



Vatnik Soup @P_Kallioniemi

Jan 2, 2026 · 21 tweets · [P_Kallioniemi/status/2007101429295759662](#)

In today's Vatnik Soup, we introduce our first Czech vatnik, Tomio Okamura. He's best known for building a political career on xenophobia while being of mixed origins himself, and for pushing Kremlin narratives in Czechia, a country otherwise very supportive of Ukraine.

1/19



Okamura was born in Tokyo in 1972 to a Japanese-Korean father and Czech mother. He spent part of his childhood in Japan, and part in a Czechoslovak foster home where he was heavily bullied. His mixed origins made it difficult for him to fit in either country.

2/19



DISINFORMATION

Meet the Czech-Japanese businessman turned anti-EU rightwing political star

Tomio Okamura, bullied when young for looking 'foreign,' has combined fake news and populism to brand himself the leader of anti-EU Czech nationalism

BY FILIP BROKEŠ 7 MAY 2019  DISPATCH

The luminaries of Europe's rightwing movements congregated on a recent spring day in Prague's historic center to preach to their army of devotees about what they see as wrong with the continent. No to migrants. No to multiculturalism. Yes to populism.

Taking center stage alongside Marine Le Pen from France and Geert Wilders from the Netherlands was one of the more unlikely rising stars within the anti-European Union, nationalistic movements taking root in Europe: a Tokyo-born Czech businessman whose savvy use of information warfare has built his four-year-old party into a new political juggernaut.

Born to a Czech mother and a Japanese father, Okamura says he was bullied as a child both in Japan and his adopted European home because he looked different. Yet after building a successful business built on globalization, he now brands himself the posterboy for discontented Czech voters who subscribe to his message centered on illiberalism and xenophobia.

“Europeans are literally fighting for survival,” Tomio Okamura told journalists after the rally. “There is not just the threat of migration from Muslim countries but also the growing pressure from the EU to denationalize Europe and to create a single, multi-cultural superstate.”

Okamura's Freedom and Direct Democracy party, the fourth-largest bloc in the Czech legislature, is vying to win its first seat in the European Union Parliament elections later in May, a victory that would underscore the swift rise of populism in the Czech Republic and similar movements across the continent that share a goal of tearing the EU apart.

Critics say Okamura and his party's success over a few short years has been supercharged by a carefully crafted media strategy of marginalizing the country's mainstream media in favor of his own social media channels that amplify fake news, including a strong anti-Brussels message.

Nonetheless, after working odd jobs in Japan, Tomio returned to Czechia and became a successful entrepreneur in Japanese tourism. He then rose in politics: Senator in 2012, MP in 2013, he founded two parties: Dawn of Direct Democracy and SPD (Freedom and Direct Democracy).



Despite having been treated as such himself, his political career is built mainly on hostility towards “outsiders”, foreigners, minorities. SPD brands itself as “direct democracy,” but its core positions are far-right, nationalist, anti-EU, anti-NATO, and anti-immigration.

4/19

Freedom and Direct Democracy (SPD)

09/03/2025



Photo: Zuzana Jarolímková, iROZHLAS.cz

Far-right party, nationalist, Eurosceptic, conservative. Currently in opposition, for the 2025 elections the party has formed an informal bloc with smaller parties PRO, Trikolora, and Svobodní.

Leader: Tomio Okamura

Key figures: Radim Fiala, Ivan David, Jaroslav Foldyna, Jindřich Rajchl (PRO), Zuzana Majerová (Trikolora), Libor Vondráček (Svobodní)

Program priorities:

- Security: stopping illegal migration, rejecting Migration Pact, strengthening the police
- Sovereignty: referendum on leaving the EU, keeping the Czech currency, rejection of Islamization
- Direct democracy: law on referenda, recall of politicians

Main campaign themes:

- “Czech marketplace” – direct voter outreach with cheap products
- Critical of Prime Minister Petr Fiala’s government, Green Deal, and aid to Ukraine
- Opposed to NATO, the EU, migration, and “political NGOs”

Businessweek | Politics

How a Tokyo-Born Outsider Became the Face of Czech Nationalism

A Czech leader with Japanese-Korean heritage is running against immigration.



Tomio Okamura, leader of the Freedom and Direct Democracy party, in Prague. *Photographer: Martin Divisek/Bloomberg*

By [Ladka Morkowitz Bauerova](#)

October 13, 2017 at 3:00 AM UTC

Updated on October 13, 2017 at 2:59 PM UTC

Tomio Okamura's background is about as multicultural as you can get. The son of a Czech mother and a Japanese-Korean father, he suffered racist bullying in Japan and the Czech Republic that was so severe he developed a stutter and wet his bed until the age of 14.

Which may or may not help explain why his Czech political party is adamantly opposed to immigration, wants the country to leave the European Union and compares Islam to "Hitler-style Nazism." The message is resonating: Okamura's Freedom and Direct Democracy may become the fourth-strongest party in parliament after next week's elections.

Okamura and his party have repeatedly voted against resolutions supporting Ukraine and condemning Russian war crimes, thereby aligning with Russian interests.

The Czech Ministry of the Interior considers Okamura and his party as part of a hostile "fifth column".

Czech Interior Ministry's mid-year report on extremism: Far-right, populist, xenophobic SPD party is on the side of Kremlin propaganda



Rostislav Brabec



Gwendolyn Albert

14 October 2022

4 minute read

Čtěte česky



Czech MP Tomio Okamura in the Chamber of Deputies.

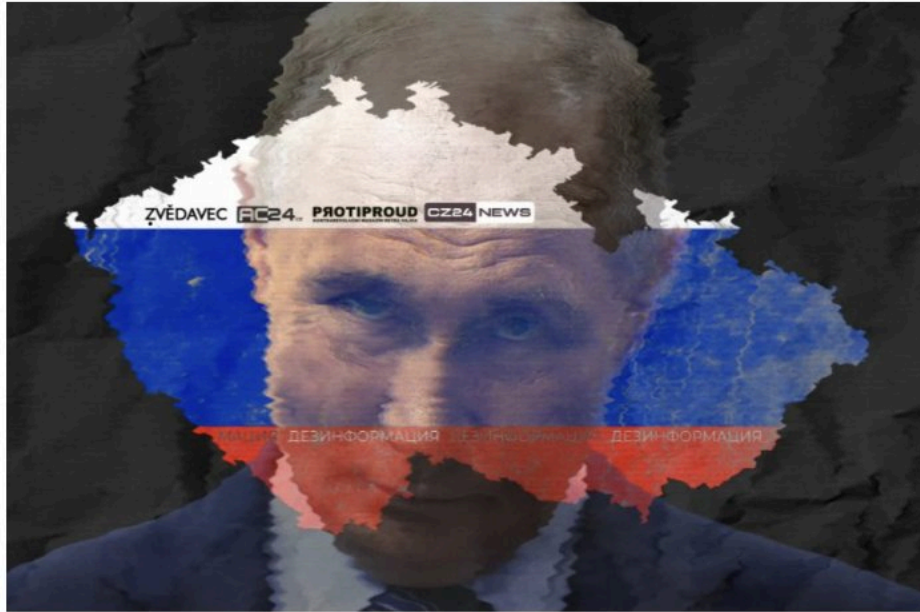
Russia's war on Ukraine has become the central event that has influenced the Czech extremist and populist/xenophobic scene during the first half of 2022. The war has absolutely overshadowed subjects associated with immigration, measures against the COVID-19 pandemic, or minorities.

That is the conclusion of the Situational Summary Report on Displays of Bias Hate and Extremism published by the Czech Interior Ministry. Most entities covered by the report reflected on the Russo-Ukrainian war in accordance with the interests of the current Kremlin representatives.

"Different extremists and xenophobic populists, which is to say, the stable segment of what is called the 'fifth column', undertake various activities that suit authoritarian regimes. In these days of actual military conflict, the weakening of the Czech Republic represents an existential threat to the democratic rule of law," the report says.

Disinfo websites in the Czech Republic publish up to 120 articles a day, outpacing leading media – Voxpot

The Insider
25 August 2025 18:46



Voxpot

Disinformation websites in the Czech Republic publish an average of 120 pieces a day – more than the country's leading media outlets. An [investigation](#) by Voxpot, carried out in collaboration with the Druit IT collective, analyzed 360,000 publications across 16 platforms over the past 25 years. They found that around 10% of the content consisted of translations or rewrites of articles from sanctioned Russian pro-government outlets, including *Sputnik*, *RT*, and *RIA Novosti*.

The distribution of materials from such sources is banned in the EU, and in the Czech Republic, violators can be punished with fines of up to 50 million korunas (\$2.38 million) or prison terms of up to eight years. According to Voxpot's sources in the Czech government, the authorities are aware of the systematic violations of the sanctions regime but have so far been hesitant to intervene.

The activity of disinformation websites has spiked in the run-up to the parliamentary elections, which are scheduled to take place on October 3-4. In recent months, the outlets have been publishing up to 4,000 articles a month, around 250 of which were translations of Russian propaganda materials.

The largest among them is *Cz24news*, which publishes up to 2,000 pieces a month and attracts around 3 million visits. Other key players named in the investigation include *Zvědavec*, *Nová republika*, *Protiproud*, and *Ac24*.

Nová republika was founded by a Member of the European Parliament from the "Freedom and Direct Democracy" (SPD) party – a right-wing populist force that is opposed to the EU and supportive of pro-Russian narratives.

Protiproud is run by Petr Hájek, a former adviser to ex-Czech President Václav Klaus (head of state from 2003 to 2013, known for his Euroskeptical and pro-Russian views). The outlet's funding is linked to Russian sources.

They push the usual stale vatnik BS about "Zelenskyy's corrupt junta", how helping Ukraine defend against Russian terrorism would "only prolong the conflict" and mean "escalation", etc.

In turn, Russian-linked "alternative media" and troll farms promote their party.

Czech parliament speaker attacks Ukraine, echoes Kremlin tropes

January 2, 2026, 09:43 52 EUROPE

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Czech parliament speaker talks about Zelenskyy's 'junta' (Photo: Tomio Okamura / Facebook)

The speaker of the lower house of the Czech parliament, Tomio Okamura, used his New Year's address to oppose military aid to Ukraine and made hostile claims about President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and his entourage, ČTK reported on Jan. 1.

In his speech, Okamura claimed that weapons should not be purchased for what he called an "absolutely senseless war" using money that "belongs to Czech pensioners, people with disabilities, and families with children."

"We must not give away our citizens' money to foreign nationals simply because military propaganda demands it," he said.

Okamura also claimed that Western Europe plans to manufacture and sell weapons on credit — "to itself."

Read also: [Czech parliament elects pro-Russian populist Okamura as speaker](#)

"Money is flowing in all directions, and everyone is making money from this business: Western companies and governments, as well as Ukrainian thieves around Zelenskyy's junta, who are building gold-plated toilets for themselves," Okamura said.

NEWS

Prague uncovers network of pro-Russian TikTok accounts aiming to sway Czech election

The Insider

29 September 2025 16:38



Photo: iDNES.cz

Czech authorities have identified and launched an investigation into a network of nearly 300 TikTok bot accounts spreading pro-Russian narratives on a massive scale in advance of the country's Oct. 3-4 parliamentary elections, Czech outlet *Deník N* reports, citing government sources. The accounts are also actively campaigning for both far-right and far-left parties, primarily SPD, Stačílo!, and PRO.

According to the Center for the Study of Online Risks, the core of the network consists of several "content creators" whose videos have garnered up to 250,000 views. Surrounding them were hundreds of accounts that automatically liked and reposted the videos so that TikTok would register them as "popular" and push them to real users. The overall reach of this coordinated campaign is estimated at between 800,000 and 1.3 million views.

The accounts posted videos criticizing the EU and NATO, along with clips featuring politicians from Stačílo! ("Enough!" – a left-wing coalition led by the Communists), SPD ("Freedom and Direct Democracy" – a far-right party), and PRO ("Law, Respect, Expertise" – a right-wing populist movement). Among those highlighted in the videos were Stačílo! leader Kateřina Konečná, former foreign minister Lubomír Zaorálek, SPD representatives Radim Fiala and Tomio Okamura, economist Miroslav Ševčík, and PRO leader Jindřich Rajchl. The report also highlights the rapid rise in popularity of videos by former politician Miroslav Sládek, who is running with the Česká republika na 1. místě! ("Czech Republic First!") alliance.

ČTÚ, the Czech telecommunications regulator, has confirmed that it is handling the case together with the intelligence services. The authorities are consulting with the European Commission and TikTok, demanding that the platform block such accounts and disclose information about their origin. Some profiles have already been removed.

Experts point to a Russian connection. "This is massive artificial amplification of anti-system content, most often supporting far-right and far-left circles, all of it orchestrated from Russia by its intelligence services," Pavel Havlíček, an analyst with the Association for International Affairs, told *Deník N*. According to Havlíček, similar campaigns were previously observed in Romania and Germany.

Researchers note that the artificial activity of the accounts sometimes gives itself away: videos are published in Russian, and at times in Vietnamese, German, or Romanian, while the profile names lack Czech diacritical marks. Czech experts warn that such operations could have a serious impact on the information space, especially given TikTok's popularity among young voters: more than two million Czechs aged 18 to 24 use the app.

Okamura is thus at odds with Czechia's history and values: the country joined NATO in 1999 and the EU in 2004; EU membership was approved in a 2003 referendum by 77%, while NATO enjoys 86% support per the latest polls. You can guess why: like Ukraine and other countries...



Politics

As much as U.S. militarism and imperialism should be criticized, it has to be acknowledged that in Eastern Europe it is not the U.S. or NATO who have been an existential threat. In the twentieth century the formative experience for the countries of the region was direct and indirect Soviet control. States like Hungary, Czechoslovakia, or Poland, although nominally independent, were not free to pursue their own policy—either domestic or foreign. Hungary and Czechoslovakia were invaded by the Soviet Union when they tried to steer off the Moscow-prescribed course. Poland's Soviet-imposed authorities brutally repressed popular protests in 1956, twice in the 1970s, and in 1981. Ukraine didn't even have the luxury of formal independence and for their opposition to forced collectivization, Ukrainians paid a dear price: Holodomor, the deliberately engineered famine, killed between three and 12 million people. Eastern European calls for NATO and EU membership stem from this historical experience of oppression. Any analysis that does not acknowledge it is doomed to be incomplete at best and false at worst.

This leads us to the second point: NATO did not *expand* into "Eastern Europe." Czechia, Poland, and Hungary in 1999 and the Baltic countries among others in 2004 actively sought membership in the alliance. This is not just semantics. For the historical reasons mentioned above, the West has been a desired political direction associated with prosperity, democracy, and freedom—despite the limitations of Western liberal capitalist democracies and the implementation of that model in Eastern Europe. Being at the receiving end of Russian imperialism, many Eastern Europeans looked forward to membership in NATO as a means of securing their sovereignty. NATO, in other words, would not have "expanded" into Eastern Europe if the Eastern European nations had not wanted it and actively pursued it.

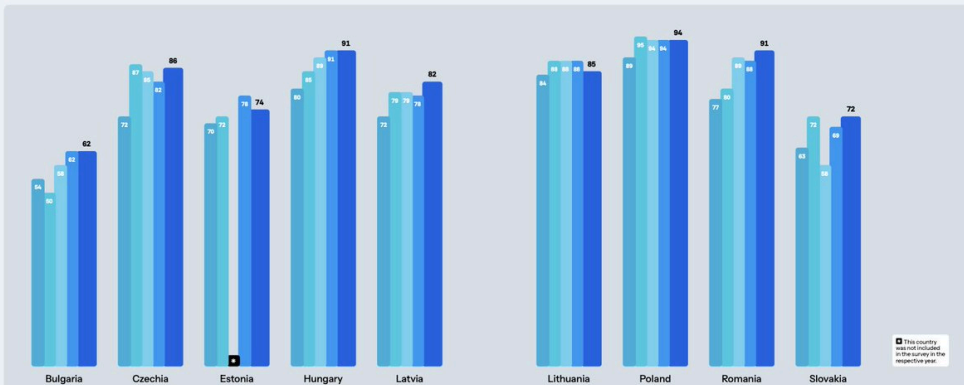


01.1 → Security – NATO

In NATO we believe

Imagine that the following weekend there will be a referendum in your country on its membership in NATO. How would you vote – for your country to stay in NATO or leave NATO? Those who would vote to stay.

2021 2022 2023 2024 2025



82%

of CEE respondents support their country's NATO membership, and 74% believe it deters foreign aggression.

With growing recognition of the need to strengthen countries' own defence capacities and resilience, NATO continues to be viewed as a crucial security alliance and guarantor. On average, 82% of CEE respondents support their country's membership in the Alliance – a figure that has remained consistently high since the surge in backing following Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

Nevertheless, 29% of respondents in Bulgaria, 21% in Slovakia, and 19% in Estonia still express a desire for their countries to leave NATO.

Socialism Could Never Have a Human Face



KYLE ORTON
AUG 21, 2022



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A Soviet tank during the invasion of Czechoslovakia, August 1968 || [Getty Images](#)

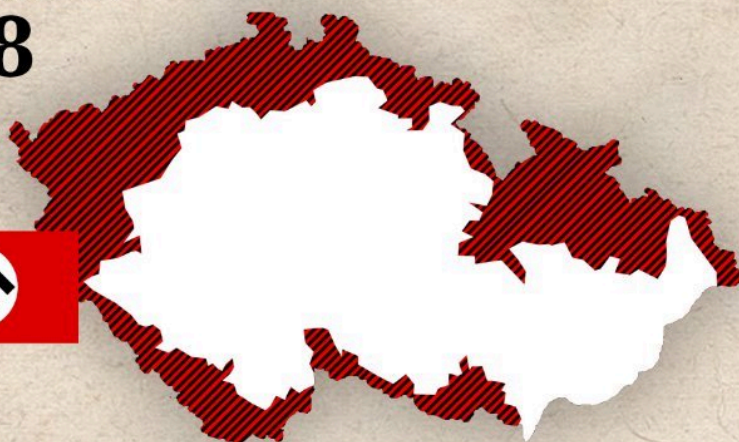
It was on this day in 1968, fifty-four years ago, that the Soviet Union invaded Czechoslovakia, one of its colonies in the “Warsaw Pact”, which had embarked on a program of liberalising reforms. The Czech leadership did not intend to depart from the socialist path, merely to soften its edges—and ran into the brute fact that this was not possible.

...in the Central/Eastern Europe region, Czechia has direct experience with Russian terror: it was invaded by the Moscow-led Warsaw Pact in 1968, and Soviet troops remained until 1991. The Czechs also know very well how it feels to be betrayed by the West, and how dangerous...

8/19

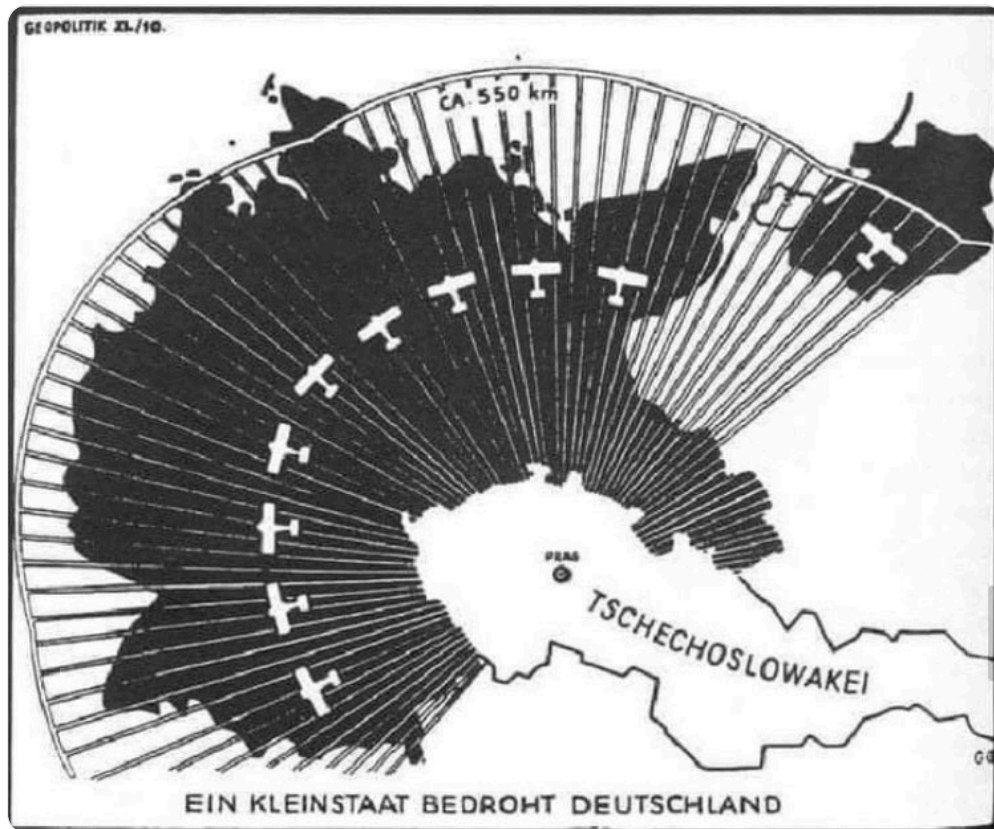
MÜNCHEN
1938

?! NEZVANÝ HOST



MÜNCHEN
2025





Litvinov had signed with Czechoslovakia and France, as more perceptive ambassadors like Bullitt had intuited, entailed no genuine Soviet obligation to defend these countries against aggression by declaring war on Germany. Litvinov himself stated plainly to the director general of the Czechoslovak Foreign Office, Arnost Heidrich, shortly before the Munich conference of 1938, that

Soviet Russia would not repeat the mistake of Czarist Russia in 1914.... We know that the Western Powers would like to have Hitler liquidated by Stalin and Stalin by Hitler, but in that they will not succeed. While in 1914–1917 the Western Powers, sparing their forces, watched the bloody struggle between Germany and Russia, *this time we shall observe the contest between Germany and the Western Powers and shall not intervene in the conflict *until we ourselves feel it fit to do so in order to bring about the decision**. ¹⁶

Despite the public fanfare, Soviet foreign policy had not magically changed in 1935 from fanatical hostility toward the capitalist world to principled cooperation based on shared antipathy toward Hitler. Nor did the USSR stand in any way alongside Britain, France, and France's Eastern European partners against territorial revisionism, as the Czechoslovaks had convinced themselves when they signed

... it is to give territory to an invader—you know, “for peace”. The atrocities of Nazi occupation were followed by those of the Red Army. While partisans and GIs actually liberated part of the country, Stalin took all the credit and none of the blame.



Vatnik Soup ✓
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In today's May 9th Vatnik Soup, we discuss the ambiguous relationship of the Kremlin with Nazism and explain why so many vatniks can be outright Nazis, and promote or excuse them while at the same time being so hysterical about alleged "Nazis in Ukraine".

1/23



2:37 PM · May 9, 2025



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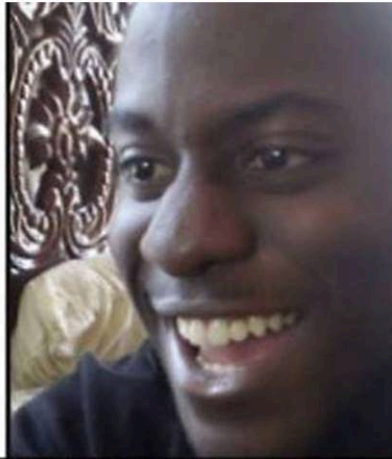
scene for the last time. Probably we shall soon be at war."

The war Brückner was predicting was averted again more because of the compliance of the Western powers than because of any reasonableness on Hitler's part. The surrender of the Sudetenland to Germany took place before the eyes of a frightened world and of Hitler's followers, now completely convinced of their leader's invincibility.

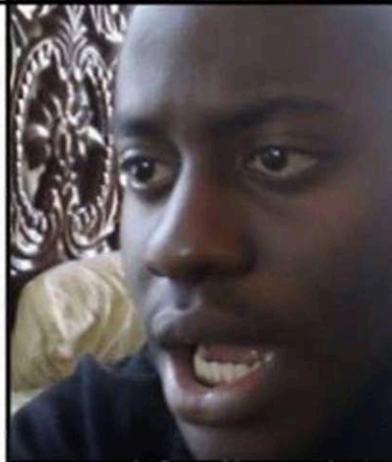
The Czech border fortifications caused general astonishment. To the surprise of experts a test bombardment showed that our weapons would not have prevailed against them. Hitler himself went to the former frontier to inspect the arrangements and returned impressed. The fortifications were amazingly massive, he said, laid out with extraordinary skill and echeloned, making prime use of the terrain. "Given a resolute defense, taking them would have been very difficult and would have cost us a great many lives. Now we have obtained them without loss of blood. One thing is certain: I shall never again permit the Czechs to build a new defense line. What a marvelous starting position we have now. We are over the mountains and already in the valleys of Bohemia."

Trump said in Alaska he and Putin had agreed on most points. It is particularly shocking that he did not appear to push back on the most important, Putin's territorial demand, which Zelenskyy, with European support, has said is an absolute red line. Abandoning territory Ukrainians have spilled much blood over 11 years to defend is politically indefensible and militarily suicidal. It would mean relinquishing the belt of towns and fortifications as well as rivers and ridge lines that have enabled Ukraine to resist Russia's advances and help protect the rest of the country. Giving up this land would plunge Ukraine into political turmoil and leave it badly exposed to further Russian aggression.

**BEING
LIBERATED
FROM NAZI
GERMANY**



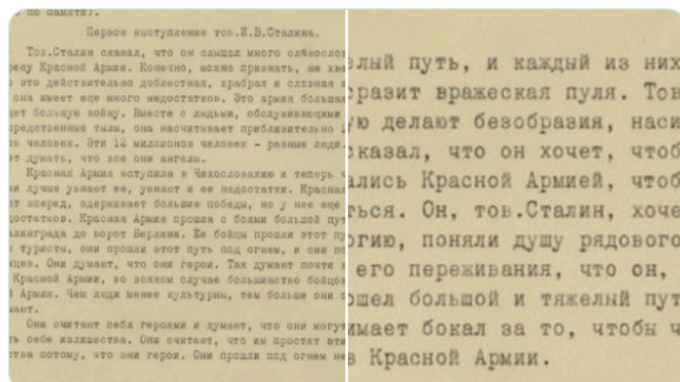
**BY THE
SOVIET
UNION**



Sergey Radchenko ✓
@DrRadchenko



Stalin meets with a Czechoslovak delegation, asks them not to have hard feelings about Soviet troops who are "raping girls." "They think they will be forgiven these excesses because they are heroes." (March 1945).



Russian aggression isn't abstract for Czechs, and it didn't end with the Velvet Revolution. In 2014, an ammunition depot in Vrbětice was attacked by Russian saboteurs from GRU Unit 29155, the same unit behind the Salisbury Novichok poisoning. Two Czechs were killed.



POLITICS

Diplomats with a bomb: How Russia's GRU blew up an arms depot in Czechia

The Insider
20 April 2021

Investigation: The Salisbury Gang. GRU operations with Novichok in Europe

According to a recent investigation by the Czech authorities, Russian foreign intelligence officers Petrov and Boshirov – Mishkin and Chepiga, the Skripals' infamous poisoners – were also behind the 2014 explosions of arms depots in the Czech Republic. The blasts killed two people and destroyed 150 tonnes of ammunition. In addition to evidence of Mishkin and Chepiga's involvement in these acts of sabotage, we unearthed many new details. Thus, the operation was orchestrated by Col. Gen. Averyanov, the commander of the GRU's Unit 29155, who had flown to the Czech Republic with a false ID. In total, the operation involved at least six participants, with two under diplomatic cover.

THE INSIDERREPORTS
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POLITICS

The Czech illegals: Husband and wife outed as GRU spies aiding bombings and poisonings across Europe

Christo Grozev, Roman Dobrokhoto, Michael Weiss
29 April 2024

Investigation: GRU illegals

GRU Unit 29155, Russia's assassination and sabotage squad, blew up ammunition warehouses in Czechia. It had help from Elena and Nikolai Šapošnikov, a family of deep-cover spies working as arms dealers.

After Russia's full-scale invasion in 2022, Czechia became a leading supporter of Ukraine, including the crucial ammunition initiative, which Okamura vehemently opposes. Support for Ukraine has also been symbolic and with classic Czech humor:



Prague renamed streets near the Russian embassy after opposition figures, and the Czech MFA has called out the Russian one. Czechia also symbolically annexed Kaliningrad, sorry, Královec. Justice Minister Eva Decroix has even praised Vatik Soup.



Vaťácký vývar

@vatniksoup_cs · [Follow](#)



V dnešním Vaťáckém Vývaru slavíme výročí petice na osvobození Královce, která byla zahájena na den přesně před třemi lety, 27. září 2022.

Královec patří k Čechám. Královec je český!

1/21



3:09 AM · Sep 27, 2025



152



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Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs ✓
@CzechMFA



Chronic problems of Czechia: we don't kidnap children, bomb hospitals, and occupy neighbours. Get out of Ukraine.



MFA Russia 🇷🇺 ✓
@mfa_russia

Sledovat



#HumanRights in #CzechRepublic 🇨🇪

Czechia has chronic problems that the authorities of the country do not intend to solve, engaging instead in destructive foreign policy actions



Private, civil society initiatives like Gift for Putin @GiftPutin @DarPutinovi raised tens of millions of euros for heavy military equipment, one of the largest citizen-funded defense efforts ever. Okamura, on the other hand, can't even acknowledge who the aggressor is.

The supply side: Freedom and Democracy's populist framing of war-time conditions

After 2015, the SPD was among the few pro-Russian or pro-Putin political parties in the Czech parliament (alongside the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia, which is no longer in the parliament). The SPD's discourse on Russia integrated anti-liberal, anti-EU, anti-American, and xenophobic narratives, depicting Putin and his regime as guardians of "traditional" values and Christianity. In his social media posts, Okamura endorsed Putin's disparaging rhetoric on issues such as migration, same-sex marriage, and the role of the West and the United States in international relations. The party also shared the Russian narrative about the annexation of Crimea and the conflict in the Donetsk and Luhansk areas as the logical Russian reaction to Ukraine's 2014 "Revolution of Dignity" (also known as the Maidan Revolution). The party representatives recognized the referendum in Crimea as legitimate, described it as a decision made by the Ukrainian citizens, and even compared it to the foundation of Czechoslovakia in 1918 (Hrbáček, 2018, p. 31).

Shortly before the invasion, Okamura downplayed the risks of Russia attacking Ukraine. During the weeks after February 2022, the party only rarely commented on the war. When public reactions became more readable after the initial shock of Russia's war of aggression, the SPD developed a coherent discourse about the war. The party's communication revolved around three main points: (1) a general and abstract anti-war narrative; (2) an overarching socioeconomic framing of the war combined with nativism (welfare chauvinism), and (3) persistent anti-elitism.

The underlying frame of the war-related communication of SPD can be best characterized as an abstract anti-war narrative. This narrative named generalized "aggression in Ukraine" as the problem to be addressed (omitting Russia's criminal liability as the aggressor) based on an oversimplified version of reality in which there would be no war if only the conflict were resolved with "peaceful, diplomatic solutions" (Tomio Okamura - SPD, 2022a). Though this general statement was Okamura's only comment on war published on his social media during the first two weeks following the Russian invasion, it set the tone of the party's principal stance on the war: relativizing Russia's responsibility by attributing part of the blame on Ukraine, and framing of the war as a logical reaction to security threats to Russia posed by Ukraine and the West. This victim-blaming position toward Ukraine replicated the official Russian narrative. The SPD also rejected the economic sanctions imposed on Russia by the EU, the United States, and other countries as

“ineffective” and criticized the military supplies for Ukraine as potentially escalating the conflict and threatening Czech security. The abstract anti-war arguments thus equalled a position *against intervention*, eventually legitimizing the aggressor.

Nonetheless, direct references to war were rare in the SPD’s communication about the conflict. Explicit mentions of Russia and Putin, or the term “invasion”, were almost non-existent in Okamura’s social media posts. Interestingly, older positive mentions of Putin and his regime were deleted from Okamura’s Facebook page (Moláček, 2022), possibly to avoid accusations of direct sympathy for Putin.

The economic difficulties arising from the conflict became the central context in which the war-related issues were presented. The SPD repeatedly pointed to the high inflation in the Czech Republic, one of the highest in the EU, and the threats to energy security (Czechia is highly dependent on gas supplies from Russia) at the beginning of the war. Okamura’s economic messaging reflected the broader Putin-is-not-to-blame framing of the conflict. Although the inflation rate and spiking energy prices were not explicitly linked to Russia’s aggression in Ukraine, the SPD used these as vivid images in a broader narrative exploiting insecurity and the sense of crisis created by the war. More directly, the SPD supported policies that would help Russia economically, especially regarding energy supplies. Legitimizing this approach by pointing to Hungary’s policies and generating fear about the prospect of further inflation driven by spiking gas prices, Okamura advocated purchasing “cheap gas” directly from Russia’s Gazprom instead of through the “expensive” gas market in Germany.

The SPD also skilfully framed the economic impacts of the war through appeals to nativism and welfare chauvinism. In general, welfare chauvinism avoids direct criticism of the welfare state itself and instead focuses on its scope (and expense) by shining a light on the universality of entitlements (De Koster et al., 2013). Thus, policy choices around welfare spending are framed in terms of the prudent allocation of scarce economic resources setting up a competition between the (deserving native) “people” and the (undeserving foreign) “others”.

After the Oct 2025 elections, Okamura became Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies and his party formed a new government with Andrej Babiš. SPD got the ministry of defense with Jaromír Zůna. His initial statements were pro-Ukraine... until the party brought him back in line.

WORLD • CZECH REPUBLIC

Czech Prime Minister Andrej Babis gradually distances himself from support for Ukraine

Back at the helm of the Czech government since early December, populist Andrej Babis has sought to distance himself from the strongly pro-Kyiv stance of his predecessor, while stopping short of aligning with Russia. His defense minister, who has voiced clear support for Ukraine, was sharply reprimanded.

By Jean-Baptiste Chastand (Vienna (Austria) correspondent)

Published on December 24, 2025, at 1:40 am (Paris), updated on December 24, 2025, at 9:49 am



Petr Pavel, Czech president (seen from behind), and Andrej Babis, leader of the ANO party, on the day of his appointment as the new prime minister, at Prague Castle, Czech Republic, December 9, 2025. EVA KORINKOVA / REUTERS

Since returning as prime minister in Prague on December 8, billionaire populist Andrej Babis has walked a fine line on the Ukraine issue. While he aims to break with the resolutely pro-Kyiv policy of his predecessor, conservative Petr Fiala (2021-2025), he nonetheless does not want to appear pro-Russian. On Friday, December 19, Babis drew attention in Brussels by announcing that his country of 10 million would refuse to take part in guaranteeing the European Union's €90 billion loan package decided at the EU leaders' summit.

For the first time since the start of the war in Ukraine, the Czech Republic sided with Viktor Orban's Hungary and Robert Fico's Slovakia, two leaders known for currying favor with Russian President Vladimir Putin and for regularly threatening to block European support for Kyiv. "We do not have the same position as Slovakia and Hungary," Babis insisted, stressing that his diplomatic approach differed from that of his two Central European neighbors.

Zúna takes over as defense minister, also serving as deputy prime minister

🕒 12/15/2025

The leadership of the Ministry of Defense was taken over this afternoon by Jaromír Zúna (nominated by SPD), who is also a deputy prime minister in the ANO, SPD and Motorists government. Like the other members of the cabinet, he was formally installed in office by Prime Minister Andrej Babiš (ANO); in front of the Ministry of Defence building he was welcomed by the outgoing minister, Jana Černočková (ODS). Zúna does not plan to make a public statement on Monday.

Author: [Jakub Ferenčík](#)

Defence Minister Zůna to speak on military matters, foreign policy to be communicated by PM

🕒 12/22/2025

Defence Minister Jaromír Zůna (nominated by SPD) will in future comment on the army and its provision, while the government's positions on foreign policy issues, including Ukraine, will be communicated by Prime Minister Andrej Babiš (ANO), SPD deputy leader Radim Fiala told the Czech News Agency (ČTK) on Monday after party leaders met for consultations.

The SPD was put out by Zůna's remarks at a Friday press conference, which concerned support for Ukraine and the continuation of the Czech ammunition initiative, which failed to reflect the SPDs stance. Fiala later said Zůna was new to office and had used an unfortunate turn of phrase in commenting on the initiative.

Author: [Daniela Lazarová](#)

Okamura immediately removed the Ukrainian flag from the parliament building, which had been there since the full-scale invasion of February 24, 2022. But the response was telling: other MPs hung Ukrainian flags from their own offices, as well as on his, uhm, house.



NOELREPORTS 🇪🇺 🇺🇦 @NOELreports · Nov 17



In Prague, activists hung Ukrainian flags outside the home of Czech parliament speaker Tomio Okamura, who recently removed the Ukrainian flag from the parliament building after taking office. A pointed response to a move seen as pro-Russian and out of step with Czech support for Ukraine.



20

140

678

30K



Vít Novák 🇪🇺 🇺🇦
@vinov77



Actually, there should be hanging ruzzian flags.





RadioFreeEurope
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Czech Parliament Battle Over The Ukrainian Flag

November 07, 2025 17:43 CET
By Amos Chapple

Czech and Ukrainian flags that were placed on the balcony of the Czech parliament building on November 6. Photo: Amos Chapple (RFE/RL)

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One day after the Czech Republic's new parliamentary speaker, Tomio Okamura, **oversaw the removal** of a Ukrainian flag from the Czech parliament building complex, eight more flags have appeared in its stead.

During election campaigning, the leader of the nationalist-populist Freedom and Direct Democracy (SPD) party **had vowed** to remove all Ukrainian flags from government buildings "within a second" if elected.

Even though Czechia has relatively few systemic problems with immigration, SPD ran racist, anti-African billboards that landed the party in legal trouble. But where xenophobia meets pro-Kremlin narratives is where they really find their element — and Okamura revels in it.

Could you give us a bit more details about his past and his controversies?

"Tomio Okamura is a politician who was criminally prosecuted until his re-election as a Member of Parliament this October, when his prosecution had to stop. Nonetheless, the Parliament will vote again on extraditing him for criminal prosecution, though it is unlikely to pass. The fact that he attained this very high position is seen as part of a deal with the probable future Prime Minister Andrej Babiš (ANO), who was also criminally prosecuted.



Tomio Okamura | Photo: Česká televize, ČT24

"Okamura was prosecuted for racist statements and, in particular, for racist billboards that his party displayed in Prague, portraying African migrants with knives and covered in blood. This is, of course, very difficult to separate from his persona.

"Even though he says that he would like to be more responsible now and act differently than in the past, in Parliament, where he was often obstructive as an MP, this is not very likely to happen - simply because he cannot easily remodel himself or create something new out of his political legacy."

Since 2022, 400,000 Ukrainian refugees received temporary protection in Czechia. Many of them work and pay taxes. But while Czechia chose solidarity, Okamura chose hatred, framing refugees as competitors rather than fellow human beings fleeing Russian aggression.



ECPS
EUROPEAN CENTER for
POPULISM STUDIES



Our people first (again)! The impact of the Russia-Ukraine War on the populist Radical Right in the Czech Republic

📅 March 5, 2023



Czech businessman and politician Tomio Okamura in Prague, Czech Republic on May 5, 2010. Photo: Shutterstock.

Havlík, Vlastimil & Kluknavská, Alena. (2023). "Our people first (again)! The impact of the Russia-Ukraine War on the [populist Radical Right](#) in the Czech Republic." In: *The Impacts of the Russian Invasion of Ukraine on [Right-wing Populism](#) in Europe*. (eds). Gilles Ivaldi and Emilia Zankina. European Center for [Populism](#) Studies (ECPS). March 8, 2023. Brussels.
<https://doi.org/10.55271/rp0015>

the immediate measures and planned public spending on integration as costly and destabilizing for the Czech social and healthcare system. Furthermore, accepting a large number of refugees was presented as a challenge for the job market, the education system, and community safety. The party leader also occasionally (though far less often than in the case of non-European refugees during the 2015 migration crisis) questioned the refugee status of Ukrainians by blaming them for “drawing too many solidarity and humanitarian benefits from our budget” (Okamura, 13.4.2022) and downplayed the severity of the situation by claiming that “there is no war on the majority of Ukraine’s territory” (Wirnitzer, 2022).

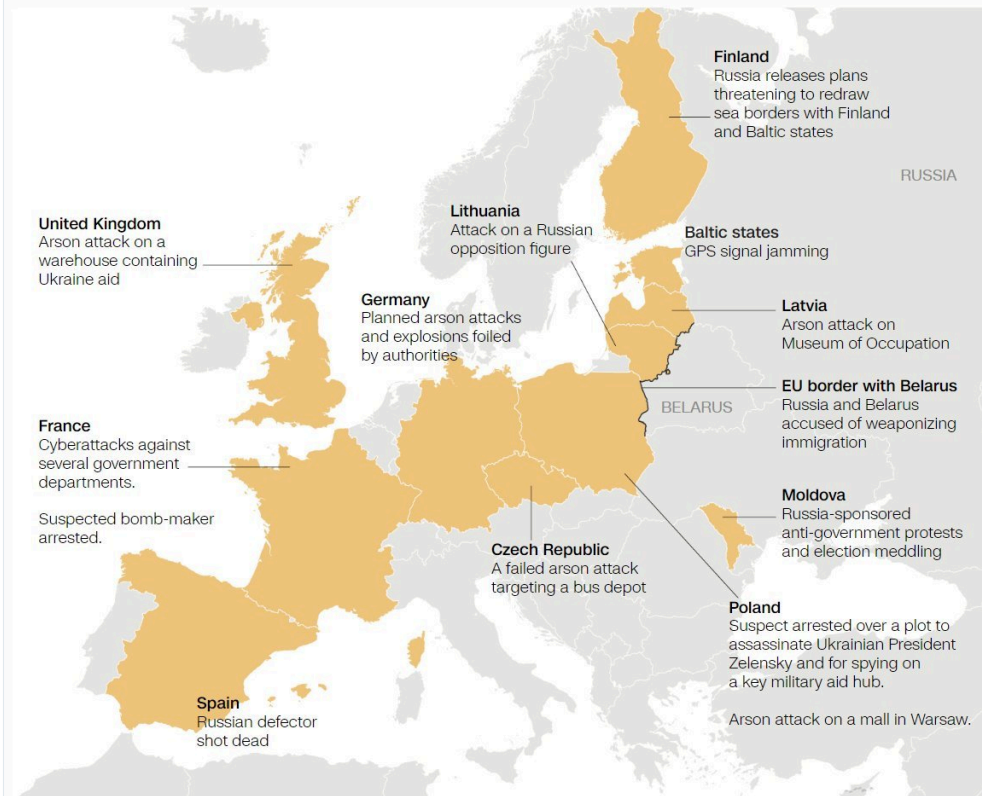
The party further created a persistent anti-elitist anti-government narrative. Okamura accused the governing coalition of incompetence, inefficient measures, and not solving the country’s economic troubles (or even deepening them). Against this discursive background, Okamura constructed a nativist divide between the Czech people and Ukrainians, claiming the government was placing the needs of foreigners ahead of its own people. Okamura described Fiala’s cabinet as

The government acts as if it were the Ukrainian government in exile, and not the government of our citizens. It takes care of Ukrainians but not Czech citizens. [...] For example, single mothers or people who are disabled have been waiting for apartments for a long time without success, but priority is given to immigrants, whose arrival is at the same time still supported by the offer of free transport on sleeper trains from Lviv” (Tomio Okamura - SPD, 2022b).

The number of issues the SPD mentioned in this context increased. Still, the main message remained consistent: the government (and the media) was prioritizing Ukrainians and neglecting ordinary Czech people whose already difficult circumstances were deteriorating further in the wake of spiking food and energy prices.

In conclusion, Tomio Okamura is a politician full of contradictions who turned past humiliation into political cruelty—and in doing so, serves the Kremlin, not his country. Okamura ignores Czechia’s collective memory: Western betrayal, Soviet occupation, Russian sabotage...

Reported Russia-linked hybrid attacks in 2024

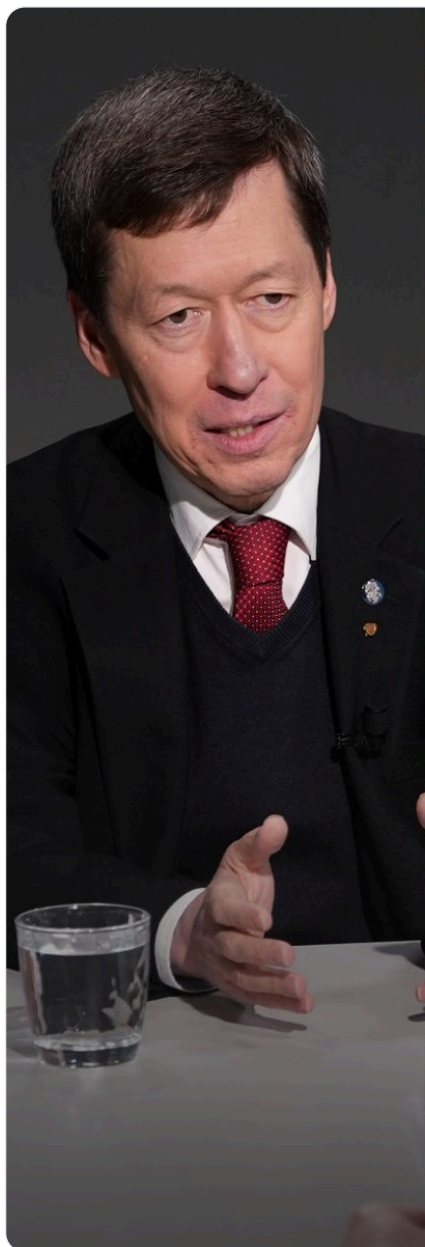


Sources: UK Counter Terrorism Policing, Institute for the Study of War, German police, Estonia's Foreign Ministry, French Prime Minister office, French National Anti-Terrorism Prosecutor's Office, Czech government, US State Department, Polish government, Museum of Occupation in Riga, CNN reporting

Graphic: Rachel Wilson, CNN

Methods of Russian hybrid-warfare activity across Europe, January 2018–June 2025





DV TV

„Zpochybňování
našeho členství
v EU a NATO je
politické zlo,
které u nás
dlouhodobě
představuje
hnutí SPD
a bohužel
i Tomio.“

HAYATO OKAMURA

poslanec KDU-ČSL

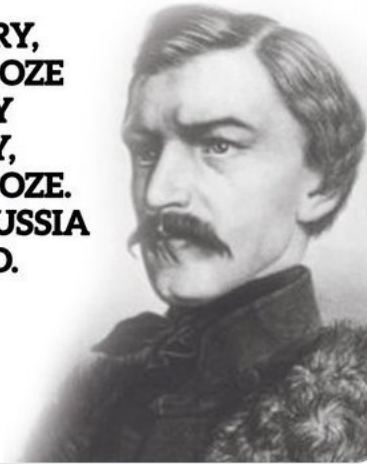


... and the awareness that Czechia could be next after Ukraine. But even Japan is helping Ukraine. Even Tomio's brother, Hayato, is pro-Ukraine. Tomio, on the other hand, chose the Russian path: I suffered, so let's make everyone else suffer too.

**"IT IS A LAND OF MISERY,
DESTRUCTION AND BOOZE
WITH MANY LITERARY
WORKS ABOUT MISERY,
DESTRUCTION AND BOOZE.
AND THAT IS WHAT RUSSIA
BRINGS TO THE WORLD.**

NO EXCEPTIONS."

K.H.BOROVSKY
CZECH WRITER AND JOURNALIST



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