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## THE HUNGARIAN MASONIC REVOLUTION

All the revolutions which overthrew the monarchist regimes of Central Europe in 1918 were inspired and directed by Masons, and it was Masons who were given posts in the new governments of Hungary, Germany, Austria and Czecho Slovakia. Almost all these revolutions rapidly degenerated into bloody convulsions with distinctly Communist tendencies, under Bela Kun, Liebnicht, Rosa Luxembourg, Kurt Eisner and others.<sup>1</sup>

Vicomte Leon de Poncins

The post-World War I Hungarian Revolution offers more evidence of Masonic involvement than do others. With its failure, the Hungarian government dissolved the lodges, confiscated their libraries and published their archives, exposing Freemasonry's flagrant involvement in the upheaval. Distressed, the Hungarian Masons called upon their brethren throughout the world to come to their aid.

Revolution first erupted in Hungary in 1848, the year Grand Orient Freemasonry had scheduled all Europe to revolt. Its leader was the great Magyar, Freemason Louis Kossuth (1802-1894). *Mackey's Encyclopedia of Freemasonry* gives a brief history of Kossuth's career:

Appointed, 1848, Minister of Finance and upon a dispute with Austria over the revolt of the Croats, he assumed charge and declared the independence of Hungary. After Gorgei's defeat at Villagos, 1849, he was forced to flee to Turkey. Imprisoned and later released, he then lived in England for several years, in constant touch with Mazzini, Italian Revolutionist. During this period he also visited the United States.<sup>2</sup>

The 1848 Hungarian Revolution was suppressed by Austria with aid from Russia. Kossuth, accompanied by Italian Freemason Adriano Lemmi, arrived in the United States in 1851 and settled in Cincinnati, Ohio. Lemmi returned to England that same year to assist Mazzini in his Italian Revolution. On February 28, 1852, Kossuth spoke to the Masonic Brethren at Center Lodge No.23, Indianapolis, Indiana:

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The Masonic brotherhood is one which tends to better the condition of mankind, and we are delighted to know it enlists the attention of so many Brethren.. as we find surrounding us here. Besides the great antiquity of the Order which should endear it to all good Masons, its excellent precepts and high moral teachings must induce all good members of the Order to appreciate its benevolent purposes and useful works. To one like myself, without a country or a home, dependent upon the hospitality of strangers for life and protection, a great substitute for all my privations is, I find, to be surrounded by Brethren of the Masonic Order.<sup>3</sup>

On another occasion Brother Kossuth proclaimed his longing for a universal Masonic order: "If all men were Freemasons, oh, what a worldwide and glorious republic we should have."<sup>4</sup>

*Mackey's Encyclopedia of Freemasonry* reports that Kossuth's revolutionary career ceased after the Hungarian Revolution: "After the Austro-Hungarian reconciliation, in 1867, under Emperor Francis Joseph, Kossuth ceased any further efforts politically and his death occurred at Turin [Italy] in 1894."<sup>5</sup>

### The Grand Lodge: Reconciliation and Appeasement

Although the Hungarian revolt in 1848 against Habsburg rule failed, Austria compromised in 1867 and formed the Dual Monarchy that made Hungary internally autonomous. The reconciliation, designed to appease the Hungarian Grand Lodge Masons, was fought by the Grand Orient Masons, but to no avail. By the turn of the 20th century, Hungarian Freemasonry was once again at work undermining the existing order. This time, however, it was Grand Lodge Freemasonry, not Grand Orient. Observing London's move to preserve both the Crown and her aristocratic Brotherhood, the Hungarian Grand Lodge realized that if it did not propose and conform to a social democratic agenda, it would lose sway in the country to Grand Orient communism. In a report signed on February 24, 1911, by Paul Szende, the venerable Grand Master of the Rosicrucian Martinovics Masonic Lodge, we find passages such as the following:

We readily recognize that charity such as we now practise does not correspond with our ideas. We must concentrate our

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attention on the necessity of achieving radical changes in the actual society.<sup>6</sup>

The "radical changes" started with a concerted effort to gain control of the press. By the time World War I had begun, Grand Lodge Masons owned most of the nation's media and began to propagandize the military. The daily newspaper *Vilag* was specifically responsible for the weakening of discipline in the Hungarian army. Throughout the war copies were distributed by the thousands in the trenches.<sup>7</sup>

The House of Habsburg realized it was being undermined by its own Grand Lodge Freemasonry. To ease the impending disaster of losing the war, the "King of Jerusalem" cult began making friendly gestures toward the Craft in preparation for the coming political change. Masons returned their good will on April 29, 1918, through their Grand Master, 33rd degree Dr. Arpad Bokay, who traveled to Vienna and delivered an extremely patriotic speech:

The enemies of Hungary are also the enemies of Austria; those who are in league to destroy Austria wish to do the same for Hungary; it is the monarchy which, in the tempest of the world war, has protected the peoples of Austria-Hungary in the most efficacious manner....

By October 1918 the Hungarian Grand Lodge, composed of radical bourgeoisie (the middle class) and members of the Social Democratic parties, were in league with the reigning monarch. Together they formed a political coalition called the Hungarian National Council headed by Count Mihaly Karolyi, which unsuccessfully tried to establish a constitutional monarchy. The Council "advocated an end to the union between Austria and Hungary, peace with the Allies, the introduction of civil liberties and broad social and economic reforms, the formation of liberal political institutions [Masonic lodges], and concessions to the non-Magyar nationality groups of Hungary. The council gained widespread support, including that of the Budapest garrison, which forced King Charles IV [r.1916-1918] to appoint Karolyi prime minister [October 31, 1918]. The council became Karolyi's Cabinet."<sup>9</sup>

Austrian Grand Lodge Freemasonry hailed ascension of the National Council to governmental power. On the first page of its monthly bulletin, which was then able to appear without hindrance, were these words of praise:

The new state of things came as a surprise. All at once we had become free republicans, masters of ourselves. We were

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no longer the slaves and martyrs of a bureaucratic government that without critic or resistance served militarism and selfdomination.<sup>10</sup>

The Grand Lodge Symbolique of Budapest unanimously decided to send to Count Karolyi and his Masonic dominated revolutionary National Council a message of goodwill: "Hungarian Freemasonry will support the new Government with all its power, since it finds the latter very favourable for the accomplishment of its aims."<sup>11</sup>

On November 2, 1918, Grand Master Dr. Bokay made a significant speech describing the Masonic program desired for Hungary. Following are extracts from that speech:

The masonic [sic] programme is also the programme of the national Hungarian council and of the popular government which has just been formed.

Our way is thus made clear to us. We are marching shoulder to shoulder with them, we are working with them, we are helping them in their great and heavy, but also thankful task, so that ancient Hungary may with perturbation enter the beloved land of new Hungary which is the most ardent wish of every good patriot.

Our beloved and highly esteemed brothers are working today [sic] in the first rank, and that entirely reassures us, for we know them and we know that they will carry out in a masonic [sic] spirit the work which they have undertaken.<sup>12</sup>

On that same day the Grand Lodge Symbolique stated its feelings toward the new government: "The

government which is in power now seeks the same ideals as ourselves. Many of our brothers are members of the Government, which is a guarantee for us that the Hungarian Revolution will follow the path of radical reforms. Our duty is to help it with all our means."<sup>3</sup>

On November 13, 1918, King Charles declared he could no longer participate in the government. The National Council immediately proclaimed Hungary a republic, and on November 16, named Count Karolyi its provisional president. Karolyi in turn dissolved the union between their new state and Austria.<sup>14</sup>

The new government planned to adopt extensive land reform measures and to convene a constituent assembly. The economy, however, was deteriorating, causing much unrest. The non-Magyar nationality

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groups (Serbs, Rumanians, and Czechs) occupying Hungarian territory refused to remain part of Hungary, wanting, instead, to remain autonomous.<sup>15</sup>

### **The Grand Orient: The Soviet Republic of Hungary**

Furthermore, the Allies were putting strong demands on Karolyi's socialist government - demands he could not resist. Pressure from the extreme left was equally severe. The Grand Orient Communists, rapidly gaining strength, considered the Grand Lodge socialists too bourgeois. The new government contained no members of the proletariat - the lowest social or economic class. The communists threatened a counterrevolution. Hungary, weary of war and bloodshed, wanted to avoid further bloodletting. Karolyi's cabinet resigned, transferring power to the Grand Orient. The Soviet Republic of Hungary was formed March 21, 1919.<sup>16</sup>

Leading the communists was the bloodthirsty, 33rd degree Jewish Freemason Bela Kun (Cohen). Kun was Grand Master of the Grand Orient Lodge Haladas at Debreczin. Although political and economic conditions made his coup bloodless, it did not remain so. Grand Orient Freemasons began blaming the middle and upper classes for Hungary's problems, suggesting they be eliminated.

Assisting Kun were the following Grand Orient Masons: Comrade Kunzi, Minister of Public Instruction; Comrade Jaszi, National Minister of the Soviets; Comrade Agoston Peter, Comrade Lukazs, Comrade Diener Denes Zoltan; Comrade Alexander Garbal (Joseph Pogany), head of the army; Comrade Ronai, Minister of Justice; Comrade Varga Weichzelbaum for finance; Comrade Vince Weinstein as governor of the capital; Comrade Moritz Erdelyi and Comrade Sezso Biro, for the police; and the bloodthirsty Comrade Tibor Szamuely, Prime Minister. <sup>17</sup>

Szamuely engineered the slaughter of the bourgeoisie while travelling about Hungary in his special train. An eyewitness (of which there were few) gives the following account:

This train of death rumbled through the Hungarian night, and where it stopped, men hung from trees, and blood flowed in the streets. Along the railway line one often found naked and mutilated corpses. Szamuely passed sentence of death in the train and those forced to enter it never related what they had seen. Szamuely lived in it constantly, thirty Chinese terrorists [Triads] watched over his safety; special executioners

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accompanied him. The train was composed of two saloon cars, two first class cars reserved for the terrorists and two third class cars reserved for the victims. In the latter the executions took place. The floors were stained with blood. The corpses were thrown from the windows while Szamuely sat at his dainty little writing table, in the saloon car upholstered in pink silk and ornamented with mirrors. A single gesture of his hand dealt out life or death.<sup>18</sup>

Within weeks Bela Kun and his Masonic comrades had destroyed the old order. Hungarian refugees carried the news of the bloodshed to America, prompting an investigation. In 1920 a committee of the Legislature of New York, presided over by Senator Lusk, published a report on revolutionary activities in Hungary. Following is a portion:

There was no opposition organized against Bela Kun. Like Lenin he surrounded himself with commissaries having absolute authority. Of the 32 principal commissaries 25 were Jews, a proportion nearly similar to that in Russia. The most important of them formed a Directory of Five: Bela Kun (Kohn or Cohen), Bela Vaga (Weiss), Joseph Pogany (Schwartz), Sigismond Kunfi (Kunstatter), and another. Other chiefs were Alpari and Szamuely who directed the Red Terror, as well as the executions and tortures

of the bourgeoisie.<sup>19</sup>

The Grand Orient had so cunningly fronted the Jews that the atrocities of the Communist republic caused Hungary to become violently anti-Semitic, as well as anti-Masonic. Three months after forming the Soviet Republic of Hungary, Bela Kun and his comrades fled to Russia, where they continued their slaughter under Lenin and Trotsky. Hungary formed a constitutional monarchy under the regency of Admiral Horthy. Freemasonry was immediately outlawed, Grand Lodges and Grand Orients alike. Secret documents outlining Freemasonry's role in the Hungarian Revolution were seized and published throughout Hungary.<sup>20</sup>

### **Hungary Resists Masonry**

Universal Freemasonry began to exert pressure on Hungary for having outlawed the Craft. Hungary was accused of making an undemocratic move against a benevolent democratic society. During the Peace

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Conference at Versailles in 1919, Freemason Berthelot, the French Minister, asked Count Apponyi, head of the Hungarian Peace Delegation, to reestablish Freemasonry. The same request came from British representatives at Vienna and Budapest. And the United States government refused a loan to Hungary because the lodges were not reopened.

In March 1922, the Masonic newspaper *Latomia* of Leipzig, Germany, published lamentations over the suppression of benevolent Free-masonry, of which a portion follows:

We are able to give the following information concerning the sad fate of Freemasons in Hungary from information supplied by one of our Hungarian brothers resident in Nuremberg.

After the catastrophe [World War I], the Freemasons, who had sent another address of welcome to the Emperor Franz Joseph during the war, fervently embraced the socialist republican ideology out of the noble conviction that the time had come when the Masonic ideal would be accomplished. In their writings they made active propaganda in its favour and most of the leaders were Freemasons.

But next, when Hungary was overwhelmed by a wave of Bolshevism, the men in power [the Grand Orient Communists] soon began to oppress [Grand Lodge] Masonry as a bourgeois institution.

The reaction which, thanks to foreign assistance, shortly afterwards set in and succeeded in regaining power, inspired by clerical leadership, closed the lodges, occupied their premises, seized their funds and anything else they found there....

In their distress, our Hungarian brothers turned to the North American Grand Lodges. The result was that, as Hungary was then negotiating a loan in America, the reply came back that this loan could not be considered until lawful institutions were reestablished in Hungary, a clear allusion to the prohibition of Freemasonry.

Thereupon the Hungarian government was obliged to open negotiations with the ex-Grand Master. The free resumption of Masonic work was proposed to him, on condition that non-Masons should have the right of access to the sessions. This was naturally refused by the Grand Master and the loan miscarried.<sup>21</sup>

In September 1922, the Masonic monthly, *Maconnique de Vienne*, announced from Italy that Grand Master Torrigiani (later killed by Mussolini because he was a Mason) promised to intervene at the Geneva

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Conference. Through the governments of various Masonic powers, he would bring pressure to bear on the Hungarian government. France acted energetically in the same direction. The Hungarian government made it clear, however, that so long as Freemasons carried on their activities in secret, they could not be reestablished with their old privileges. It will remain to the honor of the Hungarian government that it did not yield, courageously facing all these difficulties.

Freemasonry never forgot the nation that so steadfastly rebuked its power. At the Yalta Conference in 1943, a conference negotiated by the world's three leading Masons (Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin), Hungary was handed over to the Soviet Union. After the Second World War, Stalin punished Hungary. In 1955-1956 the Hungarian revolt against her Soviet masters was brutally crushed.

Only recently has this nation won freedom, but not without meeting Masonic conditions. In 1984 an unknown Russian, Mikhail Gorbachev, travelled to London and Paris for a secret meeting with Otto von Habsburg, pretender to the Austrian throne. An agreement was made to release four East European nations to

the West if the Pretender would help uncouple the United States from Europe.<sup>22</sup> One year later Gorbachev came to power. In 1989 he made good his promise - handing to the West the nations of Poland, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. Before their release, however, Gorbachev called for Grand Orient Masonic Lodges to be reopened in Budapest. Moreover, he asked French Masonic leaders to assist in efforts to reactivate lodges in Czechoslovakia, East Germany, and Poland.<sup>23</sup>

When Freemasonry is permitted free reign in a country, there is revolution - either gradually, as in the United States, or rapidly, as in Europe following World War I. The recent revolutionary changes in Poland, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary are thus comprehensible. What is perplexing is the revolution in Russia during the latter half of 1991. December of that year the Soviet Union was dissolved. For the first time in revolutionary history, we have witnessed a peaceful and bloodless transition from communism to democracy. Have both Freemasonries come to an agreement that the world must be democratic? Or, has English Freemasonry engineered the greatest coup d'etat of all time?

The world stands in awe, yet the righteous remain cautious.