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Change we're used to



Barack Obama's task of forming his first cabinet is much more pleasant than Mirek Topolánek's task of reshuffling his own. One of the risks in both cases is similar, though. Both leaders need to demonstrate that they're serious about changing the status quo. By choosing a bunch of Clinton-era politicians, Obama would be pretending that the U.S.'s problems are only a product of the Bush administration. It would signal that the more things change, the more they stay the same. By feeding rumors about replacing almost everyone except his driver, Topolánek is shoring up support for the ODS congress. But he's also setting the stage for a big public disappointment if the changes are superficial or if there's no clear rhyme or reason to why certain ministers are sacked and others with comparable blemishes are spared. A change is gonna come, as Sam Cooke sang in '63, but maybe not till the next '63.

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