

Sanders, 3 Years in Red Jail, Recounts Events of Arrest

Released Briton Describes Ways of Communist Justice

By Kenneth Sheppard

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LONDON, Sept. 14.—Three days after Edgar Sanders walked across the Hungarian border on his way home to England, I sat with him in a tiny room in a London hotel. No longer was he the bewildered, unkempt political prisoner who had been serving 13 years' solitary confinement and then been suddenly pardoned.

Here was Edgar Sanders, the British businessman, immacu-

This is the first full interview given by Edgar Sanders, British businessman, since he was sentenced to 13 years on espionage charges by a Budapest court in 1949. He was released a few weeks ago and now he is in England.

lately dressed in a new light brown suit, a cream shirt, and brown tie—a Sanders who had not forgotten how to laugh, to be witty at the expense of his late "hosts," a self-assured Sanders.

His face still bore the pallor of the prison. But he talked. How he talked!

For three and a half years he had been an oyster, not allowed to see or speak to his fellow prisoners, not even allowed to talk to his guards, who watched him night and day, except to ask for his meals or to renew his locks.

Glad to Hear Own Voice.

Now he talked like a man to whom it was very satisfying just to hear his own voice again.

In Hungary, he said, his firm, the American-owned International Standard Electric Co., together with other foreign firms in the country, had been in danger of being nationalized.

Negotiations were started. The draft agreement was initiated and sent to New York. There was a delay and the Hungarian government became impatient.

"Robert Vogeler (who was sentenced to 15 years and was released in April 1951) was always coming and going between Vienna and Budapest," said Mr. Sanders. "I was in temporary charge of the Budapest factories, but I was not a technical man—only an accountant. Vogeler was my immediate chief, in charge of Vienna and Budapest factories."

"He was followed around all the time. It was open shadowing designed to get on your nerves."

"I was shadowed only occasionally—I presume because the political police knew



—AP Photo.

EDGAR SANDERS.

the restaurants and bars I used more or less as clubs in which I met my friends. I never deviated from these places.

Vogeler Picked Up.

"Vogeler was leaving Budapest for Vienna on Friday, November 18, 1949. He was picked up by the political police somewhere outside Budapest—I never knew where.

"I didn't know of his arrest until two o'clock the next morning, Saturday, when I was awakened by the telephone. It was Mrs. Vogeler. She wanted to know where her husband was.

"On that Saturday morning my secretary, Mrs. Antha Zafos (who stood trial with Mr. Sanders), was arrested in her flat. The detectives then went straight to my office, collected all my files, took them away, and gave me a receipt.

"We did not work on Saturdays, but I was notified by telephone at my villa by the housekeeper of the flat in which my office was situated. My housekeeper, Anna Kliebel, witnessed the receipt for my files.

"Then I knew I should be picked up. I knew it was only a matter of time. I was just waiting for the political police to pounce.

"I spent the week end packing all my odds and ends and I left instructions with my housekeeper what to do after my arrest.

"On Monday morning, November 2, 1950, I reported the arrest of my secretary, and the taking away of my files, to the American Embassy—as my company was American.

"They were very surprised I was still at large!

Went to British Consul.

"From there I went to the British consul, Lt. Comdr. Revell Clayton Mannan—a tough little Irishman and a real nice fellow!

—and told him what had happened.

"I told him that I expected to be arrested at any moment as the 'last of the Mohicans' of the International Standard Electric. I also arranged with him that:

1. I should report to him in person at midday and at 6 p.m. every day.

2. Should I not appear after a five-minute lat, he would go to my villa, collect all my belongings and take them under the care of the British consulate.

"At 10 minutes to 6 that same evening I was on my way to report that I was still free although I had been tailed all day. My shadower thought he was unseen, but he was a clumsy fellow.

"About 40 yards short of the British consulate, just as I was about to cross the road, a small private car drew up. Out jumped a man who told me in German: 'I am a policeman. Will you step into the car?'

"Struggling was, I knew, useless. There were two of them. Ten minutes later I was in the political prison.

"They searched me: took all my valuables—my ring, cigarette case, even my key chain. Interrogation started.

Questioned Three Months.

"For three months exactly the interrogation continued. I was picked up on November 21, 1949, and my trial started on February 18, 1950.

"Interrogation usually came at night, when a man is not so alert. The sessions lasted anything between six and 34 hours nonstop and took place in the small, cold, unventilated cell where I was then jailed.

"I had to sleep on bare boards with only the semblance of bedclothes in the midst of a bitter

Hungarian winter. And that was shocking.

"Can you imagine what it is like—questions, questions, questions? Mostly they seemed relevant; you never knew what they were trying to get at, the time they had finished and I was turning mental tortures.

"They did not, in fact, physically torture me—but I was threatened.

"General Gabor Peter, chief of police, visited me three times. Each time he threatened me with physical violence if I refused to answer questions or gave false answers.

"During all this time they were trying to break my nerve. I was never alone. My stockbroker was with me night and day.

"A few days before the trial another man came into my cell. For three whole days he interrogated me and rehearsed me in my answers. That man turned out to be my judge.

"It came to a pitch when I thought they would start maltreating me. I had a liver complaint and I was eating very little. I was terribly nervous.

"I was so nervous—I had never been in a court before—that I could not stop shaking. I asked them for tablets to take during the trial to steady my nerves. They refused. And although they gave me a double brandy I did not do any good."

During his trial Mr. Sanders agreed with every act of treason with which the public prosecutor Dr. Gyula Alapi charged him. Alapi was the man who had prosecuted Cardinal Mindszenty a year before.

Mr. Sanders also implicated Mr. Vogeler, and named a number of officers in the former British Military Mission to

(See SANDERS, Page A-5.)

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