

## Byznys as usual



Could it be that the Topolánek cabinet has finally realized that the best way to confront the crisis is to eliminate corruption and wasteful government spending, and not to raise taxes on the "rich"? Don't bet on it. Transport Minister Petr Bendl canceled a Kč 36bn tender yesterday for outsourcing the maintenance of railroad infrastructure, but saving money isn't apparently the top priority. The work in this case will still be performed (or not, as the case may be), and it's only a matter of which special interest will benefit the most. Compare this to some other major government contracts, such as the purchase of [armored vehicles](#) for Kč 14.4bn or the environmental-clean-up mega-contract for about Kč 115bn. If these outlays were deferred or canceled, no special interests would benefit, other than Czech taxpayers. These deals will go forward with Finance Minister Miroslav Kalousek's blessing, even as he looks desperately for other ways to raise or save more money. A crisis, you see, shouldn't be allowed to get in the way of byznys.

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