

INTERVIEW WITH HUNGARY'S VIKTOR ORBAN

„You wanted the migrants – we didn’t!“



Since 2010 Viktor Orbán (54) is serving as Prime Minister of Hungary

Foto: Daniel Biskup

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BILD: Mr Orban, you were guest of honour at the CSU meeting in Seeon. This was criticized by people outside of the CSU. The head of the SPD, Martin Schulz, prompted the head of the CSU, Horst Seehofer, to set you some boundaries.

Viktor Orban: „I always respected Martin Schulz, because he is a good fighter. But to be entertaining as a good fighter and to have the responsibility to shape national policy are two different things. So what was good, even nice, in Brussels – where you have no real, obvious consequences – that’s a different story than to be a party leader in Germany and to communicate with other countries. I think we deserve more respect.“



Prime Minister Viktor Orban with the BILD reporters Nikolaus Blome and Christian Stenzel

Foto: Daniel Biskup

What for?

Orban: „Hungary is one of the few success stories of the last decade. The successful West and the poor East – that’s over! When I came into office in 2010, the unemployment rate was 12 per cent, now it is less than 4 per cent. The economic growth rate is more than 4 per cent. In 2009, it was still minus 6 per cent. The budget

deficit is well under 3 per cent. If you give us a fair evaluation, we are doing quite well.“

That's not the point of the criticism. How are the other EU states supposed to respect you if there is the feeling that Hungary is doing whatever it wants? You take money from the EU, but refuse to accept refugees that are supposed to be distributed between the member states.

Orban: „The so-called cohesion fund – which benefits the Hungarian economy – is just a kind of equilibrium, because we opened up our market for free competition. This has nothing to do with the refugee question.“

Since you mention fairness: how fair is it to be a member of a club – the EU – but not to follow its rules? Hungary was supposed to take in a mere 1294 refugees. You refused to do so, went to the European Court of Justice, and lost. You called the decision a “disgrace” and continue to refuse accepting the refugees.

Orban: „The quota was not fulfilled by more than twenty states, and still only we are being criticized. That is a case of double standards. The fact is that the verdict only applied to the EU decision, which, more or less, ran out at the same time as the verdict was passed ... Now we need a new discussion.“

Otherwise, you would have accepted the decision and taken in the refugees?

Orban: „Yes. The state of law is our basis.“

The EU, however, is not only based on laws, but also on solidarity. Why is Germany able to accept 2 million refugees and Hungary cannot even accept 2000?

Orban: „The difference is you wanted the migrants, and we didn't. We are doing our job by defending the Schengen external border with Serbia. This has cost us an additional one billion Euros since 2015, and Brussels is not paying a single cent. The solution of the problem is not to disperse people in the whole EU territory who are illegally staying in the EU. We think that one must help where the problem is located instead of bringing the migrants here.“

And why don't the Hungarians want refugees?

Orban: „We do not consider these people to be Muslim refugees. We consider them to be Muslim invaders. For instance, somebody who wants to come from Syria to Hungary must cross four countries that are not as rich as Germany, but stable. So they are not running for their lives there. They are economic migrants who are looking for a better life.“

Are they therefore less valuable as human beings?

Orban: „When somebody would like to come to your house, first they knock on the door and then ask: can we come in, can we stay? But they didn't do that; they crossed the border illegally. That was not a wave of refugees, but an invasion. Concerning the migration issue, I never understood how it is possible that in a country like Germany – which is the best example of discipline and the rule of law – the chaos, anarchy, and illegal crossing of borders could be celebrated as a good

thing.“



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Do you mean it’s our own fault?

Orban: „Politically, the refugee issue is a European problem, but sociologically, it’s a German problem. Since you mentioned the EU refugee quota: why could the Portuguese Prime Minister say: ‘Welcome! Come to us!’ Because no refugee would like to go to Portugal. They all want to go to Germany. The reason why they are in your country is not that they are refugees, but that they would like to have a German life.

I can only speak for the Hungarian people, and it doesn’t want migration. It’s impossible, in my understanding, that there is a will of the people on a very fundamental issue, and the leadership of the country rejects to follow the public will. We are talking about sovereignty and the cultural identity of the country here. We have to keep the right to decide who can stay in the territory of Hungary.“

Obviously, this is not supposed to be Muslims ...

Orban: „We think that a high number of Muslims

necessarily creates parallel societies. Christian and Muslim societies will never merge into one. Multiculturalism is an illusion. We do not want that. And we don't want something forced upon us. Take Budapest as a positive example: a cosmopolitan melting pot without a parallel society."

If you are so annoyed by Brussels, why don't you then leave the EU?

Orban: „The major threat now is that Brussels is trying, trickily, to transfer national sovereignty towards itself. But even when we criticize the Brussels elite, our attitude is not anti-European. I don't accept that the Brussels bureaucrats and elites consider themselves to be Europe. Brussels is not the same as the European Union. The EU is a wonderful project, and we are happy to be – and remain – a part of it."

The most wonderful thing in Europe is the freedom of expression and the freedom of the press. You, however, are running a nation-wide poster campaign against your arch enemy – the Hungarian Holocaust survivor and billionaire George Soros. Moreover, the organisation "Reporters without Borders" is concerned about the freedom of the press in your country.

Orban: „Mr Soros is also running a campaign against the Hungarian government, and in that, he is not restricted by anything. This is an open discussion that proves the freedom of the press. Mr Soros – who has made his money with casino capitalism – considers himself as a statesman without a state. With his money, he supports 60 non-government organisations that support migrants and illegal immigration. This is not about the freedom

expression, but national security. At this point, I have to become active. And concerning the media: I don't think the German press has more freedom than the Hungarian press. I can't imagine that."



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In the world-wide ranking of Reporters without Borders, Hungary is at number 71 – Germany is at least at number 17.

Orban: „I do not know how this list was made. More than 80 per cent of the Hungarian media are privately owned. A major proportion of them are very critical of the Hungarian government. The EU Commission has confirmed in writing that our media law conforms with EU standards.“

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