as the Kádár government was imposed on the Hungarian people by force of Russian arms, a delegation from a "Parliament" consisting solely of Kádár's stooges can hardly expect to be recognised in this country as representing the people of Hungary' and to complain to the delegation.

This was too much for the desk officers: they admitted that the British could mention oppression and that the British people regarded with horror 'the executions, arbitrary arrests, political prisons and concentration and forced labour camps which are now such prominent features on the Hungarian scene'. But it was doubtful whether Fry's suggestion would pay off in any way. In the first place, if the West wanted to be consistent, there would be several other delegations at the conference to whom much the same thing could be said; and in the second place, it was hardly logical to tell people simultaneously that they were mere stooges and then go on to protest to them about what their government was doing.¹⁹ The weight of Realpolitik was getting more important as time went by.

At least according to the British, the Hungarians, however, saw or wanted to see the British policy as more moderate than that of the other Western countries. Especially during Prime Minister Harold Macmillan's visit to the Soviet Union the Hungarian attitude towards the British approached, according to the British, 'even cordiality and I was forced to listen to clumsy exercises in wedge-driving through contrast between British flexibility and American-German intransigence'.²⁰ Naturally, the British did not want to see their moderation in this light or take the role of a deserter.²¹ Even so, their comments on American policy on Hungary were less and less enthusiastic: the standard British line was that, repulsive as the Kádár government was, the American approach had been proven 'sterile', and it was in the interests of the West to do whatever they could to promote contacts with the Hungarian nation and to prevent the traditional links from being broken.²² When the

American line emphasised isolation of Hungary, the British thought the same goals could perhaps be reached better from within.

The Americans held to their own line. When State Secretary Christian Herter approved in November 1960 that the Legations in Bucharest and Sofia would be raised to the status of embassies, he specifically stated that this would not apply to Budapest, since 'our current relations with Hungary are anomalous and wholly negative'.²³

2.1.2 A Quisling in 1956 – or a Lesser Evil?

Seen from the starting points and policy strategies mentioned previously, it is hardly surprising that the Western view on Kádár's person was extremely suspicious and negative. In the reports he was more often than once 'Quisling', and his government was not always considered a government at all – sometimes it was called 'terroristic'.²⁴

At best, Kádár was seen as a mediocrity and a victim of circumstances who had had no choice if he wanted to save himself. At worst, he was seen as a traitor and a quisling who had joined the Russians because of personal ambition. What was worst and most ominous – according to this interpretation – was that he had not done this because he had to, but because he had wanted to gain power in Hungary. Even his personal honesty was in doubt because he had first joined the Nagy regime but then deserted it and seemed to have willingly adopted the role of a Soviet puppet. In this interpretation it was also taken for granted that Kádár had no popular support at all, he was universally considered a traitor. In fact, some of the Western spectators thought the Hungarian people were so disgusted with him that even the Soviets would have liked to replace him with another, less hated figure.²⁵

In January 1957, Envoy Fry elaborated the difference between Kádár and Nagy as he saw it:²⁶

M. Nagy, his loyalty confronted during the brief days of freedom with a choice between Moscow and Hungary, stood steadfast by his own country. But his partner in power, M. Kádár, had already

betrayed her; and the Russians, as reward, set him up as head of a puppet government in the provincial town of Szolnok.

A 'Personality'-report on Kádár was hardly more merciful:²⁷

Never of first-rate ability or great strength of character, Kádár on his emergence from prison (in 1954, VV) was unable to decide which brand of communism to support. On August 12, 1956, he publicly disassociated himself from the Rákosi-Gerő line, but when in the autumn he entered the short-lived second Nagy Government, although himself a non-Muscovite, he made common cause with the Russians. It is worth noting, however, that after Nagy's Government fell Kádár was called on to form a Cabinet while he was on a visit to the U.S.S.R. and he was thus without any freedom of choice whatsoever. [...] the workers' councils (banned except in the factories) which, though disembodied, are still influential, treat Kádár with complete contempt. Kádár, in short, is a leader without a following. His past record suggests that he would prefer Communism shorn of its worst excesses, but that, although he owes his life to the Nagy reforms, he would not go further along the path towards 'liberal' Communism.

However, the most sinister interpretation of Kádár's motives gave gradually way to a view which at least admitted that Kádár was not the most stalinist alternative: there were still even worse options among the old Rákosists.²⁸ But even this might not be a cause to change opinion because in this case Kádár would hardly have space to manoeuvre. As one of the Foreign Office officials put it colourfully: 'Thus, while it may still be true that there are moderate and extremist factions within the party, their interests at the moment largely coincide: they must hang together if they are not to hang separately.' At any rate there was no hope to be seen.²⁹

But it seems that now, paradoxically and gradually, Kádár had come to represent some sort of 'lesser evil', compared to the old Rákosi guard. And if there would be hope of any improvement or even the end of deterioration and oppression, it would probably be connected to his name. A bit later the defeat of the molotovians in the Kremlin was seen as an advance for Kádár.³⁰ However, in Western eyes his position was still very

unstable and there was certainly no respect connected with his name. And the bottom line was at the end of 1957 still that the resistance of the Hungarian people against communist oppression was strong.³¹

2.2 Finland

2.2.1 Moderate Goals: Keeping the Paasikivi Line

Finland of the late 1950s was in many senses a very different case compared with Hungary. It was a neutral country or at least striving to be neutral; there were no Russian troops in Finland; the country was a democracy and had a multi-party system, free elections and mostly free press. However, there are astonishingly many similarities: the Soviet shadow, the tightening Soviet grip, a strong leader who remained in power for long, and suspicions in the West.

In the case of Kekkonen, there are many interpretations on how successful he in fact was in maintaining Finnish independence and neutrality. According to his supporters, he was a genuine success: he managed to get the recognitions of Finnish neutrality also from the West and thus won also Western confidence. This was something which the cautious predecessor J. K. Paasikivi (1946–56) had not dared even to try. Especially the American and British recognitions of Finnish neutrality in 1961 are taken as evidence of Kekkonen's success, the CSCE Summit and Final Act in 1975 in Helsinki being the jewel in the crown, and the declaration of how he had become a true European statesman of the first order. Many Finns seemed deeply astonished and hurt when not he but a Russian dissident Andrei Sakharov received the Nobel Peace Prize.

According to Kekkonen's opponents and critics, these achievements were not necessarily the merits of Kekkonen but something which would have been achieved anyhow – possibly even before and at lower cost, had Kekkonen not been so pro-Soviet in his speeches. The critics emphasize that Paasikivi had operated in much more difficult circumstances, held his own against the Russians in domestic policy and also enjoyed much

more personal respect and confidence in the West than Kekkonen. For example, there had been no communists in the Finnish government after summer 1948, and he had also defended the social democrat minority government in 1948–50 despite the evident Soviet opposition and displeasure.

According to the critics, Kekkonen allowed the Soviets to interfere into internal Finnish issues and domestic policy – the so-called ‘finlandization’ – which Paasikivi had managed to avoid. The main point of the criticism is that the basic line had been set by Paasikivi and that Kekkonen had used the Soviet card to his own benefit to gain political hegemony in Finland. Kekkonen had also created a stifled mental climate in Finland and weakened the Finnish backbone by demanding that the friendship with the Soviet Union should be treated as a virtue, not as an uncomfortable necessity.

But what was then the Western view on Finland? How much did the internal conditions of Finland matter to it and what was expected from the Finnish leaders and thus also from Kekkonen?

Finland was a sort of a reluctant test-case not only for the Russians but also for the West. As such it was not vitally important to the West. It was useful mainly for the fact that its independence denied the Soviets many military and political advantages which the membership in the Warsaw Pact or the status of the Baltic provinces would have given them. It was useful also in that sense that the collapse of Finland would weaken other small nations threatened by Communism, as the American National Security Council (NSC) concluded in the 1950s.³² But, not being vital, Finland might also be expendable if the achievement – such as Sweden’s possible membership in NATO – were tempting enough. In any case, Finland would never be defended by NATO troops: it was recognized that the country lay in the Soviet-dominated sphere of interest. As the NSC stated in 1954 its moderate goals concerning Finland:³³

To review NSC policy with respect to Finland with a view to continuance of an independent, economically healthy, and democratic Finland, basically oriented to the West, (but with no attempt to incor-

porate Finland in a Western coalition) neither subject to undue reliance on Soviet Bloc trade nor vulnerable to Soviet economic pressure.

In 1959 the NSC also stated:³⁴

Furthermore, if Finland is able to preserve its present neutral status – that of a nation able to maintain its independence despite heavy Soviet pressure – it could serve as an example of what the United States might like to see achieved by the Soviet-dominated nations of Eastern Europe.

Finland was a warning of what might become of a neutral Scandinavia, yet it was not Eastern Europe by any real standards, and it could be seen also as a positive prospect when the Eastern European bloc was concerned; perhaps it could be a model to ‘finlandize’ Eastern Europe?

It was clear that more was expected and hoped for from Finland’s than from Hungary’s part because Finland had some space to manoeuvre which a Warsaw Pact country such as Hungary could not have, especially after 1956. So it was important that Finland would not make too many compromises and put this space to jeopardy. The Finnish statesmen were expected to defend the degree of ‘Westernness’ they had. It was expected that they would preserve the status quo, make the necessary concessions to the Soviets to keep these content but simultaneously defend their right to take care of their own domestic affairs alone without Moscow’s interference. Domestic slipping towards Communism would be a blow to the Western interests in the Cold War and would shake the whole balance in Northern Europe.

A sort of a test case was the ability to keep the communists out of the government; as already noted above, this had been achieved since 1948. The standard American and British line in the 1950s and 1960s was to support co-operation and coalition governments between the SDP and the Agrarian Union, no matter how much they or their leaders might be distrusted as individuals. This was called ‘the red ochre’ government in Finland.

The essential aspect in grading the importance of the Finnish parties was ultimately not a question of which party was 'right' in internal disputes or even the most pro-Western one. The most important thing was to guarantee Finnish domestic stability and to avoid internal chaos, in which the trade unions and the farmers' union struggled for material and social benefits. This struggle would undermine the democratic parties, strengthen communists and thus make Finland more vulnerable to Soviet pressure. This sort of stability was also the highest goal considered possible to achieve.

It was accepted that the SDP and the Agrarian Union (from 1965 the Centre Party) were the only forces imaginable which occupied a position to control the economic interest groups and make them stabilise the economy. The 'red ochre' government was also considered the only coalition strong enough to make a stand against communist and Soviet demands and threats. In theory, the National Coalition Party (NCP, the Conservatives) was clearly the most pro-Western and anti-communist party as such but it was left to oblivion due to pragmatic reasons. Co-operation with this party would provoke the Russians and antagonize leftist parties, the Agrarian Union and Kekkonen – and whereas these could do much harm to Finnish stability, if left in opposition, the NCP could not. Thus, it was expendable. The desirability of the 'red ochre' government was due to tactical considerations and was a means, not an end. This standard line did not even depend on what party was in government in the USA or in Britain, neither on the personality of the Ambassadors nor on the desk officers in Washington and London. It remained dominant throughout the period in this research.

This sort of government had been the rule in the 1950s; however, between 1959 and 1966 this coalition became impossible because of the bad relations between the SDP and the agrarians, or, between the SDP and Kekkonen. The West faced a dilemma: on the one hand, they disliked Kekkonen and his agrarian followers but on the other hand they knew they could not do without them, since there was no other useful counterforce against the communists. The social democrats were of course there, and usually it was easier for the Western diplomats to understand them and

sympathize with them than to appreciate the agrarians; but they were not enough.

At the end of the day no pro-Western heroism was required from Finland because it was taken for granted that any ostentatious move towards the West, let alone help from the Western Powers, would only provoke the Russians to demand even more than they had originally intended, and the Russians were in a superior position to compel Finland to submit if they regarded this as necessary. In short, it was expected that the Finnish President and government would maintain the status quo of the mid-1950s. All changes would probably be changes for the worse.

Paasikivi seemed to have managed all the essentials; of Prime Minister Kekkonen's abilities and intentions or even of his bottom line sympathies one was not always equally sure. As a British memorandum which could be compared with the American NSC outlines stated in 1955:³⁵

[...] the attitude of the Finnish government towards Russia has of late been unnecessarily subservient. This is principally the fault of Dr. Kekkonen, the Prime Minister, an able and an extremely ambitious man who, though no Communist or fellow traveller, is prepared to follow almost any policy which will suit his personal book and further increase his popularity with the weak and ageing President Paasikivi, whom he hopes to succeed at the next Presidential elections. [...] there is a risk that he may allow his ambition to outrun his country's interests.

The West also seemed to appreciate a cartoon of the leading Finnish cartoonist in Helsingin Sanomat, Kari Suomalainen, in 1954, when Kekkonen ousted Ralf Törngren from the Premiership and became Prime Minister again. This can be assumed from the fact that both the American and the British ministers sent the cartoon to their foreign ministries. The cartoon described a mass of Soviet-type soldiers carrying Törngren away and Kekkonen saluting the soldiers from a balcony. The text was: 'Long Live the People's Republic of Kekkoslovakia!'

Since the West could not do much to defend Finland politically, not at least in the foreign policy, the Finnish domestic forum was the only one in which the communist and Soviet influ-

ence could be fought effectively – without a risk of an American-Soviet conflict over Finland. The best weapon would be to aid the non-communist parties and to further non-communist co-operation.³⁶ And this should be done with as little noise as possible.

Despite the criticism of Kekkonen it was mostly taken for granted in the Western diplomatic circles during Paasikivi's Presidency that Kekkonen would become the next President. Kekkonen's political talent was considered to be in its own class in Finland, he was clearly the favourite of the Soviets, and his opponents could not join their forces.³⁷ But after he indeed was elected in 1956, the fears seemed to become true, and the first real evidence of subservience seemed to come during the Hungarian uprising. The Finnish attitude towards condemning the Soviet aggression was considered very evasive. As the British Ambassador asked the Finnish Ambassador if Finland would contribute to the work of the UN Special Committee on the Hungarian Uprising the Finnish colleague was reluctant. The London officials were not surprised: as one of them noted in the minutes with a short but illuminating sentence: 'This is what we expected.'³⁸ And after Nagy's execution it was yet again Kekkonen who was seen as the culprit in Finland or at least as the censor whose line prevented some of the moral outcry which the executions would have deserved from every democratic and free man.³⁹

2.2.2 Rock Bottom – Permitting Soviet Interference in 1958–62

The convictions of Kekkonen's sins were accentuated even more after the so called night frost crisis in 1958–59 and note crisis in 1961. It is not possible to describe these crises in detail here but in both cases the Americans and the British thought they could see their worst fears come true: they thought that Kekkonen was yet again making undue concessions to the Soviets – concessions which Paasikivi would not have made.

The Night Frost crisis came after the 1958 elections. The communists became the biggest party (50 out of 200 MPs) but the negotiations to form the new government brought a pleasant surprise for the West. Instead of the dreaded popular front gov-

ernment just the opposite emerged: a coalition government of all parties except the communists (and the Small Farmer's Party of no importance). Even Kekkonen's party, the Agrarians, participated; the most influential position was held by the anti-Kekkonen social democrats, and also the ostracism of the conservatives was ended. In the Western eyes, this was even better than the 'red ochre' government: a government this large would effectively isolate the communists. The Western diplomats sensed Kekkonen's reluctance against the new government but as the American Ambassador reported to Washington, 'all Emb[assy] contacts assume, and we agree, communists will not repeat not be admitted to government unless President Kekkonen in effect goes nuts'.⁴⁰ It was recognized that Kekkonen could not prevent the government from being formed, and it was expected that the government would control his undue subservience to the East.

However, when the West was satisfied, it was evident that the same reasons would make the government an anathema for the Soviets. The discontent was soon apparent: trade negotiations were cancelled, and Ambassador Lebedev left the country without the usual courtesy visit to President. The relations of the two countries froze to a zero-point.

Kekkonen's own attitude towards the government had been negative from the very beginning since he regarded it as dangerous in foreign policy and consisting of his most ardent opponents in domestic policy. The question of his actual role in the making and breaking of the government is still debated among Finnish historians but the least what can be said with certainty is that he and the Soviets had at least some cooperation against the government – and both were trying to bring about the fall of it. Kekkonen did not show the slightest sign of following Paasikivi's example and defending a government which was under pressure from Moscow, on the contrary. For example, he inquired through his political confidant Ahti Karjalainen whether the Soviets would continue resisting the government without compromise to the end because only in that case could he throw his authority to the game against it.⁴¹

Kekkonen seemed to work against the government right from the start and then to give in to the Russians almost immediately – if not even to collaborate against the government. Finally, the government resigned.

In the Western Embassies, Kekkonen was seen as the culprit. It was thought that the Soviet pressure would not have warranted such submission from his part, especially since the Americans had promised to give economic aid. Now he had set a dangerous precedent and the Soviet interference in Finnish domestic matters had increased. As the British Ambassador Douglas Busk put it:⁴²

President Kekkonen is apparently genuinely persuaded that the degree of submissiveness to Russian wishes indicated in his speech is necessary to the safety and prosperity of his country. [...] the President is still playing party politics. [...] apparently granting the Russians the right to object to any government and from that it is but a short step to a Russian right to choose a government. [...] The President may think he is adopting 'divide et impera' as his motto, but it may work out as 'divide et Russia imperabit'. At the very least the Russian appetite must surely have been whetted.

The Western image of Kekkonen was of course partly a stereotype. But Kekkonen did not improve this image – of which he could hardly be ignorant – in his meetings with the Western diplomats especially in the years 1959–60. He repeatedly stressed to them that the real danger to world peace was not the Soviet Union at all, but the unwise, revanchist policy of Western Germany. He also maintained that the Soviet Union was in ascendancy in the Cold War, whereas the West had suffered many setbacks.⁴³

It has often been said that the Western diplomats had too one-sided contacts and listened too much to Kekkonen's opponents. According to their reports, however, Kekkonen and his supporters were listened to as well, and the arguments of Kekkonen's opponents were not taken at face value. Moreover, it was not supposed that Kekkonen's opponents had much of a chance to gain power in any case. It was especially those opinions of Kekkonen mentioned above (given by himself) which

made the West most worried, not the horror stories of his opponents which were taken with a grain of salt.

The British or the Americans did not succeed in raising Kekkonen's sympathies. On the contrary, his recently published diaries reveal that he considered most Western diplomats in Helsinki mediocre and did not appreciate their advice. Mostly he saw them, not the Soviets, as the troublemakers in Finnish-Soviet relations. In his opinion, especially the Americans did not understand the Finnish policy. In his entries, he called one of them 'the U.S. Gestapo man', another one 'a fool', a third one 'more stupid than can be permitted'.⁴⁴ Furthermore, State Secretary Dulles also gave advice, which – according to Kekkonen's diary – was 'the advice of a foolish dilettante'; the US foreign policy was in 'pitifully weak hands'.⁴⁵ The West Germans were especially repulsive: in 1969 Kekkonen wrote, that President Lübke was 'a big fool', Franz-Josef Strauss 'intimidating', and even Willy Brandt, a social democrat, had spoken 'like Hitler'.⁴⁶

These opinions Kekkonen naturally did not say aloud but the ones he did led, of course, to negative emotions in the West. It was difficult to decide whether Kekkonen had capitulated mentally or let fear or some sort of pro-Soviet conversion guide him. However, the Western conclusion was not that disenchantment should lead to distancing oneself from Kekkonen. It was taken practically for granted that he would be re-elected President in 1962, so the West had to find ways to influence him, not to discredit itself by backing his adversaries which scarcely had a chance to win. The West should rather try to improve his knowledge of the situation in the world and particularly make him aware of the American might compared to that of the Russians. At the same time the West should maintain a low profile in Finnish affairs in order not to provoke Kekkonen and the Russians.⁴⁷ 'Finland must walk a tightrope; the local Blondin [Kekkonen] is the only one available, so we must try to guide him', was a sentence used by more than one diplomat.

Even the question of inviting Kekkonen to a state visit to the United States and to Britain was seen in this light. So, paradoxically, when Kekkonen made these visits in 1961, this seemed to

be recognition of neutrality, and the Finns made the most of them. But, in fact, the invitations were not proof of Western recognition of Kekkonen's policies or his success or authority but quite the reverse.

How can this paradox be explained? One must bear in mind that Kekkonen was not accused of being a traitor or an agent of the Kremlin. He was almost always, also in the most critical Western analysis, considered to be a Finnish patriot. His greatest error was not lack of patriotism but of judgement: he had made a wrong conclusion in world politics and the outcome of the Cold War, since he had over-estimated Russian might and underestimated the American one. State visits were considered the only means to try and influence him and to make him see that Finland had a chance to hold its own against the Soviets. It was also useful to talk about Finnish neutrality when it was considered to be weakest and in danger because this was the only way to make it as difficult as possible for the Soviet Union to crush it. So the invitations to state visits and recognitions of Finnish neutrality during these visits were paradoxically not the fruit of Kekkonen success in convincing the West but of his failure to do this.⁴⁸ It was an effort to 'convert' him, and this would be done with a carrot, not with a stick.⁴⁹

The success, seen from the Western point of view, was meagre. Kekkonen maintained his official line and gave no signs of 'hidden' Western sympathies. A disillusioned British memorandum stated after the visit that Kekkonen had behaved in London as if he had recognised that the Soviets had a right to concern themselves with Finnish internal politics, and betrayed a leaning towards the Soviet point of view in world politics.⁵⁰ Another one stated: 'It must be hard to be a good Finn. What disappointed me most about the whole visit was the President's pointed omission of any indication that he was basically on our side.'⁵¹

In October 1961, while Kekkonen was still on his state visit to the United States, a crisis erupted which damaged his reputation even further in the West. The Soviet Union sent a diplomatic note to Finland and suggested that consultations according to the 1948 Treaty on Friendship, Co-operation and Mutual Assistance should

be commenced due to the rising militarism and revanchism in West Germany. The 'true' motives of the note are a constantly debated issue in Finland, and the main question has been whether Kekkonen somehow collaborated with the Soviets in order to ensure his re-election. The Presidential Elections of 1962 were approaching, and the anti-Kekkonen forces, the social democrats, the conservatives, the liberals and the Swedish People's Party and the Small Farmers' Party, had nominated a former Chancellor of Justice, Olavi Honka, as a joint candidate. Even though the polls indicated that Kekkonen would win, the front behind Honka was wide enough to cause worries in the Presidential Palace, the Agrarian Party – and the Kremlin.

While it is not possible to describe the aspects of the note crisis more accurately here, the result was that even though Kekkonen finally came out as a winner of the crisis, his name became more suspicious than ever in Western eyes. First the West had considered that Finland was in true danger and that the note was a threat also to Kekkonen. Now, if ever, he should defend Finland; the Americans were ready to give extensive economic and even diplomatic support – they had agreed on this with the British already in April 1961.

But when Kekkonen yet again gave in, travelled to Novosibirsk to meet Khrushchev in a manner which looked subservient in the West, admitted most of the Soviet arguments and attacked his domestic political opponents in his speech both before and after Novosibirsk, suspicions rose. They gained more nourishment from a Soviet defector's stories that Kekkonen and Khrushchev had arranged the note together in order to ensure Kekkonen's re-election and to crush his opponents. When the Soviets dropped the suggestion of consultations almost at the same time when Kekkonen's rival stepped aside from the presidential race, the Western analysis began to smell some sort of conspiracy. This time the West was disappointed not only with Kekkonen but the disappointment covered the whole nation. Where was now the spirit of the stubborn nation of the Winter War? Was Finland now slowly and undramatically sliding to the communist camp?

Kekkonen's reputation had reached rock bottom in Western eyes. Even now he still was not suspected of being a secret communist, let alone an agent, but he simply was too ambitious and too timid. It is also noteworthy that this disappointment was deepest at the same time when the image of Kádár was slowly, even though without enthusiasm and almost without noticing it, improving. Kekkonen would become part of this rehabilitation process only later.

3 A Gradual Change for the Better in the Mid-1960s

3.1 Hungary – A Necessity Becomes a Virtue

The improvement of Kádár's image was extremely gradual. It is impossible to say any definite date or year, and it hardly developed into any positive emotion, let alone admiration as such. It was more a question of two unavoidable things: the 'lesser evil' and making an inevitable state of things a virtue. In a way it was, of course, also a sign of impotence in the matter. But even though the image of the state of things in Hungary was far from ideal, some reluctant recognition of improvement had to be given. The image of Kádár became rather an image of a cunning foe, a foe cunning enough to fool his Russian masters as well – he was not only a traitor with blood on his hands and without a will. He was rather a builder of the special Hungarian line.

Since the West was experiencing problems of its own – Vietnam and the 'anti-imperialist' slogans in the decade of decolonization – it had to adapt itself to the situation. Besides, even though the Kádár regime was still considered emotionally repulsive no spectator could deny that the situation in Hungary seemed to be normalising, and the economy even prospering. Even the NSC admitted this as early as in 1958:⁵²

A certain degree of moderation has been evident in the economic policy of the Hungarian regime. Collectivization of agriculture remains the ultimate goal, but Kádár has asserted that this will be achieved by 'Leninist' persuasion rather than 'Stalinist' coercion. A degree of private enterprise among artisans and small tradesmen has been tolerated though not encouraged, and there has been an

effort to keep the market reasonably well supplied with consumer goods. With the aid of extensive grants and loans from the Soviet Union and the other Communist nations, the Hungarian economy has recovered from the effects of the revolution more rapidly than had been anticipated, though grave economic problems remain.

Although the aspect of economic development was often partially belittled with the words 'according to Eastern European standards', it was still a fact. On the one hand, this was positive development. On the other, it could also be politically worrisome: would the Kádár regime thus be able to 'buy' the popular support which the people of Hungary had thus far denied him? At the same time, the belief that the Hungarian people would continuously resist an oppressive regime diminished.

Also Kádár's personal position and standing seemed to change. Even this was a dilemma in at least two aspects. On the one hand, if one took the moralistic view of 1956, it was not mentally comfortable to see how the quisling and demon of 1956 was becoming tolerable. On the other hand, if Kádár gained more personal authority, it could be conceivable that he would some day be able to also stand up against the Soviets, at least on some issues. When Kádár visited the Soviet Union in 1958, the West considered his domestic position safe.⁵³

The execution of Nagy in 1958 produced a shocked moral outcry but even that did not have any permanent effect. The Americans did not in fact blame Kádár for the execution in their own secret negotiations. The execution was considered a factor which would rather damage his position. The Head of the CIA, Allen Dulles, expressed his conviction that the signal for the executions had almost certainly come from Moscow and that they had been intended as warnings first to Tito and thereafter to Gomulka. 'He thought it likely that in the sequel Kádár would drop out of the political picture quite soon.'⁵⁴

Despite Dulles's comment above, at least the British did not expect Kádár to fall soon, and as already stated, when Kádár visited the Soviet Union in April 1958, the West considered his position in Hungary safe: the extremists had not gain the upper

hand.⁵⁵ In late 1959 the British also concluded a new 'Personalities'-list in which they analyzed the leading circles of Hungary and even some of the potential opposition forces. It should be added that according to the information of the archive catalogue a more extensive list also exists but is still secret.

The analysis of the list available is, however, very illuminating. Kádár is, of course, the obvious target of interest, but also some other personalities are worth mentioning. It is interesting that the personality of Gerő is not commented on at all, his career is cited only in the form of an extended *curriculum vitae*. Of Kádár, the list says the following:⁵⁶

Kádár, János: Immediately after the revolution, Kádár offered many concessions to the workers and the revolutionary councils, including the principle of multi-party free elections and the withdrawal of Soviet troops. At this time he did his best to represent himself as a moderate. But his term of power has been marked by steadily increasing repression in all fields and the elimination of most of the political concessions won by the Revolution. It has been rumoured that, particularly in the summer of 1957, he favoured the introduction of a more moderate line but was overruled. His speeches have been harsh, he accepted without protest the execution of Nagy and his associates in June, 1958, and, whatever his personal views, he appears to be a reliable tool in the hands of his Soviet masters, ready to carry out any excesses which are demanded of him. It is believed that his nerve and will-power have never recovered from his sufferings in prison; but his public appearances present a facade of confidence and determination. The great majority of Hungarians detest him as devoid of every vestige of political and moral integrity.

On the surface, this was a moralist view, and the emotional repugnance was clear. Nevertheless, it is illuminating that the critical tone sounded like compulsory mental adhering to old values which, however, would no more be permitted to stand in the way of a pragmatic policy. It would have been too much to confess a wrong analysis, but the very fact that Kádár had remained in power and was likely to be the strong man also in the future made it essential to also find good sides of him. And at the very least his success had to be admitted. Even Fry, while

stressing that Kádár was ignorant of the events outside of the Soviet bloc and distorted them, and was ideologically as rigid as Rákosi and Gerő, said he displayed 'frankness and a sense of realism' in economy and agriculture.⁵⁷

Besides, the other characteristics showed that there was no better option. To take a couple of examples:⁵⁸

Kiss, Károly: Kiss is one of the key figures in the party today and is thought to be in favour of repressive policies. He is the main party organiser and disciplinarian and has been largely responsible for carrying through the reconstruction of the party since the revolution.

Marosán, György: He did not play a prominent role in the revolution of October, but has since repeatedly declared that he voted in favour of calling in Soviet troops at the outset on October 23. [...] Marosán has been one of the Kádár régime's principal spokesmen since its conception, although less has been heard of him in recent months. He has made numerous speeches at party meetings and Workers' Conferences, the majority marked by their harsh uncompromising attitude. His style is extremely coarse and the published versions of his speeches are carefully edited. He has frequently stated that there can be no question of the revival of a separate Social Democrat Party [...] He is uneducated and regarded as something of a buffoon; but he is dangerous.

Münnich, Ferenc: He is a tough and determined Communist who would have been happy to share responsibility for the excesses of Rákosi but for his personal friendship with Rákosi's victim, Rajk. He is still said to distinguish himself from those members of the leadership who are out and out Rákosists, but he is probably as reactionary and inflexible as they are. His allegiance to the Soviet Union is probably absolute.

The difference between the British and the American attitude about tactics became clearer and the British were very conscious of it. The Head of the Northern Department, R. H. Mason, wrote to the Budapest Legation: 'I entirely agree with your view that we must try to encourage a more forward policy towards Hungary by the NATO powers as a whole. The American attitude has been an obstacle to this, but we must hope that

the new Administration (=Kennedy, VV) will be prepared to take a more positive view.⁵⁹

Necessity became a virtue, and it is of minor practical consequence whether this was due to a true conversion or tactics. A year later it was essentially Kádár's authority and personal respect which was emphasised in the British analysis and this trend became all the more obvious in the following years.⁶⁰ A phrase which was frequently repeated was that it was accepted that although Kádár would never be able to win the real confidence of the Hungarian people, the Hungarians thought Kádár to be the best Prime Minister they were likely to get. He was essentially a mediocrity who had risen to the top because of events, but Hungarian history was full of men who in similar circumstances had adopted the realistic policy of doing what was possible. One Hungarian writer had even called him the Hungarian Christ, because 'someone had to save the Hungarian people'.⁶¹ And even after Khrushchev's fall in October 1964 the British did not think that this would harm Kádár's position.⁶²

Also the American image of Kádár was gradually changing, although the Americans were slower in this mental rehabilitation process and did not concentrate so much on Kádár's person. They saw the case of Hungary in a grander scheme; as a part of the communist bloc and as a case in which only the Soviet Union really mattered. When Kádár visited the United Nations, the Americans did not meet him and restricted his travels. Even so, after Kádár had visited the UN the American attitude began to show more signs of interest in him.

A report which was issued from 'a reliable source' in December 1960 described Kádár's informal comments during this visit. They were thought to be interesting also because it was assumed that Kádár had actually wished that they would reach the Americans. This is most probably a valid guess, since the comments show Kádár's desire to convince the Americans of two starting-points: he was in power to stay but he was also a pragmatic man. He would bear no grudge for the suspicions and the boycott and was a leader whom one could have dealings with – only a few circumstances had to be understood at

first. And third: it paid off to take him seriously, since he was no puppet.

Since the events of 1956, there have been a lot of childish (gyerekes) things going on between our two countries. I want to be frank with you. Both the U.S. Government and we Hungarians have been acting like a couple of kids. Periodically, we expel one another's diplomatic representatives: one American for one Hungarian. I don't think this is an intelligent (okos) thing to do. Let us explore the possibility of an understanding.

I don't like the Germans (I mean Adenauer's Germany) but to illustrate my feeling on this subject, I would use the German word 'Realpolitik' to describe the way this matter should be treated. We do not hate the Americans. After all, let us be realistic: Who are we? We are only a 'little louse' (kis tota [sic!]) in this big world. However, the prerequisite for normal relations is a willingness on the part of the U.S. Government to recognize the hard facts. The People's Republic of Hungary is an accomplished fact. It is here today. It will stay here tomorrow. All you have to do is to recognize this fact. The rest is simple. We could then resume normal diplomatic representations instead of this ridiculous (navetaeges [sic]) Charge d'Affaires business.

The U.S. Government talks about Hungary being a Soviet satellite. Now on this subject let me tell you the following. It has cost the U.S.S.R. a lot of money to help normalize our conditions after 1956. Today we are happily engaged in constructive work. Our people enjoy freedom. No more of the Rákosi terror. Believe me, we don't take people to prison in the middle of the night any more. If you don't believe me, then talk to our writers, our intellectuals who were released from prison. Talk to Tibor Dary [Déry], the writer. And all this nonsense about Khrushchev dictating everything in Hungary – it is simply not true...

Let me assure you, once the U.S. recognizes that there was such a thing as the People's Republic with Kádár as its leader, we would not have a single problem. I cannot emphasize that strongly enough.

I must tell you in earnest: We have no illusions concerning the possibility that the U.S. will become a socialist or a communist state. We Hungarian Communists are realists. We know that your country is capitalist, and it will not adopt our system. (Source: Mr. Kádár, this does not seem to be in line with Mr. Khrushchev's remark to the effect that our grandchildren in the U.S. will live under Communism.)

What makes you think that we have to go along with everything our Comrades say? We Communists like to argue with each other. That is the democratic thing to do. The principal thing is that the East and West must co-exist in peace and that we must negotiate. Take this present UN debate. It is much better to shout (kisbalai [sic!]) at each other than to shoot (loni [sic]) at each other.⁶³

The message is clear: Kádár wanted to show that he was not a man who would hang himself for any dogma. He even took the trouble to emphasize his peasantry (!) and love for nature and animals, even joke how he would not like to live in New York: 'Not enough trees and (laugh) too many policemen.' And then he appealed to the American nationalism by confessing his and his people's admiration for Ulysses Grant. The document does not, however, reveal the American reaction.

Even as the image of Kádár became better, one thing still annoyed even the British: they thought that Hungary was buying internal independence by being extra loyal and rigid in foreign policy.⁶⁴ The Americans had even more to complain about, since according to their view Hungary was almost the most eager supporter of North Vietnam and condemned 'American imperialism' so vehemently. In 1965 there occurred a demonstration of Asian and African students in Budapest against the American Legation, and even the Legation premises were violated – according to the Americans, with no effort on the Hungarian part to control this.⁶⁵

But despite such things the American policy line had also softened remarkably. For example, the issue of Hungarian credentials in the UN became more and more a liability already in the beginning of the 1960's as the years went by, since decolonization increased the number of the countries to which the Hungarian question was of no importance or which even had, if not sympathies with the Soviet view, even fewer sympathies for Western 'Imperialists' playing the role of liberators.

In addition to this, the reluctant admission of the Hungarian domestic development was unavoidable also to the Americans: the Rákosists were pushed back and the standard of living was improving – even though it was reminded that because of the

physical and political restrictions put on it, the Legation could not test the situation adequately.⁶⁶

But slowly the tendency became clearer: 'Kádár regime, although a police state disliked by the overwhelming bulk of Hungarians who would sweep it away if able to do so, has governed better than thought possible in 1956. It is probably as good as can be hoped for in the immediate future.' Kádár was sincerely interested in the welfare working class 'rather than a pure Soviet stooge'. He gave the impression that he was not necessarily the most implacable of the bloc leaders in his attitude toward the United States, particularly if he would be given evidence that the United States was not implacably opposed to him.

In September 1961, Kádár had a collective audience for the Chiefs of Diplomatic Missions. Chargé Torbert had a discussion with him and seems to have got the same message as Kádár's 1960 comments described above. He analyzed:

By nature a cold and withdrawn man, Kádár apparently finds it difficult, or else does not consider it worth the effort, to project his personality to a heterogeneous social group. The best indication of this was that after about twenty minutes of opening formalities the event died on its feet and Kádár was left talking exclusively with minor Hungarian officials. Although the initiative to open a conversation was mine, Kádár did his full share to continue it. [...] Probably the most interesting result of the conversation was Kádár's unsolicited admission that he was trying to find ways to overcome certain institutional rigidities of the communist system which inhibited economic development. He made it clear that his principal preoccupation was with economic advancement of Hungary.

A Memorandum of Conversation attached to the report gave Kádár's message even more clearly:⁶⁷

I have been thinking while I was waiting for your arrival what I should say to you. It seems to me that we did not elect each other to office but we will have to accept each other's existence and put up with each other. We may disagree on many subjects but we have important common responsibilities. The task of diplomats is

to find ways to get along in difficult circumstances. We should, therefore, enjoy normal relations so that we can solve our problems. [...] It seems much better that we take our discussions out of the hands of soldiers and put them in the hands of diplomats. He then said that the disputes in the world were between regimes and not between people. He did not like to use the word enemy but he would say his opponent was the government of the United States. In one way he would be sorry to divert that opponent from preoccupation with armaments because he knew that America was a very powerful country with a very powerful system which in fact had some advantages over the rigidity of the Hungarian system and if we devoted ourselves entirely to economic development we would get ahead very fast and it would be that much harder for Hungary to catch up.

In February 1962 Torbert admitted, that even if the party had not gained popular support, Kádár had with his 'folksy' speeches and manners.⁶⁸

The actively hostile enemy image was fading away, although there naturally was no cordiality. But it was evident that Kádár's slow tactics and messages of pragmatism were paying dividends. In fact, he was giving the same messages throughout the 1960's in various newspaper interviews, which were also noted in many Embassy records. Since the American general line towards the Satellite countries was anyhow slowly changing, it became easier and easier for Hungary to fit in a policy which would no longer stick to the memories of 1956.

This standard American line, which can clearly be seen in the document 'Changing Patterns in Eastern Europe' in 1964, was now that the communist regimes would stay in Eastern Europe. But, now they were seen as representatives of national Communism, and they would consciously and methodically attempt to free themselves as much from the Moscow dominance as possible. In this way the communist bloc would lose its monolithic nature.

It was assumed that this political evolution was not likely to proceed at a speed which would threaten the communist regimes themselves, but the logic of this development would make the difference – against Moscow anyhow. The national communist re-

gimes were now the main force which could oppose Moscow in Eastern Europe, so it was not practical any more to treat them as oppressive and undemocratic quisling governments, but to try to develop relations with them. It was also assumed that the Soviets would consider direct military intervention in Eastern Europe only in emergency circumstances, when they believed vital Soviet interests to be threatened. Even the fall of Khrushchev did not change this analysis.⁶⁹

In any case the principle was that the United States should improve its relations with Eastern European countries – even to strengthen their communist regimes.⁷⁰

All this was a far cry from the old moralist view which separated the cause of the free, democratic world and the evil communist bloc from each other completely. No immediate victory was in sight; probably there was even some thought of the convergence of the two systems in the long run. Mainly the improving image was due to the fact that a new phase in the Cold War had changed the tactics.

3.2 Finland – Slippery Slope to the East? – or Better Omens

The same trend that was slowly changing the image of Kádár, was influencing the Western image of Kekkonen as well, although a bit slower – because his dramatic crisis had also taken place later than Kádár's. This was perhaps inevitable, if the view is accepted that it was the Grand Strategy in the Cold War which was strongly influencing the policy. A case like Finland would always in such a case partly retain its continuity, partly follow the general trend.

The American and British views on Kekkonen's personality during these crucial years can also be traced from various reports in one form or the other. They are presented in a most illuminating way in two documents: a British 'Personalities' list of influential Finns, consisting of 217 names, written in 1959, and an over 60-page 'biography' on Kekkonen, "A Study of the Career and Policies of Urho Kekkonen, President of Finland", which was written in the American Embassy in 1963. The latter one even included notes.

Neither of these documents favours any such interpretation that Kekkonen would have been a sinister demon, a traitorous power-hungry satellite or an agent of the KGB. Neither was, in fact, based on only anti-Kekkonen circles' information – as has always been suggested by Kekkonen's supporters when the question of Kekkonen's strained Western relations came to the debate. Both documents were reasonably neutral and attempted to give an unbiased view.

The key sections of the American 'biography' were in the introduction and in the conclusion. Since they sum up the analysis made before in this study, they are cited here quite extensively:

Urho Kaleva Kekkonen is the unchallenged ruler of Finland and he is likely to remain so for many years to come. At 62 he has just begun his second six-year term as President of Finland. A third term seems probable and a fourth term is within the realm of possibility. [...] He likes the Presidency which he actively sought and for which he evidently considers himself well qualified. No individual even remotely threatens his political preeminence. There is no current prospect of a coalition of domestic opponents capable of reducing Kekkonen's authority and eventually turning him out of office. In the unlikely event that Kekkonen at some point proves unable to protect his own position, the Soviet Union can be expected to take steps to preserve his authority.

Kekkonen had effectively monopolised Finnish foreign policy and also made use of it like no predecessor had done before. And no one had made domestic developments serve foreign policy or used foreign policy for domestic political purposes like him before. His domination of Finland was primarily the product of the application of political skill and purposeful exploitation of fear of Russia, and he had also remained in partisan politics. Contrary to the idealised view of the Finnish President as a unifying force, he had continued to be the real leader of his Agrarian Union and had controlled the actions of the cabinet during most of his presidential term. And no one dared to challenge him – it was known that it would be useless to try to convert him, and he would retaliate by discrediting his op-

ponents in the Russians' eyes. To make the President's task even easier, he often had the support of the large communist party and factions of the other parties; his opponents were disorganised and lacking in skilful leadership.

The report described a very autocratic leader and personality:

Kekkonen is not a popular President. Confident, tough, often resentful of advice, and markedly sensitive to criticism, he seems to have few close friends or confidants. He neither seeks nor received the adulation or affection of his people. His relationship to them is cold, distant. The public seldom sees the congeniality of which Kekkonen is capable. He is offensively pedagogical in his attitude toward the Finnish people. Kekkonen asks for their confidence while often demonstrating that he has little confidence in them. He does not appeal for understanding and cooperation; he demands it. Despite his unassailable political position Kekkonen is seldom if ever magnanimous or conciliatory, even in moments of national crisis. He tolerates corruption in high places and deals harshly with opponents. Even among some of those who would not consider denying him their support, Kekkonen has incurred an intense dislike.

But even so, Kekkonen's views had a popular following: it was taken for a fact that Finland could not rely on the support of Western nations despite their sympathies. And Kekkonen had concluded, that the greater confidence the Soviets had in Finland, the freer Finland would be to develop its western associations. Within the limits he had set for himself, Kekkonen indeed desired considerable contact with the West, which was demonstrated by his visits to the West in the past two years.

Outwardly Kekkonen appears confident that he has been successful, even remarkably successful, in protecting Finland's independence. This is an attitude he must adopt, however, and it is at least questionable that he really believes Finland's position is as secure as he pretends. Nevertheless, despite the doubt he may have, the trying moments in relations with the Soviets, and the irritation and possible serious concern caused to him by those who suggest he may have undermined Finnish independence, Kekkonen has a taste for the burden he has assumed and seeks to retain. He seems

to be stimulated by his encounters with the Russians and he has had the satisfaction of seeing his domestic political position reinforced as a consequence of these encounters. In 1961 he told an American audience that he found it fascinating to conduct Finland's foreign affairs. Even shortly after what must have been a harrowing journey to Novosibirsk later that same year Kekkonen said privately that it was thrilling and stimulating to be President of Finland.⁷¹

It can easily be seen that the tone was critical, and if there was certain respect for the abilities of Kekkonen, it was reluctant. But the tone was not hopeless either; and Kekkonen was certainly not considered to be a mere stooge or a mediocrity. The main worry was still that he would overdo his policy in his zealotry to appease the Soviets at almost any price. It is rather a picture of a ruthless nationalist, who was too convinced that he and only he could save Finland, and nothing could change his grand plan to do this.

The British Personalities-list made the same kind of remarks:

One of the ablest men in Finland. His sardonic humour and cynicism are unusual in a Finn; his colleagues do not entirely like him, perhaps partly because they do not understand him, and he is easily criticised. Although a die-hard Finnish patriot during the early part of the war, he is now prepared to follow the 'Paasikivi line' of ostensible friendliness towards the Soviet Union. The apparent change of Soviet foreign policy in a more moderate direction has probably increased the support for such a policy and most Finns feel that it is the only realistic line for their country to pursue. But this policy has, in the past, been deeply distrusted in Finland, where it has been held to be a dangerous substitute for a tougher reaction to Soviet pressure. The prolonged Government crisis of the autumn of 1958 and early 1959 showed the President in a poor light. In the first place he was clearly not playing an impartial role, but favouring his old party, the Agrarians; in the second he allowed himself to be alarmed by Russian coldness and showed subservience to the Russians which much decreased his popularity."⁷²

This is not the place to argue whether these analyses were actually valid. However, they represent the attitude which set the suspicious mood on Kekkonen's person.

During the 1960's, after the Night Frosts crisis and Note crisis, these suspicions gradually diminished, but at intervals it sometimes seemed a new cause for suspicion of Kekkonen's uncritically pro-Soviet views and dictatorial leanings. For example, in 1965 Kekkonen stated in Moscow that Finland could only be neutral during peace. In West this was seen as a deviation from official neutrality and as yet another concession to the Soviets, and the American State Department Assistant Secretary expressed American surprise to the Finnish Ambassador and inquired whether there had been a change in Finnish foreign policy.⁷³ The Finns assured that this was not the case.

In domestic policy, Kekkonen's role in defeating the agrarians' Chairman [V.J. Sukselainen], whom the Soviets had criticised, was regarded as 'another successful foray into Finnish domestic affairs' by the Soviets in an American analysis. It was not the Soviet interference that was the worst; it was the fact that Kekkonen had made extensive use of it.⁷⁴ The British called the spectacle 'unedifying'.⁷⁵

But what was there to do? Kekkonen was there to stay, but he seemed unapproachable. If you compare the Western view on him, it might even seem to be going towards a worse direction than in Kádár's case – because Kádár was gaining more freedom from the Soviets and allowing more freedom domestically himself. However, it must also be borne in mind, that even given these two trends it was still evident that Kekkonen and Finland enjoyed more freedom than Kádár and Hungary and looked likely to do so also in the future.

The only option to control Kekkonen seemed to be to strengthen Finnish civil society and to let the eulogy of Finnish-Soviet friendship go past unnoticed, as lip-service, or, as it came to be called in Finland, liturgy. As a British Foreign Office official put it in 1965: 'while leaving President Kekkonen free to flirt with the Russians as much as he likes' connections between Finnish and Western individuals and organisations would be built. 'What we need, I think, is strong pro-Western public opinion in Finland capable of preventing President Kekkonen from going too far with the Russians.'⁷⁶

However, as the years went by in the 1960's, the Western image of Kekkonen improved significantly, for very much the same reasons as in Kádár's case. The Cold War came to a new phase or gave way to détente, the old diplomats with the old personal stereotypes on Kekkonen moved away, and most important of all: the worst fears had not materialised. Finland had not become a satellite or lost its democracy, and no new crisis such as the night frosts or the note crisis emerged. Finland did not even make noise about Vietnam. Quite the contrary, it seemed to gain more breathing space as it carefully, step by step, joined the economic integration of the West. So Kekkonen's cautious policy now seemed to give dividends and not to lead Finland finally to the 'slippery slope'. True, the communists entered the government in 1966, which originally caused some worry in the USA and in Britain; in 1965, the British had even expressed to the Finnish Foreign Ministry that a communist participation in the government would be looked upon with 'active dislike'.⁷⁷ Since the general line was to avoid anything which the Finns and the Russians could claim to be 'Western interference', this was an exceptionally strong expression.

But very soon the reports from Helsinki to London and Washington became very soothing: the communists had not advocated any radical policy. In fact, they seemed to have been tamed.⁷⁸ And Kekkonen seemed to have been the successful lion tamer – the one who had managed to fool those who thought they had tamed him.

4 The Good Governors

4.1 Hungary

4.1.1 The End of the 1960ss – Stability and Expectations

At the end of the 1960's the image of Hungary and Kádár had become relatively stable and even positive – if one bore in mind the starting points and the obvious differences. Hungary and Kádár were becoming not only tolerable, but they also looked

better and better compared to other bloc nations – maybe even an example for them to follow.

As the British Ambassador in Budapest, Alexander Morley, stated in his Annual Report in January 1967:⁷⁹

Hungarian leadership abjured old-fashioned dogmatist Communism and became committed to the search for a new brand of Communism, aimed at giving the people of this country material benefits similar to those enjoyed by their neighbours to the West. [...] I have the impression that if it is possible to combine a workable economic liberalism with full public ownership of production and strict central political control, which to us are the essence of communism, it is as likely to be seen in Hungary as anywhere. [...] Contrary to the then usual stereotype of how Hungarians behave (which is not always wrong) the Hungarian party and governmental apparatus has been moving slowly and methodically.

Also the American Envoy emphasized, how ‘Hungary’s pragmatic communist regime, though closely dependent on Moscow, is being drawn by geography and economic necessity into closer relations with the West’. However, there was also a drawback: the Hungarians were still very restrictive in cultural and commercial exchange with the Americans.⁸⁰ But the mood of the American reports says that this was a nuisance, not the main issue, let alone a reason to stick to the old animosity.

The Hungarians had noticed that the change in the US policy had become final and seemed to sense that they did not need to be the beggar who wanted to get parole from the boycott – it was in the interests of the USA to dismantle old animosity and thus Hungary could wait and set its own terms. The *chargé d'affaires* in Washington, János Radványi, could afford even a slightly sarcastic tone in his negotiations with the Americans:⁸¹

As to RFE [=Radio Free Europe, VV], Radványi said that Premier Kádár had decided to cease jamming of this station to bring some humor into the life of Hungarians, since RFE broadcasts were so ridiculous they could not be taken seriously. [...] Radványi next adverted to Cardinal Mindszenty. The US, he said, should put pressure on the Vatican to find a solution to the case. It was unfortunate that there was no provision in the Catholic Church for the

pensioning of Cardinals, he continued, since this might permit a solution of the issue.

True, the Vietnam issue was still stressed by the Hungarians, but even here the Americans now seemed apt to interpret it in a new light. It was now considered to be mostly lip-service and political currency with which more internal independence was bought from the Soviets. The issue was not in reality important to Hungary, so the West could afford this propagandist price. Hungary was considered to be much more moderate than the Soviet Union or the German Democratic Republic, and it was also understood to take a benevolent view on the reforms in Czechoslovakia in 1967-68. It was thought that Kádár would not allow himself to be forced either to follow the Czech model or to actively attack it.⁸²

In May 1968 the British Ambassador Millard had a long talk with Kádár and naturally sent a long report to London. Kádár's words resembled the ones in 1960 (which were probably addressed to the Americans): he thought the quarrels were mostly due to misconceptions, and as he had assured the Americans that he foresaw no socialist revolution in America, he now assured that he did not want to destroy the British Empire. But there was even more confidence in his tone now: he was firmly in the saddle and would remain so. And he pointed out that even though political relations with the West Germans were bad, the Germans had made an effort to develop economic relations; the British should do the same.

Reverting to this theme of the need for our two countries to understand each other, Kádár said that we would be aware of what had happened in Hungary during and since the war. They had suffered much, and for the events of 1956 they had paid a very high price. They were not now going to sell cheaply what had been won. If I knew the Hungarians, I would know that this was how most of them felt.

Concerning the Czechs, Kádár took an almost patronising tone: the Czech reforms were not a threat to Socialism, and in many ways the Czechs were now catching up with the Hungar-

ian reforms. 'They were dealing with their problems in their own way, and he was confident of their ability to succeed.' The Ambassador's analysis to London ended in a somewhat respecting, somewhat calculating manner:⁸³

To some extent the strength of Kádár's position is the lack of credible alternatives. Hungarians are cynical about their leadership and of course they have no means of changing it, but he is the best First Secretary they have. More positively his prestige is due to his strong personality and the relatively humane quality of his rule. Although there is little communication between Government and people, the Hungarians sense that under the pressures of office he has revealed statesmanlike qualities. Many are disposed to give him credit for this, although there is much else about the regime which they would condemn. The policy of reconciliation has produced results and to a limited extent Kádár has capitalised national feeling. From this brief contact he appears confidently in control.

The desk officers in London agreed – and were especially interested in Kádár's views on the Czech reforms and their future.⁸⁴

Kádár had a roughly equivalent meeting with the American representative. This was all the more important because this marked the final normalisation of US-Hungarian relations. And also in this meeting he played the part of the good-humoured father of the nation – and of a statesman who was big enough to forgive his counterparts' blunders. In a sense, he had a valid opportunity to pose as the winner in the US-Hungarian controversy, since this was the first time an American Ambassador met him after the long boycott. 'There was no false modesty, and he spoke with the assurance of someone who is not only party boss but the real power in this country.'

According to the Ambassador, Kádár emphasised the need for peaceful coexistence as the only rational approach between countries, whose systems were based on differing theories of society. It might not have been possible to say as much 20 years before, when the force of ideologies was much more intense, but the basic problem now was to avoid the outbreak of nuclear war between the two superpowers. And once again, referring to

the previous bad relations between the USA and Hungary, Kádár made a practical analogy:⁸⁵

He had compared the situation at that time as similar to two boxers who had been slugging at each other for seven rounds (from 1956 to 1963). Neither could hope to knock the other out, neither was prepared to capitulate, and neither could ultimately hope to gain very much from the contest. Hungary was not prepared to come on its knees to the US, and he knew the US was not prepared to assume this posture before Hungary. As I knew, he went on, the UN problem had now been solved in an acceptable way. If we approached current problems in the same spirit which had finally led to a solution of the Hungarian question in the UN, based upon realistic acceptance of the facts of life, then there was a good possibility of advancing towards agreement in other areas. --- Both sides would, of course, indulge in propaganda against each other, but firm and realistic acceptance of this truth would not let the possibilities of improving our relations be submerged by such propaganda.

Kádár was in an obviously relaxed, good humoured, sometimes semi-ironic mood. He was well-briefed and had apparently carefully thought out the line of argument he wished to use. He seemed to enjoy playing the role of a confident leader big enough to forget the past, and hopeful for betterment of Hungarian-American relations though very mindful of present difficulties.

4.1.2 The Troublesome Invasion – and the Recovery

Even after the invasion of Czechoslovakia no immediate fears were expressed about Hungary's own reforms. That is the economic freedom and the extended self-government of the people – at least as long as the Hungarians were let to decide these things themselves.

Hungary was one of the occupying powers in the Czechoslovakian crisis, but this did not destroy Kádár's record and image in Western eyes – rather on the contrary. Of course, it was noted that Hungary had participated in the invasion, but simultaneously it was taken for granted that this had been something which Kádár would have wanted to avoid; he had finally had to accept it in order not to endanger Hungary's position towards the Soviets. No enthusiasm was detected on the Hungarian side, rather extremely half-hearted efforts to find excuses for the invasion, excuses which they did not in fact take

seriously themselves but had to perform some obligatory lip-service. It was evident that the Hungarians had no wish to see the Cold War positions return.

As far as Kádár himself was concerned, there were different interpretations on whether his position had weakened or not, and a British report also registered a joke: 'A current joke here is that among the telephones on Kádár's desk, it is easy to tell which is the hot line to Moscow, because it has only a receiver.' Also the American report included a joke: 'Why are the five armies still in Czechoslovakia? They are trying to find the guy who called them to help.'⁸⁶

In 1968, the standard tone seems to have been that Kádár had tried to ride on two horses at the same time and had been forced to participate in the invasion – and would have, had the Czech reform policy succeeded, 'tried to manoeuvre himself into a Dubcek-like posture and tried to ride the whirlwind'. In any case it was thought to be essential that the West would do nothing to blame Hungary or harm its position. It was in the Western interests that contacts with Hungary would increase and the Hungarian economic reform survived, because in the long run this would strengthen Hungary's freedom towards the Soviet Union.⁸⁷ The American conclusions were no different.

There were some hints in 1968 that Kádár's position might be in danger – or his health shaky. At the very least, his authority had suffered significantly. But as the American Ambassador put it immediately after the invasion: it was doubtful whether his actual position as Party First Secretary would be in any significant danger at this time from putatively ascendant hard-liners, and there was no indication that he would be losing control of the Hungarian Party apparatus. But the Czech developments were bound to seriously impede efforts which Hungarians had made to improve relations with the West generally, at least in the short run. 'This may come about not so much as a result of Hungarian unwillingness to pursue such a course as of lack of Western receptivity', Ambassador Hillenbrand remarked dryly.⁸⁸

In 1969 the mood was already much more confident: the Hungarians were able to manage the situation. 'All in all, Hungarians

have shown considerable flexibility and skill in manoeuvring both domestically and in the foreign relations field in the post-Czechoslovakia situation to create areas of policy opportunity. A particularly interesting aspect is scattered signs they judge the current phase suitable for efforts to improve relations with Western countries.⁸⁹

When Brezhnev visited Hungary in 1972, the British noted with the true kremlological sense, that his repeated personal references to Kádár suggested endorsement of the latter's position towards other elements within the Hungarian leadership. The *communiqué* and the atmosphere of the visit had been a triumph to Kádár – and public opinion in Hungary was relieved.⁹⁰ Even the future for Hungarian economic reform now seemed brighter again and the concept that 'Hungarian lip service to the Russians [...] is, I feel sure, based solely on their interest in future material supplies'.⁹¹ All in all, the effects of Czechoslovakia had faded: 'The Hungarian regime under János Kádár has had considerable popular success with its policy of national reconciliation and the promotion of a limited degree of liberalism.'⁹²

It is also interesting to see that whereas in Leslie Fry's time the Legations had been more critical towards Kádár than the desk officers in London, now the tables were turned in this aspect. Yet again the occupational hazard of diplomats – identification with the local conditions – was at work, but this time it meant a sort of identification with Kádár's policies, not with his opposition or his victims, as after 1956. Moralism was now absent.

At any case, in the late 1960s the image of Kádár had thus stabilised. It was more positive than negative, and it was expected to improve, not deteriorate. Hungary belonged, of course, to the opposing bloc, but bearing in mind this starting point and Hungary's conditions and possibilities, the results were as good as could be expected. The Hungary of Kádár did not seem to be very rigid, orthodox or sincerely convinced about its own Socialism as such, it was anything but ideologically expansive (if it was, it was ideologically expansive to liberalize Communism in the bloc) and it seemed to want to absorb as much market economy and political breathing space as it possibly could without provoking the Soviets too much. This

did not mean implementation of capitalism or democracy as such, but it was pragmatic policy which produced very little trouble to the West. Hungary represented the *status quo* in a liberal shade and this was the best that was expected of it – especially after the invasion of Czechoslovakia and the declaration of the Brezhnev doctrine.

And the riddle of Kádár remained in many sense unsolved. As the Superintending Under-Secretary of Northern Department in the Foreign Office P. Hayman stated: 'The enigma about Kádár remains: how has he been able to combine a record of close association with the Soviet Union (in 1956 and at other times) with an appearance of national leadership?'⁹³ The answer remained uncertain, but more important was that Kádár had indeed succeeded.

4.2 Finland

4.2.1 The late 1960s: The Old Foe as the Guarantor of Stability

As already noted, Kekkonen, even with all the traditional misgivings attached to him, was no more looked upon as a spineless dictator after the mid-60s. He was still not 'liked' in any true sense of the word, and he was still considered difficult to influence and too pro-Soviet. But the emotional repugnance against him had disappeared, and like Kádár, he seemed to guarantee stability. He now seemed to be the old statesman, who guaranteed that Finland would maintain the status quo and even move slowly nearer the Western model of society – and all that was still the best that could be expected.

There was also a new reason to have a better opinion of Kekkonen. In the 1950s and early 1960s it had seemed that Kekkonen's policy meant more compliance and even possible 'fellow-travelling' radicalism than that of other Finns (the communists were, of course, a case of their own). Especially the social democrats, the conservatives, even the grass-roots agrarians and the civil society in general had been considered much more reliable.

In the late 1960s, however, a new danger seemed to be on the way in Finnish foreign policy: young neo-left radicals, the new intellectual elite of Finland, which was the counterpart of the

radical generation in Western Europe. They were not usually communists, but they marked the West as 'imperialist' and 'reactionary', and, even if they did not advocate outright Warsaw Pact policy, they very much favoured the Soviet interpretation of the détente to the Western interpretation. Especially the Social Democratic Party – previously so reliable – was influenced by these young neo-left intellectuals. Seen especially from the American point of view, these radicals, some of whom were recruited to the Foreign Ministry of Finland, were very noisy about Vietnam, Latin America etc. – issues which were inconvenient for the Americans and on which official Finnish foreign policy had kept quiet.

Compared to this, Kekkonen might be difficult, obstinate and a bit too near to the Soviets, but he was traditional and stable. He had not made noise about Vietnam, and he advocated strict Realpolitik, which meant that no idealist surprises were to be expected from him. Since there was a warning example also in the Western world next door to Finland – Sweden and especially Prime Minister Olof Palme who took a very moralist stand on the Vietnam issue and was also very anti-American in other cases – Kekkonen seemed a much better option than before. The confidence was strengthened by the fact that also the Finnish society – if you did not count the intellectuals on the surface – , seemed to be far from breaking, rather on the move in the right direction, to Scandinavia and Western Europe.⁹⁴

And now Kekkonen was confessed to be the best interpreter of Finnish interests and of the Finnish space to manoeuvre. As the British Ambassador in Helsinki, David Scott Fox analysed already in 1967: 'President Kekkonen can, I think, probably be trusted to understand better than anybody how far Finland can safely go. He seems to be moving Finnish neutrality very cautiously into a position where it is less slanted towards the Soviet Union, although we should not be surprised if he feels obliged to throw an occasional sop to Cerberus in the process.' And he specifically stated that what mattered most to the West was the fact that the development in Finland seemed to be tending to move gradually the Western way.⁹⁵

After the Czechoslovak crisis a British official reported on the moods of Kekkonen and the Finnish people:⁹⁶

[...] virtually nobody denies that in the things that matter, he is Finland, and that when he speaks to the outside world he is both honest and accurate in his interpretation of the way that Finland thinks and feels. If he pretended to us that he was entirely free to go his own way in foreign affairs, he would misrepresent both the facts and the beliefs of his own people. [...] And behind him, and identifying with him to an astonishing degree, are a people who desperately want to be part of the West, who are afraid for the present and the future, and who badly need a boost.

Kekkonen even afterwards confided to Ambassador Scott Fox that he had felt that the whole basis of his policy of promoting close Finnish relations with the Soviet Union had been so undermined that he had seriously contemplated resigning from the Presidency. In these circumstances, the Soviet government had found it necessary to send Kosygin to Finland at the beginning of October, for the purpose of giving the President very positive assurances that there would be no change in their attitude towards Finland and her neutrality.⁹⁷ However, there had been even rumors that the surprise visit of Kosygin might bring demands to Finland.

In these estimations Kekkonen was by no means a spineless man of compliance, nor primarily any more an over-ambitious and power-hungry partisan politician. It seems that now he was thought to have a cunning plan to not only defend Finland's neutrality but also to gain even more space. And while he seemed to be able to achieve this, the official lip-service to the Soviet friendship was not of equal importance. It also seems that the West was now counting on that Kekkonen himself did not take this lip-service seriously either.

Even the fact that the communists had entered the government in 1966 – as a very junior partner compared to the social democrats and the Centre Party – was not held against Kekkonen now. This had been the test-case before, and when the communists joined the government in 1966, there were initially worries. But as already mentioned, now it seemed rather that in integrating the communists into the government

Kekkonen had actually managed to tame them. In the beginning of the 1960s the participation of communists in the government would have been regarded as the final taming of Kekkonen. There were also phenomena which were always seen as a worrisome signs for democracy in the 1950s and early 1960s, like the so-called 'self-censorship' in the press, the isolation of the conservatives, political appointments in the civil service etc., and now these were rarely seen as very dramatic.

One would not have been so optimistic in this, had not also the image of the communists and left-wing socialists changed in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The new generation was not considered to be the same as the old, stalinist monolith which had only echoed its Russian masters' voice. According to the West, even the communists and the left-wing socialists had now made their choice: it was more important and paid better dividends – in fact it was the only way to gain any dividends – to integrate into the Finnish society, not to be a crony of the Russians without own will. The stalinist fervour of the young intellectuals in the early 1970s caused some concern. But by and large the stabilisation of Finland's international status and domestic policy had given the West what it mainly wanted; the 1970's seemed safe, and at the very latest the CSCE – Finland acting as the host – secured Finland's position. Also the Soviet policy seemed more predictable than before.

4.2.2 Negligible 'Finlandization': Some Concerns – Mainly Satisfaction

In the early 1970s, there were some points of concern in US-Finnish relations for the Americans. These included some deviation from the strict neutrality, some surprisingly leftist remarks of Kekkonen,⁹⁸ his growing and ever more impatient conviction that he and only he could handle the Soviets,⁹⁹ some alleged anti-US bias of the Finnish media,¹⁰⁰ and finally even the Vietnam-statements,¹⁰¹ which previously had been such a positive contrast compared to Sweden. Also the Extraordinary Law, which cancelled the 1974 presidential elections and prolonged Kekkonen's term by four years by legislation, was considered a peculiar thing in a Western democracy.

Even so, these features were in some sense common to all Western European countries and to their new generation, the noisiest part of which made a point of being radical and anti-American. The foundations of the Paasikivi-Kekkonen line were still considered valid, if they were followed. The line tried to connect neutrality and friendship with the Soviet Union, which was sometimes difficult, but 'Kekkonen's leadership has minimized these inherent contradictions, and he has succeeded in maintaining a balance between the various elements in the Finnish political scene.'

There were few concrete measures to influence the Finns – mainly keeping up and even increasing the American contacts and the American visibility in Finland in general. As Ambassador Peterson advised in 1970:¹⁰²

Lacking a formal alliance or program of economic assistance, the U.S. has only limited leverage in Finland.[...] What is needed is a balance between heavy pressure on the Finns – which would only create problems for Finland with Moscow – and too passive a role – which could erode Finland's Western orientation. [...] When American interests are damaged by Finnish over-eagerness to please Moscow, the U.S. can to some degree counter this by pointing out to Finnish officials that such actions diminish the image of Finnish neutrality. Our most effective weapon is a friendly but firm line which stresses the damage which could result to long-term Finnish interests from too compliant a line towards Moscow.

This theme was repeated also the following years in slightly different words; such as in the 1950s, there was nothing spectacular to offer, and the Soviets were not to be provoked. Trusting Kekkonen and the fact that basically Finnish society remained solid and the Finns nationalistically anti-Russian seemed the best – and only – way to silently keep up the *status quo*. 'The Finns have a particularly warm feeling for the United States and Americans', State Secretary Rogers assured President Nixon in a memorandum pointing out the usefulness of a future visit to the United States by Kekkonen. According to Rogers, Kekkonen wanted to establish with the American President the same personal relationship he had with the lead-

ers of the Soviet Union, to have President Nixon's assessment of the prospects for continued peace and prosperity in Europe which were so vital to Finnish independence, and to hear the President's views on other world issues.

A lengthy citation is also here in order, because it shows that the major points of the long biography of 1963 were still valid or had now an even more positive light – and the authoritative features were not dangerous:¹⁰³

Some critics, comparing Kekkonen's performance with that of Paasikivi, consider him too deferential to the views of the Soviet Union and too obsequious in his personal relations with the Soviet leaders. While Kekkonen may occasionally go beyond what would appear to be absolutely necessary to provide the Soviet with assurances that Finnish actions will not threaten vital Soviet interests, Kekkonen's basic motive has been the preservation of Finland's independence and neutrality. And this he has achieved to date.

President Kekkonen is adroit and determined in the pursuit and exercise of political power. He is vindictive and ruthless toward rivals, critics, and opponents.

In public Kekkonen has a cool, reserved manner, but is capable of charm. In private life he is a heavy but capable drinker, and unrestrained. He has been a superb athlete. As a young man Kekkonen was Finnish high-jump champion and, in the 1930's, led the Finnish Olympic teams at Los Angeles and Berlin. Today, at 69, he hunts, fishes and skis cross-country. While he has prided himself in particular on his speed and endurance as a cross-country skier, recent confidential reports indicate that he is slowing down on the advice of his physicians.

We will also wish to assure the Finns that we accept and value Finnish neutrality, that we understand the Finns' pragmatic need for particularly friendly relations with the Soviet Union, and that we would become concerned only if concessions to the Soviet Union endangered Finland's independence, neutrality, and free democratic institutions.

We do not recommend any dramatic initiatives in furthering our objectives. Rather, we would hope to further them by cultivating Kekkonen personally – paying him respect and attention his position deserves, welcoming an expression of his views, and demonstrating to him our interest in his country's freedom and independence.

Kekkonen is likely to respond positively to this approach. He undoubtedly considers, and with justification, that he has a unique

understanding of the Soviet leaders, their problems and motives. We would wish to give careful attention to whatever windows he opens onto the Soviet scene.

Kekkonen would be pleased by evidence of our appreciation of Finland's constructive role in the UN; of the sincerity of its interest in détente in Europe; for the availability of Helsinki as a co-site for the SALT talks and the excellent facilities offered; and for a neutrality that does not feel called upon to manifest its virility through attacks on the US.

Not even the fact that a government fell in March 1971 due to communist intransigence was a problem, because 'whatever the character of the government that is next formed, President Kekkonen will remain in absolute control of Finnish foreign policy'. Maybe he would have some difficulties with Moscow, 'but he should be able to master them as he has in the past'. And if there were no communists in the Finnish government, US-Finnish relations would be on even more secure ground, and 'the "European showcase" of communist participation in the exercise of government power will be shattered'.¹⁰⁴

It seems that the mood was now that with the wizard Kekkonen around, the Americans would all the time be in a win-win-situation.

Contrary to this, the Finnish debate about 'finlandization' has stressed that the 1970's were actually more dangerous than the 1960s. This was so because the previous unpleasant inevitability – the close relations with the Soviets – had now been made a virtue. Self-censorship, discrimination on foreign policy grounds and Kekkonen's dominant position had meant a mental capitulation, a limited democracy and a limited freedom of opinion. In the 1960s everyone, except the communists, had still thought in terms of necessary compliance, neither in terms of collaboration nor in terms of true friendship with the Soviets. In Finnish eyes, this transformation was the actual 'slippery slope'.

However, this was not equally important to the West. And thus the circle was completed in the early 1970s. The West, even though it might have some complaints in single issues and think that Finnish neutrality had some odd pro-Eastern flavour in it, now believed genuinely in Finnish neutrality, the recogni-

tion of which had been more a tactical matter to it in the 1960s. And it now had the belief in Finnish neutrality for the very same reason for which it had not had this belief previously: President Kekkonen.

As the British Ambassador Bernard Ledwidge put this:¹⁰⁵

[...] there is quite a formidable battery of sanctions at the disposal of the Russians if the Finns ignore hints of disapproval of any particular policy. It is true that the Finns are today probably strong enough to resist all these pressures and get away with it. They are not in danger of the fate of Czechoslovakia. But the Paasikivi-Kekkonen line of foreign policy, which gives priority to maintaining Soviet confidence, has served Finland very well since 1944. It has steered this country out of a position of total dependence upon the Russians, when a Communist take over was an hourly possibility, to one in which the Finns live in a Western-style welfare state with much less to fear from their Eastern neighbour. So why should they bait the bear when they can do so well out of soothing him? I agree with John Killick. If I were President Kekkonen, I should handle the Russians the way he does.

By way of conclusion it can be summed up that the formula in both Kádár's and Kekkonen's image is astonishingly similar: moral dislike – disapproval of erroneous policy – a recognition of other, worse alternatives – the improved image of the old foe whom you at least knew – a feeling which was not admiration but some sort of appreciation of the achievements anyhow – satisfaction with the stability and even respect.

Also this suggests that basically the phases of the Cold War and the grand strategies in it decided the image, not Kádár's and Kekkonen's domestic policy or democratic freedom. This was even more so since you could never do much else than hope for the best and do nothing concrete, and, of course, because the worst fears had not come true. But also the persistence and traditionalism of Kádár and Kekkonen was an important factor: when you could not expect revolutionary improvements, no news was the best news.

NOTES

- ¹ Keijo Korhonen, 'Introduction', in *Urho Kekkonen – A Statesman for Peace*. Keuruu: Otava 1975, 7-8.
- ² Osmo Apunen, 'Urho Kekkonen and the Finnish policy of Peace', in *Urho Kekkonen – A Statesman for Peace*, 39, 44, 47, 48.
- ³ Risto Hyvärinen, 'Urho Kekkonen's Eastern Policy', in *Urho Kekkonen – A Statesman for Peace*, 59, 62.
- ⁴ Niels Jörgen Haagerup, 'Western European views of Urho Kekkonen', in *Urho Kekkonen – A Statesman for Peace*, 134-135.
- ⁵ *Ulkopolitiikka – Utrikespolitik* 2/1975.
- ⁶ *Selected Speeches*, ed. Robert Maxwell; 'Introduction', ix-x, 'Introductory Biography', passim, especially 1-8, 148-152. – This is of course unacceptable from a researcher, but I must confess that the paper which contained the further bibliographical information was lost. My apologies; however, this is not essential as such for this description and interpretation.
- ⁷ Originally, the plan was to concentrate on the image-building side in this issue; that is, how the Finns and the Hungarians tried to present Kekkonen and Kádár as the guarantors of their countries, as true statesmen and symbols. Did the Finns try to present Kekkonen as the guarantor of neutrality also towards the West, and did the Hungarians attempt to make Kádár the guarantor that Hungary would accomplish to create a more liberal version of Socialism without provoking the Russians? The books in the beginning of the article seem to have this tendency. However, since the Finnish Academy allowance to the project was cut, this became impossible and could only be referred to, since there was no chance to concentrate on any other subjects than to the one which had already been started and which I had studied in the Western archives. This article is based on the article 'Foes Who Grew Better with Time', published in *Hungarologische Beiträge* 14 (2002). The main differences are that after the previous *Beiträge* publication I have added the above mentioned books on image-building side, rearranged the chapters and their logic and visited also the National Archives in the United States and could henceforth widen the aspect – in the original article the emphasis was on the British side a bit more than the actual resources of the British might perhaps have merited. However, I had first only a chance to get acquainted only with the FRUS-material in the internet on the US policy; in July 2002 I managed to look through the original documents in the National Archives. Even after that there are gaps, since both the Finnish and the Hungarian material of the 1970s was

'under rescreening' because of the events of 'September 11th', as the officials in the NA told me. I must thank them that they hurried the rescreening process up for my sake and indeed managed to get me the material on Finland up to 1973; however, the time to get also the material concerning Hungary was too limited.

⁸ See for example Stuart Hall, *Identiteetti*. Translated and edited in Finnish by Mikko Lehtonen and Juha Herkman. Tampere: Vastapaino 2002, 47, 122.

⁹ For Documents on Hungarian-US relations, See László Borhi, *Iratok a magyar-amerikai kapcsolatok történetéhez 1957-1967*. Dokumentumgyűjtemény, Budapest 2002.

¹⁰ Causes and likely consequences of the Hungarian revolution. Leslie Fry to Selwyn Lloyd 5.2.57. FO 371 128662, PRO.

¹¹ Dulles to American legation, Budapest, 4.4.57. Records of the Department of State, C0026, Internal Affairs of Hungary 1955-1959, Decimal File 764, Roll. No 10 (.00/2-1557 to .00/4-1557), NA.

¹² Fry 26.7.57. FO 371 128683, PRO.

¹³ NSC 5811/1 Washington, May 24, 1958. Statement of U.S. Policy Toward the Soviet-dominated Nations in Eastern Europe. <http://dosfan.lib.uic/ERC/frus/frus58-60xl/02easter1.html>

¹⁴ Operations Coordinating Board Report, Washington, July 15, 1959. Report on Soviet-dominated Nations in Eastern Europe (NSC 5811/1)/1/. Approved by the President May 24, 1958. Period Covered: From May 24, 1958 through July 15, 1959. FRUS-Online, <http://dosfan.lib.uic/ERC/frus/frus58-60xl/05easter4.html>.

¹⁵ Statement by Henry Cabot Lodge, United States Representative, in Plenary, on the Question of Hungary, Press Release No. 3338, December 8, 1959, Statement by the Honorable Wayne Morse, United States Representative, in Plenary Session, on the Hungarian Item. Press Release No. 3526/Corr.1, October 10, 1960. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, Central Decimal File, Box 1913, 764.00/11-160, NA.

¹⁶ Patrick Reilly to Brimelow 27.8.57. FO 371 128684, PRO.

¹⁷ Fry to Brimelow 11.12.57. FO 371 128689, PRO.

¹⁸ Fry 26.7.57. FO 371 128683, PRO.

¹⁹ Fry to Brimelow 30.8.57. FO 371 128685; Brimelow, Hungarian Delegation to the Inter-Parliamentary Union Conference, 12.9.57, W. Hayter, Minutes, 12.9.57. FO 371 128687, PRO.

²⁰ Cheetham to Selwyn Lloyd 5.1.60. FO 371 151579, PRO.

²¹ N. J. A. Cheetham to Brimelow 14.5.59, R.R.Ward, Minutes, 11.6.59, R. G. MacAlpine, Minutes, 13.6.59. FO 371 142998, PRO.

- ²² Cheetham to Brimelow 2.11.59, Brimelow to Cheetham 16.12.59. FO 371 142998, PRO.
- ²³ Raising the Diplomatic Missions at Bucharest, Rumania and Sofia, Bulgaria From Legations to Embassies. Memorandum From Secretary of State Herter to President Eisenhower. Washington, November 10, 1960. FRUS-Online, <http://dosfan.lib.uic/ERC/frus/frus58-60xl/06easter5.html>.
- ²⁴ Dulles to Amlegation Budapest 21.8.57. Records of the Department of State, C0026, Internal Affairs of Hungary 1955-1959, Decimal File 764, Roll No. 12 (.00/6-2857 to .00/9-1657), NA. – However, the Legation recommended already next month, that Kádár as a person would not be linked with the worst atrocities. The reason for this “mercy”, though, was not necessarily flattering: one should not talk about a Kádár Government, but about a “Soviet puppet regime”. Rogers to SD 3.9.57. Records of the Department of State, C0026, Internal Affairs of Hungary 1955-1959, Decimal File 764, Roll No. 12 (.00/6-2857 to .00/9-1657), NA.
- ²⁵ See, e.g. from Budapest to Foreign Office 31.1.57, J. F. Wearing, Minutes, s.a. FO 371 128669, PRO; J. F. Wearing 11.2.57, Minutes, FO 371 128670, PRO; Fry to Brimelow 7.3.57. FO 371 128674, PRO; Walter Walmsley, Memorandum of Conversation 25.1.57, Records of the Department of State, C0026, Internal Affairs of Hungary 1955-1959, Decimal File 764, Roll No. 9 (.00/1-2257 to .00/2-1457), NA; N. Spencer Barnes to SD 13.3.57. Records of the Department of State, C0026, Internal Affairs of Hungary 1955-1959, Decimal File 764, Roll No. 9 (.00/2-1557 to .00/4-1457), NA.
- ²⁶ Leslie Fry 3.1.57. FO 371 128662, PRO.
- ²⁷ U. Todd-Naylor 14.3.57. FO 371 128664, PRO.
- ²⁸ Fry to Selwyn Lloyd 4.7.57. FO 371 128682, PRO.
- ²⁹ Fry to Selwyn Lloyd 2.7.57. FO 371 128681, PRO.
- ³⁰ Fry 12.7.57. FO 371 128683, PRO.
- ³¹ J.E.D. Street to Selwyn Lloyd 18.10.57. FO 371 128688, PRO.
- ³² See for example National Security Council, U.S. Policy Toward Finland, NSC 5914/1, 14.10.59, NA.
- ³³ See for example NSC 5403. A Report to the National Security Council by the NSC Planning Board on U.S. Policy Toward Finland 12.1.54, Annex to NSC 5403, NA.
- ³⁴ National Security Council, Operations Coordinating Board, 1.7.59, U.S. Policy Toward Finland (NSC 5403), NA.
- ³⁵ Soviet Policy Towards Finland, 8.1.55. FO 371 116274, PRO.
- ³⁶ Embassy: Finland’s Draft of Section 5 (Contingencies) of Department’s Guidelines for Policy and Operations, Finland, Gufler 14.7.62. Box 1267, 611.60E/1-262, NA.

- ³⁷ Michael Creswell to the FO 18.1.56 and 23.1.56, Creswell to Selwyn Lloyd 25.1.56, Hohler, Minutes, 27.2.56, Ward, Minutes, 27.2.56. FO 371 122263, PRO.
- ³⁸ Creswell to Selwyn Lloyd 27.2.57, unclear, s.a., Minutes. FO 371 128673, PRO.
- ³⁹ D. L. Busk to Selwyn Lloyd 25.6.58. FO 371 134858, PRO.
- ⁴⁰ Douglas Busk to the FO 3.9., 15.10.58. FO 371 128752, PRO; Hickerson to the SD 10.7.58. RG 84, Box 3, Helsinki Embassy Files 1956-58, 350 Elections 1956-57-58, NA.
- ⁴¹ *Aikoja ja tapauksia Ahti Karjalaisen elämästä*, toim. Kauko Rumpunen. Juva 1997, 169, 170.
- ⁴² Brimelow, Minutes, Russian Pressure on Finland, 2.1.59, Patrick Reilly to Selwyn Lloyd 9.2.59. FO 371 142866, PRO.
- ⁴³ Hickerson to Secretary of State 30.4.59. RG 59, 1955-59 Central Decimal File, 611.60e/2-155, Box 2519, NA; Record of Conversation between the President, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary and the Ambassador, s.a., Busk to Selwyn Lloyd 2.6.59. FO 371 142867, PRO; Enclosure to Helsinki Despatch N. 87 of July 7 addressed to the Foreign Office. FO 371 142863, PRO; Busk 4.1.69, Confidential, Busk to Home 22.8.60. Record of Conversation. FO 371 151491, PRO.
- ⁴⁴ *Urho Kekkosen päiväkirjat 1, 1958-62* (Urho Kekkonen diaries), edited by J. Suomi. Keuruu: Otava 2001, 162, 450. The only wise exception had been according to Kekkonen Ambassador Edson Sessions. This attitude is easy to understand since Sessions made a point of expressing to Kekkonen how he appreciated and respected Kekkonen's foreign policy. (ibid. 324, 375.) However, Kekkonen had agreed to keep direct contact with the other American and British ambassadors as well.
- ⁴⁵ *Urho Kekkosen päiväkirjat 1, 1958-62*, 151.
- ⁴⁶ *Urho Kekkosen päiväkirjat 3, 1969-74* (Urho Kekkonen diaries), edited by J. Suomi. Keuruu: Otava 2003, 36. – However, later Kekkonen's opinion on Brandt improved because of the new *Ostpolitik* of the latter.
- ⁴⁷ Record of Conversation between the President, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary and the Ambassador, s.a. Busk to Selwyn Lloyd 2.6.59. FO 371 142867, PRO.
- ⁴⁸ See for example J. Lampton Berry to Foy Kohler 3.8.60. Box 1855, 760e.001/2-860, NA.
- ⁴⁹ Gufler to Burdett 29.8.61. Box 1855, 760e.11/1-961, NA; L.D. Battle, Memorandum for Mr. McGeorge Bundy the White House, 12.10.61, Enclosure: Draft, President Kekkonen's visit, Washington, October 16-17, 1961, Scope Paper. Box 1855, 760e.11/1-961, NA.
- ⁵⁰ Con O'Neill to Paul Mason 21.7.61. FO 371 159308, PRO.

- ⁵¹ Mason to O'Neill 27.9.61, On behalf of the State Secretary, s.n., 21.7.61. FO 371 159308, PRO.
- ⁵² NSC 5811/1 Washington, May 24, 1958. Statement of U.S. Policy Toward the Soviet-dominated Nations in Eastern Europe. <http://dosfan.lib.uic/ERC/frus/frus58-60xl/02easter1.html>.
- ⁵³ Fry to Selwyn Lloyd 2.1.59. FO 371 142986, PRO.
- ⁵⁴ Memorandum of Discussion at the 369th Meeting of the National Security Council. Significant World Developments Affecting U.S. Security. Washington, June 19, 1958. FRUS-Online, <http://dosfan.lib.uic/ERC/frus/frus58-60xl/03easter2.html>.
- ⁵⁵ Brimelow, January, 1959 to Fry, Fry to Selwyn Lloyd 2.1.59. FO 371 142986, PRO. – See also Cheetham to Selwyn Lloyd 5.1.60. FO 371 151579, PRO.
- ⁵⁶ Cheetham to Selwyn Lloyd 10.11.59. FO 371 142987, PRO.
- ⁵⁷ Fry to Selwyn Lloyd 31.1.58. FO 371 134851, PRO.
- ⁵⁸ Cheetham to Selwyn Lloyd 10.11.59. FO 371 142987, PRO.
- ⁵⁹ R.H. Mason to Cheetham 8.2.61. FO 371 159372, PRO.
- ⁶⁰ Ivor Pink to the Earl of Home 2.1.63. FO 371 171742, PRO.
- ⁶¹ Ivor Pink to Earl of Home 8.8.63. FO 371 171747, PRO; see also the next Annual Report, Sir Ivor Pink to Mr. R. A. Butler 6.1.64. FO 371 177538, PRO; János Kádár, s.a., s.n. FO 371 171743, PRO.
- ⁶² Sir Ivor Pink to Mr. Gordon Walker, Hungary: Annual Review for 1964, 4.1.65. FO 371 182620, PRO.
- ⁶³ Instruction from the Department of State to the Legation in Hungary, A – 37. Herter, Washington, October 21, 1960. Subject: Some Informal Remarks by Kádár. FRUS-Online, <http://dosfan.lib.uic/ERC/frus/frus58-60xl/06easter5.html>
- ⁶⁴ A. Morley to Michael Stewart, Hungary: Annual Review for 1965, 8.1.66, P.A. Rhodes, Minutes, 24.1.66, Greenhill, Minutes, 24.1.66. FO 371 188684, PRO.
- ⁶⁵ Memorandum of Conversation, David Anderson, 26.2.65. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1963-66, Pol. & Def., Subject Numeric File, Box 2275, Org – Organization & Administration Lux, NA. – The 'Lux' evidently refers to Luxemburg and is thus obviously a mistake.
- ⁶⁶ Louis Toplosky to the SD, Party and Government in 1959: Internal Affairs, 18.2.60. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State 1960-63, Central Decimal File, Box 1913, 764.00/8-260, NA.
- ⁶⁷ Torbert to Secretary of State, 26.10.61. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1960-63, Central Decimal File, Box 1914, 764.00/10-261, NA; Torbert to SD, 2.10.61. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1960-63, Central Decimal File, Box 1916, 764.00/10-261, NA.

- ⁶⁸ Torbert to SD 1.2.62. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, Central Foreign Policy Files 1960-63, Political and Defence, Central Decimal File 1960-63, Box 1914, NA.
- ⁶⁹ Changing Patterns in Eastern Europe. National Intelligence Estimate/1/, NIE 12-64, Washington, July 22, 1964. FRUS-Online, http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_xvii/a.html; Prospects for Independence in Eastern Europe. Special Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency/1/ No. 10-65. For the Board of National Estimates: Abbot Smith, Acting Chairman. Washington, February 18, 1965. FRUS-Online, http://www.state.gov/ww/about_state/history/vol_xvii/b.html. – The Legacy was now pressing more and more for normalization of relations with Hungary: ‘The United States is thus in a position to abet the westward turning tendency of Hungary and, by judicious use of its economic and political leverage, to encourage Kádár’s policy of national self-reliance and domestic relaxation.’ (RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1963-66, Pol. & Def., Subject Numeric File, Box 2275, Org – Organization & Administration Lux, NA.)
- ⁷⁰ Action program for US relations with East Europe. Paper Prepared in the Department of State/1/, Washington, undated. NSAM 304/2/. FRUS-Online, http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_xvii/b.html.
- ⁷¹ A Study of the Career and Policies of Urho Kekkonen, President of Finland. Gufler to the Department of State 17.3.63. Box 1853, 760d.00/2-260, NA.
- ⁷² Leading Personalities in Finland. Busk to Selwyn Lloyd 22.4.59. FO 371 142861, PRO.
- ⁷³ William Tyler to the Secretary 10.3.65. Attachment: President Kekkonen’s Speech in Moscow February 24, 1965. Box 2167, Pol 17 Fin-US 1/1/64, NA.
- ⁷⁴ Harvey Nelson, Airgram 28.6.64, Ingram 18.6.64. Box 2166, Pol 12 Political parties, NA.
- ⁷⁵ Anthony Lambert to Butler 24.6.64, received 26.6.64. FO 371 174885, PRO.
- ⁷⁶ Trevelyan to Lambert 25.2.65. FO 371 174884, PRO.
- ⁷⁷ Vesa Vares, ‘Is This the Top of the Slippery Slope? The British View on the Participation of Communists in the Finnish Government 1956-1968’. *Scandinavian Journal of History*, Vol. 27, No. 3, 2002, 158-161.
- ⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 161-163.
- ⁷⁹ Hungary: Annual review for 1966, Alexander Morley to Mr. Brown 4.1.67, Mr Millard to Mr. Brown, 22.1.68, Hungary: Annual review for 1967. FCO 28/169, PRO; British Embassy, Budapest, 31.3.67, Elections in Hungary. FCO 28/170, PRO.

- ⁸⁰ Hillenbrand to Department of State, US Policy Assessment: Hungary, 24.1.68. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1967-69, Subject Numeric File, Pol. & Def., Box 2182, Pol 30 Hung 1/1/67, NA.
- ⁸¹ Memorandum of Conversation/1/ Washington, January 13, 1964. Subject: Meeting of János Radványi with Director of Eastern European Affairs. FRUS-Online, http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_xvii/m.html.
- ⁸² Ks. esim. From Berlin to Secstate, 31.3.67. FCO 28/170, PRO; British Embassy to FO 25.4.68.; H. F. T. Smith to Mr. Hayman, Minutes, 21.11.67, G. E. Millard to H. F. T. Smith 8.2.68, British Embassy, Budapest, to George Brown 9.9.67, P. J. Goulden, Minutes, Soviet-Hungarian Friendship Treaty, 25.9.67. FCO 28/181, PRO; Airgram From the Legation in Hungary to the Department of State/1/ A-137. United States-Hungarian Governmental Relations. For the Chargé d'Affaires a.i. Richard W. Tims, Counselor of Legation. Budapest, August 31, 1965. FRUS-Online, http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_xvii/n.html.
- ⁸³ Millard to Michael Stewart 30.5.68. FCO 28/179, PRO.
- ⁸⁴ P. J. Goulden, Minutes, Ambassador's conversation with Mr. Kádár, 6.6.68. FCO 28/179, PRO.
- ⁸⁵ Telegram From the Embassy in Hungary to the Department of State/1/ Budapest, November 30, 1967, 1626Z. Subject: Conversation with Party First Secretary János Kádár. Hillenbrand. FRUS-Online, http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_xvii/n.html.
- ⁸⁶ Telegram from the Embassy in Hungary to the Department of State/1/. Budapest, August 27, 1968, 1210Z. Hillenbrand. FRUS-Online, http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_xvii/n.html.
- ⁸⁷ P. R. Fearn to P. J. Goulden 4.9.68. FCO 28/172, PRO, Relations with Hungary. H.F.T. Smith 4.9.68, R.H., Minutes, 4.9., D. Greenhill 4.9., Minutes, Millard to Smith 12.9.68, Anglo-Hungarian Relations post-Czechoslovakia, Millard to Stewart 17.9.68. FCO 28/179, PRO.
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