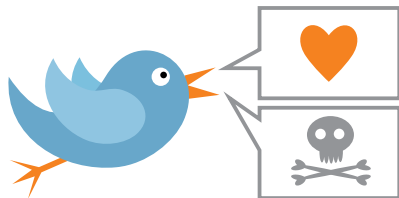


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## Bárta's comeuppance

Some commentators are hailing the guilty verdicts against Vít Bárta and Jaroslav Škárka as a groundbreaking event for Czech politics, but are they really? What actually happened? Simply put, one politician, Škárka, ratted out another politician, Bárta, and then the media frenzy took over. It didn't start with any fantastic police work or time-consuming investigative reporting. If Škárka hadn't spilled his guts to Respekt about VV's thick little envelopes, there wouldn't have been any articles in the press or any trial. Some politicians were delighted to see Bárta get his comeuppance, so the judicial system was allowed to take over and do its job. To a big degree, the Bárta case is actually very similar to the Roman Janoušek wiretapping scandal. In neither case do we know exactly why the source decided to come forward and provide evidence to journalists, and in neither case has anyone gone to prison so far.



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