# Thomas Molnar

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Budapest
Hungary
Interviewer: Mihaly Andor
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Thomas Molnar is a tall, old gentleman; he speaks Hungarian elaborately and without an accent. He spends a month in Hungary every year. During this time he meets his relatives, goes to the theater, or goes to see an operetta or an opera almost every night. The apartment, which he rents downtown, is equipped with Internet and a fax machine too, so he can arrange his routine work at home.

My paternal grandfather, Farkas Vilmos Molnar, was born in 1869 in Veszprem as Volf Vilmos Weisz. His father, Samuel Weisz, was a tailor assistant, his mother, Mari Weisz, nee Muller, was born in 1838 in Papa. I don't know anything about my grandfather's parents. I don't know much about my grandmother's parents either, but it's there in a document that her father was Farkas Muller and her mother Netti Gerstl.

I don't know much about my grandfather's youth. I only know from the documents that between 1884 and 1887 he was an apprentice of Ignac Kohn, baker and confectioner master in Papa, and in the meantime he went to the industrial school in Papa. Then he served in the Hungarian Royal 17-infantry regiment as a soldier for twelve years and three months, and because he served 'fairly,' he was entitled to wear the 'jubilee medallion.' [Editor's note: This of course doesn't mean, that he was a soldier all this time, but the effective service was four years and for eight years he was a reservist] This is written in his demobilization papers he got from the military in 1911. In World War I he wasn't called up for military service anymore. In 1896 he magyarized his name to Farkas Vilmos Molnar. He got married in 1897, and at that time he already lived in Budapest. According to the marriage certificate he was a baker's apprentice.

My paternal grandmother, Roza Polnauer, was born in Enying in 1873. Her father was Tivadar Polnauer, a shoemaker's assistant, her mother was Maria Hoffmann. I don't know when they moved to Budapest, but at the time of the wedding the Polnauer family already lived in the same street. Before her marriage my grandmother had probably been a maid, too, because her employment card was issued by the Papa trade authorities on 25th August 1896, based on the maid's card, also issued in Papa in 1892. She needed the employment card because between 25th and 30th October 1896 she worked as a knitter's assistant at Samu Weis' in Vagujhely [today Slovakia]. Her salary was 8 forints a month and full board. According to her marriage certificate she worked as a stockings knitter.

One year after she got married, in 1898, my father [Miklos Molnar] was born, and three years later my Aunt Margit [Rona, nee Molnar]. From then on my grandmother was a housewife. I only know about her that she was sickly all her life. I think she must have had quite a difficult life. They say that she was a very sweet woman; my father loved her enormously. They must have moved a lot,

because the places where they rented an apartment are recorded.

Though my grandfather had learned confectionery, too, he was mainly a baker. He was a stubby, robust, very strong man, and he loved the girls. It seems that the situation in Hungary must have been very bad; he didn't have a job, so in 1901 he immigrated to New York. I have found the money-orders with which he sent home sometimes 5, sometimes 10 dollars from New York, which was a big amount at that time. He was there for two years. When my younger brother was last in New York, he went to Ellis Island and looked at the records, and he found my father's name there, too. He was in New York throughout and he worked as a baker. Then he was homesick and he came home. I don't know details like where he worked and what exactly he did in New York, nobody ever talked about that. But I suppose that he worked as a baker. I know this only because I found the money-orders among the family documents. After he came back from America, he worked as a baker.

After World War I he opened a small shop on Vorosmarty Street no. 51, where they sold all kinds of trifles, but especially candy. This was a tiny little shop, and for a while they lived off it. At that time they lived on Szondy Street. I know this because my father told me that there was a statue nearby, on Ferdinand Square, I don't know whose statue that was, but I know that they used to climb on it when they were small children.

In 1929, at the age of 56, my grandmother died. She was just on holiday. She had serious diabetes, and she went into a coma and instead of giving her sugar, they gave her insulin. So when I was born, my grandmother wasn't alive anymore.

They had the small shop on Vorosmarty Street for quite a long time and at the beginning of the 1930s or perhaps already at the end of the 1920s, I don't know exactly when, they opened the shop 'Vilmos Molnar and Co.' on Thokoly Street. The sign read 'MOLNAR SWEET-SHOP CANDY.' The associates were my father and my father's brother-in-law, Janos Rona. The shop functioned so that they bought the goods from candy-makers and passed them on to retailers. They were in contact mainly with small factories. This is how we were in contact with Vilmos Anesini, who had a candy factory on Thokoly Street no. 8. He played an important role in our life later.

The business prospered, and later they opened another shop on Thokoly Street no. 8, too. It was worth opening a second shop relatively close, because this is a very busy place. It was opposite Keleti railway station, it was a very good place, a great place. They opened the wholesale section in the courtyard of Thokoly Street no. 14, and as a matter of fact that was the big business, which made them prosperous, not the two shops. My uncle traveled to the country, and my father was on good terms with the people in Pest. They mainly traded lollypops and candy. There were all kinds of other things too, but these were the big things.

At that time my grandfather didn't do anything anymore, he only went to visit girls. My grandmother had died long before that. I was only a small boy then, I only remember that he lived with us on Muranyi Street, and he drank one liter of milk every day. He seemed an old man to me, but he was a very robust, strong man. He didn't care about his grandchildren at all. I don't even remember if he ever caressed me. I remember that at seder he hid the afikoman. He always hid the matzah under his hat, my younger brother Peter looked for it, and when he found it, he always asked my grandfather to take him to the English Park.

So in 1898 my father was born. He went to elementary and middle school. After middle school they made him a confectioner's apprentice. Later he became a confectioner master. He took his confectioner's master exam on 18th December 1939 in front of the examining committee. He was a soldier during World War I. He was a patriotic Hungarian, and he was very proud of being a soldier. He didn't tell me World War I memories, but I know that it wasn't bad for him there. He wasn't in a place where there was a lot of shooting. I don't know at which company he was, I only know that he wasn't on the battlefront. He was a simple soldier, he had no rank. He was such a big Hungarian that in 1938 he wrote an article, which was published in the sweets trade professional newspaper. I don't remember it exactly, but he wrote about how Jews should love the country, and that they should be rather Hungarians than Jews. Later, when I got smarter I thought about this, and I couldn't understand how one could be such a big Hungarian, but somehow we never talked about this. In Australia I sometimes pulled his leg a little bit because of this.

Despite of the fact that my father had only completed middle school, he was a cultured man. He educated himself. His spelling was always perfect. He never made any mistakes. He had more than a thousand books, all kinds, but especially literature. For example, he very much liked Marai [Marai, Sandor (1900–1989): Hungarian writer and journalist. After living for some time in Italy, Marai settled in the US. Largely forgotten outside Hungary, his oeuvre has only recently been 'rediscovered' and republished in English and German, and is now considered to be part of the European Twentieth Century literary canon.], Jokai [Jokai, Mor (1825–1904): Hungarian dramatist and novelist. He was a great romancer, and his novels are widely known and popular among Hungarians.] and Kalman Mikszath [Mikszath, Kalman (1847–1910): Hungarian novelist and politician. Many of his novels contained social commentary and satire, and towards the end of his life, they became increasingly critical of the aristocracy and the burden that he believed it placed on Hungarian society.]

One could tell from his library that he was a big Hungarian. But the world literature was on the shelf as well. He loved Balzac, Don Quixote by Cervantes, and he had all the books of Lin Yutang. [Yutang, Lin (1895–1976): Chinese writer, essayist, critic] He loved poetry. Although he didn't subscribe to the Nyugat [Editor's note: The Nyugat (West) was the most important Hungarian literary and critical journal in the first half of the 20th century], he read Kassak [Kassak, Lajos (1887-1967): avant-garde Hungarian writer, poet, literary translator and artist], Kosztolanyi [Kosztolanyi, Dezso (1885-1936): Hungarian writer, poet, literary translator and journalist.] Margit Kaffka [Hungarian poet and novelist]. He loved Ady [Ady, Endre (1877–1919): poet, one of the most important poets not only in the 20th century but in Hungarian literature in general.] He had all of Ady's poems and all his writings.

My father subscribed to the Elet es Tudomany [Life and Science]. I don't know if this existed already at that time, but he subscribed to a magazine like that. And I saw Oszkar Jaszi's paper, the Huszadik Szazad [20th Century] at home too. [Oszkar Jaszi (1875 –1957): leader of the Hungarian civil radicalism. He considered the Hungarian Socialist Republic the 'new Middle Ages.' He left the country at the end of April 1919, lived in Vienna until 1925, and then he immigrated to the United States. The Huszadik Szazad was a social science magazine, founded by Oszkar Jaszi. He was also its editor for two decades.] He liked Oszkar Jaszi very much; I remember that he had all of Jaszi's books, too. I also read all of these, but not then, only later in Australia, where I have quite a nice sized library. Jaszi was a clever man, his book about the dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy,

what a book that is! But he also wrote what one should do, that one should make a federation in the Carpathian Basin [Editor's note: The book by Jaszi mentioned here was first published in 1929 in Chicago.]

Otherwise my father wasn't involved in politics actively, he was only leftist. He wasn't a member of any party, but in his soul he was a social democrat, he voted for them. He liked to read the Magyar Nemzet [Hungarian Nation], which wasn't such rubbish heap as now. [Editor's note: Magyar Nemzet is a major Hungarian newspaper. The original, moderate conservative daily was founded in 1937.] It's true that the Nepszava [The Voice of the People; Hungarian social-democrat daily founded in 1877] was the paper of the social democrats, but the Magyar Nemzet wasn't bad either. And we shouldn't forget the fact that he was already a capitalist at that time. I think he had been a trade union member only when he worked as a confectioner, but later as a shop owner he wasn't anymore. But there wasn't a trade union for shop owners anyway.

He had very many friends, but only three to four who were his very close friends. One of them was Vilmos Anesini, who hid us, then Oszkar Koves and Jancsi Reich. These were all in the candy business, in retail or in wholesale. Besides Anesini all were Jewish. My father liked to go to the café where he talked with his friends. And he also used to go and play tennis, and they went to soccer games every weekend. My father was a big MTK supporter. When he was young he also played soccer in some confectioner's team, later he was a referee at games between craftsmen teams. [Editor's note: MTK, the Association of Hungarian Sportsmen was founded by gymnasts in 1888. It came into being mainly due to the fact that the Hungarian sports associations didn't employ Jewish sportsmen, so it gradually became the association of the Jewish middle class. (Source: Magyar Nagylexikon)]

Of course the café and the game was a man's pastime, as was usual at that time. And then every weekend they played cards, there was a family card party, the men played as well. My mother didn't play cards. But they went to the theater, to the operetta or opera together. Sometimes they took me along, too. My biggest experience, which I remember, was that we went to the cinema or to the theater, and afterwards they took me for dinner to the Savoy or the Emke. Lantos and Karady performed there, they were the big stars of that time. It was a huge experience for a teenage boy to see them. [Katalin Karady (1912–1990) was a celebrated movie star in the 1940s. She emigrated to the West in 1948.] But for example my father didn't really play with me.

My father's younger sister, my Aunt Margit was born in 1901. She also completed middle school, and then she learned stenography and typing. In 1924 she married Janos Rona, who later became an associate in our shop. He went to the shops in the country and sold the goods there. He was a cute nice man, the typical traveler who was always in a good mood. He was very good with his hands, he made me toys. In the shop, Margit was the accountant; she managed the office and the warehouse. True, that she had only finished four grades of middle school, but she was an intelligent woman. Their only child, Bandi [Endre] was born in 1925, and he graduated from Bocskai high school in 1943.

Janos Rona didn't survive the war. He fled from the work service 1, he hid, and he died during an assault in 1945, a bomb killed him. When we found out that the garage where he had been hiding was hit, my father, Bandi Rona and I went to the Kerepesi cemetery with a pushcart to take him. They carried the dead there. The bodies lay in an open grave, my father climbed down into the

grave, he looked for him, and he noticed his socks. He recognized him that way. On the way home Bandi stepped on a mine, which exploded. He got seriously injured, we didn't.

After the war Margit didn't remarry, she raised Bandi, who graduated from university after the war and became a mathematics teacher. He got married in 1950. His wife, Agi [Agnes] Kreisler was born in 1927 in Budapest; she was liberated from Mauthausen 2 in 1945. She also graduated from university, but I don't know what kind, and I don't know what she does. Margit was ill many times, she had diabetes, asthma too, and she died in 1968. She was a sweet woman, I loved her very much.

Bandi and Agi had a child, Marta. Marta and her daughter Niki live here in Pest. Marta married twice, she didn't go to university. I don't know much about her. We didn't get together with her too often. Bandi was at our place in Australia for a month at the beginning of the 1970s. But he never thought about emigrating. He wasn't that type. He wasn't that healthy either, and he died in 1976. He had heart problems. Agi has already passed away, too, in 1988.

My paternal grandfather, Mor Katz, was born in 1877 in Hajduszovat, and died in Budapest in 1952. He was a painter. My grandmother, Amalia Pollak, was born in 1880 in Vekerd, and she died in 1954 in Budapest. They got married in 1901 in Darvas. They had five children, all of them were born in Berettyoujfalu, and then sometime in 1913 or 1914 they moved to Budapest. My mother was born in 1902, then Marci [Marton] was born in 1904, he died during the war in 1945. He was hiding in a garage, and a bomb hit him. Marci had a daughter, who lives in Hodmezovasarhely, but we don't keep in touch. I think she had a quarrel with Mom.

Then Bandi [Andor] was born in 1906, but he also died in 1945, he was hiding in some attic, and the poor thing burned to death. Rozsi was born in 1908, she was very sickly, the poor thing, she had heart problems since her childhood. She died in 1962. Her first husband was killed during forced labor. He was a very neat, nice man, I remember him well, his name was Jozsef Berger, and he was a kind of a poet, a writer. I don't think that anything he wrote was ever published, but there was a journal-like copybook, in which he wrote the poems, I have it at home. He died in Bor 3. Then Rozsi – perhaps in 1951, when I wasn't at home anymore – got married again, to a man called Dezso Schon. They didn't have any children.

After Rozsi, Kalman was born in 1910. Kalman became a furrier; he had a prospering shop on Kossuth Lajos Street. The shop is still there, now his daughter runs it. Kalman magyarized his name to Koves sometime in the 1930s. He was first drafted into forced labor in 1939, and they let him home at the end of 1940. Then in 1941 they drafted him again. In 1942 he was wounded at the Don Bend, the Hungarians left him there. The Russians saved his life; they took him to the hospital. They healed him, and then they took him to Siberia, from where he came home at the end of 1947. He continued the furrier trade. He opened a shop again. In 1950 he married Gabriella Schneitzer. Gabriella, her sister and mother spent the Holocaust partly in a Swiss protected house, partly in hiding, but her father died in Mauthausen.

They had two children, Tamas Koves and Judit Koves. Tamas has a daughter, who is called Sandra, and Judit has two daughters, Andrea and Szilvi. They live here in Hungary. They observe Jewish traditions just the way we do. The grandchildren even less. They know that they are Jews, and that's all. I don't know what I am either. I think about this very much. What on earth am I? Hungarian? Australian? Jewish? I don't know.

My mother only finished elementary school. They were extremely poor. My grandmother was ill all the time; my grandfather was never at home. He was a painter. My grandmother raised her four younger siblings: one girl and three boys. My grandfather was a careless man; at least they told me so.

My parents met because they lived in the same house on Vorosmarty Street. My mother was a very firm person, she was a giant. If I think of what she went through, what she survived. After getting married she gave birth to two children, and she was a housewife. Sometimes she went to the shop to help, at Christmas or Easter when it was busier. When I was born the Molnar and Co. shop already existed, and we lived on Thokoly Street no. 12, in a rented apartment. I don't remember much from the time I was a little child, only that I lived in a loving and warm milieu.

I remember that when I was a small child my mother took me to visit different relatives, who made a big fuss about me, which I was quite bored of. In any case it showed that they loved me. My favorite pastime was when they took me to one of the two shops or to the warehouse, which was close to our apartment. One of my earliest memories is the death of my second cousin, Marta Rona, who died at the age of 12, of meningitis, as far as I know. I remember what a horror and confusion there was, and Bandi Rona comforted me. Otherwise I only have good memories from my childhood; thank God I can only say good things. It was a closely knit family and everyone loved each other very much. I don't say that there was never a loud word, because there surely was.

I grew up in really safe circumstances, and we always had everything we needed. I can't say that there was luxury, but we had everything in the world. Always the best of food and plentiful. And we were in a very close relationship in the family, and not only with the immediate family, but also with the aunts, uncles and grandparents. And with both branches, the Rona branch and the Molnar branch. My cousin Bandi was like an older brother to me. He had quite an influence on my musical and literary interest. I went to the opera with him, he got me used to reading, he was a kind of a model for me. He was six years older than me; he was already a scout, when I was a cub. [Editor's note: The scouts between 8-12 years old were called cubs]. We lived close to each other, too. Every Friday evening there was a family dinner, at which the Rona family also participated, and it was always at our place. It was never at the Rona's because they only had a one-bedroom apartment. They stayed in this apartment throughout, though they were as wealthy as we were, since they were my father's associates.

Our apartment on Thokoly Street was about 120 square meters. There were two bedrooms, a living room, a hall, kitchen, bathroom, toilet, a maid's room, and a balcony overlooking the street. In the maid's room a maid stayed. She cleaned, did the laundry, ironed and did the dishes. She didn't have to heat, because we had central heating. My mother cooked, did the shopping and bossed everyone about. We were well off. We didn't have a car or motorcycle, but we could have had one. My father didn't want to buy one. His friends had a car. We always went with that on excursions or somewhere. We used to go out at weekends, to soccer games. My father was a supporter of the MTK and I was a fan of the Ujpest. [Editor's note: The UTE is a sports association, founded in 1885]

In 1939 the family moved to Muranyi Street, to a three-story apartment. This was a bigger and nicer apartment, and there my grandfather lived with us, too. He moved in with us then. We had one room more than in the previous apartment. We lived there until 1942, and in that year my father bought a house in Zuglo. The plot was about 5000 square meters, and the house was about

100 square meters. Three rooms, a hall, bathroom, kitchen, maid's room, big cellar and a balcony. There we had two maids, they lived in the same room, they were sisters. I don't know why we needed two maids, my poor mother was often nervous. But she wasn't in poor health, she was never sick. I had a governess too, a young German lady. During the war I almost knew German better than Hungarian. The governess lived with us, she slept in the hall. She had Hitler's picture posted in her wardrobe. That's why my mother fired her. I don't know how this governess got to Hungary and how my parents found her. I had almost forgotten German completely, but when I was in Berlin not so long ago, I spoke German like a German. If one is obliged, it comes back. My vocabulary is very small, though.

The ones who lived on Thokoly Street were mostly Jewish. I remember the Deutsch family. Deutsch was a tailor; we were on very good terms with them. They had a daughter, Eva. On Muranyi Street there were only a couple of Jews, I remember the Reichs. This isn't the Reich family who were my father's friends. They had two daughters; Bandi Rona dated one of them. We had no contact with the non-Jews; we didn't talk with anyone who wasn't Jewish.

We were still living on Thokoly Street when I started going to the Bethlen Square Jewish elementary school, which was about a kilometer away from our apartment. Usually I went on foot there and back, and during these walks I first encountered anti-Semitism. Some ragamuffins used to bother the Jewish children, shouting abusive words, like dirty Jew, stinking Jew etc, and I learned at once that because of being Jewish I was different from the other Hungarian children. We never came to blows, and later I didn't have any other personal experiences, because I went to the Jewish elementary school, then to the Jewish high school, and this diminished the chance of anti-Semitic affairs. Moreover my family gave me a feeling of security. If my father was there, I wasn't afraid. Of course there was the entire era, the newspapers, the radio, everything. I started to feel fear for the first time when my father was drafted into forced labor. Of course, when the Germans came in I was afraid. I remember that once my father showed me in the cellar of our house the brick I had to take out, behind which the Napoleon coins were hidden. This was a very frightening experience for a 13-year-old child.

Nobody in the family was religious. At Yom Kippur we fasted, we held the seder eve, I had my bar mitzvah at the Bethlen Square synagogue, but not exactly when I was 13, because the Arrow-Cross men [4] were here at that time, only after the liberation in 1946. Jancsi had a bar mitzvah too, in Australia, but Peter for example didn't have one. Neither my grandfather, nor my parents used to go to the synagogue. I went, because at the Jewish elementary and the Jewish high school it was obligatory to go on every Saturday. We were never kosher. There were thousands of other Jewish families like this.

I was quite a diligent pupil at the elementary school, with all excellent grades, but I didn't really like school. I hated especially the religious subjects and I hated that on every Saturday morning and on all the Jewish holidays I had to go to the synagogue. I had brains, at high school I only had bad grades because I didn't study, but in Hungarian and English I was always good there, too. I hated mathematics and physics. I became a cub quite soon. The Bethlen Square School belonged to the Kiss Jozsef scout troop [Jozsef Kiss (1843-1921) was a Hungarian poet], I was about seven to eight years old, and I was a cub. I loved that. We went on excursions and we camped.

I started reading very early and I read very much. First I read the westerns and detective novels, which were gradually followed by better and more serious literature as I was getting older. When I was ten I had already read most of the classical literature, not only Hungarian, but also the French, English and German masterpieces in translation. The books were from my father's library, bur he didn't tell me what to read. I was a voracious reader. They didn't need to recommend anything to me. I had very few friends, and though I was on good terms with my classmates, I wasn't really close to them.

Then followed the Abonyi Street Jewish high school. I might be partial, but there weren't teachers like there anywhere else. I didn't like mathematics, though my teacher was very good, I still didn't like it. I was better at the humanities. I hated mathematics and physics. I always just somehow passed these two; regardless of this I liked the teacher because he was sensational. He didn't like me, but he didn't make me feel it, he was a really good teacher. He tried to make physics and mathematics interesting. I liked English, history and Hungarian. I only learned foreign languages – English and Latin – at school I didn't need any private lessons. There were three English classes a week and I didn't only do the homework, but I also read in English. I read Shakespeare in English when I was 12-13 years old. I had a very good dictionary; everything I needed was in there.

In high school there was a literary and debating society, but I wasn't a member of that. I rather went in for sports. I went in for very many sports. I played soccer, ice hockey, handball and basketball. These especially at school, at the Jewish high school. I don't remember how I started ice hockey. And the equipment for that wasn't cheap either, but for these kinds of things there was always money. If the school team needed a ball for example, my father bought it and took it in. But I mainly played soccer. I played soccer day and night. I was the goalkeeper of the school team. When I was a 6th grader I was already a goalkeeper in the school team, which was mainly composed of 8th graders. Then in 1946 I had poliomyelitis, my arm became paralyzed, and from then on I was a left back.

So I was busy. First of all there was an excursion with the scouts every weekend. But at that time not with the Kiss Jozsef scout troop anymore, but with the Eotvos scout troop, because the Jewish high school belonged there. We had a patrol meeting once a week, and there was also the basketball and handball, so I was busy. And I read, too. I didn't really have friends at high school either; I sometimes hung out with my classmates.

In my childhood I got very many presents. For my birthday, but sometimes even when there wasn't any special occasion. I had everything. I had a Märklin, narrow-gage railway, lots of tin soldiers [Editor's note: Märklin is a metal construction toy known all around the world and manufactured in Göppingen, Germany, since the end of the 19th century]. Then what I liked very much was puzzles. I also got lots of books. When I was younger I got hardbacks, which could be folded out, and I built very good houses and castles out of these. But I was quite a withdrawn child. I played alone even with toys like the tin soldiers. I only got a bike later, after 1945, because when I was small my parents were worried about me and didn't buy me one. I learned to ride a bicycle on my own, and swimming, too. I went to the indoor swimming pool with Bandi, someone threw me in the pool, and I learned to swim. I didn't go to these places with my parents; we were very independent.

I loved to go to the cinema and to the theater. Especially to the theater. I liked to go to the cinema, too, but not as much as to the theater. I was about nine or ten years old, when I first went to the

Opera. Bandi Rona took me, and then my Aunt Margit bought me an opera pass, with which we could sit on the third floor. The first opera I saw was ‘La Bohème’ [Opera composed by Giacomo Puccini in 1896]. I would have liked to study music, too, but the war intervened, and then I couldn’t because of my paralyzed hand. I went for solfege to Anna Kurtag; she was Gyorgy Kurtag’s mother. [Kurtag, Gyorgy (b. 1926): contemporary Hungarian composer]. I wanted to become a conductor, but it came to nothing. My father also liked music, but he went to the opera with my mother three times a year at most. He wasn’t such a music fan as I was. When Peter was small, they didn’t really take him. Later, when he was eight to ten years old, then they took him, too, or he came with me, or he went to the cinema with the maid. At that time I already went with my scout comrades, they all liked music, too.

We went on holiday to Zebegeny twice every year. We never went to the Balaton, and we never went abroad either. I was on a holiday at some distant relative’s two times. They had a very nice daughter, who played the piano well, and she had the music of all the hits of the time. The entire family perished in Auschwitz. In Zebegeny we always went to the same place, to a farmhouse. This wasn’t in the village, but a kilometer away via Vac, in the middle of a beautiful forest, a ranch. We rented the entire house, the owners didn’t live there. It wasn’t only us, the immediate family, there. My mother’s sister Rozsi was there many times, Jozsi Berger was also there a few times, and the Rona family, too. We usually spent two months there, we were there in June and July, but when Peter had tuberculosis we were there all summer.

Peter caught pulmonary tuberculosis at the age of four or five, from a relative from Marcal called Muller, and the doctor said that he had maximum six months left. Then my mother took him to Zebegeny, and fed him with vegetables and all kinds of healthy food all day long. He rested a lot, my mother told him stories all the time, and somehow he got well again. Then, in 1954 he fell ill with tuberculosis in the kidney. The wanted to operate him, until they found out that he had tuberculosis in both kidneys, not only one of them. Streptomycin was invented in the west at that time, and then they wrote me to Australia, that this cure-all existed and that we should try it. I got hold of it, and sent them the Streptomycin, so Peter was the first one cured with this in Budapest. In the meantime Peter did a lot of sports. He went for check-ups to the Alkotas Street Sports Hospital all the time, where he was told that if he had no symptoms for five years, then he could consider himself cured of tuberculosis. And he is still alive: he is 69 years old.

When the 2nd anti-Jewish law 5 took effect, they didn’t take the shop, and we didn’t need a Strohmann 6 either. Maybe because my father had been a soldier. This candy thing was a fantastic business: in 1942 my parents could even buy a house. My father had never been drafted into forced labor, and when he was first drafted to Nagykata he ran away at once. From then on he was in hiding. So until the fall of 1944 this wasn’t a problem. The situation with Janos Rona was the same.

Then when in October of 1944 the tzores [Yiddish for troubles] started 7, Vilmos Anesini offered us to go to their place, and that he would hide us. Moreover my mother was pregnant with Jancsi at that time. They were so nice that his wife Bozsi [Erzsebet] registered my mother in her name, so that when she would need to go to the hospital, she would give birth as Mrs. Vilmos Anesini. Not many people did something like this at that time. Vilmos Anesini was my father’s best friend. He was a real gentleman. He was wealthy, he liked to live, he was a kind of a bon vivant, and he had racehorses. He and his wife were Catholics. From October 1944 until the liberation, which

happened in Zuglo on 4th January [1945], they hid 13 persons, my father, my mother, me, my brother Peter, my Aunt Margit, Aunt Gyongyi [Janos Rona's sister] among them, in the cellar of their house. In the cellar there was a separate toilet. We were hiding there, when they lodged German officers there. The advantage of this was that the Arrow-Cross men didn't come in here. Of course the Germans could have noticed something, but we were lucky. I'm going to give their names [the Anesinis] to Yad Vashem 8, so that they can put them on the list, too. I should have done it a long time ago.

After the war the Anesinis divorced. Boske married one of the men they had been hiding; Vilmos married a woman called Mimi. From then on he had an awful life. After the liberation they took everything from him 9. When they took his factory, he got hold of some job. At the horse races there is a man who measures the horses. This was his job. The villa remained, it became Bozsi's, and because she was very religious, some nuns lived with her, and when she died she left the house and the plot to the nuns.

In 1944 my grandfather was also hiding. He didn't come to Zuglo [residential district on the Pest side] with us, I don't know why. He was somewhere in the 7th district, maybe some woman hid him. On 3rd January 1945 he set off for Zuglo on foot, to come to us. He knew where we were. And as he was coming, a mine shrapnel killed him. My father found him there somehow, I don't know how. Oh, yes, they found his wallet and his documents were there. He was 75 years old, but he was like an ox. If the shrapnel hadn't hit him, I think he would still be alive.

Liberation came. I had never had such a disappointment before and ever since than when the Russians came in. I was waiting for them like for the Messiah. And when these…I don't want to say, animals, because animals don't behave like this. They were terrible people. My poor mother was standing there, seven months pregnant with Jancsi. A Russian idiot came in; he pointed a submachine gun at my mother, because she was wearing a blazer with gilded buttons. Bourgeois, bourgeois, he said, and wanted to shoot her. I stood in front of him, and then they wanted to fuck me, because they thought I was a girl. Then my father took my dick out, and showed it to them.

Despite this my father gave his vote for the communists at the first elections. He said that a Jew always had to give his vote to the left. But later he was also of the opinion that one couldn't live in this country.

My fathered opened the shop. There wasn't any merchandise of course, because the shop had been robbed. Among the stolen merchandise there was licorice, which was wrapped in bay leaves so that it wouldn't go bad. They took the licorice, but they didn't take the bay leaves, a sack full of bay leaves was left there. My father packed the bay leaves in small bags and he sold that. It's amazing how many people wanted to buy bay leaves. A long queue stood in front of the shop. Then he got hold of Mauthner seeds from somewhere. This was a famous seed merchant. [Mauthner, Odon (1848–1934): seeds trader, gardener, horticulturist, who wrote about horticultural issues]. He got hold of pepper, tomato and all kinds of seeds, and he sold that. Then he got several rolls of silk, and he sold that. Later the candy makers started to make lollipops again, and that was a great article. My father and my Aunt Margit ran the shop. Slowly the factories started to work again, and in 1946 when the new forint was introduced 10, they printed a price list, and on it there were sweets like this: milk toffee, frutti, candy filled with rubbing alcohol, rum drops, orange drops, assorted drops, crumbly sour candy, grillage, Christmas fondant, sour candy, mint candy, silk

candy. On the price list there was a greeting, which went like this:

Dear Customer,

The mailman knocks on your door and brings you the first candy price list in forints. We present ourselves again to our dear old customers, most of whom we have been serving for 20 years already. This little note is also a death-notice because my father, Vilmos Rona, and my brother-in-law, Janos Rona, whom you all knew and valued, died during the siege. We have lost irreplaceable colleagues with them. But life goes on, and we present ourselves to provide our dear customers with sweets again. We attach great importance to serve you to your satisfaction as we did in the past. If a fall in the prices of sugar occurs in the meantime, we will put cheaper prices on the invoice. We will ship with cash on delivery, the shipping costs and the production price of the packing will be paid by the customer.
Respectfully yours,
MIKLOS MOLNAR AND MRS. JANOS RONA

The shop operated until the nationalization 11. The nationalization happened in 1948, they didn't even allow my father to go back to get his hat.

In the meantime I continued to go to high school where I got in contact with the Shomer 12. To tell you honestly, I wasn't really interested in it. It was boring, too; it wasn't as interesting as scouting. I only went there because I had had enough of this and I wanted to immigrate. I was in the 7th grade of high school at that time. They asked me if I wanted to go to Israel. My parents wanted me to go to Australia, but I answered that I wanted to go to Israel, and I thought that if I went there I would decide where to go.

The condition was to take with me three 13-14 year old children, two boys and a girl. They told us where to go in Sarospatak. This was in May 1949. We slept in Sarospatak all day long, and when it got dark we went to Czechoslovakia. As we crossed the border we were caught at once, the Slovakian policemen caught us. They took us to the lock-up in Kiralyhelmec [today Slovakia]. We were locked up there for four days, but we didn't have a very hard time. Kiralyhelmec is a small village, and the local Jews found out that we were there and they brought us blankets and food. Then they gave money to the gendarmes and they let us go.

I was standing there in Kiralyhelmec with three children. The Jews from there told us to get on the train and go to Kassa [today Slovakia] and that in Kassa someone would wait for us. They arranged for someone to wait for us there. They bought the tickets and we got on the train. When the control came on the train, I hid in the toilet, and they didn't check the children. I wasn't caught. We arrived in Kassa, and there was really someone waiting for us there. The person in question took us to the Agudat 13, where there were around 100 Jews, who also wanted to immigrate. There was a big courtyard and there were rooms. We were there for two or three weeks, and then they told us that there was a transport. We got on the train and went to Pozsony [today Slovakia].

In Pozsony they were already waiting for us. The next morning we got on a bus and we smoothly went over to Austria. In Vienna they took us to the Rothschild Hospital. They used that as a reception center, the Hungarian Jews also went there, and they waited there to go somewhere: America, Canada, Israel. When we arrived, the Rotschild Hospital was full; there was only room in the corridor. This was a big Jewish hospital, with several buildings. The three children soon left for

Israel, I haven't heard from them ever since. I don't remember their names either, only their first names. We had discussed with my parents that I would wait in Vienna and that they would come after me. I waited and waited and waited. They were supposed to come with a transport just like this. That was the last transport, and it was caught.

Peter Molnar's account of the years when Thomas Molnar wasn't in Hungary anymore:

From the time that Tamas had immigrated the only topic in the family was when we would follow him. In 1949 we made an unsuccessful attempt. A smuggler took us over to Czechoslovakia without any problems. We waited there in Kassa in a pension for two to three weeks, for which we partly paid with our own money, and we also got some money from the Jews there. Until then they had given the refugee status to every Hungarian and let them go to Vienna. One day they put us on a train, telling us that we would go to Vienna. But in the meantime Slansky fell and the politics changed. [Editor's note: Czechoslovak politics really changed with the communist takeover in Hungary in 1948, but the imprisonment of Slansky only happened later, in November 1951. Rudolf Slansky was the secretary-general of the Czechoslovak Communist Party from 1945, then – just like Laszlo Rajk – he fell victim to the fight for power within the Party.] The train didn't go to Vienna, but they took us back to Hungary. This train was full; there were at least 600 people on it. They put us up in Mosonmagyarovar. My younger brother, my mother and I were allowed to go home the next morning. My father came to get us a couple of days later. They didn't make a big deal out of this.

The second emigration happened so that in 1950 my father met a man called Davidovics who smuggled people. By then he had smuggled 13 families successfully. We talked with them on the phone and they told us that everything had taken place in order. Davidovics told us that that was going to be his last trip, and that he was going to take his family, too. Then my father said that if he was going to take his own family, he would trust him completely. In order to be able to sell the house on Torokor Street, my parents rented a house on Matyasfold for a couple of weeks and we moved out there.

One day a covered truck came, there were 15-16 people on it, and we set off. Davidovics' family was up there, too. This was an AVO 14 truck with fake papers. Outside the town Davidovics changed into a uniform and we went towards the border. On the way they stopped us several times, but we went through all the identity checks. The children got a sleeping pill, so that there would be silence. We arrived at the border, and there was an identity check there, and we went through that, too, and we went on towards no man's land. Two border guards with machine guns noticed the truck from somewhere, and they wanted to stand in front of it. Davidovics didn't stop, and they started to shoot. Davidovics stepped on the gas and he almost hit the two border guards, but there was mud on no man's land, and the car stood in the same place, because its tires were spinning round, as he gave too much gas. Davidovics got frightened, jumped off the truck and they shot him dead at once. There was silence for a while, then cars came and took us to Rajka where there was a very small police station. They separated the adults and the children there. Then they took us to Csorna.

From Csorna they called Kalman Koves to come and get Jancsi who was five years old at that time. I was 13, they didn't let me go. From there we got to the prison in Gyor. I was there for six weeks with 18 juvenile delinquents, still separated from my parents. It wasn't bad there at all, they gave me food and drink, nobody hurt me, and I didn't experience even the smallest anti-Semitism on the

part of these small urchins. From here they took us to Kistarcsa 15. They took my parents there, too, but I still couldn't speak with them.

In Kistarcsa they put me in a cell with an agent provocateur, a man around 30. We got along very well, there weren't any 13-year-olds tougher and slier than me. I knew at once the reason why I had been locked up with this man. So that they would find out everything about the people smuggling, about Davidovics, because this was a very serious matter. This guy didn't find out anything from me. I was with him for a while, and then they took me to my father's. There were 18 of us in a room, and there I got the best education ever in my life. There was an ex-minister, a doctor, a lawyer, all political prisoners, who talked about everything in the world.

Besides, there was a hearing every day, I remember that once they heard Szilveszter Matuska's case. [Editor's note: Szilveszter Matuska blew up the railway viaduct in Biatorbagy in 1931, just when the international express headed for Vienna arrived there]. There was a judge, a defending counsel, witnesses, so that time would pass. Maybe I came to like theater here. Then the time of my parent's hearing came, and one day they just let me go home. My father got four years and eight months, and my mother three years and eight months. With a rather strange connection, with Onody's help, my father got a very good place. [Editor's note: Onody, Lajos (1920–1996): manager of the Café and Restaurant Company from 1949; about 350 catering establishments in Budapest belonged to him. He was successful thanks to his extensive relationship system and innovative personality. It also contributed to his success, that he employed and protected the confectioners and cooks who had been famous before the war, and were politically untrustworthy. After a show trial he was imprisoned for seven and a half years in 1964, and he was released in 1969 as a wreck. Not long before his death he was honored by Yad Vashem as a "Righteous Among the Nations," because he had saved the lives of many Jews during World War II.]

This Onody was on very good terms with the Anesinis, they used to go to horse races and play cards together before. Then he became a very big shot, he was the director general of the Restaurant and Canteen Company, but he was a very decent man. He arranged that my father was appointed to the Prefabricated Building Blocks Factory, to run the canteen there. This Prefabricated Building Blocks Factory was a prison in fact, where the prisoners worked for free. It wasn't a very strictly guarded place, there weren't murderers there. My mother got to the women's prison in Kalocsa, and she worked at the dressmaker's shop of the prison.

In the meantime my brother Jancsi [Janos] got to the Jewish orphanage, which was on the Buda side of the Arpad Bridge. It really pissed me off that I had a brother whose mother and father were alive and he had to be at a place like this. I went to visit him every Sunday. I will never forget that once in the winter I took him on a walk, because they let him out for an hour. It was terribly cold, and I asked him what he wanted. He told me to buy him an ice cream. I bought him the ice-cream and I saw that, as we were walking on the street, tears were running down his cheeks. I asked why he was crying. He told me to buy him another ice-cream. I told him, 'My dear Jancsi, I only have enough money to go home by streetcar.' The kid was crying and crying. So I said that I would buy him the ice cream. I bought him the ice cream, then I took him back to the orphanage. He looked like a shabby mouse. I only had enough money left to buy one line ticket, there wasn't any money left to change lines, so I had to go back on foot on the Arpad Bridge. I remember that I cried all the way home, because my brother was at the orphanage, my parents in prison, and because we were living in such a fucked-up world.

At this time I lived at the Koves'. Uncle Kalman was my father in place of my father, and Aunt Gabi my mother in place of my mother. This is why the real close family relationship remained with them until this day. My mother was first released from prison after two years and six months, in 1953. They let off one year for her. When my mother was released we moved to the Ronas'. This was a one-bedroom apartment, but it was quite big. They brought Jancsi home from the orphanage. My mother went to work somewhere, where she sewed children's clothes. This much was the benefit of the prison: she learned to sew.

They let off one year for my father, too; he was in the prison for three years and six months. When he came out he came to live at the Ronas', and he was appointed obligatorily to the METRO building site. He worked the night shift all the time, and he liked being there very much, because he could sleep all night long. He only had to take care that the freezing equipment wouldn't stop working, because the tunnel would have collapsed. He did this for a while, but in the meantime he started something else too. He thought of himself as being a confectioner, but he didn't really know much about it, because he was rather a merchant. But he had to earn money somehow. He had a close friend called Gyuri Berger, who was a manager at a candy shop on Kiraly Street. My father started to make coconut bars and grillage in the kitchen at home, and I took this to the candy shop on Kiraly Street at night, Gyuri Berger let me in, and he put it among the state merchandise. He sold it, and they split the profits. In fact we lived off this and not the salary. This went on for a while, then again with Onodi's help my father got a small booth behind the EMKE [café] on Rakoczi Street, where he sold coconut bars and grillage. He did the same here, he partly sold the state merchandise, and partly his own. And then the emigration came in 1956.

In 1956 my parents and my brother had their passport and a visa for Australia. I didn't have anything, because I was of military age. We didn't even hand in a request, because that would have harmed the others. But I was a representative ice hockey player, and I had been abroad a couple times before too. It had been arranged that the team would go to play in Vienna in the winter of 1956. We planned that when the team was going to be in Vienna, my parents would come out, and I would stay there. In the meantime the revolution 16 broke out, and in November one of my mother's cousins, Zoli Gyenes, came to say goodbye. At this time the border was open, there was absolute chaos. Zoli asked my father why Peter wasn't going to go with them. Then my father told me that Peter should go with them.

In the meantime I finished elementary school, and I went to a trade school to learn the mechanic trade. Already while going to the trade school I got to the Food Industry Maintenance Factory as a repairman, also with Onody's help, and in 1956 I was working there. I stole a piece of paper with heading from the office, and wrote on it that Peter Molnar had to go to Sopron to repair a bread kneading machine, because otherwise the bread supply of Sopron would be endangered, so he had to be issued a borderland pass, and I stamped it. [Editor's note: The Hungarian borderland was formed the following way: they designated a 15km long, 50-500-meter wide borderland in 1950 on the southern, then in 1952 on the western border, into which one could only enter with the authorization of the police or of the border guards. Only the border guards could enter the 50-meter borderland. They protected both areas with special security measures (mine blockade, barbed wire fence). The southern borderland was wound up in 1965, the western in 1969. As a result of these measures the towns in the borderland slowly wasted away, the mines of the mine blockade, which was established in order to prevent illegal border crossing, blew up the cattle of

the inhabitants that got there by mistake; identity checks became regular and also the resettling of those who were considered politically untrustworthy. (Source: Jozsef Saad /editor/: Telepessors, Budapest, Gondolat, 2004; A magyar hatarorseg tortenete, http://193.6.238.67/belugy/tortenet/hatm)].

My biggest regret is that nobody ever asked for it. On 23rd November I put on my coat, and I put an iron saw in my pocket, because I had seen in a movie that someone cut himself out the train car with an iron saw. We set off with the Gyenes family, who had a daughter who was two or three years younger than me, from the Keleti Railway Station. The ticket-inspector stood near the train and shouted, 'Emigrants, take your seats!' We got on the train and it went to Sopron. We got off and there they told us to set off that way and that we would get to Austria. We somehow got lost, but we knew that we had crossed the border, we only didn't know where we were. We decided to wait until morning and sleep in the haystack.

The Austrians came at dawn; it was very nice of them to come to gather the Hungarians every morning. They wanted to take us to the 'Lager' [German for 'camp']. We discussed with Uncle Zoli that this wasn't good for us, and when we arrived at a small village where we saw a bus stop we hid behind a house. When everyone had left we went there, waited for the bus and got on it. We didn't know where it was going, but it took us to Vienna. I exchanged my hidden American dollars. We went to the Rotschild Hospital, but we didn't like that at all, there were terrible conditions there. We moved into some pension, and called my parents to tell them that we were there. The Ronas had a phone. On the next day my parents got on the train with their normal passport and came there.

We were there for three to four weeks, then my parents set off. They already had the ship ticket, which Tamas had sent, but I didn't have my papers yet. I went to the Australian embassy and I asked for a permission to reside in Australia, and I got it within a week. I got on a ship in Genoa, because the Suez Canal wasn't open at that time, and we had to sail round Africa. [Editor's note: On 26th July 1956 Nasser, the president of Egypt, announced the nationalization of the Suez Canal. In answer to this English, French and Israeli troops attacked Egypt, and the traffic on the canal was paralyzed for half a year.] On 10th February 1957 I arrived in Australia.

Thomas Molnar continues his life story:

So, I got to Vienna, I lived at the Rotschild Hospital. The Jewish refugees gathered there, it was enormously packed, it was a hovel. I had money, because I had got some from the Joint 17, and my father had also sent me money with a smuggler, who lived off this. He didn't only bring me money, but others too, and he got a certain percentage for it. There wasn't any reason for him to steal it, because there wouldn't have been any business anymore. I acknowledged receipt of the money on the phone. We had several phones, one in the apartment and there was one at the shop, too. Ever since I remember, we have always had a phone.

I was in Vienna for a month and I was well off. In the daytime we used to go out to an expensive café to play cards. We ate something, and we stayed there all day long. At night we went to the girls. I met Ervin Katz there, with whom we traveled together on the ship. He wasn't a relative, only a namesake. He has been my best friend ever since. He is a successful businessman, a millionaire. When I heard that my parents had been caught, Jancsi Reich sent me a visa. He had to accept that I was going to go to his place in Australia. There was a medical examination in Vienna, because the

Australians were careful so that someone with tuberculosis or something like that wouldn't enter the country. I was very anxious because the traces of my illness could be seen, one of my arms was thinner than the other, but it couldn't be seen as much as now. But that wasn't interesting, I passed the examination.

The ship set off from Genoa, but I couldn't go there by bus or by train, because the Russians had encircled Vienna. [Editor's note: Austria, 1945–1955: At the conference of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs held in Moscow in 1943, the representatives of Great Britain, the USA and the Soviet Union decided to restore the national sovereignty of Austria. In April 1945 the Soviet troops occupied Vienna, and by 9th May the allied powers liberated Austria from the German rule. As a result of the Soviet-Austrian negotiations on 15th May the representatives of the occupying powers and Austria signed a state contract, which restored the sovereignty of the Austrian Republic with borders from before 1939. On 25th October the occupying forces left the country, and on 26th October they enacted the eternal neutrality of Austria.] So the Americans took us to Munich by plane, and we went to Genoa by train from there. We waited there for a week for the ship to set sail. The Joint gave us some money there too, we were well off there too, and it is a very nice small town. I ate Italian food for the first time there, and I liked it very much. The voyage lasted for one month. We bought a bottle of brandy before embarking, because we wanted to celebrate my birthday on the ship, but we drank it before that. On the ship we met Andris [Andras] Nagy, who became a professor; he went to America later and worked at the NASA. At that time we rarely met, but it also happened that we met here in Pest, we had organized it that way on purpose.

The ship was entering port in Perth; it was a long way by train to Sydney from there. I arrived in Sydney on a Sunday morning, and I went to live at Laci Reich's. Because there were three Reich brothers: Jancsi [Janos], Laci [Laszlo] and Gyuri [Gyorgy]. Jancsi's family was like my parents to me. He made candy abroad too. He died only recently, at the age of 92. Laci is also past 90, he is still alive. Gyuri is the youngest; he is also past 70 already. So I lived at their place for one or two weeks.

I got a job at once. I went to a biscuit factory, where I pushed the ready biscuits on a pushcart to the oven. I thought that I knew English, but I didn't understand a word, and they didn't understand me either. The Australian accent was entirely different from what I had learned. But in a few months I got into it. I worked at the biscuit factory for three to four months, and my salary was 4 pounds and 4 shillings. I could pay the rent from this and just enough was left for me to not die of hunger. It turned out that this was a child's salary, because if I had been past 18, I would have gotten double for the same work. I lived in lodgings in the district of Sydney where the other Hungarians and the Jews lived.

Then I transferred to clerk work to a spare parts factory, where I got 5 pounds. That was in the city, the transportation was easier. The biscuit factory was way out, I had to travel a long distance. I was at the spare parts factory for about six months, and then I met Laci Adler, who had been my classmate at high school, on the street. He told me, 'don't be stupid, tell them that you are 21 years old, and they will be happy to get a worker.' Fact is that there was an enormous manpower shortage in Australia, and they didn't ask for any papers. I could tell them what I wanted. Laci Adler was packing merchandise at a company, which made tools for sheep-shearing. This was a huge business, because there was a lot of sheep. I went to work there and I got an adult's salary, 8 pounds and 9 shillings. That was a lot of money. I was there for a few months.

In the meantime I played soccer at a soccer club called Hakoah. I didn't take part in the Jewish public life, but I only got together with Jews. Everyone was Jewish among my friends without exception. The Hakoah was also a Jewish soccer club, but I only went there to play soccer, and only for two years. Otherwise I didn't get together with those with whom I played soccer there. There was the Maccabi 18, and there was a dance every Sunday evening there, and we sometimes went there to dance. But not because they were Jews, but because there were chicks there, and it was for free.

For my next stop I must first tell you, that there was a family in Sydney, who were my father's very distant relatives, Sandor Fulop and his wife Ilonka, and their daughters Yvette and Marta. This Marta married a man called Miklos Sved. Sved and Fulop were associates in a men's garment factory. They treated me as their own child, I went there for dinner every evening. At that time I went to evening school, I had to get a high school certificate with supplementary examination, and when I got there at 9 in the evening they either waited for me to eat, or they set the dinner aside for me. Somehow it happened that they were looking for a reliable man at the factory, and they told me to work there. My work was mainly quality control. I assigned the work to the home workers and I received it and checked how they had done it, and I paid them.

I worked there and in the meantime I went out with a girl who was Yvette's friend. I was madly in love with her, we dated for two years, her name was Julika Horvath. She was Jewish, but they converted. When that was over, I met my first wife, Zsuzsi [Susan] Kaufmann. When we met, Zsuzsi was 18 years old, she was just going to graduate. When I married her she was 19 years old. Zsuzsi was born in Budapest in 1937 as Zsuzsa Hoffenreich. Her father died during forced labor. Zsuzsi and her mother Lili were hiding with fake papers. In 1946 they went to the west and met Jozsef Kaufmann at a Lager in Germany; he had returned from Auschwitz and in 1946 he also went there. From Germany they went on together to Paris, they got married there and Kaufmann adopted Zsuzsi. They lived there for two years. Kaufmann worked as a tailor and they went to Australia from France.

Joska Kaufmann also had a garment factory, and he was in great competition with the Sveds. They made the same kind of clothes and they wanted to sell them to the same shops. The Sveds didn't approve of me going out with Kaufmann's daughter, so in the end I gave notice to them and I left. At that time we weren't engaged yet, but we were going to, we had been going out for about six months, so in the end I went to work for Kaufmann. At that time I had already had some experience in manufacturing men's garment, so at Kaufmann's I became the sales manager. I sold the entire capacity of the factory, I went from shop to shop like an agent. This went on for quite a long time, meanwhile I got married: in 1956 I married Zsuzsi. Also in 1956 my parents, Peter and Jancsi arrived. They were already there at my wedding. Then Vivienne was born in 1958 and Ronny in 1959.

I worked at Kaufmann's but I wasn't very happy, there was a big cultural difference between us. Kaufmann was an unschooled person from Mateszalka, who made a lot of money and he couldn't behave himself. In 1961 I parted with him for good and I left. I opened a clothing shop in Parramatta. This is a district of Sydney. I opened the shop on credit. The owner of the house also helped with not asking for rent for the premises for a while. I did this for one and a half years, but the shop didn't go well. I went back to Kaufmann's in 1963, but not to the factory. He had three shops and I managed one of the shops in the center of the city. I was there from 1963 until 1965.

In 1965 I left again, and went to work at a women's wear factory, where I was a production manager until 1968. They made women's clothes and I was a time analyst there. I measured how much time they needed to make something. Because it wasn't like that that a woman made an entire dress on her own, but one sewed the pocket, the other one the bib, and they were on piecework. But I never wanted to remain in this trade; I always wanted to continue my studies.

In the meantime our marriage got ruined mainly because of my wife's parents, and from 1967 we didn't live together. From then on I lived with my present wife, Sandra. But Zsuzsi and I only divorced in 1970. I married Sandra in 1975, but we had been together for eight years by then. Zsuzsi remarried too, but they had no children. We didn't have any children in my second marriage either. While we were married Zsuzsi was a housewife, she only cared for the children. Much later, after we divorced, she graduated from the evening university and she became a social worker. She went to study after the war. The parents were wealthy and paid for it. They bought her a house and she raised the children there.

My second wife is an angel. Her maiden name is Sandra Nixon, she was born in 1947, she comes from an Australian working-class family, and she isn't Jewish. Her father, Tom Nixon died in 1979. During the war he was an Australian soldier, and he got in Japanese captivity, he was at the Burma Railway, which was a very ugly thing, it was like Auschwitz. Her mother is still alive, the poor thing has Alzheimer, she can hardly recognize anyone, she is 89 years old. [The Burma Railway: also known as the Death Railway, the Thailand-Burma Railway and similar names, is a 415 km railway between Bangkok, Thailand and Rangoon, Burma (now Myanmar), built by the Imperial Japanese Army during WWII, to support its forces in the Burma campaign. Forced labor was used in its construction. About 200,000 Asian laborers and 60,000 Allied POWs worked on the railway. Of these, around 100,000 Asian laborers and 16,000 Allied POWs died as a direct result of the project. (Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Death_Railway)]

I don't remember where Sandra and I got to know each other, we met at some party. My wife was a very skillful secretary. She worked at several places, first at a broker's office, later at the Money Market. They credit huge amounts of money at interest. These are international companies, which handle the superfluous money of the big companies. For example at a big company like MATAV a certain amount of money piles up every day, but they don't sit on it, so that it wouldn't bring any interest, but lend it out to someone every evening. So she worked at these kind of places. She didn't finish high school. She attended a shorthand typist course. She could type very well, quicker than I spoke. Now she does all my work, she has been doing it for a long time. She didn't continue her studies later either, but she educated herself. She is an intelligent woman. She likes to work very much, and she also loves music.

After the divorce I didn't interfere in raising the children, but we are on very good terms, and they love me very much. Zsuzsi raised the children very well, she didn't make them hate me, and we are on friendly terms, too.

I didn't have many friends in Australia either. I have mentioned Ervin Katz, he is the one with whom we came together from Vienna. We've been on very good terms ever since. We used to get together with the families as well. And there was another one, Andris Nagy, whom I have also mentioned. I often got together with him, too, while he lived in Australia.

I enrolled for evening courses at university in 1967, at the Faculty of Law, which was four years at that time. Now it is five. At that time one could only become a lawyer if he had been a lawyer-in-training for four years, either after graduating from university, or during university. The salary of the lawyer-in-training was almost nothing. So I went to the evening university, I finished four years in three and a half years. 182 people started the university with me, and only 17 finished as soon as I did. In the last three years I was a lawyer-in-training, so during the day I worked as a lawyer-in-training, and in the evening I went to university. During this time my brother Peter supported me. He was quite well off at that time already.

By 1972 I had my diploma and after four years of being a lawyer-in-training they admitted me to the Law Society. First I remained where I had been a lawyer-in-training, but already with a regular salary. One year later I opened my own office in the city. I worked there for a while, but somehow it didn't work out, so in 1973 I got a state position at the Department of Motor Transport, which is like the Ministry of Transport here. I worked there as a jurist for three years. From there I went to the Corporate Affairs Commission, which is also a state position. This supervises the stock-market and the companies so that they won't cheat. I was there as a head of department until 1979.

In 1979 I went to Sir Peter Abeles' huge multinational transport company, the TNT. I became the in-house lawyer, this is a kind of managing company lawyer. This was a very high position, with a huge salary. I had to deal with million dollar affairs every day. I had my first heart attack already in that year. I got better and I continued doing it. This was an awfully stressful job. In 1981 I had the second heart attack, then they had to operate me and I got a bypass. I went back to work, I tried to be less nervous, but it wasn't possible, so I quit in 1984. I said that I wasn't going to do it anymore. I didn't work at all for one or two years, I was at home, but I had a lot of acquaintances for whom I made contracts of real estate sales. I was comfortably off with this.

In 1987 I decided to leave Sydney. I had had enough of this life. My wife and I set off to find a place to settle. We got to a small village called Woodburn. This is in the eastern part of [New] South Wales. We bought a house there on the riverbank, and I started to work there as a lawyer. It went very well, we lived off it comfortably. In 1992 I opened an office in the closest city, which is called Lismore. [Editor's note: It is the administrative center of the northern region of New South Wales.] This office operated until 1999, but it went too well, and I didn't want to work that much anymore, so I sold it. We bought a plot of 2 hectares, 4 kilometers south of Woodburn, almost in the middle of a forest. I built myself a house there. It is as if I lived in the middle of the forest. I had two dogs, now I only have one, one of them died. I worked from home, with telephone, fax and e-mail. I still work, but only a little. And I don't undertake anything that's stressful.

Both my children finished their high school education at the best school. My daughter Vivienne graduated from university, she is a psychologist. But she has never worked in her profession. She is extremely capable, she has 20-25 apartments, and she lets them out, manages them. Her husband is an electrical engineer, he also has a small factory, but in my opinion he only loses money by it. But my daughter made them prosperous. My son Ronny got an accountant certificate, but he has never worked as such either. He has a watch and jewelry shop. He started the business with Jancsi, but they sold it and separated.

Vivienne has two daughters. Jessica is 22 years old, and Melissa is 19. Jessica is studying at university, she wants to become a physiotherapist. She is in the 1st year. Melissa has just finished

high school. Ronny has two sons: Nicholas was born in 1990, Simon in 1992. All of my four grandchildren went to Jewish schools, to Jewish elementary school, then high school.

In the meantime, in 1956 my parents and brothers also came here. My parents' story is a sad one. Especially my father's. My father wasn't happy even for one minute in Australia. He was like a fish taken out of water. My father is a café gentleman. There aren't such people today anymore. He was a man of the city, a cultured man. In Australia first of all there wasn't a café. Secondly, it was awfully hot. He was always hot. He hated this humid air. Then he got into a void, because everyone was busy, everyone was working. He could only meet even Jancsi Reich once a week at most. Here in Hungary, he had been someone, a wealthy gentleman. He immigrated to Australia and he became a nobody there. He didn't speak the language, he didn't have money, and he had a job, which he didn't like. Besides that he didn't have company. The people he met were all people like this Kaufmann. In my opinion they hadn't even gone to elementary school. They didn't have any common topics. Moreover, he tried to fit in with them, because still the family and the grandchildren were there.

My mother could get along with these unschooled people much better, she could handle this situation better. She was very good tempered. Imagine, that my mother, who had already had a lot of problems at the age of ten, because she raised her brothers and sisters, and who lived through the Arrow-Cross era, then the Russian era, was imprisoned twice, was still cheerful. My mother had a very happy disposition. That's why I've told you that she was a giant. All that she had gone through, and the way she did it, that's something very special. But my father wasn't happy in Australia. First he worked at Kaufmann's factory. But what a job was that? It was horrible for him. He sewed linings or something like that. Then things changed, because things started to go well for my brother Peter.

When they came to Australia Peter was 16 years old. First he worked for six months on a plane at a big factory called Spurway, where he earned 23 pounds, with overtime 26 pounds. He was pretty well off with this for a while. Then in the environs where we lived, there was a milk bar, this is almost like an espresso, owned by a Jewish gentleman, called Mauthner, and my father joined. My mother took part in this, too: she cooked Hungarian food. In the milk bar there wasn't a kitchen, so my mother cooked the food at home, and Peter took it there in kettles.

Later on Peter bought the milk bar. That Mauthner was a very nice guy, but they quarreled over a stupidity. The coffee machine was very old, and Peter said that they should buy a new one, and the guy got upset and said, 'you young people just throw the money around.' He offered to part, and said that Peter should buy the shop. Peter said that he would love to buy it, but didn't have money. Then Mauthner said that that wasn't a problem, and that he should only give him a certain amount of money, because he wanted to go to Munich. They wanted to lock him up, because he hadn't been paying the maintenance for his wife. The milk bar operated from 1957 until 1960, and then it went bankrupt, because Peter spent all the money on cards and horse races. He bet on everything that could be bet on. Whether the fly would land or not, the registration number of the car coming towards us would be odd or even. But he wasn't even 20, he didn't care much about the world.

Peter Molnar continues his story

Then in the newspaper I found an ad that they were looking for a traveling salesman. A small jewelry wholesaler, Peter Stern, was looking for a traveling salesman. I had never done such a

thing before, but I liked the idea very much. I applied for the job, saying that I wanted to try it. We found each other likeable, and I found out later that there were three applicants, but the other two didn't come. I put the samples in the car, and traveled around the country. The boss told me that I could choose: he would either give me 10 percent of the turnover and then I had to pay all the expenses, or he would give me a salary and pay for the expenses. In the first week I added up the orders, and I saw that with the 10 percent I would get three times more than with the salary. I called him on the phone and I told him that I would choose the 10 percent. I did this for two or three years. I loved to do it, I loved the vagrancy, and I made a lot of money. This functioned so that I went into shops, showed the samples and they ordered.

I came home from a trip in 1962-63, and they told me that my father had had a heart attack. I went to the hospital, and my father lay there and he told me smiling, 'Well, Peter, the ball almost went flat.' I talked with the doctor, who told me that there wasn't anything wrong with my father, only that he wanted to feel useful and do something. There was a certain kind of necklace then, which was very popular and I thought that I would sell that for ourselves, and then my father could pack that and invoice for it. He liked to do such things very much, and then he would have been busy and would have made some money, too.

I told Stern what I wanted to do, and he told me to not consider him stupid, because that was his business. Then what should I do? He told me that the only thing he wasn't selling was the men's jewelry, cufflinks, tiepin, and such, and that I should sell those. We started selling these in wholesale, I had everything needed for the cufflinks made, and my father glued them in and packed them in fancy boxes. We had our own brand and it was called Ambassador. We made it in the living room at home; my mother had heart failure ten times a day, because the floor was full with glue.

This business started to take shape, so we rented a small office. The business kept growing. These very cheap watches were made at that time, and we started selling them. Approximately a year later a very big company wanted to buy Stern's company. They offered a very good price and a manager position for Stern. He got into it, and told me to go to work there. I didn't go, and in fact his former business fell into my lap. I knew everyone, the ones we had bought the merchandise from, the ones we had sold it to, and I started to sell the entire collection.

I had a customer in the city, in a very good place, to whom I had sold a couple dozen pairs of earrings, and on the next day he ordered a dozen again. Then I said to myself, 'this can't be a bad shop.' I visited the owner and talked to him. This was a very interesting thing. The owner was a lawyer who had a girlfriend, and he had bought the shop for her so that she could do something. Then I told him that I really wanted to buy that shop. He told me that he didn't want to sell it, but he promised that if it were for sale, I would be the first to know. Once the phone rang, it was he. He told me that if I was still interested, the shop was for sale. What happened? Margaret wanted to have cash. She wanted 6000 pounds. I told him that I didn't have that much. He asked me how much I had. I said I had about 1500 pounds altogether. He told me that it wasn't a problem, and that we would make a contract, I would give him the 1500 pounds and the shop would remain in his name until I paid it. This must have been in September, and after the first Christmas I paid for the shop.

In the meantime Sydney's first mall, which is still the biggest, started to be built, and I bought a shop there. This shop also went very well. It went so well, that I was afraid that someone else would come in here, too, so when a shop became vacant I bought it. It happened that I had seven or eight shops in the shopping center. I sold the same under other names in each. Then the managers of the shopping center told me that there was a remote corner where the shops weren't prospering, ten of them had already been closed down, and asked me if I had an idea. I told them I did. I told them to make a duty free shop. This functions so that they pack the merchandise, they seal it, and it has to be taken on the plane that way, it can't be opened, only after going home. I joined in the business with half a million dollars. It was based on the Japanese tourist and it went very well until 2000, until the Japanese financial crisis. From then on the Japanese tourists didn't come.

In the meantime I joined in a Hungarian restaurant, and later I opened one on my own, and here I did something I had wanted to do all my life: I set up a cabaret like place with music. I brought to Australia for the first time Judit Hernadi, Gabor Maros, Antal Szalai the gipsy musician, and Bori Kallai. I like to do this very much, I earn some money with it, too. I have been doing it for five years now.

In the meantime, in 1970 I married Jackie Cook, who isn't Jewish. She is a saleswoman. In 1979 our daughter Michelle was born, and in 1981 our daughter Amber. This is how Jackie and I met: when she left Birmingham in England she met a common acquaintance in Brisbane, and he told her to call me when she came to Sydney. She called me, and our love started right there and then. She was a very small child when her father divorced her mother, and she had childhood memories about her father mistreating her mother. When I married her I always told her to send a Christmas card to her father. No, no, no. Once she agreed and sent one, and then they got in touch, and a quite normal relationship developed between them over the phone. And when my daughter Michelle went to England she visited her grandfather with her grandmother, and the meeting went well. Mainly Michelle got along well with her grandfather, because my daughter loves being with relatives. Then the old man died, and it turned out that he had a nice house, and the three of them, my two daughters and my wife, inherited it.

Michelle now lives in Tokyo. She got there the following way: she attended the Japanese Faculty in Oxford, and when they got their degree, an American company offered a contract for the most talented students. She was among them, too, so she became a broker in Tokyo. Amber also graduated from university and she has an industrial designer degree, but she is unemployed at the moment. She works with me at the restaurant. Neither one of them is married.

Thomas Molnar continues his story

My parents came to visit Pest several times. In 1972 they already came for the third time, and then I went on holiday to Heviz, and my father got a heart attack in Keszthely and he died. He is buried here at the Jewish cemetery. Everyone from the family was buried at a Jewish cemetery. My mother was buried at the Jewish cemetery in Sydney.

Jancsi was eleven years old in 1956. He went to school here in Australia. He didn't really like school, he wasn't a good pupil, he wanted to work instead. He came to work for me at the clothing shop in Parramatta, he was there for a while, then he went to work at one of Kaufmann's shops. And when Peter bought his first shop he worked there for about two years. Then he left the shop

and bought an independent jewelry shop. When the lease agreement expired, he bought another shop at a very busy place, where he became specialized in watches. This one still exists and it prospers. They live off this.

He met his wife Michelle Martin at some party. Michelle was born in 1955 on Mauritius, and she is a half-bred. She lived off being a model for a long time, she was a beautiful girl. Their daughter Nicole was born in 1975. The marriage of Jancsi and Michelle is a great marriage. Michelle is a very good wife, she is hard-working, nice and honest. She used to work at the shop for a long time. She was a good worker. The shop is doing so well, that she doesn't need to work anymore. Their daughter Nicole didn't finish school, she dropped out of the 7th grade of high school. She married an aboriginal, or they lived together, they had a child, and then the aboriginal abandoned her. She is alone now. This is a problem. That girl is beautiful, and the grandchild is beautiful, too. She/he is bad as the devil.

Glossary

**1 Forced Labor**
Under the 1939 II. Law 230, those deemed unfit for military service were required to complete 'public interest work service'. After the implementation of the second anti-Jewish Law within the military, the military arranged 'special work battalions' for those Jews, who were not called up for armed service. With the entry into northern Transylvania (August 1940), those of Jewish origin who had begun, and were now finishing, their military service were directed to the work battalions. The 2870/1941 HM order unified the arrangement, saying that the Jews are to fulfill military obligations in the support units of the national guard. In the summer of 1942, thousands of Jews were recruited to labor battalions with the Hungarian troops going to the Soviet front. Some 50,000 in labor battalions went with the Second Hungarian Army to the Eastern Front – of these, only 6-7000 returned.

**2 Mauthausen**
concentration camp located in Upper Austria. Mauthausen was opened in August 1938. The first prisoners to arrive were forced to build the camp and work in the quarry. On May 5, 1945 American troops arrived and liberated the camp. Altogether, 199,404 prisoners passed through Mauthausen. Approximately 119,000 of them, including 38,120 Jews, were killed or died from the harsh conditions, exhaustion, malnourishment, and overwork. (Source: Rozett R. – Spector S.: Encyclopedia of the Holocaust, Facts on File, G.G. The Jerusalem Publishing House Ltd. 2000, pg. 314 – 315)

**3 Bor**
The copper mines of Bor, Yugoslavia (today Serbia), were one of the most important resources for the German war industry, supplying them with 50 percent of their copper. After the capitulation of Yugoslavia, the Germans requested Hungarian forced labor battalions from the Hungarian government to use in the mines. In July of 1943, transportation of the Hungarian Jewish labor battalions to Bor began, and by September of 1944, more than 6000 people had been sent for 'obligatory work service.' When the Germans left, they force marched the prisoners to Germany,

executing the majority of them along the way.

**4 Arrow Cross Party**

The most extreme of the Hungarian fascist movements in the mid-1930s. The party consisted of several groups, though the name is now commonly associated with the faction organized by Ferenc Szalasi and Kalman Hubay in 1938. Following the Nazi pattern, the party promised not only the establishment of a fascist-type system including social reforms, but also the 'solution of the Jewish question'. The party's uniform consisted of a green shirt and a badge with a set of crossed arrows, a Hungarian version of the swastika, on it. On 15th October 1944, when Governor Horthy announced Hungary's withdrawal from the war, the Arrow Cross seized power with military help from the Germans. The Arrow Cross government ordered general mobilization and enforced a regime of terror which, though directed chiefly against the Jews, also inflicted heavy suffering on the Hungarians. It was responsible for the deportation and death of tens of thousands of Jews. After the Soviet army liberated the whole of Hungary by early April 1945, Szalasi and his Arrow Cross ministers were brought to trial and executed.

**5 Anti-Jewish laws in Hungary**

Following similar legislation in Nazi Germany, Hungary enacted three Jewish laws in 1938, 1939 and 1941. The first law restricted the number of Jews in industrial and commercial enterprises, banks and in certain occupations, such as legal, medical and engineering professions, and journalism to 20% of the total number. This law defined Jews on the basis of their religion, so those who converted before the short-lived Hungarian Soviet Republic in 1919, as well as those who fought in World War I, and their widows and orphans were exempted from the law. The second Jewish law introduced further restrictions, limiting the number of Jews in the above fields to 6 percent, prohibiting the employment of Jews completely in certain professions such as high school and university teaching, civil and municipal services, etc. It also forbade Jews to buy or sell land and so forth. This law already defined Jews on more racial grounds in that it regarded baptized children that had at least one non-converted Jewish parent as Jewish. The third Jewish law prohibited intermarriage between Jews and non-Jews, and defined anyone who had at least one Jewish grandparent as Jewish.

**6 Strohmann system**

sometimes called the Aladar system; Jewish business owners were forced to take on Christian partners in their companies, giving them a stake in the business. Sometimes Christians would take on this role out of friendship and not for profits. This system came into being because of the anti-Jewish laws, which strongly restricted the economic options of Jewish entrepreneurs. In accordance with this law, a number of Jewish business licenses were revoked and no new licenses were issued. The Strohmann system insured a degree of survival for some Jewish businesses for varying lengths of time.

**7 Arrow Cross takeover**

After the failure of the attempt to break-away (see: Horthy's proclamation) on 15th October 1944, Horthy abdicated, revoked his proclamation and appointed the leader of the Arrow Cross Party,

Ferenc Szalasi, as prime minister. With his abdication the position of head of state became vacant. The National Council, composed of the highest public dignitaries, delegated the position to Szalasi, as "national leader," a decision approved by both houses of Parliament in the absence of a majority of members. Szalasi ordered general mobilization in territories not yet occupied by the Soviets, increased the country's war contribution to Germany, and after Adolf Eichmann's return, they renewed the program of the extermination of the Hungarian Jewry.

### 8 Yad Vashem

This museum, founded in 1953 in Jerusalem, honors both Holocaust martyrs and ‘the Righteous Among the Nations’, non-Jewish rescuers who have been recognized for their ‘compassion, courage and morality’.

### 9 Nationalization in Hungary

In the endeavors of transforming the society and the economy after 1945, the liquidation of the private property and the formation of the centralized state property had an important role. The nationalization started with the 1945 land reform, which brought about the nationalization of forests, model farms, reed works. On 25th May 1946 they legalized the nationalization of mines and other establishments connected with them. At the end of 1946 they nationalized the five biggest industrial works of the country. The next step of the nationalization started in the fall of 1947 in a different political situation. The MKP (Hungarian Socialist Party) became very strong, and gradually it became the only party which made plans and took decisions, excluding the other parties from the process. At the end of 1947 they nationalized the trade of the goods belonging to the state monopoly (salt, matches, yeast, tobacco etc). They nationalized the factories with more than 100 employees in 1948. They also liquidated the companies in foreign ownership in Hungary by show trials. In December 1949 they nationalized by order the private companies, which employed 10 or more persons, and shortly after that they made impossible the operating of workshops with more than 1-3 employees. (Source: Ivan Peto – Sandor Szakacs: A hazai gazdasag negy evtizedenek tortenete 1945–1985, Budapest, 1985, KJK, pg. 95–104; Tibor Valuch: Magyarorszag tarsadalomtortenete, Budapest, 2001.)

### 10 The introduction of the forint

The new currency was introduced on 1st August 1946 in place of the pengo, which had completely lost its value. In June 1945 one dollar was worth 1,320 pengoes, in November 108,000, in January 1946 795,000, in March 1,750,000, in May 59 billion, and in June 4,600,000 quadrilles. They broke off the new price system from the world market, and with a governmental decision they determined the buying power of the forint in comparison with the prices before the war. 100 kilograms of wheat cost 40 forint.

### 11 Nationalization of commerce

On 12th February 1948 the MKP [Hungarian Communist Party] announced the principles ‘of the development of the national economy according to socialist principles.’ The document set as its aim the ‘complete cleansing’ of the economy from the great capitalists. The following measures were directed first against the wholesale trade. Since the difference between wholesale and retail

trade is not as unambiguous as the difference between the large-scale and small-scale industry, the process of the nationalization was characterized by a substantial contingency. They nationalized certain supply trades, like the bigger catering establishments, the private pharmacies, hotels and pensions. At the same time, with the liquidation of the wholesale trade, the state brought about the bases of the national commerce: they established the national internal trade companies, as well as national department stores, specialty shops and commission shops with the aim of reorganizing the retail system. From 1949 they nationalized the commercial establishments in further branches of the commerce. From 1st February 1950 an order took effect, which made private wholesale trade punishable. In the fall of 1952 they inflicted the last blow on the private trade: they nationalized all the remaining retail businesses, and they withdrew the last remaining licenses for selling on markets, catering and food trading. (Gyorgy Majtenyi – Zoltan Szatucsek: 'A szabó tuje és a cipesz dikicse. Dokumentumok a kisipar és a kiskereskedelem allamositasanak tortenetebol,' Budapest, 2001, Hungarian National Archives, 30–31, 153.)

**12 Hashomer Hatzair in Hungary**

(Hebrew: 'The young watchman') It was the most influential Marxist-Zionist organization. Different Zionist groups joined under this name in Galicia and in Poland in 1913. The shomer (scout) aliyah to Palestine started in 1919. Hashomer Hatzair developed its own education system and kibbutz organization. At this time it operated with two headquarters: one was in Varsavia (today Poland), the other one in Merhavya (Palestine). During World War II it actively took part in the resistance movement in German-occupied Europe. At the end of the 1920s the organization appeared in Hungary, too, and it became known in a short time; its membership was 1-2 thousand. At the 4th World Conference of Hashomer Hatzair (Poprad, Czechoslovakia) out of the 1,000 delegates around 20 represented Hungary. At that time the movement had about 700,000 members worldwide. In the 1930s the shomers functioned as the Youth Section of the Hungarian Zionist Association under the name of 7th-8th-district branch association. From 1938 they appeared under the name of Hanoar Haicri. Between 1945-1949 they operated legally. Their illegal groups were still active during the Rakosi regime.

**13 Agudat Israel**

Jewish party founded in 1912 in Katowice, Poland, which opposed both the ideology of Zionism and its political expression, the World Zionist Organization. It rejected any cooperation with non-Orthodox Jewish groups and considered Zionism profane in that it forced the hand of the Almighty in bringing about the redemption of the Jewish people. Its geographical and linguistic orientation made it automatically a purely Ashkenazi movement. Branches of Agudat Israel were established throughout the Ashkenazi world. A theocratic and clericalist party, Agudat Israel has exhibited intense factionalism and religious extremism.

**14 AVO and AVH**

In 1945, the Political Security Department was created under the jurisdiction of the Budapest Police Headquarters, and directed by Gabor Peter. Its' aim was the arrest and prosecution of war criminals. In October of 1946, the Hungarian State Police put this organization under direct authority of the interior minister, under the name – State Defense Department (AVO). Although the AVO's official purpose was primarily the defense of the democratic state order, and to investigate

war crimes and crimes against the people, as well as the collection and recording of foreign and national information concerning state security, from the time of its inception it collected information about leading coalition party politicians, tapped the telephones of the political opponents of the communists, ...etc. With the decree of September 10, 1948, the powers of the Interior Ministry broadened, and the AVO came under its' direct subordination – a new significant step towards the organization's self-regulation. At this time, command of the State Border, Commerce and Air Traffic Control, as well as the National Central Authority for Control of Foreigners (KEOKH) was put under the sphere of authority of the AVH, thus also empowering them with control of the granting of passports. The AVH (State Defense Authority) was created organizationally dependent on the Interior Ministry on December 28, 1949, and was directly subordinate to the Ministry council. Military prevention and the National Guard were melded into the new organization. In a move to secure complete control, the AVH was organized in a strict hierarchical order, covering the entire area of the country with a network of agents and subordinate units. In actuality, Matyas Rakosi and those in the innermost circle of Party leaders were in direct control and authority over the provision of it. The sitting ministry council of July 17, 1953, ordered the repeal of the AVH as a independent organ, and its fusion into the Interior Ministry. The decision didn't become public, and because of it's secrecy caused various misunderstandings, even within the state apparatus. Also attributable to this confusion, was the fact that though the AVH was really, formally stripped of its independent power, it remained in continuous use within the ranks of state defense, and put the state defense departments up against the Interior Ministry units. This could explain the fact that on October 28, 1956, in the radio broadcast of Imre Nagy, he promised to disband that State Defense Authority, which was still in place during his time as Prime Minister, though it had been eliminated three years earlier.

**15 Kistarcsa Internment Camp**

This internment camp served as the place of imprisonment for those held for political reasons before the German occupation. After the occupation of Hungary by the German army on March 19th 1944, 1500-2000 Jews were transported here. Most of these Jews were then deported to Auschwitz.

**16 1956**

It designates the Revolution, which started on 23rd October 1956 against Soviet rule and the communists in Hungary. It was started by student and worker demonstrations in Budapest and began with the destruction of Stalin's gigantic statue. Moderate communist leader Imre Nagy was appointed as prime minister and he promised reform and democratization. The Soviet Union withdrew its troops which had been stationed in Hungary since the end of World War II, but they returned after Nagy's declaration that Hungary would pull out of the Warsaw Pact to pursue a policy of neutrality. The Soviet army put an end to the uprising on 4th November and mass repression and arrests began. About 200,000 Hungarians fled from the country. Nagy and a number of his supporters were executed. Until 1989 and the fall of the communist regime, the Revolution of 1956 was officially considered a counter-revolution.

**17 Joint (American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee)**

The Joint was formed in 1914 with the fusion of three American Jewish committees of assistance,

which were alarmed by the suffering of Jews during WWI. In late 1944, the Joint entered Europe's liberated areas and organized a massive relief operation. It provided food for Jewish survivors all over Europe, it supplied clothing, books and school supplies for children. It supported cultural amenities and brought religious supplies for the Jewish communities. The Joint also operated DP camps, in which it organized retraining programs to help people learn trades that would enable them to earn a living, while its cultural and religious activities helped re-establish Jewish life. The Joint was also closely involved in helping Jews to emigrate from Europe and from Muslim countries. The Joint was expelled from East Central Europe for decades during the Cold War and it has only come back to many of these countries after the fall of communism. Today the Joint provides social welfare programs for elderly Holocaust survivors and encourages Jewish renewal and communal development.

**18 Maccabi World Union**

International Jewish sports organization whose origins go back to the end of the 19th century. A growing number of young Eastern European Jews involved in Zionism felt that one essential prerequisite of the establishment of a national home in Palestine was the improvement of the physical condition and training of ghetto youth. In order to achieve this, gymnastics clubs were founded in many Eastern and Central European countries, which later came to be called Maccabi. The movement soon spread to more countries in Europe and to Palestine. The World Maccabi Union was formed in 1921. In less than two decades its membership was estimated at 200,000 with branches located in most countries of Europe and in Palestine, Australia, South America, South Africa, etc.