

Hungary agrees on new rules for presidential elections

19.9.89 Pgi

Susan Viets in Budapest

HUNGARY'S ruling Social-
ist Workers' Party and
opposition groups last night
agreed on rules for presiden-
tial elections to take place on
November 26.

The accord, covering six
laws, was signed after three
months of round table talks
between the Communist
Party, opposition leaders,
unions and other groups.

It provides for a new law
for free elections, and a con-
stitutional court to safe-
guard the presidential post.
The proposals are to be sub-
mitted to parliament for rati-
fication next week.

"We have come a step
towards a political structure
where political decisions will
be originated by citizens and
will be carried out by grass-
roots and credible organisa-
tions," said Mr Rezso Nyers,
the SWP president.

The opposition split over
when and how to elect the
president, a dispute resulting
in a last-minute boycott by
two of the groups, the Alli-
ance of Free Democrats and
the radical youth group Fi-
desz, which clearly angered
SWP delegates.

Mr Peter Tolgyessey, an Al-
liance spokesman, said that
if the president is elected
first, "the parliamentary
elections will neither be
really free nor based on
equal chances between the
parties."

Mr Imre Pozsgay, the
SWP's most reform-minded
leader, has already been
nominated as its presidential
candidate and is widely ex-
pected to win.

● Mr Robert Mosbacher, the
United States Commerce
Secretary, on a visit to Buda-
pest, yesterday granted ex-
port privileges to Hungary.

19 September 1989

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