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Security as an afterthought



When it comes to military spending, Pres. Miloš Zeman and Defense Minister Martin Stropnický are speaking the same language. They used the media yesterday to advocate cost-effective use of military spending. It rang rather hollow, though, coming on the same day as the cabinet decision to sign off on the Kč 16.6bn extension of the lease for 14 Gripen fighters. Is it cost-effective for a country barely longer than three football fields to spend so much on its own fighter jets? Zeman called (again) for a single European army, but how can this work when each government is primarily concerned about contracts for its own defense companies and jobs for its voters, and not about efficient security? Or when EU immigration policies create more potential internal security threats by the day? The first step in a common European defense policy is for Europe to decide that it wants to survive, and no one is speaking this language.

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