



BRUSSELS INSTITUTE

ANTI-SEMITIC  
HATE CRIMES AND  
INCIDENTS REPORT

JANUARY 2014  
HUNGARY

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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One of the most important requirements for the struggle against anti-Semitism is an exact awareness of the situation, that is, an investigation of the actual prevalence of anti-Semitism. It is one of the aims of Action and Protection Foundation to eliminate the lack of awareness surrounding this issue. Instrumental in achieving this objective is the continuous professional monitoring of public life. The community cannot really be protected unless current information on this is collected and analyzed. Results of the monitoring are published at regular, monthly intervals by the Foundation.

The reports deal with two forms of behavior: anti-Semitic hate crimes, and hate-motivated incidents. The report uses the term hate incidents to cover both. The decisive criterion for identifying either to be the case is anti-Semitic motive. Note however that the first type of behavior counts as criminal according to the penal law, while the latter does not make that category. Nevertheless, a documentation of both types of hate incidents is necessary in order to gain a general overview.

For the monitoring to have the widest possible scope it is required that a variety of sources are used simultaneously. Apart from registering the incidents, it is important that their particular characteristics are also accounted for. Therefore, in the course of documentation, data detailing the incident's location, perpetrator, victim and consequences are recorded on the one hand, and on the other, different types of incidents are differentiated.

In the course of its January monitoring activities, Action and Protection Foundation identified two anti-Semitic hate incidents. Both fit in the category of hate speech. The present report gives an account of numerous events in Hungary connected to the Holocaust and anti-Semitism.

In January 2014, Action and Protection Foundation lodged complaints in three cases of public denial of the crimes of the National Socialist regime. Complaints were lodged against private persons in all three cases, they posted comments to reports published on the online news portal [www.kurucinfo.hu](http://www.kurucinfo.hu), and thereby committed the offence detailed above.

# ACTION AND PROTECTION FOUNDATION

The phenomenon of anti-Semitism is by no means new to Hungary. The hate speech encountered earlier has however become increasingly dominant in public life. The situation is further aggravated by the Jobbik Party, which openly declares anti-Semitic and racist views, having forty-three members of parliament making hate speech far more ever-present in both Parliament and other organized events. These circumstances brought Action and Protection Foundation into being. Among the forms of civil association offered by Hungarian law, Action and Protection Foundation chose the form of foundation; it was registered in November 2012. The Foundation seeks to provide an alternative to the ineffectual legal steps taken against deteriorating standards of public discourse, exclusion, and the ignorance in which anti-Semitism is rooted, as well as atrocities and hate crimes.

## UNITY

Action and Protection Foundation is a registered civil organization. Participating in the work of the Foundation are leading figures from Mazsihisz, which represents the Neology and Orthodoxy, the status-quo/Chabad EMIH, the reform oriented Sim Shalom Progressive Jewish Congregation, as well as socially recognized emblematic personalities independent of these movements. Trustees of the Foundation represent the most important Jewish religious and cultural movements in Hungary, a symbolic expression of the fact that action on anti-Semitism is a cause shared by all.

## BRUSSELS INSTITUTE

The *Brussels Institute*, founded by **Action and Protection Foundation**, carries out monitoring of anti-Semitic hate crime in accordance with methods worked out and proposed by the **Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe** (OSCE). In monitoring anti-Semitic phenomena the Institute records and analyzes them on the basis of information delivered by various standardized sources. The monitoring process, which categorizes incidents into seven different groups, relies on the following sources: the sources of the Institute's own Research and Incident Monitoring Group, information available in the press and public media, and relevant data to be found in judicial, criminal and other state administrative records in the framework of an agreement with these branches of government. The institute has set up a now operational **HOTLINE** that can be reached by dialing the number **(+36 1) 51 00 000**, where incidents of anti-Semitic and anti-Jewish behavior can be reported.

Beyond regular publication of the monthly monitoring reports the *Brussels Institute's* research plan incorporates a comprehensive research project related to Jewry – using both quantitative and qualitative methods –, as well as a survey on the current situation concerning anti-Semitism that encompasses society as a whole. Furthermore, the program includes development of a differentiated training program that prepares different levels and participants of state administration for action and appropriate procedure on racist and anti-Semitic phenomena, in the form of teaching materials for the educational system and further training.

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## ABOUT THE REPORT

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General opinion on, and treatment of Hungarian anti-Semitism is often unusually extreme. Voices are heard on the one hand, that belittle the importance of such offences and manifestations. On the other hand, on occasion it may be the case that in relation to one-off incidents the image registered is of a public life deluged by such incidents. Knowledge of the actual situation is an indispensable condition for treatment of the real problems, which is why Action and Protection Foundation considers it its duty to provide as comprehensive an overview of the scale of anti-Semitism in Hungary as possible. Monitoring of anti-Semitic hate crimes and incidents<sup>1</sup> is one of the tools of achieving this objective. The monitoring results are published by the Foundation on a monthly basis. Apart from the monthly report, an annual summary review including more detailed analyses on the offences committed in the course of the year is also prepared.

The fight against hate crimes bears exceptional importance, because they differ from other forms of criminal conduct. These crimes may be considered messages of a kind, and thus point beyond private actions. This additional import becomes manifest in various social realms: on the level of the individual, the group attacked, and of society as a whole. The victims may suffer a greater psychological and emotional trauma. In the case of these crimes not “only” the property, or physical integrity of victims is endangered, but also their self-respect. These offences question the right of the individual to equality, even of belonging to society itself. It is important that in the course of such crimes the victims are the target of attacks because of some unchangeable characteristic, and for this reason may well feel more defenseless. The victims are often afraid that they may again become victims of further atrocities. Inappropriate handling of such incidents can easily lead to a secondary victimization of the targeted person. This type of criminal act also has a strong affect on the group to which the victim belongs. The victims of such crimes are often interchangeable, because in countless cases the attack does not target a certain individual, but anyone who, in the given instance, is a member of the group under attack. In the event, members of the group also become involved emotionally, and might live in fear of the future when they themselves may become the target of such prejudice-motivated crimes. This is especially true of groups, which have been exposed to prejudice for a long time. There is no need to justify at length that Jewry belongs among such groups. These crimes violate the norm that holds the members of society equal. Inadequate handling of such incidents can have grave consequences for the whole of society. It may on the one hand, encourage the perpetrators, or even others to commit further crimes in the same mold. On the other, it significantly diminishes the cohesive power of society (Levin and McDevitt 1999, 92–93; OSCE/ODIHR 2009a, 19–21; OSCE/ODIHR 2009b, 17–18; Perry 2001, 10).

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<sup>1</sup> See detailed definitions in the *Methodology* section.

It may be stated in general that fewer hate crimes are reported, and in the event documented, than are committed. Victims often do not report them to the police. A number of reasons may cause this implicitly. Firstly, many do not feel assured that the authorities will treat these incidents adequately, either because they are not sufficiently prepared, or due to prejudice. Certainly there are many victims who are not clear about the applicable legal regulations. Victims may feel shame, or fear that one of their concealed traits will be exposed. Lesser categorizations of the crimes are also frequent, where official authorities do not establish the hate-crime motivation. It is civil organizations that can help remedy these problems. Cooperation with state organs—such as the police, or the Public Prosecutor’s office—may be particularly beneficial.<sup>2</sup> Reports prepared by civil organizations can be expedient in alerting the official authorities to hate motivated crimes in the country. Long-term tendencies can be outlined on the basis of the collected data. Civil organizations can help in setting particular cases on track for legal process, may provide legal defense for the victims, and give various other forms of aid. These organizations may also serve as intermediaries between the victims and the police (OSCE/ODIHR 2009b, 34–36).

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<sup>2</sup> A great example of the above can be found in the Community Security Trust (CST) and cooperation between the London and the Manchester police forces. (CST 2013)

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# METHODOLOGY

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The report deals with two types of offence: hate crimes and hate motivated incidents. These are defined by EBESZ as follows<sup>3</sup> (OSCE/ODIHR 2009b, 15–16):

- hate crime: a crime as defined by the criminal code, which has been motivated by prejudice against a certain group of people<sup>4</sup>
- hate motivated incident: an offence, also based on prejudice against a certain group of people, but not reaching the level of criminal conduct.

The heightened importance of individual hate crimes is indicated by the fact that the criminal code of numerous countries deals with these cases separately. Hungarian criminal legislation identifies two forms of hate crime: violent offences committed against the member of a group, and incitement to hatred of a community. The recently adopted Criminal Code (Act C of 2012) deals with these in Chapter XXI, Paragraph 216, on crimes against human dignity and certain basic rights, as well as Chapter XXXII, Paragraph 332, on crimes against public peace. The crime of violence against a member of a group may be established if the perpetrator assaults or otherwise coerces the victim, because they belong to a protected group. Additionally, this is also the case if the perpetrator demonstrates provocative behavior against a community that is apt to cause alarm. The crime is only affected if there is a concrete victim. Incitement against a community most often means hate speech, and it can only be defined as such on the condition that it is committed in public. Incitement to hate crimes does not target concrete individuals but a group of people. It is important to add that other crimes may also be categorized as having been committed on racist motives. In such cases the courts must pass a heavier sentence<sup>5</sup> (TASZ 2012, 3–4). Apart from these, Paragraph 333 of the Criminal Code also describes the crime of denial of the crimes of the National Socialist regime. Furthermore, Paragraph 335 bans the distribution and use in wide public, or public display of the symbols of various autocratic regimes (among them the swastika, the SS insignia, arrow-cross).

Detailed descriptions of approaches to, and recent tendencies in the definition of hate incidents can be found in our May Report. The report also cites the findings of literature in this field internationally. The present report presents hate crimes and hate incidents motivated by anti-Semitism, wherever perpetrator, target, means or message of a case suggest it. The

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<sup>3</sup> The scientific definition of hate crimes is extremely contradictory and divergent (for more on this, see Chakraborti and Garland 2009, 4–7). These definitions can serve as important addenda to an understanding of these crimes, however they are difficult to apply in practice. This is what made the creation of simpler, more practical definitions necessary.

<sup>4</sup> For example, on these grounds the OSCE does not consider hate speech a hate crime, since the given behavior would not count as criminal without the motive of prejudice (OSCE/ODIHR 2009a, 24). For our approach in dealing with this, see below.

<sup>5</sup> The Criminal Code does not include racist motives verbatim, but for example the case of “contemptible motive” is fulfilled, if someone commits a crime out of such a motivation.



target may be a person, a group, an event, a building, a monument or other property. It is important however, that anti-Semitic motivation can only be spoken of if the perpetrator chose the given target expressly because it was assumed to belong to Jewry. In this context it is not finally relevant whether the assumption is correct: the belief of the target's connection to Jewry is sufficient. In the course of monitoring, on one hand, all incidents that fall in the category of hate crime are considered hate incidents. These may be crimes identified as such by the Criminal Code (violent assault of a member of a community, incitement to hatred of a community, denial of the crimes of the national socialist regime, use of symbols of autocratic regimes), but can also include other acts mentioned in the Criminal Code, if prejudice can be proven as a motivating factor. When identifying hate incidents, various indicators recorded during the monitoring period<sup>6</sup> are used as the basis for examining whether the given action could have been motivated by anti-Semitism.

For the widest possible scope in monitoring anti-Semitic hate incidents the simultaneous use of a variety of sources is required. The victims' filed reports are of especially great importance to this study. If the victim cannot, or does not want to file a report with the Brussels Institute, the involvement of an intermediary may be facilitated to gain information. Such an intermediary may be a family member, acquaintance of the victim, a witness of the incident or another civil organization. The earlier mentioned 24-hours-a-day Hotline operated by the Foundation serves to ease the passage of reports. Additionally there are options for online filing of reports, which allow even greater anonymity for the person placing the report.

It is a declared objective of the Foundation to keep in touch with the authorities, since they are the most likely to be first approached by victims or witnesses.

A variety of media channels also represent important sources: television, radio, as well as the printed and online versions of the press. An essential segment of the report is composed of monitoring the expressions of, so called, online hatred, which seems currently to have become an ever-increasing threat.

Monitoring of these media channels is covered in part by a paid team of experts within a professional framework, and additionally volunteers are involved in a media watch, sending information gained on to the Brussels Institute for processing. It is an aim to cover an increasingly large segment of the media with continuous monitoring. Monitoring extends to roughly all receivable TV and radio stations, all the printed press with high print-runs, as well as online material not only on news portals, but the social networking pages and extreme, hate inciting websites. The monitoring process is carried through systematically, according to precisely prepared standards.

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<sup>6</sup> These are described in the *Methods* section.

Among the monitored hate incidents there are some that are considered a part of the statistics, but there are also some that are recorded, though not counted as part of the statistics.<sup>7</sup>

The criteria for hate incidents that are included in the statistics follow:

- Only hate incidents that occurred in Hungary; no matter whether the victim is a Hungarian citizen or not
- Any action, incident, atrocity that is aimed at Jewish individuals, organizations or property where an anti-Semitic intent or content can be proven, or if the victim was attacked for being Jewish or due to an assumed Jewish identity
- Deliberate and wanton impairment of any Jewish institution or building (even if no further, explicit anti-Semitic message was paired with the vandalism [for example, a Jewish synagogue's window is broken with a stone])
- Anti-Semitic comments that have been reported to Action and Protection Foundation appearing on blogs, fora, community pages
- Anti-Semitic and neo-Nazi material delivered to particular Jewish individuals, Jewish organizations, institutions
- Anti-Semitic and neo-Nazi material deposited at Jewish-owned property, Jewish organizations, institutions
- Criticism related to Israel and Zionism, if they go beyond a political statement and serve to recall traditional anti-Jewish stereotypes
- Events apt to raise fear among Jews.

Hate incidents that are not accounted for in the statistics:

- Anti-Semitic hate incidents that are related to Hungary and Hungarian Jewry, but for some reason do not belong to the scope of the statistics (e.g., they did not occur in Hungary)
- Expressions of hate that appear regularly on homepages, in comments and online fora, and have not been personally reported to Action and Protection Foundation.

A number of the aspects of the registered incidents are recorded. The indicators that help decide whether a given incident was motivated by prejudice have been mentioned earlier. These indicators pertain to various characteristics of the perpetrator, data concerning the victim, the time and location of the incident. These are recorded in the course of collection of data. Tabs are kept on whether incidents had any, and if so, what sort of—possibly legal—consequences.

Apart from registering incidents, it is also important to capture the qualitative differentials between them. The typification of cases is carried out in two ways. According to one of the systems of categorization the following types are differentiated: incitement against

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<sup>7</sup> The following were used to develop these criteria: ADL 2012, CST 2013

members of a community, violence against members of a community, use of symbols of autocratic regimes, and Holocaust denial.

Based on the *Facing Facts! Guidelines*, seven types of incidents are differentiated as follows (CEJI 2012, 10–12):

- Homicide: any attack on a person that causes loss of life
- Extreme physical violence
  - Any attack on a person that potentially causes serious bodily harm
  - Any attack involving weapons, or other tools that can cause bodily harm
  - Any attack on property, where there is a potential for the people occupying the property to be killed
  - Bombs and letter bombs
  - Kidnapping
- Assault
  - Any physical attack against a person or people, which does not pose a threat to their life and is not serious
  - Attempted assault, which fails due to self-defense, or if the victim runs away
  - Throwing objects at a person or people, including where the object misses its target
- Damage to property
  - Any physical attack directed against property, which is not life-threatening
  - Desecration of property
  - Arson attacks on property where there is not threat to life, failed attempts at arson
- Threats
  - Any clear and specific threat, whether verbal or written
  - Any “bomb” which is assessed to be a hoax
  - Stalking
  - Defamation
- Hate speech
  - Public hate speech
  - Hate speech channeled via the internet and social media
  - Abusive behavior
  - Abusive literature sent to more than one person
  - In literature and music
- Discriminatory incidents

Placing hate incidents in context is also a priority. These actions do not exist in empty space and are by no means independent of the social and cultural environs in which they occur. The dynamics of these incidents is also of importance: often processes, rather than separately occurring events can be spoken of (Perry 2001, 8). Apart from the static data, short descriptions of each event are also published, which aid understanding of the environment surrounding the incident.<sup>8</sup> In presenting time lines, attention will always be given to showing the dynamics of the events.

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<sup>8</sup> These descriptions in particular are held to be a most positive aspect of the Anti-Defamation League reports by Perry (2001, 18).

# ANTI-SEMITIC HATE INCIDENTS

## – JANUARY 2014

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In the course of monitoring in January 2014, Action and Protection Foundation identified two anti-Semitic hate incidents. Both can be categorized as hate speech. One of the incidents, though committed at the end of December only became public in January, and so appears in the *January Report*.

### HATE SPEECH

#### **Student’s Union (StU) president posts racist joke**

*Szeged, Csongrád County*

*Sources: atlaszoktatas.hu, delmagyar.hu,*

*SZTE Természettudományi és Informatikai Kar Facebook page*

The Student’s Union president at the University of Szeged Faculty of Science and Informatics, Tamás Juhász posted a racist joke on Facebook on 24 December. Internet websites published articles about the post on 2 January.

Tamás Juhász posted a photo of a member of the KuKluxKlan (KKK) in the USA. KKK is an anti-Catholic, anti-Semitic organization that proclaims white supremacy. Juhász’s comment under the photo read: “Sadly we are not to have a white Christmas this year either :) [i.e. a crying smiley]”.

In response to inquiries he replied in e-mail: “I intended the post as a joke, and accordingly no negative criticism reached me from friends. The post is infused with irony, if anyone has the right to be offended about the post, that would perhaps be the KuKluxKlan, because it rests on their narrow mindedness. [...] I do not think that I have any greater influence on the way my friends think than the films they see, the music they listen to, or the books they read.”

On 2 January the heads of the Faculty of Science and Informatics made a public statement, in which the leadership of the Faculty denounced the post for its discriminative content and expressed hope that those involved—who are at the same time public figures—delete the post that rightly elicited such an outcry, and apologize for their actions.

#### **Tibor Ágoston’s deliberate slip of the tongue**

*Debrecen, Hajdú-Bihar County*

*Sources: vagy.hu, website of the Youth Section of Jobbik (Jobbik Ifjúsági Tagozata)*

On 12 January, the Youth Section of Jobbik in Debrecen held a remembrance in the city, on the Medgyessy promenade at the war memorial that celebrates the memory of the soldiers

who lost their lives by the Don River. A speaker at the event, Tibor Ágoston, the County deputy chief of Jobbik for Debrecen and Hajdú-Bihar County, first called the Holocaust “holohoax” in his speech, then, mimicking a slip of tongue he corrected himself and used the word Holocaust instead, yet to continue his speech only after interjecting: “It was deliberate, please excuse me.” Furthermore in his speech he took exception to the remembrance of the Holocaust, because he feels that it is forced upon the people.

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# FURTHER ANTI-SEMITIC HATE INCIDENTS

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## **The opinion of Sándor Szakály on the Kamenets-Podolsk deportations**

*Budapest*

*Source: MTI*

Sándor Szakály, Director of the Veritas Historical Research Institute spoke about the Institute's fields of research and strategy in an interview with the Hungarian News Agency (MTI) on 17 January. While listing the historical events related to the research strategy, he stated that Hungarian Jewry only really suffered significant losses after German troops had marched into Hungary. He then alluded to the fact that many historians are of the opinion that the first Hungarian deportation during the Second World War was to Kamenets-Podolsk, in 1941, but in his view this ought rather to be considered a police action against aliens, because those without Hungarian citizenship were expelled and removed to this place.

His statement was critically received by many, and the Democratic Coalition Party (DK) filed a complaint against him for denial of the Holocaust. The case is also discussed in other parts of this report, the section Community News and Responses, as well as Official and Civil Responses.

# COMMUNITY NEWS AND RESPONSES

## The German Occupation Memorial

### *Budapest*

*Sources: MTI, Jobbik.hu, Index.hu, Pásztor Tibor's blog, Népszabadság, Élet és Irodalom, Lánchíd Rádió, Magyar Orosz Művelődési és Baráti Társaság webpage, ATV, Magyar Ellenállók és Antifasiszták Szövetsége webpage, Népszava, MTI-OS*

News of a memorial to the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the German occupation of Hungary to be raised in the center of Budapest came out on 31 December. The government considers it a socio-politically important cause for the artwork bearing the memory of the occupation in Szabadság [liberty] Square to be ready by 19 March 2014. The raising of the memorial has been declared a project of national economic importance.

On the evening of 1 January 50–60 people gathered at the demonstration organized by the community portal Tolerancia (Tolerance), the politician Imre Mécés and theatre director Fruzsina Magyar, to protest against the memorial. Speakers at the demonstration argued that not only was it the aim of this memorial to whitewash the Horthy period; but it also aims to mitigate historical responsibility and shift it on the Germans. “The extreme right will have a new shrine”, Andrea Zoltai, representative of the Facebook-group Tolerance said.

President of the Hungarian Antifascist Federation (MEASZ), Vilmos Hanti presented the opinion of the Federation in a statement on 1 January: “we hope it is a bad joke, but knowing the government—they are serious! [...] In itself, the memorial could be a memento of the Hungarian horrors of war, [but] it may well become the heroification of Nazism, and a place where Neonazis gather.”

On 2 January the Party Együtt-PM protested against the creation of the memorial, and demanded that plans be suspended. According to the statement published by Együtt-PM “a memorial should be erected not to the occupation, but to the resistance instead”, those who resisted, the heroes, and the victims should be remembered—and the way of remembering them should be made a common cause, not forced upon the capital and the country. In the name of Együtt-PM, Péter Juhász called upon the ministry responsible in this matter, and the local government of the district to suspend the project, and involve historians and civil partners in the selection of the content, manner and site of the memorial.

On 2 January the Federation of Hungarian Jewish Communities (Mazsihisz) called upon the decision-makers to make social reconciliation a priority, rather than the quick establishment of a memorial. According to Mazsihisz the way, and the speed at which the decision was brought elicited serious doubts and unease from Jewish communities in Hungary and abroad.



On 2 January the Government Information Center responded with a statement: “The government is paying tribute to all Hungarian victims by erecting a sculpture that memorializes the tragic German occupation of Hungary”.

In her statement issued on the same day, Lorántné Hegedűs, Jobbik MP considered it appropriate that there be a memento—particularly on Szabadság Square—to the forced interruption in the legal continuity of the historical Hungarian constitution. At the same time, Jobbik also holds that it would create an absurd situation if the obelisk glorifying the Russian occupation of Hungary, which bears innumerable symbols of autocratic regimes, would be allowed to stay there. For this reason they have called upon the government to move the memorial of Soviet heroism to the New Public Cemetery of Rákoskeresztúr, and the section within it dedicated to “those who lived for communism and the people”.

In an article that appeared in *Népszava* on 3 January, László Varga argued that the memorial to Soviet heroism in the Second World War “gains meaning” with the placement of another memorial that calls attention to the German occupation, as it indicates: this is exactly what the Russian soldiers fought against. According to the historian László Varga, the responsibility of the Hungarian state is not downplayed if it wants to establish a memorial to a significant event in Hungarian history on its 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

On 5 January the Roma section of MSZP protested in a statement against a memorial being raised for the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the German occupation of Hungary, and requests the government not to finance the establishment of “anti-Semitic and racist shrines” from taxpayers’ money.

In its statement of 8 January, MSZP called the government’s wish to erect a memorial to the Nazi hordes sweeping into Hungary unexplainable and shocking, and expressed fear that if the memorial is indeed realized, this symbolic space in the city would fall victim to political provocation, and be transformed into a battlefield. “Rather than memorials the Nazi atrocities need understanding of the events that occurred, and eternal remembrance of the inhumanity, and this remembrance to be passed on.”

Antal Rogán, Mayor of Budapest’s 5<sup>th</sup> district said on 9 January, that this memorial is erected in remembrance of all the victims of the Nazi occupation. He also added that the local government for the 5<sup>th</sup> District still had to give a prior approval for the work to be set in its designated place.

In an article in *Népszabadság* on 10 January András Heisler, President of Mazsihisz gave voice to his conviction that the German occupation memorial would grossly damage Hungarian interests. “I am afraid that there will be an international outcry: this is what we [Mazsihisz] would like to prevent”.

A statement of protest was published in the *Élet és Irodalom* issue of 17 January with the signature of 26 historians<sup>9</sup> under the title “Historians protest against the memorial ‘German Occupation of Hungary on 19 March 1944’”. “The memorial falsifies an important period of our history, and relativizes the events of the Holocaust. [...] By portraying the victims of the Holocaust and collaborationist perpetrators of the Holocaust as a single victim, it violates the memory of the victims. [...] We, the undersigned historians, call upon the government to leave off with the falsification of our recent past, the relativization of the history of the Holocaust, and discard plans to realize the memorial in Szabadság Square.”

On 17 January the opinion of Dániel Bodnár, Chairman of Action and Protection Foundation, on the memorial appeared in *Népszabadság*. As he put it, it is no difficulty in accepting that if one says, even proclaiming in the crafted stone of a memorial that the “Germans occupied” the country, it suggests at the same time that what happened after the occupation is not the responsibility of the Hungarian government at the time or Hungarian society, but that of the occupying power that simply used a powerless apparatus as a mere tool. Furthermore, he wrote: “A strategy that cosmetically corrects, reshapes or simply falsifies the responsibility of the Horthy era, is not made unacceptable by the way it upsets our peace of mind, or the peace of mind of Hungarian Jews, but because it undermines the foundations of a healthy, self-critical, but at the same time (also) forward looking national self-consciousness for a long time to come.”

In its statement of 18 January, the Raoul Wallenberg Association expressed its hope that the text of the German occupation memorial will also refer to the “responsibility of the collaborating Hungarian state”. The Association’s position on the matter is that the memory of the German occupation and the Nazi-Arrow Cross reign of terror that followed should not be passed on to Hungarian citizens—and especially the young—through the establishment of commemorative monuments, but by raising awareness, through the accounts of witnesses still alive, and an objective presentation of historical facts.

On 19 January Tibor Pásztor, the leader of the MSZP fraction of the 5<sup>th</sup> District local government was the first to publicly post the visualization of the memorial on his blog, Archangel Gabriel and the Imperial Eagle, as its central elements. The figures will stand in a 7-meter-high gate with a pediment formed of 13 columns. The documentation attached to the visualization explains the symbolism of the figures as follows: “Upon the mangled ruins of culture a greater power settles, the Third German Empire, and the Nazi symbol that portrays it: the Imperial Eagle. In its formal interpretation it forms the exact opposite in contrast to the figure of Archangel Gabriel.”

<sup>9</sup> Péter Bencsik historian, Ágnes Deák historian, László Eörsi historian, Csaba Fazekas historian, Kinga Frojimovics historian, Lajos Gecsényi historian, Gábor Gyáni historian, Tibor Hajdu historian, Gyula Hosszú history teacher, Viktor Karády sociologist, László Karsai historian, János Kenedi historian, Gábor Klaniczay historian, M. Mária Kovács historian, György Kövér historian, Tamás Majsai historian, András Mink historian, Judit Molnár historian, Mária Ormos historian, Zoltán Paksy historian, Judit Pihurik historian, M. János Rainer historian, Péter Sipos historian, Zsuzsanna Toronyi museologist, Krisztián Ungváry historian, József Vonyó historian.

The Hungarian Zionist Alliance put forward in its 20 January statement that “the Hungarian government has come forward with a plan for a memorial on the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the German occupation of Hungary to be placed in the Szabadság Square in the central 5<sup>th</sup> District of Budapest, which lumps perpetrators and victims together, relativizes the measure of losses, and wishes to shift historical responsibility from the Hungarian decision-makers and executors of the time”. In addition it threatened that if the government does not “leave off with its plans to erect the memorial in Szabadság Square”, resolve the problem of the body of councilors for the House of Fates and remove Sándor Szakály from his post, the “Alliance would no longer represent itself at the meetings of the ‘Jewish Roundtable’ and the ‘Holocaust 70’ Committee, as well as refusing to make use of the funds won under the framework of the ‘Civil Foundation 2014’ established in memory of the Holocaust”.

On 21 January, Slomó Köves, the Executive Rabbi of EMIH gave a press conference where he said that EMIH does not support the building of the memorial on Szabadság Square, because the message that the Hungarian government had no responsibility after 1944 is problematic.

On the same day, at the press conference held by Mazsihisz, András Heisler gave a statement with regard to the memorial. He explained that they would like to avoid by all means that the memorial to the German occupation of Hungary should be built without a consultation with Germany, because it may otherwise lead to conflict with them, as well as with the United States, as they have their embassy at the site chosen for the memorial. In his opinion the realization of the memorial may also lead to conflict with Russia, since the memorial of the fallen Soviet soldiers can also be found on the same Szabadság Square. Furthermore, neither Israel, nor international or Hungarian Jewry understands why it is necessary to build a memorial at this very spot and right at this time. No formal means are however at Mazsihisz’ disposal to stop the memorial from being built.

Gusztáv Zoltai, the Executive Director of Mazsihisz made a request to the government to take the plans for building the occupation memorial off the agenda, as it would be preferable if it were not to become a shrine for the extreme right.

On the same day, the Government Information Office repeated its statement, so as to say that the time had come to raise a memorial to all of the victims, adding: “the debate surrounding the memorial is understandable, after all an important question is under discussion, but we hope that no one questions the fact that the victims of the events that occurred after 19 March 1944 deserve a sympathetic and honorable commemoration”.

Also on the same day, the party DK called on Antal Rogán to refuse the request of the government, and not to give permission for Szabadság Square to be the site of the German occupation memorial, which erects a place of remembrance for the outrage of the World War, and not its victims.

On 22 January, Csaba Horváth, deputy chief of MSZP stated at a press conference that the memorial in fact serves as a monument to the Nazi occupation, the Hungarian partners to the Nazi occupation, the government is committing the offence of falsifying history by raising the memorial. The memorial shows victims and perpetrators as one group. He also objected to the government not having even tried to make the memorial expressive of the nation's unity, there having been no social debate about it. He added that the memorial was a provocation launched at society by the government, a falsification of history, it would become the gathering place for Nazis. Hungary became Nazi after the occupation, he said, there were Hungarians in the Nazi camp. In his opinion the memorial humiliates not only the Hungarian, but the German people as well, creating the impression that the German people had violated Hungary, whilst it had been the German Nazis together with the Hungarian Nazis who did so. He clarified that the German Imperial Eagle represented not the Nazi Empire, but the German people.

At the press conference, Szabolcs Kerék-Bárczy, member of the executive board of MSZP announced, "the raising of the memorial is a symbol that represents a gesture made by Fidesz towards the Hungarian radical, currently extreme right and new Nazis". He added: after the elections the democratic parties will have to shoulder the responsibility of "deporting" the memorial to the Memento Park, and placing it among the rest of the symbols of autocratic regimes where it belongs. In addition, he said, they were appealing to Antal Rogán to search his own conscience, as this is a personal responsibility to be born by him. The meeting of the local government representatives, Tibor Pásztor pointed out, was the only public forum at which Hungarian society at large could express its views about this sculpture.

On the same day, 22 January, Viktor Orbán responded in a letter to the leaders of Mazsihisz, András Heisler and Gusztáv Zoltai, who wrote to him on January 20. In his letter he approached the issue by noting that his government had always had the fate of the long-suffering Jewish community close to its heart. The conviction had also strengthened in him, that "in the future there is still much work we could do together to further strengthen the mutual respect, better understanding and cooperation between communities in Hungary". The memorial paying tribute to the victims of German occupation also fits into this series of tasks. "I firmly believe, that our respect for the victims does not allow us to walk past the fate of those imprisoned, transported, murdered without a bow of our heads, and a word of tribute." He added: though there are some, who seek to degrade the memory of the victims, and the memorial that pays respect to them to the level of everyday political speculation, he will firmly dismiss any such attempts.

On the same day, at an exceptional assembly held for this reason the 5<sup>th</sup> district local government gave its proprietor's approval for the memorial. According to Antal Rogán's position the time for the memorial to be erected has arrived, the government did not want to offend anyone's good feeling, and considers the stance according to which a reinterpretation

of history is underway a gross exaggeration. Tibor Pásztor called the erection of the memorial a discreditable and cynical act, and objected to the fact that the Jews do not have a state memorial. He objected to the name of the memorial, which, in his opinion, also offends the international community, and asked the representatives not to support the realization of the “shrine for the right-wing extremists”. Representing the Raoul Wallenberg Association at the assembly, Gábor Deák, called the erection of the memorial a provocation and stated: the labor service men and those who murdered them cannot be gathered under one name. He requested that a separate memorial plaque be placed to explain the events that occurred. Many civil participants at the public assembly gave voice to their indignation following the announcement of the results.

Also on 22 January, the Hungarian Liberal Party (MLP) spoke of the memorial as a white-washing of the Horthy Era. The party denounced the creation of memorial, because in their opinion its message is simply that Hungary was only a victim of the events of the Second World War, and the German occupation was alone responsible for the deportation and murder of the hundreds of thousands of people.

On the same day the German embassy gave a written statement saying that Germany is aware of and also accepts responsibility for the crimes committed in Hungary. Responsibility for memorial sites in Hungary is born by the Hungarian government fundamentally. They thought that considering the all-encompassing and public preparations for the memorial year that had been ongoing with the participation of the ambassadors of Austria, Germany, Israel and the United States of America for at least a year, it was a pity that the “actual decision regarding the memorial was brought very quickly, and without a broad-based discussion”.

Also on 22 January, the spokesperson for Fidesz, Péter Hoppál found it unseemly that the plans for the memorial were under political attack. As he saw it, the actions surrounding the case seemed somewhat hysteria fuelling, escalated as they were by the election campaign period, and added, “nor is it unusual for the Gyurcsány coalition to play the anti-Semitism card”.

And also on 22 January, the Democratic Coalition held its conference entitled Culture and Power, where the president of the Coalition, Ferenc Gyurcsány said, “if this ‘vile sculpture’ is erected”, and “carries through this violation of the spirit of Free-principled, democratic Hungary” then the statue need not be left there after the change of government.

On 23 January the Magyar Orosz Művelődési és Baráti Társaság (Association for Russo-Hungarian cultural exchange and friendship) posted the statement of its presidency regarding the memorial on its website. According to the argument advanced in the statement, “the planned memorial—which would, so to say, symbolically counterpoint the obelisk that stands in memory to the sacrifices of the Soviet soldiers who freed the Hungarian people from Nazi occupation—cannot even be considered a contribution to Hungarian societies ability to face up to Hungary’s role at the time, or the causes and the consequences of



the Second World War, and a realistic evaluation of the role of the Soviet Red Army within that [...] an equal to sign cannot be put between the conquering and the liberating forces, the criminal and the victim. Similarly, it is impossible to relativize the responsibility of the representative and collaborating actors of the Horthy system in the material and human losses of the Hungarian nation in the Second World War, and the crime of genocide.”

On 23 January Zoltán Balog, Minister for Human Resources was quoted in *Népszabadság*: “That there are some who have only now come to realize the facts set down in the Fundamental Law, is not our responsibility. The Fundamental Law pronounces the date as of which we consider Hungarian independence and sovereignty lost as 19 March 1944. [...] The memorial however is being built for the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Nazi occupation. A memorial to all the victims of Nazi occupation has not yet been erected in Hungary, and so we have undertaken to do so on this anniversary”.

To a question put to the Prime Minister by Pál Steiner, an MSZP politician, (“In your opinion, does the plan of raising a memorial to the German occupation of Hungary serve the national cause of remembering the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the deportation of Hungarian Jewry in a creditable fashion?”) a reply came from Zsolt Semjén on 24 January. He stated that the decision to raise the memorial was not taken by the Hungarian Holocaust 2014 Memorial Committee, in line with the decision of the government, the Ministry of public Administration and Justice submitted the initiative and in view of the imminent date of the remembrance a government decree places the realization of the memorial in the category of a project of national economic importance. The government’s decision about raising the memorial aids social dialogue, awareness of the past and a full understanding of the responsibility.

On 24 January, at a press conference held on Szabadság Square, Tímea Szabó, the co-president of *Párbeszéd Magyarorszáért* (Dialogue for Hungary, PM) said: the memorial would not stand in remembrance of the victims, but would falsify history. She added: not only Holocaust denial is a crime, but also if someone interprets the past falsely to acquit themselves.

At the same press conference, Gordon Bajnai, leader of *Együtt-PM* called the plan for the memorial an ideological poisoning of the well, which in his opinion promotes the lie that it was only because of an outside power that 600 thousand Hungarians were sent to their deaths in the Second World War. These 600 thousand persons were arrested, identified, accompanied to the cattle wagons or shot by the Danube by large numbers of Hungarians. The Hungarian state not only did not protect its citizens, but was an active participant in sending 600 thousand of our fellow citizens to their deaths. According to the ex-Prime Minister, the government seeks to rule over the past, so it can rule the future, but in fact the “false historical view believed by the government” was one of the causes of the rise of the extremists.

The president of the Hungarian Gipsy Party, Aladár Horváth said in an interview he gave to ATV on 24 January that they distance themselves from the creation of the memorial. Furthermore, the raising of the sculpture is especially offensive, because it denies the

Jews, and the Gypsies along with them their past. “It deforms the collective consciousness. [...] This has campaign purposes, and it seems that the whole thing is part of a vast system, a vast system of lies that builds the memorial, and will hold various events just for show, to divert attention from Hungary’s responsibility.”

On 25 January, Attila Mesterházy, chairman of MSZP and the broad *Összefogás* coalition’s candidate for Prime Minister spoke at the general assembly of the socialists, to the effect that Hungarians have to make a choice, whether they want a modern, European republic, or “the restoration of the Horthy Era”. He said, Fidesz tolerates and often even encourages extremist views. At the same time he evaluated the German occupation memorial as falsification of history.

On 26 January, in an interview on the program *Szabad Gondolat* (Free thought) on Lánchíd Radio László Kövér, Speaker of the National Assembly declared that he shared the Prime Minister’s view in regards to the memorial to the victims of German occupation, in that the memorial requires no explanation. He added: the government gave clear indication of the fact that it intends to hold suitably dignified remembrance of the killing of hundreds of thousands of our Jewish compatriots. He said: the war’s final stages are such a crime, as to never be erased from Hungarian history, and the state also held responsibility in this. He called it a lie, however, and even in the best case a “mistake that can be attributed to a highly agitated state of mind”, that the message of the memorial would be: the Hungarian state wants to deflect its participation in the Holocaust, or its responsibility for it. “Why should we not be able to say that we reject, that we distance ourselves from those who collaborated with Nazi Germany even in retrospect,” Kövér asked. “But that under the sign of a Rákosi-ist myth and logic this tragic period of our history should be blamed on us as the crime of nine million Fascists, let it be allowed for us not to accept that.”

On 27 January, at the Holocaust Remembrance Day commemoration held at the Holocaust Memorial Center, Márton Gulyás, executive manager of *Kréta* theatre group made a request as a private individual to Secretary of State Bence Rétvári of KDNP (the Christian Democratic People’s Party) after he finished his speech, that if the government is serious in saying that the Hungarian state has a responsibility in the Holocaust—as affirmed by Rétvári—to act accordingly, and not realize the German occupation memorial. Rétvári argued that the two don’t exclude each other. The statue on Szabadság Square—he noted—stands in remembrance of those who fell victim to the Holocaust after 19 March 1944.

On 28 January the President of the Jewish Congregation of *Érsekújvár*, Tamás Lang argued in a press release marking their refusal of the funds received in the framework of Holocaust Memorial Year Civil Fund: “We consider any form of deliberate shifting of responsibility, blurring of the line between victims and perpetrators, or bringing up of German occupation or ‘loss of sovereignty’ as an excuse, a falsification of history. None of these are made true by any history-falsifying, fake memorial.”

On 29 January the historian László Karsai described the German occupation memorial as a mad-cap plan in the program *Egyenes beszéd* (Straight talk) on ATV television. All that this memorial says is that the evil occupying Nazis were responsible for everything, which is not true, he said.

In answer to questions from ATV Television, Ildikó Pelczné Gáll, a Fidesz member of the European Parliament said that she likes the combination of Archangel Gabriel and the Imperial Eagle in the composition “and that [for her] it also has a message”. Engaged further in discussion she said: though she does not know exactly where the statue will be placed—the interviewers informed her—“I am pleased it will be in the right place”. All of this was shown on the Channel’s 29 January program.

The International Federation of Resistance Fighters (FIR) published its statement dated 30 January, in which it declares its “support for the protests by scholars, anti-fascists and other members of the Hungarian civil society in Budapest on Szabadság Square, against the planned memorial to the victims of the German occupation. [...] Such a plan is part of the measures taken to rehabilitate the Horthy regime and deny the Hungarian anti-fascist resistance of the 30s and 40s of the previous century. The plan opens the gates to falsification and the rewriting of history. [...] The FIR calls upon the Hungarian authorities, to halt preparations for the raising of the memorial.”

On 31 January, EMIH requested the government in a press release to take into consideration that the German occupation memorial should express the historical responsibility of the Horthy regime in a manner “befitting the weight of its subject matter”, worthy of public notice, and lasting symbolic impact. As the statement put it, the German occupation memorial to be raised by the government is “in itself hard to accept”, but “would seem a comprehensible plan, were it to express that the situation of Hungary—and Jewry within that—became drastically worse after 19 March 1944.” At the same time the gesture of raising the memorial leaves room for misinterpretation, “especially in the context of the Holocaust memorial year”. The planned memorial “both in its name, and dubious aesthetics” also carries a misleading message, that in the 25 years preceding 1944 there had been no Jewish victims to the disenfranchising anti-Jewish legislation, the humiliating military labor service, while also saying that there are questions with regard to all that happened following 1944, the genocide in which hundreds of thousands lost their lives and the deportations carried out in preparation, and the role of the then Hungarian government and state administration in it. “Meanwhile we observe with mixed feelings of perplexed anxiety, as in parallel to initiatives towards raising awareness of the past there are also some signs indicating efforts to bleach the darker periods of Hungarian history”.

At the Budapest press conference of the by-party Congressional Delegation from Washington on 31 January, the Republican American senator John McCain, in answering a question also addressed the issue of the German occupation memorial planned for Szabadság Square. He posited, “we must be sure not only about what we do, but about what it looks



like we are doing. If it seems as if this memorial in some way condones what Germany did in this country, and the actions of those who may have cooperated with Germany, then people around the world, and especially those of our friends in the Jewish community, have every right to take offence. We have said as much to the Prime Minister.” Ted Deutsch, Democratic representative for Florida added: Viktor Orbán assured them that the intention with raising the memorial was not to whitewash the past, and he would continue their measures to combat anti-Semitism.

### **Demands for Sándor Szakály’s resignation**

*Budapest*

*Sources: MTI, ATV, 444.hu, Népszabadság, Népszava, website of the Simon Wiesenthal Center, MTI-OS*

In a press release delivered to the Hungarian News Agency (MTI) on 17 January, Lajos Oláh and Zoltán Szabó demanded in the name of the Democratic Coalition (DK) that the government revoke Sándor Szakály’s appointment as director and apologize to Hungarian Jewry. Sándor Szakály, with his statement in which he called the 1941 deportation of Jews to Kamenets-Podolsk “a simple police action against aliens, falsified history in an impermissible way, dishonored the memory of the victims of the Holocaust, and there is a well grounded suspicion that he committed a crime by trivializing an act against humanity”.

In a statement on 17 January the Prime Minister’s Office communicated as follows about Szakály’s words: “Sándor Szakály did not represent the Prime Minister’s Office or János Lázár’s position on the matter. He is a historian, and the Veritas Institute came about specifically in order for historians to be able to state their opinions, and debate them.”

On 19 January, Mazsihisz demanded Szakály’s resignation with reference to the Director’s statement. “The leadership of Mazsihisz stands perplexed and dumbfounded in the face of the Holocaust relativization of the Veritas Institutes, which was founded by the government”, and in the wake of the debacle of Szakály’s attempted falsification of history they counted on his resignation from directing the Institute.

On January 19, historian Tamás Krausz called Szakály’s statement an extreme right provocation in ATV Television’s program *Szabad szemmel* (Open eye), saying that the reason for it was “that an autocratic regime must whitewash its predecessor, the Horthy regime [...] and attempts to cleanse Horthy too of his crime”. Meanwhile “the people who are offered the leadership of such government institutes must be, professionally, morally, and politically open towards the far right, and engaged intellectually in terms of restoring the Horthy regime”.

In the same program, Sándor Szakály gave expression to his feelings, declaring “...I turn to anyone whom I have offended with this [by calling the deportations to Kamenets-Podolsk a police action against aliens] with profound apologies. In a word, I did not want to cause any offence, I used an expression that was part of the professional jargon of the time”.

On 20 January the Hungarian Jewish Cultural Association released a statement in which 11 Jewish organizations<sup>10</sup> denounced Sándor Szakály's statement. They wrote furthermore: "in agreement with the statement made by Mazsihisz on 19 January we call upon him to resign from his post as director of the state Veritas Historical Research Institute".

On 20 January the Hungarian Zionist Alliance expressed itself as follows in a press release, "Vitez dr. Sándor Szakály's most recent unhistorical and morally unqualifiable manifestation has caused consternation even beyond the nation's borders, having spoken of the genocide at Kamanets-Podolsk as a 'police action against aliens.'" The Alliance said that if Vitez dr. Sándor Szakály was not removed from the helm of the Veritas Institute and from the faculty of the University of Administration, foreseeably the "Alliance would no longer represent itself at the meetings of the 'Jewish Roundtable' and the 'Holocaust 70' Committee, as well as refusing to make use of the funds won under the framework of the 'Civil Foundation 2014' established in memory of the Holocaust".

On 20 January the Simon Wiesenthal Center also gave voice to protest about Sándor Szakály's statement. According to the statement of the organization the Hungarian government established the Institute with the purpose of falsifying the history of the Hungarian Holocaust and to hide what a serious role the locals played in the mass murder of the Jews.

On 21 January Heisler reaffirmed that Sándor Szakály's apology with regard to the Kamenets-Podolsk deportation was not enough. "Mr. Szakály must no longer fill that position"—he announced. In his words, 15 Jewish organizations are demanding his resignation from leadership of the Institute, requesting that the government take action against these manifestations, but "words are no longer enough", the zero tolerance the government had announced is now expected.

Historian László Karsai spoke in the meanwhile about the situation: Sándor Szakály's statement about Kamenets-Podolsk is explained by the fact that he does not know the pertaining documents in suitable depth, whereas they support the fact that "this was not a police action against aliens, but ethnic cleansing in fact". In his opinion Sándor Szakály formed his opinion inexactly, because in Hungary there was no Jewish question, but only an anti-Semite question, and when speaking about the Jewish question the Institute Director used the anti-Semitic jargon of 1941.

The Magyar-Izraeli Baráti Társaság Kulturális Egyesület (Hungarian-Israeli Friendship and Cultural Association) of Szentendre-Danube Bend gave a statement in support of the protests on 21 January, in which they expressed consternation at reading Sándor Szakály's

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<sup>10</sup> Bálint Ház, Bét Orim Community, Dor Chadash Association, Gólem Theatre, Haver Foundation, Israeli Cultural Institute, Limmud Hungary Foundation, Marom Budapest, Hungarian Zionist Alliance, Magyar Zsidó Kulturális Egyesület (Hungarian Jewish Cultural Association), Sim Shalom Progressive Jewish Congregation Budapest.

statement, and solidarity and support for the statement made by Mazsihisz, in which they demanded Sándor Szakály's resignation.

Zsuzsanna Toronyi, Chief Director of the Hungarian Jewish Archives gave a statement in the ATV television program *Egyenes beszéd* (Straight talk) on 21 January, to the effect that apologies were no longer enough, after all this is part of a trend, and not a single, solitary phenomenon.

On 21 January the Hungarian Anti-fascist League said in a press release that it was joining the protests announced by the democratic, anti-fascist organizations that target the Veritas Institute Director, Sándor Szakály's outrageously cynical formulation of his evaluation of the incident. "Head Historian Mr. Szakály has in fact committed a crime: prosecuted according to paragraph 333 § of the Criminal Code, according to the provisions of which he realized the crime of 'public denial of the crimes of the National Socialist or communist regimes.'"

On 22 January Anett Bósz, the executive manager of the Hungarian Liberal Party (MLP) asked János Lázár, State Secretary heading the Prime Ministers Office, in the name of her party to dismiss Sándor Szakály as head of the Institute, since it was in evidence from the preceding weeks that the historian was not suitable for the task of revealing the events of history impartially.

On 23 January, Minister of Human Resources Zoltán Balog replied to a question from the newspaper *Népszabadság*, to the effect that Sándor Szakály's statement was "a historians opinion, a bad formulation", but it was not within his scope to judge this—he added.

On 24 January Katrina Lantos Swett, President of the a Tom Lantos Foundation expressed indignation with regard to Sándor Szakály's opinion when opening an exhibition Entitled "The memory of the Hungarian Holocaust" in New York. In her estimation this meant an unacceptable effort at hushing up the "deep moral partnership in the crime of butchering innocent people" of the government of the time. The Hungarian government should resolutely raise its voice at the highest levels against these condemnable statements and take suitable measures to settle the situation that had been created.

On 25 January Attila Mesterházy called it outrageous that the government had not distanced itself from Sándor Szakály.

In her press release of 29 January Ildikó Lendvai wrote that MSZP had turned to the Prime Minister with a question in writing, in which they ask Viktor Orbán, whether he still stands by the appointment of the Director. As she put it, the Director in Chief of the Institute can be appointed and removed from the position by the Secretary of State heading the Prime Minister's Office. It is within the powers of the Prime Minister to direct the Secretary of State heading his office to relieve the Chief Director of his office. According to Ildikó Lendvai this would be the least that a head of government ought to do after Sándor

Szakály's statement. Furthermore, she added: Sándor Szakály participates in the Order of Vitez, which tends to the personal cult of Horthy, he inaugurated the gravestone of Gyula Gömbös in 2002, and claimed at a lecture organized by a Jobbik Member of Parliament that most of the items of Gömbös's 95-point program are supportable even today.

### **Mazsihisz did not pose an ultimatum to the government**

*Budapest*

*Sources: MTI, Népszabadság*

On 19 January András Heisler, President of Mazsihisz announced, that they will consider boycotting the events of the Holocaust Memorial Year, because of the lack of transparency around the ideology of the Holocaust Memorial Center being built in Józsefváros, the unacceptable nature of statements that were given at the Horthy Conference in the House of Terror, "the falsification of history in the state radio program *Életmentő történetek* (Life-saving stories)", the German occupation memorial planned for Szabadság Square, and the statement given by the Director of the Veritas Institute.

András Heisler told the daily *Népszabadság* that the leaders of Mazsihisz turned to Viktor Orbán in a letter on 20 January requesting that he intercede so that the German occupation memorial is not realized on Szabadság Square.

At a press conference held on 21 January András Heisler emphasized that Mazsihisz did not give the government an ultimatum with regard to its participation in the events programmed for the Holocaust Memorial Year. He added that the government has produced an unrivalled and attractive program for the Memorial Year. In his opinion the possible "failure" of the Holocaust Memorial Year would mean a fiasco not only for the Jewish community, but to the country as a whole, and so the only case in which they will boycott the program will be "if progress cannot be diverted into the right channels". They are optimistic where cooperation between the government and the Jewish organization is concerned. He also said: they esteemed it as a propitious sign that Zoltán Balog, Minister for Human Resources had signed an agreement with the Yad Vashem Institute's Holocaust Memorial Center and Museum operating in Jerusalem.

On 22 January, Viktor Orbán replied to the letter sent him by leaders of Mazsihisz, András Heisler and Gusztáv Zoltai on 20 January. After reading the letter Viktor Orbán was reaffirmed in his belief that "in the future we can continue to work together on strengthening mutual respect, understanding for each other and cooperation between communities in Hungary". This series of actions includes the memorial that stands in tribute to the victims of German occupation.

An article, which appeared in *Népszabadság* on 23 January reported, András Heisler did not wish to comment on Viktor Orbán's reply. Seeing the developments in his opinion there is a good chance that the general assembly of Mazsihisz will be convened within two weeks, and will have the authority to decide in regards to the Holocaust Memorial Year if cooperation with the government should be cut off, or not.

## House of Fates

*Budapest*

*Sources: MTI, ATV, Népszava, Élet és Irodalom*

The series of events around the House of Fates—followed closely in our December *Report*—continued to unfold in January. On 17 January the ex-Director of the Holocaust Memorial Center gave his opinion to the daily *Népszava*. Asked whether the House of Fates serves only electoral campaign goals, he replied that “the government is making every effort to prove—especially abroad—that it is not anti-Semitic, though this accusation is rarely fired at them, nor is it true, however in doing so they are nevertheless balancing the unspoken allowances made towards the anti-Semitic far right, which does use racism instrumentally. They do not hold back on representation and positive sounding statements towards the public opinion worldwide, after all this is a sensitive point where developed countries are concerned today”. He was critical of Mária Schmidt’s appointment, as she was “politically committed, and unquestionably a person who whitewashes the processes that prepared the Holocaust in Hungary”, which is why the preparations of the House of Fates is marked “by a lack of faculty and researchers from universities who have achieved international recognition, plans that are not publicly available and are implemented without professional or social debate. This befits that official historical interpretation current today, which seeks to revisit its model in the social arrangements that existed between the two World Wars, praising Horthy’s role, dragging such organizations as the gendarmerie—trained for in the kind of ferocity its actions evidenced—out of the murky past, along with a Hungarian leader such as Gyula Gömbös, who strived for a role in the likeness of Mussolini and Hitler.”

In a statement released on 20 January the Hungarian Zionist Alliance put forward that in order to assist in the realization of the conceptual message of the House of Fates “Jewish organizations are seeking to delegate a council of authentic personalities to work with Director Mária Schmidt. No official response to the initiative was received, unofficially it has been dismissed.” Furthermore it projected that in the case of “the Hungarian government not making the involvement of a body of councilors possible”, in addition to the removal of Sándor Szakály from his position and canceling plans for the German occupation memorial, the Alliance would “no longer represent itself at the meetings of the ‘Jewish Roundtable’ and the ‘Holocaust 70’ Committee, as well as refusing to make use of the funds won under the framework of the ‘Civil Foundation 2014’ established in memory of the Holocaust”.

At the press conference of Mazsihisz on 21 January the House of Fates issue was also addressed. András Heisler, President of Mazsihisz expressed hopes that with the establishment of the House of Fates “the country would become richer by a serious institution”, and that the institution of public education to be developed from the railway Station of Józsefváros would give a realistic picture of the Holocaust to students in Hungary. However, they had not up to that point received any guarantee that the House of Fates would

be a useful institution within the Hungarian educational system, and so they would sit down to discuss the details with Mária Schmidt, the Director of the institution. Gusztáv Zoltai, executive director of Mazsihisz added: they are asking the government to involve the people Mazsihisz recommends in the House of Fates project. He noted: they would be dismayed if visitors would not learn what led to the Holocaust, because it “began in 1920”, and it would not be okay for students coming out of the institution to think that the Holocaust was the crime of the Germans alone, while actually the Hungarian administration had participated in it actively.

On 24 January, Deputy Prime Minister Zsolt Semjén, replied to Gergely Bárándy’s written questions. To the question, what was the role of the International Council established in parallel to the House of Fates, Zsolt Semjén declared that members of the Council are assisting Mária Schmidt in shaping the new institution with their expert opinions and suggestions, and contributing to communications with the Hungarian and international Jewish communities. Additional working groups are participating in drawing up the scientific concept of the new institution, headed by the Director.

In the ATV television program *Egyenes beszéd* (Straight talk) on 27 January, the literary historian Tamás Ungvári said, while referring to Noble Prize-winner Imre Kertész’s novel *Sorstalanság* (Fatelessness), that to open a museum under the name House of Fates was provocation.

The sociologist Mária Vászárhelyi’s open letter to Mrs. Annette Lantos, widow of Tom Lantos and member of the House of Fates international advisory body, appeared in the literary and political weekly *Élet és Irodalom* on 31 January. Mária Vászárhelyi wrote the letter with the intention of suggesting that Annette Lantos rethink her participation in the advisory body. The following arguments were drawn on to make her point: “I am convinced that this institution, rather than serving its officially proclaimed aim [...] would serve the falsification of history, the politically motivated expropriation of historical memory, and purposes of party propaganda. The policies of the Orbán administration during the past few years, and its ambivalent (to put it mildly) relations with the extreme right; its policy of ignoring the growth of anti-Semitism in Hungary; as well as all that we know about the project so far—its contents, the circumstances of its establishment, the name itself, the location selected and the deadline chosen for its construction, the person in charge, the choice of the trustees—tend to suggest that the real purpose of the new European Educational Center is to downplay whatever responsibility Hungary had for the Holocaust and to mend the damaged international reputation of the current right-wing government.”



**Did *The New York Times* make a mistake?**

*New York, United States of America*

*Source: Magyar Nemzet*

We reported in December that *The New York Times* had published a questionnaire on Hungarian anti-Semitism on its website on 24 December, seeking to gather the opinions and experiences of Hungarian Jews living in Hungary and abroad. The survey was planned to last for a year, but on 4 January the *Magyar Nemzet* reported that the questionnaire could no longer be found on the website of the *Times*.

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# OFFICIAL AND CIVIL RESPONSES

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## **DK files complaint against Veritas Institute Director for Holocaust denial**

*Budapest*

*Sources: MTI, Népszabadság*

The Democratic Coalition (DK) let it be known in a press release sent to MTI on 20 January, that their Member of Parliament, Lajos Oláh, filed a complaint against Sándor Szakály for public denial of the crimes of the National Socialist or communist regimes.

According to DK, considering the genocide, as well as the assistance given as accessories to the crime as “police action against aliens” fits the provisions for portraying genocide as a trivial matter and is a form of justification, and its having been committed at an interview does count as wide public. The Criminal Code categorizes this as a criminal offence punishable with a sentence of up to three years in prison—they announced.

In an interview given to *Népszabadság* on 21 January, Sándor Szakály reacted to the complaint with the following words: “I did not commit the actions I am accused of.”

## **The Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) lightened the Hungarian Football Federation’s (MLSZ) sentence**

*Budapest*

*Source: MTI*

On 21 January the MLSZ posted on its website a statement in which it conveys the news that the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) lightened the penalty given by FIFA to the MLSZ for the discriminative, anti-Semitic chants and offensive symbols shown by spectators at the August 2012 friendly match between Hungary and Israel.

CAS lightened the financial penalty from 40 thousand to 20 thousand Swiss Franks, and deleted the condition that “in case of a future offence a harsh penalty is put in prospect.” At the same time the court upheld the earlier decision of the international sports association according to which the Hungarian team had to play the Romanian team behind closed doors at the March 2013 World Cup qualifier.

## **National Assembly committee should discuss the “falsification of history”**

*Budapest*

*Source: MTI*

Ildikó Lendvai, Socialist member of the Human Rights Committee gave a written statement on 24 January that the MSZP has proposed in the National Assembly that the Human Rights Committee of the Hungarian Parliament discuss the “series of scandals in state-directed falsifications of history” which are also becoming a serious threat to the preparations for the Holocaust Memorial Year.



According to the opposition politician, the aims of the falsification of history are obvious: “Orbán and his people want to whitewash the Horthy regime which they consider their precursors. They are not defending the honor of the Hungarian nation, that was what those who helped the persecuted did.”

Ildikó Lendvai held the opinion: Viktor Orbán made it clear that he stands by the German occupation memorial, and that he wants Sándor Szakály—who considers sending twenty thousand defenseless persons to their death a simple police action against aliens—to remain director of the Veritas Institute.

She also emphasized that in the wake of these incidents, the Holocaust Memorial Year will ring loud with scandals Hungary-wide and internationally, and this will only open historical wounds rather than healing them. This would in the end hurt not only the Jewish community, but also the Hungarian nation as a whole.

### **Randolph L. Braham returns his state award in open letter**

*Budapest*

*Sources: MTI, ATV, Népszava*

Randolph L. Braham requested the removal of his name from the BrahamTheque Information Center of the Holocaust Memorial Center in an open letter dated 26 January, indicating at the same time that he will be returning the Medium Cross of the Order of the Republic of Hungary as well.

“I reached this decision with a heavy heart, having followed the recent developments in Hungary with great concern. The history-cleansing campaign of the past few years calculated to whitewash the historical record of the Horthy era”.

The Holocaust researcher born in Bucharest, counted the constitutional amendment among these developments, which later—as he put it—“legalized” the sinister measures subsequently taken, “to absolve Hungary from the active role it had played in the destruction of close to 600,000 of its citizens of the Jewish faith”.

According to the public letter, the straw that broke the camel’s back was the government’s resolve to erect a national statue to German occupation. He considered it a cowardly attempt to detract attention from the Horthy regime’s involvement in the destruction of the Jews, and to homogenize the Holocaust with the “suffering” of the Hungarians that was caused by a German occupation that, as historical facts clearly evidence, was not only unopposed but generally applauded.

“I hereby also return the Medium Cross of the Order of the Republic of Hungary, together with the scroll signed by President Pál Schmitt with the request that you forward them to the appropriate Hungarian authorities.”

Antal Rogán gave a statement in ATV Television’s program *Szabad szemmel* the same day, saying that he thought that Braham’s reaction was excessive, while he of course respects it. He believed it was hyperbole, and a distortion to say that they were raising a monument to the German occupation, and he thought Randolph L. Braham had been misled. He stated categorically: the memorial will stand in remembrance to the victims.

On 30 January a petition appeared on the website of *Népszava* under the title “We Stand by Randolph L. Braham”, signed by a number of renowned scholars and public figures,<sup>11</sup> the text of which declared that by joining the petition they seek to indicate that they consider the whitewashing of the Horthy era and especially the Jewish deportations unacceptable, the shrugging off and shifting of the responsibility that rests on the Hungarian state as it was at the time onto the occupying Germans, and the narrowing down of the unquestionable fact of collaboration to the Arrow Cross Party. As they formulated it: “If the government shifts the blame for the deportation and other atrocities committed before the occupation also upon the occupying powers, they will cause immeasurable damage to the Hungarian historical consciousness, especially to the minds of the new generations, while the outside world will look upon all this as a violation of the fundamental principles of the Atlantic institutional system, and an embracing of the Horthyist government policies.”

### Gábor Vona’s London visit

*London, United Kingdoms*

*Sources: MTI, Andrew Dismore’s website, website of HOPE not hate, HírTV*

Gábor Vona’s London visit was preceded by protests (see later, articles in *The Independent*). Andrew Dismore, House of Commons representative of the British Labour Party in opposition, and current member of the representative body of the London City Hall, turned to Home Secretary Theresa May on 20 January in a letter requesting that Jobbik’s president is not allowed to enter Great Britain. Then on 23 January the organization *HOPE not hate* handed over a petition with 14,000 signatures to the Home Secretary demanding the same.

Counterdemonstrators met the Hungarians arriving to the Jobbik president, Gábor Vona’s assembly on 26 January. The rallying point of the event was in London’s inner city Holborn metro station, but 200 anti-fascist demonstrators blocked the exit of the station at the time designated for departure.

The counterdemonstrators greeted those arriving for the assembly on 26 January with shouts of “Nazi scum, off our streets!” and in Hungarian: “Nácik haza!” (Nazis go home). At the same time they held high signs with anti-fascist slogans.

<sup>11</sup> László Bitó author, András Bíró journalist, András Bozóki sociologist, István Deák historian, Holly A. Case historian, György Gábor philosopher, Gábor Gyáni historian, Ágnes Heller philosopher, Gábor Iványi pastor, László Karsai historian, György Konrád author, Róbert Kovács engineer, Judit Molnár historian, Péter Pastor historian, Sándor Radnóti aesthete, János Rainer M. historian, Gyula Rugási philosopher, Iván Sanders literateur, József Schweitzer ex Chief Rabbi of Hungary, Ágnes Széchenyi literateur, Tamás Ungvári author, Krisztián Ungváry historian, Mihály Vajda philosopher, Mária Vásárhelyi sociologist.

At the assembly, Gábor Vona said that Jobbik had not handed in any draft law that differentiates between people based on their origins, nor would it do so in the future. He announced: he acknowledged that Jobbik has “drastic” proposals when it comes to establishing order, and that its program for repairing public security was “at times shocking [...] but the public security situation itself is far more shocking”.

At his press conference on 27 January Gábor Vona put forward that in his opinion the Hungarian Ambassador in London owes an apology for not having done anything to ensure the safety of the Hungarian citizens arriving to the local forum of the Jobbik president on Sunday. He also once more disclaimed that he had visited the Brit capital with the intention of forming an alliance with the Greek Golden Dawn Party. He also recalled that even “Orthodox rabbis were demonstrating on the side of Jobbik” at the rallying point, he had met them personally earlier and “according to them Jobbik was not anti-Semitic, but anti-Zionist, and they share Jobbik’s position on this”.

On 28 January HírTV reported that the rabbis mentioned (members of the Neturei Karta Jewish Anti-Zionist Organization) were demonstrating against Zionism independently of the Jobbik event.

### **Church disciplinary proceedings against Loránt Hegedűs initiated**

*Budapest*

*Source: MTI*

On 30 January the church disciplinary procedure against Calvinist pastor Loránt Hegedűs commenced. In the normal course of proceedings the acting Church legal counsel, György Horváth proposed that the pastor be stripped of his vestments for the Horthy statue inauguration held at his Hazatérés (Homecoming) Church on 3 November, as we reported in an earlier issue. György Horváth, legal counselor for the Northern Budapest Calvinist diocese—who acts as prosecutor in the procedure—accused Lóránt Hegedűs of, among others, going against an ecumenical resolution by holding a political event in the church. In addition he also accused him of having caused damage to the church by proclaiming principles, such as the cult of Miklós Horthy, on which there is no consensus within the Church. By doing so he splits the Church. The pastor rejected the accusations and called the hearing a show trial.

According to Loránt Hegedűs the person of Miklós Horthy played a role in his speech, because on the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the church it was necessary to recount the life story of “Horthy the founder, and savior of Hungarians and Jews”. He called it a lie that a Jobbik flag was held stretched out during the church service. According to him the flag that had been taken exception to was only the heraldic flag of the House of Árpád, which “only heightened the sacredness of the church service”.

György Horváth pointed out that it was not part of the procedure to judge the historical role of Horthy. The jury made up of two pastors and a lay judge finally decided to continue the proceedings on 20 February.

## Hungarian Academy of Sciences considers exclusion of Sándor Szakály

*Budapest*

*Source: Népszava*

At the assembly of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences' (MTA) II. Section of Philosophy and the Historical Sciences on 30 January the possibility of Szakály's exclusion from the MTA came up. It was quickly established however, as Ágnes Heller told *Népszava*, that Szakály's membership of the public body could not be revoked on the basis of his statement. Though—the philosopher added—every participant agreed that the historian's statement was reproachable.

Therefore it was put on record in the memo of the Section of Philosophy and Historical Sciences meeting: the Ethics Committee of the MTA will be approached in order to ensure that people could not only be disbarred on grounds of plagiarism or other scientific ethical issues, but also in such cases as this one—László Török, deputy chairman of the Section replied to questions from *Népszava*. He also said: they proposed, that the code of ethics ensure that that there was at least the chance to weigh the possibility of exclusion from the public body.

# NEWS AND OPINION ABOUT ANTI-SEMITISM IN HUNGARY

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## German Occupation Memorial—opinions that appeared in the media outside Hungary

*Germany, Austria, France, Great Britain, United States*

*Source: MTI*

On 6 January, *Berliner Zeitung* published an article on the Holocaust Memorial Year online, in which Gábor Kerényi emphasized in relation to the new memorial planned for the Szabadság Square in Budapest, that if the government is submitting its view of history to the public view, the view which considers Hungary a victim of Nazi Germany, “the far right approach will march right into the center of society”.

Cathrin Kahlweit presented her view in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* on 15 January, in that once again the “bitter argument” about the role the country played during the Nazi period is raging. She wrote that critics of the concept for the memorial are basing their argument on the fact that Hungary was the ally of Germany, and therefore the occupation was not even in fact an occupation, while the ghettoization and deportation of Jews was carried out in the main by Hungarians at the service of the Nazis. She also emphasized that “Hungary is not the only state that handles its historical legacy with difficulty even seventy years after the Holocaust”, however since Viktor Orbán has taken office the “trenches have been dug deeper”. According to critics of the leader of the government the numerous actions and initiatives taken against anti-Semitism and the extreme right recently are just “a show put on for the West”.

On 22 January an article entitled “Hungary only wants to see itself as Hitler’s victim” appeared among *Die Welt*’s online publications. The author, Florian Stark highlighted that the memorial planned for Szabadság Square would remind everyone of “Hungary’s victim role”. Presenting the historical background and the views represented in the debate around the plans of the memorial she thought that the symbolic pattern of the sculpture follows Fidesz’s line of historical interpretation. With this interpretation “Hungary rejected responsibility for the Holocaust”. Representatives of the government reply to criticism with the argument that the work will stand in remembrance to all victims. Yet the work, she writes, “obviously does not take account of all the perpetrators”.

On 23 January the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* published an article under the heading “Dark eagle and suffering angel”, in which the author, Stephan Löwenstein pointed out that the debate around the memorial concerns what form of responsibility the Hungarian state had in the crimes committed after the German occupation, and whether the current Hungarian state bears any historical responsibility. The plan for the memorial depicts Hungary as an “innocent angel”, but “the picture also has deep cracks”. He added that the

government never claimed otherwise, but affirmed on numerous occasions that Hungary also bears responsibility for the Holocaust. At the same time this is counterpointed by an “effort to keep the state distanced from this responsibility”. He notes: the fact that history is deeply politicized can be traced back not least to the fact that whether in the constitution, school books, or the contentious memorial “they are claiming ground for Fidesz’s view of history undeterrably”.

On 24 January, in an article that appeared in the left-leaning *Libération*, following a presentation of the various Hungarian positions on the matter they opined that the memorial planned for the Szabadság Square “is a perfect embodiment of the Hungarian right-wing nationalist ideology and extreme right narrative according to which only the Germans and the Arrow-Cross would be responsible for the genocide, as if it had only begun in 1944 with the German occupation”.

On 28 January the Austrian liberal newspaper *Der Standard* ran a commentary according to which the Orbán government wants to hoist the responsibility for the murder of 600 thousand Jews onto the shoulders of the Germans and the Arrow Cross exclusively. Paul Lendvai, the well-known journalist of Hungarian origin living in Austria gave an account of the protests surrounding the Budapest memorial of German occupation on 19 March 1944. He wrote that there was no real resistance to the occupation, the German troops were received amicably by the larger part of the population, the deportation of 437 thousand individuals under 7 weeks was not organized by the few special SS-Commando present, but the well oiled operations of the Hungarian gendarmerie and police, with many Hungarians profiting from the distributed Jewish property.

On the same day *The International New York Times* published a perspective of its own, according to which Hungary—like many other East European countries—is trying to reconcile the interpretation that it was a victim of the Nazis, with the historical fact that in the meanwhile it watched complacently as the Jews were killed.

The author of an article that appeared in the conservative newspaper *Die Welt* on 29 January, under the heading “The culture of memory—Hungary relativizes its responsibility in the Holocaust” Boris Kálnoky wrote, because of the planned memorial, the government is now being accused more sharply than ever before of whitewashing the government of this responsibility. The planned memorial depicts Hungary as an innocent angel while Nazi Germany swoops down upon it in the shape of an eagle, “but this is not how it happened”. While recounting the criticisms for the relativization of responsibility for the Holocaust he posited that the Holocaust Memorial Year could, as a whole, become a failure due to the case of this memorial.

30 January saw the publication of an article related to the memorial in the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*. According to this piece President of the Hungarian Republic János Áder immediately acknowledged that the Hungarian state was also responsible for the deportations,



while contradicting that the planned memorial in remembrance of the occupation emphasizes Hungary's role as a victim. According to Meret Baumann, author of the article, the Hungarian government is politicizing history. Indirectly the government is suggesting that Hungary is not responsible for the happenings of that period. Furthermore, Orbán is continuously saying in the election campaign, that his victory four years ago, and the new constitution "means the final liberation of the Hungarian people".

On 31 January *The Economist* wrote, Hungarian Jewish leaders were also surprised that no consultations preceded the matter of the planned statue. The most likely explanation for this is that parliamentary elections are to be held in Hungary on 6 April, shortly after the inauguration of the memorial. Though Fidesz is in the lead according to the opinion polls, but since many voters have not yet decided, it is not certain that the party will come out winner. The new statue was welcomed by Jobbik, leaders of Fidesz would however like the voters of Jobbik to switch sides to Fidesz. The Jobbik voters may be swayed if Hungary is portrayed as an innocent victim of the Nazis, and not their forthcoming allies.

### **Survey on Hungarian anti-Semitism completed**

*Budapest*

*Source: Szombat Online*

In November 2013, Medián Opinion and Market Research Institute conducted an Action and Protection Foundation-commissioned survey on how widespread and intense anti-Semitic prejudice is and on groups that are stoking anti-Jewish prejudice in Hungarian society. The sample numbered 1,200 individuals and the pool of respondents were representative of the Hungarian population in terms of sex, age, residence and level of education.

Anti-Semitism was also measured for the content on which the prejudice was based, as well as its intensity. In the content dimension of prejudice, discrimination against Jews would be supported by 15–16 percent of respondents in 2013, while 35–40 percent of the whole sample would certainly accept some anti-Semitic stereotypes, some more some less, and 7 percent can be considered extreme anti-Semites. In the emotional dimension of prejudice 20 percent of respondents felt antipathy towards Jews, while no sympathy is lost on any of the ethnic minorities in Hungary (every group received an evaluation that fell below the middle of the scale). It can be said in general that since 2010 more than one-third of the adult population has strong, or moderately anti-Semitic feelings.

Taking both dimensions into account it may be said that, that the proportion of extreme anti-Semites within the adult Hungarian population currently should be 15–20 percent, that of those moderately anti-Semitic would be around 15–18 percent, while on the other hand two-thirds of the population is completely free of anti-Jewish prejudice.

### **Natan Sharansky interview**

*Budapest*

*Source: Népszabadság*

*Népszabadság* published an interview with the President of the Sochnut (World Jewish Agency) Natan Sharansky on 5 January. In his opinion, “sadly Budapest is not only an important center of Jewish life, but also that of anti-Semitism”. In Hungary one comes across the “good old” type of anti-Semitism: suspicions towards otherness. “Moreover in Hungary the anti-Semitic party has got into parliament, its popularity stands at 15–18 percent. [...] I think that after what this region lived through under Nazism and communism, the return of anti-Semitism is more than worrying. By the way, this is not only the issue of Hungary, this is a problem for the whole of Europe.” In answer to the journalist’s question about whether the diaspora in Europe will continue to exist, he turned the question around and asked: Does Europe want, or Hungary want Jewish communities to feel at home in their territories in the future?

### **Hearing of the American ambassador designate**

*Washington, United States of America*

*Source: MTI*

Colleen Bradley Bell, American ambassador designate for Budapest was heard on 16 January in the Foreign Relations Committee of the U.S. Senate, and stressed that “the rise in Hungary of extremist parties is of particular concern. If confirmed, protecting and promoting a climate of tolerance will be one of my key priorities.” She also vowed to fight against hatred and prejudice.

In the opinion of Benjamin Cardin, Chairman of the Helsinki Committee, it is a cause for concern that though the Hungarian government does not support manifestations of extremist views, it does not distance itself from them either. The “German occupation memorial” is causing significant agitation in the United States, “because it seems that through it they are trying to send the message that everything that happened in Hungary during the Second World War was the responsibility of the Germans. At the same time many Hungarians were criminal party to what happened,” he stated.

### **The presence of anti-Semitism**

*Budapest*

*Source: Népszava*

On 16 January György Csepeli explained his views on anti-Semitism in an interview with the newspaper *Népszava*. As he put it “anti-Semitism is not an unusual phenomenon in this region. Even the actual physical presence of Jewry is not necessarily required, since after the Holocaust a greater part of the social groups identifiable as Jewish had disappeared from Central Europe. In spite of this, anti-Semitism has not abated, 20 percent of the population at average can safely be called Jew-haters”. In reply to the question, why people in



eastern Europe are more prone to this than in other countries, he said: “Because, in other parts—as Max Weber has said—capitalism developed from the womb of medieval society, and so competition and profit are considered natural, just as the fact that there are social differences between people in proportion to the quality of their performance. In Central and Eastern Europe capitalism came about with a delay, and moreover with the participation of groups who did not belong within the concept of the nation as it had been created. The greatest beneficiaries of capitalism in Hungary were largely the Jewish, German, Armenian urban bourgeoisie, which created the false impression that capitalism is alien to the nation, and the profit is pocketed by aliens who exploit the Hungarians. This view developed after the Austro-Hungarian accord, and—as we know—led to tragic consequences. It lay dormant like live embers under the ash after the Second World War, and is once more virulent today. A significant portion of the populace even today do not consider it right that banks and employers try to make a profit. If this is coupled with demagogic incitement, it can easily inflame anti-capitalistic emotions, and it is known that anti-Semitism goes hand in hand with anti-capitalism”.

### **A Unitarian cannot be an anti-Semite**

*Budapest*

*Sources: Népszabadság, Hungarian Unitarian Church*

A conference under the title “A human stance amidst inhumanity” was held at the Nagy Ignác Street center of the Unitarian Church on 17 January. Botond Elekes, Unitarian chief carer declared, that “anyone of our kin who goes to church regularly, but excludes others for their religion, race, skin color, sex or mother tongue, and does not approach them as the creations of God is not Christian, even if they think so of themselves.” He believes that the Church is on the wrong track if it strikes a quiet chord with those who exclude others due to worries about losing its flock. Extremism, exclusionism, and anti-Semitism must not be tolerated even “under the table”, a clear distance must be kept from the outrageous views and acts.

### **Dr. Zoltán Tibori Szabó cancels conference participation**

*Budapest*

*Source: Amerikai Népszava*

On 20 January, the Holocaust scholar, Dr. Zoltán Tibori Szabó cancelled his participation at the plenary scientific commemorative session and remembrance of the conference “Magyarország a tragédia árnyékában” (Hungary in the shadow of the tragedy) organized by the Holocaust Memorial Center for 27 January.

“The aim of the scientific conference and commemorative session to be held on the International Holocaust Remembrance Day should have been a make a tribute to the many hundreds of thousands of Hungarian—and among them northern-Transylvanian—victims of the Holocaust. I was saddened at having to realize over recent days that [...] Hungarian po-

litical and social processes have created such a negatively politicized situation, in which there is no room left for the honoring of those who died, for begging forgiveness of those who are alive, and for an honest facing up to what happened relying on scientifically well founded grounds. [...] I hope that during the Holocaust Memorial Year, on the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the tragedy, Hungarian society will turn against extremist views, xenophobia, anti-Semitism, and the current leadership that is blotted with Holocaust denial, and come to realize that it will be condemned by both the democratic world and history.”

### **Randolph L. Braham’s opinion on the current situation in Hungary**

*Budapest*

*Source: Népszabadság*

In an interview published in *Népszabadság* on 22 January Randolph L. Braham was asked about what was happening in Hungary. Regarding Sándor Szakály’s statement he only noted that he agrees completely with the position taken by the Mazsihisz leaders on the incident. Furthermore he shared the misgivings of the Jewish leaders about the fact that the latest Hungarian developments—including the questions raised by the museum in Józsefváros and the memorial envisioned for Szabadság Square—seem to indicate some sort of a reinterpretation of the liquidation of the Jews in the Horthy era. The series of events up till now can be described as a well orchestrated, history-cleansing process that targets the rehabilitation of the Horthy era.

Braham’s thoughts regarding the events programmed for the memorial year were that he holds this initiative in as high a regard as the events are accurate in depicting the historical truth, and questions them in the same measure as they are planned only to distract attention from Hungarian participation, shifting responsibility exclusively to the Germans and “a few misled people in the Arrow Cross”. In his opinion anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial are on the rise, and emphasis is being placed on the relatively few, true Christian rescue efforts. His stance is that this campaign has hit a more radical tone with the historically falsifying statement of Sándor Szakály.

### ***The Independent* on Gábor Vona’s London visit**

*London, Great Britain*

*Sources: MTI, The Jewish Chronicle Online*

“The Home Secretary [Theresa May] is under increasing pressure from Jewish groups and others to ban the Hungarian ultra-nationalist party from spreading hatred at a London rally this weekend”, *The Independent* wrote in its report on 22 January. According to the front page article in the leading Brit liberal daily the London visit by Vona and his fellow MP Sándor Pörzse “is the source of deep upset among Jewish groups”, politicians and members of the Hungarian community of over a hundred of thousand living in Great Britain.

Four leading Brit Jewish organizations (Board of Deputies, Community Security Trust, London Jewish Forum, and Jewish Leadership Council) issued a press release according to

which every effort must be made “to prevent these Jobbik representatives from propagating their despicable views and hatred in the UK”.

The newspaper understood that the Home Office was “actively considering” possibilities to bar Gábor Vona “under provisions which give the Home Secretary the power to exclude an individual if his or her presence is not ‘conducive to the public good’”.

Owen Jones, columnist of *The Independent* writes that the weekend Holocaust Remembrance Day is not only a remembrance of the millions murdered, but also serves “to absorb a warning from history”. But Gábor Vona’s arrival in Great Britain is a warning from the present, a reminder that the cancer of anti-Semitism—however effectively it has been driven into remissions—still festers. “This arrival of the leader of a poisonous anti-Semitic, anti-Roma movement is bad enough; the timing is an insult.” According to the article the past of Hungary is “soaked in anti-Semitism”, that has to be confronted. The failure of the Hungarian government to properly do so, has lead Hungarian Jewish groups to threaten a boycott the Holocaust memorial events. 600 thousand Hungarian Jews perished; this is 10 percent of the victims of the European Holocaust. This is why the rise of Jobbik is frightening; moreover the core of their voter base is not formed by the dispossessed, the party is enthusiastically supported by sections of the professional middle-class.

### **“Jewish Future in Europe”—Round table discussion held in Brussels**

*Brussels, Belgium*

*Source: MTI*

On the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Hungarian Holocaust the Hungarian Embassy in Brussels and the Balassi Institute held a round table discussion on the evening of 23 January with the participation of young Hungarians and Brusselites.

The event was hosted at the Balassi Institute, and opened by Tamás Iván Kovács, the Hungarian ambassador in Brussels. In his speech he drew attention to the fact that Jewish culture is once again vibrant and full of color in Hungary—where following Great Britain and France, the third largest Jewish community in Europe lives.

At the same time the ambassador also spoke about how, in the wake of the crisis, extremist right wing, anti-immigrant and often anti-Semitic movements are on the rise across Europe, and Hungary is no exception to this rule. In this field—he added—both Hungarian authorities, and civil society need to do more than heretofore. Nonetheless, he reassured his audience, the extremist points of view do not represent the majority opinion of Hungarian society.

## French newspapers on the danger of Holocaust-revisionism

*Paris, France*

*Source: MTI*

On 24 January, the daily newspapers *Libération* and *Le Monde* gave detailed reports of the memorial under preparation for the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the German occupation of 1944 and the contentious debates and protests that have formed around the opinion of the chief director of the Veritas Institute for Historical Research on the first mass murder of the Hungarian Holocaust, the 1941 deportations to Kamenets-Podolsk.

According to the leftist-liberal *Le Monde* the question raised by the Holocaust Memorial Year is whether after seventy years have passed “will they be able to throw a light upon the Hungarians’ responsibility in the extermination of their compatriots, or whether they will smother it in pathetic texts remembering the victims of the ‘two dictatorships’, Nazism and communism.”

The leftist *Libération* is of the viewpoint that “the case highlights the cynical double-speak of the regime”. At international conferences Viktor Orbán and the populist right—as the paper put it—distances itself from anti-Semitism. The author of the article, Florence La Bruyere quoted, apart from the Prime Minister, the words of Tibor Navracsics, Minister of Public Administration and Justice as well as János Martonyi, Minister of Foreign Affairs, on the responsibility of the Hungarian state in the deportations, earlier pronounced in the Hungarian Parliament.

## Lights switched off in the Colosseum

*Rome, Italy*

*Source: MTI, HVG*

On 27 January, International Holocaust Remembrance Day, in protest against anti-Semitism, xenophobia, and the political party Jobbik, the illuminations of the Rome Colosseum were switched off on the initiative of the city government of Rome, Riccardo Pacifici, the president of the Jewish Community of Rome, as well as Giacomo Moscati, the deputy president of the Jewish Community of Rome and its advisor for international relations.

The action by the city of Rome and the Jewish community of Rome was about all forms of anti-Semitism and xenophobia, “and a protest also at the anti-Jewish acts and manifestations of Jobbik. We are protesting against the neo-Nazi Jobbik, and not against Hungary”—the first young speaker for the Jewish community emphasized.

“The Hungarian people is not anti-Semitic and the regrettable anti-Semitic manifestations are no more frequent in Hungary than in other countries of Europe. At the same time it is obvious that such dangerous episodes must not be underestimated, they must be firmly denounced. Exactly the way the Hungarian government did on each occasion. Over the last two years numerous measures and regulations against intolerance, racism and xenophobia have come into effect”, Janos Balla, Hungarian ambassador to Rome said.

**Statement by Israeli ambassador to Hungary on the occasion  
of Holocaust Remembrance Day**

*Budapest*

*Source: MTI*

Israeli ambassador to Budapest, Ilan Mor told MTI on 27 January that the remembrance day serves not only to remember those Jews who were “killed by the Nazis and their collaborators”, but also their friendships and peaceful cohabitation with their Hungarian compatriots. On this day what we must remember is that Holocaust “did not just happen”, but was thoroughly planned, and systematically executed. On this day everyone should know that the six million victims of the Holocaust were murdered twice over: first when they were murdered through the genocide seventy years ago, and “now they are murdered once more when the memory of their fate is distorted and erased”.

He emphasized: Holocaust denial is a manifestation of anti-Semitism, every attempt at denying the genocide against the Jews signifies at the same time an effort to acquit Nazi ideology and anti-Semitism in the extermination of the Jews. If anyone tries for any reason to rewrite or reinterpret the historical facts of the Holocaust with a political or ideological objective, they become party to that pitiable attempt of trying to deny the Holocaust.

**The KDNP statement on the occasion of Holocaust Remembrance Day**

*Budapest*

*Source: MTI*

On 27 January, the smaller party in government remembered those persecuted in the Shoah with heads bowed to the victims. The Christian Democratic People’s Party (KDNP) has faith that genuine Christianity offers the real protection from ideological horrors and anti-Semitism, as it does not admit exclusionism or indignity to others by its own volition.

**Holocaust Remembrance Day commemoration at the Viennese center of the UN**

*Vienna, Austria*

*Source: MTI*

Balázs Csuday, the Hungarian ambassador to the UN in Vienna was among the speakers on the commemoration on 27 January. He declared: uncontested historical facts—the 580 thousand Jewish and one-hundred thousand Roma victims of the Holocaust—prove that Hungary belongs among the European countries that have the most responsibility for the Holocaust. He quoted the Minister of Foreign Affairs, János Martonyi’s words last October at the Tom Lantos Institute conference: “the Hungarian Holocaust was committed by and against Hungarians. Both the perpetrators and the victims were Hungarians. And believe me this is our biggest national trauma we have to live with, we have to confront”. Csuday highlighted the fact that education has a central role in shaping collective social memory. In relation to this he pointed out that a school Holocaust Remembrance Day has been introduced in Hungary as a new initiative.

## **Hungarian victims of the Holocaust remembered at the Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp**

*Sachsenhausen, Germany*

*Source: MTI*

Hungarian ambassador in Berlin, József Czukor was among speakers at the commemoration on 27 January. The diplomat, according to the press release of the Embassy, also spoke about the fact that the ideologically predetermined historical perception of the dictatorship was a setback to processing the past in Hungary, and so a “substantive examination of responsibility resting on moral grounds” could only begin after the change of regimes. “Facing [the past] is a long and painful process [...] we are now able to declare that the Hungarian state pronounced its citizens enemies and collaborated in their systematic murder. We cannot, however, restrict the responsibility to the state, an abstract notion, since it consists of people and it is managed by people”.

György Konrád, Hungarian writer and sociologist, and national Kossuth-award holder stressed that where the outcome of the Second World War is concerned, “Adolf Hitler was the loser”, however “in regards to his dream of exterminating the Jews we may consider him virtually as a the winner”. He emphasized: “New anti-Semitism, which is spreading together with neo-Nazism, is rooted in anti-capitalism and anti-communism”, and may integrate both left- and right-wing radicalism.

## **Ecumenical commemoration in Brussels**

*Brussels, Belgium*

*Source: MTI*

“Anti-Semitism contradicts Christian values,” László Surján, member of the Buro of the European People’s Party and Vice President of the European Parliament (EP), drew attention to Pope Francis’ admonishment at the Ecumenical commemoration held at the Chapel Europe in Brussels on 27 January. “The loss to Jewry is much greater still than the number of victims, since after the Holocaust the traditional large Jewish family has disappeared”, László Surján said in his speech. “Human rights are universal, that is, they apply to everyone without discrimination. Everyone we do not like also have rights equal to ours: the ban on discrimination is organically bound to tolerance. No people can be guilty as a whole, in other words nothing vindicates collective punishment. This approach has been integrated into the nation legal system of most states, and forms an organic part of the Fundamental Law in Hungary”. It is a crass flaw according to Surján if political powers use the word anti-Semite to smear their opponents, because words lose their weight as a result—he continued—weight lost through “inflation”, which only serves the interests of the anti-Semites.



### **American Representative praises Orbán's measures against anti-Semitism**

*Washington, United States of America*

*Source: MTI*

In a written statement addressed to the Speaker of the House, and delivered to MTI on 29 January, local time, Mario Díaz-Balart Republican US House Representative for Florida declared: under the leadership of Viktor Orbán Hungary has stressed a “zero tolerance policy toward anti-Semitic attitudes, with a focus on law enforcement and legal measures, Holocaust education and remembrance, and support for Jewish cultural renaissance in Hungary.”

“Prime Minister Orbán is taking a leading role in the battle against anti-Semitic voices in Europe and throughout the world,” the politician wrote. He also mentioned that a site will be inaugurated in Hungary to commemorate the child victims of the Holocaust, a Holocaust Remembrance Day has been introduced to public schools, and those who saved Jewish lives are being honored with official recognitions.

### **Film about the Holocaust survivors from Kalocsa screened in the U.S. Department of State**

*Washington, United States of America; Budapest*

*Source: MTI*

Los Angeles resident film director Gábor Kálmán's documentary *Egyszer volt* [Once upon a time] (2012) premiered on 30 January. The heroine of the film is a high-school teacher in Kalocsa, Gyöngyi Magóné Tóth, who comes to a decision in the course of her research to look up the survivors of Holocaust from Kalocsa wherever they may be in the world. As she searched, after many years the teacher came upon Gábor Kálmán, who was himself a survivor of the persecutions from Kalocsa, and their cooperation leads to the creation of the documentary, which was screened simultaneously at the Department of state in Washington and the American Embassy in Budapest.

Viewers in the two capital cities could pose questions to Gábor kálmán in Washington and Gyöngyi Magó nee Tóth in Budapest, the vice-principal of the Szent István High-school, in Kalocsa. Answering a question from an Israeli guest professor in Washington who had Hungarian origins, whether Hungary had after all lost the battle against anti-Semitism, Gyöngyi Magóné Tóth replied: “I hope we have not lost the war against anti-Semitism, we are in combat with it. We combat it on occasions like this, and similar ones. I certainly do, and there are more of us. [...] This year is the Holocaust Memorial Year in Hungary and many things are happening, many positive things. I trust that this will shape somewhat the way people think. I am not too optimistic, but I trust in it.”



### **Navracsics visits Washington**

*Washington, United States of America*

*Source: MTI*

As reported in our December issue, American Democratic senator Benjamin Cardin was concerned for the democratic rule of law, the independence of the court, freedom of press and religion, but also sees cause to fear the rise of revisionist and extremist ideologies. The Senator put forward that though many think that the main problem is caused by the extremist party, Jobbik, and not the party in government, it nevertheless seems that some members of Fidesz are contributing to the growth of intolerance.

Deputy Prime Minister, Tibor Navracsics talked with Senator Cardin on 30 January, appraising the Senator about, among other things, the government's commitment to not allowing anyone to suffer disadvantage for their origins. At the same time he offered the Senator direct information from the government at any time he may have questions about any of the measures it takes, in case "due to a lack of information, the senator might form an unbalanced view or opinion not based on facts".

### **Nick Torpe's opinion on Budapest**

*Budapest*

*Source: MTI*

At the event "Publicness revisited - a dialogue for a future media regulatory framework" held on 31 January, Nick Torpe, BBC correspondent for Hungary gave his opinion on news reports about Hungary abroad, saying that they were not above criticism. As an example he pointed out: it is not merely inaccurate, but false to depict Budapest as an "anti-Semitic capital", as he put it, articles like this could only be penned by people who had not spent more than a few days in Hungary.

## OTHER NEWS

### **The Orbán government asked for forgiveness**

*New York, United States of America; Berlin, Germany*

*Source: MTI*

At the Conference in commemoration of the Hungarian Holocaust on its 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary in New York, on 23 January, UN Permanent Representative Csaba Kőrösi, asked for forgiveness on behalf of the Hungarian state: “We owe victims an apology as the Hungarian state was guilty in the Holocaust. Firstly because it failed to protect its citizens from extermination, secondly because it assisted and provided financial resources for the genocide [...] Hungarian state institutions at the time [shared responsibility] for the Holocaust. This apology today by the Hungarian state must become part of national memory and identity.”

In reply to a question put to him the ambassador replied that Jobbik, which “is testing the line on what counts as anti-Semitism” has been isolated in Hungary, both in Parliament and outside the legislative bodies.

In an article by Boris Kálnoky in *Die Welt* on 29 January he emphasized “Budapest had acknowledged its responsibility in the Holocaust and apologized for the first time.” He recounted that Deputy Prime Minister Tibor Navracsics had acknowledged the responsibility of the Hungarians in the Holocaust last autumn, and UN Permanent Representative Csaba Kőrösi had now apologized in the name of the state. He added that “it would have been even better” had President János Áder apologized officially for the crimes of the state, but even so the Orbán government is the first Hungarian government that has apologized for the Holocaust.

### **Exhibition opened in the UN Conference Building titled “A Remembrance of the Holocaust in Hungary”**

*New York, United States of America*

*Source: MTI*

The exhibition was opened on the evening of 23 January, in the framework of the commemoration of the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Shoah. The exhibition was realized through the cooperation of four civil organizations, the Carl Lutz Foundation, the Lantos Foundation for Human Rights and Justice, the Hungarian American Coalition and the Hungary Initiatives Foundation.

According to the remarks of Peter Launsky-Tieffenthal, Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information, it is extremely important to hold remembrance of the unprecedented genocide, the Holocaust that took the lives of hundreds of thousands of Hungarians so that even more effective steps can be taken so that this is never repeated. It is an important lesson of the Holocaust that ethnic and religious hatred, anti-Semitism, among others must be combatted.

The speech given by the Chairman of the Carl Lutz Foundation, György Vámos was interpreted by Maximilian Teleki, President of the Hungarian American Coalition: History has proved that racism, whatever form it takes, can only lead to tragedy.

Tamás Fellegi, President of Hungary Initiatives Foundation stressed that in addition to raising the threats of racism and extremism it is also important to make it clear that the mainstream political parties in Hungary, both on the left and the right are not racist and not anti-Semitic. He pointed out that the past had not yet been processed. “I think that the cultural and political elite, as well as public opinion still has a long way to go until we reach a mutual understanding of this tragic part of our history, for which the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Year offers a great opportunity”.

### **Jewish congregation of Érsekújvár declines funding from Hungarian government**

*Nové Zámky (Érsekújvár), Slovakia*

*Sources: MTI, Népszava, Új Szó*

The press release of Tamás Lang, President of the Jewish congregation of Érsekújvár, declining the Hungarian government-awarded support of 1.5 million HUF came out dated 28 January. Tamás Lang told the Bratislava (Pozsony) paper *Új Szó*, about the refusal of the funding awarded in the framework of the initiatives for the Holocaust Memorial Year: the leadership of the congregation made its decision on 27 January. He added: the decision was taken because of the incidents that occurred in the last months, because they see the ongoings as a deliberate rewriting of history in Hungary, and the Holocaust memorial year is also more a part of the election campaign, than a sign of respect to the victims.

“We consider all forms of purposeful shifting of responsibility and blurring of the line between victims and perpetrators, or justifications on the basis of German occupation and the ‘loss of sovereignty’, as deliberate falsification of history. No history falsifying sham memorial will right this wrong. [...] We can not allow our names to be used either to falsify history, or to whitewash the Horthy regime.” Lang Tamás writes in the statement.

# IMPORTANT STEPS TAKEN BY ACTION AND PROTECTION FOUNDATION (TEV)

## **TEV filed complaint against Attila Bozsik for public denial of the crimes of the National Socialist regime**

*Budapest*

*Source: Action and Protection Foundation*

Dániel Bodnár, Chairman of the Action and Protection Foundation Board of Trustees filed a complaint with the police station of Monor against Attila Bozsik, for public denial of the crimes of the National Socialist regime on 20 January. On 4 January Bozsik wrote the following comment—using the social utility Facebook plugin module—to an article that appeared on the [www.kurucinfo.hu](http://www.kurucinfo.hu) website on 3 January, under the title “Idióta Szanyi Tibor: Félmillió magyar polgárt hurcoltak el a gázkamrákba” [Tibor Szanyi the idiot says: Half a million Jews dragged off to the concentration camps]: “Get your heads in order! Holocaust lie, because there was none. Holocaust .anyone proclaiming there was one, let us see your evidence. the people who spread this in in other’ minds should be exterminated ,and they make it our duty to celebrate this lie ! fidesz-mszp.mazsihisz. and the liberals..” (Sic!)

At the same time as filing the complaint the Foundation also proposed the making of the comment inaccessible in its form as electronic data.

## **TEV filed a complaint against László Kincses for public denial of the crimes of the National Socialist regime**

*Budapest*

*Source: Action and Protection Foundation*

On 20 January, Dániel Bodnár, Action and Protection Foundation Board of Trustees Chairman filed a complaint against László Kincses for the criminal act of publicly denying the crimes of the National Socialist regime, with the 5<sup>th</sup> District Police Station of the Budapest Police Headquarters (BRFK). On 3 January Kincses wrote the following comment—using the social utility Facebook plugin module—to an article that appeared on the [www.kurucinfo.hu](http://www.kurucinfo.hu) website on 3 January, under the title “Idióta Szanyi Tibor: Félmillió magyar polgárt hurcoltak el a gázkamrákba” [Tibor Szanyi the idiot says: Half a million Jews dragged off to the concentration camps]: “If only 23,000 [28,000 according to the article] Jews were registered in Auschwitz, not only is there no proof that the rest had been gassed, there is no proof that they even stepped within those gates, In fact! There is no evidence that these 400,000 Jews had ever been on Polish territory. :)” (Sic!)

At the same time as filing the complaint the Foundation also proposed the making of the comment inaccessible in its form as electronic data.

**TEV filed a complaint against Zsolt Sűveges for public denial of the crimes of the National Socialist regime**

*Budapest*

*Source: Action and Protection Foundation*

On 21 January, Dániel Bodnár, Action and Protection Foundation Board of Trustees Chairman filed a complaint against Zsolt Sűveges for the criminal act of publicly denying the crimes of the National Socialist regime, with the 5<sup>th</sup> District Police Station of the Budapest Police Headquarters (BRFK). On 18 January Kincses wrote the following comment—using the social utility Facebook plugin module—to an article that appeared on the [www.kurucinfo.hu](http://www.kurucinfo.hu) website on 18 January, under the title “Ami a zsidóság számára győzelem volt és öröm, az nekünk vereséget és tragédiát jelentett” [What meant victory and joy to Jewry, meant defeat and tragedy to us]: “And no need to speak about the fact that the communist partisans of Jewish extraction attacked the heroes defending our homeland in the back! Once they had the country subjugated by the Russians, they foisted the Red Terror upon us. They dragged off our compatriots to Gulags, or we could call them concentration camps. Who are actually the evildoers, and who the victims? The untruth of the Holocaust should finally be cleared up, because this is such a material and moral burden upon our people, as to certainly lead to the extinction of the Hungarians.” (Sic!)

At the same time as filing the complaint the Foundation also proposed the making of the comment inaccessible in its form as electronic data.

## THE MONTH'S CHRONICLE

All the incidents to be found in the report are presented chronologically in the table below. The *Category* column shows which part of the report deals with the given case in greater detail.

No.	Date	Incident	Category
1.	24 December	Student's Union (StU) president posts racist joke	Hate Incident: Hate Speech
2.	4 January	Did <i>The New York Times</i> make a mistake?	Community News and Responses
3.	5 January	Natan Sharansky interview	On Anti-Semitism in Hungary
4.	12 January	Tibor Ágoston's deliberate slip of the tongue	Hate Incident: Hate Speech
5.	16 January	Hearing of the American Ambassador designate	On Anti-Semitism in Hungary
6.	16 January	The presence of anti-Semitism	On Anti-Semitism in Hungary
7.	17 January	The opinion of Sándor Szakály on the Kamenets-Podolsk deportations	Hate Incident (not in statistics)
8.	17 January	A Unitarian cannot be anti-Semitic	On Anti-Semitism in Hungary
9.	19 January	Mazsihisz did not pose an ultimatum to the government	Community News and Responses
10.	20 January	DK files complaint against Veritas Institute Director for Holocaust denial	Official and Civil Responses
11.	20 January	Dr. Zoltán Tibori Szabó cancels conference participation	On Anti-Semitism in Hungary
12.	20 January	TEV filed complaint against Attila Bozsik for public denial of the crimes of the National Socialist regime	Action and Protection Foundation steps taken
13.	20 January	TEV filed a complaint against László Kincses for public denial of the crimes of the National Socialist regime	Action and Protection Foundation steps taken
14.	21 January	TEV filed a complaint against Zsolt Süveges for public denial of the crimes of the National Socialist regime	Action and Protection Foundation steps taken
15.	21 January	CAS lightened the Hungarian Football Federation's sentence	Official and Civil Responses
16.	22 January	<i>The Independent</i> on Gábor Vona's London visit	On Anti-Semitism in Hungary
17.	22 January	Randolph L. Braham's opinion on the current situation in Hungary	On Anti-Semitism in Hungary
18.	23 January	Orbán government apologizes	Other News
19.	23 January	Exhibition opened in the UN Conference Building titled "A Remembrance of the Holocaust in Hungary"	Other News
20.	23 January	"Jewish Future in Europe"—Round table discussion held in Brussels	On Anti-Semitism in Hungary

No.	Date	Incident	Category
21.	24 January	National Assembly Committee should discuss the “falsification of history”	Official and Civil Responses
22.	24 January	French newspapers on the danger of Holocaust-revisionism	On Anti-Semitism in Hungary
23.	26 January	Randolph L. Braham returns his state award in open letter	Official and Civil Responses
24.	26 January	Gábor Vona’s London visit	Official and Civil Responses
25.	27 January	Lights-off in the Colosseum	On Anti-Semitism in Hungary
26.	27 January	Statement by Israeli ambassador to Hungary on the occasion of Holocaust Remembrance Day	On Anti-Semitism in Hungary
27.	27 January	The KDNP statement on the occasion of Holocaust Remembrance Day	On Anti-Semitism in Hungary
28.	27 January	Holocaust Remembrance Day commemoration at the Viennese center of the UN	On Anti-Semitism in Hungary
29.	27 January	Hungarian victims of the Holocaust remembered at the Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp	On Anti-Semitism in Hungary
30.	27 January	Ecumenical commemoration in Brussels	On Anti-Semitism in Hungary
31.	28 January	Jewish congregation of Érsekújvár declines funding from Hungarian government	Other News
32.	29 January	American Representative praises Orbán’s measures against anti-Semitism	On Anti-Semitism in Hungary
33.	30 January	Navracsics visits Washington	On Anti-Semitism in Hungary
34.	30 January	Film about the Holocaust survivors from Kalocsa screened in the U.S. Department of State	On Anti-Semitism in Hungary
35.	30 January	Church disciplinary proceedings against Loránt Hegedűs initiated	Official and Civil Responses
36.	30 January	Hungarian Academy of Sciences considers exclusion of Sándor Szakály	Official and Civil Responses
37.	31 January	Nick Torpe’s opinion on Budapest	On Anti-Semitism in Hungary
38.	–	Survey on Hungarian anti-Semitism completed	On Anti-Semitism in Hungary
39.	–	The German Occupation Memorial	Community News and Responses
40.	–	German Occupation Memorial—opinions that appeared in the media outside Hungary	On Anti-Semitism in Hungary
41.	–	House of Fates	Community News and Responses
42.	–	Demands for Sándor Szakály’s resignation	Community News and Responses



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## CONTACT AND SUPPORT

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Action and Protection Foundation is the civil initiative of a number of Jewish organizations, that is ready to take resolute steps to curb increasing widespread anti-Semitic manifestations.

In case anyone faces insults or anti-Semitic abuse due to a supposed or real Jewish background, do not remain silent, let us know, so that we can forward the case through the appropriate channels to the official organs required to take measures!

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NOTIFICATIONS OF SUCH INCIDENTS ARE RECEIVED BY THE FOUNDATION THROUGH ANY OF THE FOLLOWING MEANS:

### HOTLINE

(+36 1) **51 00 000**

**The website of Action and Protection Foundation: [www.tev.hu/forrodrot](http://www.tev.hu/forrodrot)**

**The Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/tev-tett-es-vedelem-alapitvany](http://www.facebook.com/tev-tett-es-vedelem-alapitvany)**

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Action and Protection Foundation's undertaking can only be successful if great numbers share in our commitment to prepare the grounds for the right to fair process for all those who have suffered offences. In aid of this cause please support the work of the Foundation with your contribution!

DONATIONS CAN BE MADE TO THE FOUNDATION ON THE FOLLOWING BANK ACCOUNT:

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