

July 1, 2018 – NO POGROM HERE

There are areas of Europe where the slow pogrom is not taking place. Counter-intuitively, it is areas of Eastern Europe where Jews have found homes with far less strife than in Western Europe and the UK. David Goldman writes on Hungary.

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*... On April 8, Hungarians re-returned Orban to office with a two-thirds majority. He had served as prime minister for the past eight years, and has a lot to show for his efforts. Hungary's economy is booming, with growth at 4%, unemployment at 3.9%, and a pronounced labor shortage. Budapest is a different city than the dowdy capital I last visited six years ago. New high-rises are sprouting, the streets are clogged with expensive cars, a new upscale restaurant opens every day and visible signs of prosperity are ubiquitous. Orban's enemies do not allege that the vote was rigged, but they complain that his government put its thumb on the scales of state media to influence public opinion. It would seem that Orban's previous eight years in office would have given the voters sufficient information.*

*Orban is also popular because he bucked the explicit directives of the European Commission in Brussels and refused to accept an Hungarian quota of Middle Eastern migrants (not refugees—three-fifths of the millions of Middle Easterners who surged into Europe in 2016 are economic migrants, by the Commission's own reckoning). Along with the governments of Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, Hungary formed the Visegrad Group and remains intransigent. Hungarians supported Orban, just as an absolute majority of Americans supported then-candidate Donald Trump's promise to ban immigration from Middle Eastern terror states. The Soros foundations campaigned for free migration, with a budget of a size unimaginable in American terms. ...*

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You're really going to like Hungary when you learn it's the bad boy of the EU. The story from [Spiked OnLine](#).

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*Calls to expel Hungary from the EU by pro-EU voices in the Guardian and elsewhere echo an intolerant outlook that is growing within the Brussels oligarchy. Recently, members of the European Parliament's Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs Committee voted for a resolution that says the situation in Hungary constitutes 'a clear risk of a serious breach' of the EU's values.*

*Denunciations of the Hungarian government are often justified on the basis that this is a nation that refuses to go along with the migration policies that German chancellor Angela Merkel effectively imposed on the continent. Other Hungarian sins cited by the 'Kick Hungary out of the EU' lobby include a new law that makes life difficult for NGOs funded by George Soros. ...*

*... It is paradoxical that supporters of the EU's line on Hungary believe they are upholding the values of tolerance and democracy. In truth, they cannot tolerate a nation that has democratically decided to adopt values that are different to their own. The EU is very selective in the way it interprets its own values. Rhetorically, EU ideologues celebrate diversity, yet they are bitterly hostile to those who demand that diversity should also be applied to the realm of values. This is why the campaign against Budapest unabashedly claims that it has the right to impose its values on Hungary whether that nation and its people like it or not.*

*Since the re-election of the Orban government in April, hostility to Hungary has morphed into a highly politicised and irrational Magyarophobia. The EU establishment regards the massive mandate endorsing Orban's policies as a direct challenge to its way of life. Isolating Hungary and containing its influence on the political life of other European member states has become a priority for the EU leadership. Scaremongering about the return of fascism in Hungary is really a way of imposing a cordon sanitaire around that country. Thankfully, support for the ideal of sovereignty is not confined to the people of one nation. Hungary's challenge to the EU's imperial ambitions may well resonate throughout the continent.*

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**[The Safest Country for European Jews? Try Hungary](#)**

by David Goldman



***Hungary's Prime Minister Viktor Orbán***

Last Friday evening I put on a kippah and walked half an hour across Budapest to the Keren Or synagogue maintained by the Budapest Chabad. After violent attacks on Jews in German streets, the leaders of Germany's Jewish community warned Jews last month not to wear a kippah or any other visible sign of Jewish identification in public. The French community issued such warnings years ago. Belgian TV could not find a single Jew in Brussels willing to wear a kippah in public. I walked across Budapest four times (for Friday evening and Saturday daytime services), and no-one looked at my kippah twice. At services I met Hasidim who had walked to synagogue with kaftan and *shtreimel*, the traditional round fur hat. Whatever residual anti-

Semitism remains among Hungarians, it doesn't interfere with the open embrace of Jewish life. There are no risks to Jews because there are very few Muslim migrants.

On any given Friday evening, the Keren Or synagogue—one of several Chabad houses in Budapest—hosts two hundred people for dinner. Jewish life isn't just flourishing in Budapest. It's roaring with *ruach*, and livened by a growing Israeli presence. About 100,000 Israelis have dual Hungarian citizenship; many own property in the country and vote in Hungarian elections.

Prime Minister Orbán has been a close friend of Israeli leader Binyamin Netanyahu for twenty years. When Orbán first was elected prime minister in 1998 in the thick of an economic crisis, he asked then-Finance Minister Netanyahu for help, and Netanyahu lent him some of his staff to shape Hungary's economic program. I asked everyone at Keren Or who spoke English what they thought of Orbán. In that gathering the prime minister would have polled 100%.

Orbán, in turn, is one of Israel's few staunch supporters overseas. Earlier this month Hungary, along with Rumania and the Czech Republic, vetoed a European Community resolution condemning the U.S. for moving its embassy to Jerusalem. Cynics dismiss this as an instance of "the enemy of my enemy is my friend." That isn't the case. Hungary is in the middle of a nasty fight with the European Community over migration, and stands to lose up to \$4 billion in EC subsidies—roughly 3% of the country's GDP. It doesn't help Hungary to provoke Brussels by sabotaging its diplomatic efforts, as in the case of the Jerusalem embassy vote. On the contrary, Hungary is spending precious political capital in defense of the Jewish state, to its own possible disadvantage.

What motivates Orbán's backing for Israel? I spent an hour with the prime minister and a week speaking with his advisers. Their alignment with Israel is not instrumental but rather existential. Hungary is a small nation at risk of demographic extinction during the next century, and the Hungarian nationalists view Israel as the paragon of a small nation that has revived itself by force of will and the grace of God. In that regard the Hungarian nationalists bring to mind the American evangelicals, whose grandfathers for the most part were anti-Semites, but who concluded after the 1967 War that a miracle had happened before their eyes, and that they were well advised to get on the right side of it.

With an average of about 14 live births for every 10 women, Hungary may see its population of 9 million shrink by half during the present century. Orbán and his intellectual circle live with this existential threat: they know that nothing they do will matter without a revival of their country's will to exist. Speaking at a conference on the Future of Europe in Budapest May 22, I said:

*"The restoration of the actual, physical Israel, the nation-state of the Jewish people, should be a sign of hope for all the nations. Israel's mission is to be a light unto the nations (Isaiah 49:6), an "exemplar and paragon" (Rosenzweig) that incorporates the sacred—the eternal—into the quotidian life of a people. The nations of Europe will rise up from the valley of dry bones when they are able to grasp what is sacred in their own character, and encourage the efforts of their neighbors to do the same.*

*Through Christianity, Israel came to embody the desire of the nations. It should be a beacon for nations that are struggling to maintain their identity and cohesion against a demographic ebb-tide and against the pressures of globalization."*

I thought that would provoke the Hungarians as well as their Polish, Czech and Slovene partners attending the conference. Instead, I got a heartfelt ovation. Nothing succeeds like success, and the success of the Jewish State has become an inspiration to countries where

anti-Semitism has a dreadful history. Hungary was home to a Jewish community that boasted the greatest concentration of talent since Renaissance Florence. Hungary's wartime government allied with Hitler but refused to hand over the country's Jews to the Nazis; not until Germany invaded Hungary in 1944 were Hungarian Jews deported to the death camps.

Hungarian politics have a unique problem. Imagine that an expatriate American-born trillionaire had spent \$60 billion to influence politics in the United States. That's 0.3% of GDP, thirty times Hillary Clinton's record 2016 campaign budget, and almost twenty times the total lobbying budget of all U.S. corporations. You would this expatriate trillionaire to feature prominently in political debates.

Gauged against Hungary's \$125 billion GDP, that's the weight of George Soros' \$400 million in political spending in his native Hungary through the Open Society Foundations during the past three decades. It's helpful to keep that number in mind. Some Western pundits accuse Hungary's Prime Minister Viktor Orban of anti-Semitism because he made Soros the bogeyman of his last political campaign. Soros wants open borders and mass Middle Eastern immigration. Orban took a Trump-like stance against mass immigration.

On April 8, Hungarians re-returned Orban to office with a two-thirds majority. He had served as prime minister for the past eight years, and has a lot to show for his efforts. Hungary's economy is booming, with growth at 4%, unemployment at 3.9%, and a pronounced labor shortage. Budapest is a different city than the dowdy capital I last visited six years ago. New high-rises are sprouting, the streets are clogged with expensive cars, a new upscale restaurant opens every day and visible signs of prosperity are ubiquitous. Orban's enemies do not allege that the vote was rigged, but they complain that his government put its thumb on the scales of state media to influence public opinion. It would seem that Orban's previous eight years in office would have given the voters sufficient information.

Orban is also popular because he bucked the explicit directives of the European Commission in Brussels and refused to accept an Hungarian quota of Middle Eastern migrants (not refugees—three-fifths of the millions of Middle Easterners who surged into Europe in 2016 are economic migrants, by the Commission's own reckoning). Along with the governments of Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, Hungary formed the Visegrad Group and remains intransigent. Hungarians supported Orban, just as an absolute majority of Americans supported then-candidate Donald Trump's promise to ban immigration from Middle Eastern terror states. The Soros foundations campaigned for free migration, with a budget of a size unimaginable in American terms.

Soros, to be sure, is Jewish by descent but not by practice or affiliation; he is a left-wing utopian who thinks that dissolving national differences is the precondition for world harmony. During the campaign the Times of Israel quoted Orban's denunciation of Soros with alleged "anti-Semitic overtones." Perhaps some Hungarian voters voted for Orban simply because he was attacking someone of Jewish descent. But there is nothing inherently anti-Semitic about campaigning against a plutocrat who is trying to buy your country.

There are widespread allegations that Orban uses state-owned media to advance his political position. I can't judge the merit of these reports, but anyone who wants to can denounce the government on opposition websites or demonstration against the government, as tens of thousands did after the Hungarian elections last month. There are no Hungarian journalists in jail, let alone falling out of windows as in Russia.

Hungarian political debate is open and bumptious, and Hungarians have ample opportunity to hear the opposition's point of view. Claims that the April election was unfair (no-one claims that it was rigged) smack of the same refusal to accept a popular mandate that bedevils the Democratic Party in the United States.

Hungary's liberal Jewish community opposes Orban and supports the admission of Muslim migrants, who elsewhere in Europe are the sole source of violent attacks on Jews. The split in Hungary's Jewish community in some ways mirrors the U.S., where liberal Jews vote Democratic while most observant Jews back Donald Trump. But as matters stand, Hungary is the safest European country for Jews, with no anti-Semitic violence of any kind in recent years. Róbert Frölich, rabbi of the Dohány Street Synagogue, said in a 2016 television broadcast, "Here in Hungary, we [...] do not feel as threatened as French Jews feel in France, Hungary is for some reason a more protected area, we do not palpably sense any form of threat to us, while of course we do worry for the rest." Leaders of Hungary's Orthodox Jewish community told me that they are in personal contact with the prime minister and that the relationship is highly satisfactory. Hungary is the safest country in Europe for Jews (the Czech Republic is friendly to Jews, but fewer than 4,000 live there, vs. 100,000 in Hungary).

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## **Spiked - OnLine**

### **HUNGARY: THE BAD BOY OF THE EU**

by Frank Furedi

Brussels fears Hungary because it refuses to bow to imperial technocracy.

According to the political establishment that runs the EU, Hungary has become a xenophobic, authoritarian society. The Hungarian government and in particular the prime minister, Viktor Orban, are continually denounced for their alleged violations of EU values. The mainstream Western media have picked up the message that it is okay to hate Hungary. They give the impression that Hungary is a totalitarian and viciously anti-Semitic society in which critics of the regime are silenced and the government dominates the media.

Calls to expel Hungary from the EU by pro-EU voices in the *Guardian* and elsewhere echo an intolerant outlook that is growing within the Brussels oligarchy. Recently, members of the

European Parliament's Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs Committee voted for a resolution that says the situation in Hungary constitutes 'a clear risk of a serious breach' of the EU's values.

Denunciations of the Hungarian government are often justified on the basis that this is a nation that refuses to go along with the migration policies that German chancellor Angela Merkel effectively imposed on the continent. Other Hungarian sins cited by the 'Kick Hungary out of the EU' lobby include a new law that makes life difficult for NGOs funded by George Soros.

However, the campaign against Hungary actually has little to do with recent policies adopted by the Orban government. For almost a decade now, Western European critics of Hungary have been calling for its expulsion from the EU. This anti-Hungarian animosity was vividly demonstrated in a debate in the European Parliament in January 2012. The debate, titled 'Recent Political Developments in Hungary', was organised in response to concerns expressed by the European Commission (EC) about various recent Hungarian laws. The commission followed up its concerns by launching infringement proceedings against Hungary on three issues: the independence of the national central bank; the retirement age of judges; and the independence of the data-protection authority. Outwardly, at least, this controversy seemed to be a dispute over relatively routine technical matters; but as the debate unfolded, it became clear that the main protagonists were in fact divided by, and motivated by, very different visions of what the best values are.

Before the debate, Europhile commentators in the media had singled out the Hungarian government and its recently enacted constitution – known as the Fundamental Law – as serious challenges to the secular, democratic, liberal values of the EU. That the constitution references Hungary's national and Christian traditions was seen as bad, and even dangerous. Such sentiments could unleash the xenophobic nationalism of the 1940s that the EU believed had been left behind, we were told.

José Manuel Barroso, then president of the EC, set the tone when he introduced the debate. He characterised his differences with the Hungarian government as an 'extremely sensitive matter, where I believe we have to be clear on values'. He did not clarify what values were at stake; however, the implication was clear that Hungarian laws and its new constitution violated European values.

During the debate, speaker after speaker condemned the Hungarian government. The Flemish Belgian politician, Guy Verhofstadt, leader of the Group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe, took to the floor to denounce Hungary's affronts to European values. He warned that there was more at stake here than technical issues – the fundamental principles on which the EU is constructed were being threatened, he said. He declared:

*'What is necessary here is not a debate on technical issues, as we had at the beginning of the year. This is about checking the conformity of the [Hungarian] constitution and cardinal laws with the European values that are enshrined in Article 2 of the treaty: democracy, the rule of law, freedom of religion, freedom of expression and so on.'*

Verhofstadt demanded that the EU's Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs draw up a report into the actions of the Hungarian government to find out whether 'there exists a clear risk or a serious breach of our values'. His use of the term 'our values' conveyed the idea that our way of life is very different to 'theirs'.

The oddity of this demand – that a member state of the EU, a sovereign nation, should have its values policed – went unnoticed, or at least unremarked upon. This demand for value-policing suggested that the EU's highly acclaimed celebration of diversity did not apply to different approaches to values across national boundaries. Tolerance for the diversity of values, which has historically been a central feature of liberal thought, was clearly not considered important by those condemning Hungary.

Some of the criticisms of Orban were couched in a more openly hostile language than the legalistic jargon used by Verhofstadt. Daniel Cohn-Bendit of the Greens-European Free Alliance condemned Hungary and lectured Orban that 'we are here to tell you that you are going in the direction of Hugo Chavez, Fidel Castro, and all the other totalitarian authoritarian governments'.

Strip away all the heated talk, and the fundamental value at stake between the EU technocracy and Hungary is that of national sovereignty. The ideal of sovereignty directly challenges the authority of the EU technocracy. That is why those who support national independence and popular sovereignty are frequently accused of the crime of xenophobia. From the standpoint of the EU, what is truly unforgivable is the refusal of the Hungarian government to play the role of neocolonial supplicant in the EU's imperial drama.

Back in the 1990s, during the negotiations regarding the terms of EU membership, Hungary was assigned the role of a student facing an exam on its capacity to understand and practise European values. In 1993, the European Council laid out its approval procedures, known as the 'Copenhagen Criteria', which candidate countries had to meet before they could become EU members. One criterion was the willingness of the candidate to accept and promote so-called European values.

The Copenhagen document stated that 'any European country may apply for membership if it respects the democratic values of the EU and is committed to promoting them'. This reference to 'democratic values' lacked clarity and practical meaning. The rhetoric of democratic values is used by a wide variety of actors – from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the United States – which means it is very much open to interpretation. In practice, the implication was that would-be members of the EU would have to endorse uncritically the *political culture* of the EU oligarchy.

The true EU value is that of unconditional acceptance of Brussels' diktats. This means that when EC president Jean-Claude Juncker instructs an Eastern European government to 'jump', the only acceptable response is to ask 'how high?'. From this perspective, the most dangerous counter-value to those of the EU is that of national independence. What the EU really fears is that Hungary's behaviour might become infectious, and other member states might start to adopt policies that are consistent with their own national interests.

It is paradoxical that supporters of the EU's line on Hungary believe they are upholding the values of tolerance and democracy. In truth, they cannot tolerate a nation that has democratically decided to adopt values that are different to their own. The EU is very selective in the way it interprets its own values. Rhetorically, EU ideologues celebrate diversity, yet they are bitterly hostile to those who demand that diversity should also be applied to the realm of values. This is why the campaign against Budapest unabashedly claims that it has the right to impose its values on Hungary whether that nation and its people like it or not.

Since the re-election of the Orban government in April, hostility to Hungary has morphed into a highly politicised and irrational Magyarophobia. The EU establishment regards the massive mandate endorsing Orban's policies as a direct challenge to its way of life. Isolating Hungary



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*Frank Furedi's new book, How Fear Works: The Culture of Fear in the 21st Century, is published by Bloomsbury Press.*





**BREAKING NEWS:**

GLORIA ALLRED WILL BE HOLDING A PRESS CONFERENCE  
DETAILING THE SEXUAL ASSAULT ALLEGATIONS MADE  
BY HER CLIENT, A CHICAGO WOMAN, AGAINST PRESIDENT TRUMP'S  
SUPREME COURT NOMINEE.. WHOEVER THAT EVENTUALLY IS!

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AMERICA, I  
WANT TO  
APOLOGIZE  
FOR RAISING  
STUPID KIDS.

