

## Church law leaves Klaus behind

A Czech who is running late for school or work doesn't miss the bus; the bus leaves him or her behind ("*ujel mi autobus*"). Foreigners often take this linguistic peculiarity as a sign of an unwillingness on the part of Czechs to take responsibility for their actions. Except for the infrequent case when the bus is running ahead of schedule, it's generally the rider's fault if he or she isn't on it, but the Czech language shifts the responsibility into an ambiguous zone. The addition of an expletive sometimes serves to distance the tardy rider even further from his own failure. The Czech Constitution allows the president to do the same with a controversial law, such as church restitution. He can let the law pass by not signing it or vetoing it within a 15-day period, and he's able to distance himself from his action by using strong language to criticize the very law he has just escorted into existence. It's a cop-out, but it works wonders, at least on those Czechs who still ride buses and like to blame someone else for arriving late to their destination.

Read this later today in [Czech](#)

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