

Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's response to the debate in the plenary session of the European Parliament

11 September 2018, Strasbourg

For those who have felt the lack of concrete facts, prior to this session we sent a 108-page report to every MEP. Please read it.

I think I have solved the puzzle of Mr. Verhofstadt's feelings about us – it's a pity he isn't here. It seems to me, Mr. Verhofstadt, that you hate us conservative Christians more than you love Europe. And to those Hungarians who will be voting against their own homeland, all I can say is that the trouble with you is that you hate me more than you love your country.

As far as corruption goes, I have the following to say to my fellow representative Mr. Bullmann. All tenders in Hungary are public, and any European company is free to apply. In Hungary the ratio of tenders with a single applicant is 26 per cent, compared to the EU average of 24 per cent; we still need to improve things a little in this respect. The ratio of investigations launched in Hungary based on notices from the Commission is 47 per cent, compared to an EU average of 42 per cent – meaning that we are doing slightly better in this respect. Incidentally, we have adopted the Commission proposal including zero tolerance – mentioned by Mr. Timmermans – which we received in June.

With regard to the CEU, Mr. Weber is mistaken. If he looks at Bavaria's regulations, he will see that they are stricter than Hungary's. You are using a double standard – regardless of the fact that we belong to the same party family. Furthermore, I would ask you to take a look at the CEU website. Before coming here today I did just that, and I read the following thoughts there, on that website, which I will now quote. This is what you can read there. "CEU will continue its operations under all circumstances," the university writes of itself. "Currently enrolled students and those enrolling in 2018 will be able to finish their studies in Budapest", the university writes of itself. "All of the university's accreditations remain unchanged", the university writes of itself. And it also states the following: "Budapest is a welcoming city, we await you; come and have a look around."

As far as extremist parties go, the fight against migration is not a party political issue. I am prepared to cooperate with all governments that want to defend the EU's borders, and I raise my hat to the brave Italians.

With regard to anti-Semitism, I would like to make it clear that in Central Europe anti-Semitism is decreasing, but in Western Europe it is increasing. Indeed, the centre of modern anti-Semitism is Brussels, because it is from there that anti-Israeli organisations are being supported. Please focus on this in future. And it was not we who laid wreaths at the statue of Marx, the father of modern anti-market anti-Semitism.

And finally, Ladies and Gentlemen, I am a member of the European People's Party. I can see that we are in trouble, and that we are weak. We, the members of the European People's Party, are not strong enough to follow our own path. To me it seems that we are weak, and that we, the members of the European People's Party, are dancing to the tune of the socialists and the liberals. In the future I would like us to be able to change this. As for those who claim that the report is not aimed at Hungary, I suggest you read its title: it isn't the Hungarian government they want to denounce, but Hungary.

Thank you for your attention.