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## Can a pop president turn statesman?



By the time Nato members meet in Ankara in July for their annual summit, relations with the U.S. and Donald Trump might be so bad that the disdainful attitude taken toward him by Czech Pres. Petr Pavel will be just what the doctor ordered. Respect for Trump is clearly on the decline. This benefits Pavel in general, but it might not help him in the dispute over whether he should attend the summit. Pavel has decided so far to be a pop president who collects "likes" from his fans for his frequent barbs at the government of Andrej Babiš. If Pavel truly wanted to attend the summit, he would have simply stated that he respects the right of the cabinet to determine foreign policy and has no intention of stepping on its toes. Instead, he set the tone by saying that Babiš probably would indeed be better at explaining why the CR isn't fulfilling its Nato commitments. If Pavel wants to backtrack now, he'll need to start emphasizing the statesmanship aspect of his job and accept that this will cost him quite a bit of his popularity.

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