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BLACK SPRING OF 1990

The fifteenth anniversary

Marosvásárhely/Targu Mures – On March 19 and March 20, 1990, at Marosvásárhely/Targu Mures, serious incidents happened in the street when Romanians attacked silently protesting ethnic Hungarians. The events had a negative impact upon the interethnic relations in Romania. Transylvania's Hungarians have been waiting for fifteen years to receive apologies following the anti-Hungarian pogrom. Transylvania's Hungarians are still waiting for that jurisdiction to reveal: who was behind the bloody events. The incident broke out when the ethnic Hungarian inhabitants of Marosvásárhely/Targu Mures held a candle-light protest to draw the attention of the new government to the promised restoration of their banned institutes of education.

"... armed and drunk peasants from the Reghin district soon arrived. The crowd received them with the slogan: "Hodac e cu noi" [the village of Hodac is with us]. The photograph has been seen around the world in which a noncommissioned police officer enthusiastically greets the driver of a bus transporting the terrorists. (...)

This was how the moment was recorded by the person manning one video camera in the main square:

"Look, they have broken through. Jesus Christ, they have pushed out onto the square. With axes. They have gone crazy. I have never seen such a thing in my life. With pitchforks. Good God, he has fallen down. Where are the soldiers?"

One Hungarian journalist in the square prior to this moment describes noticing on the Romanian side a young woman, maybe 19 or 20, hoisted on someone's shoulders. She was always looking to the rear. He heard her shout: "They have arrived, they're here." The young woman jumped down and ran to the side, and suddenly the square was a sea of axes.

The Hungarians were now trying to arm themselves in order to return to the scene. They dismantled fences and benches - indeed, it was possible to know who was Hungarian because they held green staves.



Hungarians in a silent demonstration with candles and books in defence of mother-tongue schooling.



"They have broken through!"

The first Romanian charge, 20 March 1990, early evening.



One survivor, stabbed in the stomach.

They also raided building sites for weapons. In short they got hold of anything that appeared suitable and returned to the front of the town hall. From there, they drove the Romanians back to the Grand Hotel.

Let me note that the Hungarians of Targu Mures wanted to avoid clashes to such an extent that this was the first time during the whole of this period under review that they had actively responded to a Romanian provocation or returned a Romanian attack. Further, the first dead and injured were all Hungarians, which shows (in addition to the video-records), who started the violence.

... The Hungarians built barricades in the streets leading to the main square so that when after a big delay – three armoured vehicles arrived, they got caught in the street to the right of the town hall and could not continue.

The Hungarians refused to let them through, saying they did not trust the army. After repeated requests of mine, they dismantled a barricade, and thus the three armoured vehicles were able to get to the corner of the square next to the Grand Hotel, closing down the square and the road leading to the town hall.

After the army's arrival, I spoke again: 'The soldiers are here, they take their place. Nothing should be done to them. Everybody should now stay in place. I ask everybody to stay in place', nobody should pay attention to the military. Hungarians, remain in your places!'

But the arrival of the armoured vehicles emboldened the Romanians ('The army is with us'). They started to throw missiles at the Hungarians more and more aggressively. Paving stones were delivered by a dump truck, gasoline by another truck. Molotov Cocktails were being produced, which they threw at the Hungarians.

Control over the square ebbed and flowed during this time, with the Hungarians facing the difficulty of confronting the Romanians sheltering behind the armoured vehicles. The Romanians began to advance again. Then, at about 20:00, small parties of young men began to arrive with silent steps behind the Hungarian lines'. They wore white so that they would identify each other, and they were well armed. The Hungarian Gypsies of Marosvásárhely/Targu Mures had arrived.

The Gypsies called out: 'Hungarians never fear! The Gypsies are here!' The Hungarian crowd roared. Together, they attacked and forced the Romanians back behind the armoured vehicles. One of the Gypsy leaders told me: 'Mr. Kincses, should we not come to help the Hungarians, when we are Hungarian Gypsies, and it hurts us if the Hungarians are being beaten!' He added: 'Today you, tomorrow us...'

/Fragments and photo-documents taken of 'Black Spring – Romania's Path from Revolution to Pogrom' by eyewitness Előd Kincses. 1992./

The violent clash resulted in more than 100 serious injuries and three ethnic-Hungarian victims: Antal Csipor, István Gémes and Zoltán Kiss. The offenders have never been challenged. 40 Hungarians and 2 Gypsies were sentenced for their participation in the clashes. 2 sentences were brought against Romanians. The instigators have not been brought to justice.

Former state president, Ion Iliescu on 25 March 2005 declared that Hungarians were to be blamed for the March 1990 events.



*Evening of March 20.
Romanians attacking under the cover of tanks.*



"Hodac is with us!" – Romanian villagers with iron bars arrive to Marosvásárhely/Targu Mures, in the main square.



*After the event: the army finally deploys in strength early March 21.
But only the broken glass is left.*

ANTI-HUNGARIAN INCIDENT IN THE ROMANIAN SENATE

The leader of the Great Romania Party (Partidul Romania Mare) threatened one of the senators of the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania in the Upper House of the Romanian Parliament on 15 March 2005. Senator Corneliu Vadim Tudor, the former president – now honorary president – of the renamed Great Romania Party (now “Peoples Party”) gave voice to his resentment from the pulpit, that DAHR-Senator of Harghita/Harghita county, Csaba Sógor, as a sign of commemoration of the Hungarian Fight for Freedom and Revolution of 15 March 1848, pinned up a tricolour cockade. The appearance of the Hungarian national colours in the Romanian senate “is the dangerous sign of an escalation of Hungarian chauvinism”, Vadim said.

According to Vadim, he was barely able to keep some senators of his party back, tearing down the cockade, “this Hungarian shred”. “If this happens again”, Vadim said, “he is not sure, if he can stop them again” – reported www.transindex.ro.

Vadim’s political formation is aspiring for membership in the European People’s Party.



Senator Corneliu Vadim Tudor

ANTI-HUNGARIAN INCIDENT IN KOLOZSVÁR/CLUJ

Smoke screen at the police

“Happy Easter, you stateless!” – two young men shouted this in Romanian (“Paste fericit, bozgorule!”) when attacking an ethnic Hungarian in Kolozsvár/Cluj in the dawn of the second day of Easter, 2005 – reported Transylvanian daily, Krónika. “Bozgor/stateless/” is the hostile Romanian term referring to the native ethnic Hungarian population of Romania.

Twenty-seven years old Z. T. was closing down a club in the city center, while his colleague was trying to catch a taxi, when he got hit, then stabbed in the head from behind. His tail of hair saved his life.

His colleague and himself started to chase the 17-20 years old aggressors when a police patrol appeared and checked their identities. When the victim tried to tell what had happened, one of the policemen suggested him to go to the emergency hospital. When trying to explain the situation again, one of the policemen harshly pushed off T. Z.’s colleague,

shouting: “Get out of here!” Then, the two left the spot in the direction of the emergency, while the police were talking to the aggressors.

“They did not draw up proceeding, they did not even listen to me. I do not know what happened then” – said the victim.

To the inquiry of Krónika reporter if the local police recorded the incident of the night from 27 March to 28 March 2005 in front of the downtown club, police spokesman Adrian Marian asked if the reporter had thought of the “homicide attempt”? Then he added that they knew about the incident, but he could not tell any details because the file had been forwarded to the prosecution. Violeta Treistaru prosecution spokeswoman could not however find the file.

To a second inquiry, police spokesman Adrian Marian surprisingly asked if the newspaper reporter was sure that something had happened on the aforementioned date. When the reporter was referring to the declarations of the victim and the eyewitness, the spokesman requested written questions regarding the inquiry.

Police commander Marcel Bontidean did not know about the incident. “If there was such an incident, I would know about it.” – declared the commander.

TOWN OPENS DOORS TO 5 MILLION NEW 'CITIZENS'

A small town in Hungary is to become the country's biggest, on paper at least, by offering honorary citizenship to all ethnic Hungarians living abroad. Peter Koszó, the deputy mayor of Hódmezővásárhely, said his town decided to grant the civic honor to an estimated five million Hungarians overseas after a referendum in December failed to grant them national citizenship.

The left wing governing parties had a strong campaign against, but the Fidesz and MDF opposition backed the referendum last December to grant citizenship to overseas ethnic Hungarians, of which around half are in Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and the Ukraine. Hódmezővásárhely's answer to the failure of the referendum is a very positive gesture keeping in mind the disillusion of the Hungarian population abroad seeing the governing powers not observing constitutional obligations and urging voters to reject their right for Hungarian citizenship.

The town of 50,000 is receiving more than 100 applications a day for citizenship, and the number is expected to jump as the offer attracts more publicity, Koszó said. "We are building the biggest Hungarian city in virtual terms," said Koszó. The capital, Budapest, 150 km (90 miles) northwest of Hódmezővásárhely, has 1.7 million inhabitants.

Hungary lost two-thirds of its territory and half of its citizens after World War One, and hundreds of thousands of Hungarians also emigrated to the Americas and Australia during communist terror. The town's honorary citizens would not have the right to vote in Hungary.



City Hall of Hódmezővásárhely

Transylvanian Monitor is also available at the homepage of the Hungarian National Council of Transylvania:

www.emnt.org



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