

Big Bad John

Nominating VV Chair Radek John as interior minister might be one of the smartest political moves new PM Petr Nečas could make in putting together his cabinet. Nečas would initially look a bit weak for giving in to VV's "extortion," but he could quickly turn VV's yearning for the ministry to his advantage. To retain his credibility as a reform prime minister, Nečas needs to take swift action to clean up ODS in Prague and to combat corruption in general. If John, as interior minister, starts turning the police into a functional, independent body, he'll be helping Nečas achieve both of these goals. If

VV instead abuses the interior ministry to help Vít Bárta's business pals, voters will understand this soon enough, and both VV and ODS will do poorly in the Prague elections. This would give Nečas more leverage within ODS and also in the cabinet. No matter which way John played it as interior minister - whether honest or dirty - it should ultimately help Nečas in his essential task of cleaning house at Prague city hall.



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