

Belly politics



Every time a politician opens his mouth or takes his (or her) shirt off in public, it's a political statement. By flaunting his big belly while vacationing with his mistress, ČSSD Chair Jiří Paroubek was showing a degree of self-confidence that puts him in a league with Václav Klaus and Miloš Zeman. Compare this with House Speaker Miloslav Vlček of ČSSD, who can't open his mouth recently without whining. He made a stink because Klaus and Senate Chair Přemysl Sobotka agreed on a date for the presidential elections without him. He then sheepishly accepted more or less the same date. It was a classic case of being politically outmaneuvered. The Speaker's role is important for setting the tone of the presidential elections, but Vlček isn't up to the task. If Paroubek is serious about running Klaus out of office, he should first bust his gut to find the votes to put himself into Vlček's Speaker position.

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