

"Torn from the Flag" - Hungary-based documentary premieres in LA

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Washington, (MTI) - "Torn from the Flag," a 97-minute documentary directed by Hungarians and telling the story of 20th century Soviet domination of eastern Europe premiered at the American Film Institute in Los Angeles to a packed house, the Hungarian-American Coalition reported from Washington on Friday.

The choice of title focuses on Hungary's failed revolution of 1956, when the insignia of communism were torn out of the middle of Hungary's national flag, leaving it with a hole in the centre that became the symbol of the revolution. But, while the film centres on the 1956 revolution it attempts to tell the story of the tens of millions of people who lived under Soviet domination from 1945 to 1989.

Director - Producer Klaudia Kovacs said her film presented the history of the dictatorship from World War II on through its collapse, through the eyes of the people living under it, including families of victims, and even a member of the security force that did the bidding of the forces of oppression. It includes interviews with author and poet Arpad Goncz, sentenced to life-imprisonment for his role in the revolution, who became president of free Hungary from 1990 to 2000, former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, and Otto von Hapsburg, one-time crown prince of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, long-time advocate for a unified Europe and former president of the Pan-European Union.

The images include street shoots taken as events unfolded, including the work of Oscar-winning cinematographer Vilmos Zsigmond.

Helen Szablya, director of the Hungarian-American Coalition said, "Klaudia Kovacs has achieved the impossible - she has presented an objective picture of the 1956 revolution," and made it an exciting film, too.