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## Sometimes extortion works



At a [secret meeting at the Castle](#) on Dec. 9, U.S. Amb. Nicholas Merrick and U.S. Gen. Curtis Buzzard explained to newly appointed Designated PM Andrej Babiš how important it is to support Ukraine, to continue the ammunition program and to participate in Nato's PURL program for buying U.S. military equipment and munitions for Ukraine. Pres. Petr Pavel, who hosted the secret meeting, told Babiš that he must continue to increase defense spending, must support Ukraine and should make some other large purchases from the U.S., otherwise he'll "hardly make it to the White House." Seven weeks later, in [private SMS communication](#) with defense-industry lobbyist Petr Kolář, Czech Foreign Min. Petr Macinka indicated that if Pavel doesn't agree to appoint Filip Turek as environment minister, he won't make it to the Nato summit in Turkey. The "extortion" didn't work for Macinka, as we saw yesterday; it did indeed work for Pavel, who successfully changed Babiš's mind on the ammunition program.

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