


A daily e-mail bulletin of Czech wit & wisdom. For your free subscription, write to subscribe@fsfinalword.com

Whose side are Křetínský and Topolánek on?

[Respekt magazine](#) pointed last week to the €6bn debt of Daniel Křetínský's EPH and quoted an unnamed billionaire as saying in effect that once the banks jumped on the "aircraft carrier," they had to stay, even if they thought it was one big "letadlo" (pyramid scheme). As we noted in March 2019, [Vladimir Putin is Křetínský's No. 1 source of income](#). A key part of what keeps EPH going is its 49% stake in the Slovak pipelines that carry Gazprom's gas. This brought EPH [€136m in the last fiscal year](#). A [former top Ukrainian official](#) complained in July that when then-PM Mirek Topolánek traveled to her country during the gas crisis of 2009, all he wanted was to get the gas back on, regardless of what concessions had to be made to Russia. Topolánek now works for [Křetínský](#) in dealing with [foreign institutions](#). He has become the Czech [Gerhard Schröder](#), but with [opposing pipeline interests](#). In the ongoing Ukraine-Russia dispute, Putin might have more leverage in the CR than it seems.

Read this later today in [Czech](#)  Find us on Facebook

HOW MUCH MONEY
DO YOU HAVE TO GIVE
TO WIN A PUBLIC TENDER?

A hundred crowns each month is enough. Become a member of the Transparency International Club. Your financial subsidy helps us fight corruption and establish fairer working conditions in the sphere of public affairs. **More on www.transparency.cz/klub**

 **TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL** | Česká republika