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Film money & magic



The magic of film makes it possible to turn Prague into Moscow, but it's the magic of money that makes such a transformation desirable. It was money (in the form of incentives) that brought Tom Cruise to Prague to shoot the latest installment of "Mission: Impossible," and it was money that convinced the people at Prague Castle to allow Russian flags to be flown there. It was also money (again in the form of incentives) that caused the producers of the new "Tinker, Tailor, Solider, Spy" film to move the action of part of John le Carre's Cold-War novel from Czechoslovakia to Budapest. On one level it's a pity the Czech Republic didn't get to play itself, while on another level it's better not to remind the world how drab the country was and how cruel its secret police were. It's okay to let the Hungarians induce such images. Sometimes it's better to say No to the money and to let the filmmakers take their magic elsewhere.

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