

Weekly Newsletter

News

Ex-PM Gyurcsány calls for the protection of Orbán's family

Ferenc Gyurcsány, former prime minister disapproved of the action planned by police officers and others working in law-enforcement to demonstrate in front of Viktor Orbán's and his family's house. Gyurcsány asked the officers and other law-enforcement workers not to hold a protest in front of Orbán's home in order to leave the incumbent prime minister's family out of the ongoing political clashes.

The former PM opined in his blog that police officers' and law-enforcement workers' demands were probably righteous; however, the disagreement was not between them and Viktor Orbán as private citizen, but instead their aim should be to exert pressure on Viktor Orbán as the country's prime minister. Gyurcsány stated that the protesters had nothing to do with the premier's private and family life, and they had no bone to pick neither with Orbán's children nor his wife; yet Viktor Orbán's house was their home, too. "I cannot see any reason why they should also be victims of an increasingly ruthless political fight". Gyurcsány – who celebrated his 50th birthday only a few days ago – recalled those days when the current governing party Fidesz had been in opposition: "We were sitting in our living room while listening to the several hundred-strong crowd of enraged people who gathered under our window, shouting in ecstasy: «betrayer!», «betrayer!». I was staring at my children wondering how much they understood of the strange things that were happening to us. By that time, we had seen many protests. I was aware of the fact that they had already had several horrible experiences as well. In the autumn of 2006, even the kids were given bulletproof vests in case they might need them. That was the worst of times.

«To prison with him!», «To prison with him!» – so went the new refrain out there!

The story had started in a rather funny way several years earlier. Two Fidesz MPs, Péter Szijjártó and Róbert Répássy gathered in front of our house sometime in the afternoon – at a time when an incumbent prime minister cannot be at home – to hold a press conference. Nevertheless, they came. They came and so they delivered a speech to my wife and to my children (if we do not take journalists into account). And when it turned out that they were not willing to hide, but were going about their business – as far as I can remember, they might have walked out into the street that day to leave for training –, the two courageous Fidesz MPs beat a retreat. The example they set was kept alive, though; what is more, it became contagious. In this way, later a man called 'the minister of the interior from the Kossuth Square' came to our house, then another man called 'Uncle Satu', encamping himself for weeks at our gateway entrance, and so came the extremists, too. Sometimes only ten, and several hundreds of them at times. Protesters came along on weekdays as well as at weekends; they demonstrated under our very window in the afternoons, several times up until midnight.

«Killers!», «Killers!» – the mob upped the ante in the meantime.

I do think that political confrontation should not be extended to include anyone and anything; thus, political clashes should never be totalitarian. We must retain our humanity. The protesters should not interfere with Orbán's private life, nor with his family. They are not enemies. It is not an easy thing to be part of a PM's family anyway, and I cannot mention any reason why they also should be victims of an increasingly ruthless political fight.

A little humanity would really help things a great deal" – wrote Mr. Gyurcsány in his blog.

Government inaugurated a fake Restaurant in front of EU guests

Sándor Fazekas has deceived the EU agricultural ministers when inviting them to the Hortobágy. On

May 30th, his colleagues arriving for the inauguration of the “Hortobágy Csárda” were catered with food brought from another restaurant, while the Csárda, refurbished with EU money, was being advertised.

The ministers, whom Fazekas called the first guests of the traditional country-side Hungarian restaurant, also had lunch in the 300 year old building. Later, however, it turned out that Hortobágy Csárda does not operate, the entire inauguration ceremony was a hoax. Even the lunch of the ministers was brought over from a restaurant in Debrecen.

<http://www.stop.hu/articles/article.php?id=883999>

Orbán shocked trade unions

Trade unions got just a little more than an hour to meet Viktor Orbán and express their opinion in two minutes. They all refused to accept the proposed abolition of exemption by age for pensions. Péter Szijjártó, the prime minister’s spokesman said that pensions for all law-enforcement workers, who are under the age of 57, would be renamed an allowance, which would then be taxable. On Monday, the parliament took the first steps towards abolishing these pensions and transforming them into social benefits. In the end, a deal could not be thrashed out. Géza Pongó, secretary general of the Independent Police Trade Union, said that what happened to them was only the tip of the iceberg as the government was determined to change the whole pension system from 2012, and to introduce such disadvantageous methods that would keep them in employment for as long as possible. As far as union leaders are concerned, the negotiations are over – at least as regards the exemption by age for pensions. Kornél Árok, head of the Independent Trade Union of Professional Fire Fighters, said that it was senseless to carry on negotiations; instead they would organize a mass demonstration under the title “Clown Revolution”. (PM Orbán cynically told protestors that he would refer their demands to the state secretary responsible for clown affairs). Also, union workers would use every legal opportunity to prevent the government from laying their hands on their already deposited pensions. The Independent Police Trade Union also says that negotiations are over since they cannot back the proposals of the government, neither the ones that affect those in active employment, nor those affecting the already retired. In the former case the possibility of exemption by age for pensions would be abolished; in the latter, pensions would be lowered and taxed to spur people to take up work again. Negotiations are forthcoming about the career options of law-enforcement workers, which will be coordinated by the Ministry of Interior. Trade unions will also participate in the upcoming talks.

Trade Union Suspects Show Trial

The Kaposvár criminal prosecutor initiated proceedings against Judit Szima, secretary general of the Tettrekész Magyar Rendőr Szakszervezet [Ready-to Act Hungarian Trade Union of the Police (TMRSZ)] for the suspicion of breach of trust and other criminal offences, and she was arrested after interrogation on Friday.

According to the official statement of TMRSZ regarding the arrest of the secretary general of the union, the investigating authority still has to inform the public about the occurrences accurately, since they would need to exactly clarify all the circumstances in such an especially delicate case.

"The secretary general's sharp opposition to the government before the planned closing of negotiations and the timing of the arrest seem to be a peculiar coincidence", commented the communications manager of the LIGA Trade Union.

The official statement of the LIGA Trade Union expressed hope that the government would not exceed the legal framework to achieve its goals, and the legal proceedings against the union leader would soon be closed with reassuring results.

Salary of opposition MPs reduced

On the grounds of not having participated in the debate on FIDESZ' new constitution, the Speaker of the House, László Kövér did not sign the salary documents of opposition MPs this month. The Socialist Party "understands" the move, but considers it an act of petty political vengeance.

According to Nol.hu, Mr. Kövér claimed that the socialist MPs who were absent without leave from the Parliamentary debates related to the constitution were not entitled to the proportionate part of their salary. Mr. Kövér did not accept the joint statement of the faction leaders of both MSZP and LMP underlying that the members of their factions had a proper justification to stay absent during the period of drafting the new constitution as their factions had made a declarative political move not to take part in the process.

According to House Rules members of Parliament are obliged to appear in all sessions, and the basic salaries of those, who, in any given month, stay away from more than 1/3rd of votes, may be proportionately reduced. In its commentary, No.hu recalls that in the previous legislative period, Viktor Orbán was not attending parliamentary debates, and the members of the present coalition systematically left the room when Ferenc Gyurcsány was speaking.

www.index.hu; May 30th 2011.

Orbán: We do not retreat!

According to the prime minister the nation cannot accept the behavior of those who took an oath to safeguard order but threw smoke bombs, stepped over rules and threatened people. This means they deserted to the side of disorder – stated Viktor Orbán in a television interviews on channel TV2. Orbán claimed in connection with the changes initiated in the pension system concerning the law enforcement sector: "we shall carry through these reforms, not only if they protest in front of my house, but even if they move into my bedroom".

Tarlós would negotiate with Alstom

Alstom has only one chance regardless of the decision of the French court in connection with the bank guarantee of the subway-car contract. István Tarlós (mayor of Budapest) invited the chief executive of the French engineering company to Budapest. – communicated the daily Magyar Nemzet on Monday.

Candidates of Fidesz won, MSZP and LMP lost

The candidate of Fidesz-KDNP won the extraordinary local elections in the electoral district number 9 in Debrecen. According to the unofficial results, Mr. Szabolcs Komolay, the candidate of Fidesz-KDNP won the electoral mandate. He was one of the six candidates for member of the local government. The winner received 445 votes which equals 47 percent of all votes. The second place was taken by an independent candidate, the candidate of the Jobbik party came in at place three. The candidate of MSZP reached place four with only 40 votes. The fifth place went to the politician of another local left-wing organization named DISZ. LMP received only 31 votes, the worst result among all candidates. The candidate of Fidesz-KDNP got most votes in the extraordinary mayoral elections in Püspökladány, too. Mayoral elections were held because of the death of the former mayor Mr. Sándor Arnóth in a car accident. From the four candidates, the new leader of Püspökladány became Mrs. Imre Dombi, member of Fidesz, with 42 percent of all votes. Parallel to the mayoral elections the citizens could also vote for their future parliamentary deputy. This part of the election must be repeated as turnout was too low. However, the candidate of Fidesz got the most votes in this invalid round. Lajos Kósa, managing vice president of Fidesz and mayor of Debrecen told in a press conference on Sunday evening that the results of the extraordinary elections in Debrecen and Püspökladány showed that active voters had not turned away from the government.

Comments

Jockey Orbán goes to heaven

You shall see, my fellow Hungarians, in a year from now, this day is going to be a national high day! It will enter irrevocably into the History of All Hungarians as the day of the Great Redemption. Part of MOL is ours again: our heroic government, commanded by our Dear Leader, has crowded out the “Russkys” from our national – sorry: National – oil company. All of this, of course, purely for our sakes. So let us rejoice and celebrate. If nothing else, than the fact that the entire right wing has managed to kick itself at their own balls from a running leap, and lumbered with swollen testicles to the next waste bin, together with their rhetoric on economic policy so far.

One deed that overwrites everything else. How cute.

First of all, let us imagine the heroic act itself: Viktor Orbán, on the back of a shabby donkey – representing the Hungarian economy – galloping across Red Square. With his rusty armour wobbling, his crooked spear in hand, and his most shiny piece of armament being a borrowed shield from the IMF – behind which he can hide.

Breathless from the effort to spur his donkey on, he then arrives at the walls of the Kremlin, where a group of fellows is playing with MOL shares. He then turns to the one named Putin, and, in a wheezy voice, he proclaims “Einstead, dipshit – at current rate, of course!” Those look at him for a while, and then in return for € 1,88 billion, they hand him over the packet they had bought at € 1.4 bn, and have a jolly good laugh. They may even offer him a bit of Vodka – or maybe not... And now, following his splendid victory, Orbán does not understand why his people is pouting.

Well, first of all, dear Viktor, because it has come to the daylight that you were able to take out all these billions from the drawer without a hitch. Meaning that what the Bajnai government left behind for you was not skeletons in the cupboard, and a God damned fucking great heap of debt, but nicely sorted and rolled-up heaps of billions. Secondly, it also turned out that you were fighting your “economic liberation war” with reserves that barely fit into your drawers. And, we now also see that if your interest so requires, you have absolutely no problems in using up not only private pension savings, but also the money of IMF, which you had – ha-ha-ha – thrown out of the country. Third, because it is fact now, that the mission to reduce state debt, which we have been forced to listen to for a year now, and for which you would even raise further money from us, is the biggest hoax of Hungary since 1990. Namely, just by returning that money, you would have been able to reduce state debt by 5 percentage points. But, obviously, this was not important.

I don't give a damn about how you will sell the Redemption Campaign – fought on IMF's money – to your true believers. I am much more interested in the question of how you intend to come up for the money that you have spent instead of repaying it. Is there going to be a new emission of state bonds, further increasing state debt, or will you try to recover it from us through new austerity measures and freshly invented new taxes? From now on, saying anything about state debt may prove quite embarrassing for you. Pete the Troubadour (Szíjjártó) will be in need of having a new set of messages installed in his head.

On the cake representing Fidesz' lost credibility – Jobbik is the marzipan clown. They, who have been constantly shouting about renegotiating Hungary's state debt, they who – not a fortnight ago – were wondering “how it is possible that those responsible for the process (of indebting Hungary) are still free, and are being called by their name in Parliament, instead of their numbers in state prisons” are now proclaiming, through Tamás Hegedüs, that spending IMF funds in this manner was perfectly all right, and there was nothing wrong with the transaction, whatsoever. Meaning that from now on they are not interested any more in the issue of repayment either. Moreover: they have silently rehabilitated to evil, people-skinning arch enemy IMF. Here too: principles and rhetoric are in the waste bin. “Move along pelase, there is nothing to see here!”

The only thing that interests us now is: is this *really* such a good deal that, by the mere thought of it, we should be carried to the brink of euphoria?

1. Among MOL's owners, there is still plenty of foreigners.
2. Petrol is not going to be cheaper either, says our government.
3. Experts are calculating with falling share prices due to the presence of the state.

What is left is the national romantic so typical of Fidesz government, and which seems to be all-important in Hungary today. Even more important than all that whining about state debt.

http://varanus.blog.hu/2011/05/25/orban_dzsoki_a_mennybe_megy

Orbán alone and anointed

Not a single judge resigned when the two-third majority in parliament mutilated (into two third) the rights of this fundamental institution of democracy (Constitutional Court) last autumn. After that, many questioned the Constitutional Court's moral and ethical legitimacy. At that time we could say that the „backbreaking” pain was overridden by the judges' responsibility felt for the country. However, as months and weeks pass by without any action – even if this institution wants it or not – it sort of becomes the prime minister's bench player. Its weight and authority slowly melts away.

Mr. Viktor Orbán managed to achieve what it wanted: now there is not single forum – other than the ones created and controlled by him – where a citizen could protest against the overexpansion of state power and authority. The prime minister – surrounded by a flock of mamlouks – is not vulnerable at all. Hence the biggest problem is that his decisions are not vulnerable either. Those who would try to challenge them are pushed to the streets and are controlled by a dishonored police force.

It is not a problem that there is no more niggling: his country is facing its biggest task yet to come. The elimination of the ruins of civil democracy requires almost efforts that befit a deity, and humbleness from everybody. It is simply a matter of luck that the creator of this war finds himself as anointed leader on the front. A pure polyhistor who – just this week alone – managed to claim as his own, with a humble smile on his face, the entire structural reorganization of the Hungarian economy, and yet he also managed to remember who should be the director of the Hungarian State Opera, or the head coach of the Fehervár soccer team.

Ironically, he entrusts his 'state secretary responsible for clown affairs' to manage personal consultations, while he himself is in social correspondence with the population. „I started with the politicians, I halved their number and introduced salary ceilings” – says Mr. Orbán, with his sleeves up. He did this all himself. He doesn't speak, he declares instead. He shows where to go. He was born to define – even as a beacon to Europe – how ten millions of Hungarians shall live in decades to come.

This is what it is: where tyranny is allowed to be born, there it will be born.

Róbert Friss, Népszabadság, June 4. 2011.

Trianon and other dishonours

June 4th is a tragic day in Hungarian history. The international peace treaty was signed with Hungary in Versailles (or the palace of Trianon, as it is falsely known in Hungary) on this day in 1920. According to the treaty, Hungary lost two thirds of its territory, millions of citizens, historic towns, etc. This trauma cannot be forgotten, and the decision made in Versailles has an influence in the following generations' fate as well. Hungarian political leaders had a strong responsibility regarding the situation that developed in the first two decades of the 20th century, but the punishment was disproportionate and it was hard to digest.

This is true even if this tragedy was not the fault of the left wing that „wanted to destroy the nation” bit of the gentry of Hungary. Just as it is also the fault of the right wing that it attempted to make up for its mistakes through a war that tallied the nation through the death of several hundreds of thousands of people, the Holocaust and the laws against the Jews. Thus they wanted to reclaim territories and people that we had lost before. These tragedies were the 'side effects' of their post-Trianon political activity which was aiming at getting back the lost territories. Trianon cannot be the explanation for the Hungarian Army's tragedy at the Don river, (a World War II. battlefield in the Soviet Union), or for the trains crowded with Hungarian Jews departing to Auschwitz. (By the way, a memorial was erected at Don by the Gyurcsány administration.)

I feel pity for the current political climate which still disables conversation regarding the processes

that led to the Treaty of Versailles. Some publicists blame Károlyi for everything. (Károlyi was a left-wing politician who proclaimed the republic in Hungary and served as its first president in 1918-1919.)

I share in the sorrow felt for Trianon, but I do not believe that anyone can build a political strategy on the Trianon claims nowadays. Trianon will not solve the problem of unpaid bills, the chaotic situation in education and health care and it will not stop the decay of democracy in Hungary.

Zsolt Gréczy; <http://greczy.blog.hu/>; June 5. 2011.