

## Lecture 7 (AO, 12 November 2009)

### Environmental Policy in the Central European Context

Time: 3 p.m. – 6 p.m.

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\*\*\* Questions regarding lecture 5 and the worksheet for that “lecture”? \*\*\*

- The Duhem-Quine problem:

„experimental results always present a joint test of the theory (however well articulated, formally) that motivated the test, and all the things you had to do to implement the test.“ (Smith EE 2002, p. 98) ... the so-called auxiliary hypotheses ...

- Why economists use financial incentives:

widespread belief among economists that they reduce performance variability

widespread belief among economists that increasing stakes tends to move experimental data closer to the theoretical prediction

The evidence seems to support that claim.

- Smith & Walker (1993) study
- Camerer & Hogarth (1999) study
- Hertwig & Ortmann (2001) studies

- Harrison & Rutstroem (1999/2008) study

*Chapter 81*

EXPERIMENTAL EVIDENCE ON THE EXISTENCE  
OF HYPOTHETICAL BIAS IN VALUE ELICITATION METHODS

GLENN W. HARRISON and E. ELISABET RUTSTRÖM

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Table 1  
Summary of findings of hypothetical bias

Study	Key features of bias comparison	Hypothetical bias	Statistically significant?
BH		-46%	no
JLJ	Conservative interpretation of CVM responses vs real; largest bias reported.	-43%	no
MSC	Smallest bias found at highest risk treatment.	-25%	?
Bohm	Comparison with auction institution.	0%	no
JLJ	Conservative interpretation of CVM responses vs real; smallest bias reported.	0%	no
SM		3%	no
DFG	Excluding team 2 and outlier identified in study.	8%	no
Bohm	Comparison of means; smallest bias reported.	16%	yes
JLJ	Standard interpretation of CVM responses vs real; smallest bias for lowest price.	19%	yes
Bohm	Comparison of medians; smallest bias reported.	25%	?
Griffin et al.	Comparison of proportion of "yes" responses.	29%	?
KMD	Private good.	30%	yes
DP	Means, excluding non-respondents.	35%	?
Bohm	Comparison of means; highest bias reported.	40%	yes
Frykblom	Dichotomous choice responses.	56%	yes
DFG	Comparison of "raw" means.	58%	no
BHK	Comparison of means.	60%	yes
Frykblom	Open-ended responses.	60%	yes
CEHM		67%	yes
DFG	Estimated demand functions; comparison of means; smallest bias reported.	69%	no
KMP	Public good.	100%	yes
Bohm	Comparison of medians; largest bias reported.	100%	?
MSC	Largest bias reported at lowest risk.	120%	?
CHR	Juicers; within-subjects.	163%	yes
CHR	Calculators; between-subjects.	163%	yes
BHK	Comparison of medians.	176%	?
DP	Comparison of means, assuming non-respondents have WTP = \$0.	203%	?
Neill et al.	Painting; comparison of means.	290%	yes
DFG	Estimated demand functions; comparison of means; largest bias reported.	351%	no
Neill et al.	Painting; comparison of medians.	400%	?
JLJ	Standard interpretation of CVM responses vs real; highest bias reported.	701%	yes
CHR	Chocolates; within-subjects comparisons.	873%	yes
SS	Comparison of means.	2017%	?

(continued on next page)

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Table 1  
(continued)

Study	Key features of bias comparison	Hypothetical bias	Statistically significant?
Neill et al.	Map; HVA vs RVA; comparison of means.	2400%	yes
Neill et al.	Map; CVM vs RVA; comparison of means.	2600%	yes

Notes: The acronym for each study is provided in the References; bias measured as hypothetical minus real over real when positive, and real minus hypothetical over hypothetical when negative; statistical significance is determined at a one-sided 10% level, and a question mark indicates that there was insufficient information in the study to allow a simple determination.

### Murphy and Stevens (M&S), Contingent Valuation (CV), Hypothetical Bias, and Environmental Economics (2004)

CV – contentious debate, recall litigation following the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill in the Prince William Sound

Contention stems from fact that surveys are hypothetical in both the payment for and provision of the good in question (which may be public but could also be private): “We do not know whether what an individual says she *would* do in the hypothetical setting matches what she *will* do when actually given the opportunity to do so.” (p. 180)

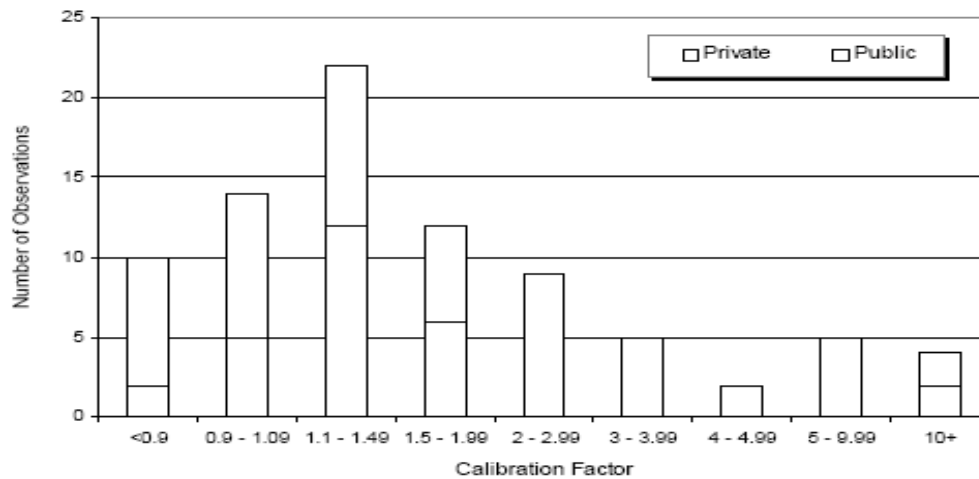
The usual concern (that seems to be borne out in many studies) that people will over-state their WTP: “As a matter of logic, if you do not have to pay for the good but a higher verbal willingness to pay (WTP) response increases the chance of its provision, then verbalize away to increase your expected utility. Similarly, if your verbal statement of a higher willingness to accept (WTA) compensation might reduce the risk that the commodity will be taken away from you verbalize as high an amount as you want.” (Harrison and Rutstroem ~ 1999/2008, p. 752)

Experiments to the rescue? Why because “unlike a typical field CV survey, a carefully designed experiment can include both hypothetical and real payment scenarios. By comparing outcomes in these two settings, one can make some inferences about the existence of hypothetical bias, its causes, and ways to mitigate its effects.” (p. 183) -> “induced values” rather than “homegrown values” (“most valuation experiments ... do not use induced values”, p. 185), calibration

M&S mention the Champ et al. study on WTP for Grand Canyon road removal; one set of participants was asked a hypothetical contingent valuation donation question, another set was asked for actual contributions for road removal. “Both surveys made clear that the project was the only source of funding for the program. The estimated mean WTP in the hypothetical treatment (\$46 - \$89) was significantly greater than the mean actual contributions (\$9).” (p. 185) It is the real payment control treatment that normally does not exist in survey situations.

“Generally, it is the body of experimental evidence, rather than a single study that allows us to draw more reliable conclusions about what we do and do not know.” (p. 183)

Here are the results of one of two meta-studies (actually this one updating and correcting the earlier one), based on 83 observations from 23 studies:



Source: Murphy et al., 2003

**Figure 1. Distribution of calibration factors by type of good (where calibration factor = hypothetical value/actual value)**

- Findings:
  - o The mean hypothetical value about 2.5 to 3 times greater than actual values
  - o The median hypothetical value about 1.5 (smaller because of outliers to the right)
  - o About one half of the valuation experiments use private goods, the other half use public goods; see p. 187.
  - o Hypothetical bias seems to exist for private and public goods (p. 184, Fig. 1) although there is no agreement whether indeed hypothetical bias is lower for private goods as List & Gallet (2001) claim, M&S (2004, p. 184) argue that the evidence is mixed but note that “as shown by Figure 1, private goods, in fact have a larger share of calibration factors which exceed 1.5 (54% vs. 36%). However, it is worth noting that most of the very large calibration factors (> 5) are from public good experiments.” (p. 188)
    - Public goods is what we are really interested in (but ... )
    - Private goods, on the other hand, are familiar in a narrow and broad sense, and -- because of their very nature -- are not afflicted by biases due to free-riding

So, what to do now that we know that hypothetical bias is a problem but that the problem can't be captured easily in one point estimate?

- NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) panel of experts: we need better ways to "calibrate" the hypothetical bias
- Blackburn, Harrison, and Rutstroem (1994): here you are ! (they created a statistical bias function using socioeconomic characteristics [from an earlier experiment, Cummings, Harrison, and Rutstroem] to estimate the extent to which people overstate their value.)
- Unfortunately, that is also not completely solving the problem because people may have different degrees of uncertainty about their valuation and therefore hypothetical bias might be sensitive to the specific good being investigated (not just the type of good), and so on.
- So, people have been searching for other calibration techniques such as "cheap talk" (pp. 186 – 7) . Here, essentially, you alert participants to the likely existence of hypothetical bias and hope that they create, so to speak their own bias function: "According to the premise behind this technique, simply making respondents aware of hypothetical bias, regardless of underlying causes, is sufficient to eliminate it." (p. 187) Unfortunately, "the evidence about cheap talk's robustness is mixed .. " (p. 187) Even the length of a script seems to play a role.

It really would help to know why hypothetical bias exists in the first place.

What causes it?

What are its determinants?

- "The experimental valuation literature seems to have focused more on developing better CV instruments and calibration techniques without directly addressing the underlying sources of the bias." (p. 187)
- The argument that Harrison and Rutstroem made (see above; a positive response to the valuation question increases the probability of provision of a public good) does clearly not apply to private goods, so it cannot be the whole story.
- Nor do respondent uncertainty or ambivalence theory (don't bother)

Here is the authors' conclusion:

Let's take stock of what we do and do not know. It has been well-established that hypothetical values exceed actual values, and calibration techniques have had some success in aligning these values. Less is known about the underlying causes of these differences in values. The inconsequential nature of the CV survey cannot alone explain these differences; it might explain greater variability in hypothetical responses, but not higher mean and median responses. Therefore, there must be an interaction of the hypothetical decision with other factor(s). Expressing positive sentiment toward the good, or an attempt to increase the likelihood of the good's provision, is certainly possible in a public goods setting, but this fails to explain why hypothetical bias also exists with private goods since these factors are not applicable. There is some evidence that respondents may be uncertain, but the causes of this uncertainty and its implications for valuation are not well understood. Ultimately, hypothetical bias is likely to be individual-specific and a composite of a variety of factors. Experiments can play a key role in developing a better understanding of what causes hypothetical bias and can assist researchers in designing CV instruments which incorporate these considerations.

Alternative explanations?

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## **The Greens, Czech Politics, and the Current Political Situation**

*References:*

Stephen Deets & Karel Kouba (2008), The Czech Greens revived. *Environmental Politics*, 17.5, 815 – 821

Various recent articles from Radio Prague ( <http://www.radio.cz/en/news> (see archive section), Prague Post, and Ceske noviny

*The Current Political Situation: A Mess*

March 24, 2009: Apparently to everyone's surprise [including Paroubek], the centre-right government succumbs to (yet another, the fifth) vote of no confidence (101 votes against, of which 97 votes came from Social Democrats and Communists, and four of "independents" that were formerly members of Civic Democrats and Greens)

- after two years and two months of government

- in the middle of a worsening economic crisis, essentially coming from the real sector in Germany rather than the financial sector here, with
  - o January's industrial output down by 23.3 percent year-on-year, capping a fourth straight monthly drop
  - o January's orders down by 26.6 percent year-on-year
- in the middle of being at the helm of the EU (with the Lisbon Treaty still to be ratified)
  - o The Czech Republic, at that point, remained the only member state that had yet to finish voting on the unifying EU document. (Although it passed through the lower house in February, its fate in the Senate, home to several Euroskeptic ODS members, remained unclear.)
  - o The chief Euroskeptic, President Václav Klaus, suddenly had significant influence over EU presidency due to Topolánek's lame-duck status (and his right to appoint a new government). As a matter of fact, Klaus suggested himself as acting EU president. Not an enticing thought given that an important EU summit was scheduled for June during which it was to be discussed how to complete the ratification of the Lisbon treaty.

March 27, 2009: Czech Prime Minister Topolánek

- formally submits his resignation to President Klaus
- is not, contrary to expectations, asked to remain in office until the end of the country's EU presidency

March 27, 2009: Czech President Klaus

- makes it clear that he will use his constitutional right to appoint whoever he wants as prime minister designate
- formulates condition: appointment will go to the person that can provide guarantee that has majority – 101 votes -- in lower house (mission impossible?)

April 4, 2009: News that interim ("caretaker") government supported by the three parties on which the government drew (Civic Democrats [Topolánek, until last year also Klaus], Christian Democrats, Greens [Bursak]) and the Social Democrats [Paroubek] who initiated the vote of no confidence (but without participation of the communists), under interim prime minister Jan Fischer (then head of the Czech Statistical Office), possibly as "government of experts", should take over by second week of May until early elections to be held on October 9 and 10.

April 7, 2009: Christian Democrats voted not to nominate their ministers to such a government

April 9, 2009: President Klaus to appoint Jan Fischer prime minister

The news came shortly after the centre-right Civic Democrats and the opposition Social Democrats reaffirmed their support for a caretaker government led by non-partisan Jan Fischer. Under the deal, the new interim administration should have 16 non-partisan cabinet members, take over on May 9th and rule the country until early elections in October.

The deal on a caretaker government has led to a serious rift within the Christian Democrats of the outgoing coalition. The party leadership ruled on Wednesday that it would not support the emerging Fischer cabinet, a decision that caused a public rift. At least five deputies, including Finance Minister Miroslav Kalousek on Wednesday pledged to support the caretaker administration, despite a threat from the party leader that if they broke with the party line they would not be allowed to run for the party in the European and parliamentary elections.

April 9, 2009: President Klaus appoints Jan Fischer prime minister

Czech President Václav Klaus appointed Jan Fischer as the country's new prime minister during a brief ceremony at Prague Castle on Thursday afternoon.

In an earlier statement, outgoing Prime Minister Mirek Topolánek said that while no major political decisions await the caretaker government it nonetheless faces some tough tasks. These include completing the Czech EU presidency with the heads of government meeting in June and a series of bilateral summits. At home, he said it would have to push through measures to counter the economic crisis and prepare the next budget. Mr Topolánek said his government had worked to find a solution to the political crisis it was not guilty of creating and which had had a severe impact on the country's reputation abroad.

April 11, 2009: Topolánek: government collapse in Czech Republic hurts all small countries in EU

Outgoing Prime Minister Mirek Topolánek has said that the collapse of the Czech government halfway through the country's EU presidency harms all small countries in the 27-nation bloc. In an interview with the newspaper Mladá fronta Dnes on Saturday, the outgoing Czech prime minister said that all post-communist countries and other small countries in Europe relied upon the Czech Republic to handle its presidency well. Mr Topolánek added that the collapse of his cabinet halfway through the presidency had given rise to comments in the European media, questioning small countries' ability to run the EU

April 12, 2009: Paroubek reacts to 'parochial myopia' comments published in The Economist

The leader of the opposition Social Democrats has reacted to comments published in this week's edition of The Economist, accusing Czech politicians of 'parochial myopia' for topping the government halfway through the country's EU presidency. Jiří Paroubek, whose Social Democrats instigated the no-confidence vote, said that the magazine was ignoring the 'moral' side of the issue. Speaking on TV Prima on Sunday, Mr Paroubek said that Mirek Topolánek's outgoing cabinet was founded on a basis of 'political corruption' and that the prime minister and his government had attempted to interfere in the justice system and this country's media. In this week's Charlemagne column, The Economist said that a Czech government of 'technocrats' would 'leave the presidency politically dead'.

April 14, 2009:

Outgoing government (?) approves law for early elections

The lower house has approved a constitutional law which cuts short its term and opens the way to early elections in October. The one-off proposal had the backing of the two main parties, the Civic Democrats and opposition Social Democrats. On Tuesday, the law was passed by the two-thirds majority required to make a change to the Czech Constitution.

EU environment ministers start two-day informal meeting in Prague

EU environment ministers are gathered in Prague for a two-day informal meeting. Topping their agenda is the issue of climate change and finding a common EU strategy to take to the Copenhagen Climate Summit at the end of this year. The UN conference will attempt to find a replacement to the Kyoto treaty, setting worldwide targets for cutting emissions of greenhouse gases by 2012. In Prague on Tuesday, ministers are also hoping to discuss whether the EU 27 should be bound by a stricter legal framework for cutting carbon emissions.

April 15, 2009: EU environment summit

European Union environment ministers called on the United States Wednesday to help the bloc lead and finance the battle against climate change. Czech minister Martin Bursik, who hosted the EU environment summit in Prague said that Europe needed to build a coalition with the US if the fight against climate change was to be effective.

Earlier this month in Prague, US President Barack Obama vowed that the United States was "now ready to lead" on climate change, breaking with his predecessor George W. Bush, whose stance had long frustrated Europeans. So far, the US has agreed to cut its emissions to 1990 levels by 2020, while Europe has pledged to cut its own emissions by at least 20 percent of 1990 levels by 2020, and 30 percent if other advanced economies follow suit.

April 18, 2009:

Former president criticizes Social Democrats for role in bringing down government

Former Czech president Václav Havel has criticized the opposition Social Democrats for their role in bringing down the government in March. In an interview for Saturday's Lidové noviny, the former president suggested the move, halfway through the EU presidency, was an act of "stupidity" – something he hoped voters wouldn't forget. <snip>

Social Democrat leader warns party to focus on pre-election campaign

The leader of the Social Democrats, Jiří Paroubek, has warned party members to focus more on the pre-election campaign than on helping the incoming interim government. A new technocratic cabinet led by incoming Prime Minister Jan Fischer will take office on May 9 with the aim of completing the Czech EU presidency as well as leading the country to early elections. Speaking to the party executive committee, Mr Paroubek reminded members that the interim government was not the Social Democrats' own. He also said he anticipated a tough campaign from political rivals the Civic Democrats, saying a repeat of what he called the "criminal" Kubice report "was possible". The police document, warning of growing links between the Social Democratic Party (then head of the government) and organised crime in 2006, was leaked just days before parliamentary elections, won by the Civic Democrats.

Head of PEN Club critical of president in Austrian daily

The Czech writer, poet and former diplomat Jiří Gruša has criticised Czech President Václav Klaus in an interview for the Austrian daily Kurier, calling steps by the president to play a bigger role on the international scene "alarming". Mr Gruša was education minister in Mr Klaus's government in the 1990s. In the interview the writer, who now chairs the International PEN Club, also criticised the recent vote of no-confidence on Mirek Topolánek's government during the Czech EU presidency, something which he said he had not thought possible.

April 21, 2009: Havel distances himself from Civic Democrat endorsement

Former president Václav Havel has distanced himself from speculation that he could back the centre-right Civic Democrats in upcoming October elections. Havel said that he was not about to wear a political t-shirt and if he were to do so it would be green. Havel sparked speculation following comments to the Lidové Noviny newspaper last week which criticised the Social Democrat led no-confidence vote which toppled the centre-right coalition as a 'stupidity.' He added that he sympathised with the Civic Democrats and expected voters would make the Social Democrats pay for what they had done.

May 5, 2009:

Interim PM presents new cabinet

Interim Prime Minister Jan Fischer announced his cabinet on Tuesday. He presented his list of ministers to President Vaclav Klaus on Tuesday afternoon, who accepted Mr Fischer's suggestions, saying they spelt an end to the political uncertainty in this country in recent months. <snip> Mr Fischer's caretaker government of experts will take over from the outgoing cabinet on May 8. The caretaker cabinet will steer the country to early elections, to be held in October.

Mr. Fischer said on Monday the main goal of his administration would be to successfully finish the country's EU presidency and to draft the 2010 state budget, keeping the budget deficit below 150 billion crowns.

Outgoing PM says country's reputation in EU damaged by government fall

In a question and answer session on the Czech Republic's EU presidency website on Tuesday, outgoing Prime Minister Mirek Topolánek said that he believed the fall of his cabinet in March had damaged the image of the Czech Republic abroad. Furthermore, Mr Topolánek said, the fall of the Czech government halfway through the country's EU presidency had given big countries a reason to doubt the competence of small countries when presiding over the bloc. <snip> The outgoing prime minister is set to be replaced by interim leader Jan Fischer on May 8.

May 6, 2009:

Senate vote seals Czech parliamentary approval for EU's Lisbon treaty

The Czech Senate has voted to ratify the European Union's Lisbon treaty, two and a half months after it was approved by the lower house. The motion was passed when 54 out of 79 senators present raised their hands for Lisbon ratification in Wednesday afternoon's vote. It was effectively decided by members of the Civic Democratic Party, which had previously been opposed to Lisbon: twelve of the party's senators voted in favour of its ratification.

Czech president says he will wait to put signature to ratification if senators send Lisbon to court

The Czech president, Vaclav Klaus, now has to put his signature to ratification in order for it to come into effect. A group of Euro-sceptic Civic Democrat senators have proposed sending the treaty to the Czech Constitutional Court; Mr Klaus said after Wednesday's vote that if they do so, he will not put his signature to Lisbon until the court rules on whether the document is in line with the Czech constitution. A request last year from Civic Democrat senators for the court to consider the treaty put the matter on ice for some months and is one reason the Czech Republic is among the last states to deal with its ratification. President Klaus also said he would not sign ratification until Lisbon has been approved by Ireland. He reiterated his view that Ireland's no vote in a referendum last year rendered the treaty a dead document.

May 8, 2009:

New caretaker government takes office

President Vaclav Klaus has named the country's new interim government to office. 16 new ministers were sworn in at Prague Castle shortly after four pm on Friday. The move was a final step in ending a crisis which ensued when the previous cabinet was defeated by the opposition in a vote of no-confidence. One of the main goals of the new caretaker cabinet, led by Prime Minister Jan Fischer, will be to see through the remaining two months of the Czech EU presidency, as well as to lead the country to early elections. At the ceremony on Friday, Czech President Vaclav Klaus expressed confidence the government would be successful in facing its tasks ahead.

Analysts: government faces difficult task in improving image of Czech EU presidency

In related news, one of the tasks faced by the caretaker cabinet will be to improve the image of the Czech EU presidency, which many observers say suffered after the fall of the previous government. Czech news agency CTK reported on the matter on Friday. A number of recent informal summits hosted by the Czech EU presidency, such as a meeting on regional development, had since seen a low turn-out by European officials. Many, including the Czech ambassador to the EU, Milena Vicensova, described the fall of the previous government halfway through the EU presidency as most unfortunate. The Czech Republic took over the running of the EU on January 1, and immediately had to address a number of international crises - including the conflict in Gaza and the gas crisis between Russia and Ukraine.

May 15, 2009:

President Klaus says he had no hand in government's fall

President Klaus has rejected allegations that he had contributed to the fall of former prime minister Topolánek's centre right government <snip>. In an interview for Friday's Lidove noviny Mr. Klaus said that the main reason for the government's fall was infighting within all three ruling parties which weakened the government in the lower house. He said it had been folly on the part of Green Party leader Martin Bursik to expel two deputies from the

party at a time when the governing coalition no longer had a majority in the lower house. Shortly after his government was toppled, the former prime minister Mirek Topolánek accused President Klaus, Prague mayor Pavel Bem and rivals within his own Civic Democratic Party of having orchestrated the fall.

May 16, 2009:

Klaus: Topolánek's former government most 'lobbied' in Czech history

In an interview with Lidové noviny on Saturday, Czech president Vaclav Klaus said that he was 'disappointed' in the former government of Mirek Topolánek, and never had a cabinet succumbed to such pressure from lobbyists. Mr Klaus said that in the history of the Czech Republic, he had never seen a government which yielded so much to lobbyists' interests and named former Prime Minister Mirek Topolánek's advisor Marek Dalík as one lobbyist to have penetrated the upper echelons of the Czech government in particular.

May 17, 2009: Finance Ministry rejects appeals from unsuccessful candidates for 'tender of the century'

The Finance Ministry has rejected the appeals of three unsuccessful candidates for the so-called 'tender of the century'. The tender to clean up past environmental damage is thought to be worth 115 billion crowns (5.8 billion USD). The announcement was made by senior ministry official Tomas Uvira on Czech Television on Sunday. Mr Uvira added that if the unsuccessful candidates wanted to appeal this decision then they could, at the country's Office for the Protection of Competition.

May 18, 2009: Havel comes out in support of Martin Bursik's Greens

Former Czech president Vaclav Havel has come out in support of the Green Party lead by Martin Bursik, calling the party the authentic and true proponent of green ideals. The Czech Green Party has recently split, with rebel Green MPs now standing for the newly-founded Democratic Green Party in upcoming European elections. On Monday, former president Vaclav Havel came out in support of Martin Bursik's Greens, calling the party an alternative to the two main parties in the Czech Parliament, the Social Democrats and the Civic Democrats. Mr Havel said that while the two main parties were very similar in their 'technocracy', the Greens were the only party concerned by matters aside from economic growth. These are some of the strongest remarks that Mr Havel has made in favour of one particular political party. The Greens are one of around 30 parties standing for election in June's European parliamentary vote.

Schwarzenberg says Greens limit lobbyists' influence on Czech political scene

At the same press conference on Monday, former foreign minister Karel Schwarzenberg also spoke out in support of the Greens. According to Mr Schwarzenberg, without the Green Party, the Czech political scene would be 'more boring' and more vulnerable to the influence of various lobby groups.

May 19, 2009: Former PM Topolánek rejects accusations of excessive lobbying

Civic Democrat leader Mirek Topolánek has sharply rejected President Vaclav Klaus's accusations of unprecedented lobbying during his government's tenure. Hitting back in an interview for the daily Mlada fronta Dnes, Mr Topolánek enumerated a list of lobbyists closely linked to Mr Klaus's government in the 1990's, adding that the president would most likely deny knowing the lobbyists in question and that under normal circumstances he would not have brought the matter up on the grounds of common courtesy. Mr. Klaus in recent years has been unsparingly critical of the Civic Democrats, the party he himself founded in 1991, for what he sees as a divergence from core conservative principals (? , AO) under Mr Topolánek's leadership. The current dispute was sparked by Mr Klaus's claim that no government in the course of the past 20 years had allowed lobbying to reach the level it did during Mr Topolánek's tenure."

May 21, 2009: Moody's downgrades banking sector rating

Moody's Investors Service has downgraded the rating on the Czech banking sector from stable to negative as it expects the quality of assets and banks' profitability to worsen sharply, the international rating agency said in a report sent to the CTK news agency. After years of strong and stable GDP growth, the pace of the Czech economy slowed to 3.1 percent in 2008 and, according to estimates, should register a 3.5 percent fall in 2009. Moody's analysts said the quality of the banks' assets in general has remained high but there has been a certain worsening and Moody's predicts the level of unpaid loans will grow sharply in the short to medium term.

June 9, 2009:

#### Five of 13 Christian Democrat MPs quit party

Five MPs have quit the Christian Democrats, the fourth biggest grouping in the Czech lower house. Miroslav Kalousek, Jan Husak, Ladislav Sustr, Vlasta Parkanova and Pavel Severa all said they were leaving the party on Tuesday. There are now eight MPs left in the deputies group of the Christian Democrats, which is headed by the party's new leader Cyril Svoboda.

Mr Kalousek, who was finance minister in the last government, is planning to form a new centre-right party named TOP 09 to contest general elections in October. Meanwhile, the Czech News Agency reported that a number of Christian Democrat senators were also considering leaving the party.

#### Bursik resigns as Green Party leader after poor showing in European elections

Martin Bursik has resigned as leader of the Greens in the wake of a poor showing for the party in elections to the European Parliament at the weekend. The Green Party received just two percent of the vote, falling well short of the five-percent threshold needed to win any seats. Speaking after a five-hour meeting of the Greens' leadership, Mr Bursik said he was taking personal responsibility for the party's electoral failure. Deputy head Ondrej Liska has been named acting chairman and will lead the Greens into early elections in October.

The Green Party was for some time beset by internal divisions which culminated with some high-profile members leaving to form another Green group, who also did badly in the European elections.

#### Czech economy officially in recession after second quarter of contraction

The Czech economy is officially in recession, after GDP fell for the second consecutive quarter in the first three months of 2009. The economy shrank by 3.4 percent year-on-year in the quarter, the Czech Statistical Office said on Tuesday, after a revision confirmed its estimate from May. The poor figures have been blamed on a decline in the manufacturing sector; the Czech Republic is heavily dependent on the car industry. The Czech National Bank forecasts a 2.4 percent contraction for the whole of this year.

Meanwhile, consumer inflation hit a 28-month low in May: the 1.3 percent year-on-year inflation recorded last month was the lowest seen since January 2007, according to official data.

June 11, 2009:

#### Kalousek unveils new centre-right party: TOP 09

Former Christian Democratic leader and ex-finance minister Miroslav Kalousek has officially unveiled his new centre-right party, TOP 09. The official announcement had been highly anticipated as the party is expected to draw many members from other centre-right parties. TOP 09, which stands for tradition, responsibility and prosperity, will be based on a platform of social conservatism and fiscal responsibility with a strong emphasis on "Europe's Judeo-Christian tradition". Historically one of the leading members of Christian Democrats, Mr Kalousek resigned his party membership on account of what he sees as increasing leftward tendencies. Five other Christian Democrat MPs have also left the party, reducing its tally of MPs from 13 to seven.

#### Karel Schwarzenberg to lead TOP 09

Former foreign minister Karel Schwarzenberg on Thursday confirmed speculation he will be taking the leading role in the new party. One of the Czech Republic's most popular politicians, Mr Schwarzenberg represented the Green Party in the previous government in the post of foreign minister. Speaking at the official presentation of TOP 09, Mr Schwarzenberg said that he recognised he did not have the support of a part of the Green constituency, but that as a former forester he would remain a proponent of that party's ideals. His migration to the new centre right party is another part of the ongoing reorganisation of many parties following elections to the European Parliament and the reshuffling of the Christian Democratic leadership. <snip>

June 23, 2009: Klaus last to decide on Lisbon

The Czech president, Vaclav Klaus, told Czech Radio on Tuesday that he would only make up his mind on whether or not he will ratify the Lisbon treaty after all other EU states have reached a decision. Mr Klaus, who is a staunch critic of the reform document, said he would wait for the result of the Irish referendum scheduled for October. He also

said he would not decide before the Constitutional Courts in the Czech Republic and Germany reach their verdicts on the document, and he will also wait for the Polish position on the issue.

June 30, 2009: EU presidency comes to an end

The Czech Republic ends its six month presidency of the EU at midnight on Tuesday, making way for the next presiding country Sweden. At a ceremony marking the end of the presidency at the Office of the Government Prime Minister Jan Fischer and his predecessor in the post Mirek Topolánek said the presidency had fulfilled its agenda successfully despite the fall of the government halfway through. Mr Fischer drew attention to the success of the EU summit this month which lined up the current EC president for another term and thrashed out assurances for Ireland ahead of another referendum on the Lisbon treaty. The prime minister also highlighted Czech moves to put relations with countries in Eastern Europe on a new footing, prioritise energy security and curb the impact of the world economic crisis. On July 1 the EU presidency will be assumed by Sweden.

July 31, 2009: Top politicians and energy lobbyists photographed on yacht in Italy

Newspaper photographs of top Czech politicians sharing a yacht in Italy with energy lobbyists are causing a stir in the Czech Republic. Among those featured on the photographs are former Prime Minister Mirek Topolánek, CEO of the energy company CEZ Martin Roman, and Social Democratic MP Milan Urban. Czech media outlets, aside from speculating on who is most likely to benefit from the rather expensive detective work, have also made frequent reference to the recent passage of a carbon emissions deal in parliament that resulted in a multi-billion-crown windfall for the energy giant, CEZ. A number of those featured on the photographs have said the meeting was a chance encounter in a popular holiday area. Compounding the discussion around the photographs is the fact that they were released by Karel Randák, the erstwhile chief of the Czech civilian intelligence agency. Mr Randák has declined to shed more light on the procurement of the photos, saying only that no intelligence agents were involved, and that his decision to release them was taken in order to "show how things work in this country." Mr Randák was dismissed from his position in 2006 by Mr Topolánek's government.

August 1, 2009: Topolánek makes first comments on press photographs of meetings in Italy

The leader of the Civic Democrats Mirek Topolánek has called on the Social Democrats and the party's chairman Jiri Paroubek to stop using the methods of the StB, referring to Czechoslovakia's communist era secret police. Mr Topolánek made the comments at a news conference in Prague on Friday that saw his first reaction to newspaper photographs of him meeting influential lobbyists and business people while on holiday in Italy. He did not give any direct evidence for the claims and Mr Paroubek later responded that unfounded accusations were also StB practice. The Social Democrats deny being behind the pictures.

As for those he was photographed with in Italy, including a lobbyist for the power giant CEZ, the Civic Democrats leader said such meetings were merely coincidental, as Tuscany was "the new Spindleruv Mlýn", a reference to a popular Czech ski resort. Mr Topolánek said he did not know who owned the villa he had stayed at and refused to provide receipts to show he had paid for the recent holiday.

August 19, 2009:

A group of Euro-sceptic senators who are vehemently opposed to the Lisbon treaty have found a new way of attacking it in court. They are preparing to question the validity of a recently adopted law that is to prevent the transfer of national powers to the EU without Parliament's consent on the grounds that it was not approved by a constitutional majority. The law was approved by both houses of Parliament and was decisive in winning support for the Lisbon treaty. Legal experts have made it clear that the senators would have little success in attacking the treaty itself. The Lisbon treaty still has to be signed by President Klaus who has said he will delay the process for as long as possible.

September 1, 2009:

Early elections likely to be postponed by Constitutional Court ruling

The Constitutional Court has ruled that early elections, currently scheduled for October 9-10 and approved by Parliament via a constitutional amendment, may be unconstitutional. Technically, the ruling postpones the enforceability of a presidential decree to declare early elections; President Klaus has said the decision's effect will be to postpone early elections indefinitely.

The ruling was the result of a formal complaint brought by independent MP Miloš Melcák regarding the constitutionality of the amendment, which shorted the tenure of members of Parliament in order to initiate early

elections. The complaint, which was filed last week, states that the amendment was a violation of Mr Melcak's right to be elected and serve out his term of office, and maintains that the constitution provides for early elections only in "extraordinary moments", such as a national emergency.

The Constitutional Court has emphasised that it will continue to review the case, saying it needs adequate time to reach a final verdict. The court also noted the possibility that the complaint could ultimately be dismissed.

September 10, 2009:

Constitutional Court ruling cancels early elections

The Constitutional Court has upheld a complaint made by lawmaker Milos Melcak which means that early elections will not be held in the Czech Republic as planned on October 9-10. Last week, the court froze a presidential order setting a term for early elections while it examined Mr Melcak's complaint.<snip> . It now falls to lawmakers to decide upon making permanent changes to the Czech Constitution, which they are set to discuss this Thursday or Friday. If proposals to change the Constitution are passed, it is thought that early elections could be held on November 6-7 at the soonest. Should no such changes be agreed, Parliament may well have to wait until lawmakers' mandates expire next spring.

President accuses Constitutional Court of 'deepening Czech political crisis', while party heads split in their response

Czech President Vaclav Klaus slammed the Constitutional Court's ruling on Thursday evening, saying that judges had knowingly and deliberately 'deepened the political crisis' in the Czech Republic. Mr Klaus said that it was time for the Constitutional Court's mandate to be redefined. Meanwhile, heads of the main Czech political parties were split in their reaction to the ruling, which cancels early elections originally planned for October 9-10. Head of the Social Democrats Jiri Paroubek said that while he would take Thursday's verdict into account, he believed that the court had ruled 'unconstitutionally'. Civic Democrat leader Mirek Topolaneck meanwhile said that he 'fully respected' the court's decision, and that his party would now strive for a long-term solution to the problem through changing the Constitution. The ruling was greeted by the heads of the Green Party and the Christian Democrats, Ondrej Liska and Cyril Svoboda respectively.

September 15, 2009: Vote to dissolve lower house not held as expected after Social Democrats withdraw support

A vote on whether the Czech lower house should dissolve itself, paving the way for early elections, was not tabled as expected on Tuesday, after the Social Democrats withdrew support for the motion. The Social Democrats had voted last week for a constitutional amendment, bringing about early elections should the Chamber of Deputies vote to dissolve itself. But in a shock announcement on Tuesday morning, party leader Jiri Paroubek called the dissolution of the lower house 'too risky' and said his party now favoured regular elections to be held when lawmakers' mandates expired next June. Shortly afterwards, Communist deputies said that they would abstain from any vote on the dissolution of Parliament, in effect scuppering the motion entirely. In the end, not enough votes were mustered to have the motion tabled for discussion. It now looks like elections will be held next June, when politicians' four-year mandates come to an end.

September 29, 2009: Czech senators bring complaint against Lisbon treaty to Constitutional Court

A group of senators handed a complaint about the EU's reforming Lisbon treaty to the Czech Constitutional Court on Tuesday afternoon. The move is expected to delay ratification of the reform document in the Czech Republic by anything between three and nine months. The Czech Republic is already amongst the last European states to ratify Lisbon; besides the Czechs, only Ireland and Poland are yet to approve the document. Opponents of the Constitutional Court complaint say the move could damage the Czech Republic's standing in Europe, while senators responsible for bringing the complaint say that Lisbon encroaches upon Czech sovereignty and could be at odds with Czech national law. The Constitutional Court has already reviewed several controversial passages of the treaty at the request of right-wing senators. Last autumn it ruled that these articles were in line with Czech law. This time the court will be examining the entire reform document. Head of the court, Pavel Rychetsky, called an extraordinary plenary session on Tuesday afternoon to get discussion of Lisbon underway.

October 1, 2009: IMF sees bigger contraction this year but higher growth in 2010

The International Monetary Fund has worsened its forecast for Czech economic contraction this year but increased its growth prediction for 2010. The IMF now expects that the economy will shrink this year by 4.3 percent instead of

its previous prediction of 3.5 percent. But it sees 2010 growth at 1.3 percent instead of just 0.1 percent. The IMF predicts continuing low Czech inflation with this year's 1.0 percent rise followed by a 1.1 percent rate in 2010.

October 9, 2009: Klaus conditions Lisbon signing on exemption from Fundamental Rights Charter

Czech President Vaclav Klaus has come up with a new condition for signing the EU-reforming Lisbon treaty: an exception to the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights similar to the one secured by Poland and the UK. At a Friday-afternoon press conference, Mr Klaus stated he was unhappy to have to address the issue before the completion of a constitutional challenge to the Lisbon Treaty. He said his address was forced by Swedish Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt's announcement of certain, further unspecified, details that the Czech president said were intended to be confidential.

The Euro-sceptic Czech president along with his Polish counterpart have still not signed the reform treaty, which was expected to come into force at the beginning of 2010. Klaus is likely to be the last European head of state to do so after Polish President Lech Kaczynski said he would sign the treaty this Saturday. The Czech president is now waiting for the Constitutional Court to give its verdict on a new complaint about Lisbon lodged by a group of right-wing Senators.

October 15, 2009:

Havel: Klaus' stance on Lisbon dangerous

Former president Vaclav Havel on Thursday came out very strongly against his successor Vaclav Klaus for the latter's obstruction of the Lisbon Treaty ratification process. Speaking at a press conference for the 20th anniversary of the Velvet Revolution, Mr Havel called the president's attitude irresponsible and dangerous, adding that his failure to understand the constitution was damaging to the country and its reputation. Mr Klaus fairly stunned pundits last week by announcing for the first time that his endorsement would depend upon an exemption from a part of the treaty. With the Czech Parliament having passed the treaty earlier this year, President Klaus himself has become the sole obstacle to final ratification of the EU-wide reform treaty, which requires the endorsement of all 27 member states in order to take effect. The treaty is currently the subject of a complaint submitted to the Constitutional Court by a group of the president's allies; President Klaus maintains that his endorsement is impossible so long as that review is underway.

Czech government says Lisbon fully compatible with constitution

The Czech interim government has said it considers the EU's Lisbon treaty wholly compatible with the Czech constitution. In his statement on the matter for the Constitutional Court, Prime Minister Jan Fischer said that the cabinet also considers the complaint itself to be formally inadmissible, as it asks the court to exceed its own authority, for example by reviewing the guarantees allowed for Ireland in order to spur ratification in that country. For his part, Mr Klaus on Thursday encouraged the public to read the complaint, and said that he would soon release his own statement on it.

November 3, 2009:

Czech President Vaclav Klaus signs Lisbon treaty

The Czech president, Vaclav Klaus, has put his signature to ratification of the European Union's Lisbon treaty, allowing the document to come into force across the whole of the 27-member bloc; the Czech Republic was the last state in the EU to complete ratification of Lisbon. Mr Klaus released a statement saying he had signed the treaty at 15:00 on Tuesday, only hours after the Czech Constitutional Court ruled that it did not contravene the Czech constitution.

In a statement, the Czech president said he had expected the court to rule in favour of Lisbon. However, he also said that its verdict had not been legally neutral but represented a biased political defence of the document. Mr Klaus also said the Czech Republic would cease to be a sovereign state once the Lisbon treaty was implemented.

The caretaker Czech prime minister, Jan Fischer, co-signed the Lisbon treaty later on Tuesday afternoon, meaning that ratification has been completed on the part of the Czech Republic. The document must now be lodged in Rome.

Court rules Lisbon treaty not in contravention of Czech law

The Czech Constitutional Court delivered its verdict on Lisbon shortly after 9 on Tuesday morning. A group of Euro-sceptic senators loyal to Mr Klaus had sent a complaint against the Lisbon treaty to the court, which delivered its ruling a week after holding a public hearing on the matter.

November 6, 2009: Poll: vast majority of Czechs dissatisfied with political situation

A sweeping 88% majority of Czechs are dissatisfied with the general political situation in the Czech Republic according to a survey published by the Median polling agency. According to Median, the postponement of early elections until next year has played a major part in that dissatisfaction. Respondents said that the politician who best handled the early-election crisis was President Vaclav Klaus, giving him a below-average grade of 3.1 on a five point scale. Civic Democratic party chairman Mirek Topolanek got the worst result in this regard with a grade of four. More than two-thirds of those polled also suggested that the ambiguous political situation in the Czech Republic will damage its position in Europe. <snip>

November 11, 2009:

European Commission: Czechs must cut budget expenditures

The European Commission on Wednesday urged the Czech Republic to avoid excessive budget expenditures in the coming years. The commission also set down the year 2013 as a benchmark for the Czech Republic to lower its budget deficit to three percent of the gross domestic product. The European Commission warned that if Prague fails to do so, it might face sanctions.

The Czech Finance Minister, Eduard Janota, said that the recommendation was an unambiguous message to Czech politicians to take fiscal issues seriously. This year, the state budget deficit is expected to reach some 163 billion crowns, which is about 5.3 percent of the country's GDP.

European commissioner Alumnia: Czech economy's foundations healthier than others in region

In related news, the European Commissioner for Economic and Monetary Affairs, Joaquin Alumnia, told reporters in Brussels on Wednesday that Czech economy had better foundations than the economies of other countries in the region. Commissioner Alumnia also said that the country's growth potential was higher than the EU average

How did this mess come about?

- Two former ODS [Civic Democrats] members, now independent MPs, (reportedly close to Klaus) voted with Social Democrats (and the Communists)
- Two former Greens members, now independent MPs, voted with Social Democrats and (and the Communists)

Consequences (quotations from April 2, 2009 article titled "Gov't gridlock harms presidency. Czech EU role suffers as politicians deal with collapse" by Markéta Hulpachová, Staff Writer

<snip>

Former President Václav Havel likened the situation to a soap opera. "What bothers me most is that it deepens the alienation between politicians and society," he commented. "With all these attacks and muckraking, it is no longer about serving the public good."

## Top four key Lisbon arguments

Debate on the treaty centers on a few general issues

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*Post*, December 17th, 2008 issue

### **The EU Commission**

**Issue:** The Lisbon Treaty proposes to reduce the number of commissioners by one-third, thus breaking from the policy of every state having a member on the commission at all times.

### **More consolidated foreign policy**

**Issue:** The treaty seeks to merge the post of the European commissioner for external relations and European neighborhood policy and the post of the high representative for the common foreign and security policy into a single position, the high representative of the union for foreign affairs and security policy.

### **President of the European Council**

**Issue:** Among the other Lisbon Treaty proposals is the creation of a permanent president of the European Council, a single individual to be elected for a two and a half year term, replacing the present six-month rotating presidency.

### **Democracy**

**Issue:** Voters in the Netherlands and France rejected the EU constitution (the precursor to the Lisbon Treaty) in referendum in 2005. The Lisbon Treaty requires unanimous support from all member states, which it lacks in Ireland, where it was rejected by voters, the only citizens to vote on the Lisbon Treaty. A second vote in Ireland, now slated for late 2009, is a rejection of the democratic process.

### ***How did this mess come about, continued:***

Stephen Deets & Karel Kouba (2008), The Czech Greens revived. *Environmental Politics*, 17.5, 815 – 821

*The aggregate actors:*

Civic Democratic Party (ODS), centre-right, essentially a conservative party, “Republicans” in US terms

Christian Democratic Party (KDU), centre-right, essentially a conservative party with some religious orientation (whatever that means in the Czech Republic), “Republicans” in US terms

Czech Party of Social Democracy (CSSD), centre-left, “Democrats” in US terms

Communists (KSCM), left party, essentially the old state party, unreformed

Czech Greens (SZ)

- founded in 1989
- success in 1990 elections (motivated by environmental degradation under communism, notably the tremendous air pollution in northern Bohemia and

Moravia where they had highest support (elections won by broad anti-communist coalition called Civic Forum that soon disintegrated)

- “success” in 1992 elections when SZ teamed up with Agrarians and Socialists but then two thirds of Greens left over the coalition agreement
- 1996, SZ in such disarray that did not even participate in national elections (which led to a stabilization of sorts of the political landscape, with Civic and Social Democrats emerging as the two large parties – about 30% each) and Christian Democrats and Communists having about 10 percent of the votes each ... [I know it does not add up to 100 %]
- 2001, SZ down to 239 members, most of them older, with little formal education ... (stark contrast to the Greens in Germany who were strong-going at that point, and were running the country together with the Social Democrats)
- Factors that led to revival of Green party starting then:
  - series of corruption scandals involving ODS
  - Klaus (prime minister 1992 – 1997) openly dismissive of civil society and environmental movement. See his *Blue Planet in Green Shackles* pamphlet (2007, 100 pages)
  - non-parliamentary protests over the Temelin Nuclear Power Plant and other issues (such as corruption and civil society) failed
  - CSSD formed minority government with ODS tacit approval; perception that that was too much collusion on the part of the large parties
  - “While SZ was small, dysfunctional, and heavily indebted, it did have an existing organizational structure, a well-known name, and ties to a European party” (p. 816)
  - Revitalization was initiated by outsiders Jan Beranek and Peter Stepanek (see p. 816)
- 2002, promising election results on national level (2%), with particularly good showing in urban centers such as Prague and Brno among younger, well-educated urban voters (similar to Greens in Germany)
- 2003, Beranek joined the Greens, and together with Jakub Patočka started to rewrite programme and constitution of the Greens (programmatically he stressed similarity to German Greens, organizationally he centralized power)
- 2004, crisis over the June 2004 European elections list, headed by Patočka; critique headed by Petr Uhl, “a prominent dissident from the communist era and former Commissioner for Human Rights. Uhl wanted the list headed by former

Minister of Environment Martin Bursik, what that time was not even a SZ member (having joined KDU several years earlier). While Uhl held no leadership position, he had close ties to Daniel Cohn-Bendit, then co-President of the European Green Party and self-proclaimed 'realo'. Cohn-Bendit demanded that Beranek redo the list and rewrite the party constitution, which he refused to do. The Greens still won 3.2 %, ... , but inside the party the results were viewed as a disaster in light of expectations, setting in motion the autumn 2004 leadership battle. By summer 2004, there was a growing faction wanting to replace Beranek with the more media savvy and pragmatic Bursik. This faction was led by Stepanek, who had since joined the party and had long-standing ties to both Uhl and Bursik. The group also complained of the leadership's undemocratic behavior, calling for restoring the power to the regional organizations. ... the party became a cauldron of intense personal rivalries ... " (p. 817)

- 2005, Bursik becomes chair of SZ, several of Beranek's opponents won leadership positions (including Stepanek), Beranek and his group eventually were ousted from the party
- 2006, after campaigning on quality of life (e.g., increased preservation of green space, reduced weekend truck traffic), good governance, greater rights for women and minorities, increased use of renewable energies, preservation of community control over schools, the Greens (also benefiting from the collapse of the liberal US-DEU)
  - win 6.3 % of the popular vote (underperforming expectations significantly)
  - becomes (after bargaining that lasted from June to December) "the surprise kingmaker" (p. 815) of the centre-right government that was voted out of office March 24, 2009. The reward: Bursik becomes Deputy Prime Minister as well as minister of the Environment, Greens also are appointed as Ministers of Education and Minister of Equal Opportunity, and Greens nominate Karel Schwarzenberg as Minister of Foreign Affairs; they also secured agreement that there would be no expansion of nuclear power, more emphasis on renewable energy and energy efficiency, a tax for major CO<sub>2</sub> polluters, as well as concessions in transportation, anti-corruption, and minority protection policies.
  - gets caught quickly in new round of internal arguments about things such as the US missile shield against 'rogue states' as well as factional battles within the party (leading to Stepanek not being reelected to the SZ leadership in February 2007, to Stropnický – one of Bursik's most vocal critics – being elected deputy chair of the SZ's national council in May 2007, to Kuchtová being forced to resign as Minister of Education in October 2007, to Liska being appointed new Minister of Education a few weeks later after internal debate about the procedure leading to appointment, ... ). These debates reflect personal animosities and long-

term concerns about the identity of the party and differences about the appropriate degree of centralization and pragmatism.

- January 31, 2009: Democratic Appeal faction within SZ initiated by Kuchova, Zubova, and others critical of Bursik's leadership.
- March 12, 2009: Democratic Green Party (DSZ), founded by dissatisfied members of the Green Party (but not, yet, members of the SZ's internal faction Democratic Appeal – such as Kuchtova and Zubova – who were expelled from the SZ a couple of days earlier).

### **A green change of heart**

Olga Zubová is outspoken in her critique of her own party and the current government

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Among the people at the center of a struggle within the present governing coalition and the Green Party is **Olga Zubová**, a deputy from Kutná Hora. She first came to national attention when she controversially missed voting in presidential elections earlier this year. More recently, her name was in the headlines tied to an attempted blackmail scheme by deposed ODS Deputy Jan Morava. Now **she is among an outspoken group within her own party opposing the leadership of party Chairman Martin Bursík**. She spoke to with The Prague Post Oct. 31 at Parliament. On Nov. 3 **she announced her intention to resign as chairwoman of the Green Party National Council after the party's poor showing in regional elections based on a platform promoted by Bursík**.

- March 24, 2009: ... (no-confidence vote, Kuchtova is vote no. 101)  
... according to current polls, the Greens are not likely to make it into the next parliament

... surveys suggest that since 2006 elections Greens have lost more than half of their supporters: is it because the Greens are neither Green nor democratic?