

# Rivals round on Hungary party

11.10.89 Pg 12

**Susan Viets in Budapest**

**T**HE opposition was yesterday unimpressed with the emergence of the new Hungarian Socialist Party, claiming that it had made too many compromises.

It said the party would suffer at the free elections scheduled for the spring. Mr Mihaly Bihari, a Communist Party member expelled last year for attending an opposition meeting, said the compromise engineered by Mr Nyers would not hold together for long.

Criticism followed the end of the four-day congress which, in its final hour, voted to disarm the Workers' Militia and make it a non-party body. While an

important step, this falls short of opposition demands to disband the organisation and will remain a sharp issue of debate. The Workers' Militia is now under government control.

The party also voted to hand back some of its much disputed property, but accepted the softer of two proposals. They have agreed to register their assets and to hand back property they do not need, which will undoubtedly include lavish holiday resorts.

They rejected a proposal to pass all party property over to a parliamentary committee and will still face a barrage of criticism on this issue from the opposition.

The congress also agreed to propose to parliament that Oc-

tober 23, the day marking the start of the 1956 uprising, be a national holiday. Parliament will decide on this next week and preparations are now going ahead for the first public celebrations of the uprising. The event is expected to attract tens of thousands.

Mr Bihari said yesterday that the HSP "cannot be held together for long because there are directly clashing platforms". He said a congress decision to keep party cells at the workplaces is indicative of the split in the newly elected 24-man praesidium. Mr Nyers, the party president, voted for the cells, while his praesidium colleagues, Mr Imre Pozsgay, Mr Miklos Nemeth and Mr Gyula Horn voted against. In the last

minutes of the congress reformers tried to raise the issue again but were roundly defeated.

Mr Gabor Roszik, an opposition MP, yesterday announced that his group, the Hungarian Democratic Forum will oppose Mr Pozsgay as candidate for the presidential elections and that the opposition might field a joint candidate. Mr Roszik also denied that the Forum would enter into a coalition with the HSP before the multi-party elections.

Yesterday the small opposition October Party announced that Mr Sandor Racz will be their candidate for the presidential elections. Mr Racz headed the main workers' council in the 1956 uprising.

Reproduced with permission from  
the *Guardian*

11 October 1989