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The Truth, the Whole Truth, and nothing but the Truth

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Benedek Magyar: The Bolshevik Legacy — Hungary's Poisoned Souls

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Much of the current moral, economic and political crisis in Hungary has been distorted and without a clear understanding of the current crisis and how this was orchestrated it is all too easy to draw the wrong conclusions. Hungarian Prime Minister, Ferenc Gyurcsány's so called *leaked speech*, in September of 2006, was no mere accident. This was a calculated move on his behalf which was carefully planned and executed. Nowhere in the western world would a Prime Minister possess the emerity to use such derogatory and slanderous language in reference to the nation he is *supposed* to serve and still retain public office; sadly in Hungary it is still possible. However, this speech served a strategic purpose, which to a large extent has accomplished its objectives.

In modelling a solution to a problem we first need to understand the real world situation, then, define the variables that drive the process and then formulate the problem. To understand the actions of the ruling coalition of the MSZP & SzDSz (Hungarian Socialist Party & Free Democratic Alliance respectively) and in particular Ferenc Gyurcsány, what we need to grasp here is what *Vilfredo Pareto*¹ called the *mind of the actor*². In his study of non-logical behaviour Pareto states that *acts, expressions and beliefs* are often observable but not the actor's state of mind. Pareto notes that mankind's behaviour is determined by their state of mind much more than the reasons that they tend to invoke. Bauke Visser of Erasmus University Rotterdam, has often referred to this as the *predisposition* of the actor³. It is on this basis that we examine the leaked speech – not so much for the circumstances under which it was leaked, but rather *the mind of the actor* who expressed it i.e. what is the *predisposition or state of mind* of Ferenc Gyurcsány and the members of ruling MSZP and SzDSz coalition.

We refer here to the ruling coalition of the MSZP & SzDSz rather than just Ferenc Gyurcsány, as he is no *lone gunman*. He does not operate in isolation but in concert with other members of the ruling elite. Ferenc Gyurcsány is not the sole lever that drives all political, social and cultural life in Hungary. He belongs to a class of the ruling elite that have dominated every aspect of Hungarian life since the Soviet occupation.

To lay the foundation to this predisposition all we need do is examine the background and upbringing of the present members of the governing elite: Ferenc Gyurcsány is married to none other than the grand daughter of Antal Apró one of the most senior members of Hungary's former communist elite who is allegedly responsible for massacre at the Hungarian Parliament on 25th of October 1956⁴. Other members of the present ruling coalition Tamás Bauer, is the son of an AVH⁵ (Hungarian Secret Police during the 1950's) interrogator allegedly renowned for his brutality. Likewise, former SzDSz party leader János Kis's mother was an AVH officer. Károly Bárd junior whose father Károly Bárd senior was an AVH interrogator. György Gadó, whose father was a *vérbíró* (Judge on a court of execution), Ivan Pető whose parents were both AVH officers are all either presently or past members, ironically, of the SzDSz i.e. Free Democrats⁶. This snapshot of some of the ruling members of Hungary's political elite clearly demonstrates that Ferenc Gyurcsány and his inner-circle, namely, the MSZP & SzDSz are the progeny of a Bolshevik generation. There can be no doubt as to their anti-Hungarian and anti-democratic predisposition.

¹ Vilfredo Pareto (1848 – 1923) Italian economist, sociologist and philosopher, who made valuable contributions to the study of economics.

² See: Raymond Aron, 1972, *Main Currents in Sociological Thought* 2.

³ In his various works Dr. Bauke Visser of Erasmus University Rotterdam, demonstrates the impact an advisor has over the actions of a minister who holds a particular predisposition positive/negative.

⁴ See: Kéri Edit, 2007, *Kik Lóttek a Kossuth Téren '56ban?*

⁵ It is worth noting that the AVH (Állam Védelmi Hatóság) or secret police was the most despised government apparatus in Hungary during the 1950's. Its members, tortured, deported and murdered countless thousands of innocent victims. Their old headquarters at 60 Andrassy Street has since been converted into a museum now known as Terror House.

⁶ See: Kéri Edit, 2007, *Kik Lóttek a Kossuth Téren '56ban?*

Hungary's Situation

Hungary, prior to the leaked speech was already on the verge of financial crisis. The European Union (EU) had already made repeated calls for the government of Hungary under Ferenc Gyurcsány to produce accurate and credible figures. This was especially important since Hungary had been subject to the EU's excessive deficit procedure since 2004. The EU had identified certain *irregularities*, which was in reality a wilful attempt by the Hungarian government to deceive EU officials as to the true magnitude of the crisis (Ferenc Gyurcsány concedes as much in his speech).

It was no doubt around this time that Ferenc Gyurcsány most likely with the assistance of his closest aides concocted this masterful theatrical performance and delivered the leaked speech. In this dialogue he uses numerous crude, inflammatory and obscene expressions sprinkled with some political rhetoric: “*we lied right through the last two and a half years....there is no choice because we f*cked things up...it is a fantastic thing to create politics. Fantastic!...that we can do it without bowing our heads in this whore of a country....etc*”

The outside observer might wonder what rational explanation could account for a political leader in Ferenc Gyurcsány's position to intentionally create such a speech, and then release it being fully aware of the political backlash. As elementary game theory⁷ implies a strategic game consists of *a*) as set of players *b*) a set of actions for these players and *c*) for each player a set of preferences over these actions. Ferenc Gyurcsány as one of those players has a set of actions at his disposal and a series of preferences over these actions. These preferences do not include political suicide for the financial crisis he i.e. the MSZP and SzDSz has generated. He along with the MSZP and SzDSz are rational economic actors who strive to obtain maximum utility i.e. to sustain political and economic dominance in Hungary.

The success of their strategy hinges on three principal conditions:

1. The need to create an environment of complete information asymmetry
2. The need to terrorise and drive fear into the heart of the populace
3. Create an atmosphere of utter helplessness and despair.

Meanwhile, the EU as the other player is beginning to lose patience with the government of Hungary and this is something Ferenc Gyurcsány and his inner circle are fully aware of. It is only a matter of time before the truth comes out and they are left with full responsibility for this economic catastrophe. The country is in financial crisis and he desperately needs to shift attention away from himself, and the ruling coalition of the Hungarian MSZP and SzDSz. This masterful play of strategy implies that he knows the population will react in a hostile manner, but as his speech alludes to, public opinion is fickle and he knows the drama will fade. Of all the strategies he has at his disposal this is his optimal equilibrium strategy, the one that can produce the highest possible payoff.

The first condition has been satisfied as control of the media is instrumental in pulling - off this political *pièce de resistance*. As Bauke Visser and Otto Swank of Erasmus University Rotterdam, point out: *If the public can observe policy consequences the more politicians are likely to be encouraged to uphold the public interest*. This illustrates the crucial function played by the media as information providers⁸. Given that the MSZP, SzDSz and their functionaries possess a significant stranglehold over the Hungarian media they pump out this propaganda day-in, day-out and not surprisingly the western media along with sections of the Hungarian public have fallen for this ruse. If there is any opposition (which not surprisingly there has been) he can advertise: “*look, I am trying to bring in reforms in line with the EU's requirements, but ultra-nationalists like Viktor Orbán (opposition leader) and other football hooligans are resisting me.*” The brilliance of this strategy is that, now, no one even discusses

⁷ Game helps us understand situations in which decision-makers interact i.e. strategic games. For more information see: Martin.J. Osborne, 2004, *An Introduction to Game Theory*.

⁸ See: Otto Swank & Bauke Visser, *Do Elections Lead to Informed Public Decisions?*

why reforms are necessary in the first place. A recent confidential report released by a government ministry confirms the dominating influence the government has over the Hungarian media and its skewed predisposition⁹.

The second condition was met during the brutal police action displayed on the streets of Budapest, as witnessed by the writer, on the 23rd October 2006, during the 50th anniversary of the 1956 Uprising. Here, the police were unleashed against an unsuspecting public where innocent people were beaten, shot at with rubber bullets and run-down by police cavalry charges. The aim of this exercise was nothing short of driving fear into the heart of the public. At the same time they pour disproportionate resources into targeting, detaining and prosecuting individuals the likes of György Budaházy whose sole crime was to take part in the destruction of the communist symbol (i.e. a symbol of terror and dictatorship) on the Soviet statue of remembrance in 2006. For what reason? For essentially defacing/destroying public property! But the signals from the government's actions are clear: the MSZP and SzDSz as the preservers of the Bolshevik legacy will not tolerate any other form of ideology or threat to their powerbase and will go to any lengths to enforce it.

The third and final condition is met via the assistance of a media carpet bombing campaign. MSZP and SzDSz politicians regularly utter cleverly designed slogans, which the media repeat and circulate, such as: *"All politicians steal....it's better to keep the ones in power who have already stolen, as at least their pockets are full."* This shrewd distribution of responsibility serves two purposes. Firstly, it shifts attention away from the perpetrators and allocates responsibility to all politicians and institutions, and secondly leaves the public in utter despair. It leaves the populace with the feeling that no matter who is elected they have no control over their own fate and they resign themselves to this situation. As renowned political economist and sociologist Max Weber pointed out, people's beliefs and perspectives of the world orientates their action in it¹⁰. Understandably, this suits the MSZP and SzDSz perfectly, as no action by the populace is the best action. Meanwhile, the media continues its crusade to demonise Viktor Orbán as a nasty brown-shirt who is hell bent on power.

What is the outcome? Attention has shifted away from the MSZP and SzDSz and their inept and fraudulent governance and shifted attention onto Viktor Orbán, and the likes of György Budaházy. As after 1989, where no persons were held accountable for the atrocities of the past, no one really knows where or how public funds were spent. In fact, no one even asks. Has the equivalent of a royal commission been established to determine who, what, when, where and why? Of course not. What is more alarming is that having defrauded and insulted the very people they were elected to serve these poisoned souls now proceed to shut down hospitals, universities and other essential public services and increase taxes to reign in the funds that they misappropriated in the first place. If ever a nation was swindled by its own government this was a text book case. Check-mate!

⁹ See: <http://www.mno.hu/portal/538610>

¹⁰ See: Raymond Aron, 1972, *Main Currents in Sociological Thought 2*.