

**TO ENSURE PEACE AND PUBLIC ORDER...  
THE SECURITY FORCES' INTERVENTION  
AGAINST DEMONSTRATORS ON WENCESLAS  
SQUARE ON 20 – 21 AUGUST 1989**

*Milan Bárta*

For most of us, the demonstrations of 1989 are linked with the November Velvet Revolution and the fall of communism. In fact, this was actually the culmination of a long-standing process, which is inextricably linked with developments in the other countries of the Soviet Bloc. The events that led to the collapse of the Communist Party's totalitarian regime in Czechoslovakia in November 1989 were preceded by growing tensions in society, an increase in opposition activities and a wave of anti-government demonstrations. Although demonstrations in August 1989 were suppressed using the Standby Regiment of the State Police, they had more work than they expected. They had to check the identities of 1560 people and made almost 500 arrests. The opposition movement had clearly been gathering strength.

**"LEGALISATION" OF LIEUTENANT LUDVÍK  
ZIFČÁK**

*Pavel Žáček*

Ludvík Zifčák joined the State Security agency in 1982. He later worked his way up to becoming an active officer. Through a number of fateful coincidences, he ended up playing an important role in the collapse of the communist regime, which he still regrets to this day. As a provocateur using the false identity of a "student" called "Růžička," he hung around with opposition-minded students, whose leader he wanted to become. He also stood at the front of the demonstration march held on 17 November 1989. That was when he played his "fateful role" as the "dead student Martin Šmíd," which substantially accelerated the course of events, even if they went in a direction that Zifčák had not anticipated. Study includes a detailed view of the circles Zifčák moved in, his activities, and the system in which the State Security agency operated.

**A LONELY PROTEST ON A DECEMBER NIGHT  
MEANS OF POLITICAL THOUGHT AMONG  
"PROGRESSIVE" CATHOLICS IN POLAND**

*Pavel Kugler*

At the end of 1981, the People's Republic of Poland again experienced a serious political crisis, which the governing Polish United Wor-

kers' Party (PSDS) tried to find a way out of by negotiating with opposition forces, headed by the Solidarity union movement and representatives of the Polish Catholic Church.

Ultimately, the PSDS decided to resolve the situation by force and, early in the morning on 13 December, General Wojciech Jaruzelski declared a state of emergency in a speech on radio and television which applied to the entire country. With this decision, all reforms leading to liberalisation were suspended. Poland went into international isolation and the evident stagnation of the communist regime was prolonged by several more years. One of the few, who according to many saved the honour of Poles at this difficult time, was the member of the Council of State Ryszard Reiff. The author looks at this man's life story, which is full of political upheaval and reversal of power.

**THE "ESCAPEE" WHO WOULD NOT LEARN HIS  
LESSON**

**RESERVE GROUP CAPTAIN OTAKAR ČERNÝ**

*Ladislav Kudrna*

Group Captain Otakar Černý was the last surviving member of the 311<sup>th</sup> Czechoslovak bomber squadron, which served in the ranks of RAF during the Second World War. Despite high losses and his minimal chances of survival, he never abandoned his post as a radio-telegraph operator in a Wellington bomber. Even after he was shot down and captured, he continued to be an active anti-Nazi fighter, as illustrated by his repeated escapes from prison camps. With luck and with the aid of an appeal by the British government, he escaped being sentenced to death, which meant he was able to return to his country after its liberation. He served for three years in Czechoslovakia's air force before the advent of another form of totalitarianism in this country. Like many others who served with Western armies, Otakar Černý was also arrested and condemned, but he managed to escape from a penal camp in Dolní Jiřetín. After a number of adventures, he managed to make his way back to England, where his wife, son, recognition and work already awaited him. Group Captain Otakar Černý lived out his days in Cambridge, where he died on 14 October 2009.

**THE FREEDOM LEGION – DAAK AND THE JOSEF  
OPERATION**

*Václav Veber*

The Freedom Legion was a resistance group that was created out of many groups in the

autumn of 1952 and the spring of 1953 with the aim of establishing a control centre for domestic anti-communist resistance. It was headed by three people: Bohumil Kokrda, Miloslav Novák and Stanislav Cába. Surprisingly, the activity of this illegal group stirred up the American presidential campaign in the second half of 1952 and subsequently gave rise to broadcasts by Radio Free Europe and the Voice of America, which reacted to it. The Republicans ran a campaign with a slogan declaring their intention not to pursue the containment of communism, but the liberation of the nations of Central and Eastern Europe. They criticised the Democrats and Harry Truman for losing the important region of Eastern Europe and leaving it to its fate. The hopeful domestic resistance to communism began to actively operate against the regime. They organised hundreds of followers and prepared for a possible confrontation between the super powers. The Freedom Legion – DAAK resistance group was a very diverse resistance organisation that set itself the difficult goals of concentrating and unifying all anti-communist forces, primarily at home but also abroad. This did not happen, however. Instead, it marked the beginning of mass arrests of dozens of people, political trials and convictions that sent people to prison for decades.

**VALDICE AND THE FATES OF POLITICAL  
PRISONERS 1948–1989**

*Roman John*

Valdice Prison is one of the harshest correctional facilities, which was usually only used for criminals convicted of particularly serious and violent crimes before 1948. Naturally, during the era of communist totalitarianism, this prison was frequently the "home" of political prisoners unfairly convicted by the communist judiciary. People such as the writer Jiří Stránský, the priest and theologian Otto Mádr, the priest Felix Davídek, professor Josef Zvěřina and the poet Ivan Jirous etc. spent many years of compulsory imprisonment behind the walls of Valdice. Moreover, this jail converted from a Carthusian monastery had very bad living conditions and unsatisfactory work assignments. It was also known for the harsh isolation of its so-called "third department." Since 1989, the prison has once again only been used for real criminals.