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## Independence for the police



ČSSD Chair Jan Hamáček made the headlines yesterday by declaring on Czech TV that his party will not support a proposal from ANO that would give the justice ministry a majority on the commission that chooses the top state prosecutors. He was supporting the trendy idea of liberating the prosecutorial arm from the executive branch, almost as though it were its own, fourth, branch of government (the other two being the judicial and legislative). Hamáček said this not only from the position of first deputy prime minister, but also of interior minister, who has the sole authority to appoint the country's top police officer, the police president. When Hamáček appointed Jan Švejdar to the position late last year, he said that Švejdar would be a guarantee of police independence in the Stork's Nest case. Using Hamáček's own logic for the prosecutors, though, wouldn't police independence only be assured if the interior minister were prevented by law from hand-picking the top cop?

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