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Two main news items have dominated the Czech media in the past few weeks, the ratification of the Lisbon treaty and the scandal at the Pilsen law school involving plagiarism and fake degrees. Some people are beginning to wonder whether there's a link between the two. No one knows for sure what an opt-out to the EU bill of rights will mean for Czechs, but one probable result is that Czech courts will retain their authority over certain decisions that would otherwise pass to the EU level. Václav Klaus has framed this mainly in terms of the Beneš Decrees, but more relevant might be decisions on everyday matters such as privatization, eminent domain and criminal activity. Recent history has shown that almost no one with connections is convicted by a Czech court. Such immunity for the well-connected might no longer be assured if EU judges were the ones rendering more of the final verdicts.



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