

Press Release  
Prague 9 December 2014

## Reconstruction of the State: Blesk protects interests of the state-controlled companies

Earlier this week, government coalition leaders received anonymous leaflets with plenty of misleading and downright false information about Reconstruction of the State. On Wednesday 3 December, the weekly Blesk carried an article citing the anonymous leaflet and borrowing information from it without giving room to Reconstruction to state its position.

The anonymous leaflet targets Reconstruction's "vehement" efforts for the duty to disclose contracts to be mandatory for the "broadest possible circle of state-controlled enterprises", and must have been therefore inspired by one of the joint stock companies with a majority owned by the state, which are working to win an opt-out from the law.

"Blesk never paid much attention to us, but now it gives us full-page treatment at a time when the coalition considers exempting ČEZ from the duty to disclose the contents of its contracts. Blesk's management told us some time ago its editorial policy reflects the will of the paper's owner. The daily is currently owned by Daniel Křetínský alongside other anonymous proprietors. Daniel Křetínský, or rather the company, Energetický průmyslový holding, is famous for contracts with state-owned enterprises, such as ČEZ. Reporter Mihalik admits that his story ensued solely from an anonymous letter and now, three days on, he cannot remember whether he cross-referenced the information. I think this speaks volumes," said Pavel Franc, guarantor of Reconstruction of the State.

A recording of our conversation with the Blesk reporter is available (in Czech) at:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RcuJFMKjSUU>.

"The anonymous lampoon and the article in Blesk show that our effort to have state firms disclose their contracts hits them where it hurts. The current version of draft legislation on the disclosure of contracts solves problems concerning the protection of trade secrets and obviously leaves opponents of transparency with no other option than wage a defamation campaign. We trust it will strengthen the parliament's conviction that such legislation is necessary," Franc explains.

In accordance with the Media Act, Reconstruction of the State seeks the publication of apology for the dissemination of false information.

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Transcript of Marcel Mihalik's story published by Blesk on 3 December 2014:

### Reconstruction of the State: Is it an MP grinder?

**PRAGUE – Is it their wish to reconstruct state or to pursue their business? There are many lobbyists in Czech politics. The Reconstruction of the State coalition is a self-appointed corruption exorcist in the Czech Republic.**

*But a leaflet circulated among the members of parliament says it is a "pressure lever" on politicians. Some of them have warned in the past that Reconstruction of the State cautioned them that unless*

*they subscribe to points it proposes, its pre-election newspaper would label them “promise churners” and their electoral chances would be low. The Reconstruction website even claims its lawyers will instruct MEPs in writing, before every parliamentary vote, which proposals and amendments best suit their requirements.*

### **Donation tricks**

*Now doubts about the noble goals of this activity have deepened further. A leaflet, circulated in the parliamentary corridors, describes Reconstruction as a “money machine” run by private legal group Frank Bold, formerly known as Environmental Law Service. It poses as a fighter against corruption and uses media and social networks to apply pressure on politicians.*

*But its glossy anti-corruption veneer reportedly has cracks: For example, it claims it returns anonymous financial donations exceeding 50,000 CZK. But what if a five-million-crown gift is split to 49,000-crown installments?*

### **Reaction by Reconstruction of the State:**

Reconstruction of the State accepts donations only to a transparent bank account stating the names of donors contributing any amount of money. It will be easy to check that the total amount of donations smaller than 50,000 CZK since 1 January 2014 has been 260,278 CZK, with a total of 184,276 CZK coming from donations in excess of 10,000 CZK.

Consequently, Reconstruction has not received any anonymous donations. The said rule on sending back donations exceeding 50,000 CZK apiece, common for all transparent campaigns around the world, also requires that we fully identify the donor and establish contact with him so we can establish that the donor is not acting in contravention of our ethical standards.

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### **About Reconstruction of the State**

The anti-corruption project, Reconstruction of the State was launched in March 2013 with the aim to promote nine key legislations, which would dramatically reduce room for corruption and prevent the ongoing state capture. Commitment to promote the legislation was confirmed in writing before the elections by more than 160 incumbent members of parliament, including the leaders of the main political parties. **Members of the coalition:** Oživení, Transparency International, Frank Bold (formerly Environmental Law Service), Otakar Motejl Fund, zIndex, Open Society, Brnění, Pražské fórum, Zaostřeno, Zelený kruh, Anticorruption Endowment (NFPK), Inventura demokracie, Glopolis, Good Governance, Naši politici, Iuridicum Remedium, ProAlt, Kohovolit.eu, and PragueWatch. The coalition receives financial support from scores of small donors, companies and foundations, the list of whom can be found on our website.

Reconstruction of the State enjoys long-time support from the Otakar Motejl Fund. [www.motejl.cz](http://www.motejl.cz)

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