Controversial Soviet-Era Statue Removed in Prague

By [AFP](#)

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Michal Cizek / AFP

Prague authorities on Friday said they had removed a controversial Soviet-era statue, despite protests from Moscow, to make way for a World War II memorial.

Plans to remove the bronze statue of Soviet general Ivan Konev triggered a sharp reaction from Moscow last year.

Related article: [Prague Will Remove Statue of Soviet Marshal Who Led Red Army Forces](#)

While Konev is regarded as a hero in Russia, many Czechs see him as a symbol of Soviet-era oppression.

He led Red Army troops that liberated Prague from the Nazis in 1945, but he was also in

charge of Operation Whirlwind, which crushed the anti-Soviet Hungarian Uprising of 1956.

Prague district 6 mayor Ondrej Kolar told the Czech CTK news agency that Konev's statue would be placed in a "museum dedicated to the history of the 20th century in Czechoslovakia."

Pro-Russian Czech President Milos Zeman echoed Russian outrage over the move as "an abuse of the state of emergency," referring to a government-imposed lockdown to stem the spread of the deadly novel coronavirus.

On Aug. 21, 2019, the anniversary of the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia, someone sprayed "No to the blood-covered marshal, we shall not forget" on Konev's statue that was erected by the then communist regime in 1980.

Prague city hall then covered up the statue, but pro-Konev protesters tore down the tarp and held a rally in its support.