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Hostage to Czech foreign policy



Two Czechs, a man and a woman, were sentenced in Turkey yesterday to six years in prison (subject to appeal) for supporting the Kurdish "terrorist" organization YPG. Foreign Min. Lubomír Zaorálek acknowledged on [TV Nova last night](#) that the conviction was at least partly political. A role was played, he said, by the [resolution of the Czech Parliament in April](#) recognizing the massacre of Armenians under the Ottoman Empire as "genocide." Zaorálek was conveniently absent from that [vote in Parliament](#), but the resolution was submitted by his party colleague, Robin Böhnisch, and supported by all but three of ČSSD's present MPs. The main vote wasn't about Turkey at all, but rather about state holidays. Doesn't Turkey, a Nato member, deserve better than an offhand vote on a subject of such seriousness? If the conviction of the two Czechs leads to a clearer formulation of Czech foreign policy toward Turkey, their suffering won't be entirely in vain.

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