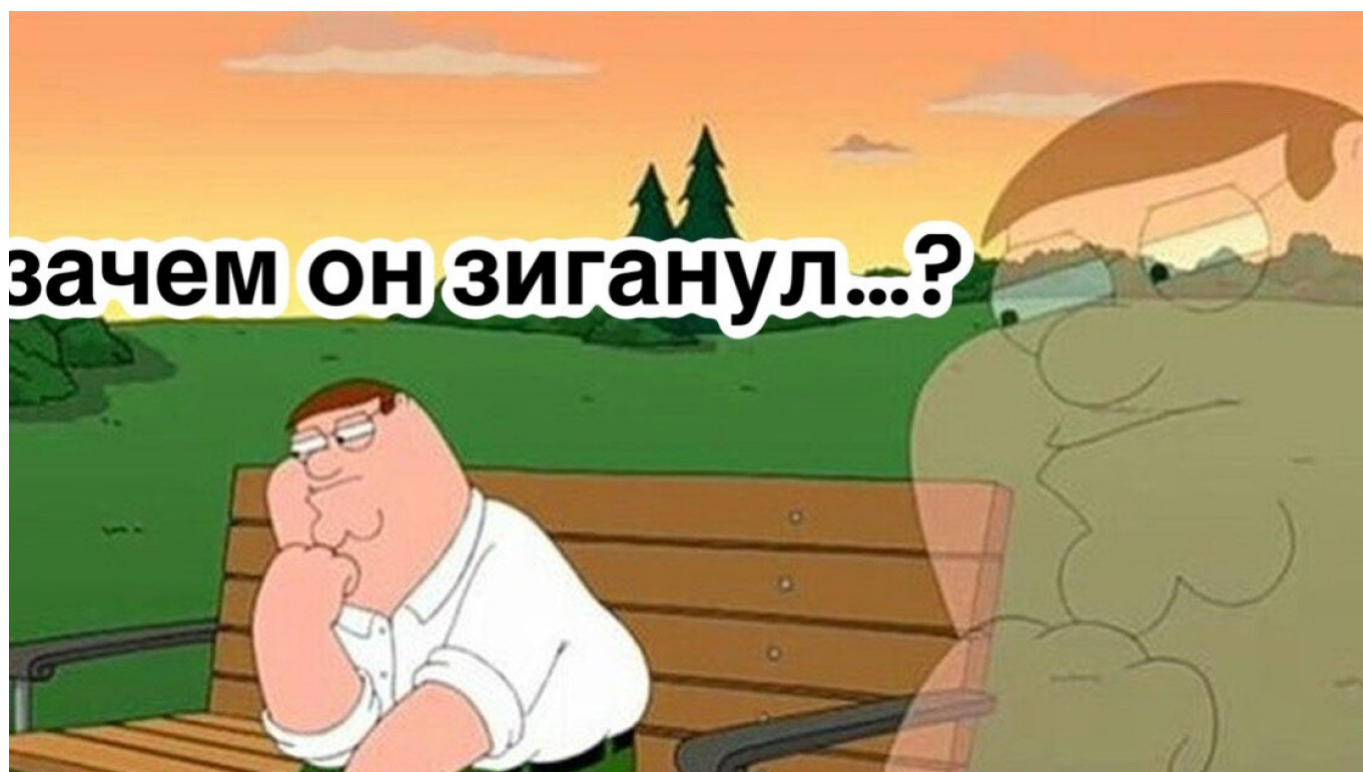


# ‘A Special Gesture Operation’: Russian Internet Reacts to Trump’s Inauguration

January 21, 2025



“Why did he Sieg Heil?” @lpr\_tw / X

Just like the day after Donald Trump’s election triumph in November, the Russian internet is overflowing with memes and humor.

Elon Musk, especially, seems to have made a real splash.

We’ve collected some of our favorites:

Let’s start with the reactions to Elon Musk’s gesture that closely resembled a Nazi salute at Capitol One Arena, something which Musk himself has [denied](#).

— “Doctor, if I turn my hand up a little, it’s not a Sieg Heil, right?”

— “No, it’s still a Sieg Heil.”

**Embed:**

Доктор, а если я ладонь немного поверну – это уже не будет зига?

Нет. Всё равно зига. [pic.twitter.com/BjuWhLXC5i](https://pic.twitter.com/BjuWhLXC5i)

— Мысли Перзидента (@VVP2\_\_0) [January 21, 2025](#)

“Not a Sieg Heil, but a special gesture operation,” a play on Moscow’s parlance for it’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

**Embed:**

Не зига а специальная жестовая операция

— бе (@dushirip) [January 21, 2025](#)

“It’s not a Sieg Heil if you’re rich enough.”

**Embed:**

это не зига, если ты достаточно богат

— Sult! (Taylor’s Version) (From the Vault) (@sult) [January 21, 2025](#)

[Here](#), Musk is edited to look like Alexey Milchakov, the leader and co-founder of the far-right, neo-Nazi Rusich Group, a paramilitary organization that has been involved in Russia’s invasion of Ukraine since 2014. Milchakov, who has openly [admitted](#) to being a Nazi, has been linked to atrocities in both Ukraine and Syria and is a suspected war criminal.

“The crazy grandpa is president again. He’s talking about gender and one of his officials is Sieg-Heiling. Guess the country.”

“Stop stealing our jokes.”

**Embed:**

может хватит воровать у нас наши приколы <https://t.co/ZFuaFT7jGm>

— ~нет~ (@phurdi) [January 20, 2025](#)

“So that’s why Melania wore the hat!”

**Embed:**

Вот зачем Мелания надела эту шляпу! [pic.twitter.com/CO4dVVBPYE](https://pic.twitter.com/CO4dVVBPYE)

— Вестник бури (@bure\_vest) [January 20, 2025](#)

“Melania Trump–Shapoklyak,” a play on Old Lady Shapoklyak, a villain from the Russian children’s series Cheburashka.

A misleading Telegram message preview reads, “Donald Trump has ended the SVO (Special Military Operation).”

**Embed:**

“Come on, fix my life.”

**Embed:**

[pic.twitter.com/aKJR67Qfqs](https://pic.twitter.com/aKJR67Qfqs)

— Страдающее Средневековье (@souffrantmitte1) [January 20, 2025](#)

“The media has published an uncropped version of the photo of Mikhail Khodorkovsky at Donald Trump’s inauguration.”

**Embed:**

В СМИ опубликовали некадрированную версию фотографию Михаила Ходорковского на инаугурации Дональда Трампа.

[pic.twitter.com/PPl8Wq8QQI](https://pic.twitter.com/PPl8Wq8QQI)

— Tony Green (@greentony) [January 20, 2025](#)

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