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Saint Yulia, cohort in crime

The EU condemned the seven-year prison sentence in Ukraine this week for Yulia Tymoshenko, but Czech politicians were mostly quiet on the matter. Except for Foreign Minister Karel Schwarzenberg, who said that Ukraine was jeopardizing its chances for an association agreement with the EU. Tymoshenko was accused of acting against the interests of her country by signing a natural-gas contract with Russia at double the price paid by Germany and other customers. There's little doubt that she committed a criminal or treasonous act. What bothers the EU, and Schwarzenberg, is that she was singled out for punishment. As journalist Jan Petránek told the Czech Council on Foreign Relations this week, there are few people in Europe in leading positions today who aren't thieves. When criminal acts are the norm, Petránek asked, how can any one misdeed be fairly punished? This was often the unspoken reason in the CR for condemning the Promopro investigation, with the main difference being that the CR was already in the EU.



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