

Part I

Hungary's Economy

Introduction

An observer surveying the North American media today will undoubtedly come across references to the "Hungarian economic miracle." While some economists might question the appropriateness of this label, few will deny that, compared to the state of the economy in many East European countries today, Hungary enjoys remarkable prosperity. Moreover, such contrast between the economies of Hungary and her neighbors is not new. Toward the end of the last century for example, Hungary experienced a period of rapid economic development which prompted some Western observers to refer to Hungarians as the "Yankees" of the Habsburg Empire. Due to the vicissitudes of her history, Hungary has not enjoyed these periods of prosperity often, or for long periods of time, as indeed the country's economy suffered greatly in the wake of both world wars of our century. Despite the many ups and downs, or possibly because of them, Hungary's economic development in modern times is a subject of considerable controversy among historians, political scientists and economists today. It is our good fortune to present in this issue three studies which offer new insights and new information both on Hungary's economic development and on the controversies that surround it.

The three works presented here belong to different genre of scholarly publishing. Professor Scott Eddie's piece is a full-fledged article, the kind of study which is usually featured in learned journals devoted to reporting the results of original research. Professor Komlos' essay can be best classified as scholarly criticism, usually found in book reviews or review articles. It takes issue with the findings of an established Hungarian historian, György Szabad. The editors hope that the dialogue initiated by this review will be followed by a detailed and constructive exchange of opinions between Professors Komlos and Szabad in a future issue of the *Review*.

The last item in this section on Hungary's economy is an interview with Rezső Nyers, one of Hungary's leading economic planners. Though such interviews are not commonly featured in academic periodicals, this one offers much that might be of interest to students of Hungary's economic development, and we felt that its inclusion was justified. A further reason for its publication was the fact that it seemed remarkably candid for an official of a Communist state. Nyers' outspokenness is illustrative of the state of affairs in Hungary today: namely, that opinions can be voiced, often quite freely, as long as they do not reflect unfavourably upon Marxist doctrines, the Soviet Union, and/or the international Communist movement.

In presenting the second and third items of this section alongside a traditional piece of scholarship, we may appear to have acted contrary to time-honoured academic conventions. In reality our decision is in conformity with our policy of favouring the occasional use of unconventional means of publishing information of interest to students of Hungary and Hungarian affairs.

N.F.D.