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BEREHOVE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS DURING THE KHRUSHCHEV ERA (1953–1964)

Histories of cities, towns, villages are an essential part of understanding the history of a country, a historical era. Knowledge of the local history is important for understanding the historical past of the local population, for developing and preserving its sense of identity.

The exact date of the foundation of Beregszász is a subject of debate among local historians, yet the town, what lies on the banks of the Verke Canal for over 900 years, has experienced many upheavals, glorious and tragic moments in its past. The history of the town is very rich in various important historical events.

During the Soviet period (1945–1991) as well as being part of independent Ukraine, Berehove played an extremely important role in the political and cultural history of the local population.

After the death of Generalissimo Stalin on March 5, 1953, it became clear that the socialist camp, which had previously been considered inseparable, was far from unified. Nikita Khrushchev became the winner in the struggle for power of the three triumvirates, after which the signs of political weakening became more and more noticeable. The consequences of his policy were felt in Berehove as well.

The period from 1953 to 1964, the historical era of the ‘Khrushchev Thaw’, can be considered a positive decade in the history of the Soviet Union, as well as of the town, in terms of improving living standards and weakening the dictatorship. This period was characterized by a reduction in political repression and censorship besides partial liberalization of political life. Khrushchev allowed some freedom in culture and media, opened up cross-border trade and economic reforms, educational development also was obvious.

Berehove is located 72 kilometers from Uzhhorod, the centre of the Transcarpathian region of Ukraine, and only 6 kilometers from the border with Hungary, i.e., the European Union. Many have been interested in the town, its past has been researched by several historians, however, a comprehensive town monograph covering the entire history of the town, its political, economic and cultural life, has not been completed to date. The present study does not undertake this either, it only represents the town’s life and history during the Khrushchev era, mainly based on the articles published in the contemporary Berehove district paper, i.e., the «Red Flag» (Hungarian title: «Vörös Zászló»).

Keywords: history of Berehove, Beregszász, Berehove politics, economy, culture, society.

The name Beregszász had been used in official documents from 1504¹. The exact date of the founding of this town with a long history is disputed among local historians, László Zubánics dates it to either 1061 or 1063², while György Csanádi dates it to 1096³. Whichever we accept, this town on the bank of the Vérke Channel is more than 900 years old and experienced many adversities, glorious and tragic moments in its past, and has played an extremely important role in the political and cultural history of the local Hungarian population.

The origin of the town can be traced back to the time of the Hungarian conquest⁴, and its history is very rich in important historical events. In the 13th century, it was a free royal town, later the seat of Bereg County, the home of the Roman and Greek Catholic church, as well as the very early Reformed church, since the first Reformed council was held here in 1552⁵. The town was often ravaged by various foreign peoples, but it was also the place where Tamás Esze unfurled the flag of the War of Independence led by Ferenc Rákóczi II on May 22, 1703⁶. Prince Rákóczi himself visited the town several times, for example on December 20, 1705, he issued his proclamation encouraging the uprising here⁷. The inhabitants of Beregszász also joined the events of the War of Independence in 1848–1849⁸. After the First World War, Transcarpathia, and thus the town as well, suffered from several changes of political power and ceased to be the county seat. During the Czech period (1919–1938), later the Soviet period (1945–1991) and now in independent Ukraine, Berehove was the centre of the political and cultural life of the local Hungarian minority. Its area is 19 km². According to the latest all-Ukrainian census conducted in 2001, Berehove is the only Hungarian-majority town in Ukraine. It has a total population of 26 554, 12 785 of which are of Hungarian nationality⁹.

On October 26, 1944, the 138th Rifle Division of the Soviet Army invaded the town under the command of Colonel Vasilyev V. In honor of this and the soldiers who died in Transcarpathia in World War II, an obelisk was erected in the centre of the town, in the Heroes' Square Park (now Kossuth square) in June 1945¹⁰. On January 26, 1946, by decree

¹ История городов и сел Украинской ССР: в 26-ти т. Закарпатская область / ред. кол. и предис. Н. Семенюк. Киев, 1982. Ол. 121.

² Zubánics L. Beregszászi kalauz. Beregszász, 2001. Ол. 6.

³ Csanádi Gy. Sorsfordító évek sodrásában. Uzhgorod: PoliPrint, 2004. Ол. 10.

⁴ Dobos S. Beregszásza a magyar nyelvű történetírásban. *Mercurius Veridicus Novus. A II. Rákóczi Ferenc Kárpátaljai Magyar Főiskola Történelem- és Társadalomtudományi Tanszékének tanulmánygyűjteménye* / szerk. S. Dobos, N. I. Szamborovszkyné. Beregszász; Ungvár: Grafika Kiadó, 2015. Ол. 75–76.

⁵ Lehoczky T. Adalékok Beregszász történetéhez. Ungvár: Clio, 1999. Ол. 76–79; Lehoczky T. Beregvármegye monográfiája. K. III. Ungvár: Nyomtatott Pollacsek Miksa könyvnyomdájában, 1881. Ол. 138–141.

⁶ Csátáry Gy. Beregszász a Rákóczi-szabadságharc idején. *Pro Patria tanulmányok* / szerk. E. Mecsei. Nyíregyháza: Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg M. Lvt, 2004. Ол. 29–40.

⁷ Sebestyén Z. Beregszász utcanevei. *Névtani értesítő*. 2001. № 23. Ол. 23–29.

⁸ Csátáry Gy. Levéltári Kalászatok (tanulmányok, szövegközlemények). Ungvár; Budapest: Intermix Kiadó, 1993. Ол. 117–130.

⁹ Molnár J., Molnár D. I. Kárpátalja népsége és magyarsága a népszámlálási és népmozgalmi adatok tükrében. Ungvár: PoliPrint, 2005. Ол. 30.

¹⁰ История городов и сел Украинской... Ол. 128.

of the Presidency of the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, a new Soviet-Ukrainian administrative unit, the Transcarpathian Region, i.e., Zakarpatska Oblast, was artificially formed from the former Ung, Bereg, Ugocha, and Maramures counties. After Transcarpathia was annexed to the USSR, Beregszász became a district seat named Berehove, or, as the sources state, the administrative centre of the area¹¹.

The most significant administrative reorganizations took place between 1944 and 1969. According to the new administrative division, Transcarpathia consisted of 15 administrative units, 2 towns with regional subordination, Uzhhorod and Mukachevo, and 13 districts¹². In 1946, in addition to Uzhhorod and Mukachevo, 3 more settlements, Berehove, Khust and Vynohradiv, received town status.

After the death of Stalin, the Generalissimo, on March 5, 1953, it became clear that the socialist camp, which had previously been considered united, was not so united after all. Nikita Khrushchev emerged victorious from the competition for the power of the three triumvirates (1953–1964), after which the signs of political easing became more and more noticeable.

On March 27, 1953, and then from May 1955, those sentenced to up to 5 years in prison were released in terms of a large amnesty program, as well as women caring for children under the age of ten, men over the age of 55, and women over the age of 50, while the duration of longer sentences was halved. Unfortunately, however, this measure did not apply to political convicts, several of whom were convicted of «*counter-revolutionary activity*». In Transcarpathia, this is exactly what innocent people were accused of in a significant part of the political conceptual lawsuits that resulted in 10 to 20 years or even longer sentences¹³.

In July 1953, the Plenary Session of the Central Committee of the CPSU excluded L. Beria, Stalin's bloodthirsty Minister of the Interior, from his ranks proclaiming him «guilty of anti-party and anti-state activities». At the meetings of the Transcarpathian leadership, the officials condemned Beria and urged swift, ruthless action against him and his comrades, that is, the imposition of the death penalty¹⁴. Beria was accused of «treason, espionage for the West and trying to destroy the Party»¹⁵. On the orders of the leadership, meetings were held in all collectives in Berehove as well, the participants of which also condemned the traitors and encouraged vigilance and more efficient work¹⁶.

In September 1953, N. Khrushchev reported on the situation of agriculture at the meeting of the Central Committee of the CPSU. For the first time, an attempt was made to portray the poor situation of the sector in a relatively realistic way, as Khrushchev put it: «The quality of agricultural production does not fully meet the population's food demand, and the raw material needs of the light and food industries do not meet the technical equip-

¹¹ Dobos S. Beregszász története a helyi historiográfiában. II. Rákóczi Ferenc Kárpátaljai Magyar Főiskola Lehoczky Tivadar Intézetének tanulmánygyűjteménye / szerk. A. Bocskor, S. Dobos. Ungvár: PoliPrint, 2012. Ol. 27–42.

¹² Brenzovics L. Kárpátalja történetének korszakai és gazdasági-társadalmi helyzete a XX században. Kárpátalja. A Kárpát-medence régiói II / szerk. B. Baranyi. Pécs; Budapest: Dialog Campus Kiadó, 2009. Ol. 75–107.

¹³ Csanádi Gy. Sorsfordító évek... Ol. 213.

¹⁴ State Archive of Transcarpathian Oblast (hereinafter – SATO). F. 1. Op. 1. Delo Nr. 2237. Ol. 1–162.

¹⁵ SATO. F. 1. Op. 1. Delo Nr. 2118. Ol. 6–10.

¹⁶ Ibid. Delo Nr. 2237. Ol. 20–22.

ment of agriculture and the potential of the kolkhoz system... The situation is particularly unfavorable in the development of animal husbandry...»¹⁷.

In September 1953, Hungarian secondary schools were opened in three settlements of the Berehove district – Variievo (Vary), V. Beregi (Velyki Berehy) and Kosino (Koson') – and a year later in Berehove as well, i.e., in the 1954/55 school year, two eighth grades with 76 students were established and in 1957 Hungarian children could graduate in their native language for the first time. Although in the Soviet system education was declared free for all citizens, students in these institutions had to pay tuition fees¹⁸. It was not until June 6, 1956, that the Decree of the Council of Ministers of the USSR «On the Abolition of Tuition Fees for Higher Education Institutions, Secondary Schools and Vocational High Schools of the Soviet Union» was issued.¹⁹

The first Hungarian one-page literary section in the district newspaper, *Vörös Zászló* (Red Flag) appeared in August 1953. It was the Literary Column with poems by Róza Bakos, György Leskó, Sándor Bihari, Rozália Lengyel and a short story by Tihamér Iván entitled «True American»²⁰. Poems, sketch stories, short stories, etc. by Hungarian poets and writers later appeared regularly in the paper.

From January 1954, the press was full of celebrations of the 300th anniversary of the unification of Ukraine and Russia²¹, it was also one of the main agenda items of the district and regional party meetings²². A government committee headed by A. Kirichenko (the first secretary of the UCP Central Committee between June 1953 and December 1957) was formed to organize and conduct the celebration, to whom every moment of the preparations in the countryside was reported²³. The 300th anniversary was finally celebrated in May 1954, after lengthy, detailed preparations²⁴. In Berehove, a parade was held on this occasion on May 22–23, and a district song and dance festival were held in the Voroshilov Square (now Rákóczi Ferenc Square)²⁵. During the organization, the leaders of factories, collective farms, and plants were obliged to find socialist competitors in the Russian Federation or other Soviet republics. They then sent each other their commitments, exchanging delegations at regular intervals to study the achievements of the competitors, to learn good practices, to apply useful experience in production²⁶. The delegations visiting each other were to be welcomed with great splendor and the previously made commitments were to be overfulfilled in honor of the visit. This is how the Berehove Clothing Factory came into contact with the staff of the Red Seamstress Clothing Factory No. 16 in Moscow, and the local tannery with the staff of the Leningrad Kommintern Tannery. There was a lot of formalism in this top-down

¹⁷ *Vörös Zászló*. 1953. 17 szeptember. Ol. 1.

¹⁸ Orosz I. *Két évtized távlatából II. Rákóczi Ferenc Kárpátaljai Magyar Főiskola*. Ungvár: PoliPrint, 2012. Ol. 7.

¹⁹ Сборник приказов и инструкций министерства просвещения РСФСР. 1956. № 27. Ol. 3.

²⁰ *Vörös Zászló*. 1954. 30 augusztus. Ol. 3.

²¹ *Ibid.* 1954. 10 január. Ol. 1.

²² SATO. F. 1. Op. 1. Delo Nr. 2140. Ol. 1–104.

²³ *Ibid.* Delo Nr. 2457. Ol. 15, 23.

²⁴ *Ibid.* Delo Nr. 2513. Ol. 1–44.

²⁵ *Vörös Zászló*. 1954. 23 május. Ol. 4.

²⁶ SATO. F. 1. Op. 5. Delo Nr. 2457. Ol. 1–32.

socialist competition, the factories of the competitors could make little use of the experience of other factories because the production conditions and opportunities in the region were different from those of the competitors. The Moscow Red Seamstress Clothing Factory, for example, produced predominantly lingerie, while Berehove produced women's and men's outerwear. The factories used different technologies, machines, equipment, materials²⁷.

On March 14, 1954, elections to the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union were held²⁸. The people of Berehove were able to vote for the electric saw operator of the Svaliava Wood Industry Farm, Fedor Canykó, for the Federal Council, and for Iván Turianycia for the Nationality Council, with the usual «uniformity» that had already become the norm. The latter was replaced a year later by Olga Ivashchenko, the secretary of the UCP Central Committee, whom the people of Berehove did not know at all and had never seen²⁹.

There were amateur bands and a free university in the district in the 1950's. Clubs and libraries were established in each village, along with 22 permanent and 4 traveling cinemas, which sometimes screened Hungarian films³⁰.

In the autumn of 1954, the Hungarian theater group of the District Culture House presented A. Simukov's «Retired Captain» directed by Anna Nádas – a comedy in which the life, work, and love of the common Soviet people were portrayed. Its protagonist, Sergei Uskov guard captain, was played by Otto Schober. Miklós Rácz, Miklós Major, Gyula Till, Erzsébet Túróczi, Éva Somogyi also played a role in the play, and their productions impressed the audience and journalists³¹. A few months later, Tipot's operetta «With You» was staged by the expanded team. They later entertained theater lovers with many unforgettable plays³².

Hungarian literary life unfolded more and more, one of the most prominent representatives of which was Vilmos Kovács. On December 26, 1954, the district newspaper published his first poem, «Autumn Picture»³³. In the following years, Vilmos Kovács published his poems in the district newspaper more and more often.

In April each year, the government issued a decree to lower the prices of food and state industrial retail goods. In 1954, for example, the prices of wheat bread, macaroni dropped by 5 %, coffee dropped by 15 %, summer clothes by 15 %, rubber footwear by 12 %, construction materials dropped by 10–30 %, medicine by 15 %³⁴, on average. Price cuts were likely to divert attention from the poor performance of agriculture, the light, and the food industries. In reality, however, there was little food, and very often long lines for bread, meat, and dairy products as well.

²⁷ Csanádi Gy. Sorsfordító évek... Ol. 216.

²⁸ SATO. F. P-195. Op. 19. Delo Nr. 51. Ol. 1–261.

²⁹ Vörös Zászló. 1954. 7 február. Ol. 1.

³⁰ Csanádi Gy. Sorsfordító évek... Ol. 217.

³¹ Vörös Zászló. 1954. 2 szeptember. Ol. 4.

³² Irodalomtörténet. A Magyar Irodalomtörténeti Társaság folyóirata / szerk.: Barta J., et al. 1960. № 49. Ol. 363. Історія літератури. Журнал Угорського Літературного Історичного Товариства / Ред.: Барта Й. та ін.

³³ Vörös Zászló. 1954. 26 december. Ol. 3.

³⁴ Ibid. 1 április. Ol. 1.

In 1954, the big party grain campaign, i.e., the corn program, began³⁵. Its success and profitability were reported regularly and in every possible way. In 1954, the virgin soil farming program began too. It covered the Transcarpathian organizations of the Komsomol, i.e., the Communist Youth League. The relevant resolution of the Plenary of the Central Committee of the CPSU was titled: «On the further growth of grain cultivation in the country, as well as on the farming of virgin lands and fallow lands». As emphasized in the resolution, the further development of all sectors of agriculture and meeting the growing needs of the population and the economy as a whole depended entirely on the success of the development of the grain farming economy³⁶. According to the data of April 17, 1957, for example, 4 727 young Transcarpathian Komsomol members worked outside Transcarpathia³⁷. The expected successes fell short again³⁸. At the machine-operating training school in Berehove, the young people were trained for six months to handle tractors and various tractor-drawn machines. After a successful machine operator exam, they were sent to cultivate the wastelands of Kazakhstan, Siberia, and the Urals to «create an abundance of food and raw materials for their homeland»³⁹. Most of the graduates of the Berehove Vocational School of Agricultural Mechanization were sent off to Kazakhstan⁴⁰. Applicants who «volunteered» for the long journey were solemnly said goodbye. Ceremonious articles were published in the press about the benefits of the program and the enthusiasm of the young people.

Most of the young people could only come home after many years, as well as those who also traveled to work in the mines of Donbas after «submitting voluntary applications». Articles with titles like «To Donbas with a Komsomol passport» appeared in the local press. They stressed that «coal is the bread of industry» and that «the miner family is a strong bond, a cohesive force»⁴¹ and never failed to stress that there is a lot of competition among applicants and that dozens of applications are submitted by young people in order to start working in the coal mines as soon as possible⁴².

On July 1, 1954, the resolution of the Plenary of the Central Committee of the CPSU «On the results of spring sowing, care after sowing, preparation for the harvest and ensuring the fulfillment of the 1954 stocking plan of agricultural products» was published in the *Vörös Zászló*. It stressed that although the volume of stocks of agricultural products had increased, they still did not adequately meet the needs of the state, which became greater due to the regular reduction of food prices. The Ministry of Inventory, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Food, and «Tsentrosoiuz» were blamed for insufficiently managing the inventory and purchase of agricultural products. The decision-makers envisioned that «... the current year will be included in the history of the Soviet villages as a year of great work on the cultivation of virgin and fallow lands...». It was further emphasized that the task set by the «... party and the government in cultivating the virgin and fallow

³⁵ SATO. F. P-179. Op. 1. Od. zb. 2776. Ol. 1–116.

³⁶ *Vörös Zászló*. 1954. 1 április. Ol. 1.

³⁷ SATO. F. 1. Op. 1. Delo Nr. 3029. Ol. 4.

³⁸ SATO. F. P-1545. Op. 1. Ed. hr. 93. Ol. 28.

³⁹ *Vörös Zászló*. 1954. 11 április. Ol. 1.

⁴⁰ *Vörös Zászló*. 1958. 14 május. Ol. 2.

⁴¹ *Vörös Zászló*. 1955. 22 május. Ol. 1.

⁴² *Ibid.* 5 június. Ol. 1.

lands was greeted with support by the workers of the kolkhozes, MTSs (machine and tractor stations) and sovkhozes, as well as the urban population, and became a common cause for everyone. At the call of the party and the government, more than 140,000 people had already arrived at the MTSs and sovkhozes to cultivate the virgin and fallow lands and were actively involved in the work...»⁴³.

In January 1955, at the Plenary of the Central Committee of the CPSU, Khrushchev himself reported on the situation in animal husbandry, and then a decision was made to boost animal husbandry, significantly expand feed manufacturing, mechanization, construction of animal husbandry premises, and so on. The Plenary considered it necessary that «the plan be based on the task of producing a determined number of livestock products per 100 hectares of agricultural land». It was stated that «great mistakes have been made in the practice of centralized supply». It was suggested that in agriculture, instead of centralized management, there should be more scope for local initiatives for development⁴⁴. Although it was very well seen that progress was stalled due to strong centralization and it was verbally acknowledged, in practice no steps were taken to improve the situation.

On February 27, 1955, elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR were held, as well as to local councils that were referred to as Soviets⁴⁵. Of the 60 representatives of the district council, 22 were of Hungarian nationality⁴⁶. In the town council, 20 of the 59 representatives were Hungarians⁴⁷.

In March 1955, the Council of Ministers of the USSR adopted a decree «On the financial incentive of collective farm members for the yield of additional crops grown from intermediate sowings». At the suggestion of the Socialist Agricultural Research Institute of Ukraine, it was requested that beans, soybeans, and squash be sown between the rows of corn sowings using the so-called square-nest method. It has also been proposed to increase the area of potatoes sown together with beans. In order to encourage the financial interests of the members of the collective farms, additional wages were introduced from 1955 «up to half the yield of the intermediate crops in the case of legumes and up to one-third of the yield of the intermediate crops in the case of squash, vegetables, and other crops»⁴⁸.

As for backyard farms, they remained in a vulnerable position. In August 1955, for example, the domestic slaughter of animals was banned within a 6-kilometer radius of slaughterhouses. Raw hides and skins of cattle and pigs had to be supplied to the state. It was forbidden to scorch or boil the pigs. Violators of the decree were fined up to 100 rubles or sentenced to up to a month of forced labour, and their slaughtered animals were confiscated⁴⁹.

In the 1950^s and 1960^s, the Soviet leadership covered Transcarpathia with orchards and vineyards. The Ukrainian Communist Party sent a number of draft resolutions to the regional executive committee to increase the area of orchards and vineyards, although many

⁴³ Vörös Zászló. 1954. 1 július. Ol. 1.

⁴⁴ Ibid. 6 február. Ol. 1.

⁴⁵ SATO. F. 1. Op. 1. Delo Nr. 2679. Ol. 1–105.

⁴⁶ Vörös Zászló. 1955. 6 március. Ol. 2.

⁴⁷ Ibid. Ol. 3.

⁴⁸ Ibid. 27 március. Ol. 1.

⁴⁹ Csanádi Gy. Sorsfordító évek... Ol. 220.

collective farm and district leaders, including the Berehove leadership, responded in letters that the plans were unrealistic and not feasible⁵⁰.

In October 1955, for example, the presidency of the UCP Central Committee passed a resolution «On measures for the further development of viticulture in the kolkhozes and sovkhozes of the area». Based on this, the Regional Party Committee and the Executive Committee of the Regional Soviet of Workers' Representatives issued a decree stating that «between 1956 and 1961, 1 200 hectares of new vineyards should be planted in the Berehove district. At the same time, the missing vines on sparse plantations in both collective farms and sovkhozes must be replaced within two years. Thus, at least 2 million 530 thousand vines must be replaced»⁵¹. The implementation of the task was again unrealistic, mainly due to the lack of the necessary conditions and tools, so the regulation improved almost nothing in the situation of viticulture.

In November 1955, as part of an exhibition in the small hall of the district culture house, art enthusiasts could admire the works of several young painters – János Varga's paintings «Deep in the Forest», «Ranch in Bakta», «Borzhava Suspension Bridge», as well as pastels «Monument to the Heroes», «Kvasovovo Street», «Summer in Verkhovina», «Mountain Lake» by Eleonóra Haba. In addition, the paintings «Forest Road» by Pál Joanovics and «Old Tree» by József Garanyi and the works of some other artists were exhibited. However, they were criticized by many because these works were mainly portraits, still lifes and landscapes and lacked «depictions of the daily lives of people, the creators of our happy present, the builders of communism, the work in collective farms, vineyards and constructions, ... liberation from the yoke of capitalism, the struggle for the unification with Soviet Ukraine ...»⁵².

In November 1955, «The 10th anniversary of the reunification of Transcarpathia with Soviet Ukraine» was celebrated with great luxury⁵³.

On February 14–25, 1956 the 20th Congress of the Central Committee of the CPSU was held. The meeting took place behind closed doors, and representatives of foreign communist and workers' parties were not invited⁵⁴. However, the Great Kremlin Palace was attended by industrial and agricultural leaders from all parts of the powerful Soviet state, state and party functionaries, scientists, representatives of the Soviet Army and Fleet, and individuals close to the party who worked in arts and literature⁵⁵. A notice on the closing session was issued. According to this, the guidelines for the Development of the National Economy of the USSR from 1956 to 1960, i.e., the sixth five-year plan, the report of the Chairman of the Vote Counting Committee on the results of the election of the party's central bodies were unanimously approved. In addition, N. Khrushchev, on behalf of the Bureau, submitted a resolution on the preparation of the party's new program, which was unanimously accepted by Congress⁵⁶. The press was silent for a long time about Khrushchev speaking

⁵⁰ SATO. F. P-179. Op. 1. Od. zb. 2801. Ol. 26.

⁵¹ Vörös Zászló. 1955. 2 október. Ol. 3.

⁵² Ibid. 13 november. Ol. 2.

⁵³ SATO. F. 1. Op. 1. Delo Nr. 2649. Ol. 92.

⁵⁴ Ibid. Delo Nr. 2809. Ol. 1–15.

⁵⁵ Vörös Zászló. 1956. 16 február. Ol. 1.

⁵⁶ Ibid. 1956. 26 február. Ol. 3.

at the Party Congress against the cult of Stalin's personality. Only a few months later, on June 30, 1956, the resolution of the CPSU Central Committee «On overcoming the cult of personality and its consequences» was issued⁵⁷. From the end of February 1956, a series of processions, reports, meetings and speeches related to the 20th Congress of the CPSU took place in all districts, including Berehove⁵⁸. It was also the subject of the Plenary Session of the Berehove District Committee of the UCP held on March 20, 1956⁵⁹.

According to the decree of the Presidency of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR issued on March 8, 1956, in order to alleviate the financial situation of the workers, the authorities reduced working hours to six hours on the days before the public holidays and weekends, effective from April 1956. The regulation did not apply to those who worked six or fewer hours a day. In plants operating without interruption, or in industries where it was impossible to introduce reduced working hours due to production conditions, an additional day off was provided in exchange for four eight-hour working days worked before days off and public holidays. In the case of time wage, the pay for a full working day was given. In the case of per piece wages, the wages were calculated in accordance with the work performed⁶⁰. On March 15, 1956, the Central Committee of the CPSU and the Council of Ministers of the USSR issued a resolution: «On the statutes of the agricultural artels and on the further development of the initiatives of the members of the collective farm in the organization of collective farm production and management of collective farm affairs»⁶¹. The resolution emphasized the need to regulate the allocation of backyard plots: «... collective farm families that have collective farm members capable of work who do not work in the collective farms or are insufficiently involved in the work of the collective farm community should have smaller backyard units than families who work in kolkhozes conscientiously»⁶². The resolution covered the keeping of livestock in private property, the distribution of income, issues of kolkhoz life, raising the standard of political and organizational work regarding kolkhoz matters, and so on.

The resolution provided for «monthly advances to collective farm members and monthly extra wages in collective farms», expecting an increase in the interest among collective farm members⁶³.

On May 1, 1956, in Berehove, the ceremonial meeting was held in the Voroshilov Square, where the statue of Stalin was still standing, but it was no longer wreathed. The speakers were: Kohutych – Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Town Council, Bubryák – Secretary of the Berehove District Party Committee, Shchadey – Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Berehove District Council, etc.⁶⁴.

On May 11, 1956, the Council of Ministers of the USSR submitted a bill on state pensions to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. According to the draft, a state pension could

⁵⁷ SATO. F. 1. Op. 1. Delo Nr. 2810. Ol. 5–9.

⁵⁸ Ibid. Delo Nr. 2875. Ol. 1–53.

⁵⁹ Vörös Zászló. 1956. 22 március. Ol. 3.

⁶⁰ Ibid. 1956. 11 március. Ol. 1.

⁶¹ Ibid. 15 március. Ol. 1.

⁶² Ibid. Ol. 1.

⁶³ SATO. F. P-179. Op. 1. Od. zb. 4381. Ol. 13.

⁶⁴ Vörös Zászló. 1956. 4 május. Ol. 2.

be established tax-free in the case of old age, disability, or loss of a provider. Men could retire after at least 25 years of service from the age of 60, and women could retire from the age of 55 after 20 years of service. The minimum monthly old-age pension was set at 300 rubles and the maximum at 1 200 rubles⁶⁵. In addition, invalidity pensions had also been established. The bill was accepted and entered into force on 1 October 1956.

On September 8, 1956, the resolution of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, the Central Committee of the CPSU, and the Central Trade Union Council of the USSR «On the increase of wages of low-paid workers and employees» was issued, which came into force on January 1, 1957. According to this, workers and employees employed directly in industrial plants, construction, transport, and telecommunication plants had to be paid at least 300–350 rubles a month. Other workers were paid at least 300 rubles in towns and workers' settlements and at least 270 rubles in the villages. In addition, the student income tax and taxes for unmarried, single citizens and small families were abolished for those who received 370 rubles a month in wages or scholarships⁶⁶.

In 1956, subscriptions for Hungarian newspapers and magazines were available in Transcarpathia, so people could follow the events taking place in Budapest. Nevertheless, the outbreak of the revolution was quite unexpected for the locals. In Berehove, at the end of October, the radio was switched on all day long. People observed the events with tension. The mood was depressed. The sound of the old-style «Moskvych» and «ARZ» radios was crackling, the «Free Europe», «Voice of America» and BBC news programs were being disturbed, but from the fragments of news, it was possible to suspect that a revolution had broken out in Budapest⁶⁷.

During the 1956 revolution, reports on the events in Hungary – published in the Soviet central and Transcarpathian press or told on the radio – focused mainly on the executions of Hungarian communists, the assassination of Soviet soldiers, and the occupation of the party and state institutions.

The district newspaper published its first article on the revolution on October 31, 1956, entitled «The Failure of the Anti-People Adventure in Hungary», which was taken over from the October 28 issue of «Pravda»⁶⁸. It covered the events and their motivations on an entire page. On November 2, the Declaration of the Government of the USSR of October 30, entitled «On the Basis for the Development and Further Consolidation of Friendship and Cooperation between the Soviet Union and the Other Socialist States», was published. It announced that «at the request of the Hungarian People's Government the Soviet Government allowed Soviet military units to march on Budapest to help the Hungarian People's Army and the Hungarian authorities restore order»⁶⁹.

On October 23, everything was quiet in Berehove, but the next day large military units arrived in the town and the tanks and trucks marched through the Khmelnytskyi, (Bochkay) Street, through Luzhanka (Astey) village, towards the Hungarian border. It was

⁶⁵ Ibid. 1956. 11 május. Ol. 1.

⁶⁶ Ibid. 12 szeptember. Ol. 1.

⁶⁷ Interview with György Csanádi, who from 1951 was the translator and column editor of the Red Flag Beregszász district newspaper, and from 1957 he was the editor-in-chief of the paper. The interview was conducted by the author on July 7, 2002.

⁶⁸ Vörös Zászló. 1956. 31 október. Ol. 4.

⁶⁹ Ibid. 1956. 2 november. Ol. 1.

obvious that the Soviet army was preparing for the armed suppression of the Hungarian revolution. When the Hungarian radio announced that the Soviet troops will be withdrawn from Hungary, the residents of Berehove had doubts about this, as the flood of tanks heading to Hungary did not decrease for a moment, and no tank passed through the town in the opposite direction at the time⁷⁰.

To strengthen the educational work among the population of the Berehove district, 6 «lecturers» were directed from the regional center to the district, who gave lectures to the people. These, as well as members of the district party committee, gave 26 lectures and 72 reports in the Berehove district in late October and early November. In addition, about 100 lectures were read by village «lecturers» as well. On November 4, talks were held with the population in all settlements of the district, in order to explain the program announced by the Revolutionary Workers-Peasant Government of Hungary to the population⁷¹.

According to current facts, Transcarpathia played a significant role during the revolution. Among other things, it served as a parade ground for Soviet tanks. In Uzhhorod, a political headquarters was established, which maintained contact between Budapest and Moscow and received the deportees of the 56' Revolution – more than a thousand people, according to my current research – to the local prison⁷².

On January 18, 1957, the Central Committee of the CPSU and the Council of Ministers of the USSR published a voluminous call that occupied an entire issue of the local newspaper: «To all agricultural workers, workers of MTSs and sovkhozes, the party, professional and Komsomol organizations, the Soviet and agricultural authorities, professionals and all agricultural workers». In this, the success that the country's workers achieved «enthusiastic about the resolutions of the XX party congress, together with the leadership». However, failures were also reported, the cause of which was seen in the incompetence of leading cadres. «Not only has the situation not improved in some collective farms, but it has even worsened. This was due to the fact that not everywhere were the leaders selected conscientiously and that many collective farms were offered weak, uninitiated people, and sometimes people who simply did not want to honestly perform the great and honorable task entrusted to them»⁷³.

This was typical of Berehove and the Berehove district as well. The lack of professionals was a common phenomenon throughout the Khrushchev period. According to the resolution of the Central Committee of the CPSU of March 25, 1955, to strengthen the leaders of the collective farms, 30 000 volunteers were sent from various cities of Ukraine to manage the underdeveloped collective farms. This movement became known as the «Thirty Thousand». Of these, 506 people⁷⁴ arrived at the collective farms of Transcarpathia to help them catch up, 78 of whom became collective farm leaders or deputy collective farm leaders⁷⁵. However, a significant proportion of the new kolkhoz presidents were unable to solve local problems. Foreign «leaders» from distant lands, who carried out the orders

⁷⁰ Interview with György Csanádi. 7.07.2002.

⁷¹ SATO. F. 15. Op. 15. Ed. hr. 13. Ol. 82.

⁷² Sectoral State Archive of the Security Service of Ukraine. F. 1. Op. 1. Delo Nr. 1–22.

⁷³ Vörös Zászló. 1957. 18 január. 13 évf. Ol. 1–4.

⁷⁴ SATO. F. 1. Op. 1. Delo Nr. 2639. Ol. 127.

⁷⁵ Нариси історії Закарпатської обласної партійної організації / редкол.: Ю. Ільницький (голова) та ін. Ужгород: Карпати, 1980. Ol. 189.

they received from higher agricultural bodies without thinking, did not understand the real worries, insights, and problems of the people or the economy. In the Berehove district, which was mostly inhabited by Hungarians, the situation was aggravated by the fact that the majority of the leaders did not speak the Hungarian language at all.

The aforementioned call pointed out «the successes in increasing the production of animal products and milk in particular, and the great work done to expand maize sowing» and therefore predicted an increase in maize production. «Corn can grow in every district, provided it is surrounded with love and attention», – stated the call⁷⁶. The area under corn also referred to as the «*queen of the fields*» increased significantly. However, there were not enough machines, fertilizers, weed killers, etc. to cultivate it, so the long-awaited success was not achieved. Although numerous exaggerative articles were published, entitled: «We introduce the proposals of the kolkhoz members extensively into kolkhoz production» or «The kolkhozists decided so»⁷⁷ which suggested that after the call, kolkhoz leaders took into account the opinions of kolkhoz members during production, though not much had changed in reality.

On the day of the election of the local councils on March 3, 1957, the people of Berehove delegated 33 Hungarian representatives to the district council and nearly forty to the town council⁷⁸. For the first time, more than half of the representatives of the local councils in the district were Hungarian⁷⁹.

Due to Sovietization, the private sector in Transcarpathia was completely abolished by 1950. In addition to crop supply and collective farming, part of the workers' wages was seized as state loans, which people gave to the industrial development of the country to fulfill the five-year plan, to serve the reconstruction and development of the national economy «voluntarily», mostly in cash⁸⁰. However, the government bond caused serious financial problems for the workers every year, so Khrushchev's announcement was issued in the district newspaper on April 10, 1957, which stated that «From 1958 onwards, government bonds must be abolished, the payment of government loan prizes should be stopped and the deadline for repayment of government loans must be extended. The unity with which workers and employees supported this proposal signals the expression of the interests of the Soviet people»⁸¹.

The World Youth Meeting was held in Berehove on April 28, 1957. In advance, local youth meetings were held everywhere. Art enthusiast groups from the town and villages gathered to show off their talents⁸².

On May 31, 1956, a new task was issued: «In the coming years, we will catch up with the United States in per capita meat, milk, and butter production». While in 1957 the production of 332 centners of milk per 100 hectares of land was expected, by 1960 the production of 381 centners of milk was planned⁸³. A few days later, as of June 5, 1957, a

⁷⁶ Vörös Zászló. 1957. 18 január. Ol. 3.

⁷⁷ Ibid. 23 január. Ol. 3.

⁷⁸ Ibid. 8 március. Ol. 2.

⁷⁹ Csanádi Gy. Sorsfordító évek... Ol. 231.

⁸⁰ SATO. F. P-1. Op. 1. Od. zb. 12. Ol. 62.

⁸¹ Vörös Zászló. 1957. 12 április. Ol. 2.

⁸² Ibid. 1957. 28 április. Ol. 3.

⁸³ Ibid. 31 május. Ol. 1.

new campaign was launched with the slogan «for 400 and for 100» to produce 400 centners of milk and 100 centners of meat for every 100 hectares nationwide⁸⁴. To date, no document has revealed how and who calculated that these were the numbers needed for success. These two numbers then appeared regularly in the newspapers. However, instead of the target of 400 centners of milk and 100 centners of meat per 100 hectares the farms of the Berehove district, for example, produced only 182 centners of milk and 30 centners of meat in 1957⁸⁵.

At the end of May, those interested could view the largest-ever exhibition of the town's painters, i.e., 130 works by seven painters, mainly etudes and sketches⁸⁶.

In 1957, the town already had good public catering, i.e., a restaurant, 9 canteens, 14 snack bars, 5 buffets, 5 school buffets, self-service canteens⁸⁷. A confectionery was also opened on May 19, 1957, where a variety of delicious cakes, chocolate, ice cream, skim milk, cocoa, tea, coffee, butter, milk, sour cream, syrups, and mineral water were served. The pottery store had a self-service department, so customers could examine the goods for a long time without holding up the salesperson, who could thus pay more attention to serving customers interested in electric appliances and other goods. In addition, the turnover of bookstores increased⁸⁸. The diet canteen opened in May 1958 was a great sensation in the town. In canteen No 8, under the supervision of specialists, 10–15 different dietary dishes recommended by doctors were prepared daily, with the help of chef Chehyl. Here, customers also had the opportunity to seek the advice of a specialist about their diets⁸⁹.

There were a central and 16 savings bank agencies in the district and more and more people placed their money in the Berehove district savings bank⁹⁰.

From the summer of 1958, local film fans could watch widescreen films at the Pushkin Film Theater⁹¹.

In December 1957, the 40th anniversary of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic was celebrated at the District Culture House⁹².

On February 12, 1958, the Central Committee of the CPSU issued an invitation to participate in the next election to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR on March 16, 1958, to fulfill their civic duties and vote for the candidates of the bloc of communists and non-partisans⁹³. The candidate from the Berehove district was Fedor Tsan'ko, who was successfully registered by the District Election Committee. Then a great exhortation campaign was launched so that on March 16, 1958, everyone would vote as one person for the candidate of the Communist and Non-Partisan Bloc – Fedor Semionovich Tsanko⁹⁴.

⁸⁴ Ibid. 1957. 5 június. Ol. 2.

⁸⁵ Csanádi G. Sorsfordító évek... Ol. 234.

⁸⁶ Vörös Zászló. 1957. 29 május. Ol. 4.

⁸⁷ Vörös Zászló. 1956. 24 október. Ol. 3.

⁸⁸ Vörös Zászló. 1957. 7 június. Ol. 4.

⁸⁹ Vörös Zászló. 1958. 5 június. Ol. 3.

⁹⁰ Ibid. 21 március. Ol. 3.

⁹¹ Ibid. 13 augusztus. Ol. 2.

⁹² Vörös Zászló. 1957. 25 december. Ol. 1.

⁹³ Vörös Zászló. 1958. 12 február. Ol. 1–3.

⁹⁴ Ibid. 28 február. Ol. 1.

On February 14, 1958, in accordance with the resolution of the Transcarpathian Territorial Executive Committee, as well as the District Executive Committee, a notice was issued that in 1958 families could relocate to the Crimean kolkhozes and sovkhozes that possessed an abundance of land, or to the virgin lands of Kazakhstan⁹⁵. As the families were not motivated to relocate⁹⁶, they were offered a number of encouraging advantages⁹⁷, such as: free travel, property transfer, housing, financial aid, jobs, wonderful beach and excellent climate, sanatoriums, food loan, exemption from agricultural taxes, etc. for as many families as possible to move. These were provided in terms of the «*relocation ticket*»⁹⁸. However, no one moved voluntarily. Despite the difficulties of relocation, the authorities did not give up the plan and even increased the number of families to be relocated.

On February 26, 1958, by decree of the Presidency of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union, Transcarpathia was awarded the Order of Lenin⁹⁹. On 27 February 1958, the district newspaper, and then on 28 February, the regional newspapers reported that 10 regions of the Ukrainian SSR, including Transcarpathia, had been awarded the Lenin Order for their achievements in increasing the production and stockpiling of agricultural products. Crowded rallies were held in several settlements to thank the Communist Party for the high government award¹⁰⁰.

The Plenary Session of the Central Committee of the CPSU held on February 25–26, 1958, passed a resolution «On the further development of the kolkhoz system and the reorganization of the machine and tractor stations»¹⁰¹. The essence of this was that since the kolkhozes had become a large, solid economy, were well-equipped technically, had a skilled workforce, a significant income, etc., MTSs were unnecessary in the economic organization of the kolkhozes. Thus, the machine and tractor stations were liquidated, and their machines and technical equipment were offered for purchase to the kolkhozes. This put an end to the unsustainable situation where tractors and machinery were owned by MTSs and machine operators carried out contract jobs in the collective farms. The operators of the MTSs were not sufficiently interested in increasing the yield¹⁰².

As a result of the reorganization of the MTSs, the relationship of agriculture with industry expanded, and the material and technical base of the collective farms was consolidated. It was possible for the collective farms to make better use of the machines, to specialize in production, and to reduce the cost of agricultural products. The MTSs were transformed into repair and technical stations, which supplied the collective farms with new machinery, spare parts, and agrochemicals and helped them to repair the machinery.

More than 60 workers worked at the MTS in Berehove, to whom Fanych, the party secretary of the MTS, explained the resolution. They decided to sell the tractors on a brigade basis, the same way they were in the kolkhozes, as the purchase of tractors also posed new

⁹⁵ Vörös Zászló. 1958. 14 február. Ol. 4.

⁹⁶ SATO. F. P-1545. Op. 1. Ed. hr. 87. Ol. 31.

⁹⁷ Ibid. Ol. 32.

⁹⁸ Ibid. Ol. 36–37.

⁹⁹ SATO. F. 1. Op. 1. Delo Nr. 3213. Ol. 1–15.

¹⁰⁰ Vörös Zászló. 1958. 5 március. Ol. 2.

¹⁰¹ Ibid. Ol. 1.

¹⁰² Ibid. 7 március. Ol. 2.

tasks for the management of the kolkhozes. So, the Berehove Machine and Tractor Station were being dismantled gradually¹⁰³. Most of the machine operators entered the collective farms. Undoubtedly, this improved the utilization of the equipment, but there were still not enough machines.

The financial situation of the kolkhoz members, though slowly, improved, but did not reach the level of those employed in the industry. To divert attention from this, numerous awards were presented to agricultural workers year after year¹⁰⁴.

In March 1958, for example, under a decree of the Presidency of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR of February 26, 1958, nine employees of the bodies of agriculture, the party, and councils in the district were awarded the Order of Lenin. Among them, György Ohár, president of the Gorky kolkhoz, József Polner, farm manager of the same kolkhoz, «because they were the first in the district to start a fight for 100 and 400 and double the productivity of their farms in one year». In addition, 23 employees received the Red Flag Order of Labour, 34 received the Order of Honor badge, 25 received the Medal of Heroic Work¹⁰⁵, and 17 received the Medal for Outstanding Work¹⁰⁶. On many occasions, of course, the awards were not given to those who really deserved them.

In March 1958, the Central Committee of the CPSU and the Council of Ministers of the USSR adopted a resolution «On increasing the production of children's clothing, footwear, expanding its selection and improving its quality»¹⁰⁷. According to this, 27,3 % more pairs of children's leather footwear, socks and stockings, knitted and woven underwear, and upper knitwear had to be produced, worth 1 billion rubles at the pan-Soviet level.

Agriculture continued to struggle. Therefore, at the Plenary Session of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party held on 17–18 June 1958, a resolution entitled «Abolition of compulsory services and payments in kind for the work of MTSs, new stockpiling arrangements, prices and conditions for agricultural products» was adopted¹⁰⁸. One of the most important items of the regulation was that although a single price was set for the purchase of agricultural products and this purchase price was set according to the conditions of the year if the harvest was higher than planned, the purchase price of agricultural products was reduced, but if the crop was bad, more than the average price was paid. The decree did not work anywhere, including in the district of Berehove, as it reduced the interest of farms in achieving high yields, as low yields paid more than average for the products, but high yields led to lower purchase prices. The decree was in force for a short time.

A resolution was adopted to strengthen the relationship between public education and life, making it compulsory for students to learn different professions in their school, and setting up workshops everywhere. Like many other experiments, this did not work well in the years to come, with students learning mostly to drill and carve, and in some schools to operate a lathe. Also, the working hours took a lot of time at the expense of the hours assigned to the main subjects.

¹⁰³ Ibid. Ol. 2.

¹⁰⁴ SATO. F. 1. Op. 5. Delo Nr. 107. Ol. 1–143.

¹⁰⁵ Vörös Zászló. 1958. 12 március. Ol. 1.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid. 14 március. Ol. 1.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid. 21 március. Ol. 1.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid. 25 június. Ol. 1.

On January 15–22, 1959 a national census was held in the Soviet Union. According to the census, the population of Transcarpathia was 920 200¹⁰⁹. The available data on the results of the census vary. According to some demographers, Transcarpathia had a population of 920 200, and 920 173 according to others. Of them, 686 464, or 74,6 % of the population were of Ukrainian nationality. There were 146 247 Hungarians, i.e., 15,9 % of the population, and the number of the population of other nationalities was 87 462, i.e., 9,5 %¹¹⁰. According to another source, the Hungarian population at that time was 154 738¹¹¹. According to the data, only in the Berehove district, there was an absolute, about 85 % majority of the Hungarian population, and Berehove was the only town with a Hungarian majority¹¹².

On March 1, 1959, elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR were held¹¹³. The list of the elected representatives was on the front page on March 6, 1959¹¹⁴.

On July 14, 1959, after moving four times in the Heroes' Square, the district library was moved to its final location under No. 7, Heroes' Square. The library was self-service and hosted events, writer-reader meetings as well. In addition to the 45 000 volumes, the reader could select from 63 domestic and foreign newspapers and magazines, including 19 Hungarian publications. The number of Hungarian books exceeded 14 500¹¹⁵.

On August 7, 1959, the Soviet delegation returned from the VII Vienna World Youth Meeting. On the Ukrainian-Hungarian border, hundreds of young people from Berehove waited for them and accompanied them to the railway station. A meeting was arranged in the square in front of the station, where A. Kyrychenko, secretary of the Central Committee of the Leninist Communist Youth Association of Ukraine, and then M. Holub, a member of the USSR delegation, gave a speech. Then the Voronezh Russian Folk Choir gave a concert¹¹⁶.

On August 11, 1959, the Decree of the Presidency of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR «On the Prohibition of the Keeping and Owning Livestock by Citizens Living in Towns and Work Settlements» was issued¹¹⁷. The decree entered into force on 1 October 1959. Violation of the regulation entailed the seizure of the livestock and the payment of its value at the state stock prices in force before 1958 for the payment of the goods delivered as compulsory service. The slaughter of individually owned cows and heifers had to be prevented.

On September 22, 1959, the first town bus service started in Berehove, on a route connecting different parts of the town and nearby villages. One bus ran between the office building of the wine sovkhos and the auxiliary farm of the inter-kolhoz Construction Council in Bucha (an area of Berehove) with 11 stops, while another bus ran between Ivanovka

¹⁰⁹ Molnár D. I. Perifériáról perifériára. Kárpátalja népessége 1869-től napjainkig. Budapest: MTA TK Kisebbségkutató Intézet. Kalligram, 2018. Ol. 102–110.

¹¹⁰ Molnár J., Molnár D. I. Kárpátalja népessége... Ol. 9.

¹¹¹ Dupka Gy. Autonóm-törekvések Kárpátalján. Ungvár; Budapest: Intermix Kiadó, 2004. Ol. 104.

¹¹² Csanádi G. Sorsfordító évek... Ol. 229.

¹¹³ SATO. F. P-179. Op. 19. Ed. hr. 64. Ol. 1–45.

¹¹⁴ Vörös Zászló. 1959. 6 március. Ol. 1.

¹¹⁵ Csanádi G. Sorsfordító évek... Ol. 235.

¹¹⁶ Vörös Zászló. 1959. 14 augusztus. Ol. 4.

¹¹⁷ Ibid. Ol. 1.

(Yanoshi) and Muzhiyevo with 5 stops¹¹⁸. In the first days of October, a new bus service also started between Uzhhorod and Berehove via Chop, running twice a day¹¹⁹.

On October 12, 1959, in the House of Culture, the traditional autumn exhibition of the local artists opened with many new works, and for the first time, the audience could see the ceramic works of Anna Horváth («Sitting Teenager», «Fairy Tale», «Accordion», «Sweeping Woman»)¹²⁰, who soon became a Merited Artist of Ukraine and a defining personality of Berehove's cultural life¹²¹.

On November 29, 1959, Ferenc Farkas's «The Forest is Singing» musical play was presented at the People's Theatre¹²². This play was performed 32 times, of which 13 were full house performances in Berehove¹²³.

On December 1, 1959, Khrushchev and his accompanying delegation arrived in Budapest for the 7th Congress of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party¹²⁴. Following the congress, on December 8, János Kádár and N. Khrushchev arrived in Transcarpathia, as Kádár escorted Khrushchev back to the Soviet Union. In his speech at the Chop train station, Kádár said that he had already visited Transcarpathia during the Revolution of 1956. «I visited this land about three years ago when the Hungarian people were in big trouble. We came to ask the Soviet people for brotherly help. We received this help and defeated the counter-revolution»¹²⁵.

Between 10 and 20 December 1959, the Days of Hungarian Culture were held in Ukraine. On this occasion, thematic evenings of friendship were held in the factories and kolkhozes of the Berehove district to present the achievements of the richness and culture of the Hungarian People's Republic. In the clubs and libraries, photo and book exhibitions were organized, readings on the achievements of the Hungarian people were held, and a book day was held to sell classics of Hungarian literature and works by contemporary Hungarian writers, as well as books by Ukrainian writers translated into Hungarian¹²⁶. On December 16, a group of Hungarian artists performed at the district culture house, greeted on behalf of the people of the Berehove district by Ottó Schóber, the director of the district culture house¹²⁷.

On January 14, 1960, the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union passed a resolution «On the reduction of the armed forces of the Soviet Union by 1 200 000»¹²⁸. After this, the «peace offensive» proclaimed by Khrushchev was in the focus of media attention. The topic, that is, the peaceful intent of the Soviet Union, had been on the table before, since Khrushchev's visit to the United States in 1959¹²⁹. In Berehove, in the villages of the district, the great peace offensive of the Soviet Union was reported at the sessions of political

¹¹⁸ Ibid. 23 szeptember. Ol. 4.

¹¹⁹ Ibid. 9 október. Ol. 4.

¹²⁰ Ibid. 14 október. Ol. 4.

¹²¹ Csanádi Gy. Sorsfordító évek... Ol. 236.

¹²² Vörös Zászló. 1959. 12 december. Ol. 4.

¹²³ Csanádi Gy. Sorsfordító évek... Ol. 236.

¹²⁴ Vörös Zászló. 1959. 15 december. Ol. 4.

¹²⁵ Ibid. 10 december. Ol. 1–3.

¹²⁶ Ibid. 15 december. Ol. 1.

¹²⁷ Ibid. 19 december. Ol. 4.

¹²⁸ Vörös Zászló. 1960. 21 január. Ol. 2.

¹²⁹ Vörös Zászló. 1959. 30 szeptember. Ol. 2.

schools, various meetings, and seminars, which the workers supported with commitments and work offers. It was argued that this way that the size of the army had decreased even more people could work in the national economy. In Berehove, some of the demobilized soldiers worked as tractor drivers at the Berehove Town Trade.

In January 1960, the Central Committee of the CPSU and the Council of Ministers of the USSR adopted a resolution «On measures to further improve the medical care and health protection of the population of the USSR». As a result, the number of hospital beds and the production of medicines, medical instruments, and other medical preparations increased. Social councils were established in health care institutions, consisting of health affairs, party, Komsomol, and economic organizations, as well as representatives of the population. Their expenses, according to the resolution, had to be covered from the amount of money remaining as a result of the reduction of the armed forces¹³⁰. The USSR Ministry of Health decided to vaccinate everyone from the age of 2 months to the age of 20 against polio, a disease, which, from 1957, caused numerous deaths in this area as well. Therefore, in the first quarter of 1960, the Sabin vaccine against polio was widely used in the district as well¹³¹.

In 1960, the district museum opened in the rebuilt Workers' Home. Photographs, old posters, some issues of the Workers' Newspaper and many antiques were accompanied by materials showing the rapid development of the district's economy and culture in showcases made by the district's factories and kolkhozes themselves. In the museum, visitors could find data on the district's education network, the development of schools such as the Vocational School of Health, School of Industry, the Vocational School of Agricultural Mechanization, for example. But it also housed the exhibition materials of the Furniture Factory, the Food Industry Factory, the Clothing Factory, the Leather Factory, the Borzhava Red Flag Kolhoz, which mainly presented their technical development¹³². Its archaeological and medal collection was based on the private collection of Ferenc Horváth. Miklós Deli history teacher, sculptor Anna Horváth, painter József Garanyi, and many enthusiastic collectors from Berehove gained invaluable merit in creating the museum. Anna Horváth became the head of the museum¹³³.

At the initiative of the pioneers of the Trostnik Secondary School, rabbit breeding took place on a large scale in the schools, where rabbit farms had to be established and rabbit breeding student brigades were formed; they worked on the rabbit farms in their spare time. The young rabbit breeders of V. Beregi Secondary School achieved particularly nice results in the district, where the students were entrusted to take care of 1 200 domestic rabbits¹³⁴. Various sessions were held for groups of rabbit farmers. During these, students were introduced to the basics of rabbit breeding, feeding rabbits, and the rules for keeping the cages clean¹³⁵.

On March 1, 1960, retail prices were reduced pursuant to a resolution of the USSR Council of Ministers. For example, electric sewing machines by 20 %, cameras by 30, hunting weapons by 25, Vyatka scooters by 18 %¹³⁶.

¹³⁰ Vörös Zászló. 1960. 23 január. Ol. 1.

¹³¹ Ibid. 1 március. Ol. 3.

¹³² Ibid. 23 február. Ol. 4.

¹³³ Vörös Zászló. 1961. 23 március. Ol. 4.

¹³⁴ Vörös Zászló. 1960. 12 március. Ol. 3.

¹³⁵ Ibid. 1 március. Ol. 2.

¹³⁶ Ibid. 3 március. Ol. 1.

In the first week of March 1960, according to the decree of the Presidency of the USSR, entitled «Award with Orders and Medals for Outstanding Transcarpathian Working Women», there were two honorees in Berehove, who learned about the high degree of recognition from the newspaper. Magda Gábor, the chief of the Sewing Department of the Clothing Factory received the Lenin Order, which was the highest government award, while Olena Zhytko, a worker from the Furniture Factory¹³⁷, who completed the first year of the seven-year plan in 10 months, received a medal For Heroic Work¹³⁸.

In accordance with the resolution of the Central Committee of the CPSU entitled «On the Duties of Party Propaganda in Contemporary Conditions», according to a report dated April 2, 1960, more than 1 600 lectures were given to more than a hundred thousand people – more than twice as many, as in the previous year. This success was attributed to the relocation of the center of activity of the village agitators directly to the workplaces of the kolkhozists, to the farms, the fields, the vineyards. This allowed them to link their conversations more closely to specific tasks and have a greater influence on the production process. In addition, they regularly visited the Forward Artel, the Slaughterhouse, and the Cheese Factory, as well as the villages, stressing that «the struggle on the ideological front must continue without a break, not a single man will be missed out»¹³⁹.

Throughout the Khrushchev era, one of the most important tasks of farms was to increase the area of vines and orchards. The tasks were obviously unrealistic. From 20 October to 20 November 1960, for example, a month of fruit and vine planting was declared in the district of Berehove, when in one month 290 hectares of vineyards and 335 hectares of orchards had to be planted. The viticulture program stipulated that only noble grape varieties could be planted, in practice, they deviated from this instruction in order to be able to fulfill the plan¹⁴⁰.

From 1954, the Party and the Government had been claiming that the housing shortage would be eliminated. For the next 10–12 years, the sixth five-year plan promised to build nearly 51 million square metres of living space in Ukraine's cities, towns, and villages¹⁴¹.

In 1960, according to the Decree on the Development of Housing Construction in the Soviet Union, 100 flats were built for the workers of the Clothing Factory, Machine Repair Plant, Brick and Tile Factory, Food Processing Plant, Industrial Factory, Tobacco Fermentation Plant, The Forward Artel and, and also 24 flat buildings were being built on the Muzhaiska street, along with 2 to 4 storey buildings on the initiative from Kharkiv¹⁴². On Muzhaiska street, a boarding school suitable for 300 children was also built¹⁴³. In the second half of November 1961, the construction of a 240-person dormitory in the Berehove Wine Sovkhoz was also completed¹⁴⁴.

¹³⁷ Ibid. 12 március. Ol. 1.

¹³⁸ Ibid. 29 március. Ol. 2.

¹³⁹ Ibid. 2 április. Ol. 1.

¹⁴⁰ Csanádi Gy. Sorsfordító évek... Ol. 239.

¹⁴¹ Vörös Zászló. 1958. 26 február. Ol. 3.

¹⁴² Vörös Zászló. 1960. 26 január. Ol. 3.

¹⁴³ Ibid. 21 május. Ol. 2.

¹⁴⁴ Vörös Zászló. 1961. 25 november. Ol. 2.

On November 28, 1961, at a meeting of the Town Council of Workers' Representatives, Y. Kopyn, Chairman of the Executive Committee announced that more than 926 families built new residential houses. In the Furniture Factory, a one-apartment and three eight-apartment houses were built, with a total living space of 814 square meters¹⁴⁵.

On May 5–7, 1960, the fifth session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR was held. Its agenda items included the abolition of the payroll tax for workers and employees for economic growth, which was planned to be implemented intermittently in 1960–1965. However, agricultural taxes were left «temporary» as they played a significant role in consolidating work discipline in kolkhozes and regulating the organized income of backyard farms for the personal use of kolkhoz members. Another important item on the agenda of the meeting was monetary reform to consolidate the currency¹⁴⁶. According to the plan, from the beginning of 1961, the proportion of the currency unit would be increased tenfold and new money would be put into circulation. «This measure does not represent any loss to either the population or the state. The population's monetary income from the state, cooperative and state enterprises, organizations and collective farms, wages, wages of collective farm members, pensions, allowances, scholarships, etc. are recalculated at the same rate, i.e., 10:1. Sufficient time – three months – is imposed to make the transition convenient for the public»¹⁴⁷, – stated the draft of the monetary reform, which was implemented in January 1961. All the savings of the population had to be converted in the same proportion. It was pointed out that this reform would increase the purchasing power of the currency tenfold, as well as increase the gold content of the ruble and the exchange rate of the ruble against the foreign currencies¹⁴⁸. In Berehove, in addition to the bank and the savings bank, two exchange centers were set up, one in the Market Committee room and the other in the housing office. And there were four other exchange centres in the district as well. In addition, from January 1, during the three months, all commercial organizations, post offices, savings banks accepted the old type of money, and savings bank deposits were automatically converted according to the new currency¹⁴⁹. However, the monetary reform did not improve the financial situation of the population.

At the same meeting, the Supreme Council passed a law amending Article 119 of the Constitution of the USSR in connection with the adoption of the «Law on the Completion of the Transfer of All Workers and Employees to Seven-Hour and Six-Hour Working Days in 1960»¹⁵⁰.

In the second week of May 1960, The Forward Industrial Artel opened the first rental store in the town. People could rent bikes, motorcycles, washing machines, vacuum cleaners and much more. The store immediately became very popular. A daily washing machine rental fee, for example, was 8 rubles¹⁵¹.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid. 1961. 30 november. Ol. 2.

¹⁴⁶ SATO. F. 1. Op. 5. Delo Nr. 93. Ol. 1–47.

¹⁴⁷ Vörös Zászló. 1960. 7 november. Ol. 1.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid. Ol. 2.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid. 13 október. Ol. 4.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid. 10 május. Ol. 1.

¹⁵¹ Ibid. 14 május. Ol. 4.

On September 9, 1960, in the Great Hall of the District Culture House, the first session of the Hungarian-language University of Culture was held, which then gave lectures twice a month on science and technology, literature, art, and music¹⁵².

On March 15, 1961, the month of grapes and fruits began in the kolkhozes and sovkhozes of the Berehove district. During this time, another 100 hectares of vineyards and orchards were planned to be planted. However, the main task was to improve the condition of the existing vineyards, as the average shortage of vines in the kolkhozes of the district was 27,3–38 %, and there were areas where 70 % of the vines did not produce crop. 600 000 units of planting material were supplied to the kolkhozes of the district to eliminate the problem. The establishment of new orchards began on 200 hectares. It was a particularly significant event when on March 25, 1961, in the sovkhoz of the small village of Astey on the Soviet-Hungarian border, just a few hundred meters from the border, the two «brotherly nations» established a common orchard and named it the Garden of Friendship¹⁵³. The Garden of Friendship later became a venue for cultural and professional meetings of people living on both sides of the border¹⁵⁴.

On April 12, 1961, the TASS announced sensational news about man's first journey into space. Yuri Gagarin, an air force major, reached outer space¹⁵⁵ on the Sputnik spacecraft «Vostok» at 9:52 a.m. Moscow time. In Berehove, meetings were held in all collectives, and, as usual, the success was celebrated with new work gifts everywhere.

From the beginning of April 1961, sightseeing flights over the town became a popular Sunday pastime. Helicopters took nearly 100 adults and children on sightseeing flights each Sunday. During the summer, a permanent helicopter station was built in the suburbs of the town, from where employees could travel to Uzhhorod by regular helicopter flights¹⁵⁶.

In 1961, the women's council was active in implementing the seven-year plan. They played a particularly important role in the establishment of children's institutions and seasonal kindergartens. During the summer, several nurseries and kindergartens were organized, making life easier for women working in the fields. In addition, tailoring and sewing training, cinema, and theater visits were organized, women working in collective farms, factories, plants, etc. were encouraged to complete the production plans¹⁵⁷.

The cleanliness and order of the town were ensured by the resolution made on March 1, 1961, according to which, among other things, the building materials obstructing traffic had to be removed from the road edges and sidewalks; the sidewalk and drainage channel had to be swept clean in front of the houses and institutions every morning; it was forbidden to discharge sewage into the Vérke Channel, as well as to wash cars there, etc. was prohibited. Those who violated the resolution were fined 5 rubles or sentenced to 7 days of forced labor¹⁵⁸.

¹⁵² Ibid. 1960. 13 szeptember. Ol. 2.

¹⁵³ Vörös Zászló. 1961. 30 március. Ol. 3.

¹⁵⁴ SATO. F. 1. Op. 1. Delo Nr. 3067. Ol. 1–34.

¹⁵⁵ Vörös Zászló. 1961. 15 április. Ol. 1.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid. 13 április. Ol. 4.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid. 27 április. Ol. 2.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid. 18 március. Ol. 4.

In addition to the Hunting Society, the Nature Conservation Society, founded in 1958, had 1 200 members by 1961 and did its best to educate the population to love and protect nature. To this end, on May 2, 1961, they arranged a pigeon and canary exhibition and urged schoolchildren and collective farm leaders to become active members of conservation work. Their work was complemented by the 850-member Hunters and Fishermen's Association of the Berehove District Council, which was actively involved in conserving protected areas, monitoring fishponds and rivers, holding poachers accountable, giving lectures on nature conservation and raising awareness of hunting and fishing rules¹⁵⁹.

The Berehove Wine Factory produced delicious wines of different brands: Promenyste, Berehivske, Transcarpathian Riesling, Transcarpathian Troianda, Serednianske, etc. These were transported to the northern regions of the Soviet Union, the capital of Ukraine, Donbas and many other areas¹⁶⁰.

In the summer of 1961, the town's beach was also renewed. Among other things, it received new locker rooms. Communal farm workers cleared roads, planted flower beds, repaired bridges. Bathers were able to buy newspapers and books in the beach area, due to the post office staff involved in the sales¹⁶¹.

On June 15, 1961, another decree was issued by the Presidency of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR on «Enhancing the fight against those who withdraw from socially useful work and engage in anti-social parasitic lifestyles», which took action against those who «engaged in private entrepreneurship, engaged in illicit industry, begged, engaged in speculation, make a living from income other than their wages, from which they buy cars, houses, summer houses, employ hired workers»¹⁶². The decree stipulated that they should be relocated to a specially designated place under the district or town people's court ruling for a period of 2 to 5 years, and that non-work income should be confiscated from them. They had to be reeducated at the place of eviction. If the displaced person proved his or her improvement by his or her exemplary conduct and honest work, he or she could be repatriated by the People's Court and at the request of social organizations after serving half of the eviction time. Working-age people who became actual drunkards as a result of regular consumption of alcoholic beverages, whose abnormal behavior created adverse conditions for cohabitation in the family and home, had to be sent to «healing labour» for a year by court order. According to the district newspaper, the population of the town welcomed the resolution¹⁶³. In Berehove, the verdicts were handed down at meetings convened by the housekeepers' or district street committees, the extent of which was decided by open vote. In convictions handed down without the participation of the court, defendants could not seek a lawyer to defend themselves. Everywhere, including in Berehove, there were people, who, with the help of this regulation, took revenge on others out of envy and malice.

On September 17, 1961, a district radio node was established in Berehove. They mainly read announcements every Sunday from 11:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., Moscow time, which reported on the excellent work success of the best plants and collective farms, the

¹⁵⁹ Vörös Zászló. 1961. 27 április. Ol. 2.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid. 1 május. Ol. 3.

¹⁶¹ Ibid. 11 május. Ol. 4.

¹⁶² Ibid. 15 május. Ol. 1.

¹⁶³ Ibid. 17 június. Ol. 2.

work of leading animal breeders, and also news about sports successes and cultural life. Particular attention was paid, among others, to reporting on the socialist competition in honor of the XXII Congress; the leaders of industrial and agricultural production, leaders of district organizations, etc., spoke in front of the microphone¹⁶⁴.

On October 17, 1961, the XXII Congress of the CPSU, which adopted the party's new program and bylaws, was opened. The new party program set unrealistic goals, for example, to complete the building of the foundations of a communist society in the country in two decades¹⁶⁵. After this, the sentence: «Today's generation of Soviet people will live in communism» became proverbial¹⁶⁶.

On October 22, 1961, the 150th anniversary of the birth of Ferenc Liszt was commemorated in the town. On this occasion, a large-scale Liszt evening was held at the Music School on October 24¹⁶⁷.

On December 29, 1961, the Presidency of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR issued a decree «On criminal liability for the negligent operation and preservation of agricultural machinery»¹⁶⁸. According to this, the negligent operation and preservation of tractors, cars, combines, agricultural machines of the sovkhozes, kolkhozes and other state or cooperative organizations, their damage or breakage were punished by imprisonment or forced labour for up to one year. If the same acts were committed more than once or there was significant damage, those responsible were sentenced to three years in prison¹⁶⁹.

The years 1961–1964 were the years of great reorganizations and failures in the Soviet Union, the effects of many decrees, resolutions, and laws adopted at this time were experienced by the people of Berehove just as in other parts of the Soviet Union. The shortcomings of N. Khrushchev's professional and political leadership became more and more obvious. He did not employ suitable professionals but preferred to employ incompetent flattering advisers, and this led to serious consequences of his policy.

Due to the burdens on agriculture, excessive centralization, and unprofessional management, the expected results fell short. Therefore, on March 5, 1962, the Plenary Session of the Central Committee of the CPSU put on the agenda an action plan referred to as «The task of the party in the field of improving the governance of agriculture»¹⁷⁰. As a result, on 22 March 1962, the Central Committee of the CPSU and the Council of Ministers of the USSR adopted a resolution on the reorganization of agricultural management¹⁷¹. Everywhere, including Berehove, Territorial Kolhoz-Sovhoz Production Directorates were established¹⁷². The Berehove, Vynohradiv and Irshava district farms were also subordinated to the latter,

¹⁶⁴ Ibid. 23 szeptember. Ol. 4.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid. 19 október. Ol. 1–2.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid. 2 november. Ol. 3.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid. 24 október. Ol. 4.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid. 4 január. Ol. 1.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid. 11 január. Ol. 1.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid. 6 március. Ol. 1; Ibid. 8 március. Ol. 1–2.

¹⁷¹ Ibid. 27 március. Ol. 1–3.

¹⁷² Ibid. 3 április. Ol. 1–2.

with a Berehove centre and two separate party committees and councils for the management of industry and agriculture¹⁷³.

In the Berehove district, 15 printed kolkhoz newspapers were published, which helped the work of party and kolkhoz leaders. For example, they reported on the work of harvesting groups, those who were at the forefront of the harvest, devoted a lot of space to the issues of animal husbandry, but they also included a presentation of cultural life and the «growth of the good life of collective farmers»¹⁷⁴. The press, of course, was under serious control, and journalists were not allowed to deviate from the political instructions¹⁷⁵.

On December 30, 1962, the districts of Transcarpathia were merged in accordance with the decree of the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidency. The districts of Vynogradovo and Irshava were added to the district of Berehove and Berehove was made the seat of the merged district. Its population was 267 thousand – Ukrainians, Hungarians, Russians, Romanians and other nationalities. The employees' representatives had two town councils (Berehove and Vynohradiv), 3 rural towns (Irshava, Korolevo, Vylok) and 66 village councils, and a total of 43 plants and factories belonged to it¹⁷⁶.

On 16 May 1963, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR issued a decree: «On the Standards of Livestock Which May Be Personal Property of Citizens who Are Not Members of Kolkhozes»¹⁷⁷. Accordingly, from 1 July 1963, each family was allowed to have (a) one cow and one calf or less than 8 months old, or a goat with an offspring not more than one-year-old, and (b) one pig or three sheep with offsprings under one year of age. Whoever had more had to be taxed. And whoever concealed the livestock subject to tax at the time of the census was fined up to 50 rubles.

Another decree of the Presidency of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, also adopted on 16 May 1963, was entitled: «Increasing liability for the hoarding of bread and bakery products purchased in state and cooperative shops in order to feed cattle and poultry»¹⁷⁸. Under the regulation, the feeding of cattle with bread, flour, groats and other bakery products purchased in state and cooperative shops was to be banned everywhere. If someone first violated the decree, they were fined from 10 to 50 rubles and the purchased products were confiscated. If someone violated it regularly and, moreover, did not engage in socially useful work, the article «154.1. Purchase of bread and other bakery products for the purpose of feeding livestock» was punishable by up to one year of imprisonment, or repair work, or a fine of up to 200 rubles. If the person had previously been convicted, he or she could be sentenced to 1 to 3 years in prison and confiscation of the property. In addition, shopkeepers who exceeded the amount that could be sold to 1 person paid a fine of up to 10 rubles.

On May 29, 1963, a session of the Berehove District Council of Workers' Representatives was held. Representatives discussed «measures to improve trade and catering in the district»¹⁷⁹. There was talk of a shortage of goods, poor work in the

¹⁷³ Vörös Zászló. 1962. 2 június. Ol. 2.

¹⁷⁴ Vörös Zászló. 1959. 26 augusztus. Ol. 1.

¹⁷⁵ SATO. F. 1. Op. 1. Delo Nr. 2878. Ol. 1–120.

¹⁷⁶ Csanádi Gy. Sorsfordító évek... Ol. 246.

¹⁷⁷ Vörös Zászló. 1963. 21 május. Ol. 1.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid. Ol. 1–2.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid. 1 június. Ol. 2.

canteens of industrial plants, shortcomings in the feeding of schoolchildren, incorrect distribution of goods, and so on.

In June 1963, the slogan «*newspapers and magazines for all families*» was repeated over and over in accordance with the XXII Party Congress. After all, in them «the new victories of the Soviet people, the achievements of Hungarian science and technology, the rich life of the builders of communism» and so on were described. Measures were taken for the employees of the Press Office, the Post Office, party, trade union, and Komsomol organizations to provide people with newspapers. In January 1963, there were 78 166 subscribers to newspapers and magazines in the Berehove district. «Immediate action must be taken to ensure that every family receives a newspaper!», – the instruction stated¹⁸⁰.

From July 17, 1963, the Berehove Town Communal Office made garbage disposal regular: on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 6 to 9 p.m. The population was asked to take the garbage to the garbage truck of the Communal Works at the time designated for their street¹⁸¹.

At the end of September 1963, the biggest traveling exhibition of amateur photographers in the area was held in Berehove, at the House of Culture, which stood out for its richness, variety and artistic standard. Among others, those interested could view the works of M. Stanchenko, M. Popik, I. Orosi, F. Perem¹⁸².

On December 9, 1963, the plenary session of the Central Committee of the CPSU began its work, the main topic of which was: «Accelerating the development of the chemical industry – the main condition for boosting agricultural production and raising public welfare»¹⁸³. The essence of this was that the development of agriculture was impossible without the knowledge of chemistry because without it it is not possible to achieve a constant and abundant crop. Therefore, after this, great emphasis was placed on the teaching of agricultural chemistry. To this end, a school of agricultural chemistry was opened for collective farm chairmen, at the Regional Agricultural Experimental Station, and for agronomists and brigade leaders in the New Life Kolkhoz. In addition, inter-kolkhoz agrochemical laboratories were established in several kolkhozes in the district¹⁸⁴.

The cultural life of the town was developing as well. More and more people visited theaters, cinemas, libraries, museums, exhibitions, concerts and several foreign, mainly Hungarian, art groups visited Berehove. The guest performance of the Leo Weiner string quartet from Budapest was outstanding among these. The amateur group of the Berehove Folk Theater could be seen more and more often on the stage in more and more performances. In 1963, for example, the play «Dódi» by the Slovak writer Teréz B. Dávid, directed by Ottó Schober, was performed with great success, the sets of which were made by Anna Horváth¹⁸⁵.

The district of Beregovo and the town of Berehove developed significantly during the Khrushchev era. Several new plants were established, and unemployment in the town was almost completely eliminated. The number of people working in the district's industry

¹⁸⁰ Ibid. Ol. 2–3.

¹⁸¹ Ibid. 16 július. Ol. 4.

¹⁸² Ibid. 26 szeptember. Ol. 4.

¹⁸³ Ibid. 7 december. Ol. 1.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid. 12 december. Ol. 1–2.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid. Ol. 4.

was more than 14 000¹⁸⁶. There were 53 industrial plants in the district, which produced goods worth 73 107 000 rubles a year. The largest plants in Berehove included the Berehove Furniture Combine, the Brick and Tile Factory, the Leather Factory, the Machine Repair Plant, the Car Repair Shop, the Mechanical Repair Plant, the Porcelain Dish Factory, the Calibration Workshop, the Tobacco Fermenter, the Wine Factory, the Printing House, the Milling Factory, the Clothing Factory, the Food Combine, the Bread Combine, the Cheese Factory, the Combined Feed Plant, etc.¹⁸⁷. In addition, the electrification of the district was completed, leaving only a few homesteads without electric lighting¹⁸⁸.

The district had a wide network of health care facilities available to workers. According to January 1964 data, the number of hospital beds approached 1 000. Of these, 475 hospital beds were in Berehove. The Regional Neurological Hospital and the Polio Sanatorium also operated here. 22 pharmacies provided medicines to the population. The number of health care workers approached 3 000, including 260 physicians, and the number of secondary health care personnel was around 1 400¹⁸⁹. Every year, workers from the district received free referrals to various sanatoriums and resorts in the Soviet Union. State aid was provided to mothers with many children and single mothers¹⁹⁰.

According to data from early January 1964, there were 194 schools in the district. Of all the schools, 54 were elementary, 109 eight-grade schools, and 28 were secondary schools. The number of students in the given school year was 48 645, and 18 663 children studied in secondary schools. There were 2 838 teachers in the district, 991 of them had higher education. 900 children were being raised in 3 boarding schools in the district, of which 200 lived in the Berehove eight-grade boarding school¹⁹¹.

On February 15, 1964, the plenary of the Central Committee of the CPSU adopted a resolution entitled: «Based on the expansion of agriculture, the widespread use of manure, the development of irrigation, complex mechanization and the use of scientific and life experience to increase agricultural production as soon as possible»¹⁹². The resolution was discussed at all collective farms, the workers agreed with it, and at the meetings, it was promised with great enthusiasm that all production sectors would be made profitable and the kolkhozes would become strong farms¹⁹³. After that, an even greater complex mechanization and automation of agriculture began¹⁹⁴.

In 1964, an attempt was made to summarize the ten-year results of Khrushchev's agricultural reforms, the newspapers reported success. In reality, however, the results were pathetic, no significant progress was made in agricultural production, and measures such

¹⁸⁶ Ibid. Ol. 3.

¹⁸⁷ Vörös Zászló. 1964. 12 december. Ol. 2.

¹⁸⁸ Vörös Zászló. 1963. 26 december. Ol. 2.

¹⁸⁹ Vörös Zászló. 1964. 16 december. Ol. 2.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid. 6 február. Ol. 3.

¹⁹¹ Ibid. 9 január. Ol. 2.

¹⁹² Ibid. 18 február. Ol. 1.

¹⁹³ Ibid. Ol. 2.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid. 25 február. Ol. 2–3.

as the elimination of grass rotations, the steady increase in the area under maize, peas, and sugar beet caused a decline in several other sectors¹⁹⁵. The problems got worse.

On July 13, 1964, at the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Khrushchev reported on «Measures for the Implementation of the CPSU Program for Improving Public Welfare»¹⁹⁶. A bill was passed to increase pensions and benefits for collective farmers, as well as the wages of workers in public education, health care, housing and communal management, commerce, public education, and other sectors of the economy that directly served the population. The bill provided for the establishment of a national social welfare fund for collective farmers through collective farm allocations and annual state budget allocations. The bill stated that collective farm members who did not stop working in the collective farm after retirement should be encouraged. It also established aid for kolkhoz women in the event of pregnancy and childbirth, i.e., they were granted 56 days of paid leave before and after childbirth. It envisaged a 25 % increase in the wages of public education workers, 23% in sports and health care, and 15 % in trade.

On September 13, 1964, the first international friendship festival was held in Berehove. After the speeches of the party leaders describing the «great economic successes of the past years» in Heroes' Square, the choir in the folk costumes of the 21 nations lined up on the stage¹⁹⁷.

On October 1, 1964, the resolution of the Council of Ministers of the USSR «On the State Pension and Social Insurance of the Presidents, Specialists and Operators of the Collective Farms» came into force¹⁹⁸. According to the resolution, pensions were increased based on the length of service. The regulation also provided for the payment of benefits in the event of temporary incapacity for work.

Cooperation with the neighboring regions was also developing¹⁹⁹. New treaties were signed between the Transcarpathian County of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, the Western Slovak Territory of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, the Szabolcs-Szatmár County of the Hungarian People's Republic, and the Satu Mare Province of the Romanian Socialist Republic, which provided a legal basis for the establishment and maintenance of regular administration, trade and cultural relations²⁰⁰.

By the early 1960s, it had become regular practice for regional party committees in the border zones of different countries to meet together to adopt annual action plans for border affairs²⁰¹. They mainly came together to exchange experiences, to discuss the development of different industries and working methods²⁰².

On October 17, 1964, the district newspaper reported on the October 14th Plenary Session of the CPSU Central Committee, according to which «The CPSU Central Committee Plenary Session complied with Comrade Khrushchev's request to be released from the posi-

¹⁹⁵ Csanádi Gy. Sorsfordító évek... Ol. 247.

¹⁹⁶ Vörös Zászló. 1964. 16 július. Ol. 1.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid. 15 szeptember. Ol. 3.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid. 30 július. Ol. 1.

¹⁹⁹ SATO. F. 1. Op. 1. Delo Nr. 3011. Ol. 8.

²⁰⁰ Ibid. Delo Nr. 3488. Ol. 1–205.

²⁰¹ SATO. F. 1. Op. 5. Od. zb. 694. Ol. 25.

²⁰² Ibid. Delo Nr. 555. Ol. 1–18.

tions of First Secretary of CPSU Central Committee, CPSU Central Committee presidium member, chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers due to his old age and deteriorating health. The plenary of the Central Committee of the CPSU elected Comrade Brezhnev L. I. as the first secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU». A. Kosygin became the chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers²⁰³.

Leonid Brezhnev initially had high hopes, but in the autumn of 1964, it was not yet known that after the initial great momentum, he would become the creator of the period of stagnation.

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БЕРЕГОВЕ ТА ЙОГО ОКОЛИЦІ ЗА ХРУЩОВА (1953–1964)

Оскільки історії міст, селищ, сіл – невід’ємна частина розуміння історії країни, епохи, то акцентовано, що знання локальної історії важливе для усвідомлення минулого місцевих мешканців, розвитку та збереження їхнього почуття самобутності.

Вказано, що назву «Берегас» згадано в офіційних документах від 1504 р., а точна дата заснування міста з багатівічною історією – предмет суперечки серед місцевих краєзнавців: Ласло Зубанич (László Zubánics) датує її 1061 р. або 1063 р., а Дьордь Чанаді (György Csanády) – 1096 р. Отже, встановлено, що місту, яке розкинулося на березі каналу Верке, вже понад 900 років, і воно пережило багато потрясінь, славних та трагічних моментів. Зазначено, що історія його дуже багата на різні важливі події, а в радянський

період (1945–1991), як і у складі незалежної України, Берегове відіграло надзвичайно важливу роль у політичній та культурній історії місцевого населення.

Вказано, що після смерті генералісимуса Сталіна (Іосиф Сталин) 5 березня 1953 р. стало очевидно, що соціалістичний табір, який раніше вважався нероздільним, усе-таки був далеко не єдиним. Відзначено, що Микита Хрущов (Никита Хрущов) переміг у змаганні за владу трьох тріумвіратів, після чого ознаки політичного послаблення ставали все помітнішими, а наслідки його політики були відчутні і в Береговому. Констатовано, що період із 1953 р. по 1964 р., епоху хрущовської відлиги, можна вважати позитивним десятиліттям в історії Радянського Союзу з погляду підвищення рівня життя й ослаблення диктатури, він характеризувався зменшенням політичних репресій та частковою лібералізацією політичного життя.

Відомо, що Берегове розміщене за 72 км від Ужгорода – адміністративного центру Закарпатської обл. України і лише за 6 км від кордону з Угорщиною, тобто Європейським Союзом. Відзначено, що багато хто цікавився містом, його минуле досліджували декілька істориків, однак ґрунтовної монографії, яка б охоплювала всю історію, його політичне, економічне та культурне життя, до сьогодні не створено. Відтак у дослідженні це також не поставлено за мету, а лише віддзеркалено життя й історію міста за часів М. Хрущова, переважно на основі статей, опублікованих у сучасній берегівській районній газеті «Червоний прапор» («Vörös Zászló»).

Ключові слова: історія Берегового, Берегсас, політика щодо Берегового, економіка, культура, суспільство.