

Lecture of Prime Minister Viktor Orbán at the 33rd Bálványos Summer Free University and Student Camp

27 July 2024, Tusnádfürdő (Băile Tuşnad)

Good morning Summer Camp and other Guests.

The first piece of good news is that my visit this year was not accompanied by the same kind of brouhaha as last year's: this year we have not received – I have not received – a diplomatic démarche from Bucharest; what I received was an invitation to a meeting with the Prime Minister, which took place yesterday. Last year, when I had the opportunity to meet the Prime Minister of Romania, I said after the meeting that it was “the beginning of a beautiful friendship”; at the end of the meeting this year, I was able to say “We’re making progress”. If we look at the figures, we are setting new records in economic and trade relations between our two countries. Romania is now Hungary’s third most important economic partner. We also discussed with the Prime Minister a high-speed train – a “TGV” – linking Budapest to Bucharest, as well as Romania’s membership of Schengen. I have undertaken to put this issue on the agenda for the October Justice and Home Affairs Council meeting – and, if necessary, for the December Council meeting – and to take it forward if possible.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have not received a démarche from Bucharest, but – to prevent us getting bored – we have received one from Brussels: they have condemned the Hungarian peace mission efforts. I have tried – without success – to explain that there is such a thing as Christian duty. This means that if you see something bad in the world – especially something very bad – and you receive some instrument for its correction, then it is a Christian duty to take action, without undue contemplation or reflection. The Hungarian peace mission is about this duty. I would like to remind all of us that the EU has a founding treaty, which contains these exact words: “The Union’s aim is peace”. Brussels is also offended at our describing what they are doing as a pro-war policy. They say that they are supporting the war in the interest of peace. Central Europeans like us are immediately reminded of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, who taught that with the advent of communism the state will die, but that the state will die while first constantly strengthening. Brussels is also creating peace by constantly supporting war. Just as we did not

understand Lenin's thesis in our university lectures on the history of the labour movement, I do not understand the Brusselsers in European Council meetings. Perhaps Orwell was right after all when he wrote that in "Newspeak" peace is war and war is peace. Despite all the criticism, let us remind ourselves that since the beginning of our peace mission the US and Russian war ministers have spoken to each other, the Swiss and Russian foreign ministers have held talks, President Zelenskyy has finally called President Trump, and the Ukrainian foreign minister has been to Beijing. So fermentation has begun, and we are slowly but surely moving from a pro-war European policy to a pro-peace policy. This is inevitable, because time is on the side of peace policy. Reality has dawned on the Ukrainians, and now it is up to the Europeans to come to their senses, before it is too late: "Trump ante portas". If by then Europe does not switch to a policy of peace, then after Trump's victory it will have to do so while admitting defeat, covered in shame, and admitting sole responsibility for its policy.

But, Ladies and Gentlemen, The subject of today's presentation is not peace. Please regard what I have said so far as a digression. In fact, for those who are thinking about the future of the world, and of Hungarians within it, there are three big issues on the table today. The first is the war – or more precisely, an unexpected side-effect of the war. This is the fact that the war reveals the reality in which we live. This reality was not visible and could not be described earlier, but it has been illuminated by the blazing light of missiles fired in the war. The second big issue on the table is what will happen after the war. Will a new world come into being, or will the old one continue? And if a new world is coming – and this is our third big issue – how should Hungary prepare for this new world? The fact is that I need to talk about all three, and I need to talk about them here – first of all because these are the big issues that are best discussed in this "free university" format. From another point of view, we need a pan-Hungarian approach, as looking at these issues only from the point of view of a "Little Hungary" would be too constricting; it is therefore justified to talk about these issues in front of Hungarians outside our borders.

Dear Summer Camp,

These are big issues with manifold interrelations, and obviously even the esteemed audience cannot be expected to know all the important basic information, so from time to time I will need to digress. This is a tough task: we have three topics, one morning, and a ruthless moderator. I have chosen the following approach: to speak at length about the real situation of

power in Europe as revealed by the war; then to give some glimpses of the new world that is in the making; and finally to refer – rather in the manner of a list, without explanation or argumentation – to the Hungarian plans related to this. This method has the advantage of also setting the theme for next year’s presentation.

The undertaking is ambitious, and even courageous: we must ask ourselves whether we can undertake it at all, and whether it might be beyond our ability. I think it is a realistic endeavour, because over the past year – or two or three years – some superb studies and books have been published in Hungary and abroad, and translators have also made these available to the Hungarian public. On the other hand, with all due modesty we must remind ourselves that we are the longest-serving government in Europe. I myself am the longest-serving European leader – and I should quietly point out that I am also the leader who has spent the longest time in opposition. So I have seen everything that I will talk about now. I am talking about something that I have lived through and continue to live through. Whether I have understood it is another question; that is something we will find out at the end of this presentation.

So, about the reality revealed by the war. Dear Friends, the war is our red pill. Think of the “Matrix” films. The hero is faced with a choice. He has two pills to choose from: if he swallows the blue pill, he can stay in the world of surface appearances; if he swallows the red pill, he can look into and descend into reality. The war is our red pill: it is what we have been given, it is what we must swallow. And now, armed with new experiences, we must talk about reality. It is a cliché that war is the continuation of policy with other means. It is important to add that war is the continuation of policy from a different perspective. So war, in its relentlessness, takes us to a new position from which to see things, to a high vantage point. And from there it gives us a completely different – hitherto unknown – perspective. We find ourselves in new surroundings and in a new, rarefied force field. In this pure reality, ideologies lose their power; statistical sleights of hand lose their power; media distortions and politicians’ tactical dissimulation loses its power. There is no longer any relevance to widespread delusions – or even to conspiracy theories. What remains is the stark, brutal reality. It’s a pity our friend Gyula Tellér is no longer with us, because now we would be able to hear some surprising things from him. Since he is no longer with us, however, you will have to make do with me. But I think there will be no shortage of shocks. For the sake of

clarity, I have made bullet points of everything we have seen since we swallowed the red pill: since the outbreak of the war in February 2022.

Firstly, the war has seen brutal losses – numbering in the hundreds of thousands – suffered by both sides. I have recently met them, and I can say with certainty that they do not want to come to terms. Why is this? There are two reasons. The first is that each of them thinks that they can win, and wants to fight until victory. The second is that both are fuelled by their own real or perceived truth. The Ukrainians think that this is a Russian invasion, a violation of international law and territorial sovereignty, and they are in fact fighting a war of self-defence for their independence. The Russians think that there have been serious NATO military developments in Ukraine, Ukraine has been promised NATO membership, and they do not want to see NATO troops or NATO weapons on the Russian–Ukrainian border. So they say that Russia has the right to self-defence, and that in fact this war has been provoked. So everyone has some kind of truth, perceived or real, and will not give up fighting the war. This is a road leading directly to escalation; if it depends on these two sides, there will be no peace. Peace can only be brought in from outside.

Secondly: in years gone by we had got used to the United States declaring its main challenger or opponent to be China; yet now we see it waging a proxy war against Russia. And China is constantly accused of covertly supporting Russia. If this is the case, then we need to answer the question of why it is sensible to corral two such large countries together into a hostile camp. This question has yet to be answered in any meaningful way.

Thirdly: Ukraine's strength, its resilience, has exceeded all expectations. After all, since 1991 eleven million people have left the country, it has been ruled by oligarchs, corruption sky-high, and the state had essentially ceased functioning. And yet now we are seeing unprecedentedly successful resistance from it. Despite the conditions described here, Ukraine is in fact a strong country. The question is what the source of this strength is. Apart from its military past and individuals' personal heroism, there is something worth understanding here: Ukraine has found a higher purpose, it has discovered a new meaning to its existence. Because up until now, Ukraine saw itself as a buffer zone. To be a buffer zone is psychologically debilitating: there is a sense of helplessness, a feeling that one's fate is not in one's own hands. This is a consequence of such a doubly exposed position. Now, however, there is the dawning prospect of belonging to the West. Ukraine's new self-authored mission

is to be the West's eastern military frontier region. The meaning and importance of its existence has increased in its own eyes and in the eyes of the whole world. This has brought it into a state of activity and action, which we non-Ukrainians see as aggressive insistence – and there's no denying that it is quite aggressive and insistent. It is in fact the Ukrainians' demand for their higher purpose to be officially recognised internationally. This is what gives them the strength that makes them capable of unprecedented resistance.

Fourthly: Russia is not what we have so far seen it to be, and Russia is not what we have so far been led to see it as. The country's economic viability is outstanding. I remember being at European Council meetings – the prime ministers' summits – when, with all sorts of gestures, Europe's great leaders rather hubristically claimed that the sanctions against Russia and the exclusion of Russia from the so-called SWIFT system, the international financial clearing system, would bring Russia to its knees. They would bring the Russian economy to its knees, and through that the Russian political elite. As I watch events unfold, I am reminded of the wisdom of Mike Tyson, who once said that “Everyone has a plan, till they get punched in the mouth.” Because the reality is that the Russians have learned lessons from the sanctions imposed after the 2014 invasion of Crimea – and not only have they learned those lessons, but they have translated those lessons into action. They implemented the necessary IT and banking improvements. So the Russian financial system is not collapsing. They have developed the ability to adapt, and after 2014 we fell victim to this, because we used to export a significant proportion of Hungarian food produce to Russia. We could not continue to do so because of the sanctions, the Russians modernised their agriculture, and today we are talking about one of the world's largest food export markets; this is a country that used to have to rely on imports. So the way that Russia is described to us – as a rigid neo-Stalinist autocracy – is false. In fact we are talking about a country that displays technical and economic resilience – and perhaps also societal resilience, but we'll see.

The fifth important new lesson from reality: European policy-making has collapsed. Europe has given up defending its own interests: all that Europe is doing today is unconditionally following the foreign policy line of the US Democrats – even at the cost of its own self-destruction. The sanctions we have imposed are damaging fundamental European interests: they are driving up energy prices and making the European economy uncompetitive. We let the blowing up of the Nord Stream pipeline go unchallenged; Germany itself let an act of terrorism against its own property – which was obviously carried out under US direction – go

unchallenged, and we are not saying a word about it, we are not investigating it, we do not want to clarify it, we do not want to raise it in a legal context. In the same way, we failed to do the right thing in the case of the phone tapping of Angela Merkel, which was carried out with the assistance of Denmark. So this is nothing but an act of submission. There is a context here which is complicated, but I will try to give you a necessarily simplified but comprehensive account of it. European policy-making has also collapsed since the beginning of the Russo-Ukrainian war because the core of the European power system was the Paris–Berlin axis, which used to be inescapable: it was the core and it was the axis. Since the war broke out, a different centre and a different axis of power has been established. The Berlin–Paris axis no longer exists – or if it does, it has become irrelevant and liable to be bypassed. The new power centre and axis comprises London, Warsaw, Kiev/Kyiv, the Baltics and the Scandinavians. When, to the astonishment of Hungarians, one sees the German chancellor announcing that he is only sending helmets to the war, and then a week later he announces that he is in fact sending weapons, do not think that the man has lost his mind. Then when the same German chancellor announces that there may be sanctions, but that they must not cover energy, and then two weeks later he himself is at the head of the sanctions policy, do not think that the man has lost his mind. On the contrary, he is very much in his right mind. He is well aware that the Americans and the liberal opinion-forming vehicles they influence – universities, think tanks, research institutes, the media – are using public opinion to punish Franco–German policy that is not in line with American interests. This is why we have the phenomenon that I have been talking about, and this is why we have the German chancellor’s idiosyncratic blunders. Changing the centre of power in Europe and bypassing the Franco–German axis is not a new idea – it has simply been made possible by the war. The idea existed before, in fact being an old Polish plan to solve the problem of Poland being squeezed between a huge German state and a huge Russian state, by making Poland the number one American base in Europe. I could describe it as inviting the Americans there, between the Germans and the Russians. Five per cent of Poland’s GDP is now devoted to military expenditure, and the Polish army is the second largest in Europe after the French – we are talking about hundreds of thousands of troops. This is an old plan, to weaken Russia and outpace Germany. At first sight, outpacing the Germans seems to be a fantasy idea. But if you look at the dynamics of the development of Germany and Central Europe, of Poland, it does not seem so impossible – especially if in the meantime Germany is dismantling its own world-class industry. This strategy caused Poland to give up cooperation with the V4. The V4 meant something different: the V4 means that we recognise that there is a strong Germany and there

is a strong Russia, and – working with the Central European states – we create a third entity between the two. The Poles have backed out of this and, instead of the V4 strategy of accepting the Franco–German axis, they have embarked on the alternative strategy of eliminating the Franco–German axis. Talking of our Polish brothers and sisters, let us mention them here in passing. Since they have now kicked our backsides black and blue, perhaps we can allow ourselves to say a few sincere, fraternal home truths about them. Well, the Poles are pursuing the most sanctimonious and hypocritical policy in the whole of Europe. They lecture us on moral grounds, they criticise us for our economic relations with Russia, and at the same time they are blithely doing business with the Russians, buying their oil – albeit via indirect routes – and running the Polish economy with it. The French are better than that: last month, incidentally, they overtook us in gas purchases from Russia – but at least they do not lecture us on moral grounds. The Poles are both doing business and lecturing us. I have not seen a policy of such rank hypocrisy in Europe in the last ten years. The scale of this change – of bypassing the German–French axis – can truly be grasped by older people if they perhaps think back twenty years, when the Americans attacked Iraq and called on the European countries to join in. We, for example, joined in as a member of NATO. At the time Schröder, the then German chancellor, and Chirac, the then French president, were joined by President Putin of Russia at a joint press conference called in opposition to the Iraq war. At that time there was still an independent Franco–German logic when approaching European interests.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The peace mission is not just about seeking peace, but is also about urging Europe to finally pursue an independent policy. Red pill number six: the spiritual solitude of the West. Up until now the West has thought and behaved as if it sees itself as a reference point, a kind of benchmark for the world. It has provided the values that the world has had to accept – for example, liberal democracy or the green transition. But most of the world has noticed this, and in the last two years there has been a 180-degree turn. Once again the West has declared its expectation, its instruction, for the world to take a moral stand against Russia and for the West. In contrast, the reality has become that, step-by-step, everyone is siding with Russia. That China and North Korea are doing so is perhaps no surprise. That Iran is doing the same – given Iran’s history and its relationship with Russia – is somewhat surprising. But the fact that India, which the Western world calls the most populous democracy, is also on the side of the Russians is astonishing. That Turkey refuses to accept the West’s morally based demands,

even though it is a NATO member, is truly surprising. And the fact that the Muslim world sees Russia not as an enemy but as a partner is completely unexpected.

Seventhly: the war has exposed the fact that the biggest problem the world faces today is the weakness and disintegration of the West. Of course, this is not what the Western media says: in the West they claim that the world's greatest danger and problem is Russia and the threat it represents. This is wrong! Russia is too large for its population, and it is also under hyper-rational leadership – indeed it is a country that has leadership. There is nothing mysterious about what it does: its actions follow logically from its interests, and are therefore understandable and predictable. On the other hand, the behaviour of the West – as may be clear from what I have said so far – is not understandable and not predictable. The West is not led, its behaviour is not rational, and it cannot deal with the situation that I described in my presentation here last year: the fact that two suns have appeared in the sky. This is the challenge to the West in the form of the rise of China and Asia. We should be able to deal with this, but we are not able to.

Point eight. Arising from this, for us the real challenge is to once again try to understand the West in the light of the war. Because we Central Europeans see the West as irrational. But, Dear Friends, what if it is behaving logically, but we do not understand its logic? If it is logical in the way it thinks and acts, then we must ask why we do not understand it. And if we could find the answer to this question, we would also understand why Hungary regularly clashes with the Western countries of the European Union on geopolitical and foreign policy issues. My answer is the following. Let us imagine that the worldview of us Central Europeans is based on nation states. Meanwhile the West thinks that nation states no longer exist; this is unimaginable to us, but all the same this is what it thinks. The coordinate system within which we Central Europeans think is therefore completely irrelevant. In our conception, the world is made up of nation states which exercise a domestic monopoly on the use of force, thereby creating a condition of general peace. In its relations with other states the nation state is sovereign – in other words, it has the capacity to independently determine its foreign and domestic policy. In our conception, the nation state is not a legal abstraction, not a legal construct: the nation state is rooted in a particular culture. It has a shared set of values, it has anthropological and historical depth. And from this emerge shared moral imperatives based on a joint consensus. This is what we think of as the nation state. What is more, we do not see it as a phenomenon that developed in the 19th century: we believe that nation states

have a biblical basis, since they belong to the order of creation. For in Scripture we read that at the end of time there will be judgement not only of individuals but also of nations. Consequently, in our conception nations are not provisional formations. But in complete contrast Westerners believe that nation states no longer exist. They therefore deny the existence of a shared culture and a shared morality based on it. They have no shared morality; if you watched the Olympic opening ceremony yesterday, that is what you saw. This is why they think differently about migration. They think that migration is not a threat or a problem, but in fact a way of escaping from the ethnic homogeneity that is the basis of a nation. This is the essence of the progressive liberal internationalist conception of space. This is why they are oblivious to the absurdity – or they do not see it as absurd – that while in the eastern half of Europe hundreds of thousands of Christians are killing one another, in the west of Europe we are letting in hundreds of thousands of people from foreign civilisations. From our Central European point of view this is the definition of absurdity. This idea is not even conceived of in the West. In parenthesis I note that the European states lost a total of some fifty-seven million indigenous Europeans in the First and Second World Wars. If they, their children and their grandchildren had lived, today Europe would not have any demographic problems. The European Union does not simply think in the way I am describing, but it declares it. If we read the European documents carefully, it is clear that the aim is to supersede the nation. It is true that they have a strange way of writing and saying this, stating that nation states must be superseded, while some small trace of them remains. But the point is that, after all, powers and sovereignty should be transferred from the nation states to Brussels. This is the logic behind every major measure. In their minds, the nation is a historical or transitional creation, born of the 18th and 19th centuries – and as it arrived, so may it depart. For them, the western half of Europe is already post-national. This is not only a politically different situation, but what I am trying to talk about here is that this is a new mental space. If you do not look at the world from the point of view of nation states, a completely different reality opens up before you. Herein lies the problem, the reason that the countries in the western eastern halves of Europe do not understand one another, the reason we cannot pull together.

If we project all of this onto the United States, this is the real battle that is going on over there. What should the United States be? Should it become a nation state again, or should it continue its march towards a post-national state? President Donald Trump's precise goal is to bring the American people back from the post-national liberal state, to drag them back, to force them back, to raise them back to the nation state. This is why the stakes in the US election are so

enormous. This is why we are seeing things that we have never seen before. This is why they want to prevent Donald Trump from running in the election. This is why they want to put him in jail. This is why they want to take away his assets. And if that does not work, this is why they want to kill him. And let there be no doubt that what happened may not be the last attempt in this campaign.

In parenthesis, I spoke to the President yesterday and he asked me how I was doing. I said that I was great, because I am here in a geographical entity called Transylvania. Explaining this is not so easy, especially in English, and especially to President Trump. But I said that I was here in Transylvania at a free university where I was going to give a presentation on the state of the world. And he said that I must pass on his personal heartfelt greetings to the attendees at the camp and those at the free university.

Now, if we try to understand how this Western thinking – which for the sake of simplicity we should call “post-national” thinking and condition – came about, then we have to go back to the grand illusion of the 1960s. The grand illusion of the 1960s took two forms: the first was the sexual revolution, and the second was student rebellion. In fact, it was an expression of the belief that the individual would be freer and greater if he or she were freed from any kind of collective. More than sixty years later it has since become clear that, on the contrary, the individual can only become great through and in a community, that when alone he or she can never be free, but always lonely and doomed to be shrunken. In the West bonds have been successively discarded: the metaphysical bonds that are God; the national bonds that are the homeland; and family bonds – discarding the family. I am referring again to the opening of the Paris Olympics. Now that they have managed to get rid of all that, expecting the individual to become greater, they find that they feel a sense of emptiness. They have not become great, but have become small. For in the West they no longer desire either great ideals or great, inspiring shared goals.

Here we must talk about the secret of greatness. What is the secret of greatness? The secret of greatness is to be able to serve something greater than yourself. To do this, you first have to acknowledge that in the world there is something or some things that are greater than you, and then you must dedicate yourself to serving those greater things. There are not many of these. You have your God, your country and your family. But if you do not do that, but instead you focus on your own greatness, thinking that you are smarter, more beautiful, more talented than

most people, if you expend your energy on that, on communicating all that to others, then what you get is not greatness, but grandiosity. And this is why today, whenever we are in talks with Western Europeans, in every gesture we feel grandiosity instead of greatness. I have to say that a situation has developed that we can call emptiness, and the feeling of superfluity that goes with it gives rise to aggression. Hence the emergence of the “aggressive dwarf” as a new type of person.

To sum up, what I want to say to you is that when we talk about Central Europe and Western Europe, we are not talking about differences of opinion, but about two different worldviews, two mentalities, two instincts, and hence two different arguments. We have a nation state, which forces us towards strategic realism. They have post-nationalist dreams that are inert to national sovereignty, do not recognise national greatness, and have no shared national goals. This is the reality we have to face.

And finally, the last element of reality is that this post-national condition that we see in the West has a serious – and I would say dramatic – political consequence that is convulsing democracy. Because within societies there is growing resistance to migration, to gender, to war and to globalism. And this creates the political problem of the elite and the people – of elitism and populism. This is the defining phenomenon of Western politics today. If you read the texts, you do not need to understand them, and they do not always make sense anyway; but if you read the words, the following are the expressions you will find most often. They indicate that the elites are condemning the people for drifting towards the Right. The feelings and ideas of the people are labelled as xenophobia, homophobia and nationalism. In response, the people accuse the elite of not caring about what is important to them, but of sinking into some kind of deranged globalism. Consequently the elites and the people cannot agree with each other on the question of cooperation. I could mention many countries. But if the people and the elites cannot agree on cooperation, how can this produce representative democracy? Because we have an elite that does not want to represent the people, and is proud of not wanting to represent them; and we have the people, who are not represented. In fact in the Western world we are faced with a situation in which the masses of people appearing with college degrees no longer form less than 10 per cent of the population, but 30 to 40 per cent. And because of their views these people do not respect those who are less educated – who are typically working people, people who live from their labour. For the elites, only the values of graduates are acceptable, only they are legitimate. This is the viewpoint from which the

results of the European Parliament elections can be understood. The European People's Party garnered the votes of "plebeians" on the Right who wanted change, then took those votes to the Left and made a deal with the left-wing elites who have an interest in maintaining the status quo. This has consequences for the European Union. The consequence is that Brussels remains under the occupation of a liberal oligarchy. This oligarchy has it in its grip. This left-liberal elite is in fact organising a transatlantic elite: not European, but global; not based on the nation state, but federal; and not democratic, but oligarchic. This also has consequences for us, because in Brussels the "3 Ps" are back: "prohibited, permitted and promoted". We belong to the prohibited category. The Patriots for Europe have therefore been prohibited from receiving any positions. We live in the world of the permitted political community. Meanwhile our domestic opponents – especially the newcomers to the European People's Party – are in the strongly promoted category.

And perhaps one last, tenth point, is about how Western values – which were the essence of so-called "soft power" – have become a boomerang. It has turned out that these Western values, which were thought to be universal, are demonstratively unacceptable and rejected in ever more countries around the world. It has turned out that modernity, modern development, is not Western, or at least not exclusively Western – because China is modern, India is becoming increasingly modern, and the Arabs and Turks are modernising; and they are not becoming a modern world on the basis of Western values at all. And in the meantime Western soft power has been replaced by Russian soft power, because now the key to the propagation of Western values is LGBTQ. Anyone who does not accept this is now in the "backward" category as far as the Western world is concerned. I do not know if you have been watching, but I think it is remarkable that in the last six months pro-LGBTQ laws have been passed by countries such as Ukraine, Taiwan and Japan. But the world does not agree. Consequently, today Putin's strongest tactical weapon is the Western imposition of LGBTQ and resistance to it, opposition to it. This has become Russia's strongest international attraction; thus what used to be Western soft power has now been transformed into Russian soft power – like a boomerang.

All in all, Ladies and Gentlemen, I can say that the war has helped us to understand the real state of power in the world. It is a sign that in its mission the West has shot itself in the foot, and is therefore accelerating the changes that are transforming the world. My first presentation is over. Now comes the second.

What comes next? It needs to be shorter, Zsolt Németh says. So the second presentation is about what follows from this. First, intellectual courage is needed here. So you have to work with broad brushstrokes, because I am convinced that the fate of the Hungarians depends on whether they understand what is happening in the world, and whether we Hungarians understand what the world will be like after the war. In my opinion a new world is coming. We cannot be accused of having a narrow imagination or of intellectual inertia, but even we – and I personally, when I have spoken here in recent years – have underestimated the scale of the change that is happening and that we are living through.

Dear Friends, Dear Summer Camp,

We are in a change, a change is coming, that has not been seen for five hundred years. This has not been apparent to us because in the last 150 years there have been great changes in and around us, but in these changes the dominant world power has always been in the West. And our starting point is that the changes we are seeing now are likely to follow this Western logic. By contrast, this is a new situation. In the past, change was Western: the Habsburgs rose and then fell; Spain was up, and it became the centre of power; it fell, and the English rose; the First World War finished off the monarchies; The British were replaced by the Americans as world leaders; then the Russo–American Cold War was won by the Americans. But all these developments remained within our Western logic. This is not the case now, however, and this is what we must face up to; because the Western world is not challenged from within the Western world, and so the logic of change has been disrupted. What I am talking about, and what we are facing, is actually a global system change. And this is a process that is coming from Asia. To put it succinctly and primitively, for the next many decades – or perhaps centuries, because the previous world system was in place for five hundred years – the dominant centre of the world will be in Asia: China, India, Pakistan, Indonesia, and I could go on. They have already created their forms, their platforms, there is this BRICS formation in which they are already present. And there is the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, in which these countries are building the new world economy. I think that this is an inevitable process, because Asia has the demographic advantage, it has the technological advantage in ever more areas, it has the capital advantage, and it is bringing its military power up to equilibrium with that of the West. Asia will have – or perhaps already has – the most money, the largest financial funds, the largest companies in the world, the best

universities, the best research institutes, and the largest stock exchanges. It will have – or already has – the most advanced space research and the most advanced medical science. In addition, we in the West – even the Russians – have been well shepherded into this new entity that is taking shape. The question is whether or not the process is reversible – and if not, when it became irreversible. I think it happened in 2001, when we in the West decided to invite China to join the World Trade Organisation – better known as the WTO. Since then this process has been almost unstoppable and irreversible.

President Trump is working on finding the American response to this situation. In fact, Donald Trump's attempt is probably the last chance for the US to retain its world supremacy. We could say that four years is not enough, but if you look at who he has chosen as Vice President, a young and very strong man, if Donald Trump wins now, in four years his Vice President will run. He can serve two terms, and that will total twelve years. And in twelve years a national strategy can be implemented. I am convinced that many people think that if Donald Trump returns to the White House, the Americans will want to retain their world supremacy by maintaining their position in the world. I think that this is wrong. Of course, no one gives up positions of their own accord, but that will not be the most important goal. On the contrary, the priority will be to rebuild and strengthen North America. This means not only the US, but also Canada and Mexico, because together they form an economic area. And America's place in the world will be less important. You have to take what the President says seriously: "America First, everything here, everything will come home!" This is why the capacity to raise capital from everywhere is being developed. We are already suffering as a result: the big European companies are not investing in Europe, but are investing in America, because the ability to attract capital seems to be on the horizon. They are going to squeeze the price of everything out of everyone. I do not know whether you have read what the President said. For example, they are not an insurance company, and if Taiwan wants security, it should pay. They will make us Europeans, NATO and China pay the price of security; and they will also achieve a trade balance with China through negotiations, and change it in favour of the US. They will trigger massive US infrastructure development, military research, and innovation. They will achieve – or perhaps have already achieved – energy self-sufficiency and raw material self-sufficiency; and finally they will improve ideologically, giving up on the export of democracy. America First. The export of democracy is at an end. This is the essence of the experiment America is conducting in response to the situation described here.

What is the European response to global system change? We have two options. The first is what we call “the open-air museum”. This is what we have now. We are moving towards it. Europe, absorbed by the US, will be left in an underdeveloped role. It will be a continent that the world marvels at, but one which no longer has within it the dynamic for development. The second option, announced by President Macron, is strategic autonomy. In other words, we must enter the competition of global system change. After all, this is what the USA does, according to its own logic. And we are indeed talking about 400 million people. It is possible to recreate Europe’s capacity to attract capital, and it is possible to bring capital back from America. It is possible to make major infrastructure developments, especially in Central Europe – the Budapest–Bucharest TGV and the Warsaw–Budapest TGV, to mention what we are involved in. We need a European military alliance with a strong European defence industry, research and innovation. We need European energy self-sufficiency, which will not be possible without nuclear energy. And after the war we need a new reconciliation with Russia. This means that the European Union must surrender its ambitions as a political project, the Union must strengthen itself as an economic project, and the Union must create itself as a defence project. In both cases – the open-air museum or if we join the competition – what will happen is that we must be prepared for the fact that Ukraine will not be a member of NATO or the European Union, because we Europeans do not have enough money for that. Ukraine will return to the position of a buffer state. If it is lucky, this will come with international security guarantees, which will be enshrined in a US–Russia agreement, in which we Europeans may be able to participate. The Polish experiment will fail, because they do not have the resources: they will have to return to Central Europe and the V4. So let us wait for the Polish brothers and sisters to return. The second presentation is over. There is only one left. This is about Hungary.

What should Hungary do in this situation? First of all, let us record the sad fact that five hundred years ago, at the time of the last global system change, Europe was the winner and Hungary the loser. It was a time when, thanks to geographical discoveries, a new economic space opened up in the western half of Europe – one in which we were completely unable to participate. Unfortunately for us, at the same time a civilisational conflict also kicked down our door, with Islamic conquest arriving in Hungary, making us a war zone for many years. This resulted in a huge loss of population, leading to resettlement – the consequences of which we can see today. And unfortunately we did not have the capacity to break out of this

situation on our own. We could not liberate ourselves by our own efforts, and so for several centuries we had to be annexed to a Germanic Habsburg world.

Let us also remind ourselves that five hundred years ago the Hungarian elite fully understood what was happening. They understood the nature of the change, but they did not have the means that would have enabled them to prepare the country for that change. This was the reason for the failure of the attempts to expand the space – the political, economic and military space – and to avoid trouble: the attempts to cut our way out of the situation. Such an attempt was made by King Matthias, who – following Sigismund's example – sought to become Holy Roman Emperor, and thus involve Hungary in the global system change. This failed. But I would also include here the attempt to have Tamás Bakócz appointed as Pope, which would have given us another opportunity to become a winner in this global system change. But these attempts did not succeed. Therefore the Hungarian symbol of this era, the symbol of Hungarian failure, is [military defeat at] Mohács. In other words, the beginning of the West's world power dominance coincided with the decline of Hungary.

This is important, because now we must clarify our relationship to the new global system change. We have two possibilities: Is this now a threat for Hungary, or an opportunity for Hungary? If it is a threat, then we must pursue a policy of protecting the status quo: we must swim along with the United States and the European Union, and we must identify our national interests with one or both branches of the West. If we see this not as a threat but as an opportunity, we need to chart our own development path, make changes and take the initiative. In other words, it will be worth pursuing a nationally-oriented policy. I believe in the latter, I belong to the latter school: the current global system change is not a threat, not primarily a threat, but rather an opportunity.

If, however, we want to pursue our independent national policy, the question is whether we have the necessary boundary conditions. In other words, would we be in danger of being trodden on – or, rather, being trampled on. So the question is whether or not we have the boundary conditions for our own path in our relations with the USA, the European Union and Asia.

In short, I can only say that developments in the US are moving in our favour. I do not believe that we will get an economic and political offer from the United States that will create a better

opportunity for us than membership of the European Union. If we do get one, we should consider it. Of course the Polish trap is to be avoided: they have bet a lot on one card, but there was a Democratic government in America; they have been helped in their strategic Polish national goals, but the Poles are subject to the imposition of a policy of democracy export, LGBTQ, migration and internal social transformation which actually risks the loss of their national identity. So if there is an offer from America, we need to consider it carefully.

If we look at Asia and China, we have to say that there the boundary conditions exist – because we have received an offer from China. We have received the maximum offer possible, and we will not get a better one. This can be summarised as follows: China is very far away, and for them Hungary's membership of the European Union is an asset. This is unlike the Americans, who are always telling us that perhaps we should get out. The Chinese think that we are in a good place here – even though EU membership is a constraint, because we cannot pursue an independent trade policy, as EU membership comes with a common trade policy. To this the Chinese say that this being the case, we should participate in each other's modernisation. Of course, when lions offer an invitation to a mouse, one must always be alert, because after all reality and relative sizes do matter. But this Chinese offer to participate in each other's modernisation – announced during the Chinese president's visit in May – means that they are willing to invest a large proportion of their resources and development funds in Hungary, and that they are willing to offer us opportunities to participate in the Chinese market.

What is the consequence for EU–Hungary relations if we consider our membership of the EU as a boundary condition? As I see it, the western part of the European Union is no longer on course to return to the nation state model. Therefore they will continue to navigate in what to us are unfamiliar waters. The eastern part of the Union – in other words us – can defend our condition as nation states. That is something we are capable of. The Union has lost the current war. The US will abandon it. Europe cannot finance the war, it cannot finance the reconstruction of Ukraine, and it cannot finance the running of Ukraine.

In parenthesis, while Ukraine is asking us for more loans, negotiations are underway to write off the loans it has previously taken out. Today the creditors and Ukraine are arguing over whether it should repay 20 per cent or 60 per cent of the debt it has taken on. This is the reality of the situation. In other words, the European Union has to pay the price of this

military adventure. This price will be high, and it will affect us adversely. As a boundary condition, the consequence for us – for Europe – is that the European Union will acknowledge that the Central European countries will remain in the European Union, while remaining on nation-state foundations and pursuing their own foreign policy objectives. They may not like it, but they will have to put up with it – especially as the number of such countries will increase.

All in all, therefore, I can say that the boundary conditions exist for independent nationally-oriented policy towards America, Asia and Europe. These will define the limits of our room for manoeuvre. This space is wide – wider than it has been at any time in the last five hundred years. The next question is what we need to do to use this space to our advantage. If there is a global system change, then we need a strategy that is worthy of it.

If there is a global system change, then we need a grand strategy for Hungary. Here the order of words is important: we do not need a strategy for a grand Hungary, but a grand strategy for Hungary. This means that up to now we have had small strategies, usually with a 2030 time horizon. These are action plans, they are policy programmes, and they have been intended to take what we started in 2010 – what we call national course building – and simply finish it. They have to be followed through. But in a time of global system change this is not enough. For that we need a grand strategy, a longer timeframe – especially if we assume that this global system change will lead to a stable long-term state of affairs that will last for centuries. Whether this will be the case will, of course, be for our grandchildren to say at Tusnád/Tuşnad in 2050.

How do we stand with Hungary's grand strategy? Is there a grand strategy for Hungary in our drawer? There would be, and in fact there is. This is the answer. Because over the past two years the war has spurred us on. Here some things have happened that we have decided to do in order to create a grand strategy – even if we have not talked about them in this context. We immediately started working on such a grand strategy after the 2022 election. Unusually, the Hungarian government has a political director whose job is actually to put together this grand strategy. We have entered the programme-writing system of President Donald Trump's team, and we have deep involvement there. For some time researchers at the Magyar Nemzeti Bank [Hungarian National Bank] have been taking part in strategy workshops in Asia – particularly in China. And to turn our disadvantage into an advantage, after we were forced into a

ministerial change, we brought into the Government not a technocrat but a strategic thinker, and we created a separate European Union ministry with János Bóka. And so in Brussels we are not passive, but we have set up shop there: we are not moving out, but moving in. And there are a number of such soft power institutions associated with the Hungarian government – think tanks, research institutes, universities – which have been operating at full throttle over the past two years.

So there is a grand strategy for Hungary. What condition is it in? I can say that it is not yet in a good condition. It is not in a good condition because the language being used is too intellectual. And our political and competitive advantage comes precisely from the fact that we are able to create a unity with the people in which everyone can understand exactly what we are doing and why. This is the foundation for our ability to act together. Because people will only defend a plan if they understand it and see that it is good for them. Otherwise, if founded on Brusselian blah-blah, it will not work. Unfortunately, what we have now – the grand strategy for Hungary – is not yet digestible and widely comprehensible. It will take a good six months to get to that stage. Currently it is raw and coarse – I could even say that it was not written with a fountain pen, but with a chisel, and that we need to get through a lot more sandpaper to make it comprehensible. But for now, I will briefly present what there is.

So the essence of the grand strategy for Hungary – and now I will use intellectual language – is connectivity. This means that we will not allow ourselves to be locked into only one of either of the two emerging hemispheres in the world economy. The world economy will not be exclusively Western or Eastern. We have to be in both, in the Western and in the Eastern. This will come with consequences. The first. We will not get involved in the war against the East. We will not join in the formation of a technological bloc opposing the East, and we will not join in the formation of a trade bloc opposing the East. We are gathering friends and partners, not economic or ideological enemies. We are not taking the intellectually much easier path of latching on to someone, but we are going our own way. This is difficult – but then there is a reason that politics is described as an art.

The second chapter in the grand strategy is about spiritual foundations. At the core of this is the defence of sovereignty. I have already said enough about foreign policy, but this strategy also describes the economic basis of national sovereignty. In recent years we have been building a pyramid. At the top of it are the “national champions”. Below them are the

internationally competitive medium-sized companies, below which are companies producing for the domestic market. At the bottom are small companies and sole traders. This is the Hungarian economy that can provide the basis for sovereignty. We have national champions in banking, energy, food, the production of basic agricultural goods, IT, telecommunications, media, civil engineering, building construction, real estate development, pharmaceuticals, defence, logistics, and – to some extent, through the universities – knowledge industries. And these are our national champions. They are not just champions at home, but they are all out there in the international arena and they have proven themselves competitive. Below these come our medium-sized companies. I would like to inform you that today Hungary has fifteen thousand medium-sized companies that are internationally active and competitive. When we came to power in 2010, the number was three thousand. Today we have fifteen thousand. And of course we need to broaden the base of small enterprises and sole traders. If by 2025 we can draw up a peace budget and not a war budget, we will launch an extensive programme for small and medium-sized enterprises. The economic basis for sovereignty also means that we must strengthen our financial independence. We need to bring our debt down not to 50 or 60 per cent, but close to 30 per cent; and we need to emerge as a regional creditor. Today we are already making attempts to do this, and Hungary is providing state loans to friendly countries in our region that are in some way important to Hungary. It is important that, according to the strategy, we must remain a production hub: we must not switch to a service-oriented economy. The service sector is important, but we must retain the character of Hungary as a production hub, because only in this way can there be full employment in the domestic labour market. We must not repeat the West's mistake of using guest workers to do certain production work, because over there members of host populations already consider certain types of work to be beneath them. If this were to happen in Hungary, it would induce a process of social dissolution that would be difficult to halt. And, for the defence of sovereignty, this chapter also includes the building of university and innovation centres.

The third chapter identifies the body of the grand strategy: the Hungarian society that we are talking about. If we are to be winners, this Hungarian society must be solid and resilient. It must have a solid and resilient social structure. The first prerequisite for this is halting demographic decline. We started well, but now we have stalled. A new impetus is needed. By 2035 Hungary must be demographically self-sustaining. There can be no question of population decline being compensated for by migration. The Western experience is that if there are more guests than hosts, then home is no longer home. This is a risk that must not be

taken. Therefore, if after the end of the war we can draw up a peace budget, then to regain the momentum of demographic improvement the tax credit for families with children will probably need to be doubled in 2025 – in two steps not one, but within one year. “Sluice gates” must control the inflow from Western Europe of those who want to live in a Christian national country. The number of such people will continue to grow. Nothing will be automatic, and we will be selective. Up until now they have been selective, but now we are the ones who will be selective. For society to be stable and resilient it must be based on a middle-class: families must have their own wealth and financial independence. Full employment must be preserved, and the key to this will be to maintain the current relationship between work and the Roma population. There will be work, and you cannot live without work. This is the deal and this is the essence of what is on offer. Also linked to this is the system of Hungarian villages, which is a special asset in Hungarian history, and not a symbol of backwardness. The Hungarian village system must be preserved. An urban level of services also needs to be provided by us in villages. The financial burden of this must be borne by towns and cities. We will not create megacities, we will not create big cities, but we want to create towns and rural areas around towns, while preserving the historical heritage of the Hungarian village.

And finally there is the crucial element of sovereignty, with which we have arrived here on the banks of the River Olt. We have reduced this to a minimum, fearing that otherwise Zsolt might take the microphone from us. This is the essence of the protection of sovereignty, which is the protection of national distinctiveness. This is not assimilation, not integration, not blending in, but the maintenance of our own particular national character. This is the cultural basis of the defence of sovereignty: language preservation, and avoiding a state of “zero religion”. Zero religion is a state in which faith has long disappeared, but there has also been the loss of the capacity for Christian tradition to provide us with cultural and moral rules of behaviour that govern our relationship to work, money, family, sexual relations, and the order of priorities in how we relate to one another. This is what Westerners have lost. I think that this state of zero religion comes about when same-sex marriage is recognised as an institution with a status equal to that of marriage between men and women. That is a state of zero religion, in which Christianity no longer provides a moral compass and guidance. This must be avoided at all costs. And so when we fight for the family, we are not just fighting for the honour of the family, but for the maintenance of a state in which Christianity at least still provides moral guidance for our community.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

And finally, this Hungarian grand strategy must not start from “Little Hungary”. This grand strategy for Hungary must be based on national foundations, it must include all areas inhabited by Hungarians, and it must embrace all Hungarians living anywhere in the world. Little Hungary alone – Little Hungary as the sole framework – will be insufficient. For this reason I dare not give a date, because we would have to stick to it. But within the foreseeable future all the support that serves the stability and resilience of Hungarian society – such as the family support system – must be extended in its entirety to areas inhabited by Hungarians outside the country’s borders. This is not going in a bad direction, because if I look back at the amounts spent on these areas by the Hungarian state since 2010, I can say that we have spent an average of 100 billion forints a year. By way of comparison, I can say that during the [Socialist] government of Ferenc Gyurcsány, the annual expenditure on this was 9 billion forints. Now we are spending 100 billion a year. So that’s a more than tenfold increase.

And then the only question is this: When the grand strategy for Hungary is in place, what kind of policy can be used to make it a success? First of all, for a grand strategy to succeed, we need to know ourselves very well. Because the policy we want to use to make a strategy a success must be suited to our national character. To this, of course, we can say that we are diverse. This is particularly true for Hungarians. But there are nevertheless shared essential features, and this is what the strategy must target and fix on. And if we understand this, then we do not need compromises or consolidation, but we need to take a firm stand. I believe that, in addition to diversity, the essence – the shared essence that we must grasp and on which we must build the Hungarian grand strategy – is the freedom which must also be built inwards: we must not only build the freedom of the nation, but we must also aim for the personal freedom of Hungarians. Because we are not a militarised country like the Russians or the Ukrainians. Nor are we hyper-disciplined like the Chinese. Unlike the Germans, we do not enjoy hierarchy. We do not enjoy upheaval, revolution and blasphemy like the French. Nor do we believe that we can survive without our state, our own state, as the Italians tend to think. For Hungarians order is not a value in itself, but a condition necessary for freedom, in which we can live undisturbed lives. The closest thing to the Hungarian sense and meaning of freedom is the expression summing up an undisturbed life: “My house, my home, my castle, my life, and I will decide what makes me feel comfortable in my own skin.” This is an

anthropological, genetic and cultural characteristic of Hungarians, and the strategy must adapt to it. In other words, it must also be the starting point for politicians who want to carry the grand strategy to victory.

This process we are talking about – this global system change – will not take place in a year or two, but has already begun and will take another twenty to twenty-five years, and therefore during these twenty to twenty-five years it will be the subject of constant debate. Our opponents will constantly attack it. They will say that the process is reversible. They will say that we need integration instead of a separate national grand strategy. So they will constantly attack it and work on diverting it. They will constantly question not only the content of the grand strategy, but also the need for it. This is a fight that must now be committed to, but here one problem is the timeframe. Because if this is a process spanning twenty to twenty-five years, we have to admit that as we are not getting any younger, we will not be among those who finish it. The implementation of this grand strategy – especially the final phase – will certainly not be done by us, but mostly by young people who are now in their twenties and thirties. And when we think about politics, about how to implement such a strategy in political terms, we have to realise that in future generations there will essentially be only two positions – just as there are in our generation: there will be liberals and there will be nationalists. And I have to say that there will be liberal, slim-fit, avocado-latte, allergen-free, self-satisfied politicians on one side, and on the other side there will be streetwise young people of nationalist sympathies, with both feet firmly on the ground. Therefore we need to start recruiting young people – now, and for us. The opposition is constantly being organised and deployed to the battlefield by the liberal Zeitgeist. They have no need for recruitment efforts, because recruitment happens automatically. But our camp is different: the national camp will only come out at the sound of a trumpet, and can only rally under a flag that has been raised high. This is also true of young people. Therefore we need to find courageous young fighters with nationalist sentiments. We are looking for courageous young fighters with a national spirit.

Thank you for your kind attention.