THE HUNGARIAN-AMERICANS OF SOUTH BEND

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HUNGARIAN BACKGROUND: WHO EMIGRATED, WHEN, AND WHY

The Hungarians or Magyars were originally a nomadic people who migrated east from the Ural Mountains and finally settled in the Carpathian Basin, which became known as Greater (or Historic) Hungary, around 900 A.D. Thereafter these people became the dominant political force in a region populated by numerous ethnic groups. In the year 1000 Hungary's first King, Stephen, was crowned by the Pope, an act which linked Hungary with Western Christianity and civilization. Throughout their history the Magyars have viewed their nation as an outpost of that civilization, keeping Eastern hordes out of Western Europe--from the Mongols, to the Turks, to this century's Soviet Army.

By the eighteenth century all of the lands of Greater Hungary had become part of the Hapsburg Empire. Lajos Kossuth attempted to restore Hungarian independence in 1848, but his effort failed after the Austrian Emperor obtained Russian aid. Supporters of Kossuth were among the first Hungarian immigrants to the United States, and some of his former troops fought for the Union in the Civil War. But none of these immigrants settled in South Bend.

In 1867 Hungary became Austria's partner in the Dual Monarchy, under which the two countries shared a common monarch and foreign policy, while internal affairs were the responsibility of two independent parliaments. Successive Hungarian governments, dominated by the Magyar aristocracy, were not attentive to social, economic or ethnic problems. Nor were they especially popular. For ordinary people elective county governments were more important than the parliament, because they were more responsive to local interests. It was during this period of the Dual Monarchy, which lasted until 1918, that immigrants from Hungary began to arrive in South Bend.

Both Hungary and Austria entered World War I allied with the Central Powers. Minority groups

satellite, eventually declaring war on the United States as well as the other Allies. In the spring of 1944, under General Sztojay, the deportation of most of Hungary's Jews to Auschwitz began. By October Hungary was a battleground, with the Nazis controlling the government and the Soviet Army advancing from the East.

About seventy Displaced Persons from Hungary came to South Bend at the war's end. Most had been either army officers or highly-placed civil servants in the wartime regime. Some were Hungarian Jews.

By 1947, after disregarding the free election results of 1945, the communists had become the real rulers of Hungary. Under the Party's leader Rakosi a single-party government was established, the Church was persecuted, and industry and agriculture were collectivized. Rakosi patterned his regime on that of Stalin, building around himself a cult of personality and running the country by force and terror. Dissenters to this regime were arrested and held without trial. After Stalin's death in 1953 came a period of comparative relaxation led by premier Imre Nagy. When Moscow ordered Nagy replaced by Rakosi early in 1955, the Hungarian people organized demonstrations against such external control. A year later demonstrations had become armed rebellion. To bring things back under Soviet control Russian forces attacked Budapest and other cities in November, 1956.

For about one week during the revolution Hungary's communist government permitted anyone who wanted to leave the country to do so. As a result, about 300 refugees eventually reached South Bend. At first, when it appeared that the Freedom Fighters might be successful, some of those who left Hungary were Communists. (About five or six immigrant families in South Bend were deported by the F.B.I. for their Communist ties.) Others who left Hungary were dissatisfied with the government's economic policies and decided instead to live under a system of free enterprise. The actual Freedom Fighters were the last to leave the country.

Most of Greater Hungary (the State's territory before the peace settlement of 1919) consisted of the fertile Danube River basin. Agriculture has always been the mainstay of the country's economy. For centuries Hungary has produced wheat and other grains, fruit, grapes for wine, and livestock. But most of Hungary's land has been controlled for the same span of time by the titled aristocracy and other small but powerful classes--ecclesiastics, industrialists, bankers.

The majority of those who left Hungary around the turn of the century were farmers or cottage industry workers. They regarded emigration as their only chance for advancement. Those who came to South Bend were mostly tenant farmers. In return for cultivating his landowner's property, each tenant received a small plot of land for himself and perhaps one pig a year. Large families were wanted to help the father with his work, but when these boys grew up there was no additional land for them to settle on. Even those who could save money could find no land to purchase. If these young men were apprenticed, they were likely to remain apprentices all of their working lives.

It is not surprising that only a small number of early immigrants belonged to the middle classes or were teachers. For most Hungarians social mobility was extremely limited. Western Hungarians ordinarily received only four years of compulsory education, while Eastern Hungarians sometimes received less, or none. Sons of tenant farmers remained tenant farmers, or apprentices. Young women might "finish" their education by working as servants in the households of wealthier people or, if their families lived near a border or a different nationality group, by going to another region where they could learn another language. But there were not many opportunities for them to capitalize on such skills.

The Hungarian immigrants who came to South Bend after World War II came out of a more urban, more industrial society. Hungary's business and professional classes were somewhat larger than they had been,

within Hungary--Serbs, Croatians and Czechs, among others--opposed the war and used it as an opportunity to obtain their independence from the Magyars. In the Treaty of Trianon, signed in 1919, Hungary was forced to give up 72% of its territory and 64% of its population to the Successor States of the Dual Monarchy, which included Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Yugoslavia, and Rumania. Meanwhile, in an effort to obtain more favorable peace terms Mihaly Karolyi had declared Hungary a Republic. In the end-or-war chaos, however, control of the government passed to communists inspired by the Soviet example of 1917. For five months in 1919 Bela Kun ran Hungary, until the counterrevolutionary National Army led by Admiral Miklos Horthy forced him to flee. To guard against his return in 1920, Hungary's parliament elected Horthy Regent and then supported his severe measures against those who were suspected of having backed Kun.

Although the number of Hungarian immigrants arriving in the United States after World War I was supposedly very small, because of immigration quotas which worked to the disadvantage of Eastern Europeans, in actuality many Hungarians came to South Bend immediately after the war. Some had intended to join other relatives here earlier and were caught by the war. Others were politically active workers who found the Regency of Miklos Horthy not to their liking. Some were Magyars whose county or town had been assigned to another country by the Treaty of Trianon. They refused to become citizens of Austria or any of the other successor states, because in none of them did they belong to the dominant nationality.

The Regency in Hungary was a period of reaction and an attempt to return to traditional political and social institutions. About the only concession to change was a modest land-reform program. During the 1930's the world depression led the government to protect itself by endorsing the nationalism and anti-Semitism propounded by Nazi Germany. During World War II Hungary became a Nazi

but there was still very little social mobility. Entrance to any profession or trade was by government license, an arrangement which limited the number of people going into any occupation. As a result it was likely that, if a man was a newspaperman, his father had probably run a newspaper. If he was in the leather business, his father and grandfather had probably been in the same trade. There seemed to be a reverse social mobility in Hungary under the communists during the 1940's and 50's, however. People who had formerly been comfortably well off now found that their businesses had been nationalized, or that their professions suddenly had no place for them. Such political-economic discrimination encouraged emigration of a different social class from that which had left Hungary earlier.

The most educated group of Hungarians to come to South Bend were the displaced persons of World War II. Most had received a university degree or at least a high level of technical education. Their numbers included diplomats, lawyers, teachers, engineers, judges, and newspaper publishers. Their 1956 successors tended to be as urban and as well educated, but younger.

LIFE IN SOUTH BEND

Most of the ancestors of the people interviewed for this study came from Western Hungary, specifically from Sopron, Győr, and Mont Counties. Others listed their places of origin as Devecser, Veszprény County; Kapovar; Hegykő; Görökbécse, Torontal County; Budapest, Vas County; Hoszú Szó, Cömör County; Sárospatak; Pali; Zala Szentiván; and Ada.

Many of these early immigrants had been farmers. Others had worked at glassblowing, metal work, carpentry, tailoring, blacksmithing, cabinetmaking or woodcarving, baking, and locksmithing. South Bend's Oliver Farm Machinery Company used to send agents to Sopron County to tell people that American factories needed workers. In response, groups of tenant farmers and craftsmen came to South Bend in search of an opportunity to earn a better living. Although

some entire families came, more frequently a father would come first, to establish himself. When he had saved enough money for their passage, his wife and children would follow. Once a small community of Hungarians had been established in South Bend, friends and relatives of the original immigrants came to the same place, lured by tales of the good life and economic opportunity. Later, after the turn of the century, young people would come here to seek adventure as well as opportunity. Steamship lines moved their agents further and further east into Europe, encouraging emigration in order to sell passages.

There were no restrictions on immigration into the United States prior to World War I. Instead it was encouraged, because expanding industries needed immigrant labor. By 1921 however, a quota system had been established, which limited the number of annual immigrants of any nationality to 3% of the number of such people already residing in the states. Nevertheless, many Hungarians arrived in South Bend in the years after the War. Some of these actually belonged to the earlier group of immigrants. For example, some wives and families of men who had come here earlier had been caught in Hungary in 1914. Other immigrants had actually been born in the United States and then taken back to Hungary by their parents. Most of the Hungarians who came to South Bend after World War I actually arrived as citizens of some other country whose frontiers had been extended at Hungary's expense by the Treaty of Trianon. Those emigrating from what had been Western Hungary arrived as Austrians, accidental citizens of a state which was entitled to send relatively large numbers of residents to America by the law of 1921.

All of these early immigrants came to South Bend in search of employment. Many stayed with one local company, usually the first to hire them, for their whole working lives. Fathers and sons often worked for the same firm. Industries employing large numbers of immigrant Hungarian workers included the Oliver Farm Implement Company, the Singer

Sewing Machine Company, the Wilson Shirt factory, the O'Brien Corporation, and Studebaker Corporation. At Oliver, the first factory to employ Hungarians, men worked as laborers, doing such heavy work as "hanging plows" and such dangerous tasks as grinding. Women worked as molders, shaping molds for plow parts with sand. The Singer Company employed many skilled craftsmen, such as cabinetmakers, cabinet finishers, woodcarvers, and decorative ironworkers, to make their ornate sewing machines. At the Wilson Shirt factory Hungarian men did heavier jobs such as steam pressing, and women sewed. From 1896 the Studebaker plant employed Hungarian workmen in many capacities, for untrained labor or assembly line work, but also for such skilled labor as designing, drafting, layout, pattern making and metal finishing. Women, especially daughters of immigrants, later worked in the plant's offices. Some Hungarians at Studebaker worked their way up to the rank of engineer: Frank Nemeth, Chief Body Engineer; Joe Bokon, Assistant Body Engineer; Tony Braszo, Chief Chassis Engineer, and Joe Huszvar, Chief Trim Engineer.

Descriptions of what factory life in South Bend was like vary. Dr. Andrew Petrass, one of the few educated early immigrants, who worked in South Bend's factories before going on to medical school, described his experience in these words: "to drop from the scientific milieu of a European Gymnasium to Upton Sinclair's industrial jungle was hard." Most early immigrants, however, found life here no harder than the one they had known in Hungary as tenant farmers or apprentices. In South Bend they had the added advantage of being able to save their wages (which varied from $.12½ to $.25 per hour) to buy homes, property, or possessions. For the most part, young men and women seemed to have enjoyed working with their friends in these factories, hard as the work might have been. When interviewed years later, this group of people clearly felt that their work had been appreciated, and that they had made an important contribution to the factories' produc-

tion.

Working wives were common among South Bend's early Hungarian population. While men worked in factories, women often turned their newly acquired homes into boarding houses. While raising many children, they also provided rooms and meals for the large numbers of single Hungarian men in the community. Often married women would invite single female relatives to come to South Bend to help them run their boarding houses. As a result of both their extended families and their many roomers, these early immigrants often lived under very crowded conditions. Dr. Andrew Petrass, physician to the early Hungarian community in South Bend tells about one hard-working woman who was soon expecting an addition to an already large family. When labor pains began, she walked to nearby Studebaker Woods to give birth, for there was no privacy in her home. Then she wrapped the baby in her apron, walked back home, and cooked supper for her boarders before going to bed. Other Hungarian women worked as domestics on South Bend's more affluent east side, where the Hungarians were known as "hard workers and very clean people." Or, they worked in factories and factory offices.

Those early immigrants who had been tenant farmers and craftsmen belonged to roughly the same social class in America as they had in Hungary--the lower working class. The only difference was that here they or their children could anticipate upward mobility. Those who came from rural environments had to adjust to town life, as South Bend was a sizable city even at the turn of the century. But the Hungarian peasant did not know the same kind of isolation as the American farmer. He lived in a village and went from there out to the fields each day. South Bend's Hungarians tried to recreate the village environment they had known. They lived west of Michigan Street, congregating around Chapin Street, Thomas Street, Kendall Street, Ford Street, and eventually extending southward to Miler Town, as the Indiana and Prairie Avenue area was called.

Chapin Street was so Hungarian around 1910 and 1920 that it was called "Little Budapest." Merchants who were Hungarian or at least spoke Hungarian had their stores in this area, and women who knew only Hungarian would often walk great distances to do their shopping here.

Most of the community's large factories were in or near this part of town. Between the factories were neat rows of workers' homes. In 1911 a successful working man could purchase a home for under $2,000. It would be heated by a coal stove in the dining room and a cook stove in the kitchen. Water came into the house from a pump outside. A "Michigan cellar" stored food. Although in Hungary he had lived in the open countryside, the tenant farmer owned little land. Thus, when he moved to South Bend, his small house and yard seemed ample space in which to cultivate a garden and perhaps raise a pig. He continued making his own wine, sauerkraut and sausage, just as he had in the old country. Also, since the west side of town was near open countryside, these immigrants found it easy to rent a grove or field and continue their traditional outdoor picnics and festivals.

Initial language difficulties caused the earliest Hungarian immigrants to cluster together in Hungarian neighborhoods. Few of them knew any English at all when they arrived. They spoke what they called "Magyar," a Finno-Ugric language which is unrelated to the Indo-European languages of Western Europe. Its closest affinity is with Finnish. These immigrants associated their language with the Magyar people's superiority to the other ethnic groups of Greater Hungary.

On the other hand, because of Hungary's long association with Austria, which had culminated in the Dual Monarchy, most immigrants knew some German, and those with any higher education knew German very well. Since most of South Bend's first Hungarians had come from Hungary's western border regions, they had usually heard or even learned still another language, perhaps Croatian or Bohemian. Such ex-

periences may have left these immigrants more amenable than some others to the acquisition of an additional language, English.

Hungarian immigrants learned English at classes held at the YMCA, at workers' organizations, and at school night classes. Those few who had received more than a primary education often found such classes too simple for their needs and preferred to study English on their own. Usually only the women, the immigrant wives with large families, found it hard to learn English, because of their lack of both social contacts and spare time. On the other hand, so many South Bend residents spoke Hungarian that even the downtown stores tried, as recently as the 1950's, to employ at least some Hungarian-speaking clerks. These persons would then advertise their language skills in the Hungarian newspaper.

During the first half of this century South Bend's Hungarian community had an Hungarian language newspaper to serve its needs. The paper may have had its start as long ago as 1895, in a printing establishment on St. Joseph Street. Dr. Oscar Van Barandy, the first Hungarian physician in South Bend, is supposed to have owned an Hungarian newspaper in 1901. But the generally accepted date for South Bend's first Hungarian press is 1906, when Julias Pesti and Zoltan Tarr began to publish the South Bend Ujsag (News). The Ujsag stopped publication a year later, but it reappeared shortly afterwards under the name Igazsag (Truth). Igazsag was financed by Andrew Piczkanits, who retained Pesti and Tarr as editors. This paper lasted for one and one-half years. In 1911 the Hungarian press was renewed under Frank Lassu as the South Bend Tudosito (Informer). The Reverend Bela Bertok of the Evangelical Reformed Church edited Tudosito until 1915, when it was taken over by Catholic clergy and Father Lawrence Horvath became editor. In 1918 L. R. Kovach and the Gerschofer brothers owned the paper. From 1920 until he died in 1938 Vendel Hajdu owned and edited the Varosi Elet (City Life). Eugene

Pataky took over this paper in 1939 and published it until his death in 1952. After that, publication of a local Hungarian language newspaper ceased.

The Varosi Elet, or Varois Elet as it was sometimes called, appeared weekly. It contained a summary of recent news and included articles about notable Hungarians from all over the world. There were church announcements, notices of organization meetings, and funeral announcements. But the greatest proportion of space in the newspaper was devoted to advertisements and classified notices.

Clustered around "Little Budapest," South Bend's early Hungarian immigrants formed their own churches, sick benefit societies, workers' associations, businessmen's organizations, political organizations, and social or cultural clubs. Many of these so-called ethnic organizations had a very short lifetime, although a few still exist today. At least half of the early Hungarian community assimilated out of it within one generation. As a result its descendents, while proud of their heritage, actually know very little about it or the institutions associated with it. Despite their relatively short lifespan, however, these ethnic organizations performed a valuable cohesive function for Hungarian immigrants while they existed.

Sick benefit societies were a traditional form of social organization for Hungarian as well as some other groups in South Bend. They were basically small insurance companies which also served as social clubs for their members. At the turn of the century immigrant laborers, most of whom worked in physically demanding and dangerous jobs, could not obtain insurance from any major insurer. Many of the Hungarians at Oliver, for example, were employed as grinders, smoothing off plowshares against grindstones. Most grinders eventually died of silicone sclerosis. By banding together in their benefit societies, South Bend's Hungarians attempted to take the risks of such illnesses upon themselves. Besides paying small sickness and death benefits, these societies sponsored dances, dinners, and other recreational

events. They usually had their own meeting rooms or buildings.

One sick benefit society was called the Szicsenyi. Another was the Munkas Otthon, or Workers' Home, which served as the social and organizational headquarters for the radical (some said Communist) Hungarian laborers who had left Hungary in 1919, when Bela Kun's government collapsed. This group first met in the Washington Hotel on Scott and South Streets and later had its own building, called Hoffer's Hall, in the 1200 block of Colfax Avenue. The Hungarian Reformed Federation of Americans was a society which centered around the Hungarian Presbyterian Church and which survives today as an insurance company. The largest sick benefit society was the Verhovay Fraternal Organization, which began as an amalgamation of several smaller sick benefit associations in 1909. This group conducted its business and social activities at the Kossuth Hall at 820 W. Indiana Avenue. In 1955 members changed their name to the William Penn Fraternal Association. This still functions as an insurance company and as a center for Hungarian social life in this community.

An Hungarian Businessmen's Association, consisting of Magyar businessmen from various Hungarian neighborhoods, was active during the 1920's. Eventually it evolved into the non-ethnic Rum Village Businessmen's Association, which is still active today.

Perhaps the most important social center for the Hungarian immigrants in South Bend was the Magyar Haz (Hungarian Hall) on Chapin Street. It was built in 1910 by the Hungarian immigrants themselves and functioned as an ethnic community center until 1930, when the building began to be used for other purposes. The Magyar Haz had three levels--the offices of several sick benefit societies and clubs on the top floor, a basketball court, stage and auditorium on the main floor, and bowling alleys and a bar on the lowest level. One of the groups operating out of the Magyar Haz was the Magyar Athletic Club, called the Atlantic Club. It consisted

of a group of young men who played basketball and sometimes football together. Another was the Mukedvelo, a drama group which put on Hungarian plays several times a year. Both men and women over the age of 18 could become members. A third group, the Glee Club, had rotating volunteer leaders. In addition to entertainments put on by local Hungarians, the Magyar Haz stage was also used by professional Hungarian entertainers, who often billed themselves as Bypsy musicians or singers. They would come over from Europe to perform in Hungarian communities within American cities.

South Bend's Hungarians established several churches, most of which still exist, although without their ethnic label. By 1893 the earliest arrivals had established St. Stephen's Roman Catholic Society, a church which became a National Hungarian Catholic Parish in 1900. Ten years later, on Thomas Street, the congregation erected a beautiful Romanesque church with stained glass windows which are considered outstanding to this day. A full congregational life developed, with several masses each Sunday in Hungarian, social organizations, and a choir. In 1901 the parish established a large school, the earliest Hungarian parochial school in the United States.

In 1911 a controversy developed over the priest's handling of funds for the new church building. Parish trustees decided to retain ownership of the building which their donations had constructed instead of giving title to the Bishop. St. Stephen's parishioners chose up sides in the dispute, and after some very heated arguments about one hundred families left the church. Initially these dissidents formed a National Catholic Church under the leadership of Father Kubinyi, who was an Hungarian aristocrat. When the group ran out of money it split apart. Some families organized the Sacred Heart Independent Church. This eventually became the Immanuel United Methodist Church, which is now located on Ewing Street. After petitioning to join the Episcopalian church, the remaining families

founded the Hungarian Episcopalian Church on West Colfax, which later relocated as Holy Trinity Episcopalian Church at 915 N. Olive.

A group of Protestant Hungarians, Calvinists and Lutherans, first held services in peoples' homes, and then (in 1904) in the basement of the First Presbyterian Church, until they could afford to build their own on West Washington. This became known as the South Bend Magyar Evangelical Reformed Church. In 1921 the congregation built a large edifice on Portage Avenue and changed its name to Memorial Presbyterian.

By 1916 a large community of Hungarians had developed on the south edge of town, known as Miler town, around Indiana Avenue. That year Our Lady of Hungary Roman Catholic Church was founded there as a mission church of St. Stephen's. By 1922 the church had been reorganized on a territorial rather than an ethnic basis. The majority of the parishioners were Magyars, however. By 1935 the church had a beautiful modern building on Calvert Street and a parish numbering 1400 families. On Sundays two services were held in Hungarian and two in English. This church is still the focal point for many Hungarian activities in this community.

Another group of Catholic Hungarians, who had originally attended St. Mary's Catholic Church on Taylor Avenue, which was basically a German church, left Roman Catholicism and organized as a Pentacostal church under the leadership of Brother Matt Rinenbach. For a while they met in a house on Swygart Street. By 1935 they were meeting at 1607 Prairie Avenue and known as the Magyar Punkoski Kereszteny Gyulekezet. Later the church was called the First Hungarian Assembly of God, and in 1950 the congregation built their current church at 1819 Prairie Avenue, the Prairie Avenue Gospel Church.

The Hungarian-Americans interviewed, most of whom were children of the original immigrants, said that they did not experience much prejudice as Hungarians but did experience some prejudice as

Catholics or as "foreign-born." South Bend's west side (west of Michigan Street) was considered the turf of foreigners and other minority groups. Those who were interviewed, however, said that they did not have any trouble mixing with other groups. Basically, those Hungarians who remained in Hungarian neighborhoods, attended parochial schools, and whose social life involved mostly Hungarian groups, felt no prejudice at all. Those immigrant families who made a deliberate effort to assimilate rapidly, by moving into English speaking neighborhoods, or by moving into English speaking neighborhoods, or by attending public schools in such neighborhoods, felt some prejudice. WASP neighborhoods apparently dreaded the arrival of the first Hungarian family on a block. In return these Hungarians took great pains to prove themselves worthy of their new neighbors. Children were expected to ve extremely well behaved, and parents tried very hard to keep their property in good repair.

South Bend's real melting pot at this time was Central High School, for many years the city's only high school. At least half of the students in this school were ethnics. All of the Hungarians interviewed who had risen out of the laboring class said that they had graduated from Central. Early in the century, however, only about twenty-five percent of South Bend's young people even attempted high school.

There were some tensions within the local early Hungarian community. Hungarians exhibited some prejudice against other, non-Magyar groups which had enigrated to South Bend from the area of Greater Hungary--Serbs, Croatians, or Jews. In another context, the exodus of dissenting families from St. Stephen's Church left many hard feelings between Magyar Catholics and Magyar Episcopalians. There were also some slight misunderstandings between the Hungarian Presbyterians and the Catholics, based on a lack of understanding of one another's traditions.

The majority of the early Hungarian immigrants in this community came expecting to stay for only a short time. They wanted to earn enough money to purchase land in Hungary. Once here, they came to

like their new way of life. Instead of returning, they sent passage money to their wives, children and other relatives. Those immigrants who did return to Hungary often found that they could no longer adjust to life in the old country and came back to America.

After spending several years here as resident aliens, Hungarians acquired citizenship out of gratitude for the opportunities that life in America had afforded them. Their children, who were born in this country, were becoming Americanized through the influence of both public and parochial schools. Many first generation Americans of Hungarian descent remember urging their parents to become citizens and helping them to study for their citizenship tests. Hungarian aliens who were willing to fight for the United States were drafted into the army during World War I. They often became citizens upon their return. Later, during the 1930's, the government again encouraged resident aliens to become citizens. Funds from the WPA were available to persons teaching literacy and citizenship classes. YMCA's also offered such classes. Democratic precinct workers encouraged citizenship as a means of gaining votes for their party.

These early Hungarian citizens had come from a political system in which they had no voice into a system which invited them to vote. The immigrants' gratefulness for their new opportunity to improve their station in life led to simple political loyalties. Until about 1930 Hungarian immigrants who had been naturalized voted Republican. Factory foremen told their workers to vote that way to prevent the plant from being closed right after the election.

At the same time Democratic precinct politicians were being friendly and helpful towards these immigrants. Expecially after 1914 they took great pains to bring them into community life. The party would rent empty stores in each neighborhood and establish Democratic headquarters where Hungarians, who often could not yet read or write English,

could go to have forms filled out and questions answered. Nicholas Muszer, a government official, and Mr. Molnar, who ran a furniture store, were among those Democrats who took the trouble to help Hungarian immigrants with their "downtown business." By the late 1920's their indebtedness to those who had helped them when they needed it was prompting some naturalized immigrants to vote Democratic. In 1930 these people helped elect several Democrats to local office.

In 1934 an Hungarian named Alex Langyel was elected to the office of Portage Township Trustee on the Republican ticket. Two years earlier, with the help of a loyal bloc of Hungarian voters, he had carried South Bend for the Republicans during the Franklin Delano Roosevelt landslide of 1932. Such an influential party worker and proven vote getter should eventually have become the Republican mayoralty candidate. Local Republican leaders did not want an ethnic candidate, however, and in 1942 they rejected Langyel and nominated someone else. Aided by the votes of disgruntled Hungarians, who now abandoned the Republican Party, Democrats swept the subsequent election. From then on local Hungarian-Americans voted a straight Democratic ticket through the forties except that they continued to support Langyel whenever his name appeared on the ballot.

Later, South Bend's Hungarians developed extensive political organizations in order to obtain jobs and benefits for their ethnic group. The St. Joseph County Hungarian Civic and Democratic Club is an outgrowth of the victorious Hungarians on the Democratic ticket in the 1930 election. The club continues today to conduct fund raising activities and provide precinct workers for the Democratic party. The West Side Hungarian Democratic Club, which was located on the city's near west side, performed a similar function, but is now defunct. Until recently "Hungarian" precincts would deliver votes reliably for the Democrats. In return the Hungarian community received jobs: at least one elective position on the party slate,

minor appointive positions within the city and county governmental structure, and police and fire department appointments.

After World War II Congress passed a law which admitted displaced persons and political refugees to this country without regard to national immigration quotas. Most ordinary Hungarians and rank and file soldiers who found themselves in refugee and POW camps in 1945 eventually returned to Hungary. But some formerly privileged Hungarians in these camps did not want to go back to a homeland which was already dominated by pro-Soviet communists. After spending more years in displaced person camps in Austria, these people immigrated with their families to North and South America. About seventy such persons came to South Bend. These included upper army officers, who had been integrated into the German command structure toward the end of the war, and professional people or civil servants who were identified with Hungary's wartime government. Most of these men were middle-aged, and all had been well educated.

Nevertheless, many of these men were unable to make use of their professional educations in South Bend. Sometimes their training did not satisfy national or state career requirements. As a rule pressing family needs demanded that they find work immediately and forego extra training or education. Those who had received a liberal arts education were especially likely to find themselves working in factories. Many of South Bend's professional librarians are Hungarian refugees, because a Library Science degree may be based on any liberal arts degree and requires only one additional year of schooling. On the other hand, at one time there were four Hungarian refugees working on the assembly line at Drewrys. One had been a newspaper publisher and editor, one had a law degree, another had been a chief prosecuting attorney, and the fourth had been the chief engineer at the Budapest Water Works. They were making good money in their

laboring positions, accumulating seniority, and not one felt that he could afford to stop working long enough to begin a new professional career in middle age. Those refugees who possessed technical skills were more likely to find employment commensurable with their training.

The Hungarian refugees learned English quickly and became citizens as soon as possible, because they could never return to Hungary again. For several reasons they did not mingle very much with the older Hungarian community. They considered themselves, accurately, to be from a different level of society than the earlier immigrants. For its part the established Hungarian community in South Bend was not necessarily eager to welcome these newcomers, although none of the refugees who were interviewed would admit it. The socialist and communist attitudes of 1919 had greatly influenced the Hungarian workers in South Bend. Their descendents regarded the newcomers as fascists who had been members of Hungary's oppressive Establishment. There was an analagous antipathy between the strongly Democratic older immigrants and the refugees, who believed that Roosevelt had given away Eastern Europe to the Communists. As a group, these refugees were very quiet. Their only organization was known as the MHBK. Most became Republicans.

In contrast to South Bend's response to the displaced persons, refugees from the 1956 Hungarian Revolution were welcomed with open arms. Americans felt guilty about not coming to the aid of Hungary's Freedom Fighters. Congress enacted a special law to admit these Hungarian refugees. Other official actions tried to make immigration to the United States look as attractive as possible. Any refugee who could find a sponsor could come. Once here, his or her education and training would be evaluated in an effort to help each newcomer find appropriate employment. Special scholarships were also available to help them obtain additional schooling if that seemed desirable.

Locally, elaborate plans were made to welcome the 320 refugees who ultimately settled in South Bend. The Relief Committee which organized these activities included Professor Steve Kertesz, Judge Nyikos, Msgr. Sabo, Msgr. Peterson, Rev. Kalabany, Julia Lukacs, Edward Bruckner, Joseph Auer, Mr. Kiraldi, and Frank Wukovits, who was the group's executive secretary.

The refugees were first interned at Kamp Kilmer in New Jersey. They were allowed to come to South Bend if they had a relative or other sponsor in this community. Many of the sponsors were almost unknown to the incoming immigrants. If he or she would go through the formality of sending a telegram, however, the American Hungarian Relief Organization would provide temporary support and assistance for this immigrant. South Bend's relief activities centered around the William Penn Fraternal Organization (Verhovay). The organization collected used clothing for the refugees and helped them find housing and jobs. Several banquest and parties were held in their honor.

The 1956 refugees were younger than those who had come after 1945. Most were in their twenties. All had at least a high school education, and some also knew a trade. Many had been underemployed in Hungary as a result of their lack of sympathy with the controlling communist regime. These people were prepared to work hard and were not overeducated for jobs available here, as the displaced persons had been.

This group assimilated very rapidly. Father Molnar, a Catholic priest taught them English. They stopped speaking Hungarian rapidly. Although they were grateful to the older Hungarians in the community for their initial assistance, they did not really become a part of South Bend's Hungarian community. For a time South Bend's 1956 refugees had a society known as the Hungarian Freedom Fighters Organization. It is still a strong organization on the international level, although in this community it has ceased to be active. While

it functioned, however, the Hungarian Freedom Fighters Organization provided a point of unity for the area's various Hungarian groups. In addition to commemorating the 1956 revolution each year, it remembered Hungarian holidays, called in Hungarian performing artists, and sponsored picnics.

The 1956 Hungarians were more interested in the economic opportunities offered by the United States than in politics. They shared with the post-war refugees a distaste for the Democratic Party. Some became active in the Republican American Heritage organization. The 1956 refugees as a group were tremendously successful. They were practical business people who used the economic freedom they found in this country to help themselves succeed.

ATTITUDES AND ENTERTAINMENTS: SOUTH BEND'S HUNGARIAN CULTURAL HERITAGE

Traditionally, the family has been the basic social and economic unit in Hungary. This was particularly true in the rural, peasant society from which South Bend's early Hungarians came. At the turn of the century in South Bend a large extended family might live in one home. The immigrant workers saved their money for tickets for brothers, sisters, parents, and other relatives to join them. Today older Hungarian-Americans still revere their parents. They remember their early family life here as a very happy time, despite the many hardships which these immigrants faced. As children they were kept under control but not disciplined harshly. Perhaps as a result few were drawn toward adolescent rebellion. Young children always accompanied parents to all of their recreations, such as Harvest Dances, plays, and Sunday afternoon picnics.

Relationships between employees and employers at the turn of the century, both in Hungary and South Bend were patriarchal, an arrangement which the workers themselves accepted. They seem to have been keenly aware of the interdependence of the work force and management. Perhaps this is why the

early immigrants were at first influenced politically by their Republican bosses.

In the traditional Hungarian value system, the possession of land was considered the most dependable means of providing for one's family. The amount of one's land determined one's wealth and social standing. The original Hungarian immigrants came to South Bend to earn enough money to return home to buy some land. Among those who later decided to remain here, this pride in accumulating property was evident in the value which they placed on home ownership. They worked hard to save enough money to be able to purchase homes. Once acquired, these houses were and are very well maintained.

In keeping with the value which they placed on property, Hungarians in South Bend have consistently shown great respect for law and order. The Hungarian community policed itself. It is not surprising that the first local Hungarians to find jobs other than laboring jobs became policemen. There have also been Hungarian-American sheriffs in St. Joseph County: Steve Kolnar, Steve Hipsak, Billy Locks, and Elmer Sokol.

The early Hungarian immigrants valued hard work and self-reliance. They realized that they could not rely on outsiders to help them succeed. They formed at least twelve sick benefit and insurance societies to help their own community. Even on a less formal level the Hungarian community stuck together. If one family experienced a disaster, friends and neighbors rallied to its aid.

The Christian religion forms the basis of the ethnical and moral values of South Bend's Hungarian community. Since historically the church has been identified with the nationhood of theMagyars, this is true to some extent in Hungary even today under communist rule.

Patriotism was another value which accompanied early Hungarian immigrants to South Bend. Those who dreamed of returning home tried at first to remain loyal to both Hungarian and American systems. The first loyalty meant that some did not become

United States citizens for many years after their immigration, while the second was exhibited when large numbers of Hungarian immigrants fought in World War I. Some old-timers have refused to ever go back to visit their homeland, because "America has given me everything I ever got." Later immigrants, who for the most part were forced to leave Hungary, saw the United States as a place where they would be accepted while they still remained "Hungarian." To them America was a country which welcomed diverse groups and allowed them to retain their national identities.

Education. In South Bend the children of Hungarian immigrants attended both Roman Catholic parochial schools and public schools, with perhaps a slight majority at the former. St. Stephen's parish opened the first parochial school in 1901. It served around 500 children. Many of them walked each day all the way from Miler Town. Later, the Our Lady of Hungary parish established its own school, which is still in operation today.

Most of the first generation Hungarian-American children learned English for the first time at school. The parochial schools held all classes in English, because they were usually staffed by nuns who knew no other language. At first, however, the parochial schools did offer daily courses in Hungarian. Later, as the demand lessened, Hungarian was taught during the summer. The Hungarian Presbyterian Church ran an Hungarian Summer School, first under Rev. Dezo and later under Rev. and Mrs. Stephen Kalabany. Children attending this school learned to read and write the language which they already spoke. They read the Bible and sang Hungarian hymns and patriotic songs. All of this group learned their catechism and were confirmed in Hungarian. Later, one of the World War II immigrants, Laslo Nagy, ran a Hungarian summer school for the children of his fellow refugees. The children of the 1956 refugees were mostly born in this country, and they assimilated very rapidly. No organized effort was made to teach them the

Hungarian literary language.

Although some early immigrants educated themselves and their children immediately, most of the first peasant immigrants valued economic success above educational success. Children of these immigrants often went to work without finishing high school. The factories encouraged youngsters with any skills at all, such as draftsmanship, to leave school as soon as possible and join the work force. Those few early Hungarians who did rise to professional positions seemed to have attended public rather than parochial schools. It was to be the grandchildren of most of these early immigrants who would first attain a college degree.

By contrast, the later immigrants were very education-conscious. World War II refugees were, of course, very well educated themselves. The 1956 Hungarian refugees were young enough to be able to educate themselves in this country. The United States Government made every effort to evaluate their previous college credits fairly and even gave them scholarship aid.

The Arts. The early Hungarian immigrants brought with them to South Bend a folk art and handicraft tradition. Some of the men had been wood carvers or metal workers and were able to use these skills at the Singer Sewing Machine Company, where they carved the ornate drawer fronts on the sewing machine cabinets and worked the wrought-iron scrolls on the bases. They do not seem to have taught these skills to their children, however, and the crafts have apparently died out. Hungarian women once did fancy needlework, producing elaborately decorated dancing costumes and table linens. Many items were elaborately corcheted, such as "spider work" dresser scarves composed of circular motifs, each completely different. There were "cat's paw" work, Madeira-type lace, and very colorfully embroidered table linens. Again, these handicrafts seem to have been practiced by only the early immigrants. The first and second generation Americans seem to treasure inherited pieces and to buy new ones when they travel to Hungary, but they do not learn these skills themselves.

Some local Hungarians have ties with the more formal world of art. Eugene Kormendi, an Hungarian sculptor, was on the Notre Dame faculty after World War II. He did the Boys' Town sculpture in Lincoln, Nebraska and the Light of the World, which is in the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. A study for this second work may be seen in South Bend's Our Lady of Hungary Church. Another Hungarian artist, Prokap, did a triptych depicting medieval Hungarian religious scenes for the same church. Dr. Joseph Toth has a collection of modern Hungarian paintings, including works by Mihalvock, Horvath, and Prokap, Other local Hungarian-Americans own quality reproductions of antique furniture.

For centuries theater played an important role in Hungarian lives. This began with pageantry and plays performed in connection with church festivals, and developed into a regional enjoyment of plays and operettas. South Bend's Hungarians were enthusiastic enough about Hungarian theater to want to continue it here. Their societies, organizations, and churches often put on, or allowed to be produced on their premises, plays, operettas, and musical reviews in the Hungarian language. Many plays produced by the Hungarian community were performed at the Magyar Haz. Scripts would be ordered from Hungary. Local young people were volunteer actors, and production took place on Sunday afternoons. Sometimes each play would be presented three times: at the Magyar Haz, at St. Stephen's, and at Our Lady of Hungary. Most of these plays were musical melodramas or comedies, with much singing and several soldier characters called Hussars. Always they were lavishly costumed.

In addition to these local productions, the Magyar Haz also presented traveling Hungarian performers--Gypsy orchestras, famous vocalists such as Shari Fedak and Ernest King (Erno Kiraly), and

theatrical troups. The singers would often perform each number in a dramatic setting, similar to today's night club act. This type of performance was once immensely popular with South Bend Hungarians. Until the 1950's Hungarian performers touring the United States always stopped in South Bend. Once the use of the Hungarian language died out in this community however, interest in Hungarian entertainments also disappeared.

But while they existed, these local and traveling production had an enormous influence on the musical tastes of the Hungarian community. The most admired kinds of music here were the popularized folk songs found in the frequently performed operettas and played by Gypsy orchestras. Gypsy musicians played ornamental and versatile interpretations of original Hungarian folksongs. Their music was played by ear and was very emotional, and filled with embellishments. The typical piece began slowly, in a melancholy manner, with "hearing music" called halgato. Then it changed to a csardas (dance), first slow and ultimately very fast.

The basic Gypsy orchestra consisted of a violin, a string bass, and a czimbalom, often considered one of the forerunners of the piano, was a stringed instrument about forty inches across which stood on legs and was struck with hammers covered with string, much in the manner of today's xylophone.

Gypsy orchestras played the music for the Hungarian dances and picnics put on by local Hungarians. Their violinists would move among the audience, playing numbers at request. Satisfied listeners would tip the performers by sticking dollar bills into the openings in the violin. Orchestra members would also sing. In the early 20th century, Joe Bango's Orchestra played the best Hungarian Gypsy music. Mr. Bango's children are still performing musicians but they live elsewhere. Two sons, Bill and Joe, play with a Chicago band and sometimes return to this community. Contemporary musicians of Hungarian descent have either "Americanized" their musical style or combined it with that of other ethnic groups such as the Poles. Julius Vargo and Steve Bokor are local musicians who perform in a somewhat Hungarian style.

Dancing was another important aspect of the cultural life of the early South Bend Hungarian community. Almost all celebrations and outdoor summer picnics included dancing of the csardas and other couple dances. The mixed group dances of men and women combine graceful dignity with fiery rhythm. Male dances emphasize a proud military bearing, with the rhythmic movement of the legs often accentuated by the use of spurs. In these male performances what is emphasized is individual virtuosity in the performance of traditional steps. Currently, the only Hungarian dancing in this community is done by trained groups of little children who have performed for many years at the St. Anne's Festival held each July at Our Lady of Hungary Church. There is a possibility that an adult group of Hungarian dancers may soon be formed to perform some of the traditional Grape Harvest Festival Dances.

The Harvest Dance or Grape Harvest Festival is one of the most picturesque traditions which the Hungarians brought with them to South Bend. Usually each church or social organization would have its own dance in October. For a month in advance of the celebration one of the more experienced dancers would teach a group of young adults the intricate steps of Hungarian dances. Elaborate costumes were made by hand for the event. The girls wore red bodices and very full white skirts trimmed in ribbons. Their partners dressed in loose-sleeved shirts, wide brimmed hats, and either loose white culottes (gatya) or dark britches tucked into high black boots (csizma). The wide sleeves of their shirts were decorated in bands of ribbons in the Hungarian colors--red, white, and green--to match the women's skirts.

On the evening of the Harvest Festival, a hired hall would be decorated with bunches of grapes, apples, and pears strung on wires. There would be an elaborate centerpiece made up of fruit and wine, which would be raffled off at the end of the evening. The costumed young people performed their fancy dances for watching adults. For their part, members of the audience would try to steal the bunches of grapes from the ceiling, and, if they were caught by the dancers in the act of theft, they had to pay a fine. (Games of this sort increased the sponsoring organization's treasury.) The dancing couple which caught the most thieves won a prize. When the performances were over, everyone danced slow and fast csardas to the music of a Gypsy orchestra.

Another tradition which the Hungarians brought to South Bend was called "sprinkling" or "watering." On Easter Monday, which was known as Sprinkling Day, teen-aged boys would run through the Hungarian neighborhoods to the houses of the girls, carrying bottles of diluted perfume covered with linen handkerchiefs. The boys would sprinkle the girls with the perfume while reciting a little poem:

My little girl come here.
With Rose Water in my hand,
If you will give me an Easter egg,
I will sprinkle you my dear.

The girl would then give the boy one of her gaily decorated Easter eggs. Each boy attempted to accumulate more eggs than did his friends.

The November pork suppers were another annual Hungarian social event. About a week before the supper two large pigs were slaughtered. Then Hungarian women would work for days preparing for the dinner by rendering lard and making blood, garlic and rice sausage. The menu, which was served family style, consisted of pork chops, sausage, and stuffed cabbage. The crowd at such a supper might number 200 people. A Gypsy orchestra played gay music to add to the festivities. Pork suppers

are still given by the William Penn Fraternal Association.

For many years a monthly ritual at the St. Joseph County Hungarian Civic and Democratic Club has been its fried chicken dinner. The men begin on Thursday to wash down and salt the chickens, which are then packed on ice. They make their own breaded coating, and fry the quartered chickens in melted lard. With this they serve Hungarian rice and langalo--a bread-like dough fried in fat with salt and garlic added. These dinners are still eagerly attended by members of the local Hungarian community.

The old Hungarian community in South Bend picnicked almost every summer Sunday afternoon. Young and old would ride out to the end of the street car lines and then walk to Bokor's Grove (on the Crumstown Highway) or Shady Grove (off Western Avenue), or the woods on Portage, or Muessel Grove. There were many stables in South Bend, and for special occasions young people would rent horses and/or buggies to drive out to these picnics. On the scene, the sponsoring organization sold Hungarian food and wine to all who came. A typical menu might include homemade goulash, strudels, kiflies (cookies), and kalacs (coffee cake). After the meal a Gypsy orchestra would play for dancing. These picnics were theHungarian community's opportunity to socialize. When an election campaign was in progress, politicians would show up to buy rounds of drinks for the voters. The picnics are no longer held today. They were stopped by a combination of two factors, enforcement of laws prohibiting the sale of alcoholic beverages on Sunday, and the gasoline rationing which accompanied World War II.

Food. Paprika, a sweet and mild red pepper which was brought into Hungary by the invading Turks, is the most-used spice in Hungarian cuisine. Typical Hungarian meat dishes prepared with paprika are the Gulyas (or goulash as it is spelled in English),

Szekely Gulyas (Transylvanian Stew), Paprikas Csirke (Paprika Chicken Stew), and Borju Porkolt (Veal Stew). Other popular dishes are Zoldsegekkel Fott Tyukleves (Chicken Vegetable Soup), Rantott Csirke (Fried Chicken), and Fatanyeros and Flekken, both prepared from three or more kinds of roast meat, roast bacon, and garnish. Tarhonya is a kind of sieved dumpling which is often eaten with stews. Stuffed peppers and sauerkraut are also typical Hungarian dishes. Cabbage may be stuffed or prepared in pies. Hungarian strudel or retes are composed of pastry filled with sweetened cottage cheese, cherries, apples or even cabbage. Kiflies are filled cookies and kalacs are coffee cakes which may be filled with nuts or poppy seeds.

The very early immigrants kept some of their peasant traditions in regard to food production. Most Hungarian families kept a pig in their back yards. This was slaughtered in the fall, smoked and made into sausage and lard. The children would help make sauerkraut by stomping on it.

Hungarians usually drink wine with their meals and serve it as a hospitality beverage. Hungarian wines, always made from Today grapes, may be of the aszu type, a sweet dessert wine, or the szamorodni type, a dry heavy table wine. The early Hungarians in South Bend usually made their own wine each year. They drove up to the Michigan vineyards to buy grapes. Their children would stomp the grapes with their bare feet in their back yards. The resulting wine aged in barrels in the cellar and was drunk the next year.

Hungarian men are considered good cooks. Most of the women interviewed said that their husbands helped with the cooking or would always make one or two specialties such as Sunday goulash or strudel.