

Blago and Kalo



It's the brazenness that's so shocking about Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich's "pay-to-play" corruption scandal. Although he knew he was probably under federal wiretap, he allegedly continued to hustle up bids for his state's vacant Senate seat. Czech Finance Minister Miroslav Kalousek shares more with the governor than merely Slavic blood. Just as Blago had the sole right to appoint a replacement senator, Kalo had the sole ability to circumvent the gaming law and to allow five deep-pocketed betting operators to move into the lucrative online world. Kalousek, who was made for Chicago-style politics, defied his own legal advisers and his political party to rush through the licenses, despite the intense media attention his brazenness has attracted. Newspapers haven't even tried to conceal their assumptions about what his motivations are. If the CR had a decent white-collar crime squad, we'd have some wiretaps. Kalousek is of course innocent of any wrongdoing until proven otherwise. But then so is Blagojevich.

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