

# the **fleet sheet's final word**

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## Havel and Russia



By an unpredictable confluence of events, Dmitri Medvedev's recent visit to Prague is turning into a bit of a retroactive PR calamity. The list of bloopers from the visit itself is long - the Castle censorship of questions about the Russian elections, Václav Klaus's own defense by omission of the elections, his careless use of "Soviet" once for "Russian," his shameless support for the Russian bid for Temelín, the bone-chilling exchange between the two presidents about Russia using it euros to buy crowns. Add to this the Kremlin's diplomatic pettiness of not posting its condolences on the death of Václav Havel, which the pro-Havel camp has jumped on. The logical next step for the anti-Klauses is to mount a campaign to exclude Russia from the Temelín bid on security and Havelian grounds. A wise Russian said recently, with regard to Putin, that when such a small man casts such a long shadow, you know the sun is setting. It is much too early to predict the twilight of Putin's Russia, but its relations with the CR have taken an unexpected turn for the worse.



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