

Zeman's useful idiot



We'll go out on a limb and predict that Michal Hašek of ČSSD will never become Czech prime minister. He served a useful purpose over the election weekend, when he fronted Miloš Zeman's effort to further weaken Bohuslav Sobotka by instigating a party coup, but at the same time Hašek dug his own grave. Czechs don't like putschists, and Hašek's usefulness to Zeman is therefore nearing its end. The more Hašek pushes to sideline Sobotka, the more Sobotka will become a martyr. He'll win the sympathy of even those who consider him a weakling and blame him for some of the worst privatization cases in the country (OKD, IPB). Ironically, the attempted coup probably increases the likelihood that Sobotka will become PM. The anti-Zeman forces allowed their nemesis to take the initiative right after the elections (as we discussed on Fri. in our [pre-election analysis](#)), but Sobotka is now turning this to his advantage. To outfox Zeman, he'll still need some help from those two great freedom fighters, Miroslav Kalousek and Karel Schwarzenberg.

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