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ČEZ says...



No matter how you slice it, a 10-18% hike in electricity rates for next year is a PR disaster for PM Mirek Topolánek. Unlike humdrum political scandals that are here today and gone tomorrow, a rate hike of this magnitude is something people won't forget. Especially given the cutbacks, layoffs and recession fears that are making the headlines on a daily basis. Everyone is feeling the pain, it seems, other than ČEZ and the other oligopolist energy providers. If ČSSD is sincere about wanting to force early elections next year, it now has an even bigger howitzer than healthcare fees. Topolánek could react by firing his "minister" for higher energy prices, CEO Martin Roman of ČEZ, but Topolánek would probably rather swallow radioactive isotopes. Like Interior Minister Ivan Langer, Roman might be dragging Topolánek down, but he's holding too many cards to make his dismissal a viable option.



**In turbulent times,
good information
is priceless.**

info@fleet.cz