

I didn't go to Wenceslas Square that day because I'd have certainly rushed into something and got myself killed by them in the process. They say that people were shouting "fascists" and "Gestapo" at them. No way! They are not brutal because they have lost their nerve or got out of control. They're not "fascist-like". They are separate and autonomous species in whom bestiality is born and bred – and manipulated. So next time you should shout "communists" at them and they won't take offence – in the same way that a pig won't take umbrage if you call it one (according to Klement Gottwald). Moreover, they're not bestial only when they're beating people up, they're that way all the time: when they're holding meetings, exchanging opinions, lecturing, educating or broadcasting. And this latest display is only a practical demonstration of their own words. "We have the leading role", they say ex cathedra, and anyone who denies it gets a walloping – that's one thing they're agreed on. It goes without saying that if you're "leading" something you have to give it a whack. So there you have it. With its back to the wall on account of its own actions, communism has given up its century-old scholarly flirtation with Hegel and ended up battering people: it's in its philosophical genes. And when the latter combine with the biological genes of North Moravian² thuggery, communism "puts forth a scarlet flower".

They always were beating somebody, of course, only they used to do it secretly or behind closed doors, unbeknown to other people or counting on their debased awareness. In that respect, the recent events have been a move away from darkness towards the light. And that's not all the government has been doing to assist us: after twenty years of suppressing information about every manifestation of civic dissent it has also made room in the media for Charter 77 and other groups, and given publicity to certain worthy names. It has at last fired young people's interest in Jan Palach! With the very worst of intentions, *Rudé právo* published the rhapsodic programme of the Czech

D 55

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Ludvík Vaculík: *Communism is best-ial*

After haunting Europe for over a century, the spectre of communism is ending its run by treating us as well to an open display of its true nature: beating up people on the main street. And the Soviet playwright Shatrov is wrong (unless it's just subterfuge) when he makes out in his play "Dictatorship of Conscience" (being performed at the Workers' Theatre in Zlín¹) that communism is a noble idea that merely needs purging of evil; that's impossible – it is evil.

Children: though its text must have charmed many of the paper's readers as it bubbled like a forest spring amidst the surrounding verbal sludge.

There's one real poser I don't have an answer to yet. Where did they manage to find so many thugs, both uniformed and otherwise? Who trained and directed them? And when we've seen the back of the present stopgap government, what will we do with so many moral defectives? The idea of a "common European home" is currently germinating both West and East, and the first basic legal instruments are tentatively laying the foundations of a more humane order within it. When that home is eventually set up, actions which are the product of a criminal disposition will be brought to trial. No doubt thousands of those indicted for cruelty in the performance of their duty will try to use the old Nuremberg alibi: "I was only following orders". It would therefore be worth the effort to get the following clause inserted in a future European legal code: All those who obey orders contrary to humanity shall forfeit their civil rights.

⁽¹⁾ The Moravian town, once the heart of the Bata footwear empire, known between 1953 and 1989 as Gottwaldov after the Communist leader and President Klement Gottwald.

² A reference to the newly appointed Minister of Interior. Ed.)