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Putin Accuses West of Attempting to 'Cancel' Russia

The Russian president complained about discrimination against "everything Russian."

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Vladimir Putin accused the West of trying to “cancel” Russia Friday.

In a televised address, the Russian President used the recent controversy surrounding “Harry Potter” author J.K. Rowling as evidence of Western cancel culture, stating the West is now trying to subject Russia to a similar fate.

“Look at the recent treatment of J.K Rowling, the children’s author who is published all over the world. They are canceling her because she didn’t satisfy the demands of gender rights, and now they’re trying to do the same to our country,” the Russian President stated.

“I’m talking about the growing discrimination of everything to do with Russia — it's a trend

spreading across the West, permitted and even encouraged by some countries," the President added.

J.K. Rowling later responded on Twitter: "Critiques of Western cancel culture are possibly not best made by those currently slaughtering civilians for the crime of resistance, or who jail and poison their critics. #IStandWithUkraine" with a link to an article about jailed opposition leader Alexei Navalny.

Since Russia launched an offensive on neighboring Ukraine, Western countries have slapped Russia with far-reaching sanctions, stunting Russia's economy at home and creating a cultural backlash towards Russian culture abroad.

In efforts to display solidarity with Ukraine, some celebrations of Russian culture across the West have, in fact, been canceled. For example, the Russian State Ballet Company of Siberia's performances in Europe have been called off, and the U.K.'s Cardiff Philharmonic decided to pull its upcoming Tchaikovsky performances on the grounds that they were "inappropriate."

Critics also called for the ousting of the popular children's cartoon show "Masha and the Bear," stating it was part of Russia's "propaganda machine."

"The last time such a mass campaign to destroy unwanted literature was carried out was by the Nazis in Germany almost 90 years ago," President Putin added.

The president's allusion to Nazi Germany comes as his country launched a brutal invasion of its pro-Western neighbour in what Kremlin officials claim is an attempt to "denazify" and "demilitarize" Ukraine.

Russia has repeatedly accused the West of stoking "Russophobia" since the beginning of what the Kremlin has called a "special military operation," with former President Dmitry Medvedev describing the West's "frenzied hatred" as being pushed by the U.S..

"It's impossible to imagine something like this happening in our country. In Russia there is no place for ethnic intolerance," President Putin said.

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