

ESTONIA'S GEOPOLITICAL SITUATION AS FOUND IN ISTVÁN CSEKEY'S WORKS

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How did a highly educated scholar of law who was well-versed in European culture and politics view Estonia's international relations and its geopolitical situation throughout the 1920s and early 1930s? Examining István Csekey's works provides an answer to this question, one which bears particular relevance to events occurring today.¹

Professor István Csekey (1889–1963) was a prominent figure in Hungarian and European law during the twentieth century. Other than his significant academic contributions, Csekey played a defining role in promoting relations between Hungary and the nations of Estonia as well as Finland during the interwar period. In Estonia, he furthered awareness of the Hungarian state and culture via academic, educational and journalistic means while familiarizing Hungarian audiences with Estonia through his works and lectures.² Today, István Csekey's efforts have been largely forgotten, a state that is undeserved given the important role this noteworthy scholar filled in expanding interwar, Hungarian society's knowledge of Estonia. As the discipline of Finno-Ugric Studies seeks new alternatives in a world of dynamically fluctuating relations among the nations of Estonia, Finland and Hungary, it grows even more urgent for today's scholars to reexamine what precedents were set and what eminent works were achieved by those who went before us.

¹ This lecture was given at the Péter Domonkos Memorial Conference held on January 16, 2016 and contains a section of a soon-to-be published examination of Professor István Csekey's works on Estonian history.

² **Bereczki, A.** Eesti ja Soome rahvuspoliitika kajastumine Ungaris kahe maailmasõja vahelisel ajajärgul. – Akadeemia, 2005, 17, 2, 256–303.

THE GEOPOLITICAL SITUATION AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

From 1923 to 1931, István Csekey deepened his knowledge of Estonian culture and history as a guest professor lecturing at the University of Tartu, Estonia. He subsequently published his experiences stemming from these years in academic works and newspaper articles. From the very beginning of his arrival, Csekey devoted a great deal of time and energy to the geopolitical and national security issues inherent to Estonia's standing. Beginning in 1923 and spanning a period nearly two decades in length, István Csekey regularly returned to these topics; true to his usual form, Csekey frequently did so by repeating his main conclusions, yet with the passing of time these observations underwent slight refinements and alterations.

The following lines can be read at the beginning of many of Csekey's lengthier historical overviews: "There is no doubt that Estonia completely owes its formation to the outcome of the world war. Even during the war, neither the boldest dreamers nor freedom's fiercest advocates would have ever dared hope or consider that the Estonian people could come to inhabit their own independent and sovereign state. Unlike so many other nations, the Republic of Estonia was not created out of imperialist or expansionist aspirations, but rather emerged due to an unexpected turn of history's ever-revolving wheel and in tandem with the ambitions of a people that preserves and consciously cherishes an enduring culture embedded in folk traditions.³ In short, Csekey points to the fact that Russia's collapse enabled the emergence of Estonia and Finland as nations, a process that echoed throughout other parts of Europe as Germany, Romania and various Slavic countries were also established. With the appearance of Finland and Estonia, the map suddenly contained nations possessing a Finno-Ugric language and culture. Before this historical event occurred, among the Finno-Ugric peoples Hungary alone had been able to forge a stable state located in the Carpathian Basin. According to Csekey, fate had invested these peoples with the same task of "serving as a stalwart bastion in the defense of European culture from the East, which often released its threatening and crushing hordes."⁴

When outlining the region's more concrete, geopolitical characteristics, Csekey describes Finland and Estonia as border states existing on Russia's most northern edge, along the coast of the Baltic Sea. Due to its geographic location as well as its historic and cultural developments, the author classified Finland as a part of Scandinavia, while collectively grouping the Baltic states into a transitional

³ Csekey, I. Észtország története a világháború után. (Történelem a világháború után, 5.) Budapest, 1931, 18; Csekey, I. Észtország államának alakulásának története és államrendje. Klny. [Offprint] a Kecskeméten működő egyetemes ref. jogakadémia százéves fennállása alkalmából kiadott "Emlékkönyv"-ből. Hírlapkiadó és Nyomda, Kecskemét, 1932, 3.

⁴ Csekey, I. Észtország története a világháború után, 18–19; Csekey, I. Észtország államának alakulásának története és államrendje, 3.

territory that blocks Russia from the sea, yet also forms a kind of borderland of Central European culture due to the Protestant German influences found in its most northern reaches. In an earlier work, Csekey used the following words to expand upon this issue: “Its geographic location predestined the Baltics to act as the watershed for the East and West’s political, racial and economic estuaries.”⁵

In his article dating from 1924, Csekey points to the presence of Finno-Ugric peoples already occupying Russia’s European territory at the beginning of the ninth century (with the exception of certain western areas). He also drew attention to the fact that the Baltics’ eastern boundary falls precisely along the borderland the Vikings (Varangians) traversed to reach the Sea of Azov from the Gulf of Finland. This area separated not only the Russians from Europe’s other peoples, but also divided Eastern Orthodoxy from Western Catholicism and the Cyrillic alphabet from the Latin alphabet. After Estonia became an independent country, the Narva (Narova) River and Lake Peipus once again divided East from West, thereby returning to the era when this territory was gradually conquered beginning in the early thirteenth century. At the end of the sixteenth century, this in essence marked the farthest reaches gained by the forces of the King of Poland, István Báthory.

Following the so-called Great Northern War (1700–1721), which ended in victory for the Russian czar, Peter the Great, these eastern provinces bordering the sea remained a part of Russia for the next two hundred years. To use Csekey’s words, the Baltics acted as “Russia’s window,”⁶ through which it could peer toward Western Europe. Due to the way Germans had been “flocking” to the region for the past seven centuries, the Baltics also formed the Russian Empire’s most educated region. Throughout the centuries, Germans had come to control the region’s land holdings and trade while also directing its intellectual scene. During the last decades of czarism, German nobles from the Baltics practically took over the czar’s court, resulting in the spread of their retrograde ideas.

According to Csekey, it was the combination of the chauvinism of the Baltic German nobility and the “nervous haste” of Germany’s general staff that came to ruin Germany’s relationship with the Baltics. “How differently the world war would have ended if the Germans had not attempted to annex the Baltics while simultaneously stoking the flames of Russian Bolshevism. If Germany had refrained from playing with the Red fire and kept a firm hand on Russia... the map of Europe would not be at all what it is today. Instead, German forces had to withdraw from the Baltics, where the extreme nature of their military rule had already earned the local population’s hatred. The Entente created Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania...”⁷ As Csekey viewed the situation, among these so-called border

⁵ Csekey, I. Az Észt Köztársaság alkotmánya és a Baltikum világpolitikai helyzete. – Magyar Kisebbség, 1926, 5, 4, 13–14.

⁶ Csekey, I. A Baltikum és a szovjet. – Budapesti Hírlap, 20.12.1924; Csekey, I. Az Észt Köztársaság alkotmánya és a Baltikum világpolitikai helyzete, 14.

⁷ Csekey, I. A Baltikum és a szovjet, 2; Csekey, I. Az Észt Köztársaság alkotmánya és a Baltikum világpolitikai helyzete, 14–15.

states Poland and Romania turned toward the Mediterranean and French dependence, while the Baltic states oriented themselves toward the Baltic Sea and therefore fell under British influence. In an earlier article, Csekey added that the Soviet Union's attitude toward the Baltic states revolved around the Soviet Union's relationship with Great Britain. In reference to the current situation, experts in political science would surely agree that the influence exerted by the British at this time closely resembles the role United States plays in the region today.

SWEDISH, POLISH AND FINNISH POLITICAL AIMS

In reference to the King of Sweden's visit to Estonia in 1929, István Csekey stated that Estonia had – by virtue of coming under Sweden's powerful influence – entered Northern Europe. This cultural impact mostly made itself felt in the areas of technical administration and education. It was during this Swedish period, for instance, that Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden established the University of Dorpat (Tartu) in 1632 as the sister institution to Uppsala University.

When commenting on the official visit Estonia's head of state, Jaan Tõnisson, made to Stockholm in 1928, Csekey emphasized that Estonia's political leadership was attempting to draw closer to Sweden rather than looking eastward. Instead of opting for obvious shows of political influence, Sweden worked to bring Estonia – together with other nations that had once belonged to the former Swedish Empire – into its economic and cultural sphere of interest. In Csekey's opinion, the future of this Swedish-dominated cultural commonwealth depended on its members' – with particular emphasis on Estonia and Finland – ability to block the advance of Slavs and Bolshevism from the East.

In February of the following year, Csekey followed the trip made by Estonia's head of state to Warsaw for readers of the *Budapesti Hírlap* ['Budapest News'].⁸ He did not view the reinforcement of Estonian and Polish relations as a position that would be irreconcilable with Estonia's gradually warming connection with Sweden. Other than the advantages posed by gaining Poland's support as the largest military power in Eastern Europe, Csekey also weighed the possibility of establishing an anti-Bolshevist bloc stretching from the Mediterranean to the Bering Sea. More significantly, he believed that differences among the region's nations could be solved. In his opinion, Europe was once again facing exactly the same question Báthory had upon realizing that Russia's advance formed the greatest danger threatening Western culture.

While living in Estonia, Professor Csekey also developed close ties with Finland. Since he also made roughly a dozen trips to this country, Csekey wrote numerous studies and newspaper articles about this other nation in the north.

⁸ Csekey, I. Az észtt "államvén" Varsóban. – *Budapesti Hírlap*, 13.2.1930.

The concept of the “Estonian-Finnish bridge” – a symbol of cooperation between Estonia and Finland that emerged in the second half of the nineteenth century – inspired the text Csekey published in the journal, *Magyar Külpolitika* [‘Hungarian Foreign Affairs’].⁹ In this study, he observed that Finnish and Estonian politicians had only viewed the issue of cooperation as important while their nations were still living under Russian rule. In spite of what could be deemed in many ways as a common past, a related language and culture and similar geographic location, nothing was done to develop this joint line of defense against the East. To the contrary, relations between the two countries actually cooled to the point of frostiness. While Finland strove to join forces with Scandinavia’s foreign policy, at this point in time Estonia still believed in cooperating with the other nations bordering the Soviet Union.

According to Csekey, Hungary¹⁰ would have welcomed the union between Estonia and Finland given their similar circumstances: both nations were small and impoverished while the cost of having a public administration was undeniably expensive. A country with a small population can obviously not compete with nations possessing much larger populations. As can be read in Csekey’s 1929 article, he recommended that Estonia build a much closer relationship with Finland, whose economy was statistically better. In spite of their shared linguistic and cultural past, a joint state would not have to be immediately established, but rather a customs union would be the best option: each nation’s administration, parliament and government could operate independently of the other’s while maintaining joint direction of foreign policy, the military and finances. This Finnish-Estonian union would represent a significant force while simultaneously cutting costs considerably.¹¹

When writing in the beginning of the 1930s about Estonia’s international relations, Csekey emphasized that – as a nation possessing a unique geopolitical location as a buffer state – it was in Estonia’s interest to remain in the best possible relations with its neighbours. Together with the other two Baltic states, Estonia’s leadership endeavored to establish an effective means of enforcing its interests at the League of Nations, but these attempts were never fully successful due to conflict between Poland and Lithuania. “Estonia’s geopolitical location, which acts as a connecting bond between East and West, demands a sense of cautious restraint in international politics. With time, however, this international necessity may form a firm base for Estonia’s future.”¹² As we know, this latter statement was not to become reality.

⁹ Csekey, I. A finn-hid problémája. – *Magyar Külpolitika*, 1929, 10, 12, 11.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Csekey, I. Észtország története a világháború után, 41; Csekey, I. Észtország állammá alakulásának története és államrendje, 19.

ESTONIA'S 1924 COMMUNIST PUTSCH AND ESTONIAN-RUSSIAN RELATIONS

As was already demonstrated in the discussion of the previous topics, István Csekey could not exactly be called an admirer of Russia or communism. He viewed both as a threat to Western civilization and this opinion appeared in unvarnished form in his journalistic writings. As far as his aversion for and fear of the East is concerned, his feelings were most likely founded on his historical perspective, the public mood of the time and his analyses of national security. His misgivings surrounding Bolshevism were based on personal experience; in the spring of 1919, at the time of the Hungarian Soviet Republic, his own life came under threat when the “Reds” issued a warrant for his arrest.

In his historical overview, the chapter he dedicated to analysing Estonian-Russian relations and their future prospects was given the title of “A kommunista veszély” [‘The Communist Peril’]. Here, Csekey partly reused the thoughts he had expressed in his lecture given at the Magyar Külügyi Társaság [Hungarian Society of Foreign Affairs] in 1926, but also borrowed from two newspaper articles that had been published in Hungary a few days following the communist putsch, in the beginning of December, 1924. The chapter begins with the following sentence: “Estonia’s geopolitical situation bears within itself the peril of communism, for the country shares two hundred-seventy-seven kilometers of border with Soviet Russia. This is further compounded by the circumstance that this small, young republic beat the Soviets on open ground, causing the leaders of Estonia’s communist movement to flee to the neighboring territory. From there they were able to continue their underground work via secret channels. Among this more educated, not easily ruffled northern people the Bolshevik propaganda did not reap many positive results.”¹³

Csekey blamed liberal Estonian policies for not bringing special measures against the communists, who even had their own parliamentary party for quite some time. He summarized the most significant moments of the communist attempt to overthrow the state thus: “Once it became apparent that the leaders working at the orders of the Third International’s Estonian branch could not exert widespread influence on Estonia’s society, they aimed to achieve their goals via a government overthrow. Roughly fifty trustworthy and amply armed comrades were joined by workers from Tallinn’s Russian harbor organization to form a force of nearly three hundred supporters. On the morning of December 1, 1924, this force attacked a few governmental and military institutions located in the capital. While this assault was totally unexpected, troops from Estonia’s regular army and the police soon restored order. Half of the rebels were arrested while the rest fled to Russia. As to what little effect this putsch had on the “working people,” this is best

¹³ Csekey, I. Észtország története a világháború után, 38; Csekey, I. Észtország állammá alakulásának története és államrendje, 17.

shown by the fact that factories remained open and production continued as usual on this day.”¹⁴

In Professor Csekey’s estimation, the leaders of this putsch arrived from the Soviet Union, where they – as émigré communists – mainly proved incapable of gaining the right kind of position for themselves. Since the Third International could not provide them with any kind of role in Leningrad, they had the choice of filling modest positions in Siberia or returning to Estonia to lay down the groundwork for a revolution. At the end of November, they crossed the border at Narva bearing false passports, Soviet money and Soviet military plans. The Third International had sent its secret agents into Estonia so telegrams requesting aid from the Third International could be sent once strategically placed locations throughout the capital had been occupied. On the day preceding the putsch, the number of secret telegrams exchanged between Moscow and the Soviet embassy in Tallinn was uncommonly intense, albeit this activity was taken at the time to be in an effort to consolidate good relations with Tallinn. In Csekey’s opinion, the Third International had been preparing for years to spark a socialist revolution from within Estonia, if at all possible, at which time the Soviet Union could rush to help. Due to Estonia’s geopolitical significance, it was of utmost importance that revolution first break out in Estonia, from where it could then spread to the two, other Baltic states, thereby inducing the collapse of all the border nations found in the buffer zone. Csekey emphasized that, other than this, Soviet politics were primarily aiming to destroy Poland.¹⁵

In an article published in the *Budapesti Hírlap*, Csekey expressed the need for Estonia’s officials to show no mercy toward communist activities, in light of the nation’s present situation. He also mentioned movements by the Soviet Union’s Baltic fleet stationed in Kronstadt, at the ready to offer its “assistance”, as well as the presence of journalists who had arrived in Tallinn bearing a pre-printed proclamation for the purpose of announcing all that was to occur. According to Csekey, these preparations should be cause for alarm in Europe.

This article¹⁶ also marks the first time Csekey expressed his analysis regarding the relationship between the Baltic states and the Soviet Union. As he stated, the Baltic states were in the most difficult position regarding the Soviet Union, an enormous nation possessing an inevitably significant economic influence on the Baltics. The Soviet Union’s only route toward gaining access to the sea was through the Baltic state; should the Soviets be dissatisfied with the behaviour of these nations – whether they were cooperating or not – the Soviet Union was still fully capable of dealing either an economic or a political death blow to the Baltics. The Baltic states could count on Great Britain alone: “Russia’s Bolsheviks are brilliantly trained in tactics. No other state or political system exists that

¹⁴ Csekey, I. Észtország története a világháború után, 29; Csekey, I. Észtország államává alakulásának története és államrendje, 18.

¹⁵ Csekey, I. Az észtországi kommunista puccskísérlet. – Magyarország, 12.12.1924.

¹⁶ Csekey, I. A Baltikum és a szovjet, 2.

possesses – thanks to its intelligence service – such incredible bearings in foreign affairs. No one can compete with Moscow’s leaders in producing effective propaganda abroad. They thereby always center their attack on the point of least opposition... Estonia represents the most vulnerable of Baltic states due to its geographic, economic and political circumstances.”¹⁷

In his analysis, Csekey also referred to the relatively small geographic distance between Tallinn and Leningrad, rendering it possible for the Soviet fleet to approach the Estonian coast very quickly from Kronstadt. He additionally emphasized Estonia’s economic dependence on the Soviet Union: not only were its raw resources imported from the Soviet Union, in times of peace Russia had also represented the largest market for Baltic goods. The Baltic states’ industry therefore supplied the Soviet Union and had been structured to suit this role. According to Csekey, the economic depression benefited the Bolsheviks politically, but he also mentioned how – among all the other concerns – Estonia’s defenses had been chipped away at by dissension and the inability to rally its own forces. This later aspect resembled Hungary’s and was a reflection of what Csekey referred to as the *turáni átok* [Turan curse]. He closed his analysis with the following remarks: “And if today’s generation awaits in vain the fall of Russian Bolshevism, the East’s dance with death can hardly end any other way than by the collapse of the great Russian empire. This tendency not only reveals the way in which the Baltic states have formed, but also indicates – perhaps even more so – the map of today’s Soviet Union, which is far more colorful than that drawn in Paris regarding Europe’s other regions.”¹⁸

A few years later, Csekey wrote the following comments about Estonia: “Those witnessing the events here cannot warn the rest of the world strongly enough that the time has come to examine the issues simmering under Bolshevism’s lid from a far different perspective compared to what was customary during the past few years if we do not want to face a series of highly unpleasant surprises.”¹⁹

CONNECTIONS BETWEEN DAILY POLITICS AND PROCESSES IN WORLD HISTORY

Following his return to Hungary in 1931, Csekey held an inaugural address on the topic of the Soviet Union at the University of Szeged. To provide one thought characterizing his speech: “If, however, the world should Bolshevize, I would not view this as an example of the Soviet Union’s success, but rather point to the short-sightedness and petty, nationalistic jealousy and selfishness of today’s capitalist leaders whose behavior has led to the terrible and virtually cataclysmic

¹⁷ Csekey, I. Az Észk Köztársaság alkotmánya és a Baltikum világpolitikai helyzete, 15–16.

¹⁸ Ibid., 16–17.

¹⁹ Csekey, I. Hólepte orosz mezőkön... – In: Északi írárok. Pfeifer Ferdinánd (Zeidler testvérek) Nemzeti Könyvkereskedése, Budapest, 1928, 18.

moral crisis the only outcome of which can be the economic depression we face today.”²⁰

It can be stated in conclusion that the broader ramifications of daily, political events occurring in his time did not escape István Csekey’s attention. Possessing an excellent grasp of the power struggle, main conflicts of interest and the sheer hopelessness that characterized the situation experienced by these small Baltic states possessing no allies. Csekey in fact accurately described Estonia and Finland’s exact international position at the time of the outbreak of World War II. At least parts of Csekey’s analysis have furthermore withstood the test of time. While this present examination has not been able to deal in-depth with his writings from the end of the 1930s and the beginning of the 1940s, it must be mentioned that Csekey did in fact draw attention to that his predictions came true. István Csekey prognosticated how events would possibly play out while also outlining the paths nations would be forced to take in the interest of national security. Thanks to his professional knowledge, level of education and sense of dedication, István Csekey’s examinations of Estonia’s geopolitical situation can provide specialists today with a rich source of information and inspiration.

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EESTI GEOPOLIITILINE OLUKORD ISTVÁN CSEKEY TEOSTES

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Professor István Csekey (1889–1963) oli kahe maailmasõja vahelisel ajal Ungaris väljapaistev isiksus Ungari ja Euroopa õigusteaduse ning Ungari-Eesti suhete alal. Tartu külalisprofessorina (1923–1931) edendas ta Ungari riigi ja ungari kultuuri tutvustamist, Ungaris aga populariseeris Eestit. Käesolevas artiklis on otsitud vastust küsimusele, millisena nägi üks haritud Euroopa kogemusega õigusteadlane Eesti ja selle naaberriikide geopoliitilist olukorda ning rahvusvahelisi suhteid 1920. aastail ja 1930. aastate algul. See lühike ülevaade on katkend pikemast kirjutisest, mis analüüsib Csekey Eesti ajaloost kirjutatud töid.

Seoses Eesti riigi kujunemisega rõhutas professor juba 1924. aastal, et Eesti Vabariiki ei loonud mitte imperialistlikud ja ekspansionistlikud pürgimused, vaid rahva visa tahe, kuigi oma sünni eest ollakse tänu võlgu I maailmasõja tulemusele

²⁰ Csekey, I. A szovjet államszemlélete. (Széphalom-Könyvtár, 25.) Szeged Városi Nyomda és Könyvkiadó Részvénytársaság, Szeged, 1932, 7.

ning antandile. Ta oli arvamisel, et Nõukogude Liidu hoiak Balti riikide suhtes sõltus Inglise-Vene suhte kujunemisest, kuna Balti riigid olid põhimõtteliselt Inglise mõju all.

Csekey nimetas Soomet ja Eestit Venemaa serval kõige põhjapoolsemateks – Läänemere-äärseteks – ääreriiikideks. Ta pidas Balti riike selliseks Lääne- ja Ida-Euroopa vaheliseks üleminekualaks, mis isoleerib Venemaa merest ning mille põhjapoolsem osa kujutab endast protestantlike Saksa mõjude tõttu Kesk-Euroopa vaimse kultuuri ääreala. Baltikumid idapiir langeb kokku selle piirivööndiga, mida mööda jõudsid viikingid (varjaagid) Soome lahest Aasovi mereni. See vöönd eraldas venelasi teistest Euroopa rahvastest ja seal jooksis piir ida- ja läänekiriku ning slaavi ja ladina kirjakuultuuri vahel. Eesti iseseisvumise järel lahutasid Narva jõgi ja Peipsi järv uuesti ida ning läant nagu Eesti alade vallutamise järel 13. sajandi algusest alates. Põhimõtteliselt selle piirini tungis ka Poola kuningas Stefan Batory 16. sajandi lõpul.

Just seepärast võis Csekey arvates Baltikum 18. sajandi algusest olla *Venemaa aken*, millest vaadati Lääne-Euroopasse. Kuna sakslaste *sissevool* (nagu sõnastas Csekey) oli kestnud juba seitsesada aastat, hõivates maavaldusi, kaubanduse ja vaimse elu suunamise, oli see muuhulgas ka seepärast toona impeeriumi harituim piirkond. Tsaarivalitsuse viimastel aastakümnetel aga valitses tsaari õukonnas praktiliselt baltisaksa aadel.

Põhja-Euroopa kultuuriala liikmeks sai Eesti Rootsi riigi osana, mis oli tuntav peamiselt seoses administratiiv-tehniliste ja haridusküsimustega. Rootsi püüdis 1920. aastail Eestit ja kunagisi Rootsi suurriiki kuulunud riike silmatorkava poliitilise mõju laiendamise asemel oma huvifääri tuua majanduse ning kultuuri vallas. Csekey arvates sõltus selle rootsimeelse kultuurikogukonna saatus sellest, kuid võrd õnnestus selle liikmetel, aga eriti Eestil ja Soomel, takistada slavismi ning bolševismi sissetungi idast. Eesti jaoks pidas ta oluliseks ka Poola toetuse saavutamist. Csekey oleks pidanud põhjendatuks ka ühise Soome-Eesti riigi loomist, kuid vähemalt ühise välispoliitilise, sõjalise ja rahandusjuhtkonna loomist.

1924. aasta putšikatsega seoses kirjutas ta, et bolševistlik propaganda ei andnud rahuliku meelelaadiga ja haritud põhjamaise rahva hulgas kuigi positiivseid tulemusi. Csekey heitis liberaalsele Eesti poliitikale ette, et võimud ei rakendanud kommunistide suhtes erilisi meetmeid. Põnevas analüüsis jõuab ta järeldusele, et Nõukogude Liit oleks just Eestis tahtnud valla päästa “revolutsiooni”, mis oleks kahte teise Balti riiki levides põhjustanud ääreriiikide kokkukukkumise. Eestit nimetas ta Balti riikidest kõige haavatavamaks geograafilistel, majanduslikel ja poliitilistel põhjustel. Ta juhtis tähelepanu Tallinna ja Leningradi geograafilisest lähedusest tingitud ohtudele ning sellele, et Kroonlinna Nõukogude laevastik võib kiiresti Eesti rannikule suunduda, kuid märkis ka Eesti majanduslikku kaitsetust.

István Csekey pööras tähelepanu ka päevapoliitilistele sündmustele ja seostele. Tema harituse ja terava pilgu kõrval teevad tema 1920.–1930. aastail kirjutatud analüüsid huvitavaks taustateadmised ajaloost ning kultuurist: ta tunnetas hästi jõujooni ja peamisi huvide konflikte samamoodi kui liitlasteta eksistentsi perspektiivitust väikestele riikidele.