

One of the main justifications of Putin and his friends in the West for the cruel invasion of Ukraine is that Russia's hand was forced by NATO's expansion right up to its borders. What these cynics conveniently ignore is the question of why former Soviet satellite states rushed to join the Alliance.

Russia's 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia exactly 56 years ago today provides a compelling answer. The Czechs were engaged in a process of political and economic liberalization called the "Prague Spring" which so disturbed Moscow that it mustered a half a million Warsaw Pact troops and rolled into the country. Czech civilians fought back bravely with paving stones and Molotov cocktails but were quickly crushed.



This story was repeated over and over in the Russian Empire from the East German uprising of 1953 to the brutalization of Budapest in 1956 to the later post-Soviet invasions of Chechnya and Georgia. However, no NATO country has ever been attacked by Russia, which is precisely why Moscow is petrified of Ukraine's candidacy.

www.inthetrenchesukraine.org