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## Sobotka and Kellner force Babiš's China hand

Outgoing Czech PM Bohuslav Sobotka yesterday [invited his Chinese counterpart, Li Keqiang, to visit Prague in 2019](#), apparently without first clearing it with the next Czech PM. Sobotka knows that Andrej Babiš is no great admirer of China or of its business practices and is pushing his successor into a corner. Petr Kellner of PPF is doing the same, but from another angle. CRRC of China reportedly balked at buying Škoda Transportation because of the risk of criminal prosecution over the way Škoda Plzeň was privatized. Babiš, in turn, has been the biggest critic of the privatization, saying that Škoda has been used to suck money out of Czech Railways and DP Praha. Kellner has now bought Škoda, and until he sells it on to CRRC, he will in effect be Babiš's counterparty in commercial and legal disputes involving alleged Škoda swindles. The obvious question is whether Kellner would force Babiš's hand in such a way without first clearing it with the next PM.

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