

The other invasion



Comparisons of Czechoslovakia 40 years ago and Georgia 14 days ago are now a dime a dozen, but Czechs have mostly forgotten about the invasion of Iraq that came between.

They had a vicarious hand in it because of a [letter](#) Václav Havel wrote with seven other European leaders in support of George Bush's policy of preemptive war. [Peter Steiner](#), a Czech-born professor at Penn, asserts that this letter can be compared to the letter of invitation that brought on the 1968 Warsaw Pact invasion. By sending the letters, he argues, Slovak leader Vasil Bilak in 1968 and Havel in 2003 each demonstrated the conviction that "under certain circumstances the sovereignty of independent states ought to be disregarded."

There can be no doubt about whose side Havel will take in the Georgian invasion, but one would hope that his silence so far can be traced to soul-searching about whether his doctrine of interventionism has always proven morally defensible.



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