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Kalousek back in control



Finance Minister Miroslav Kalousek waltzed back into town and decreed yesterday that the sale of safe alcohol will be resumed within a matter of days. Why is it that something that should be good news sounds so devious when coming from his lips? It just doesn't pass the smell test when he utters it. Kalousek's ploy is transparent enough for those paying close attention. First, he wants to disavow any responsibility for the 23 deaths from methanol poisoning, although his ministry has allowed (encouraged?) a multibillion-crown black market in alcohol to flourish. Second, he wants to shift the attention by resuming "safe" sales and talking about a new licensing system for retailers. It's hard to tell from Kalousek's words who has been lobbying him more in the past few days - the legitimate spirits producers or the black marketeers, all of whom want to return to normal operation ASAP.



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In June 2011, we published research demonstrating that, for competition purposes, ČEZ's relevant market is Czech. ČEZ dismissed the research as "ill-constructed and intentionally misleading", asserting that its relevant market was European. In July 2011, the European Commission began formal proceedings against ČEZ for alleged abuse of dominant market power. In January 2012, we released more research validating our earlier findings. And in September 2012, the Czech competition authority concluded that ČEZ's relevant market is indeed Czech.

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