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## Hungary hails 1956 revolt amid critics' jeers

Associated Press

BUDAPEST — Protesters with referee whistles disturbed the Hungarian government's commemorations of the 60th anniversary of the anti-Soviet revolution of 1956 on Sunday, as supporters of Prime Minister Viktor Orban tried to stifle them, sometimes violently.

Kossuth Square was heavily guarded by police and private security guards for the anniversary events, during which small scuffles broke out and several journalists and a noted historian were among those hit or harassed.

Orban said the whistling protesters embodied the return of the Soviet-style communism that had been "taken away by the devil" thanks in part to the events in 1956.

"The course of history took a turn in Hungary," a visibly tense Orban said, as the whistling grew more intense. "Instead of the predicted global communist revolution, there was a revolution against the communist world."

The protest as Orban spoke was organized by Egyutt (Together), a small opposition party that distributed hundreds of whistles and symbolic red cards for supporters to sound and wave at the gathering.

Opposition politicians say Orban's deal with Russia to build new reactors for Hungary's only nuclear power plant in the city of Paks went against the spirit of the anti-Soviet revolution.

"Viktor Orban's policies are exactly the kind Hungarians rebelled against in 1956," said Peter Juhasz, a Together vice president. "Back then, Hungarians stood up to Soviet domination, while today Orban has committed Hungary to Russia for decades."

Orban's critics also accuse him of weakening Hungary's system of democratic checks and balances, limiting press freedoms and working to turn Hungary into an "illiberal state."

Orban, a fierce critic of European Union migration policies, said that while Europe was dominated by complacency and lethargy, Hungary had chosen to be brave and confront modern challenges. Last year, the government built razor-wire fences on Hungary's southern border to stop migrants coming north through the Balkans.

He likened E.U. bureaucrats in Brussels to the Soviet Union, a recurring theme in his speeches.

“The freedom-loving peoples of Europe have the task of preventing the Sovietization of Brussels,” Orban said.

The brief but bloody 1956 uprising began on the afternoon of Oct. 23 with a student march in Budapest in solidarity with reforms in Poland. By the evening, secret police had killed demonstrators who rushed the headquarters of Hungarian radio to have their list of 16 demands — including the withdrawal of Soviet troops — read on the air.

After days of street battles, Soviet troops withdrew Oct. 30. The Red Army, however, returned Nov. 4 with more than 100,000 troops and as many as 4,500 tanks, effectively ending the revolution.

More than 2,500 Hungarians and 700 Soviet troops were killed, and 200,000 Hungarian refugees fled the country. Hundreds of revolutionaries, including Prime Minister Imre Nagy, were executed in the wake of the uprising and the establishment of a Soviet-backed government led by Janos Kadar.

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