



AKTUÁLIS
VITÉZEK HÍRMONDÓJA
FŐKAPITÁNY BESZÉDEI
HÍREK
A VITÉZI RENDRŐL
A SZERVEZET
TAGFELVÉTEL
RENDTÁRSÁKNAK
BESZÉDEK, ÍRÁSOK
KIADVÁNYOK
VERSEK
KÉPGALÉRIA
LETÖLTHETŐ
DOKUMENTUMOK
LINKEK
TÁMOGATÁS
KAPCSOLAT

A Vitézi Rend
Magyarországon a magyar
királyi miniszterelnök
rendeletével jött létre, és
került bejegyzésre

A bejegyzés adatai:

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6650/1920. M.E.

Rendelet kiadásának dátuma:

1920.08.11

Törvényerőre emelkedett:

1920. évi 36. tc. 77. par. alapján

keresés...
Keresés

Támogató



Vitézi rend
 1921-1945
 tagjainak név sora



SHORT HISTORY OF THE ORDER OF VITÉZ

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The Vitézi Rend, or "Order of Valiant's", is a relatively new order of chivalry. It was founded due to the need to honour thousands of war heroes and to help rebuild a shattered country.

In the years 1918-20, Hungary experienced an anarchist-democratic revolution, which was followed by invasion from the still-forming Czechoslovakia, the newly-formed Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (later Yugoslavia) and the Kingdom of Rumania.

To this was added a communist revolution, which cost about 2,000 lives and introduced Hungary to the phenomenon of class warfare, plus after their overthrow, the thorough looting of Hungarian infrastructure by the Rumanian army and a starvation-blockade initiated by the Western Powers, it can be seen that by late 1919, the much-shrunken country was in a state of near-collapse.

When constitutional government was finally restored, and the country, in order to prevent mass starvation and further invasions, finally signed the 1920 Trianon Peace Treaty with the Western Powers, the nation was in sore need of reconstruction.

Add to that the ethnic cleansing policies practiced by Czechoslovakia and Rumania —quietly encouraged by Britain and France — which brought 500,000 refugees to Hungary, and it becomes obvious that the newly reinstated Constitutional Monarchy had to strive for stability above all else.

It was for this reason that, after the National Assembly elected the last commander of the Austro-Hungarian Joint Fleet, Vice-Admiral Miklós Horthy, to the post of temporary Regent, he called for an organisation to be set up to reward those who had given outstanding service to the Hungarian Kingdom in war, and who were prepared to work for it in peace. This was promulgated as a Prime Ministerial Edict (no. 6650/1920) and was ratified by Parliament in Law XXXVI, paragraph 77 of 1920 (XXXVI t. c. § 77).

As a result, various ministries and landowners were called on to organise a central administrative body, the National Council of Heroes ('Országos Vitézi Szék') and began organising the granting of land to those who applied to what became known as the 'Vitézi Rend', which means 'Order of Knights'.

The word 'vitéz' in late 19th and early 20th century usage, meant 'knight', but also 'hero'. As a result, the "Vitézi Rend" has been translated variously as 'Order of Knights', 'Order of Heroes', 'Order of Valiant's or Valiant Ones'. The best modern translation would be 'Order of Valiant's'. The foundation of the Order was also a step towards land reform, for which there was a great need at the time.

In order to gain acceptance, former soldiers had to have received a certain gallantry medal as a minimum requirement, in the case of Other Ranks, the Small Silver Medal for Bravery, and the requirements got progressively higher as the ranks went up.

The Order of Gallantry was therefore a State Merit Order for war veterans, inspired by the old medieval orders of chivalry, but not quite the same. Clearly, Hungary was a constitutional Monarchy, not a medieval state, and secondly, although the title 'vitéz' granted land, it could not grant nobility, because only a king could do that. The Regent had no powers to grant nobility, nor did he try. The title was officially recorded, for instance in Birth, Marriage or Death Certificates, and was usually written as 'v.' in front of the surname. Note, in Hungarian, the surname precedes the Christian name.

The Order combined conservative elements as well as ones reflecting the changing society. For example, there was an Officers' Section and one for Other Ranks, reflecting old-fashioned ideas, but the title 'vitéz', as well as the badge were the same for generals and privates. The members had to prove they were upstanding citizens, and were expected to live an exemplary life. One aim of the Order was to provide an example of decency to society as a whole. The title could be inherited, in this way also following the traditions of knightly orders. Tying the Order in with Hungary's medieval heritage, the ceremony where the Order was awarded included a knighting with a sword specially made for the purpose. This sword is now housed in the Military History Institute and Museum in Budapest.

The Head of State became the leader of the Order, but was not styled "Grand Master" in the traditional way of chivalric orders, but instead, an old Hungarian title was used, namely 'Főkapitány', literally 'Chief Captain', but better translated 'Captain General'.

Following the prevention of the return of Hungary's last king, Karl IV of Hapsburg-Lorraine in the

following year, due to the direct threat of war by the 'Little Entente' (Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Yugoslavia) and an indication of support of their move by Britain and France, the Regent was forced to prevent his king to from taking his legitimate throne. Due to further Entente pressure, the Hungarian Parliament was forced to dethrone the House of Hapsburg.

In the period 1921-1931, Hungary made important strides to rebuild its economy, escape from diplomatic isolation imposed by the Entente (it finally was allowed to join the League of Nations). In this period, the membership of the Order of Bravery reached almost 13,000 and the Order had been established as a respected part of society, with one member given a place in the Upper House of Parliament.

In the years leading up to WWII, the Order continued its growth, and as certain territories were returned to Hungary, even more members were accepted, even after land for land grants ran out. By 1941 the number of 'vitéz' members was over 33,000.

During the Second World War, many of Hungary's bravest soldiers came from 'vitéz' families, such as the top-scoring fighter pilot, Dezső vitéz Szentgyörgyi.

The armistice, signed between the USSR and Interim National Government in Moscow on January 20th, 1945, stated that no "fascist" organisation could be re-formed once Hungary was "liberated". This list included the National Council of Vitéz, which, being the administrative body of the Order, effectively meant that the Order could not be resurrected in Hungary while under Soviet rule. This was according to the Prime Ministerial Edict no. 1945/529.

It should be noted that similar orders were issued disbanding the Boy Scouts, as well as various Catholic Orders.

The banning of the Order was strengthened by the contents of the Paris Peace Treaty in 1947 and was reinforced by the Hungarian Parliamentary Law of 1947/18. Due to the fact that members of the Vitézi Rend had been brave soldiers; thus making them 'untrustworthy' in the eyes of the Communists; they were religious, another 'untrustworthy' feature; and they were patriotic - rather than loyal to Moscow - vitéz members were thrice 'Class Enemies'. Not only was the Order of Bravery banned, but its members were persecuted, often without trial, or later, through kangaroo courts.

It is not known exactly how many members were murdered or deported, but if one looks at the fact that after the fighting in Hungary stopped, at least 600 000 people were deported, of whom about half failed to return, then the reader can get an idea of what the members of the Vitéz had to look forward to.

While this was happening in Hungary, many members had escaped and in some cases, been deported, to the West. At first, it was hoped by many Hungarian veterans that the Soviets would leave Hungary, but by the late 1940s, with the coming of the Cold War, it was realised that Communism was in Hungary to stay.

At first, Veterans' Groups, including groups of Vitéz veterans, were formed, but in 1953, General Hugó vitéz Sónyi began work on re-organising the Order in exile. On July 18th, 1956, the Captain General, Admiral Horthy, at the time in exile in Portugal, named him Vice Captain General, but he became ill soon after and died, while the Captain General, Horthy, died in early 1957.

A general meeting was called off Vitéz members, which elected a Council of Vitéz in 1959 and named the first-ranked member, Field Marshall of the Royal Hungarian Army, His Royal Highness József Ágost vitéz of Hapsburg-Lorraine. In 1962, HRH vitéz József succeeded in having the Order accepted by the International Commission for Orders of Chivalry, which was brought into being by the Genealogical and Heraldic Congress, but later became an independent scholarly body.

After the Prince's death in 1962, the V.R. Council elected General Ferenc vitéz Farkas, who led the Order until his retirement at the age of 85 in 1977. He was followed by Prince József Ágost's grandson, HRH Prince vitéz József Árpád, who is still the Captain General of the Vitéz Order.

When the Commission published its findings, it sent them to all UNESCO member states, and the V.R. remains on the ICOC's Register as a "Knightly Body".

The Vitézi Rend continued to exist, and based on the legitimate succession of people to the title, got new members, as well as recognising the merits of those who had fought against foreign invasion and occupation in 1956. It gained respect among Hungarian émigré communities all over the world, including Canada, the USA, South America, Europe, Australia and New Zealand.

After the Soviet Union gave up Hungary and the country could return to a multiparty system, the law banning the Order was not changed, and as a result, the headquarters could not return to Hungary. Nevertheless, a Section of the Order was allowed to operate, but not as an Order, in Hungary in 1992. Later, due to the confused legal situation in Hungary, a number of splits appeared in the Order, with various claimants to the title "Captain General." It is important to note that until the return to Hungary, there were no splits, and the order functioned normally and also that every other formerly banned organisation, such as the Boy Scouts, has been put through the same treatment by ex-Communist agent-provocateurs.

Despite this, the Order of Vitéz continues its work of rewarding heroism in many fields, as well as doing charity work and attempting to help the much-battered Hungarian people regain their sense of self worth.