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Malice and calculation



The death of President Lech Kaczynski and other leading Polish politicians drew attention away from an unashamed power play last week at Prague Castle. President Václav Klaus, or his staff, intentionally failed to invite several prominent politicians to the New START signing and luncheon. Klaus's staff gave some feeble excuses for leaving out the likes of Václav Havel, Karel Schwarzenberg, Ondřej Liška and Alexandr Vondra, but Klaus made no apologies. He told [LN](#) that people who complained were unable to cope with their own fall from glory. Diplomatically, Klaus made a huge faux pas that demonstrates his own provincialism. He did the same thing recently when he criticized AmCham's effort to clean up public procurement. Politically, though, Klaus sent a very effective message to politicians and businesspeople. If you aren't with him, he's against you, and he'll make you pay if he can.

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