

'Nagy body' exhumed in Hungary

30.3.89 Pg 8

Susan Viets and Reuter
in Budapest

EXPERTS have exhumed from an unmarked grave a body which they believe is that of Imré Nagy, the Hungarian Prime Minister executed after the 1956 uprising.

The Justice Ministry state secretary, Mr Gyula Borics, said a rudimentary coffin wrapped in tarred paper had been found after six hours of digging two feet from Plot 301 of Budapest's sprawling General Cemetery.

"In all probability it is the coffin of Imré Nagy," he said, speaking half an hour after the remains were found.

Mr Nagy was executed in 1958 for treason during the 1956

rebellion. He was buried in the unmarked plot with his associates, Pal Maleter, Miklos Gimes, Jozsef Szilagyi and Geza Losonczy, and hundreds of other executed "counter-revolutionaries" — along with animal corpses from the city zoo.

Mr Nagy's reburial will take place on June 16, the 31st anniversary of the executions. Foundations for a memorial stone are also to be laid. The ceremony is expected to draw a large crowd.

Mr Borics has said: "Those who still consider the events of 1956 a simple counter-revolution and not a popular uprising, are opposed to these funeral services. They are also against Plot 301 becoming a permanent national memorial."

A government spokesman

has stressed the decision to allow the reburial of Mr Nagy and his associates was taken on humanitarian grounds and that Mr Nagy has not been politically rehabilitated.

The government has appointed a committee headed by the Justice Minister, Mr Kalman Kulcsar, to review show trials of the period 1945-62.

The cases up for review include that of the Maort Oil Company whose British and American managers were accused of spying in the early 1950s. The company was later nationalised.

The Nagy affair is being kept a separate issue until the report of the government's historical sub-committee, whose mandate includes reassessing 1956, is ready.

In February, a Politburo member, Mr Imré Pozsgay, precipitated a political crisis and widespread public debate by calling 1956 a popular uprising. Mr Nagy is seen as the leader of opposition in 1956 and it is feared that his rehabilitation would generate similar controversy.

At a film festival earlier this year, the government allowed a one-day screening of *Right of Asylum*, a previously banned documentary on the Nagy affair.

The Samizdat journal, Beszelo, recently published a partial list of those executed after 1956 and is pressing the government to follow suit.

Indications are that officials will continue to treat the Nagy affair with caution.

30 March 1989

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