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Kalousek's budget shocker

As in the famous Czech film, we take back what we took back. We herewith retract our [apology](#) to Finance Minister Miroslav Kalousek for doubting his commitment to cutting the budget deficit. His final draft of the 2011 budget shows that he has no interest whatsoever in cutting spending or revenue. Between the earlier draft a month ago and the final one this week, he raised the spending level by 12% and the revenue figure by 13%, although he kept the deficit the same. The final outcome is a 2011 budget that is roughly the same as this year's. So where are all the savings that have been the source of such social distress in recent weeks and are driving public-sector workers into the streets? The money is being funneled into bloated eco-tenders, house-arrest contracts, IT systems, defense purchases and other deals that benefit a select few. If Kalousek is "guardian of the treasury," it is someone else's treasury.

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