

## **From Neo-Liberalism to National Interests: Ideology, Strategy and Party Development in the Euroscepticism of the Czech Right**

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## **From Neo-Liberalism to National Interests: Ideology, Strategy and Party Development in the Euroscepticism of the Czech Right**

### **Introduction**

The euroscepticism of former Czech Prime Minister and current Czech President Václav Klaus and his centre-right Civic Democratic Party (ODS) has been widely remarked upon since at least the early 1990s. However, with a few significant exceptions,<sup>1</sup> the eurosceptic positions of the effective founder of the Czech centre-right and his party have not been analysed in detail. More surprisingly, the shift by ODS in the late 1990s to a more strident euroscepticism committed to defend Czech national interests against the European Union, if necessary to the point of remaining outside the EU, has hardly been addressed in scholarly writing. This is doubly surprising, given how ODS fits poorly the profile of eurosceptic parties in East and Central Europe identified by early comparative research. This suggests that such parties are usually the far right or far left groupings committed to anti-establishment ideologies, which remain outside normal coalition-building politics, or traditionalist conservative forces rooted in historical nationalism.<sup>2</sup>

ODS, by contrast, is a relatively new party created largely to promote free market reform and has been a key political actor in Czech politics since its foundation in 1991. It was the dominant partner in the 1992-97 centre-right coalition which, negotiated the dissolution of Czechoslovakia in late 1992 and subsequently implemented many of the key policies of post-communist transformation in the independent Czech Republic. After parliamentary elections in June 1998, although formally an opposition party, ODS retained significant influence through institutionalised co-operation with a minority Social Democratic government, only

moving into opposition *sensu stricto* after the June 2002 elections, when the Social Democrats formed a coalition with smaller centre parties.

Some analysts have explained the euroscepticism of Klaus and his party as an ‘instinctive’ position resulting from their neo-liberal ‘Thatcherite’ ideology and identification with British conservatism, later bolstered by a growing awareness of the asymmetrical relationship between the EU and East Central European accession states.<sup>3</sup> Others have seen it as a ‘nationalist card’ prompted by the move to opposition, electoral opportunism and a self-interested desire to preserve clientelistic networks, threatened by the prospect of accession.<sup>4</sup> Such commentaries have a certain validity, but leave much unexplained. Firstly, there is an apparent contradiction in viewing Klaus’s party as simultaneously nationalistic, dogmatically committed to imported ideological models and politically opportunistic. There is no explanation of explain why eurosceptic elements of British New Right ideology should be ‘instinctively’ taken up by ODS, when other aspects of its agenda such as ‘family values’ and welfare reform, were largely ignored by the party. Nor do they explain why ODS, but not the incumbent, europhile Czech Social Democrats (ČSSD), also widely accused of practising etatism and clientelism,<sup>5</sup> should turn to euroscepticism to defend party political networks or vent frustration at the one-sided nature of accession. Finally, and most significantly do they account for the *changing* nature of the euroscepticism of the Czech centre-right or link it coherently with the development either of the Czech party system or of ODS as a party. This paper seeks to address these questions both empirically and by relating the case of ODS to emerging debates on party-based euroscepticism . It begins by mapping the euroscepticism of ODS and its leader in the changing domestic and European contexts of the 1990s. It then seeks to relate these findings to emerging typologies of party-based euroscepticism in the comparative

literature and the unfolding debates about the causal mechanisms underlying eurosceptic parties' stances on Europe. It concludes by arguing that the ideology versus strategy dichotomy in which these debates have been usually been framed fails to take account of the close link between the two for parties on the Central European centre-right, such as ODS, whose origins as vehicles of regime change leave them increasingly lacking in both organisational and ideological cohesiveness.

### **Mapping the Euroscepticism of the Czech Right**

#### *Integration with Western Europe as a Rejection of 'Third Ways'*

The Civic Democratic Party (ODS) has its roots in Civic Forum (OF), the broad umbrella movement, that formed in the Czech lands to oppose Czechoslovakia's crumbling communist regime during the 'Velvet Revolution' of November and December 1989. The Forum was the dominant force in the new Czechoslovak and Czech governments elected in June 1990, but was quickly plagued by internal divisions. In April 1991 the Civic Democratic Party was founded by the Forum's emerging 'right-wing', a loose alliance of neo-liberal economists, conservative dissidents and anti-communist activists, who had rallied to Václav Klaus, then Federal Finance Minister, when he had challenged the centrist ex-dissidents for the movement's leadership in late 1990. ODS convincingly won the June 1992 Czech and Czechoslovak elections, attracting the bulk of the pro-reform electorate that had previously supported OF.<sup>6</sup>

The divisions within Civic Forum that led to the ODS's foundation centred almost entirely on domestic issues of post-communist transformation, such as economic reform, decommunisation, the restructuring of Czechoslovak federalism, and the future of the Civic Forum movement itself.<sup>7</sup> The desire for closer integration with

Western Europe, by contrast, was at this time a widely endorsed, uncontroversial ideal shared, with the partial exception of the Communist Party, across the whole of the Czech political spectrum. However, to the limited extent that 'Europe' did become a matter of mainstream domestic political contestation in the immediate post-transition period, it did so as part of an emerging Czech right-wing critique of dissident-led 'civic' politics. To the right, the policies of former dissidents in the Civic Forum-led government, and in particular their commitment to creating new innovatory forms of non-ideological, participatory democracy, represented a dangerous reworking of reform communist aspirations of the 1960s to find a Third Way between Soviet-style communism and Western liberal capitalism. The net effect of such policies, the right argued, was to slow the creation of West European type democratic and market institutions in Czechoslovakia, leading to economic and political instability. The 1992 ODS election programme consequently rejected 'ideas that a country which has just escaped the Russian colonial yoke can enrich a tired democratic Europe with new and original initiatives and approaches' arguing that these were 'third ways ... which do not mean a return to communism, but which do not mean a return to Europe either'.<sup>8</sup>

To such supposedly left-wing, experimental and utopian ideas, the Right countered its own belief in 'tried and tested', 'standard' West European institutions such as programmatically oriented, hierarchically structured political parties and free markets. However, the Right's critique of 'utopian' dissident ideas as a threat to Czechoslovakia's Europeanisation extended beyond debates over the pace and form of domestic reform, to take in a distinct position on foreign and European policy. In 1990-91, under Foreign Minister Jiří Dienstbier, a former dissident and close associate of President Václav Havel, the European policy of Czechoslovakia shifted from a 'utopian' position of dissolving all existing blocs towards seeking pragmatic co-

operation with and eventual membership of the European Community. Such early equivocation, made the policy a further target of the Right, which saw the existing West European institutional architecture as another set of ‘standard’, ‘tried and tested’ institutions to be embraced by new post-communist democracies as quickly and fully as possible. The 1992 ODS programme, therefore, advocated ‘a pragmatic foreign policy, free of empty gestures, moralising and lecturing others’ in which NATO membership and ‘the integration of Czechoslovakia into the European Community is our most important and immediate goal’.<sup>9</sup> Although strongly supporting the ‘active participation of the US’ in Europe<sup>10</sup> and hostile to the EC-sponsored notion of Central Europe as a potential bridge for trade between the West and the USSR, neither the programme nor the public statements of ODS leaders at this time, contained any substantive criticism of EU policies or institutions. Indeed, it was characteristic of the Right’s discourse on European integration of the early 1990s, that it saw any questioning of the institutional *status quo* in Europe as ideologically suspect.

#### *The Euroscepticism of Václav Klaus*

The ODS-led Czech coalition government that took office in June 1992 pursued a European policy radically different from that of its predecessor. The new government stressed the Czech Republic’s exceptionalism as a political and economic front-runner suitable for rapid integration with the European Community and rejected regional co-operation within the Visegrad group framework as an artificial, Western-inspired attempt to recreate ‘Eastern Europe’, which would hold back the advanced Czechs’ prospects of EU membership. ODS programmatic documents therefore consistently favoured EU entry, but tended to balance positive evaluation of the EU with mildly expressed concerns over the preservation of diversity and national sovereignty. The

1996 ODS election programme, for example, while insisting that integration ‘should not artificially suppress the diversity of nations and cultures’, identified EU membership as the party's main foreign policy goal. EU membership, it argued, would bring ‘peace, security, stability and economic prosperity ’to citizens of all member states.<sup>11</sup> The only specific position taken on the institutions of the EU was a demand that ‘the sovereignty and powers of the Union should be derived from the sovereignty and powers of individual states’.<sup>12</sup> However, from 1992, in a series of speeches and articles for both domestic and international audiences, the new Czech Prime Minister Václav Klaus developed a more assertive critique of the EU and its prospects for enlargement. This contained three key elements:

- An 'Anglo-Saxon' neo-liberal economic critique of the EU as an inefficient, over-regulated and 'socialist' structure dominated by self-seeking bureaucratic elites whose far-reaching political ambitions to challenge the United States, were undermining the original, economic rationale of the Union.
- A moralistic ‘Central European’ critique of the EU's self-interest and bad faith in both the enlargement process and in its relations with East and Central Europe.
- A ‘national’ critique of the EU as a threat to Czech national sovereignty and identity in both in its existing practices and in its plans for further political integration, sometimes depicted as reflecting German (or Franco-German) domination of the Union.

### *'Continentwide Dirigisme'*

As a politician committed to neo-liberal positions, Klaus viewed the EU as based on the collectivist ‘ideological paradigm of the first part of the 20th century’ and traditions of ‘continentwide dirigisme’,<sup>13</sup> reflecting the political concerns of French

Gaullism and German Christian Democracy at the time of its foundation. He also detected left-wing and collectivist tendencies in the Union's current practice, and specifically in 'excessive regulation and bureaucratisation' and 'ballooning welfare states' which he saw the EU as both supporting and extending. Like many neo-liberals, he therefore argued that the Union needed internal reform not so much to facilitate enlargement than to maintain Europe's global competitiveness.<sup>14</sup> Such neo-liberal criticisms were, however, relatively unfocused, sometimes failing to distinguish between the EU and domestic social and economic arrangements determined by national governments. The one key exception can be found in Klaus's detailed analysis of the Euro and its political implications. Klaus argued that because in fiscal terms EU states did not constitute an optimal currency zone, EMU was therefore 'above all a political project',<sup>15</sup> but one, crucially, which lacked an adequate political basis. Klaus noted that, when economically diverse states united into a single currency zone, large transfers from richer to poorer regions were usually necessary. This required political solidarity based on a strong, shared political identity, usually a national identity, if it was not to rapidly break down. Klaus illustrated this point by contrasting the experiences of Germany and Czechoslovakia after 1989. While in 1990 a common national identity had, he believed, successfully underpinned currency union and political unification in Germany, divergent Czech and Slovak national identities revealed after the fall of communism had made the maintenance of an integrated Czechoslovak federation impossible. Given the weakness of popular identification with Europe, Euroland, he argued, lacked precisely such a strong common political identity. The result, he suggested, of such a currency union would be that economically less developed regions – regions such as East and Central Europe - would become caught in a cycle of backwardness, as had occurred with



Southern Italian regions following the unification of Italy in the 19th century.<sup>16</sup>

*European Integration and the Experience of Central Europe*

Klaus's euroscepticism of the 1990s was, however, more complex than a simple transposition of Anglo-American neo-liberalism to post-communist Central Europe. It also contained a distinctly 'Central European' strand. As noted, Klaus and ODS had always rejected the institutionalisation of 'Central Europe' in the Visegrad group as a Third Way attempting to create 'interval stages, an interval society [which] revived some kind of ideas of bridges between East and West',<sup>17</sup> an allusion to the ill-fated and unrealised project of President Beneš for post-war Czechoslovakia. Klaus also rejected the Visegrad framework because he felt it was politically counterproductive in failing to address the question of EU membership for Central and East European states directly or take account their divergent interests. Despite this, aspects of Klaus's euroscepticism clearly drew on a sense of Central European identity and experience. This can be seen, for example, in his moralistic arguments that the EEC was a product of the Cold War, which, in effect, benefited its West European members at the expense of Central Europe.<sup>18</sup> This line of argument echoed the thinking of more self-consciously 'Central European' writers such as Kundera and Havel.<sup>19</sup> However, Klaus additionally argued, the historical experience of Central European societies of repeated domination by larger, centralised, supranational bureaucratic regimes - first under the multi-national dynastic empires and later under Nazi rule and Soviet hegemony - had left them acutely sensitive to the dangers of such over-centralisation inherent in the current European project. More significantly, he suggested, history had left the Czech Republic and other states in the region facing a 'double task' in post-Cold War Europe, one of integrating participating in European

integration, but also maintaining and rediscovering national identity and national independence.<sup>20</sup> This view is summed up in Klaus's famous (and repeated) remark that the Czech Republic faced the task of 'how to be European without at the same time dissolving into Europeanism like a lump of sugar in a cup of coffee'.<sup>21</sup>

### *Safeguarding National Distinctiveness*

A concern with the Czech nation and its character and interests was a notable, if submerged element in much of ODS's free market agenda throughout the early-mid 1990s. The unexpected emergence in 1993, for the first time in modern history, of a purely Czech state re-ignited older debates about the meaning of Czech identity and statehood. This is a debate to which both Klaus and his party contributed by challenging and reinterpreting key aspects of the Czech national tradition to legitimise the neo-liberal aspects of their programme. Such reinterpretations of Czech identity and tradition usually stressed their supposed cultural affinity with neo-liberalism and the free market.<sup>22</sup> A concern with the Czech national interests is also detectable at the policy level. The assertion of the Czech Republic's position against that of Slovakia during the protracted attempts to reform Czecho-Slovak federalism in 1990-2, dovetailed with ODS's commitment radical economic reform, perceived as in the Czech but not the Slovak interest. Similarly, the voucher privatisation strategy of the 1992-6 ODS-led government, despite its reliance on market forces, prioritised the development of national capital over greater foreign ownership, despite the greater market efficiency and the higher levels of investment the latter might have assured.<sup>23</sup>

While Czech politicians such as Václav Havel viewed European, national and local identities as concentric and overlapping and addressed the relationship between them through a mixture of metaphysical reflection and suggested institutional compromises,

<sup>24</sup> Klaus and ODS saw the relationship as conflicting in markedly zero-sum terms. They consequently sought to mount a vigorous defence of the Czech national state as a guarantee of national identity and political self-determination against the supranational or regional institutions promoted by the EU, both of which they viewed as inefficient, undemocratic and irreparably lacking in political, cultural and historical legitimacy.<sup>25</sup> Czech 'Europeanism' (*evropanství*), Klaus suggested should, therefore, be interpreted as 'obligations to safeguard and preserve our distinctive features'.<sup>26</sup>

### **Crisis and Realignment on the Czech Right**

From the mid-late 1990s it became increasingly clear that, rather than producing the post-communist economic miracle many had anticipated, the policies followed by the Klaus government had created an under-regulated, under-capitalised, inefficient private sector, dominated by politically well connected, rent-seeking groups.<sup>27</sup> The resultant economic malaise undermined the claims of Czech exceptionalism, that had underpinned much of the ODS position, including its European policy, and aggravated tensions with its junior coalition partners, the social-market oriented Christian Democrats (KDU-ČSL) and the free market Civic Democratic Alliance (ODA). Discontent with Klaus's leadership also grew within his own party. In 1995 pressure from Josef Zieleniec, the then Czech Foreign Minister and one of ODS's co-founders and Deputy Chairs, led to the adoption of a long-term ODS *Political Programme* of aims and values with a more 'social', even Christian Democratic focus.<sup>28</sup> Such criticisms intensified when the ODS vote remained virtually static at 29.9 per cent in the June 1996 parliamentary elections and the centre-right coalition narrowly failed to retain its parliamentary majority, continuing as a minority administration 'tolerated' by the opposition Social Democrats. In November 1997 the incipient crisis facing

ODS was brought to a head by a party financing scandal that led to the collapse of the Klaus government.<sup>29</sup> Klaus's alleged complicity in the scandal not only prompted his coalition partners to withdraw from the government but caused a split in ODS itself, when senior figures in the party called Klaus's integrity and political judgement into question.<sup>30</sup> However, using his immense personal authority, Klaus - who claimed to have been unaware of the irregularities - was able to mobilise grassroots ODS activists to resist pressure for his resignation, defeating his opponents by a decisive majority at a special congress in Poděbrady in December 1997.<sup>31</sup> In early parliamentary elections in June 1998, despite recovering much apparently lost support, ODS was out-pollled by the Social Democrats, who became for the first time the largest Czech party. Although centre-right parties regained a theoretical parliamentary majority, such were the tensions between ODS and its former allies, that Klaus unexpectedly opted to allow a minority Social Democratic government to take office, on the basis of a written pact (the so-called 'Opposition Agreement'). This arrangement, partly justified by its authors as a bi-partisan attempt to ensure that preparations for EU membership were not disrupted by domestic political instability, endured until scheduled parliamentary elections in June 2002.

### *Europe and the 'New' ODS*

Following the political crisis of 1997, ODS underwent a two year period of ideological and political realignment in opposition, which saw it adopt a more strident and higher profile euroscepticism, laying greater stress on patriotism and the need to defend national interests against the European Union. The party's revised position on European integration was systematically developed and incorporated into the party's programme from summer 1999 at three ideological conferences in Prague in June

1999, June 2000 and April 2001 as well as at regular party congresses.<sup>32</sup> Although articulated in a range of speeches, articles and policy documents in this period, the party's new position on Europe was perhaps most fully expressed in its *Manifesto of Czech Eurorealism* presented to its Third Ideas Conference in Prague in April 2001.<sup>33</sup> Although, as this paper will argue, ODS's changing position on European integration, reflected longer term problems of ideology, strategy and institutionalisation, events outside the Czech Republic seem to have facilitated its more openly critical attitude towards Western Europe: the Kosovo crisis in 1999 and EU sanctions against Austria in 2000. . Despite its strong support for Czech membership of NATO, ODS forcefully criticised allied air strikes against Yugoslavia as both politically counterproductive and an unacceptable violation of national sovereignty.<sup>34</sup> ODS fears that the European Commission or coalitions of EU states might impinge upon the sovereignty of small, newly admitted member states by seeking to influence their domestic politics were highlighted by the party's outspoken opposition to EU sanctions against Austria. These were adopted in early 2000 in response to the entry into government of Joerg Haider's far right Freedom Party (FPO). Despite Haider's hostility to EU's eastern enlargement and to the Czech government's plans to complete the Temelín nuclear power plant, Klaus justified his party's domestically unpopular stance 'the lesser evil'.<sup>35</sup>

The substance of ODS criticisms of the EU and its preferred model of European integration remained largely consistent with the views expressed in previous party documents and in Klaus's speeches and writings before 1997. The *Manifesto of Czech Eurorealism*, for example, repeated earlier ODS criticisms of the Union as a product of post-war welfare capitalism and criticised the *acquis communautaire* as 'above all the product of various lobbies and corporatist pressures' in member states,<sup>36</sup> which

served mainly to restrict market forces. It once again noted the lack of a European political identity and the supposed tendency of federalist models of European integration to ignore the importance of national identity as a basis for democratic institutions and 'reduce it to a mere piece of folk culture'.<sup>37</sup> The *Manifesto* and it maintained the ODS critique of Western Europe's self-interested approach to EU enlargement and repeated earlier criticisms of the 'implicit anti-Americanism' of greater EU political integration, which it interpreted as an attempt by (unnamed) European states to 'restore lost great power status'. It then presented a more explicit, but familiar, preferred model of European integration, advocating an 'inter-governmentalist' approach based on co-operation between sovereign states, extending mainly to economic co-operation, with limited political co-ordination.<sup>38</sup> However, the position of the 'new' ODS on Europe incorporated a number of significant *changes of emphasis and explicitness* in comparison with both the party's earlier official position and Klaus's personal views before 1997:

- A much heavier focus on the nation and the defence of national interests at the expense of neo-liberal and 'Central European' critiques of the EU, justified in terms of the doctrine of 'realism'.
- Open discussion of the possibility that EU enlargement would be postponed for a significant period, or that the Union would offer 'second-class membership' to Central and East European states, and the contemplation of scenarios for a Czech medium-term future outside the European Union, which ODS saw as, in some circumstances, preferable to EU membership.

- A radicalisation of the party's rhetoric and the introduction by ODS of the defence of 'national interests' against the EU as a stance distinguishing it from political opponents.

### *The Turn to National Interests*

The notion of a 'national interest' is a commonplace in English language political discourse. However, despite the centrality of the nation as a category in Czech political discourse since at least mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, Czech nationhood has usually been expressed in terms of historical rights; the juxtaposition of a Czech (or Slavonic) civilisation to the German-speaking world; or a Czech(slovak) 'state idea' embodying certain ethical and moral values.<sup>39</sup> Indeed, in 1992 even Václav Klaus had argued that the notion of 'national interests' was academic, abstract and removed from real politics, concluding that defining them was 'a never ending task for political scientists and historians, not for practical politicians'.<sup>40</sup>

References to Czech 'national interests' first appear in ODS programmatic documents in the mid 1990s,<sup>41</sup> supplementing or replacing the notion of a Czechoslovak 'state idea'. The term seems to have entered political usage as a result of overlapping debates in academic and policy communities following the unexpected emergence of an independent Czech state in 1993.<sup>42</sup> However, the idea of national interests was relatively unimportant in ODS's 'balanced' euroscepticism of early-mid 1990s and hardly features explicitly in Klaus's writings and speeches of the time. Moreover, where a Czech national interest was evoked in relation to European integration, it was almost always used to justify joining the EU, rather than to highlight costs and conflicting interests in the enlargement process.<sup>43</sup>

ODS's tougher, public euroscepticism centring on 'national interests' first emerged as a theme in Václav Klaus's speech to the extraordinary ODS Congress in Poděbrady on 13-14 December 1997 in the wake of the party's dramatic and divisive exit from office. It was developed further at the party's ninth regular congress in Jihlava in April 1998, which incorporated it into the ODS election programme of that year.<sup>44</sup> However, these speeches and documents largely recapitulated the party's earlier position and gave equal or greater prominence to other themes such as privacy, individual freedom and a 'cheap state'.<sup>45</sup>

ODS's more 'national' standpoint was first presented as a key plank of party policy at the party's first Ideas Conference in June 1999, a shift signalled to the wider public by Klaus and ODS's new foreign affairs spokesman Jan Zahradil in newspaper interviews.<sup>46</sup> Klaus, for example, stressed that the concept of patriotism should not be forgotten, arguing that the homeland (*vlast*), the nation and the state were 'natural entities of human societies with which a person identifies' contrasting this with the 'vacuous Europeanism' upon which a 'certain organisation' was being constructed.<sup>47</sup> Klaus further argued that the need to defend national identity was becoming more acute, as the Czech Republic's accession to the European Union became a more immediate prospect. However, while Klaus's comments represented a change of emphasis and a clarification of his well-known objections to political integration, the position set out by Zahradil was more radical and more specific, combining an overall critique of European integration with specific proposals to reform the EU and modify Czech accession strategy.<sup>48</sup> Zahradil, who had worked a policy specialist Ministry of Foreign Affairs until 1997, also drafted the ODS policy document, *National Interests in the Real World*, which formally established the principles of 'realism' in international relations and the defence of national interests as the basis of ODS's



European and foreign policy.<sup>49</sup> Zahradil also headed the working group within the ODS party foreign affairs commission, which produced the still more detailed *Manifesto of Czech Eurorealism* presented to the third ODS Ideas Conference in April 2001.

### *Czech 'Eurorealism'*

The *Manifesto of Czech Eurorealism* was one of the fullest and most sceptical assessment of European integration produced by any mainstream political party in Central Europe since 1989. Consistent with ODS's 'realist' foreign policy doctrine, the *Manifesto of Czech Eurorealism* depicted the EU as a 'gladiatorial arena' (*kolbiště*) opposing existing members, candidate states, national interest groups and the EU bureaucracy itself. This, it suggested, made it necessary to reassess both the accession process and the longer-term prospect of EU membership. Czechs, it suggested, 'can no longer settle for a blanket interpretation of our entry to the EU as a final, symbolic end point to our being part of (*pobyt v*) the former socialist empire, or today's temporary state of post-communism'.<sup>50</sup> Nor, it argued, should EU accession be regarded as a politically neutral, technical and administrative process of adapting to the *acquis communautaire*. Rather, the *Manifesto* stressed, enlargement should be viewed in terms of its conflicting self-interests as

'not concerned with the acceptance of candidate countries as rapidly as possible but with using the accession process to the advantage of current members. The EU sees the candidate states above all as markets for its products, sources of beneficial opportunities (*výhodné uplatnění*) for its surplus professionals, as well as a source of raw

materials and cheap, skilled local labour and as a possible buffer zone against political and security risks in the East and the Balkans'.<sup>51</sup>

Given such a zero-sum clash of interests, the *Manifesto* concluded, a careful political appraisal of the conditions, costs and benefits of EU entry was required. This should a clear stance on both accession and on the future shape of the Union, which would reflect and maximise the Czech national interest.<sup>52</sup> This new ODS approach to EU accession was bluntly summed up by the party's Defence spokesman Petr Nečas in a speech to its 2001 Ideas Conference, in which he urged Czechs to '... gain everything possible from the EU .... let us not give it a fraction more than we have to. Let us say fairly, openly and loudly to the Czech public that for us entering the European Union is not, and will not be, a love match, but a marriage of convenience'.<sup>53</sup> The 'realist' stress on interest maximisation led the *Manifesto*'s authors to a further significant conclusion: that the Czech Republic and other candidate states were committing a 'strategic error' in giving greater priority to the *rapidity* of EU accession, at the expense of the *quality* of the terms of entry.<sup>54</sup>

#### *Alternatives to EU Accession?*

This *Manifesto*'s 'realist' view of enlargement as based largely upon national states and other actors pursuing conflicting self-interests, led its authors to conclude that the EU side lacked a strong interest in enlargement. This logically implied either a significant delay in enlargement or the offering of a diluted 'second class membership'.<sup>55</sup> This in turn necessitated the exploration of alternative scenarios to (rapid) Czech EU accession. The *Manifesto* essentially envisaged three such scenarios: 1) a delay in Czech accession initiated by the EU because of the Czech Republic's robust defence of its national interests; 2) a Czech decision to review EU

membership if it ‘was unfavourable from the point of view of foreign policy or national interests’; and 3) a rejection of EU membership by the Czech public in a referendum. The *Manifesto* specified several instances in which ‘unsatisfactory’ membership in the EU that might prompt a Czech review of accession to (or membership of) the EU. These included the consistent marginalisation of the Czech Republic within the decision-making processes of an enlarged EU; a growth in anti-Americanism and the scaling back of transatlantic links resulting from the Common Foreign and Security Policy; or a ‘revision of the results of the Second World War’ through an EU-enforced cancellation of the post-war Beneš decrees expelling ethnic Germans from Czechoslovakia.

The *Manifesto* concluded by exploring a number of alternative strategies for what Jan Zahradil termed elsewhere ‘the theoretical possibility of not joining the EU’.<sup>56</sup> In outline, these amounted to two options: 1) the Czech Republic’s participation in the European Single Market without adopting the full legislative and administrative burden of the *acquis*, either through membership of the European Economic Area, the route taken by Norway;<sup>57</sup> or through bilateral treaties with the EU on the Swiss model; and 2) the development of closer economic and political links with Great Britain, Scandinavia and the USA in a ‘broad Euro-Atlantic space linked in security, economic and political terms, rather than a Fortress Europe ranged against the USA’.<sup>58</sup>

#### *Germany, Europe and the Rediscovery of Traditional Nationalism*

Despite sporadic attempts to incorporate traditional Czech national symbols and myths into its ideology<sup>59</sup> the dominant tendency in ODS from its foundation in 1991 until the late 1990s, was an attempt to break with many traditional, historically derived categories of Czech political thought. These were typically viewed by the

party's leaders and intellectual supporters as provincial, utopian and left-wing in inclination and thus suitable for replacement with more mainstream, 'tried and tested' Western ideologies such as neo-liberalism.<sup>60</sup> This tendency was also observable in ODS's euroscepticism. Thus, for example, although on one occasion Václav Klaus quoted remarks by Tomáš Masaryk, Czechoslovakia's revered first President, on the need for a diverse Europe in which small states were not dominated by larger, centralising powers,<sup>61</sup> Klaus based the bulk of his critique of the EU on a neo-liberal euroscepticism explicitly inspired by British and American thinkers. In other contexts, he did not hesitate to say that much of Masaryk's contribution to politics had little positive relevance to contemporary Czech society.<sup>62</sup>

However, after 1997 both Klaus's and ODS's discourse on Europe and European integration began to incorporate traditional Czech nationalist paradigms. This is most clearly illustrated by their growing tendency to view European integration in terms of a clash of German and non-German interests. A veiled anti-German undercurrent can be detected in many ODS statements on European integration during the 1990s.<sup>63</sup> Indeed, to a considerable extent, the party's identity as an 'Anglo-Saxon' neo-liberal conservative party, rather than a Christian Democratic party on the model of the German CDU or the Austrian OVP, was an assertion of Czech national identity and independence against the dominance of Austro-German influences in Central Europe.<sup>64</sup> Nevertheless, ODS policy when in government between 1992 and 1997 sought to neutralise the emotive and divisive potential of the Czech-German relationship. Bilateral negotiations between the Czech and German governments thus led to the signature in 1997 of a 'Czech-German Declaration', which agreed a compromise formula, addressing the issue of the post-war 'transfer' of Czechoslovakia's ethnic German population.<sup>65</sup>

From 1999, however, in addition to a 'realist', international relations-based concepts of 'national interests', ODS increasingly based its euroscepticism on a more traditionally Czech nationalist understandings of European politics, explicitly defining the Czech nation and its interests in opposition to those of Germany and the German speaking world. Firstly, it explicitly linked existing trends in European integration with a (supposed) preponderance of German interests in the EU, referring to 'German' visions of a federal Europe or to a 'dominant German conception of the EU'.<sup>66</sup> However, the *Manifesto of Czech Eurorealism* took this a step further by attempting to align ODS's preferred neo-liberal model of European integration with the Czech nation tradition, claiming that liberal-nationalist thinkers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century such as Havlíček, Palacký and Masaryk were 'strikingly close to Anglo-Saxon liberal-conservative thought'.<sup>67</sup> This claim was intended to legitimise a neo-liberal model of integration by grounding it in Czech political tradition, and to delegitimise euro-federalist models by associating them with what Czech historiography had traditionally seen as its antithesis - authoritarian, centralising German designs for hegemony in Central Europe.<sup>68</sup> Secondly, and more significantly, however, the *Manifesto* took up the defence of the Beneš Decrees as a Czech national interest and explicitly linked them to Czech EU accession, a stance previously taken only on the Czech left and far right.<sup>69</sup> ODS concern with the Decrees as a vital national interest, which could give cause to contemplate Czech withdrawal from the accession process or the Union, was first indicated by the *Manifesto of Czech Eurorealism*. ODS's June 2002 election programme also paid considerable attention to the defence of the Decrees, challenges which it depicted as 'property and perhaps also territorial claims against the victims of past Nazi aggression' which could 'call Czech statehood into question'.<sup>70</sup> During the course of the election campaign, this position was radicalised

by Václav Klaus in his demand that the retention of the Decrees be legally guaranteed as part of Czech EU accession.<sup>71</sup>

Such shifts in the party's position on 'national interests' were accompanied by radicalisation of its political rhetoric towards to both domestic rivals and foreign countries. Speaking in 2000, Klaus, for example, described the failure of Czech europhile politicians to understand that EU accession implied the assertion of Czech interests as a national community, as a manifestation of a historically rooted lack of Czech national self-confidence

‘a constantly returning feeling that our state and national existence is not self-evident (...)not only in underestimating ourselves and accusing ourselves, and in submitting to great powers and strong allies on the other, but in accusing and denouncing domestic political opponents for a lack of devotion to foreign countries’,<sup>72</sup>

This was an allusion to a debate over the character and meaning of Czech national identity dating back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century (the so-called ‘Czech Question’). However, in the same speech, Klaus provocatively termed this alleged mindset a ‘Protectorate mentality’, a reference to the Nazi occupation of the Czech Lands in 1939-45, which appeared to equate Czech europhile politicians with wartime collaborators.<sup>73</sup> Similarly strident rhetoric was used in 2002 by the philosopher Miloslav Bednář, one of the co-authors of the *Manifesto of Czech Eurorealism* and an thinker strongly committed to defending traditional Czech political thought against intellectual paradigms imported from the West. Borrowing President George W. Bush's phrase, Bednář termed Austria, Germany and Hungary ‘an axis of evil’ for demanding for the formal legal cancellation of the Beneš Decrees.<sup>74</sup>

Interestingly, the concept of ‘national interests’ was extended by some ODS politicians to a domestic social policy agenda.. Petr Nečas, one of the leading thinkers on ODS's neo-conservative wing, for example, argued in 1999 that the nation and national interests should be asserted not only as a defence against ‘cheap pseudo-Europeanism’, but also to preserve social cohesion against the destructive effects of social, economic and generational differences.<sup>75</sup> Klaus and other ODS leaders initially distanced themselves from such notions of ‘national cohesion’ (*národní soudržnost*).<sup>76</sup> However, by 2002 the party’s election programme had extended the notion of ‘national interests’ to cover policy areas such the regulation of both illegal immigration and Vietnamese migrants legally resident in the Czech Republic.<sup>77</sup>

## **Explaining the Euroscepticism of the Czech Right**

### *Measuring Euroscepticism*

In attempting locate ODS’s evolving euroscepticism in more theoretical and comparative terms, we are confronted with a range of different explanations of both the nature and causation of party-based euroscepticism. In one of the most influential typologies, Taggart and Szczerbiak distinguish ‘hard’ euroscepticism based on principled, usually ideological, opposition to EU membership or demands which amount a *de facto* rejection of membership, and ‘soft’ euroscepticism characterised by qualified opposition to the EU based on hostility to certain policies or a negative assessments of the overall costs and benefits of joining.<sup>78</sup> An alternative conceptualisation is offered by Kopecký and Mudde, who propose a two dimensional typology focusing on the *logic* of opposition. Kopecký and Mudde measure support for (or opposition to) existing EU structures on one axis and support for European integration in principle on a second. This produces four possible party positions: 1) a

‘europhobe’ category hostile to both the existing EU and the principle of European integration; 2) a ‘eurosceptic’ category critical of the current European project, but favouring some alternative model of integration; 3) a ‘europhile’ position favouring integration both on principle and in its current form; and 4) a ‘euro-pragmatist’ position opposed to integration in principle, but reconciled to EU membership in practice.<sup>79</sup>

Both the official positions of ODS of the early-mid 1990s and the more strident eurosceptic views expressed at this time by Václav Klaus fall squarely within the limits of Taggart and Szczerbiak’s ‘soft’ euroscepticism and Kopecký and Mudde’s qualified ‘eurosceptic’ position. In most of his speeches and writings in this period Klaus presented his views on European integration as sceptical reflections, as ‘questions not answers’ and concerns ‘that should be seriously discussed’.<sup>80</sup> At no time did he or other ODS leaders call into question, even in hypothetical terms, the necessity or desirability of Czech membership of the EU. Nor was it directly suggested that any of the Union’s fundamental institutions or any aspects of the *acquis*, even those of which he was critical (such as the Euro), should be reformed or rejected.

ODS’s position on European integration after 1997 also falls in the ‘soft’ eurosceptic category, as it does not reject EU membership outright. It also remains ‘eurosceptic’ in Kopecký and Mudde’s two-dimensional typology in rejecting existing forms of integration, rather than integration *per se*. This highlights the underlying continuities in ODS’s position, making clear that it had not performed a sudden *volte face* or drifted towards extremism, as some domestic critics suggested. Nevertheless, even using such broad comparative typologies, it is clear that ODS’s revised post-1997 position was more radically eurosceptic than its earlier stance. If we use Taggart and



Szczerbiak's criteria for distinguishing 'hard' and 'soft' euroscepticism, we can clearly see that the party's later stance is a 'harder' eurosceptic position. This is firstly because after 1999 ODS for the first time advocated Czech non-membership of the EU *in certain circumstances*<sup>81</sup> and secondly, because in 2001-2 it made its support for EU entry conditional on demands (the guaranteeing of the Beneš Decrees), which were impossible or unlikely to be met.<sup>82</sup>

A more nuanced model of party positioning on European integration is presented by Hooghe, Marks and Wilson. A party's position on European integration, they argue, must be viewed as a multi-dimensional response to the complex mix of policies pursued by the EU. While some EU policies promote market liberalisation, some develop market regulation, and others promote European political integration (including both deepening and widening the EU).<sup>83</sup> Euroscepticism, whatever its overall degree of 'hardness' or 'softness', must, Hooghe, Marks and Wilson suggest, always therefore be seen in terms of opposition to *specific aspects* of the EU project. Such opposition, they suggest, is rooted in and given coherence by ideologically-derived models of European political economy. ODS's stance before 1997 approximates to what these authors identify as neo-liberal euroscepticism, a stance typical the liberal-conservative family of parties, in which ODS is most often included.<sup>84</sup> While supportive of aspects of integration such as the European Single Market, which free up markets, these parties' euroscepticism has been triggered by their opposition to post-Maastricht European level re-regulation and the erosion of national sovereignties, both of which limit the scope for competition between different national economic models.<sup>85</sup> When viewed in this perspective, what is striking is that the 'hardening' of ODS position after 1997 did not simply take the form of an intensification or development of its neo-liberal critique. The party did not, for

example, seek to defend national sovereignty as a means of exploiting the Czech Republic's comparative advantages as a low-wage, low-regulation economy. Rather, its post-1997 position focused more narrowly on opposition to deepening political integration, the weakening of national states and the erosion of the autonomy and identity of Czechs as a national community. In doing so, it combined newly articulated notions of 'realism' in international relations with traditional Czech nationalism, also flirting with previously uncharacteristic discourses of social conservatism and 'national cohesion'. This suggests that *the change in ODS's euroscepticism was part of a broader ideological shift*. As Marks, Hooghe and Wilson note in work on Western Europe, centre-right eurosceptic positions on European integration are often rooted not just in neo-liberal political economy, but also in nationalist and socially conservative values, which can be conceived as part of second 'values' axis, crosscutting the conventional left-right axis of distributional conflict.<sup>86</sup> ODS's hardening euroscepticism, therefore, seems to imply a shift in political space, moving the party to a more socially conservative position.<sup>87</sup> The possibility that a broader ideological realignment might be under way was also hinted at by the interest shown by Jan Zahradil in the newly formed Alliance for a Europe of Nations (AEN) grouping, uniting a variety of parties all of which fall within a loose family of 'national movements', distinct from more historically rooted centre-right party families.<sup>88</sup> AEN members include the Gaullist RPF of Charles Pasqua and Italy's National Alliance, as well as Ireland's *Fianna Fail* with which ODS has excellent relations.

### *Causal Mechanisms for Party Euroscepticism*

The changing make-up of ODS euroscepticism and ideology raises important issues about the causation of party-based euroscepticism. Initial debates over the determinants of party positions on European integration have generally centred on whether they are primarily determined by electoral strategies and institutional factors such as electoral systems and party system formats,<sup>89</sup> or whether party origins, ideology and identity play a greater determining role.<sup>90</sup> Although writers on both sides of the argument accept that both sets of factors are relevant and that in practice they interact, most avoid direct consideration of their relationship noting only that it is complex.<sup>91</sup> In their innovative work on agrarian parties, Sitter and Batory do, however, formulate a ‘three stage model’ of causation for party based euroscepticism, based on a relatively straightforward hierarchy of factors.<sup>92</sup> In the first instance, they argue, certain parties have a cleavage-based predisposition towards euroscepticism, reflecting the preferences of a party's electorate or, in cases where its cleavage base is residual or indeterminate, on a party's identity, values and ideology. This basic stance is subsequently modified, sometimes quite radically, by a party's medium-long term strategic orientation, which reflect its competitive position within a given party system. Such strategic orientations will typically trade off the competing claims of internal party stability, office holding and the achievement of policy goals.<sup>93</sup> Finally, short-term tactical considerations, usually reflecting the imperatives of coalition formation, may further modify a party's precise stance on specific issues.

This three stage model works well for a party family with a well-defined core constituency and historical identity such as farmers' parties in Scandinavia and Eastern Europe, which are relatively minor actors in their national party systems and operate in a strategic context largely determined by bigger parties.<sup>94</sup> It can be extended with relatively little difficulty to analyse large the positioning on European integration

of de-ideologised catch-all formations in established West European democracies, which have emerged from historic parties and movements with clear social and ideological roots.<sup>95</sup> However, the case of ODS suggests, for a broad East Central European catch-all party formed to meet the exigencies of post-communist transformation, such 'stages' of causation premised on a dichotomy between ideology and strategy may not be sustainable.

### *Cleavage, Party Identity and Party Ideology*

There has been a considerable debate as to whether European integration is a distinct cleavage or issue dimension capable of being translated into structures of domestic party competition. In post-communist East Central Europe, this debate is complicated by the fact that party-forming cleavages differed from classical cleavage structures in core West Europe states, in both type and configuration. They also appear less deeply rooted in distinct social structures, tending to reside in more diffuse, individualised values and judgements such as approaches to nationalism and citizenship, or in responses to macro-political processes such as regime change, democratisation or post-communist socio-economic transformation.<sup>96</sup> Despite the presence in post-communist party systems of some classic, structural-historical divisions, such as centre-periphery, rural-urban and religious-secular cleavages, which sometimes sustain small historic or interest-based parties,<sup>97</sup> the dominant catch-all parties of left and right in post-communist Europe are based upon such diffuse, non-structural cleavages.<sup>98</sup> There seems no reason, however, why European integration and its recasting of the role of the national state cannot be regarded as such a non-structural cleavage.<sup>99</sup> More problematic, however, is determining how a newly emerging European 'cleavage' can be mapped onto the broader sets of socio-economic and

value cleavages underlying post-communist party systems. Euroscepticism in post-communist Europe has often been related to the division between 'winners' and 'losers' in socio-economic transformation. Transition 'winners', it is argued, tend to be more europhile, given that European integration reinforces the market and liberal institutions and values from which they benefit. 'Losers', by contrast, are more eurosceptic, given their perceived disempowerment by such institutions and values.<sup>100</sup> However, while the strong euroscepticism of parties of the far left and far right – in the both Republic and East and Central Europe more generally - do reflect the preferences of electorates of elderly, unskilled, rural and economically deprived transition 'losers',<sup>101</sup> this clearly not the case with ODS and its relatively young, wealthy, educated and urban electorate.<sup>102</sup>

In some Central and East European states such as Poland and Hungary the scepticism towards European integration of some centre-right parties can be related to long standing socio-cultural and historical cleavages between Westernising liberalism and a national-populist conservatism.<sup>103</sup> This is again, however, not the case in the Czech Republic. Despite the more nationalistic and conservative positions explored by ODS after 1997, the Czech party competition has since the early 1990s been overwhelmingly defined by a single conventional left-right axis over the extent to which resources should be allocated by the market or the state.<sup>104</sup> Opinion polls have, moreover, consistently shown that, to the extent that Czech voters' views on EU membership coincide with a left-right division, it is supporters of the right, including the overwhelming majority of ODS supporters, who strongly favour EU accession.<sup>105</sup> Moreover, unlike centre-right formations in neighbouring Poland and Hungary, ODS was formed as a self-consciously 'new' force created to address the demands of post-communist transformation, and, until recently, was not obviously influenced by pre-

communist right-wing or nationalist traditions, which were, in any case, historically weak in the Czech Lands.<sup>106</sup>

More purchase is gained if we consider ODS's ideology and party (family) identity, rather than its role in representing a cleavage. This is essentially the approach taken by Marks and Wilson,<sup>107</sup> who argue parties respond differently to European integration over time, as the nature of that integration evolves, in ways that can be predicted from their historically derived party family identity. In the past two decades liberal-conservative parties, such as ODS, they suggest, have evolved from initial enthusiasm for European integration as an economic project centring on a single European market, to euroscepticism, as the political implications of integration become clear. As suggested above, ODS's early trajectory on the question of European integration seems to fit this model well. Václav Klaus's speeches and writings repeatedly highlight that for him, as for of liberal-conservative leaders in Europe, the signing of the Maastricht Treaty in 1992 represented the key turning point at which European integration turned away from its original liberalising mission and took on an unacceptable federalist course. The role of party family identity is further confirmed by the obvious transfer of key aspects of eurosceptic thinking to ODS from an Anglo-American context. This is, for example, clearly the case with the *Manifesto of Czech Eurorealism's* advocacy of the 'Hong Kong solution' of becoming a free market *entrepot* linked to NAFTA as an alternative to EU membership, an idea canvassed by a number of leading British Conservatives, including their current leader.<sup>108</sup> However, as argued above, ODS's turn towards a euroscepticism based on the defence of 'national interests' was less not a simple response to the logic of European integration *per se*, but part of a broader ideological shift to a more conservative-national ideology.<sup>109</sup>

This undermines the assumption made by both ‘ideological’ and ‘strategic’ analysts of party-based euroscepticism that, while party positions on European integration may change in response to both the dynamics of integration itself and the pressures of party competition, party identities and ideologies are in all cases relatively well established.<sup>110</sup> The case of ODS suggest that this assumption may not well founded. This implies that, in a Central European context, the relationship between party euroscepticism and cleavage, identity and ideology may be more complex than the clear, hierarchical pattern of causation suggested by Sitter and Batory.

#### *Euroscepticism as a Mobilising and Realignment Strategy*

The second set of factors highlighted are the strategic imperatives of party competition, which, may lead a party both to take up the issue of European integration and adopt specific stances. For party elites faced with weak structural cleavages, or unconstrained by strong party organisations, which often act as repositories of party identity and ideology, (re)positioning their parties over an emerging issue such as European integration may largely be determined by strategic incentives, such as vote maximization or the prospect of gaining political office. At first sight such considerations seem particularly applicable to larger, newer parties in East Central Europe, which typically have weak social roots and limited party organization and seek to make broad ‘catch all’ appeals to relatively open electorates.<sup>111</sup> ODS can be regarded as just such a Central European catch-all party: Despite developing an increasingly loyal electorate, it has consistently followed an office-seeking logic based on vote maximisation, rather than attempting to represent defined constituencies as small confessional, class or interest-based parties do.<sup>112</sup> It has also avoided the more limited targeted appeals to particular social groups, such as rural residents or an

embryonic ‘nationally-minded’ middle class made by conservative-national centre-right formations in Poland and Hungary.<sup>113</sup>

In this context, the ‘new’ ODS euroscepticism after 1997, which took the party to the verge of rejecting EU membership, appears anomalous and seems to lack any strategic rationale. Comparative surveys of party euroscepticism suggest that broad, programmatically-based, catch-all parties of centre-left and centre-right, which are (or are likely to be) actors in governing coalitions, tend not to be strongly eurosceptic or to adopt only milder forms of euroscepticism when faced with competitive pressures to do so.<sup>114</sup> Where ‘harder’ euroscepticism is found within such parties, it is argued, it tends to be confined to factions of limited influence. The competitive context of Czech party politics between 1997 and 2002 seems to confirm these observations. ODS’s carefully crafted euroscepticism served only to divide the party from potential coalition partners on both the centre/centre-right and centre-left and failed to match the preferences of its electorate on European integration. The issue of Europe also lacked salience for both ODS supporters and voters generally.<sup>115</sup> ODS, like the British Conservatives,<sup>116</sup> therefore appears anomalous both in the (increasing) ‘hardness’ of its euroscepticism and in the fact that euroscepticism was part of the party mainstream. Historical factors, such as the role of Empire mark out British conservatism and the UK party system as a special case.<sup>117</sup> However, there seem few such distinguishing features for a medium sized post-communist Central European state such as the Czech Republic explaining the stance of the Czech centre-right on Europe.

To explain ODS’s strategically inexplicable stance, we need to move beyond the image of dynamic, but predictable patterns of party competition, which inform much the emerging literature, to consider the *strategic repertoire* and cognitive templates



developed for party competition by ‘new’, centre-right catch-all parties in post-communist East Central Europe. Far from being de-ideologised teams of office seekers on the pattern West European catch-all parties – or even technocratic post-communist social democrats<sup>118</sup> – centre-right parties in East Central Europe are often highly ideologised not to say ideologically militant. Most are the recent successors of opposition movements, whose rhetoric and identity are shaped by the experience of regime change and the intense and polarised ‘politics of mobilisation’ that followed it, when fundamental issues such as regime type, political identity or the basic direction of post-communist transformation are contested.<sup>119</sup> In such a period charismatic, political entrepreneurs are relatively free to frame these issues to mass publics in new ways. The rise of Klaus’s ODS in 1991-2, when it reframed economic reform, decommunisation and Czech-Slovak relations within a new right-wing discourse,<sup>120</sup> delegitimising and marginalising competitors as being knowingly or unknowingly against reform, is a clear instance of such politics.<sup>121</sup>

In subsequent elections in 1998 and 2002, fought as a non-incumbent party at a time when the key institutional and policy choices for transformation had already been made, ODS *continued* to frame the issues in terms of regime change. In both campaigns it, thus, contrasted a supposedly unreliable and dangerous left-wing opposition to its own chosen role as guarantor of the Czech Republic’s democratic and market-oriented development. In the 2002 election campaign, for example, more than 1.3 million Czech households received a pre-recorded telephone message from Václav Klaus warning that

‘... our future is in danger. Don’t give any opportunity to those who are burdening us with debt and taking our freedom from us. I want to do everything

to ensure that to ensure that our children can live in prosperity and freedom. We have a fateful choice ahead of us...'<sup>122</sup>

A similar mobilisation strategy was identifiable in the campaigning of Hungary's Fidesz-MPP for the 1998 and 2002 elections and in the Polish right's attempts to win the presidency.<sup>123</sup> It is in the context of a political strategy seeking to repeat the party's successful electoral mobilisations of 1992 and 1998 that ODS's use of 'harder' euroscepticism in the late 1990s must be viewed. Despite the party's respectable showing in the June 1998 elections, ODS leaders seem to have been aware that, given the party's failure to implement a successful radical free market economic programme in government and subsequent support for a minority social democratic government, ODS could no longer credibly present itself as a vehicle for successful neo-liberal transformation or as a guarantor against an irresponsible centre-left.<sup>124</sup>

ODS's turn towards harder line euroscepticism can therefore be interpreted as an electoral and political mobilisation strategy, similar in many ways that the used during its formative years to frame post-communist transformation. As in the early 1990s, the party's campaigning over Europe after 1997 stressed the need for a 'realist' view of politics based on arbitrating between conflicting interests, in the latter case national interests. Its depiction of its europhile opponents as intellectual elites with a covert left-wing agenda, detached from the people and the nation, also echoed its presentation of centrist ex-dissidents in debates over economic reform in early-mid 1990s.<sup>125</sup> Speaking to a party gathering June 2000, Václav Klaus, for example, emphasised that ODS was not 'a group of café society intellectuals for whom EU entry is an academic exercise in rhetoric or in formulating visions of salvation in the so-called "globalising world". (...) .... [or] play[ing] the role of enlightened teachers preaching to our supposedly benighted citizens about the "advantages and

disadvantages” of Czech membership in the EU, but a force which would represent their interests precisely on those issues, which have now become relevant to our newly free and sovereign national community’.<sup>126</sup>

Paradoxically, however, ODS’s use of euroscepticism as mobilisation strategy was paralleled by a number of initiatives suggesting a *realignment of the Czech party system* away from the left-right polarisation of the 1990s. From summer 2000 ODS started advocating a ‘super grand coalition’ of all non-communist parliamentary parties, rather than the formation of a centre-right coalition of the type that existed between 1992 and 1997. Although rejected by some ODS leaders and supported by others only as a short-term expedient, certain ODS figures such as Petr Nečas argued that working with the Social Democrats could become a durable arrangement based upon co-operation over such issues of ‘national interest’ such as reform of the welfare system and EU entry.<sup>127</sup> Although triggered by its loss of office, it therefore seems that ODS’s growing euroscepticism after 1997 was less a predictable response to dynamics of party competition, than part of a broader ideological realignment, attempting to address the *lack* of predictable patterns of competition in a relatively new party system.

#### *Internal Dynamics and Party Institutionalisation - a Missing Link?*

Electoral defeat and loss of office can lead not only to changes in a party’s electoral strategy, but also to ideological and policy change, often associated with changes in the internal balance of power in a party’s ‘dominant coalition’.<sup>128</sup> The rich literature on domestic political disputes surrounding EU membership provides a wealth of examples of how internally divisive these issues can be for political parties.<sup>129</sup> EU membership has in different contexts divided governing parties and governing

coalitions, usually leading them to avoid or downplay the issue, while acting as a rallying point for others.<sup>130</sup> However, there has been little systematic assessment of how internal party dynamics forms have affected parties' changing stances on integration. The case of ODS suggests that for many newer parties and party systems, internal power relations and patterns of institutionalisation may have considerable bearing in determining the adoption of such positions.

The first point to note is that ODS's growing internal crisis of the mid 1990s, culminating in the split of 1997-98, largely represented a breakdown of the institutionalisation process.<sup>131</sup> In supporting Václav Klaus almost regardless of the circumstances of the funding scandal, the majority of ODS delegates in effect chose to make the party a formation based largely on a bond of trust with its charismatic founder and leader, retarding the party's development towards becoming an 'end in itself'. However, the shift in the internal balance of power in ODS - rooted in its problems of institutionalisation - had more immediate political consequences for the party's European policy.

Václav Klaus was a powerful charismatic figure, popularly seen as the 'architect of economic reform', who was the dominant public face of the Civic Democratic Party from its foundation in April 1991 until December 2002, provoking frequent accusations that it was 'a one-man party'.<sup>132</sup> However, despite ODS's centralised organisational structure, from an early stage Klaus was constrained both by the party's grassroots and by less prominent, but politically significant, figures in the leadership, such as Josef Zieleniec, the former Czech Foreign Minister (1992-7) and ODS co-founder and deputy Chairman between 1992 and 1997. While grassroots activists were often able to use ODS's internal democratic mechanisms to challenge Klaus's organisational and personnel preferences, they lacked the ability and resources to

generate or influence alternative high policy or programmatic orientations.<sup>133</sup> However, Zieleniec and others in the ODS elite do seem to have exerted countervailing pressures on Klaus over issues of high policy, including the party's European policy. Indeed, Klaus's own published writings record an occasion in 1994 pressure from Zieleniec made him abandon a series of highly critical remarks on the Visegrad group. The existence of such elite-level pressures to moderate his sceptical stance towards European integration may explain the division between Klaus's own markedly eurosceptic agenda and the more balanced position of official ODS documents during the early 1990s.<sup>134</sup> By contrast, the new cohort of younger ODS politicians, such as Nečas and Zahradil, who were elected to the party leadership after 1997, having previously held second rank positions, owed their advancement in the party to their endorsement of Klaus's leadership and lacked independent political authority. Many had, moreover, formed their political views in the ideologically-charged 'politics of mobilisation' of 1990s and were, in any case, often more inclined towards assertive and radical positions than Klaus.<sup>135</sup> ODS shift to a more overtly charismatic mode of leadership thus (re)created a situation, where the Klaus's personal views on high policy, including his euroscepticism, went largely uncontested and were rapidly diffused throughout the party as official policy.<sup>136</sup>

However, as well as reflecting the changing balance of internal power, ODS's new emphasis on defending national interests against the EU also served to maintain party cohesion by bridging the ideological divisions that had opened up since 1997. Following the unravelling of the party's vision of 1990s of rapid post-communist transformation based on a neo-liberal economic miracle rooted in the Czech national character,<sup>137</sup> growing tensions developed between neo-liberal and neo-conservative elements in ODS and on the Czech right more generally. Despite the reservations

entertained some senior ODS figures, the post-1997 eurosceptic agenda also provided a set of themes around which both ideological camps in the party, as well as ODS's less 'political' local activists and representatives, could unite with little difficulty.<sup>138</sup> This unifying effect can, for example, be seen by the contrasting views of two of the most vocal advocates of ODS's eurosceptic policies on Europe after 1997, Jan Zahradil and Petr Nečas. While Zahradil, stands firmly on ODS's social liberal wing, Nečas is a neo-conservative keen, where possible, to introduce a US-style social agenda of 'family values' to Czech politics.<sup>139</sup>

## **Conclusions**

This paper has sought, using the case of the Civic Democratic Party, to examine the relationship between the development of a centre-right party in post-communist Central Europe and its increasingly hardline eurosceptic positions. It has mapped the evolution of ODS's position on the issue of European integration, distinguishing a relatively restrained and multi-layered euroscepticism in the period 1992-97, and a more elaborated, strident and explicitly 'national' post-1997 critique, which occupied a central place in the party's programme and rhetoric until 2002. It has also sought to distinguish between the euroscepticism of Václav Klaus and the more moderate official position of the party before 1997.

The paper has suggested that the intersection of the growing domestic weakness of the Czech centre right and the acceleration of European enlargement and integration processes in the mid-late 1990s created a context favouring a turn by ODS towards greater euroscepticism. However, the specific enabling factors were the renewed personal dominance of Václav Klaus in the party and the related circulation of party elites, and the growing need to fill a growing ideological vacuum with themes

commanding broad majority support in the party. The new more hardline euroscepticism of ODS of the late 1990s radicalised elements of the party's earlier programme and ideology, laying greater emphasis on the previously submerged theme of a distinct Czech national community, whilst downplaying neo-liberal aspects which had had great prominence in the early-mid 1990s.

The paper has also sought to reflect in more theoretical terms upon the causal mechanisms, which may lead centre-right parties in the region towards eurosceptic positions. The case of ODS suggests that, in addition to problems of institutionalisation, East Central European centre-right parties' origins as engines of regime change and post-communist transformation can leave them vulnerable to ideological exhaustion and crises of party identity, as the great issues of regime change and transformation recede. This makes the newly emerging issue of European integration a highly attractive one for them to take up. European integration is both comparable in importance and scope to earlier aspects of post-communist transformation, and has an apparent potential to mobilise and realign mass electorates in the way these issues did in the early 1990s.

ODS's development between 1991 and 2002 suggests for 'new' parties of the Central European centre-right the relationship between ideology or identity and the imperatives of party competition may not be the straightforward trade-off between deep structures and shorter-term political electoral strategies, suggested by the emerging literature. For such parties, ideology (and identity formation) and party strategy appear more as parallel tracks, than the hierarchical 'stages' detectable in older, better institutionalised political formations. For 'new' parties of the East Central European centre right, although ideology and strategy remain distinct spheres, changes in strategy, this research suggests, often entail the rethinking of relatively

weakly established party ideologies. Conversely, ideological debates, seeking to fill the vacuum left by the passing of post-communist transformation as political issues, tend to have clear ramifications for party strategy. In the case of ODS, this can be clearly seen in the reaction of those who took the new theme of ‘national interests’ as implying a new model of party competition based on left-right cooperation against liberal and centrist forces. The unexpected election of Václav Klaus as Czech President in February 2003 with the concerted support of Communist deputies, in part attracted by his defence of ‘national interests’ in debates over the Beneš Decrees, suggest that such a realignment could indeed come to pass.<sup>140</sup>



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<sup>1</sup> P. Bugge, Czech Perceptions of the Perspective of EU Membership Havel vs. Klaus, (Florence: European University Institute Working Paper RSC no. 2000/10 2000) and P. Kopecký, and P. Učeň, “Return to Europe? Patterns of Euroscepticism Among Czech and Slovak Parties” in J. Zielonka and V. Pettai , eds. EU Enlargement and the Road to European Union – Volume II. (Manchester: Manchester University Press forthcoming) and P. Kopecký “An Awkward Newcomer? EU enlargement and Euroscepticism in the Czech Republic”, European Studies: A Journal of European Culture, History and Politics, 19 (forthcoming 2003).

<sup>2</sup> P. Taggart and A. Szczerbiak, “The Party Politics of Euroscepticism in EU Member and Candidate States”, Opposing Europe Research Network Working Paper No 6, /Sussex European Institute Working Paper No 51, April 2002.

<sup>3</sup> P. Robejsek, “Parallel Paths East and West”, Transitions Online, 1 March, 2002, [www.tol.cz](http://www.tol.cz).

<sup>4</sup> Bugge, Czech Perceptions of the Perspective of EU Membership, 42-3; J. Pehe, “Lidé z ODS: eurorealisté zvláštního ražení”, Lidové noviny, 22 June., 1999 and “Nationalist Platform could be Klaus’ Last Resort”, Prague Business Journal, 24 June,

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2002. For a scholarly treatment of party clientelism, see C. O'Dwyer, "Runaway State Building: the Development of Political Parties and States in Contemporary Poland, Slovakia and the Czech Republic", paper presented at the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Northwest Regional Conference for Russia, East European and Central Asian Studies, Evergree State College, Olympia, 14 April, 2001.

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, J. Pehe, "Hrad jako záchrana klientelského systému", Právo, 9 December, 2002.

<sup>6</sup> See O. Krejčí, Kniha o volbách (Brno: Victoria Publishing 1994).

<sup>7</sup> See M. Hadjiisky, "The Failure of Participatory Democracy in the Czech Republic", West European Politics 24:3 (2001): 43-64.

<sup>8</sup> ODS, Svoboda a prosperita (Prague: ODS 1992), 7.

<sup>9</sup> ODS, Svoboda a prosperita, 1992: 13-14

<sup>10</sup> ODS, Svoboda a prosperita, 1992, 13.

<sup>11</sup> ODS, Svoboda a prosperita, 1996, 10

<sup>12</sup> ODS, Svoboda a prosperita, 1996, 11.

<sup>13</sup> V. Klaus "The Czech Republic and its Integration into European, Political, Security and Economic Structures", Speech to the Europe and Us conference, Prague 13 May, 1994, in V. Klaus, Renaissance: the Rebirth of Liberty in the Heart of Europe (Washington, DC: Cato Institute 1997), 105-8, citation 107.

<sup>14</sup> V. Klaus "Davos, Evropa a my", speech of 6 February, 1997 reprinted in V. Klaus, Obhajoba zapomenutých myšlenek (Prague: Academia 1997), 347-51, citation 348.

See also "Evropský týden" in the same volume, 351-54.

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<sup>15</sup> See V. Klaus, “Evropská měnová unie a její systémové a fiskální souvislosti”, Speech at the European Forum, Alpbach, 30 August, in V. Klaus, Obhajoba zapomenutých myšlenek, 357-365. Citation 358.

<sup>16</sup> V. Klaus “Evropa v Cannes”, “Evropská měnová unie a její systémové a fiskální souvislosti”, Speech at the European Forum, Alpbach, 30 August, 1996 reprinted in V. Klaus, Obhajoba zapomenutých myšlenek, 354-7. Other speeches made in 1995, 1996 and 1997 reprinted in the same volume also make this point. For the same argument in English see V. Klaus “Notes for London Speech” in V. Klaus, Evropa pohledem politika, pohledem ekonomu, (Prague: Centrum pro ekonomiku a politiku 2002), 219-22.

<sup>17</sup> V. Klaus, “Jak je to s visegradskou spoluprací?”, in V. Klaus, Obhajoba zapomenutých myšlenek, 386-9. Citation 388

<sup>18</sup> V. Klaus, “Konrad Adenauer and the Meaning of European Integration”, Konrad Adenauer Foundation Prize acceptance speech, Prague December 1993, reprinted in Klaus, Renaissance: the Rebirth of Liberty, 119-25. See also Bugge, Havel vs. Klaus, 25-29.

<sup>19</sup> See Bugge, Czech Perceptions of the Perspective of EU Membership.

<sup>20</sup> See, for example, V. Klaus, “The Czech Republic and its Integration into European, Political, Security and Economic Structures”, Speech to the Europe and Us conference, Prague 13 May, 1994 reprinted in Klaus, Renaissance: the Rebirth of Liberty, 105-8.

<sup>21</sup> Cited in Bugge, Havel vs. Klaus, 24. The remark was first made in 1994.

<sup>22</sup> This can, for example, be detected in both the Right’s framing of the Czech-Slovak split and the politics of socio-economic transformation. See K. Williams, “National

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Myths in the New Czech Liberalism,” in G. Hosking and G. Schopflin eds., Myths and Nationhood (London: Hurst, 1997), 132-40 and S. Hanley, “The New Right in the New Europe? Unravelling The Ideology of ‘Czech Thatcherism’” , Journal of Political Ideologies, 4:2 (1999): 169-78.

<sup>23</sup> See M. Orenstein, Out of the Red: Building Capitalism and Democracy in Post-Communist Europe, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press 2001). This priority was widely shared across the Czech political spectrum in 1990-1 and reflected the underlying concerns of Czech public opinion.

<sup>24</sup> Havel stressed the need both to develop a European identity and Czechs’ responsibility to maintain national identity by not to being overly seduced by consumerism and materialism. See A. Tucker, The Philosophy of Czech Dissidence from Patočka to Havel, (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press 1999). For his views on different levels of governance see V. Havel, “Address before the Members of the European Parliament”, 16 February, 2000,

[http://www.hrad.cz/president/Havel/speeches/index\\_uk.html](http://www.hrad.cz/president/Havel/speeches/index_uk.html)

<sup>25</sup> See V. Klaus, “The Nation-State as a Building Block of European Integration”, Speech to the Zavikon conference, Prague 10 June, 1994 reprinted in V. Klaus, Renaissance: the Rebirth of Liberty, 101-4.

<sup>26</sup> V. Klaus, “Evropa v Cannes”.

<sup>27</sup> Orenstein, Out of the Red.

<sup>28</sup> Politický program ODS, (Prague: ODS 1996).

<sup>29</sup> Although the exact details of the affair are still unclear, the trial of the then ODS Executive Deputy Chair, Libor Novák, established in June 2000 that donations to the party from business interests which had been involved in the privatisation process,

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were illegally channelled to it and the identity of the donors concealed by “unidentified” officials at ODS Head Office. Novák was acquitted for lack of evidence.

<sup>30</sup> Most notably Interior Minister Jan Ruml and Finance Minister Ivan Pilip made a joint televised declaration calling on Klaus to resign,

<sup>31</sup> The anti-Klaus faction subsequently broke away to form a new party, the Freedom Union (US), whose programme was a significant departure from the policies of ODS, particularly in stressing the need for a more positive approach to EU accession.

<sup>32</sup> Specifically congresses held in Liberec in December 1999, Plzeň in October 2000 and Ostrava in November 2001.

<sup>33</sup> J. Zahradil, P. Plecítý, P. Adrian and M. Bednář, Manifest českého eurorealismu, (ODS: Prague, April 2001). Citations are my translations from the Czech original. An English translation can be found at [http://www.zahradil.cz/html/publikace/old/manifest\\_eng.html](http://www.zahradil.cz/html/publikace/old/manifest_eng.html). The positions of the *Manifesto* also strongly formed sections in the 2002 ODS election programme dealing with European integration, Volební desatero ODS 2002 (ODS: Prague, 2002).

<sup>34</sup> See V. Klaus, “Kosovo: nevytvářejme nové falešné mýty”, Lidové noviny, 30 March, 1999; V. Klaus “Jiný pohled na jugoslávskou krizi”, Mladá fronta Dnes, 1 April, 1999 and J. Zahradil, “Věcná debata o zásahu NATO není zbabělost”, Mladá fronta Dnes, 15 April, 1999. The ODS stance was largely shared by the then minority Social Democratic government. Klaus was also critical of subsequent EU and Western attempts to influence the results of elections in Yugoslavia so as to accelerate the fall of Milošević.

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<sup>35</sup> See “Klaus: Haider je menší zlo než tlak Evropské unie na Rakousko”, Lidové noviny, 4 February, 2000 and M. Mareš, “Nová rakouská vláda a české politické spektrum”, Integrace, no. 2 (2000), [www.integrace.cz](http://www.integrace.cz) See also V. Klaus, “Je veden spor o samotném Haiderovi nebo o Evropě?”, Večerník Praha, 11 February, 2000 and J. Zahradil, “Nebezpečí ve stínu Haidera”, Právo, 10 March, 2000.

<sup>36</sup> Zahradil et al, Manifest českého eurorealismu, 4

<sup>37</sup> Zahradil et al, Manifest českého eurorealismu, 8.

<sup>38</sup> Specifically, it opposed any extension of Qualified Majority Voting (QMV), enhancement of the powers of the European Parliament or the establishment of the European Commission in a quasi-governmental role. Zahradil et al, Manifest českého eurorealismu, 4, 8-10. These points was re-emphasised in a speech to the European Parliament by Václav Klaus on 4 December, 2001 in which he argued that current trends towards greater political integration should be frozen. See V. Klaus, Klaus v Bruselu (Centrum pro ekonomiku a politiku: Prague, 2002).

<sup>39</sup> See J. Rak, Bývali Čechové: české historické mýty a stereotypy. (Jinočany: H & H, 1996) and (L. Holy, The Little Czech and the Great Czech Nation: National identity and the post-communist social transformation. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

<sup>40</sup> V. Klaus, “Potřebujeme definovat národní zájmy?” in V. Klaus, Rok, málo či mnoho v dějinach země. (Prague: Repro-Media, 1993), 53-4. The article, dated 14 September, 1992, discusses Czech-Slovak relations and the division of Czechoslovakia.

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<sup>41</sup> ODS's 1996 election programme, for example, promised to 'consistently base ourselves on the Czech national interest'. ODS, Svoboda a prosperita, 1996, 10. See also 6-9, 10-15 of the same document.

<sup>42</sup> See, A. Valenta et. al., Máme národní zájmy?, (Prague: Ústav mezinárodních vztahu 1992) and O. Krejčí, Geopolitika a český národní zájem, (Prague: Universe 1993). On the close relationship between foreign policy elites and the academic study of international relations in Central Europe see P. Drulák and L. Konigová, "The Discipline of International Relations in Central and Eastern Europe", European Political Science, 1:3 (2002): 47-53.

<sup>43</sup> See, for example, ODS Svoboda a prosperita, (ODS: Prague, 1996), 10-13.

<sup>44</sup> ODS, Hlavu vzhůru: volební program ODS, (ODS: Prague, 1998).

<sup>45</sup> The so-called "Poděbrady articles".

<sup>46</sup> V. Klaus, "Odmítám zapírat své vlastenectví", Lidové noviny, 3 June, 1999 and J. Zahradil, "Přemýšlíme o Evropské unii realisticky a bez předsudků", Mladá fronta Dnes, 2 June, 1999.

<sup>47</sup> V. Klaus, "Odmítám zapírat své vlastenectví".

<sup>48</sup> Zahradil, "Přemýšlíme o Evropské unii realisticky a bez předsudků"; J. Zahradil, "Střízlivý pohled na rozšíření", Hospodářské noviny, 10 June, 1999.

<sup>49</sup> ODS, "Národní zájmy v reálném světě – základní koncepční teze pro II. ideovou konferenci", discussion document presented at the Second ODS Ideas Conference, June 2000. An earlier and more extensive version of this document dated October 1999 appears on Zahradil's website

[http://www.zahradil.cz/publikace/old/koncepce\\_zahranicni\\_politiky.htm](http://www.zahradil.cz/publikace/old/koncepce_zahranicni_politiky.htm)

<sup>50</sup> Zahradil et al, Manifest českého eurorealismu, 3.

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<sup>51</sup> Zahradil et al, Manifest českého eurorealismu, 5. It also notes that enlargement will bring a powerful “liberalisation shock” that might result in a growth in inflation and unemployment in candidate states and put pressure on domestic business sectors.

<sup>52</sup> The Czech national interest is defined in the *Manifesto* as “the maintenance and development of a clearly defined national identity: the strengthening of the international rule of law and of an institutional framework in which the same rules apply for big and small states; the maintenance of the territorial integrity and political sovereignty, independence and security of the Czech Republic; the mutual opening and linking of markets without excessive barriers”. Zahradil et al,

Manifest českého eurorealismu, 8. Interestingly, both the *Manifesto* and its predecessor “Národní zájmy v reálném světě” (see note 48) reintroduce the notion of a Czech “state idea” which is presented as the basis of national identity, sovereignty and national interests.

<sup>53</sup> The speech is reproduced in full in ODS, Deset let ODS, 15-16. Citation 16.

<sup>54</sup> Zahradil et al, Manifest českého eurorealismu, 6-7.

<sup>55</sup> See, for example, J. Zahradil, “V Evropské unii se pro nás připravuje druhořadé členství”, České slovo, 14 November, 2000.

<sup>56</sup> Untitled on-line interview with Jan Zahradil, dated 30 March, 2001, published on-line on ODS website [www.ods.cz](http://www.ods.cz), response to question 6.

<sup>57</sup> The *Manifesto* depicts EFTA as “an intergovernmental organisation which “only” serves the trading interests of its members”, which appears to approximate to the model of the EU that the party would ideally envisage. Zahradil et al, Manifest českého eurorealismu, 12.

<sup>58</sup> Zahradil et al, Manifest českého eurorealismu, 12-13.



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<sup>59</sup> Williams, “National Myths in the New Czech Liberalism”.

<sup>60</sup> In this the party drew on the critique formulated by the philosopher Václav Bělohradský’. See ‘Realism in Politics Worries People - interview with Czech philosopher Václav Bělohradský’, Central Europe Review, 22 May, 2000, [http://www.ce-review.org/00/20/interview20\\_belohradsky.html](http://www.ce-review.org/00/20/interview20_belohradsky.html) and Hanley, “The New Right in the New Europe?”.

<sup>61</sup> Klaus, “The Czech Republic and its Integration into European, Political, Security and Economic Structures”, 124. Many see a closer correspondence between Havel and Masaryk. See M. Baer, “Imagining Membership: the Conception of Europe in the Political Thought of T. G. Masaryk and Václav Havel”, Studies in East European Thought, 52:3 (2000): 203-26.

<sup>62</sup> V. Klaus, “T G Masaryk a jeho obraz v dnešní české společnosti” in V. Klaus, Od opoziční smlouvy do toleranční patentu, (Prague: Votobia, 2000): 296-302.

<sup>63</sup> See A. Bazin, Germany and the Enlargement of the European Union to the Czech Republic, (Florence: European University Institute Working Paper RSC 1999/21, 1999).

<sup>64</sup> See, for example, ODS’s internal analysis of its prospects after the June 2002 elections, M. Beneš, “Volby PS PČR 2002 - analýza volební kampaně ODS materiál pro Výkonnou radu ODS”.

<sup>65</sup> See A. Stroehlein, Czechs and the Czech-German Declaration (Glasgow: Institute of Russian and East European Studies, University of Glasgow 1998).

<sup>66</sup> Zahradil, “V Evropské unii se pro nás připravuje druhořadé členství”; see also V. Klaus “Bude sjednocená Evropa německá, či francouzská?”, Večerník Praha, 7 July,

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2000; J. Zahradil, “Snažím se, abych byl spokojen”, Respekt, 19 February, 2001; and Bazin, Germany and the Enlargement of the European Union to the Czech Republic.

<sup>67</sup> Zahradil et al, Manifest českého eurorealismu, 8.

<sup>68</sup> A point later made explicit by the Manifesto’s authors. Zahradil, P. Plecítý, P. Adrian and M. Bednář, “Odpověď kritikům Manifestu českého eurorealismu”, document dated 4 October, 2001 online at [www.zahradil.cz/html/publikace/old/manifest\\_odpoved.htm](http://www.zahradil.cz/html/publikace/old/manifest_odpoved.htm).

<sup>69</sup> Principally, the Czech Communists (KSČM) and the extreme right-wing Republican Party (SPR-RSČ), but also many Czech Social Democrats. On these parties’ positions towards Germany. See Stroehlein, Czechs and the Czech-German Declaration.

<sup>70</sup> ODS, Volební desatero ODS 2002., 14-15.

<sup>71</sup> See interviews with Klaus: “Před volbami se stíhají z děl a minometů, po volbách se vyjednává”, Právo, 26 May, 2002 and “Jde mi o podmínky, za kterých do unie vstoupíme” Hospodářské noviny, 28 May, 2002.

<sup>72</sup> V. Klaus, “Nenechme se pohltit každodenností”, speech to the Second ODS Ideas Conference, 4 -5 June, 2000, published at [www.ods.cz](http://www.ods.cz) June 2000.

<sup>73</sup> Klaus, “Nenechme se pohltit každodenností”.

<sup>74</sup> See RFE/RL Newslines 15 March, 2002. He later apologised for the remark. For Bednář’s philosophical views see his Spravedlnost, demokracie a česká filosofie politiky, (Olomouc: Votobie 1998).

<sup>75</sup> See D. Balšínek, “Láska k vlasti nerezaví”, Respekt, 7 June, 1999, 4.

<sup>76</sup> Klaus, “Odmítám zapírat své vlastenectví”.

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<sup>77</sup> In interviews, during the 2002 election campaign, Vaclav Klaus further developed this stance by arguing that immigration into the Czech Republic could risk the “loss of a certain civic coherency (*koherence*) .... of consistency (*konzistence*), of the homogeneity (*homogenity*) of the world I live in”. The multi-culturalist model characteristic of ethnically diverse West European societies should, he felt, therefore be avoided. See “Jde mi o podmínky, za kterých do unie vstoupíme”, Hospodářské noviny, 28 May, 2002. Klaus later wrote a sympathetic review of a working paper, which had claimed that multi-culturalism resulting from immigration eroded social capital. V. Klaus “Co s přistěhovalectví?” Lidové noviny, 18 February, 2003.

<sup>78</sup> P. Taggart and A. Szczerbiak, “The Party Politics of Euroscepticism in EU Member and Candidate States”, 7.

<sup>79</sup> P. Kopecký and C. Mudde, “The Two Sides of Euroscepticism: Party Positions on European Integration in East Central Europe”, European Union Politics, 3:3 (2002): 297-326.

<sup>80</sup> Klaus, “Evropa v Cannes”, 354 and “Evropská měnová unie a její systémové a fiskální souvislosti”, 364.

<sup>81</sup> Although as both ODS eurosceptics and their critics noted, the economic and geopolitical realities constraining the Czech Republic meant that non-membership scenarios were unlikely ever to be realised and Czech EU membership was a virtual inevitability, these publicly presented arguments still indicated an important shift in the party’s preferences. See V. Klaus, “Británie nemá sebemenší důvod přijímat euro”, Hospodářské noviny, 10 December, 2001 and “Evropská unie předbíhá svou dobu / rozhovor s ing. Janem Zahradilem”, Integrace, no. 3/2000, [www.integrace.cz](http://www.integrace.cz).

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For a critique of the *Manifesto*, see R. Špok, “Naivní český eurorealismus”, Integrace, no.8/2001, [www.integrace.cz](http://www.integrace.cz)

<sup>82</sup> The Beneš Decrees were effectively neutralised as an issue in Czech debates on European integration following the publication in October 2002 of a legal opinion commissioned by the European Parliament, which found that the Decrees were not an obstacle to Czech accession.

<sup>83</sup> L. Hooghe, G. Marks and C. Wilson “Integrating Europe: How Domestic Contestation Frames Party Positions on European Integration”, paper presented at American Political Science Association meeting, San Francisco, 30 August- 2 September 2001. See also L. Hooghe and G. Marks, “The Making of a Polity: the Struggle over European Intergration” in H. Kitschelt, P. Lange, G. Marks and J. D Stephens, Continuity and Change in Contemporary Capitalism, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999), 70-100.

<sup>84</sup> ODS is usually categorised as a member of the “liberal-conservative” family of parties. See P. G. Lewis, Political Parties in Post-Communist Eastern Europe, (London: Routledge 2000) and Taggart and Szczerbiak, “The Party Politics of Euroscepticism in EU Member and Candidate States”. The AEN founding conference was attended on an “exploratory” basis by Jan Zahradil. See “Zahradil se zúčastnil konference AEN...”, Lidové noviny, 26 February, 2002.

<sup>85</sup> G. Marks and C. Wilson, “The past in the present: A cleavage theory of party response to European integration”, British Journal of Political Science 30 (2000): 433-459; Hooghe, Marks and Wilson, “Integrating Europe”.

<sup>86</sup> Hooghe, Marks and Wilson “Integrating Europe”.

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<sup>87</sup> H. Kitschelt, Z. Mansfeldová, R. Markowski and G. Toka, Post-Communist Party Systems: Competition, Representation and Inter-Party Collaboration, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

<sup>88</sup> Marks and Wilson, “The Past in the Present”.

<sup>89</sup> N. Sitter, “The Politics of Opposition and European Integration in Scandinavia: Is Euro-Scepticism a Government-Opposition Dynamic?”, West European Politics 24 (2001): 22-39 and P. Taggart and A. Szczerbiak, “Parties, Positions and Europe: Euroscepticism in the EU Candidate States of Central and Eastern Europe”, *Opposing Europe Research Network Working Paper No 2/Sussex European Institute Working Paper No 46*, May, 2001.

<sup>90</sup> Marks and Wilson, “The Past in the Present”; Kopecký and Mudde, “The Two Sides of Euroscepticism”.

<sup>91</sup> For example, Kopecký and Mudde speak only of a “complex interrelation between ideology and strategy.... directly related to the multi-layered nature of the concept of Euroscepticism” but do not discuss the nature of this interaction. “The Two Sides of Euroscepticism”, 319

<sup>92</sup> N. Sitter and A. Batory, “Cleavages, Competition and Coalition Building: Agrarian Parties and the European Question in Western and Eastern Europe”, European Journal of Political Research, forthcoming. This broadly ‘Rokkanian’ approach parallels both classic approaches to West European party formation and attempts to adapt Rokkan’s model to post-communist Eastern Europe. See S. M. Lipset and S. Rokkan, “Cleavage Structure, Party Systems And Voter Alignments: An Introduction” in Party Systems And Voter Alignments: Cross National Perspectives, (New York: Free Press 1967), 1-64 and M. Cotta, “Building party systems after the dictatorship: the East European

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cases in comparative perspective” in G. Pridham and T. Vanhanen, eds.,

Democratisation in Eastern Europe: domestic and international perspectives, (London and New York: Routledge 1994), 99-128

<sup>93</sup> Batory and Sitter, “Cleavages, Competition and Coalition Building”.. For a more elaborated account see N. Sitter “Opposing Europe: Euro-Scepticism, Opposition and Party Competition” , Opposing Europe Research Network Working Paper No 9/Sussex European Institute Working Paper No 56, October 2002,

<sup>94</sup> This is particularly the case where, as with agrarian parties such as the Hungarian Smallholders party identities endure, but their historic ideologies, positing rural or national populism as an alternative to the liberal democratic market model is effectively defunct in fundamentally contradicting a broad political and social consensus for this Western European oriented model. See B. and Greskovits, The Political Economy of Patience and Protest. (Budapest: Central European University Press, 1998): 93-114 and A. Batory, “Hungarian Party Identities and the Question of European Integration”, Opposing Europe Research Network, Working Paper No 4 (Sussex European Insitute Working Paper No 49), September 2001.

<sup>95</sup> Sitter, “The Politics of Opposition and European Integration in Scandinavia”. See also N. Sitter, “The European question and the Norwegian party system since 1961: The freezing of a modern cleavage or contingent opposition?” paper presented at 30<sup>th</sup> ECPR Joint Sessions of Workshops, Turin, 22-27 March, 2002.

<sup>96</sup> G. Evans and S. Whitefield, “Identifying the Bases of Party Competition in Eastern Europe”, British Journal of Political Science, 23 (1993): 521-48; H. Kitschelt, “The Formation of Party Cleavages in Post-communist Democracies: Theoretical Propositions” , Party Politics, 1:4, (1995): 447-72; Kitschelt et al., Post-Communist

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Party Systems; M. Vachudová and T. Snyder, “Are transitions transitory? Two types of political change in Eastern Europe since 1989”, East European politics and societies, 11:1 (1997):1-35; N. Sitter, “Beyond Class vs. Nation: Cleavage Structures and Party Competition in East Central Europe”, Central European Political Science Review, 2:3 (2001): 67-91

<sup>97</sup> See S. Rivera, “Historical Cleavages or Transition Mode? Influences on the Emerging Party Systems in Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia”, Party Politics, 2:2 (1996): 177-208; Z. Enyedi, “Organizing A Subcultural Party in Eastern Europe: The Case of the Hungarian Christian Democrats” Party Politics, 2:3 (1996): 379-96; A. Szczerbiak, “The Polish peasant party: a mass party in postcommunist Eastern Europe?”, East European Politics and Societies, 15:3 (2001), pp .554-88; Sitter and Batory, “Cleavages, Competition and Coalition Building”.

<sup>98</sup> See A. Innes, “Party Competition in Postcommunist Europe: the Great Electoral Lottery”, Comparative Politics, 35:1 (2002): 85-104.

<sup>99</sup> Indeed, in East Central Europe such a cleavage can even be viewed as having a certain historical pedigree. During the classical period of cleavage-based party formation in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the absence of national states in the region mobilised powerful nationalist parties against supranational dynastic states, crosscutting the classical cleavages associated with modernisation. This arguably represented a national autonomy/supranational integration cleavage of a type not dissimilar to that hypothesised by some contemporary analysts of European integration. This “cleavage” was particularly evident in the Czech lands where the “National Question” produced tensions between class and interest-based parties, such as the Social Democrats and Agrarians, and a variety of “national” parties. See B. M.

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Garver, The Young Czech Party 1874-1901 and the Emergence of a Multiparty System, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press 1978). On integration as a cleavage in contemporary Europe see S. Hix, The Political System of the European Union, (Basingstoke : Macmillan 1999) and S. Hix and K. Goetz, eds., Europeanised Politics?: European Integration and National Political Systems, (London: Frank Cass 2000). H. Kitschelt, “European Party Systems: Continuity and Change” in R. Rhodes (eds), Developments in West European Politics, (Basingstoke: Macmillan 1997), 131-150.

<sup>100</sup> See K. Henderson, “Euro scepticism or Europhobia: Opposition Attitudes to the EU in the Slovak Republic”, Oposing Europe Research Network Working Paper No 5, /Sussex European Institute Working Paper No 50, September 2001 and A. Ágh, The Politics of Central Europe, (London: SAGE 1998).

<sup>101</sup> See S. Hanley “Towards Breakthrough or Breakdown? The Consolidation of KSČM as a Neo-Communist Successor Party in the Czech Republic, Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics, 17 (3): 2001: 96-116 and M. Kreidl and K. Vlachová, “Sociální zázemí extrémní pravice v ČR“, Sociologický časopis, 35: 3 (1999): 335-356.

<sup>102</sup> See, for example, J. Mišovič, “Podpora vstupu do EU podle jednotlivých sociálních skupin”, Integrace, 4/2000.

<sup>103</sup> H Kitschelt et al., Post-Communist Party Systems.

<sup>104</sup> Kitschelt et al., Post-Communist Party Systems and K. Vlachová, “The Crystallization of Values and Attitudes” in J. Večerník and P. Matějů, eds, Ten Years of Rebuilding Capitalism: Czech Society After 1989, (Prague: Academia 1999), 251-72.



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<sup>105</sup> Mišovič, “Podpora vstupu do EU podle jednotlivých sociálních skupin”,. See also J. Česal, “Názory naší veřejnosti na vstup do Evropské unie”, Integrace, no. 2/2000, [www.integrace.cz](http://www.integrace.cz). and J. Hartl, “Evropská unie v zrcadle veřejného mínění”, Integrace no. 2/2000, [www.integrace.cz](http://www.integrace.cz).

<sup>106</sup> Hanley, “The New Right in the New Europe”.

<sup>107</sup> Marks and Wilson, “The past in the present”. While ostensibly based on ‘cleavage’, the authors, in fact, focuses on party ideology and identity.

<sup>108</sup> C. Denny, “Contender Retains Hope of Taking UK into Nafta”, The Guardian, 22 August, 2001, 8.

<sup>109</sup> Baker, Gamble and Seawright distinguish between a neo-liberal “hyper-globalist” euroscepticism centred on the idea frictionless global free market and a more, state-centred ‘inter-governmentalist’ scepticism. While the former is now the majority view among British Conservative elites, the latter is more characteristic of the traditional centre-right. ODS, despite its ideological borrowings, leans squarely towards the “inter-governmentalist” position. D. Baker, A. Gamble and D. Seawright, “Sovereign nations and global markets: modern British Conservatism and hyperglobalism”, British Journal of Politics and International Relations, 4:3 (2002): 399-428.

<sup>110</sup> On Western Europe see P. Taggart, “A Touchstone of Dissent: Euroscepticism in Contemporary Western European Party Systems”, European Journal of Political Research 33 (1998): 363-88; Marks and Wilson, “The past in the present”. On Eastern Europe see Taggart and Szczerbiak “Parties, Positions and Europe: Euroscepticism in the EU Candidate States” and “The Party Politics of Euroscepticism in EU Member and Candidate States”. Batory, “Hungarian Party Identities”; A. Batory, “Attitudes to Europe: Ideology, Strategy and the Issue of European Union Membership in

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Hungarian Party Politics”, Party Politics 8:5 (2002): 525-539. Kopecký and Mudde, “The Two Sides of Euroscepticism”. The assumption of ideological stabilisation may be influenced by the obvious decline in electoral volatility and party system fragmentation in the region and the identification of “programmatic structuring” in a number of East Central European party systems. See Kitschelt et al., Post-Communist Party Systems.

<sup>111</sup> P Mair, What is Different about Post-Communist Party Systems?, (Glasgow, University of Strathclyde, Centre For the Study of Public Policy, Studies in Public Policy no. 259, 1996); Lewis, Political Parties in Post-Communist Eastern Europe; Sitter, “Beyond Class vs. Nation”.

<sup>112</sup> H. Kitschelt, The Logics of Party Formation. (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 1989); Enyedi 1995; Hanley, “Towards Breakthrough or Breakdown?”; Szczerbiak, “The Polish peasant party”; Sitter and Batory, “Cleavages, Competition and Coalition Building”.

<sup>113</sup> See A. Szczerbiak, Poles Apart: the Emergence and Development of Political Parties in Postcommunist Poland. (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2001), 111-56 and C. Kiss, “From Liberalism to Conservatism: The Federation of Young Democrats in Post-Communist Hungary”, East European Politics and Societies, 16 (3) 2003: 739-63.

<sup>114</sup> Sitter, and Taggart and Szczerbiak, “The Party Politics of Euroscepticism in EU Member and Candidate States”. See also Taggart, “A Touchstone of Dissent”.

<sup>115</sup> See J. Herzmann, “Co přinesou Klausovy výroky o Evropské unii”, Mladá fronta Dnes, 26 June, 2000.

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<sup>116</sup> D. Baker, A. Gamble and D. Seawright, “Sovereign nations and global markets: modern British Conservatism and hyperglobalism”, British Journal of Politics and International Relations, 4:3 (2002): 399-428.

<sup>117</sup> D. Baker, A. Gamble and D. Seawright, “Sovereign nations and global markets”.

<sup>118</sup> See A. Gryzmala-Busse Redeeming The Communist Past: The Transformation of Communist Parties in East Central Europe, (Cambridge University Press, 2002), 123-74.

<sup>119</sup> A term coined by Václav Žák. V. Žák, Rizika mobilizační politiky, (Prague: Český spisovatel, 1997).

<sup>120</sup> Hanley, “The New Right in the New Europe”.

<sup>121</sup> For an overview of the period in both the Czech lands and Slovakia see A. Innes, Czechoslovakia: The Short Goodbye, (New Haven: Yale University Press 2001).

<sup>122</sup> See transcript of the message in “Příloha č. 1 - Prostředky kampaně”, published online at [www.ods.cz](http://www.ods.cz), August, 2002, 1-17. ODS’s 1998 election programme concluded on a similar note: “This country does not need socialism, in overt or covert form, therefore it needs ODS”, ODS, Hlavu vzhůru, 25.

<sup>123</sup> Kiss, “From Liberalism to Conservatism”; B Fowler, “Hungarian Parliamentary Elections, May 1998”, Electoral Studies, 17:2 (1998): 257-62; M. Pittaway, “The “House of Terror” and Hungary’s Politics of Memory”, Austrian Studies Newsletter, Winter 2003: 16-17, “A. Szczerbiak, “Explaining Kwasniewski’s landslide: the October 2000 Polish presidential election”, Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics, 17:4 (2001): 78-107. See also A. Bozóki, “The Rhetoric of Action: The Language of Regime Change in Hungary” in A. Bozóki, ed., Intellectuals

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and Politics in Central Europe (Budapest: Central European University Press, 1999), 263-83.

<sup>124</sup> T. Němeček, "Lojalita není program", Respekt, 48/2001. Mass demonstrations in November 1999 and December 2000/January 2001 against the Opposition Agreement and perceived attempts by ODS and the Social Democrats to control Czech public television through political appointments to its board underlined the growing frustration of the Czech public with the parties of 1990s transformation. See V. Dvořáková, "Civil society in the Czech Republic: "Impulse 99" and "Thanks You, Time to Go" in P. Kopecký and C. Mudde, eds., Uncivil societies: Contentious Politics in Post-Communist Europe. (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), 134-56.

<sup>125</sup> Even Klaus's initial eurosceptic discourse of the early 1990s implicitly but equated the (future) EU with Comecon and other coercive institutions of the former Soviet bloc, as well as to totalitarianism through, for example, references to European "Newspeak" Klaus, "Evropský týden", 352.

<sup>126</sup> Klaus, "Nenechme se pohltit každodenností". This a "populist" framing of EU accession was accompanied by support for a rapid referendum on Czech EU entry, despite ODS's previous resolute opposition to the use of referenda to settle constitutional issues, such as the future of Czechoslovakia in 1992, and more generally as a supplementary democratic mechanism.

<sup>127</sup> P. Nečas, "Odpovědnost za volební porážku ODS by nenesl jen předseda, ale celé vedení", Právo, 16 November, 2001.

<sup>128</sup> See, for example, A. Agh, "Defeat and Success as Promoters of Party Change", Party Politics 3:3 (1997): 427-44 and "Party formation process and the 1998 elections

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in Hungary: Defeat as promoter of change for the HSP”, East European Politics and Societies, 14:2 (2000): 288-315 and M. Demker, “Changing Party Ideology: Gaullist Parties Facing Voters, Leaders and Competitors”, Party Politics, 3:3 (1997): 407-26.

<sup>129</sup> On the British case see, for example, S. George, An Awkward Partner: Britain in the European Community, (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1999 2<sup>nd</sup> edition).

<sup>130</sup> Sitter, “The Politics of Opposition and European Integration in Scandinavia” and “The European question and the Norwegian party system”.

<sup>131</sup> The concept of institutionalisation is a complex and contested one. Most authors agree that institutionalisation occurs when a party acquires a degree of organisational permanence associated with partisan identification by members and supporters, leaving behind the purely instrumental goals of founding participants. There is, however, disagreement as to when and how this process occurs. See J. Hopkin, Party Formation and Democratic Transition in Spain, (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999); A. Panebianco, Political parties : organisation and power (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988); J. A. Aldrich, Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Political Parties in America, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

<sup>132</sup> See S. Saxonberg, “Václav Klaus: the Rise and Fall and Re-emergence of a Charismatic Leader” East European Politics and Societies, 13: 2 (1999): 391-418.

<sup>133</sup> For more detail see S. Hanley, “Are the Exceptions Really the Rule? Questioning the Application of ‘Electoral-Professional’ Type Models of Party Organisation in East Central Europe”, Perspectives on European Politics and Society, 2:3 (2001): 453-79

<sup>134</sup> V. Klaus, “Štředoevropské iniciativy”, Lidové noviny, 9 May, 1994.

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<sup>135</sup> Some Czech commentators consider Zahradil and his collaborators as significantly more eurosceptic than Klaus. See, for example, B. Pečinka, “Komentář: ODS mezi stagnací a růstem”, Proglas, 2001/4.

<sup>136</sup> The unpredictable impact of internal party dynamics on (European) policy is also demonstrated by the election in December 2003 of Miroslav Topolánek as Klaus’s successor as Chairman of ODS, and of Jan Zahradil as the new ODS First Deputy Chairman. The election result, which largely reflected coalitions of regional interest groups in the party, leaves ODS future policy on Europe unclear: while Zahradil is an arch-eurosceptic, Topolánek appears to have pragmatic views on integration close to those of the Social Democrat-led coalition. See B. Pečinka, “Co se dělo na kongresu ODS?” Politika, 2003/1.

<sup>137</sup> Hanley, “The New Right in the New Europe?”.

<sup>138</sup> Research into Czech local politicians’ views on European integration suggest ODS local representatives (and those of most other parties) were sceptical of integration and concerned over perceived threats to Czech national identity and sovereignty. C. Perron, Views of Czech local politicians on European Integration, (Florence: European University Institute, Working Paper RSC no. 2000/39, 2000)

<sup>139</sup> See interview with Nečas, “ODS nemůže stát jenom na liberální noze”, Lidové noviny, 16 December, 1999.

<sup>140</sup> See E. Tabery “Rudý Václav na Hradě”, Respekt, no. 10, 3-9 March, 2003, 5, and D. Spritzer, “Red Tide”, Prague Post, 12 March, 2003. In voting for Klaus, the Communists also sought to undermine the Social Democrat-led coalition government, establish themselves a “normal” party, and obtain the nomination of some

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Communist-aligned figures to judicial and diplomatic posts appointed by the  
President.