

H. Res. 479

In the House of Representatives, U.S.,

December 6, 2005

Whereas on October 23, 1956, university students marching through the streets of Budapest were joined by workers and others until their numbers reached some 100,000 Hungarian citizens protesting against the communist government of Hungary and its domination by the Soviet Union, whereupon the Hungarian Security Police opened fire on the crowd and killed hundreds;

Whereas the Hungarian government under Prime Minister Imre Nagy released political prisoners, including major church leaders, took steps to establish a multi-party democracy, called for the withdrawal of all Soviet troops from Hungary, announced Hungary's withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact, and requested United Nations assistance in establishing Hungarian neutrality;

Whereas the Soviet Union launched a massive military counteroffensive against the revolt on November 4, 1956, sending tens of thousands of additional troops from the Soviet Union and launched air strikes, artillery bombardments and coordinated tank-infantry actions involving some 6,000 tanks which, remarkably, the outnumbered and under-equipped Hungarian Army and Hungarian workers resisted for several days;

Whereas Prime Minister Imre Nagy was seized by Soviet security forces despite assurances of safe passage for him to leave the Yugoslav Embassy in Budapest where he sought asylum, and he was taken to Romania and was subsequently tried and executed;

Whereas an estimated one thousand two hundred Hungarians were tried and executed by the post-1956 Hungarian government;

Whereas an estimated 200,000 Hungarians fled their country in the aftermath of the Soviet suppression of the Hungarian uprising, and over 47,000 of these people eventually were able to settle in the United States, where they have contributed to the cultural diversity and the economic strength of this country;

Whereas the uprising of the Hungarian people in 1956 dramatically confirmed the widespread contempt in which the Hungarians held the Soviet Union and the underlying weakness of the communist system imposed by Soviet authorities in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as the strength of popular support for democratic principles and the right of the Hungarian people to determine their own national destiny;

Whereas on October 23, 1989, the Republic of Hungary proclaimed its independence, and in 1990 the Hungarian Parliament officially designated October 23 as a Hungarian national holiday, indicating that the legacy of the 1956 Revolution continues to inspire Hungarians to this day;

Whereas the people of Hungary are beginning a year-long celebration to mark the 50th anniversary of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956;

Whereas on March 12, 1999, the Government of Hungary, reflecting the will of the Hungarian people, formally acceded to the North Atlantic Treaty and became a member of NATO and on May 1, 2004, Hungary became a full member of the European Union; and

Whereas Hungary and the United States continue to expand their friendship and cooperation in all realms: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) commends the people of Hungary as they mark the 50th anniversary of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution which set the stage for the ultimate collapse of communism in 1989 throughout Central and Eastern Europe, including Hungary, and two years later in the Soviet Union itself;

(2) expresses condolences to the people of Hungary for those who lost their lives fighting for the cause of Hungarian freedom and independence in 1956, as well as for those individuals executed by the Soviet and Hungarian communist authorities in the five years following the Revolution, including Prime Minister Imre Nagy;

(3) welcomes the changes that have taken place in Hungary since 1989, believing that Hungary's integration into NATO and the European Union, together with similar developments in the neighboring countries, will ensure peace, stability, and understanding among the great peoples of the Carpathian Basin; and

(4) reaffirms the friendship and cooperative relations between the governments of Hungary and the United States and between the Hungarian and American people.

Passed the House of Representatives December 6, 2005.

Attest:

Clerk.