

End of the Freedom Dividend



The end of the Cold War was supposed to produce a Peace Dividend, and until 9/11 it briefly did, with defense budgets stagnating or in some countries even falling. The end of Communism also produced a brief Freedom Dividend. Walls and borders came down in Central and Eastern Europe, barbed wire was cut, and personal freedoms abounded. With 9/11 the personal freedoms in the "land of liberty," as the U.S. is sometimes called, immediately began to be curtailed, but the process was slower in Central and Eastern Europe, where the repression of the previous regimes was still fresh on people's minds. It is the government of Bohuslav Sobotka and Andrej Babiš that is finally allowing the CR to catch up with the U.S., or even exceed it, in terms of rolling back personal freedoms. On Friday alone, three new restrictions got the okay of Parliament (confiscation of weapons of "dangerous" people without a court order, stiffer fines for insulting government officials, police authority to break up demonstrations). Freedom sure was fun while it lasted, huh?

Read this later today in [Czech](#)



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