

## Czech business indirectly opposes Biden

U.S. Pres. Joe Biden told George Stephanopoulos of [ABC News](#) last week that he doesn't need a cognitive test, because he has one every single day. "Every day I have that test. Everything I do. You know, not only am I campaigning, but I'm running the world." That sounds like hyperbole, Biden added, but the U.S. is the "essential nation of the world."

Running the world, or at least a large part of it, means establishing mechanisms for implementing the strategies and decisions that are made at the top. Biden can't be everywhere in the world at once, so he must have a pyramid structure in place that devolves responsibility to the lower levels.

Two of the top-down structures in the CR that the Biden administration can take at least partial credit for are coming under attack from Czech business, although most of those who are opposing the efforts aren't aware that the Biden administration is involved. "Running the world" at times means staying in the shadows to avoid unwanted publicity.

The first of the two items in question is the [amendment to the two public-media laws](#) for raising the user's fees for Czech TV and Czech Radio. It was debated in the lower house of Parliament yesterday and continues to have the strong support of the Fiala government. The second item is a [bill from the NÚKIB cybersecurity office](#) for requiring companies to increase their cyber defenses. Both of these measures carry significant costs for the companies affected, which means that Czech businesses will bear the expenses of Biden's global leadership.

A key aspect of the media amendment, as we noted in the [Final Word](#) last week, is a clause requiring Czech TV and Czech Radio to "contribute to countering disinformation, while respecting freedom of speech." The heads of Czech TV and Czech Radio stressed [last night](#) that this wasn't their idea. It instead reflects the principles of the U.S. government's [Framework to Counter Foreign State Informa-](#)

[tion Manipulation](#), as well as the [Memorandum of Understanding on Countering Foreign Disinformation](#) signed in Prague on May 30 of this year by U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and his Czech counterpart, Jan Lipavský of the Pirates. Blinken said in Prague that it was the 17th

given that there's a fight over the fate of democracy. Rafaj told [Prima on Wed.](#) that the government is using undemocratic methods to save the democratic media.

In Hungary, [American taxpayer dollars were mobilized](#) to combat disinformation. While [Donald Trump](#) was still president,

Radio Free Europe resumed local-language broadcasts there. The advantage of the efforts of the Biden administration is that public media are used to combat disinformation.

The second item, [cybersecurity](#) is more technical but is in principle quite similar. It's also about protecting democracy against bad actors and reflects the principles of both the Framework to Counter Foreign State Information

Manipulation and the [Cyber Dialogue](#) between the U.S. and Czech governments. When Czech businesses complain that the changes proposed by NÚKIB [go beyond what the EU requires under the NIS 2 directive](#), they usually fail to take into account that the U.S. is more aggressive than the EU in its decoupling or derisking from China. The Fiala government is a

perfect partner for such endeavors.

The [tragedy of Czech foreign policy](#), as we wrote on March 15, is that it's ideological, one-directional and basically unchanging in a world that is constantly moving. Czechs become victims of their own inability to react to what is happening around them. The excessively strict public-media and cybersecurity laws are being imposed at great expense to many Czech companies, but the Fiala government isn't willing to assess the full risks.

Biden is "running the world," but some of the policies his administration is promoting on the Czech level could also be running the Fiala government into the ground. Opposition from business is strong and isn't going to abate. And as media analyst [Aleš Borovan](#) said on [CNN Prima News on Wed.](#), if the cabinet pushes the media law through, it could be a major factor in helping Andrej Babiš to win the parliamentary elections next year.



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50-99	10x	24 600 Kč
100-199	20x	49 200 Kč
200-249	30x	73 800 Kč
250-499	70x	172 200 Kč
500 a více	100x	246 000 Kč

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such memorandum to be signed by the U.S. "And through this memorandum of understanding, through the framework that we've established, we have partnerships with countries to work together to help develop the capacity, to develop the technical means, to develop the human resources, to develop the organizational structures and institutions, to develop the collaboration, necessarily, to effectively deal with misinformation and disinformation, which is a poison being injected into our democracies by our adversaries."

Pres. Jan Rafaj of the Confederation of Industry told [CNN Prima News](#) that the government of Petr Fiala is discrediting public television by pushing the changes to the public-media laws through without discussing them in the usual way. Culture Min. Martin Baxa of ODS informed him, he said, that nothing in the proposal will be changed and that there's no other way for the government to save public media,