



Remarks
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Excerpts from Frank Koszorus, Jr.'s Opening Remarks at the American Hungarian Federation's Gala Evening to Commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, Cosmos Club, October 20, 2006

Ladies and Gentlemen, Distinguished Guests, Dear Friends,

We are gathered here tonight to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956. Over the last few months, numerous commemorative events have been scheduled and there are still more planned for next week.

Our purpose tonight is not to repeat what you may have already heard. We're not here to analyze what went right or what may have gone wrong with the Revolution; we're not here to speculate how different decisions by the extraordinarily brave participants of the Revolution could have changed the course of history; and we're certainly not here to suggest that perhaps Hungarians should have been content with Titoism or Goulash Communism in 1956.

No! Our sole purpose is to honor those heroes of 1956 – the students, the intellectuals, the workers and the cross-section of the entire nation – who knew what they wanted fifty years ago and were prepared to realize their dreams at great personal sacrifice. And what did they want, what did they fight and die for? Nothing that had not been promised them – freedom, a multi-party democracy and independence from the Soviet Union -- Ruzski Haza.

But alas, that was too much for the world fifty years ago.

Were the sacrifices of that incredibly brave generation in vain? Of course not! But in order to strengthen the democracy and safeguard the freedoms the 1956 heroes fought and died for, today's generation – the beneficiary of these freedoms -- must be vigilant and guard against even the slightest curtailment of democracy or infringement of fundamental human rights. The heroes of 1956 deserve nothing less.