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Cartel politics



Amid all the uncertainty in Czech politics, one thing is as sure as night follows day: The animosity between the established political parties and the new parties will intensify as the small parties profit from the rising level of voter dissatisfaction. TOP 09, for example, is being defined largely by the disputes its co-founder, Miroslav Kalousek, has with Jiří Paroubek, Cyril Svoboda and even Mirek Topolánek. Yet lobbyist James de Candole told [LN](#) that he thinks TOP 09 is in fact an attempt at a "controlled change" by the political cartel that rules the country. In order to survive, he said, those who finance the main parties know that they must adapt to the new environment. This means financing some of the radical new small parties too. Whether Kalousek, Paroubek or Topolánek survive all the personal invective and scandals that ensue is almost irrelevant, because the political cartel itself will endure.



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