

## Klaus's national front



In its lead TV news story last night, Russia's state-owned [Channel One](#) ran an interview with an ex-CIA agent from Turkey who claimed that [Osama bin Laden](#) died in 2006. Such a report follows the pattern in Russia of declaring one thing officially - congratulating the U.S. on the killing of bin Laden this month - and spreading another story domestically. It's not so unlike the way Petr Hájek called bin Laden a "media fiction," only to be gently reproved by his boss, Václav Klaus. There's another similarity worth noting. Vladimir Putin boggled many minds 10 days ago when he announced the formation of a [National People's Front](#), officially for spreading the democracy around, unofficially for getting elected again as president.

Step-by-step, Klaus is doing something similar, though less officially. He's writing a travel diary for left-leaning Právo, he's playing favorites where possible to VV, he's cozying back up to ODS. The big difference is that Putin's political intentions after the current presidential term expires seem quite clear.

