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Tea for three

The Tea Party movement helped carry the Republicans to a resounding victory in the U.S. mid-term elections yesterday, much as TOP 09 and VV gave the Right unprecedented control of the Czech Parliament in May. Political commentators in Prague are split on whether TOP or VV is more like the Tea Party. All three grew out of voter anger and the desire to "take the country back" from the established political and business interests. However, voters have gradually learned that some of the same established interests were in fact behind the phenomenal initial success of each of these "grass-roots" movements. This duplicity of purpose explains why TOP and VV can support a 2011 state budget that is tailor-made for special interests. If Tea Party lawmakers are just as quick to reveal their true colors, many angry ex-supporters will be calling for dumping them in the harbor before the winter ice melts.

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