

The Great Pavel



We wrote in [May](#) that without the glasses and beard, Petr Fiala would resemble the [smiling Jay Gatsby](#) and that the two share a willingness to make sacrifices in the pursuit of a higher ideal. Time has shown, though, that the better Gatsby in Czech politics is Petr Pavel. One of the key scenes of the book by F. Scott Fitzgerald comes when the narrator asks Meyer Wolfsheim, a gangster who apparently fixed the World Series in 1919, whether he started Gatsby in business. "Start him! I made him," Wolfsheim replies. "I raised him up out of nothing, right out of the gutter. I saw right away he was a fine-appearing, gentlemanly young man, and when he told me he was an Oggsford, I knew I could use him good." Part of it was a name change, which the young Pavel, as an agent-in-waiting, also went through. Lobbyist [Petr Kolář](#) has spoken about the need to polish up Pavel to make him presentable, and now billionaire businessman [Jan Dobrovský](#) could add something more about how important it is to keep a frontman on a short leash. Alas, the rags-to-riches Gatsby tale ended in tragedy; he died with just one friend in the world.

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