

Message to politicians and oligarchs

Zdeněk Bakala, the patriarch of one of the Five Families, announced that he gave Kč 28.5m in sponsorship to ODS, TOP 09 and VV, in the interest of supporting fiscal responsibility and raising a debate on fair party financing. Putting aside the obvious PR value, what Bakala is doing can be interpreted as a challenge to the other Four Families and ČEZ about how some of them finance political parties. No more bulging briefcases carried in by private jet from Bulgaria or surreptitious payments through Swiss subsidiaries of Czech banks! Bakala seems to be sending the message to Petr Nečas and his potential coalition partners that it's possible to do independent politics, without relying on kickbacks from oligarchs, regional godfathers and energy moguls who strive to push the CR into a debilitating grand coalition. Bakala is perhaps the only person of mega-stature who can get away with such an attack on the power elite. It's no coincidence that most of the pre-election corruption scandals were uncovered by his newspaper, HN.

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