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Latvia Bans Soviet Symbols

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RIGA — Latvia's parliament has approved a ban on the public display of Soviet and Nazi symbols, including swastikas and the hammer and sickle, and the singing and promotion of fascist and communist anthems and ideologies.

Lawmakers approved the bill 56-0, with 44 lawmakers abstaining or absent. It will become law after President Andris Berzins signs it, expected next month.

The bill was partly sparked by annual pro-Soviet rallies organized by the country's large Russian-speaking populace, and frowned upon by ethnic Latvians after five decades of Soviet occupation.

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