

What did Klaus want?

Václav Klaus removed a lot of doubt surrounding the Lisbon treaty yesterday by ratifying the text, but questions remain. One of the biggest is what Klaus got out of all this, other than his 15 minutes of fame. The Czech opt-out to the EU bill of rights won't take effect for at least two years, and it might not materialize at all if the political environment changes between now and then. If, instead, Klaus's main goal was to engender a backlash against the treaty and ride the wave of discontent to push for Czech withdrawal from the EU, he should have resigned in protest as president after refusing to ratify the treaty. As it stands, his behavior is not so different from Mirek Topolánek's. Remember, Topolánek dismissed the draft EU constitution as "shit," criticized the Lisbon treaty, and then accepted it anyway. Until we know Klaus's next move, his own anti-Lisbon efforts will seem a bit vain, in both senses of the word.

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