

# The Czech Republic Officially Bans Communist Ideology



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The Czech Republic's new criminal code criminalises support for communist ideology, whilst legalising the use of cannabis.

Details. On July 17th, Czech President Petro Pavel amended the country's criminal code, officially criminalising the promotion of communist ideas.

- ▶ The law equates communism with Nazism, labelling both as "totalitarian" movements that "aim to suppress human rights."
- ▶ The same legislative package decriminalised cannabis offences, making the drug more freely available.
- ▶ The agenda also includes an act providing for reparations to Czech 'victims' of communism and to persons who fled socialist Czechoslovakia.

Context. We previously covered the approval of these anti-communist measures by Czech lawmakers, before the amendments reached President Pavel's desk and how, since 1997, communist symbols and ideas have been criminalised across Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, and the Baltic States.

- ▶ In both Ukraine and Russia, former Soviet Republics, there are simultaneous and ongoing efforts at 'decommunisation', gradually erasing the USSR's legacy, whilst governments still flirt with Soviet aesthetics and nostalgia if these can supplement chauvinist propaganda.
- ▶ Earlier this year, German authorities banned Soviet flags during commemorations of the 80th anniversary of the Allied victory over Nazi Germany, despite the Red Army's decisive role in defeating the Nazis.

Important to Know. The amendment equates "class hatred" with "racial, ethnic, national, and religious hatred", treating them as equally punishable. This obscures the reality that capitalist society is already built on class oppression. While the law could occasionally be used to target individual capitalists, its primary purpose is to criminalise workers who resist exploitation.

- ▶ In *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, Engels wrote that capitalism drove workers into drunkenness, "inevitably... manifest[ing] its ruinous influence upon the body and mind." Today, Czech capitalists preserve the same ruin, tolerating drugs to numb workers' suffering and stifle consciousness.