



A.)

ABOUT SOME OF MY COMRADES IN THE CAMP OF FORCED LABOUR IN
BOR /SERBIA/ 1944.

I was in a camp of forced labour in Bor between the 21st of May and the 15th of October 1944. I met there among my comrades persons who showed a remarkable helpfulness, humanity and pity towards me who was 20 years old at that time. This quality was the more appreciable because we were in a desperate situation starving and frightened which naturally engendered egotism and ruthlessness in most people.

I remember some persons whose pity and humanity showed itself towards my own person. There was the poet Miklos Radnoti who gave the half of his meal to me which he received as extra gift in the kitchen. There was a man, a barber who undertook the shave of many of his room-mates and who offered me to use gratis his remaining foam to my own shave. There was a young man who was very desperate because he worked as an acrobat in an African city before the war and returned home just before the outbreak of the war. We became chatting partners, and he trusted me to bring his portion of lunch from the distant kitchen when we removed to the city of Bor later on. At this occasion I cheated him by taking a thin slice of his bread away while returning to him. It was a foul trick of mine and he noticed it, didn't trust me any more and didn't speak with me. Then there was a comrade whom I don't remember exactly of. He hold me back once when in the camp I wanted to denounce myself to the officer in charge of the camp in my despair. The story was the following. Once I found a mess-tin full of meal derelict in the barrack-room. I had no self control enough and being very hungry I ate it. Shortly afterwards the proprietor of the mess-tin searched his meal and began to scold me as a thief, which he was right of. He wanted to bring me before the commander in charge and at this moment I became hysterical and without self control and wanted myself to go to the officer. Somebody of the room-mates who was older than me hold me back in the last minute and thus saved me by being suspended by my wrists as it was the used way of punishment in the camp. There were some comrades whose great moral strength and bravery I saw, though I had no direct experience in connection with my own person. I remember a man, named Justus who had an optical shop in Budapest and who was in the last weeks the commander of the room where we the white ribboned workmen lived. I remember our physician Dr Bardos who ran from one place to the other whole day long to help the sick persons. Then there was a stubby young man, a lawyer who always made laugh the others by expressing the simplest sentence in a long phrase in a lawyer's slang.

Of course I had negative experiences on the side of my comrades too. There was a man who was at that time the commander of our room. He demanded my wrist-watch and promised to bring for it lard. But he only brought some irrelevant food and never the promised meat. Then there was another primitive and aggressive young man who on my way back from my working place pointed a knife to my stomach, accusing me to have left something of his propriety on the working post.

It is so tragic to think that probably all these men perished during their way back in november 1944 because these

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persons were rallied into the first group which returned from Serbia parting one week from Bor earlier than the second group where I became rallied to. And how many other men of great moral strength must have perished in all the annihilation camps during the second world war. Of course the right to live and not to be killed is also the attribute of persons who have no special appreciable mental or moral qualities. The grief for their forced death is of a similar necessity.

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