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Russia's aircraft carrier in Central Europe

To equate refusing one loan to the IMF with exiting from Europe is ridiculous on one level. The CR has such a bad reputation within the EU that one more scar wouldn't be fatal. However, from the viewpoint of Finance Minister Miroslav Kalousek, the comparison makes political sense. His brand of politics is at risk. Almost everything he represents - poor financial management and forecasting, crony capitalism, reforms that benefit a select few - are coming under increasing attack. By creating a domestic demon of Václav Klaus and his predilection for Russia, Kalousek will consolidate the pro-EU vote on the right (leaving that on the left to ČSSD) and win kudos from the EU itself. Kalousek is playing classic disaster politics of the kind Merkel and Sarkozy have become experts at. But that doesn't mean he isn't right when he suggests on [Czech Radio](#) that Klaus wants the CR to be Russia's aircraft carrier in Central Europe.



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