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Visionary Czech foreign policy



Miloš Zeman has been accused of being the mouthpiece of Vladimir Putin, but he could also be fêted for paving the way for Barack Obama's new policy on Cuba. Months before Obama reversed direction, Zeman telegraphed it by saying repeatedly that sanctions haven't worked on Castro and won't work on Putin either. Obama apparently thinks that Zeman is at least half-right. Bohuslav Sobotka is also a prescient foreign-policy practitioner. In April of this year, he announced a new direction for Czech policy vis-à-vis China, and his cabinet has been implementing it ever since. Although he didn't mention Russia at the time, Sobotka now says that this "pivot" toward China was partly a result of the need to find substitute markets for Russia. Even before sanctions were imposed, Sobotka knew it was time to shift away from Russia. Impressive. Some people have 20/20 hindsight; Sobotka and Zeman have 20/20 foresight.

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