

Kedves Magyar Honfitársaim!

Tisztelettel és szeretettel köszöntöm Önöket az 1956-os forradalom és szabadságharc 64. évfordulóján. Bár sok szenvedés, nyomorultság és véráldozat árán de mégis megtörtént a csoda. '56 megadta a történelmi jelet, megszabadult az elnyomó zsarnoktól Magyarország. Még sokan vagyunk itt akik megéltük a rettenetet, a harcokat Budapest utcáin és átéltük a borzalmakat. Emlékszem magam 9 éves fejjel tágra nyílt szemmel sikoltottam volna amikor az első orosz tank bedübörgött az utcánkba, de nem jött ki hang a torkomon. Félttem... Az elnyomott, megalázott népünk felkelt és jelet adott. Ki érti ezt? A költő jut eszembe aki így írt: *"Kérdezel? Hiába mondom nem hiszed, hogy hegy lábánál porban játszom, s mégis a csúcsra jelt teszek."* Dicsőség a jelt tevő hősöknek, a mártíroknak, a túlélőknek, akik képesek voltak továbbvinni a zászlót kiteljesítve '56 örök dicsőségét, a magyar ügyet.

Kedves Magyar Testvéreim!

Az ausztrál kormány megtisztelt bennünket azzal, hogy elsőként adott engedélyt Canberra nagykövetségének, hogy nemzeti ünnepünket méltó körülmények között, minegy 100 fős ünnepség, beszédek és magyar film vetítése mellett tarthatjuk meg: Külön örömünkre szolgált, hogy rendezvényünkön ausztrál részről fontos politikai-társadalmi döntéshozók is részt vettek, jelezvén 1956 történelmi jelentőségét és ausztrál hozzájárulást a magyar sors jobbrafordulásához.

Röviden küldöm a nagyköveti előadás anyagát szíves megtekintésre.

Honfitársi üdvözlettel,

Dr. Mikola István

nagykövet



Your Excellences, Ambassadors, Mr. Ian McConville Chief of Protocol, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Commonwealth of Australia, Dear Guests, Ladies and Gentleman! It is my honour to welcome you to the screening of the film "*Children of Glory*" on the National Day of Hungary and the 64th anniversary of the 1956 Revolution and freedom fight.

The Hungarian title of the film is "*Freedom, love*" that reflects to the poem of Sándor Petőfi, one of the greatest Hungarian poets and revolutionists. I would like to share this poem with you:

Freedom and love my creed!

These are the two I need.

For love I'll freely sacrifice

My earthly spell,

For freedom, I will sacrifice

My love as well.        /Kery, Leaslie A. /

The revolution started on 23. October 1956 by young students, than the nation joined the freedom fight of our country. It happened in a difficult international political situation. In 1955 occupying Soviet troops withdrew from Austria. By then we had already been under Soviet occupation for ten years. In Hungary, intimidation, tyranny, deportation and the logic of the Soviet world determined the order of our lives.

Everyone felt, that if things were to continue like that, under the oppressive barbarism of communism, then our culture – the Christian Hungarian culture - that succeeding generations had created over the course of a thousand years - would disintegrate, would fall apart and be reduced to atoms.



Our predicament seemed to be catastrophic. Within half a century, we had been defeated twice: we had lost two-thirds of the territory of Hungary together with the millions of Hungarians who lived there and now cultural annihilation threatened the remains of Hungary, the very heart of historical Hungary.

By nature Hungarians are not gamblers: they do not take risks with their homeland, and they do not readily set out on adventures with doubtful outcomes.

If needed they can fight hopeless battles, but they prefer to have both heroism and common sense on their side. The freedom fighters of '56 made a rational decision: the Soviets had withdrawn from Austria, Hungarian communists were stabbing each other, and the free western world was urging us on and promising us assistance.

On one side of the coin was the hopelessness of annihilation, while on the other was a final, unrepeatable opportunity. The attempt needed to be made. That is what they did. They did so - in a way - that only we, Hungarians are able to do: with death-defying courage, casting aside their own internal squabbles, and with complete unity and purity of heart.

Soviet tanks were rolling on the streets of Budapest, and Hungarians in Australia were angry with the West for not intervening. The people of Hungary felt betrayed. Because of the rules of the global political playground, the revolution could not reach its goals.

Still 1956 serves as a rock-solid basis for freedom and independence of Hungary. Hungarians showed the entire World that they are ready to fight and ready to sacrifice their lives for their freedom and independence. Historians know it is true although it was not apparent at the time.

The Hungarian revolution was really a catalyst for the eventual fall of the communist regimes in Eastern Europe and collapse of the USSR.



I would like to underline, that I am not only sharing you what I have seen in history books or Wikipedia on the internet, but as the ambassador of Hungary today, I have personal memories of the streets of Budapest in 1956. I was a nine-year-old young boy at that time. As lot of Hungarians were killed or sent to prison, my own family also suffered and was persecuted by the communist regime.

Like many other countries, Australia also turned its head towards Hungary in 1956 during the days of the revolution. Australian party leaders of that time, Prime Minister Mr. Menzies and the leader of the opposition Dr. Evatt agreed that the uprising in Hungary was not just a domestic matter and encouraged the United Nations to act to prevent bloodshed. Mr. Menzies supported the establishment of a truly independent Hungarian nation with guaranteed democratic and human rights which removes any shadow of foreign domination.

In 1956 Melbourne was the host of the Olympic games and Budapest was in turmoil as the uprising started. When the Hungarian Olympic team arrived to Melbourne, a group of Hungarians welcomed them singing the National Anthem. The symbol of the rebel fighters, an altered flag - missing the communist style coat of arms - was displayed at the opening ceremony angering the Soviet competitors. Melbourne hosted the famous Hungarian-Soviet „blood in the water match”, in the Olympic water polo semi-final on the 6 of December. This game became violent with kicks and punches. One Hungarian player was injured by a hit. The Hungarian team was declared the winner, and the Soviet team had to be escorted from the pool by police. In the final, the Hungarian water polo team defeated Yugoslavia and received the Olympic gold medal.

Because the fall of the revolution freedom fighters, some of the best people were forced to leave Hungary facing the cruel retaliation. More than 10.000 of them managed to find a new home in Australia thanks to the generosity of the government in Canberra, heloing them in becoming excellent, well integrated members of the Australian



multicultural society. Their work is still appreciated today. SnowyHydro around Canberra for example was built among others by hungarians as well. At the main square of Coma, it is acknowledged by the presence of the Hungarian flag among the different nations, building the hydroelectric power plant.

Ladies and Gentleman,

The mystery of Hungarian survival is inexplicable. The source of miracles is kept hidden from inquisitive human minds, but the heart can guess at something. Somewhere among the reasons for the survival of the Hungarians we find perennial hungarian heroism. When after almost half a century of Soviet occupation and communist oppression we regained our freedom and could finally exhale from our lungs the stale air of the comrades' world. We thought we had returned home.

Hungary has been a part of Christian Europe for a thousand years. We are Europe - because we remained europeans even after we were sold off at Yalta and in 1956 when we were abandoned to our fate. After the Soviet withdrawal we felt, that we had found calm and that finally our history, culture and situation in global politics were all in alignment.

We could again take our place in Europe: in the family of free nations, which stands on the foundations of Christian culture, national consciousness and human dignity. Everything seemed so beautifully arranged. Not even in our dreams could we have imagined that one day - thirty years later, after the liberation of the captive nations, after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the reunification of a brutally divided European continent. European nations, including us Hungarians, would be facing challenges not seen since the distant past. But this may be the beginning of another history...

As you can see Ladies and Gentleman, hungarians are always ready to fight for their rights!



Please turn your attention to the Freedom Fighters living with us today in Australia, who escaped from Hungary after the broken 1956 revolution. We are very proud of these Hungarian heroes; we thank them for not only what Hungary is today, but also that every Hungarian around the world can be a proud Hungarian because of these Freedom Fighters' heroic fight 64 years ago. Freedom, what we could not achieve in 1956, was achieved in 1990. Today in 2020 we celebrate the 64th anniversary of the Revolution and War of Independence and we can now speak of a strong Hungary defending its national interests. Our economic results are improving year by year, and our developing relations with Australia are excellent.

Ladies and Gentleman!

Remembering the heroes of 1956 may my last words be from one of Johann Sebastian Bach's cantata:

Virtuous Muses!

Do not sing your habitual songs anymore!

This day shall be your celebration!

Fill your breast with happiness!

Toss your quill and scroll aside, and rejoice again three fold!

Glory the heroes!