

Kadar stripped of party post

9.589 Pg 6

Susan Viets in Budapest

MR JANOS KADAR, former general secretary of the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party, was relieved late last night of his post as party president and his seat in the central committee.

The announcement followed a statement last week by the politburo member, Mr Pal Vastagh, that Mr Kadar's "mental and physical health are in a very bad state".

Mr Kadar, who led Hungary for the 32 years following the 1956 uprising, lost his politburo membership at the May 1988 party conference. Mr Karoly Grosz was elected general secretary, while the

party created the new post of president for Mr Kadar.

Since May of last year Mr Kadar has all but disappeared from party politics. His infrequent and largely ceremonial appearances at central committee sessions sparked rumours of deteriorating health.

The decision to strip Mr Kadar of his post comes at a time when Hungary is experiencing a widespread and profound review of its history since the war.

The weekend edition of the Hungarian daily, Magyar Hirlap, published excerpts from a document written by Hungary's one-time politburo member, Mr Mihaly Farkas, which for the first time publicly implicated Mr

Kadar in the Rajk trial of 1949.

Hungary's secret police, the AVH, "tortured Rajk for a whole night while Farkas and Kadar were sitting in the room next door".

An article entitled "And What Does Janos Kadar Say?" which appeared in the Hungarian weekly, ES, earlier this year, stated that Mr Kadar gave evidence in the 1958 proceedings against Hungary's former Prime Minister, Imre Nagy.

Following a visit earlier this month, Mr Grosz reported Mr Kadar was suffering from lung problems associated with his years in prison and that he was unable "to come to terms with political changes".

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