



HUNGARIAN
HELSINKI
COMMITTEE

Smear Campaign Against a Hungarian Judge, the Spokesperson of the National Judicial Council (NJC)

14/08/2022–20/08/2022

1. The article in The Guardian that triggered the smear campaign

On 14th August 2022, *The Guardian* published an article on the Hungarian judiciary with the contribution of Judge Csaba Vasvári, the spokesperson of the National Judicial Council (NJC).

Link: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/aug/14/viktor-orban-grip-on-hungary-courts-threatens-rule-of-law-warns-judge>

In the article, it was reported that the wife of the Kúria President, András Zs. Varga was appointed to a judicial leadership position, even though she was supported by a much smaller proportion by her peer judges of the concerned court college, than the other applicant. Judge Vasvári, member of the NJC did not comment on this particular appointment in the article, but spoke about other aspects of judicial independence as quoted:

“Csaba Vasvári, a senior judge at the Budapest Metropolitan Court, told the Observer that he and his colleagues on the bench ‘have been witnessing external and internal influence attempts’ for several years. [...] Vasvári said political overreach came from all sides of the political spectrum. [...] One ‘clear internal influence attempt’ Vasvári cited was a discussion among senior court officials and a prime suspect in a corruption case about firing a judge or making life ‘uncomfortable’ for them at work, according to redacted secret documents leaked to Hungarian media. The case centers on Fidesz MP and deputy justice minister Pál Völner, who has been accused of accepting bribes – charges he denies. Völner was not involved in discussions to fire the judge. In an unusual move, a senior judge appointed by the Fidesz-controlled parliament decided a judicial investigation into the case would remain secret, not only to the public but even to fellow judges Vasvári also lamented the lack of transparency in judicial appointments made by the president of the National Office for the Judiciary (NJO). [...] ‘We just want a transparent and meritocratic system,’ Vasvári said.”

2. Reactions of the Hungarian pro-government propaganda media

On 15th August 2022, the online news site of the Hungarian daily newspaper *Magyar Nemzet*, (*Magyar Nemzet Online*) published an anonymous article, with the title **“Csaba Vasvári has been washed clean on Wikipedia – the uncomfortable parts relating to 2006 have disappeared from the article describing the judge’s professional history”**. Link: <https://magyarnemzet.hu/belfold/2022/08/tisz-tara-mostak-vasvari-csabat-a-wikipedian>

*“Judge Csaba Vasvári attacked the government again, this time in the columns of the liberal British newspaper, *The Guardian*. However, a part of the text that would help put Csaba Vasvári’s years of anti-government agitation into context has disappeared from the lawyer’s Wikipedia page: his role in the 2006 Gyurcsány terror.*

*Csaba Vasvári, the team leader judge of the Central District Court of Pest and the spokesman of the National Judicial Council, spoke to the liberal British newspaper *The Guardian*, in its columns he expressed his opinion that ‘the government interferes in the work of the courts’. The lawyer’s words ripped through the left-wing media - as usually.*

In such cases, it is common for those who do not know the name of the interviewee to search for information on who the speaker is and what his professional background is. Wikipedia pages are typically among the first hits. Vasvári has been fighting the government and the judiciary for years now. His professional and political stances are notable, primarily his opinions in cases arising from the confrontation between the National Judicial Council and the National Office for the Judiciary - according to the judge’s Wikipedia page, from which, however, a part of the entry about Vasvári’s role in 2006 disappeared.

Namely the following : ‘After the riots in Budapest in the fall of 2006 - especially the siege of the headquarters of MTV [the Hungarian national public television] - hundreds of innocent people were arbitrarily placed in pretrial detention, based solely on police reports. Most of the suspects were picked up randomly from the street or dragged away from bars by the police, only to be accused later of assaulting the police. Vasvári’s decisions were annulled without exception due to being unfounded by the Budapest Regional Court of Appeal acting at the second instance. Later, the criminal proceedings against the arrested citizens were later largely dropped. Vasvári, as a trial judge, also acted in several of these cases, and in many ones, despite the lack of evidence, innocent young men with no criminal record were sentenced to prison. In an egregious case, the 23-year-old Dániel Dukán, who had been brutally beaten by the police, was sentenced to two and a half years in prison for the crime of acting violence against an official, even though the prosecutor’s office only asked for a one-year prison sentence for disorderly conduct. The verdict was overturned at the second instance, and the Budapest Regional Court of Appeal found that Vasvári had acted biased. The persons convicted by him were rehabilitated on the basis of the Nullity Act that entered into force in 2013. Because of his work, the Kuruc.info online news portal presented Vasvári as a ‘blood judge’ at the time.’

While there is a factual error in the section deleted from Csaba Vasvári’s Wikipedia page, for example Dániel Dukán stated that he was also convicted at the second instance, it can hardly be disputed that the judge’s activities in 2006 at least call into question his current role as the champion of justice.

Appearing in the liberal media in recent years, Vasvári has not had to answer any unpleasant questions regarding his decisions in 2006, rather, these matters have deliberately been kept silent.

From all this, it may seem that Vasvári is only concerned about the rule of law when Hungary has a right-wing government. The phenomenon may be familiar to many from the last decade.”

On the same day, another Hungarian online news portal **Origo** repeated the main content of this article entitled **“The judge of the Gyurcsány terror is trying to attack Hungary”**. Link: <https://www.origo.hu/itthon/20220815-tisztara-mostak-vasvari-csabat-a-wikipedian.html>

“Judge Csaba Vasvári attacked the government again, this time in the columns of the liberal British newspaper The Guardian. However, a part of the text that would help put Csaba Vasvári’s years of anti-government agitation into context has disappeared from the lawyer’s Wikipedia page: his involvement in the Gyurcsány terror in 2006, Magyar Nemzet reports.

Csaba Vasvári, the team leader of the Central District Court of Pest and the spokesperson of the National Judicial Council, spoke to the liberal British newspaper The Guardian, in its columns he expressed his opinion that the ‘government interferes in the work of the courts’, reports Magyar Nemzet. The lawyer’s words were of course echoed by the Hungarian left-wing media. In the meantime, it was revealed that all parts of Vasvári’s Wikipedia article about his role following the 2006 Gyurcsány terror had disappeared. The [disappeared] parts recalled among other things, that ‘after the riots in Budapest in the fall of 2006 - especially after the siege of the MTV headquarters - hundreds of innocent people were arbitrarily placed in pretrial detention, based solely on police allegations. The majority of the suspects were caught by the police off the street or dragged away from bars being accused of assaulting the police. The vast majority of those who had been remanded in custody by Vasvári were released during the second instance proceedings, most of them were not prosecuted at all in the end. His best-known and most scandalous case was the trial of a 23-year-old university student, Dániel Dukán, for whom the prosecution only asked for a suspended prison sentence, but Vasvári, as the trial judge, sentenced him to two and a half years in prison, without any concrete evidence, based only on the statements of the policemen who beat Dukán. In the end, the Budapest Regional Court of Appeal, acting at the second instance, reduced the sentence to a suspended one. Appearing in the liberal media in recent years, Vasvári has not had to answer any unpleasant questions regarding his decisions in 2006, these matters have been rather deliberately kept quiet, Magyar Nemzet reports.”

3. Statement of the National Judicial Council (NJC)

The next day, on **16th August 2022**, the **National Judicial Council** of Hungary (NJC) issued a statement. Link: <https://orszagosbiroitanacs.hu/?mdocs-file=2261>

“The National Judicial Council categorically rejects all statements published in the Hungarian press insinuating that any Hungarian judge in office had been a judge of a ‘terror regime’ or is connected to any actor of the political spectrum.

In a modern European state governed by the rule of law it is unacceptable to discredit the person of a judge for propaganda purposes.

No criticism or view expressed by a judge on the court administration system can be regarded as an attack against the country as judges also have the right to the freedom of speech.

In a statement released on 2 February 2022 the National Judicial Council already drew attention to the increasing pressure on the Hungarian judiciary in recent years.”

4. Continuing smear campaign in the propaganda media

On 17 August 2022, **Magyar Nemzet Online** responded to the NJC’s statement in an article with the title: **“The National Judicial Council took a complaining, activist judge under its protection”**.

Link: <https://magyarnemzet.hu/belfold/2022/08/panaszko-do-aktivista-birot-vett-vedelmebe-az-orszag-os-biroi-tanacs>

“Recently, the role of the weak parliamentary opposition has been regularly taken over in Hungary by public law institutions and officials who are otherwise not called upon to do so, aiming to undermine the credibility of Hungary and to openly cause economical and political disadvantage to Hungary and Hungarians. Connected to the question whether certain actors of the justice system may be involved in this regard, they have increasingly become the subject of public discourse and social debates, writes the Tűzfalcsoport blog on Blogstar in its latest article. In a recent statement, the National Judicial Council most emphatically rejects all claims made in the Hungarian press that any Hungarian judge in office has ever been a judge of any kind of a ‘terror regime’ or could be linked to any political figure. The background of the case is that Csaba Vasvári, the team leader at the Central District Court of Pest, the spokesperson of the National Judicial Council, made a statement in the liberal British newspaper The Guardian, arguing that the ‘government interferes in the work of the courts’. In recent years appearing in the liberal media, Vasvári has not had to answer any unpleasant questions regarding his decisions in 2006, since these matters have been rather deliberately kept quiet. In the light of these, it may seem that Vasvári is only concerned about the rule of law when Hungary has a right-wing government. The phenomenon may be familiar to many from the past decade, as the Mediaworks News Center report highlights.

However, the outburst from a representative of the judicial body is not necessarily considered unusual. Previously, it caused a serious clash in professional circles that the NJC launched a political attack against Tünde Handó, the former president of the National Office for the Judiciary, and Péter Darák, the former president of the Kúria, who had also been involved in the codification work under the Medgyessy government, sympathizing with the NJC - provided the venue for the rebellious judicial body. By the way, according to our sources, the fact that they could count on the support of Darák may have played a role in the fact that the NJC took more and more fierce steps over time, as Tűzfalcsoport writes in its article.

The article recalls that the name of the judge at the center of the current NJC press statement may not be unknown to the law-abiding public. Csaba Vasvári, who appeared on ATV’s show ‘Friderikusz Most’ on 12 October 2006 saying that ‘you have to be able to bear the epithet of blood judge’, seems to have become more sensitive since then, having a harder time bearing criticism. At least this is evident from the fact that, according to 444.hu, the spokesperson of the National Judicial Council (!) complained to the British Observer that he and his colleagues had been the alleged victims of ‘external and internal influence attempts’ (!) for years.

According to the court sources of the Tűzfalcsoport, the ominous statement does not contain substantive specifics, but it is excellent for creating atmosphere. Vasvári, who served at the Central District Court of Pest, is not known for his calm temper. According to some reports, he sued the former President of the NOJ in connection with an unsuccessful application for a position at the Budapest Regional Court of Appeal, and later the Metropolitan Court for HUF 135 (!) because, according to his claim, it had been transferred to him late.

However, what is even more exciting is that Vasvári does not always know the boundaries even during his professional work. Recently, in connection with one of his decisions, the Kúria stated that the court shall adjust the prison sentence imposed in a judgment issued by another EU Member State court in accordance with the upper limit of the sentence that can be determined based on the Hungarian law, if the term of the prison sentence imposed in the Member State judgment is longer than what could be determined based on the Hungarian law. Judge Vasvári suddenly decided to enforce the Anglo-Saxon legal approach in one of his decisions, exceeding the upper limit established in the relevant section of the Hungarian Criminal Code. Against Vasvári's decision, the Chief Prosecutor submitted a motion for legal remedy in the interests of legality, claiming the court's decision violated the law, since the prison term imposed on the defendant by the Member State court was a lighter punishment. The highest judicial forum found that Vasvári's decision regarding the cumulative punishment imposed on the accused was seriously contrary to law.

According to Tűzfalcsoport, it should be noted that in the past, the National Judicial Council was ready to assist to undermine the authority of the Polish government, which joined the anti-Warsaw axis of the European Union at a critical moment with its decision last week.

The judicial body discussed the initiative of the European Network of Councils for the Judiciary (ENCJ) behind closed doors in one of the rooms of the Kúria and, according to our information at the time, supported the proposal to suspend the ENCJ membership of the Polish Judicial Council (KRS) with a majority decision of 6:4.

The Fundamental Law and Act CLXI of 2011 on the Organization and Administration of Courts have established the NJC with the task of supervising the National Office for the Judiciary, which performs the central administration of the courts. However, this professional control cannot in any way mean political positioning since the basic function of the NJC is to control the work of the NOJ.

The article of the Tűzfalcsoport was published at:

<https://tuzfalcsoport.blogstar.hu/2022/08/17/panaszkode-aktivista-birot-vett-vedelmebe-az-orszagos-biroi-tanacs/118387/>

On the same day Magyar Nemzet Online released another anonymous editorial article about Judge Vasvári with the title **“Csaba Vasvári's 2006 role is back on his Wikipedia page – for example, the judge sentenced a man beaten by the police for violence against an official”**. Link: <https://magyar-nemzet.hu/belfold/2022/08/vasvari-csaba-wikipedia-oldalara-visszakerult-2006-os-szerepvallalasa>

“Following a previous article by the Mediaworks News Center, the information according to which he had sentenced innocent people to prison terms during the 2006 Gyurcsány terror, re-appeared on the Wikipedia page of judge Csaba Vasvári. Meanwhile, the National Judicial Council condemned our related article, stating that we attacked the judge in person, while we were just presenting facts about his professional work and about his work history.

The information about the darkest period of the judge's career, the orders and judgments being delivered during the 2006 Gyurcsány terror, has reappeared on the judge Csaba Vasvári's Wikipedia page. This information had disappeared from the website in the fall of 2021 following an editorial correction. It is known: on Monday, the Mediaworks News Center reported the disappearance of data in connection with Vasvári's sharp criticism of the President of the Kúria and the Hungarian court system in a foreign newspaper. In connection with such statements, the Wikipedia page of a public figure is relevant, since many people do not know the interviewee, and Wikipedia results are among the first to appear during Internet searches.

For a long time, on the Wikipedia page of judge Csaba Vasvári, there was a text which, albeit with inaccuracies, indicated that he had issued severe sentences and pretrial detention orders during the brutal police violence in 2006, which leading many peaceful protesters or ordinary passers-by to become a victim of political revenge.

The text just published on Wikipedia contains factual statements: instead of the one- year prison sentence requested by the prosecutor's office, Vasvári sentenced Dániel Dukán, for example, to two and a half years, who had been convicted on the basis of contradictory police statements.

Before the court the accused person argued for example that the police had beaten him, but the witnesses summoned by the authorities told to Vasvári that Dukán repeatedly ran into vehicles on his own, that's how he got his injuries. Hewas also convicted at the second instance and was rehabilitated only in 2013.

Our article about the information that disappeared from the Wikipedia page made waves, and the National Judicial Council (NJC), whose spokesman is, by the way, Csaba Vasvári himself, condemned our editorial in a statement. As the NJC wrote, 'in a modern European state governed by the rule of law it is unacceptable to discredit the person of a judge for propaganda purposes'. The announcement was also enthusiastically cited by the liberal press.

However, the NJC claimed untruths, because in one of our previous articles linked at the beginning of the concerned one - as anyone can read and interpret for themselves - we did not attack the person of Csaba Vasvári at all. On the contrary, we made it clear that as a judge, he acted in such a way that his decisions could give the impression that he was part of the Gyurcsány terror machinery in 2006. Bythis, we criticized his professional activities, not his person."

On **19th August 2022**, another article appeared on **Magyar Nemzet Online**, this time signed by a well-known columnist, Tamás Pihál. The title of the article is: **"A shameless blood judge – Csaba Vasvári sent innocent people into prison in the autumn of 2006, and now he is cursing in a foreign newspaper."** Link: <https://magyarnemzet.hu/velemeney/2022/08/egy-arcatlan-verbiro>

"A few days ago, the infamous Hungarian blood judge Csaba Vasvári, who helped the conspicuous Gyurcsány regime by imprisoning innocent young people in the fall of 2006, trampled on his own country in the liberal British press. If he had an iota of conscience, he would have buried himself with such a dark past a long time ago, perhaps he would have gone into hiding. But it seems he doesn't have one. Csaba Vasvári, the team leader at the Central District Court of Pest, who is also the spokesperson for the left-liberal bootless club called the National Judicial Council, informed the readers of the Guardian Observer that the Orbán government 'interferes in the work of the courts'. As quoted, he and his fellow judges have been witnessing an 'external and internal influence attempts' for years, he said. The document tried to underline all this with the Völner case. But this example is weak for several reasons. On the one hand, how can you refer to an ongoing procedure, where not even a first instance judgment has been delivered, let alone a legally binding one? Presumption of innocence - does it ring a bell? On the other hand, after the case broke out, Pál Völner resigned immediately, and the government did not even think of excusing him. (Not like the left wing's current sycophants, from Katalin Cseh to Csaba Czeplédy.) Third: according to the suspicion, the former president of the Hungarian Chamber of Bailiffs bribed Völner - so a player in the court world dabbled in politics, asked for its help, and not the other way around. The government removed Völner because it does not tolerate even the suspicion of abuse - but nobody fired Vasvári for the fact that he sentenced innocent people in the fall of 2006. That's all about that.

In the article, Csaba Vasvári also criticized the National Office for the Judiciary (which is supposed to be controlled by Vasvári's NJC) because, in his opinion, its president does not make judicial appointments transparent. Then a serious ex-judge, who asked to remain anonymous, was also interviewed by the Guardian, according to whom politically sensitive cases are discussed in the 'Supreme Court' (there is no such thing, there is Kúria, it has been in place since 2011, never mind) 'a loyal body of judges, which makes decisions in favor of the government'. Indeed? Doesn't he say that?! Just as in 2018, the Kúria ruled perfectly in favor of the government, when a parliamentary mandate was stolen from Fidesz through a misinterpretation of the law in the case of mail-in ballots - this was later con-

firmed by the Constitutional Court. What would have happened, if the Kúria was not so 'pro-Fidesz'? Do they take two? Anyway, this was one of the most serious legal frauds of the last decades, but interestingly, Brussels, The Guardian and Vasvári did not budge at the time. Of course not, since Fidesz was the victim.

Then the key sentences of the document is following (they shoved a microphone under Vasvári's nose so that he would pave the way for them): the Orbán government 'constantly exceeds' its powers in order to influence the courts, and this further increases concerns about the rule of law in Hungary. 'Concerns about political interference in the Hungarian legal system were raised when Budapest tried to free up billions of euros in EU funds, which are currently frozen due to concerns about the rule of law, including the independence of the judiciary.'

EU funds - that's the point! In recent weeks, anti-Hungarian pamphlets have been published even more diligently in the mainstream liberal sewers in order to create and maintain the appearance in the virtual spaces of the West: there are problems with the rebellious Hungarians, the dictatorship is rumbling here. Csaba Vasvári - despite being a judge - is involved in this deceitfully planned, anti-Hungarian campaign of lies, the purpose of which is to blackmail our country and steal the EU funds that are due to us by law. The rule of law, the issues in the judicial system (which are caused by the Vasvári types of people anyway) and all the rest: just dumb nonsense, political slogans, a cover story to break the resistance of Hungary, which is too sovereign and wishes to stay out of the imperial madness.

Anyway, can you imagine an English judge spitting on the justice system of his country in a Hungarian newspaper? Of course not. Only left-liberals in Hungary are capable of such vileness. Then they faint that the majority considers them traitors and won't let them near power.

Csaba Vasvári has been a favorite of domestic and international left-liberals for quite some time, as he scolds the government without having the need for a teleprompter and repeats the simplest left-liberal mantras by heart. Previously, under strange circumstances, he acquitted Ibolya Dávid and Károly Herényi in the UD Zrt. surveillance case. In his oral justification, he attacked the Prosecutor's Office and 'certain rivals' of the accused politicians and 'those collaborating with them'. A few years ago, he sued the NOJ, the Metropolitan Court and the Budapest Regional Court of Appeal, because they did not appoint him as a judge at the latter. And he was the one who, after the police terror in the fall of 2006, sentenced Dániel Dukán, a university student, to two and a half years in prison for armed violence against an official, despite the fact that the prosecution only asked for a one-year suspended sentence for disorderly conduct. Vasvári was not interested in the fact that Dukán had injuries that were obviously caused by the brutal police action.

According to the testimony of the policemen, Dukán was injured because he ran into parked cars three times (!) while running away. But Vasvári considered the lies of the Gergényi hussars to be realistic and believable, and imposed a cruel punishment on the university student. As in the autumn of 2006, besides Vasvári, several judges of the Central District Court of Pest sent protesters behind bars on a conveyor belt, based solely on false police statements. But at that time, Brussels was not worried about the Hungarian rule of law and justice system. And that Vasvári, who was a cog in the terror machine for sixteen years, can now smear Hungary in a foreign newspaper. It blows the mind. (Dukán's conviction was eventually annulled by the Nullity Law passed under the Orbán government. The legislation itself was largely inspired by Dukán's ordeal.)

It is more than interesting that, in the meantime, the sentences referring to the judge's checkered professional history were deleted from Csaba Vasvári's Wikipedia page by diligent hands, Mediaworks News Center pointed out. Precisely those that reveal that he took an active part in imprisoning those who were arrested randomly, and that because of his work he is called a 'blood judge'. And you know what happened after we wrote that? In a statement, the NJC - for which Vasvári is the spokesperson - protested against the 'propagandistic' attack on the person of a judge, which they believe has no place in a state governed by the rule of law.

I think that in a state governed by the rule of law there is no place for sending beaten university students to prison without evidence. There is no place for Hungarian judges to smear their country in foreign newspapers. As long as these sickly biased, Bolshevik-minded figures are not removed from our courts, there will not be justice, but either serving law.”

On 20th August 2022 Zsolt Bayer, an influential newspaper editorialist and television talk-show host, founding member of Fidesz, published a short post on his own blogsite entitled ***Who belongs to which place?***

Link: <https://badog.blogstar.hu/2022/08/20/kinek-hol-van-helye-/118428/>

“Then I ‘propagandistically’ declare: Csaba Vasvári is a bastard who has nothing to do on the judge’s bench. Sweep him out of there!”

The blog post has been re-posted by several Hungarian online newspapers.