



Written by [Christian Gomez](#) on January 31, 2011

Hungarian Communist Faces Prosecution

On January 27, Hungary's former Interior Minister Béla Biszku, 89, was prosecuted in Budapest "for denial of the crimes of national socialist and communist regimes." The charges were filed in response to comments made by Biszku on August 4, 2010, in a televised interview on Hungary's state-run Duna TV.

"I consider 1956 to have been a national tragedy of which I was [a] victim," Biszku stated during the interview, adding that he had no reason to apologize for the events that transpired in his country, and that the Hungarian government was justified in its punishment of "lawbreakers" at the time. Biszku is known for his well-documented and key role in suppressing anti-communist and anti-Soviet freedom fighters during the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, during which time he became Interior Minister.



His remarks are considered in violation of legislation passed by Hungarian lawmakers in February 2010 which makes it a crime to deny, doubt or downplay the Holocaust and other atrocities committed by the Nazi German regime during World War II. The law was then amended in June to include similar crimes against humanity committed by communist regimes such as the Soviet Union and its then-satellite People's Republic of Hungary.

A parallel legislation which would have made it illegal to deny atrocities committed under communism throughout the European Union was rejected by the European Commission in December of 2010.

According to [CBS News](#):

Biszku denied any direct involvement in the executions and repressions which came after over 100,000 Soviet troops and nearly 4,500 tanks invaded Hungary on November 4, 1956, crushing the armed resistance that started on October 3.

Over 220 people who participated in the uprising were executed and many thousands imprisoned or persecuted.

In 1972, Biszku launched an unsuccessful coup d'état against Hungarian General Secretary János Kádár in favor of an even harder-line communist government — perhaps to be led by himself.

General Secretary Kádár responded by removing Biszku from power. With the demise of the communist regime in Budapest in 1989, Biszku entered obscurity until his August 4 television interview. If found guilty, he faces up to three years in prison.



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Photo: The Hungarian flag with the communist coat of arms cut out became the symbol of the 1956 revolution.



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