

What Topolánek wants

By our reckoning, the dispute in Parliament over the method of voting for the president today (open or silent) decreases Václav Klaus's chances of winning from 70% to 65%. And the longer the dispute continues, the lower Klaus's chances will be. But don't get us wrong. This doesn't mean that Jan Švejnar's chances are improving. We still give him a measly 5% probability. (He is simply too risky a choice for the Savoy crowd.)

The other 30% goes to an as-yet-unidentified candidate who could emerge if the political crisis drags on for too long. Someone "harmless" like Senate President Přemysl Sobotka or Chief Justice Pavel Rychetský of the Constitutional Court could perhaps be elected for an interim period, until direct elections are arranged. If ODS finally agrees to this scenario "against its will" after lots of screaming and fist-pounding, it will of course increase the speculation that Mirek Topolánek had been planning something like this from the very beginning.

TNP

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