

Hungarian Stamps 2010

20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ELECTION OF JÓZSEF ANTALL AS PRIME MINISTER

Magyar Posta is overprinting 10,000 copies of the stamp block "In memory of the Republic of Hungary's first freely elected prime minister", which appeared in 1993, to mark the 20th anniversary of József Antall being elected prime minister.

József Antall (Pestújhely, 8 April 1932 – Budapest, 12 December 1993), Hungary's first prime minister after the change of political system, was a teacher, librarian, museologist and politician.

He was born into an old family of the lower nobility. Influential factors of his childhood and youth were a commitment to democracy, national sentiment, and Christian morals and social outlook. He matriculated from the Piarist Secondary School in Budapest in 1950. At the age of 16 he had already decided to pursue a political career.

After leaving school, he enrolled at the Faculty of Humanities of Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest, and wrote his graduation thesis on the policy of József Eötvös. After obtaining a degree in librarianship and museology, he worked at the Hungarian National Archives and the Scientific Institute of Education. In 1955 he began teaching at the Eötvös József Secondary School, where he led the revolutionary committee in October 1956. He was active in the reorganisation of the Smallholders Party and in establishing the Christian Youth Association. After the revolution he was taken into custody a number of times. In 1959 he was permanently banned from teaching due to his political behaviour. In 1963 he wrote eighty medical biographies for the Hungarian Dictionary of Biography. It was then that he realised the importance of the history of medicine and that it was an academic area that had only been partly explored. He worked at the Semmelweis Museum, Library and Archives for the History of Medicine opened in 1964 first as a researcher, then as deputy director, and from 1974 as director. He published several hundred works, and proofread and edited countless others. In 1986 he became vice-president of the International Society for the History of Medicine.

He came to be involved in the work of the Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF) at the invitation of Sándor Csoóri. The Opposition Round Table was set up on 22 March 1989 and the MDF, by then functioning as a political party, delegated him to the talks. He worked on the I/1 committee for the amendment of the constitution and made numerous proposals, while his ability to reach compromises and his professional competence brought him increasing recognition. On 21 October 1989 he was elected president of the MDF by a landslide majority and became the party's prime minister designate. As the winners of the 1990 elections, the MDF formed a government on 23 May 1990. József Antall, who was already struggling with an incurable illness, formed a coalition with the Smallholders' and Christian Democrat Parties, and with his government created the political, economic and foreign policy conditions for transition. His illness, however, overcame his body before the end of his term of office, and he died on 12 December 1993. He was succeeded by Péter Boross as prime minister. (Source: hu.wikipedia.org)

In honour of the first prime minister of the Third Republic of Hungary, Magyar Posta issued a regular postage stamp and a commemorative block in record time on 30 December 1993. 20,000 copies of the stamp block "In memory of the Republic of Hungary's first freely elected prime minister" have been overprinted to mark the 20th anniversary of his election. The new face value of the block - and its selling price - is HUF 200. The new face value and the inscription on the left of the frame of the block "20th anniversary of the election of József Antall as prime minister, 23 May 2010" are deep red. The overprinting was done by the state printers Állami Nyomda. The main motif of the special postmark for the overprinted stamp block released on 18 June 2010 is a portrait of József Antall.



More information: belyeg@posta.hu
Orders: philately@posta.hu

www.posta.hu

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