

## Democratic tear gas



Belarusian Pres./Non-Pres. Alexander Lukashenko said in June that the IMF had offered his country \$940m in rapid financing if it modeled its coronavirus response on that of Italy. (Click [here](#) for the English, or [here](#) for the original Russian.) "God forbid! I don't want to see the Italian situation repeated in Belarus," he said. "We have our own country and our own situation." The IMF was demanding quarantine, isolation and a curfew, he said. Whether his refusal had anything to do with the sharp increase thereafter in pro-democracy protests is for each to decide. Each reader must also decide to what extent the use of [tear gas and brute force](#) in Prague yesterday against anti-government demonstrators is comparable to the crackdown in Belarus. There is at least one very large difference. The Czech opposition offered its full support to the government of Andrej Babiš and the police for enforcement of the covid restrictions. Belarusian tear gas is authoritarian; Czech tear gas is democratic.

Read this later today in [Czech](#)

