
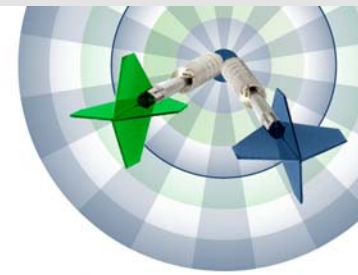


Ukraine and missile defense

Defense Minister Martin Stropnický spoke yesterday in the Brdy military zone about rescinding the zone's military status and converting it to civilian use. This isn't a new topic, but the timing of Stropnický's remark makes one wonder whether the minister has been following the international news. Certain Senate Republicans in the United States, specifically [John McCain](#) and Lindsey Graham, are talking about responding to the Russian invasion of the Crimea by reviving the Bush-era missile-defense plan and putting missiles or radar in the CR. The Brdy area, as you may recall, was the location being considered before Barack Obama canceled the plan, much to the delight of the Russians, who considered the radar a threat to them. The latest events give the Russians two reasons to chuckle. First, because Stropnický is speaking of abolishing the zone at the very same moment that the debate is resuming. And second, because McCain always denied in the past that the radar was targeted against Russia. He is now essentially admitting it was.

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