

## “Freedom of Speech in Ukraine”: Neo-Nazi Svoboda Party MP Threatens Head of Ukraine National TV

By [RT](#)

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*A Ukrainian nationalist MP assisted by a group of helpers abused and threatened interim head of Ukraine’s National TV.*

*They accused him of being anti-Ukrainian and bullied him into signing his resignation, claiming to be members of a new media regulator.*

*The office of the acting CEO of the National Television Company of Ukraine, Aleksandr Panteleymonov, was stormed by people who claimed to be members of the freedom of speech and information committee. Among them were Ukrainian Svoboda MP Igor Miroshnynchenko and party ideologist Andrey Ilyenko.*

*What began as a loud conversation quickly turned into a fight.*

Still from video by Svoboda Party

NTU is state-run and operates the nation’s largest public broadcaster, Pershyi Natsionalnyi.

Svoboda (Freedom) party members yelled at the interim CEO and beat him in the face, accusing the channel of a lack of nationalism and forcefully demanding his resignation.

*“Write your resignation!” Sit down! I told you, sit down!,” yelled one of the members while throwing punches and pushing Panteleymonov.*

*“You are feasting in my Ukraine!...Here is a paper, pen, write the resignation now quickly, you animal...You are Moskal (a derogatory term for Russian) garbage!”*

He replied to the men, saying: *“I am not Russian, I am Ukrainian.”* But to that they responded: *“You are Ukrainian? You are sh\*t! You campaigned for Moscow, you lied to Ukrainians for our money!”*



Image from [facebook.com/oleksandr.aronets](https://www.facebook.com/oleksandr.aronets)

The Svoboda party’s press secretary, Aleksandr Aronets, said on his Facebook page that

they “forced the head of the Pershyi Natsionalnyi Panteleymonov to write a letter of resignation.” As proof, he attached a picture of the paper.

*“During Yanukovich’s [presidency] he was a deputy for information policy of Egor Benkendorf [former NTU CEO and now the chairman of TV channel ‘Inter’], i.e. he was personally behind brainwashing the Ukrainians and was convincing them that improvements have happened already, and when people were getting killed, he was showing a TV series about the Russian army. For the last year he has been the head of the channel,”* reads the statement.

The Svoboda party is a far-right Ukrainian nationalist party, which is currently one of the five largest parties in the country. The event comes amid a wide, vocal presence of far-right groups in Ukrainian politics.

Meanwhile, a number of Russian channels have been banned in Ukraine, and a satellite provider that used to provide services for RT was threatened by unknown gunmen.

Just last week, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe criticized Kiev’s “repressive” move to shut down the broadcasting of Russian TV channels after the media watchdog reported that over 50 percent of providers have already fulfilled the order allegedly aimed at “ensuring national security and sovereignty.”

*“As of 11:00 GMT, March 11th, 50 percent of providers throughout Ukraine have disabled broadcasting of foreign channels”* and others are preparing to follow, the National Television and Radio Broadcasting Council of Ukraine said on its website.

This was not the first time that nationalist radicals coerced individuals to sign resignation letters by using violence and threats. Far-right radicals wearing masks stormed a city council meeting last week, armed with bats and hammers.

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