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## The high price of saving Vondra

The closer Miroslav Kalousek comes to forcing Alexandr Vondra out of the government, the more Kalousek risks bringing about a backlash that leads to his own political demise. Kalousek has been tolerated so far by voters, his coalition partners and the Schwarzenberg side of TOP 09, but a groundswell of anti-Kalousek opinion is developing and came close late last week to turning into an avalanche. This is probably why Kalousek withdrew his demand that Vondra resign. If Kalousek were the direct cause of Vondra's departure, it would turn more attention toward his own dubious activities in the areas of defense and public procurement, the eco-tender and the concentration of power at the finance ministry. If Kalousek now drops his attacks against Vondra, it will be very bad news for taxpayers, because it will mean that ODS has agreed to turn a blind eye to Kalousek's dealings, as the price of saving Vondra.

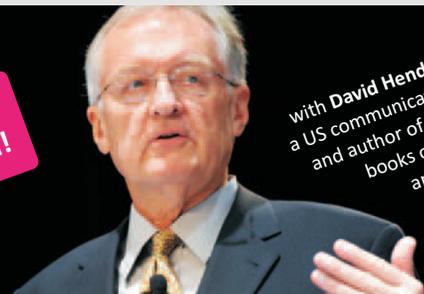
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