

English version

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Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's luxurious trip to Vienna and the dismissal of a senior diplomat at the Hungarian Embassy in Vienna

- Viktor Orbán, who has become "the little Putin of Eastern Europe"

The dismissal of the Director and Deputy Director of the National Meteorological Service (Meteorological Observatory)

Following the decision to postpone the fireworks on 20 August, the Director and Deputy Director of the National Meteorological Service (OMSZ) have been dismissed by Industry Minister László Palkovics for "making a mistake" in weather forecasting. Initially, the National Meteorological Service had predicted a 75-80% chance of the

storm hitting based on weather forecast model calculations, and the government's relevant group (the Steering Committee) decided to postpone the fireworks based on the forecast. In response to the government's decision, the heads of the OMSZ departments issued a joint statement demanding that the minister revoke his decision to dismiss the chairman and deputy chairman. They also said in the resolution that they had been under severe pressure in their dealings with the Operational Staff from the day before the fireworks display until the moment of the fireworks display's cancellation.

The 2006 fireworks display was overshadowed by a storm that caused the deaths of five people on the banks of the Danube. Based on the experience at the time, a decision had to be taken to cancel or postpone the event in the event of bad weather forecasts. The OMSZ had already warned of the possible arrival of the storm, but the government did not take the warning seriously.

Although Chief Cabinet Secretary Gulyás explained that the fireworks were not the direct reason for the dismissal, but that the government was already dissatisfied with the work of the Service, the current government's attitude that weather forecasting is also a political issue should be seen as a sign. In short, the Orbán government has made it look as if the meteorological service has made a political decision that has harmed the government administration and has made the scientific and technical staff politically accountable. However, the decision to cancel the fireworks was not taken by the OMSZ, but by the government itself, the Steering Committee. What the hell is the point of holding technicians accountable without holding the politicians involved in the government's decisions politically accountable? It is like living in a Stalinist dictatorship.

If political responsibility is to be taken, it should be taken by politicians, not by scientists and engineers. However, since the science of weather forecasting deals with highly uncertain events, it is impossible to take political responsibility for the occurrence or non-occurrence of a weather event. But the Fidesz is willing to make even scientific and technological issues a political issue. Regardless of the nature of the issue, it treats anyone who does not sympathize with the regime as an enemy. This is madness. I must say that it is the result of the long-standing administration's finesse in its supreme command to seize power. Like Rákosi, who was dubbed the "little Stalin of Eastern Europe" as a disciple of Stalin, Prime Minister Orbán is behaving like "the little Putin of Eastern Europe". History does indeed repeat itself.

Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and his delegation visit Vienna

While the aforementioned event was the main topic of discussion, the spotlight was on Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and his delegation's trip to Vienna at the end of July. The "diplomatic visit", which was invited by the Austrian Chancellor, took place after Prime

Minister Viktor Orbán made a statement in Tusnadfürdő that "Hungary does not want a racially mixed society", a statement that caused a stir throughout Europe. In fact, it was just a pretext: the unusually large visit to Austria in the middle of the summer holidays was probably intended to reward government officials with a somewhat lavish outing. The Hungarian government probably decided that it would not be too much of an expense if the Austrian side paid for the accommodation of the four senior officials.



Hotel Bristol next to the Opera House

On 28 July, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and three of his ministers drove a convoy of more than 30 government officials and security staff at two-hour super-speed to Vienna, where they met the Austrian chancellor for about 30 minutes from 11 am. The Austrian Foreign Minister was on summer holiday and Foreign Minister Szijjártó could only meet the State Secretary. There was no urgency at all for the Prime Minister and his three ministers to make a grand tour of the country in the middle of the summer holiday, at the end of July. Although the ministers had individual meetings, almost all the events of the "diplomatic trip" had been completed by mid-morning

Instead of returning to Hungary that day, Prime Minister Orbán and his delegation stayed at the Hotel Bristol. The Presidential Suite (Opera Suite), in which Prime Minister Orbán and his ministers stayed, reportedly cost €6,717 per night. Fortunately, the Austrian side covered the accommodation costs for the Prime Minister and the three

ministers, but the accommodation costs for the rest of the delegation were of course covered by the Hungarian government. The group dined in a fine restaurant in Vienna that evening. Although the visit was undoubtedly intended as a summer holiday trip, a Hungarian opposition politician published an article entitled "Orbán's delegation's visit makes hosts turn round". Austrian newspaper Die Presse published an article on the aftermath of the visit entitled "Bitter aftermath of Orbán's visit to Vienna".



Opera Suite (president suite) at Hotel Bristol

For the first time, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's luxurious trip was not reported in detail in Hungary. The state broadcaster has committed itself to discreet reporting and will not report news that could harm the regime. However, on 1 August, details of the "trashing" trip were published in the Hungarian opposition media. The Hungarian government panicked and started investigating those who leaked the "secret information". Some 10 days later, news of the dismissal of a senior official at the Hungarian embassy in Vienna (13 August) was reported in Die Presse on 22 August, which noted that "this event shows how the Orbán regime is working today".

Diplomatic dismissals and removals are not always due to "leaks of secrets", according to VÁLÁSZ online (22.08.2022), on 3 August an official at the Hungarian

embassy in Washington was recalled to his home country due to logistical errors in connection with Foreign Minister Szijjártó's FOX NEWS interview. The reason was apparently that the Foreign Minister was upset that the interview was broadcast 30 minutes later than scheduled and that the interview was conducted on location rather than in a studio. It was as if Suga, the Chief Cabinet Secretary in the Abe-led Japanese government, was outraged when MC Yuko Kuniya questioned him harshly in an interview on NHK's Close-Up Today. After the incident, MC Ms. Kuniya was removed from the show by NHK. This is another example of the arrogance of an authoritarian government.

These are not the times to be enjoying a cool trip when there is a disastrous war going on in the neighboring country every day. If Orbán had really only wanted to explain himself, he could have returned to Hungary immediately after the meeting, accompanied by a few people, and saved himself unnecessary expenses. All the more so because the prime minister prides himself on calling himself a "thrifty puritan". While his whole family, including his father, is enriching and growing rich on public money, he seems unconcerned about taking private jets to watch football matches and traveling luxuriously on public money, even though he is proud to be so poor that he has no savings. He is a strange man.

In any case, this royal trip is a very interesting example of the ethical and moral level of the current Hungarian government.