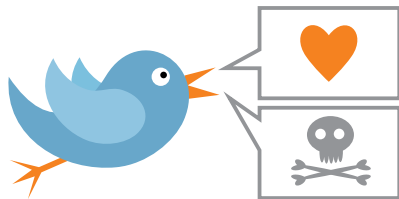


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VAT and mafia capitalism

Lubomír Zaorálek of ČSSD pulls no punches and said the church-restitution law is designed to make the [theft of state assets](#) possible. The churches are supposed to be an instrument for building mafia capitalism, he said, and another goal of the law is to keep the godfathers alive. This is heavy stuff coming from the second of the "opposition agreement" parties. The big question many people are asking is why ODS and TOP 09 didn't just cut a deal with ČSSD on church restitution? They're too greedy, is the often response. The same questions apply to the tax changes. ČSSD's lawmakers would have little trouble voting for the higher taxes on the rich but are vehemently against the VAT hike. So why didn't the cabinet just do some kind of deal with ČSSD? Could it be because ODS and TOP also see higher VAT as a way to make the theft of state assets possible ... and don't want to share with ČSSD on this either?



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