

China and radar



On the same day that U.S. authorities saved the world financial system (maybe), defense ministers from the U.S. and the CR signed a key radar agreement in London. On the surface, the two events are unrelated. Wouldn't it be wise, though, for the Czechs to consider the possible impact of the financial crisis on the missile-defense deal? Standard due diligence calls for looking into the financial strength of a potential partner. Would the U.S. pass the litmus test after taking on about \$6-7 trillion in new liabilities in recent weeks? It's more than just a question of whether the U.S. can still afford the missile-defense project. What happens to U.S. foreign policy when Washington's biggest creditor, China, decides to impose more-stringent rules on its borrower, just as banks regularly do with their insolvent customers? Czech politicians have proven their willingness to defy Russia in backing missile defense; it might now be time to assess whether China is worth crossing too.

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