

ALEX EMBER*

The Antecedents of Hungary Joining the International Labour Organization

After the 1867 Consolidation¹ between the Hungarian Kingdom and the Habsburg Empire, though Hungary was still quite underdeveloped economically in relation to Austria, the capital got off the ground. Hungary's leading economic branch remained agriculture, but, sadly, at that time it was also behind its time. The scale of industry could be well described by the fact that the surplus of workforce emitted by agriculture could not be employed by the industry. Owing to the Habsburg Empire, the circumstances were conserved so much so that the situation remained virtually unchanged until the first decade of the 20th century.

The unity of the Austro-Hungarian Empire could have only been maintained by force, therefore, a possible political change of leadership seemed unimaginable. At that time, the social setup of the Hungarian Kingdom was characterized by national oppression, feudal dependence and exploitation. Hence, the critical mass for a revolution existed; it was also claimed to be quite unorganized; therefore, there was hardly any chance for an uprising before the outbreak of the First World War (1914–1918).

The situation of the working class was becoming worse and worse, and not just in Hungary but Europe-wise as well. During the four years of the First World War employers slowly but surely suspended those measures that were to protect their workers and started to interpret the content of past actions ever flexibly. Work had become harder and forced while workers' self-aiding system and the right for moving and organizing strikes freely suffered. Since industry had an inevitable role in the war efforts therefore it was tightly bound to the labour force; consequently, among the workers of other branches, the rights of the industrial workers had to be curtailed the most.

It became evident just before the War that the workers had to give up many pre-war measures that were to aid the labourers in general. Obviously, this filled all workers with anxiety since it could be foreseen that there would be little chance to swiftly restore the pre-war situation afterwards. Moreover, eluding this, the capitalists hindered many measures changing labour for the good.²

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¹ It was a political, economic and military agreement between the Habsburg Empire and the Hungarian Kingdom.

² HAJDU, TIBOR: *A Magyarországi Tanácsköztársaság*. [Hungarian Soviet Republic] Kossuth Könyvkiadó. Budapest, 1969. pp. 7–8.; PAPP, DEZSŐ: *A Nemzetközi Munkaügyi Szervezet és Magyarország*. [International Labour Organization and Hungary] Budapest, 1925. pp. 3–4.

The Hungarian Soviet Republic

The worsening work conditions of labourers during the First World War had to be solved. The first real positive change in this matter occurred in 1916 when Franz Joseph I of Austria (reign: 1848-1916)³ passed away and Charles I of Austria (reign: 1916-1918)⁴ followed him on the throne. The new Emperor led rather indulgent politics, hence labourers rightfully thought that the strictness of the past years might as well ease.⁵

In October 1918, after the Russian Revolution (1917-1922)⁶ the Hungarian National Council was established, which became the legislative organ of the Hungarian People's Republic until the takeover of the Hungarian Soviet Republic in 1919. The set purpose of the Council was to legitimately take the rule over though it was feared that the revolution would eventually reach a certain level when it might bust the democratic frames. The National Council wished to acquire the full support of the bourgeoisie and to secure the sovereignty of the nationalities.

The Hungarian Communist Party (Kommunisták Magyarországi Pártja – KMP) had taken an active part in the true, overwhelming revolution. The KMP was founded by the Hungarian members of the Russian Bolshevik Party in 1918 and Béla Kun (1886-1938)⁷ was elected as its Chairman. The task of the KMP was to prepare and carry out the overthrow of the capitalist system and to start organizing the socialist way of the society.⁸

In 1918 Hungary became People's Republic. The Berinkey government (1919) aimed to protect the bourgeoisie and the private property. Since it could hardly tolerate the sympathy towards the KMP, it became its greatest foe. Many KMP sympathizers were arrested, sentenced to jail, or interned in these years. During the 1919 elections, Dénes Berinkey's (1871-1944) party, the Civil Radical Party (Polgári Radikális Párt – PRP)⁹ and the KMP already openly impugned each others' motifs. As the illegitimacies against the communists came to light one after another, a revolution commenced to unfold in the countryside.

As Lenin wrote in his 1917 book, *The State and Revolution* (Государство и революция), the establishment of socialism requires the demolition of the capitalist world order and this transition inevitably leads to revolution, though he admits that capitalism is unquestionably a necessary part of the process, but also ill-fitted for the long-term goals of socialism and communism. Although a socialist country surrounded by capitalist nations might seem inapt to start a revolution, the time was just right for that after the First World War. But a socialist Central-Eastern European country had not only local but global fruit as well; it proved a victory over capitalism and showed that this world order was not just a Russian phenomenon. The tools of the Hungarian socialism were to end the class collaboration, liquidate the bourgeoisie

³ Franz Joseph von Österreich (1830–1916) the Emperor of the Habsburg Empire and the King of the Hungarian Kingdom.

⁴ Karl Franz Josef Ludwig Hubert Georg Maria von Habsburg-Lothringen (1887–1922), the last Emperor of the Habsburg Empire.

⁵ HAJDU 1969, pp. 7–10.

⁶ During the 1917 Russian revolution the regime of the tsar was overthrown and a new communist regime was created.

⁷ Born as Béla Kohn (1886–1938), communist politician. He was the real leader of the Hungarian Soviet Republic. After the fall of the Republic, he fled to Moscow where he fell victim to the Stalin regime.

⁸ HAJDU 1969, pp. 10–14.

⁹ The Civil Radical Party (1914–1919) was established by Oszkár Jászi (1875–1957), Minister of Ethnic Affairs of the Károlyi Government. The aim of the Party, among others, was a Hungarian economy independent from the Monarch and the freedom of press and the organization of strikes.

state apparatus, set up a militia, socialise the lands, the banks, the industry, and the transportation, and to monopolise the external and the wholesale trade and the main edibles.¹⁰ The proletariat turnover was clearly a political coup. In 1919 in the name of the peasantry and the militia, Kun declared Hungary a People's Republic.

The "Victorious" 133 Days

After the KMP had seized power, the Revolutionary Governing Council commenced to set up the socialist order; they started to socialize the above-mentioned branches and declared the general and compulsory work. Though the Hungarian system was not the perfect copy of the Russian one, in Hungary the private trade was not banned and the edibles were not commandeered as they were in Russia. The establishment of trade unions and workers' councils were also peculiar to this transition.

The first and most important step was the socialization of industry, which led to a very centralized economy. For this only the frames were available, but there was not much content behind it whatsoever; therefore, the awaited rise in the standard of living failed, which already weakened the proletariat system in the short run.

The other great problem was the lack of raw materials, which was owing to the blockade of the Entente and the Trianon borders. The rate of productivity decreased and the situation was threatening with unemployment. Avoiding the worst case scenario, it was believed that by slowing down productivity more people could work for more hours, hence economy would become stable again.

In spite of every radical social and economic measure, the Károlyi government (1918-1919) followed those reforms which had been set off before. The communist world order and the ideas of the Garbai government (1919) ran parallel with eradicating poverty, elevating the standards of living, and considering those achievements that labourers had achieved so far.¹¹

The Fall of the Hungarian Soviet Republic

Objecting the Vix-note¹² had disastrous consequences for the Republic. On the 16th of April the Romanian Army advanced to the River Tisza while the Czechoslovakian Army occupied towns and villages in the north. Fearing that it might collapse, the Republic decided on a counter-attack, and by the 19th of May the Hungarian Red Army¹³ managed to re-occupy the before mentioned northern territories, and could even advance into Czech territory. There the Republic joined with the Czech Bolsheviks and together they declared the Czech Soviet Republic.

Seeing the success of the Hungarian Red Army and fearing that the Bolsheviks might advance in Europe, the Entente offered a possibility to the Republic that if they retreated

¹⁰ HAJDU 1969, pp. 14–22., pp. 51–52., p.117.

¹¹ HAJDU 1969, pp. 360–377., pp. 381–383., pp. 387–391.

¹² The Note is a detailed description set by the victorious states how Hungary must meet the decision of the peace treaty.

¹³ The Red Army was also the name of the army of the Hungarian Soviet Republic.

from Czechoslovakia a seat would be granted for them at the Trianon Peace Conference. Though the offer was enticing, there were many who questioned its validity. Finally, the Republic accepted the offer of the Entente although many military officers lost their faith in the Republic as a result.

The Entente had neither kept its promise nor did it order the Romanian troops back; the Republic prepared for an offense against the Romanian Army to re-occupy the territories east from the River Tisza. Despite the fact that Red Army had won a couple of battles, it could not halt the advancement of the Romanian Army; they could even reach and occupy the capital, Budapest itself.

At the beginning of the counter attack, Kun still believed in success and that revolution could eventually save the nation. The Republic neither could reach the proletariat in the countryside nor could it hope that the Soviet Army would help. The former supporters of the Republic did not believe in success, so after the last seating of the Governing Council, Kun and some of his men fled to Austria; the Hungarian Soviet Republic was over.

Although after the fall of the Republic, for a short period of time a tradeunionist government was formed, they could not take up the gauntlet against the offensive of the Romanian forces. The new government desired to restore the former capitalist system and protect the achievements in the field of labour, but a Romanian coup prevented it to happen, proving that the defeated socialism can only be followed by terror and not civil democracy.¹⁴

Joining the International Labour Organization

Hungary's first phase of joining the International Labour Organization started in 1921 when Governor Miklós Horthy (in office: 1920-1944) assigned István Bethlen (in office: 1921-1931)¹⁵ as Prime Minister of the Hungarian Kingdom. In the same year Bethlen's party, the Uniform Party (Egységes Párt – EP) and Károly Peyer's¹⁶ party, the Hungarian Social Democrat Party (Magyarországi Szociáldemokrata Párt – MSZDP) signed the so-called Bethlen-Peyer Pact.¹⁷ The Pact had key importance for both sides since neither party desired a coup similar to the one in past years.

This political compromise was advantageous for both sides; the pressure on the MSZDP seemed to ease somewhat. From 1922 the MSZDP could take part in every election and could have a parliamentary representation. For this the MSZDP had to give up the organization of workers and peasantry and had to support the Bethlen government in its external affairs. In return the MSZDP desired to let the workers' organizations operate freely, the EP to secure freedom, to suspend marital law, to provide amnesty for the imprisoned members of the MSZDP, and to restore the workers' system of insurance. Owing to the Pact, until the 1930s the MSZDP was a significant participant of the Hungarian political palette, supported the workers' interests though did not give up on class struggle and the organization of

¹⁴ BORSÁNYI GYÖRGY, KENDE JÁNOS: *Magyarországi munkásmozgalom*. [Labour Movement in Hungary] 1867–1980. Kossuth Könyvkiadó. Budapest, 1982. 108–110. pp.

¹⁵ COUNT ISTVÁN BETHLEN (1874–1946), lawyer and agronomist, the 27th Prime Minister of the Hungarian Kingdom.

¹⁶ Károly Peyer (1881–1956), the Chairman of the MSZDP and Minister of the Interior after the Hungarian Soviet Republic (1919).

¹⁷ The Pact was signed on the 22nd of December, 1921.

workers in the countryside. With the Pact the EP officially acknowledged the MSZDP as a political factor, although it did not desire to share the government with the socialists.

In the long run the political situation was pacified and the Bolshevik advancement in Europe was halted, which well suited the Western powers. In 1922, as a sign of returning to the West, Bethlen asked for admission to the League of Nations,¹⁸ which at the same time meant the admission to the International Labour Organization (ILO). Thanks to this step, Hungary could now again appeal for international loan, which was granted in 1924 by the League. Finally, the upcoming Hungarian governments were able to support the post-war reconstruction of the country.¹⁹

Though the ILO did not elect Hungary into its Governing Body yet, in 1925 the Organization already had Hungarian employees. At this time the ILO did not have a country office in Hungary, but still it was well and regularly informed about the situation of labourers in the country; in the publications of the Organization Hungary already appeared from time to time. The objectives of the Bethlen cabinet with the membership were to see as many Hungarian representatives as possible in most of the Organization's committees, with the help of the ILO to raise the standards of labour to the level of the age, to solidify its position, and to adopt numerous conventions and recommendations.

The Great Depression and the growth of the 1930s

The primary aim of the Bethlen cabinet was to set Hungary on its leg after the war. This could only have been achieved with the Western financial help; by the late 1920s economy had showed sign of a rather great boost, and owing to this, certain social security forms could be introduced.

In 1929 the Great Depression broke out in the United States of America, which could soon be felt in Europe as well. Sales decreased, so did the production; many factories had to be closed and workers had to be laid off. The standards of living had fallen, large-scale unemployment led to strikes. Of course, the socialists blamed both Bethlen and the EP but kept itself aloof from any political action for the functioning of the MSZDP and the workers' trade unions greatly depended on the goodwill of the existing system.

At this time Hungary, both socially and economically, was still underdeveloped, though it did not stand out of the neighbouring countries. The Bethlen administration supported the capital, hence there was virtually no chance to introduce a dictatorship. While the country was far from being a state under the rule of law, flouting the law was not a common practice.²⁰

By 1927, the International Labour Organization introduced 25 conventions; therefore, Hungary had much to complement. The first convention was ratified in 1927, followed by twelve more during the Bethlen administration.

¹⁸ Hungary joined the League of Nations on the 18th of September, 1922.

¹⁹ VASS VILMOS: *A magyar demokratikus munkásmozgalom rövid története*. [Short History of the Democratic Labour Movement] 1919–1944. Széphalom Könyvműhely. Budapest. 1999. pp. 25–30.

²⁰ VASS. 1999, pp. 39–46.

István Bethlen's government, owing to the social and economic consequences of the Depression, lost its credibility. He was followed by Gyula Károlyi's administration (1931-1932),²¹ but it did not have an easy task either, since by this time labour strikes had become ever frequent. Though the KMP tried to gather workers for another revolution, they did not want to hear about that. The persecution of communists was peculiar to this era; during the early 1930s many communists were arrested, imprisoned, and even executed. Owing to the Depression, the political right wing started to gain space; socialism could only be seen in the Soviet Union. Because of the swing of the political pendulum to the right and the constant persecution communism remained at a level of an underground organization in Hungary.²²

The Bethlen administration proved to be a rather successful period in connection with the ratification of ILO conventions; while the Károlyi administration only ratified one convention, the Bethlen administration managed to ratify thirteen.

Neither Bethlen, nor Károlyi could ease the acute symptoms of the economic crisis. That is why the labourers had turned against him; consequently, Governor Horthy had only one chance but to make him resign and replace him with Gyula Gömbös (in office: 1932-1936)²³ in the position of the Prime Minister.

The Gömbös cabinet was famous for a National Lay, the so-called "Dream Book" (Álmoskönyv), which desired to uphold the capitalist system while introducing political, legislative, and economic measures. Gömbös urged the integration of workers into society, but at the same time desired to eliminate both the MSZDP and the workers' unions from political life, which bred content from the socialists and the workers as well.

His Lay was called the Dream Book because its provisions remained an illusion, a dream. Brushing the MSZDP and the socialists aside eventually led to country-wide strikes in the late 1930s. The workers and the trade unions both disapproved that, according to the Lay, the government might have had much saying in the economic life of the country. This alienated the labourers from the current government. With the death of Gömbös in 1936, Kálmán Darányi (in office: 1936-1938) took his office.²⁴

During its three years in administration, the Gömbös cabinet, it only ratified two conventions and modified one. With this the number of ratified ILO conventions was already sixteen.

Prime Minister Darányi²⁵ also supported the conservative capital with the difference that he did not want to abridge the work of the socialists. His cabinet was already overshadowed by the upcoming events; the position of Hungary projected an unavoidable participation in the war. For the protection of the country certain steps had to be taken and, this time, with the help of the socialists.

The pack of provisions of 1938 was called the *Program of Győr* which was basically an armament program though it can also be interpreted as a series of general economy stimulating efforts. Although it was successful, it was also an inescapable path as the

²¹ Count Gyula Károlyi of Nagykároly (1871–1947), the 28th Prime Minister of the Hungarian Kingdom.

²² VASS 1999, pp. 46–48.

²³ Gyula Gömbös (1886–1936), the 29th Prime Minister of the Hungarian Kingdom.

²⁴ VASS 1999, pp. 49–55.

²⁵ Kálmán Darányi (1886–1939) was the Government Commissioner of the Town of Győr after the fall of the Hungarian Soviet Republic, and was the 30th Prime Minister of the Hungarian Kingdom.

Romanian Army had 3 years of advantage in armament and the Darányi cabinet was afraid that Hungary might fall behind and this would increase the country's vulnerability.

The Program proved to be so successful that it exceeded even the optimal expectations. Instead of the five years planned before, the program was completed by 1940; economy was developing in great leaps, new markets and workplaces were created, and even a rather small and weakly equipped army could be set up, which was unfortunately destroyed by the Soviet Army at the River Don in 1943.

In spite of the successful economic reforms, social reforms became secondary. This conceived a dislike for the government and the miners of Pécs articulated it. This enraged Darányi so he started to think of them as the disruptive of the existing system.^{26 27} Nonetheless, the Darányi cabinet continued the work of its predecessors and ratified two further ILO conventions.

Darányi resigned in 1938, and Béla Imrédy (in office: 1938-1939)²⁸ became the Prime Minister of Hungary. The capital unconditionally supported Imrédy. At his inauguration he promised to see through the long-awaited social reforms. He wanted to eliminate his greatest enemy, the Arrow Cross Party (Nyilaskeresztes Párt) which was an openly extreme right party. His intention had two directions: to elevate the voting census to take away the voting base from the Nyilaskeresztes Párt (NYKP), and to make the work of labourers' representation impossible. All this well suited the capitalists but the breaking out of the Second World War sealed the fate of his administration.

The Second World War (1939-1945) completely changed the country's external and social relations as well. After the fall of Béla Imrédy, again Pál Teleki (in office: 1939-1941)²⁹ became the Prime Minister. In the first years of his administration there was a boom in economy; there were fields where unemployment virtually became nonexistent; moreover, sometimes there was even a lack of workforce. But with the advancement of the war the social economy became a war economy. Military officers were put in charge of factories and they did not stop short of regulating the workers if they breached orders.

Teleki wanted to elude the participation in the war, but Germany drew up an offer which was hard to deny; if Hungary stood on the side of the Third Reich, the southern territories would be recovered, hence Hungary officially joined the war in 1941.

After the Second World War

Unfortunately, Hungary had chosen the losing side in the war. The battles in the territory of Hungary, the retreating Germany Army, and the marching in Soviet Red Army virtually devastated the country; the transportation, agriculture, and industry were the hardest hit sectors.

²⁶ VASS 1999, p. 55., p. 83.

²⁷ TARJÁN M. TAMÁS: 1938. március 5. Darányi Kálmán meghirdeti a győri programot. [5th March 1938. Kálmán Darányi announces Győri Agenda. http://www.rubicon.hu/magyar/oldalak/1938_marcius_5_daranyi_kalman_meghirdeti_a_gyori_programot/.

²⁸ Béla Imrédy (1891–1946), economist, Chancellor of the Exchequer, the 31st Prime Minister of the Hungarian Kingdom.

²⁹ Count Pál Teleki (1879–1941), geographer, teacher, the 32nd Prime Minister of the Hungarian Kingdom.

Between 1945 and 1948 almost one-third of the country's annual expense was spent on indemnification. Hungary's economy was wrecked; the country suffered one of the greatest inflation in history. The recovery of the economy could not be carried out without Western help.

During the first post-war years the private property was peculiar to the structure of the economy but owing to the systematic socialization this had soon changed. The decisions of the following years all served the solidification of socialism; the socialization of mines, and the largest factories in 1946, the largest banks and companies attached to them in 1947, and companies employing more than a hundred employees in 1948. By this time one-fifth of all industrial workers became employed by the state. In the following years the process was completed; in 1949 companies employing more than ten employees and by 1950 all small industries became state controlled. The possibility of any compensation was out of question; the directors of the companies were removed from their positions by show trials and breaching of the law.³⁰

In 1950, there was an enforced changed of regime and a communist takeover. The face of communism was Mátyás Rákosi (in office as Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the People's Republic of Hungary: 1952-1953)³¹ under whose leadership the Hungarian Communist Party (Magyar Kommunista Párt – MKP)³² made its political enemies impossible or, like in the case of the MSZDP, merged them into the MKP. Rákosi did not shrink back from purging his own party, and in the end, he was able to establish a Soviet-type dictatorial socialism. During Rákosi's eight years of amok, politics was totally criminalized, the resistance of the society completely crumbled and economy was being exploited without control.³³

The relationship between Hungary and the International Labour Organization was weakened during the Rákosi administration. In 1949, as a response to the American intervention in the Chinese Civil War, the Hungarian delegation left the Conference and stayed aloof until 1954.³⁴

In 1956 the time was right to challenge the socialist regime. It had started as a political revolution but soon turned into an armed freedom fight. The irony was that citizens did not fight against the communist leadership but against the Soviet Red Army which was ordered to occupy the country for the protection of the Communist Party. The freedom fight was put down though it had one positive outcome: the Rákosi political elite could not return anymore.³⁵

³⁰ *A magyar gazdaság átalakulása.* [Transformation of the Hungarian Economy] Országos Széchenyi Könyvtár. 1956-os Intézet és Oral History Archivum. 2001. http://www.rev.hu/sulinet45/tanulm_gazd/gazd.htm.

³¹ Mátyás Rákosi (1892–1971) 2nd Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the People's Republic of Hungary and General Secretary of the Hungarian Communist Party. His era is known as the darkest periods of Hungary's modern-time history.

³² The MKP, with the help of the Soviet Army, was founded in 1944 in Szeged as the spiritual successor of the KMP. It was dissolved in 1948 and eventually the Magyar Dolgozók Pártja (Hungarian Workers' Party; 1948–1956) took its place.

³³ BIHARI MIHÁLY: *Magyar politika. A magyar politikai rendszer történetének főbb szakaszai a második világháború után. 1945–1995.* [Hungarian politics. Main Phases of the Hungarian Political System after the Second World War.] Korona Kiadó. Budapest. 1996. pp. 12–13.

³⁴ *A Tajvan-kérdés.* [The Taiwan Issue] Biztonságpolitikai Szemle. Corvinus Külügyi és Kulturális Egyesület. 2010. http://biztpol.corvinusembassy.com/?module=corvinak&module_id=4&cid=88#C

³⁵ BIHARI 1996, 14. p.

Although the socialist regime could not be overthrown, the year of 1954 marked a sort of return to the ILO and the course of labour characteristic to the era before the Second World War. During the two years when András Hegedűs (in office: 1955-1956)³⁶ was Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the People's Republic of Hungary the government ratified eleven more ILO conventions.

The next important chapter in the story of socialist Hungary was János Kádár's regime (in office: 1956-1958 and 1961-1965) under which era socialism could further be solidified. Consequently, the ILO annulled the Hungarian mandates until 1960, and in the following three years, from 1961 to 1963, they were suspended. Owing to the fact that the political milieu was easing, in 1966 Hungary could fulfil a chair position in the Organization, although the distance between the East and the West was still evident.^{37 38}

The reforms commencing from 1968 could not be halted. It became evident that because of politics the economy and the society could not evolve any further. At the beginning of the 1980s the social conflicts were only deepening and political criticism was surfacing more and more often. The Kádár administration was falling apart from the inside.³⁹

The period between 1987 and 1990 was characterized by the transition from socialism to democracy in Hungary. In the previous 40 years socialism was able to establish one of its most viable examples but it also showed that its viability is finite and its fall was eventually inevitable. Hungary left the Comecon and the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet soldiers left the country while the country's economic and political sovereignty was ever growing.⁴⁰

After the Change of Regime (1989–2000)

In 1989/1990 Europe could witness Hungary's second change of regime; state property became private property and the single political party gave room for a multi-party system. Breaking away from the country's socialist past was not easy and complete. From 1996 Hungary is again an ordinary member of the ILO and in the following twenty years the political parties in power were able to ratify further twenty-one conventions.⁴¹

Present Days (2000–)

From 2000 Hungary is a donor member country for the ILO, which means that by financially supporting the IPEC (International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour) it supports the Organization itself at the same time. The Government of Hungary in the ILO is represented by the Ministry of National Development, which has close

³⁶ András Hegedűs (1922–1999), sociologist, the 4th Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the People's Republic of Hungary. In 1956 he signed the document which made it possible for the Soviet Red Army to enter the country.

³⁷ BIHARI 1996, p. 14.

³⁸ *Magyarország csatlakozása az ILO-hoz. Magyarország és az ILO.* [Hungary's accession to the International Labour Organization. Organization. Hungary and the International Labour Organization] Szociális és Munkaügyi Minisztérium. <http://szmm.gov.hu/main.php?folderID=21031>.

³⁹ BIHARI 1996, pp. 15–16.

⁴⁰ BIHARI 1996, pp. 16–17.

⁴¹ BIHARI 1996, pp. 16–17.

relationship with other ministries, employer and employee organizations, which are the following⁴²:

from state side:

- a) a Központi Statisztikai Hivatal (Hungarian Central Statistical Office),
- b) az Emberi Erőforrások Minisztériuma (Ministry of Human Capacities) és
- c) a Külgazdasági és Külügyminisztérium (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade).

from employer side:

- a) a Munkaadók és Gyáriparosok Országos Szövetsége (MGYOSZ) (Confederation of Hungarian Employers and Industrialists) és
- b) a Vállalkozók és Munkáltatók Országos Szövetsége (VOSZ) (National Association of Entrepreneurs and Employers),

while from employee side:

- a) a Magyar Szakszervezetek Országos Szövetsége (MSZOSZ) (Hungarian Trade Union Confederation),
- b) az Autonóm Szakszervezetek Szövetsége (ASzSz),
- c) a Szakszervezetek Együttműködési Fóruma (SZEFE),
- d) A Független Szakszervezetek Demokratikus Ligája (LIGA) (Democratic League of Independent Trade Unions),
- e) a Munkástanácsok Országos Szövetsége (MOSZ) (National Federation of Workers' Councils) és
- f) az Értelmiségi Szakszervezeti Tömörülés (ÉSZT) (Intellectuals Trade Union Organization).⁴³

EMBER ALEX

MAGYARORSZÁG NEMZETKÖZI MUNKAÜGYI SZERVEZETHEZ TÖRTÉNŐ CSATLAKOZÁSÁNAK RÖVID TÖRTÉNETE

(Összefoglalás)

Magyarország XIX. és XX. századi történelme meglehetősen viharos volt, amely természetesen közvetlenül a gazdaságra és így a munkaügyért folytatott harcra is kihatással volt. Érdekes, vagy inkább szomorú módon e közel százötven év során külföldi hatalmaknak és érdekeknek, vagy a mindig aktuális külföldről irányított országvezetésnek legalább annyi beleszólása volt a munkaügy fejlődésébe, mint maguknak a magyar embereknek.

⁴² *Magyarország és az ILO kapcsolata*. [Hungary's Connection with the International Labour Organization] Nemzetgazdasági Minisztérium, Szakmai Területek, <http://ngmszakmaiteruletek.kormany.hu/akadalymentes/magyarorszag-es-az-ilo-kapcsolata>.

⁴³ Hungary. International Labour Organization. <http://www.ilo.org/budapest/countries-covered/hungary/lang-en/index.htm>.

A XIX. század közepén a magyarságnak épphogy sikerül lerázni a Habsburg igát, a XX. század legelején máris egy másik nagyhatalom, még ha csupán rövid ideig is, a Szovjetunió gyakorolt hatást az országra. Némi lélegzetvétel, és német megszállást követően a szovjet hatalom újból meghatározó tényezővé vált az ország politikájában, de időközben az is elvitathatatlanná vált, hogy sem a nemzeti, sem a nagyhatalmi törekvések nem valósíthatóak meg a munkásság tevékeny részvétele nélkül. Ahhoz, hogy a gazdaságot életben lehessen tartani, az aktuális kormányzásnak szépen lassan meg kellett adni a munkásságnak azokat a juttatásokat, amelyekért már többször, hol sikeresen, hol sikertelenül síkra szálltak.

Ilyen jelentős előrelépés volt Magyarországnak a Nemzetközi Munkaügyi Szervezethez történő csatlakozása, amely egyszersmind biztosította, hogy a munkásság élet-, bér- és munkakörnyezetének színvonala egyre jobban közelítsen a nyugaton akkor már megszokotthoz. Az alábbiakban e százötven év politikai történéseit veszem górcső alá, megmutatva, milyen eseményeken át vezetett az út a Nemzetközi Munkaügyi szervezethez való csatlakozáshoz és iránymutatásának elfogadásához.