

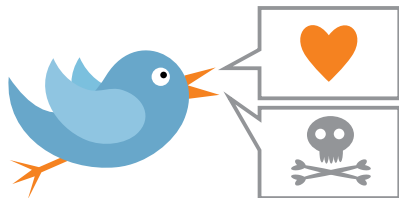
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## One million liters of hooch in the ground



Last Tues., the ÚOOZ organized-crime unit and the customs department made a spectacular announcement. They found three underground cisterns containing 1m liters of illegal alcohol. If it had hit the market, the officials said, the excise-tax evasion would have reached about Kč 285m. Fine work, right? Well, not exactly. The tax figure is simple multiplication (10,000 hectoliters times the consumption tax of Kč 28,500 per hl), without any estimate of the inventory turnover. We have no idea where the booze was made or how much of it flowed through the warehouses, which suggests that the sites weren't under surveillance for very long. And even more curious is the fact that no one was arrested. What ever happened to stakeouts and catching people red-handed? This whole incident smells like a turf battle. The real issue is where the illegal liquor was made and which officials are providing the protection.

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