

## Fischer's calling

Rarely has a Czech prime minister been as equally popular among the public as among the business elite. Jan Fischer has achieved this remarkable feat by talking fiscal responsibility without attacking almost anyone's pocketbook, by running a grand coalition that pretended it wasn't, and by finding consensus among business rivals on the big issues without taking sides on the particulars. Instead of getting hung up on whether to support ČEZ or Czech Coal in their dispute, for example, Fischer gave smooth-sailing to an energy policy that serves them both. Fischer also contributed to the consolidation of the political system by marginalizing the Greens, giving indirect support to TOP 09 and showing that an ex-Communist can still be relevant in the 2000s. Discussions about who will be the next Czech president have centered on Karel Schwarzenberg, Miloš Zeman (R.I.P.) and Přemysl Sobotka, but it is Fischer who has shown all the attributes of what the public, the main political parties and big business want of someone in the office.



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