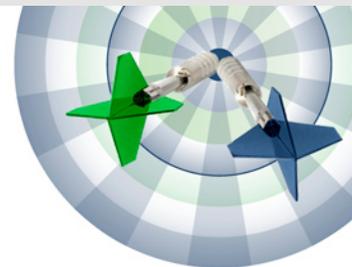


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Paroubek 2013

It's the May parliamentary elections that are on everyone's mind, but the presidential battle is raging too. ODS Chair Mirek Topolánek said last week that the real reason ČSSD Chair Jiří Paroubek blocked early elections was that he didn't have a "presidential coalition" in place. It's also easy to see Paroubek's presidential ambitions behind the talk of making Jan Švejnar the education ministry in a ČSSD-led government. It would be a humiliating offer and is meant to reduce Švejnar's own presidential chances. Švejnar is notoriously noncommittal, but he told Czech TV's [Hyde Park](#) last night that he does not think he'll be education minister. He's smart enough to know he'd be falling right into Paroubek's trap. When asked last night whom he would support for president in 2013, Švejnar paid Paroubek back by saying he doesn't have a favorite. It's curious that ODS hasn't made "President Paroubek" more of a campaign issue. A vote for ČSSD in 2010 could very easily turn out to be a vote for Paroubek in 2013.



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