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## Čunek free, Paroubek leashed



The state prosecutor's decision to halt corruption proceedings against Vice PM Jiří Čunek is one of the biggest political events of the year. It breathes fresh life into the government's reform plans. ČSSD Chair Jiří Paroubek is understandably upset. He spoke about an attack on democracy and, if he really gets going, might end up comparing PM Mirek Topolánek to Vladimir Putin. But Paroubek will need to be careful. He, too, has benefited from laxity on the part of the authorities. Topolánek said last year that the police should investigate the hedging deal Paroubek did with Deutsche Bank in 2003 as deputy Prague mayor, and it's not too late for Topolánek to give the word. Now Blesk tabloid has started adding up Paroubek's living expenses. A guided look at his Prague property holdings might turn up some surprises. Paroubek will bark loudly about Čunek, but Topolánek has him on a short leash.

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