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**Text 1 - A line in the sand moment for Europe and the U.S.**

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The release of the U.S. National Security Strategy landed like a grenade in Brussels, underscoring the depth of ideological vehemence within the White House.

Column by [Ishaan Tharoor](#) - Today's Worldview , *The Washinton Post*, December 7, 2025

**The Polish leader struck an uncertain note.** “Dear American friends, Europe is your closest ally, not your problem,” Prime Minister Donald Tusk posted on social media Saturday. “And we have common enemies. At least that’s how it has been in the last 80 years. We need to stick to this, this is the only reasonable strategy of our common security. Unless something has changed.”

The “something” in Tusk’s formulation, looming across the Atlantic and casting a shadow across European capitals, is the specter of President Donald Trump. The return of his “America First” brand of politics this year has already provoked rounds of continental hand-wringing over the future of U.S.-Europe relations and the geopolitical perils that Europeans must face alone. Over golf games and White House confabs, a host of European leaders have wooed Trump, flattering and praising him while attempting to disabuse him of his conspicuous affections for the Kremlin and contempt for the European project.

Those entreaties have not quite worked and more damage control seems needed. The late Thursday release of the White House’s National Security Strategy, a document sketching the president’s foreign policy priorities and their ideological underpinnings, landed like a grenade in Brussels. Instead of focusing on the geopolitical challenge of Russia and China (as Trump’s first term NSS did), it took aim at Europe itself, warning against the “civilizational erasure” of the continent thanks to unfettered migration and a feckless liberal establishment.

The document scoffed at the “unrealistic expectations” of European officials backing Ukraine in its fight for survival against Russia and the “unstable minority governments” — a jab at embattled European centrists — that they represent. It frames the Trump administration’s broader view as one turning away from an era of global domination to an approach tethered more narrowly around U.S. interests. “The days of the United States propping up the entire world order like Atlas are over,” the strategy says.

**Little of this is surprising, but the NSS underscored the depth of ideological vehemence within the White House.** Gérard Araud, a former diplomat who served as France’s ambassador to the United States as well as the United Nations, responded in a social media post that “the stunning section on Europe reads like a far-right pamphlet.” The NSS cheers the “growing influence of patriotic European parties” and supports “cultivating resistance to Europe’s current trajectory within European nations” — that is, it backs the European far right and wants to undermine the workings of the European Union. “The only part of the world where the new [U.S.] security strategy sees any threat to democracy seems to be Europe,” former Swedish prime minister Carl Bildt wrote on X. “Bizarre.”

Separately, Reuters reported that U.S. officials had communicated to European counterparts that they want “Europe to take over the majority of NATO’s conventional defense capabilities, from intelligence to missiles, by 2027,” an implicit withdrawal of U.S. commitments that could have seismic implications for the military alliance. “If true, this is earth-shattering stuff,” observed Politico’s Nicholas Vinocur. “The shortness of the timeline is staggering. E.U. populations are not prepared for what this means — illusions crumbling, brutal choices ahead.”

By the weekend, a chorus of Trump allies showed little sign of conciliation. The news that the E.U. had fined X \$140 million for its apparent violations of the bloc’s regulations was described by Secretary of State Marco Rubio as “an attack on all American tech platforms and the American people by foreign governments.” Tech mogul and X owner Elon Musk was more scathing: “The E.U. should be abolished and sovereignty returned to individual countries, so that governments can better represent their people,” he wrote.

**Top Kremlin officials amplified these calls**, cynically supporting the posturing over free speech by Vice President JD Vance and Musk, whose website is blocked in Russia. Dmitry Peskov, Russian President Vladimir Putin’s top spokesman, said Trump’s NSS “corresponds in many ways to our own vision.” Such rhetoric only deepens the conviction among some Europeans — including, according to an apparent leaked transcript of a phone call, French

President Emmanuel Macron and German Chancellor Friedrich Merz — that the Trump administration is prepared to jettison Ukrainian and European interests in favor of a swift political settlement with Russia.

“Unity between Americans and Europeans on the Ukrainian issue is essential,” Macron told reporters during a trip to China on Friday. “And I say it again and again, we need to work together.”

But the Trump administration appears more interested in boosting other forces within Europe, including far-right factions with neofascist origins that were once considered beyond the pale in Western politics. Trump has embraced Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban, the illiberal black sheep of the European Union and a friend of Putin. And he has echoed far-right calls for “remigration” and the deportation of Muslim or other non-White migrants in Western societies.

Trump appears to be promoting what the scholars Tara Varma and Sophia Besch coined earlier this year as “revisionist transatlanticism,” where an ultranationalist White House and European nativists “could work to renegotiate the values and interests that unify the United States and Europe, and, in the process, dismantle the European project.” The new NSS “is targeting Europe in a very deliberate manner,” Varma, a visiting fellow at the Brookings Institution, told me. “Despite announcing a form of retreat or isolationism, it actually focuses on the continent and the necessity for it to be fully aligned with the ideological goals” of Trump’s second term.

These gestures, which dovetail with Trump’s record of bullying and coercion since returning to the White House, might backfire. “Finally, America is now saying that key allies are in fact its greatest enemy,” wrote Johns Hopkins University political scientist Henry Farrell. “That gives those allies strong incentives to reduce their dependence on American power and technological and economic platforms, building closer connections among themselves and perhaps with others. All this is likely to the benefit of those who’d like to see America taken down a peg or three.”

## Text 2 - Trumpworld thinks Europe has betrayed the West

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Centrist governments across the continent rightly sense a trap



Illustration: Chloe Cushman

*The Economist*, Dec 2nd 2025|

A FEW MONTHS ago Western governments were sunk in gloom because America no longer sounded or acted like a reliable friend. Today American flakiness is the least of their worries. A growing fear among allies, notably in European countries run by old-school centrists, is that President Donald Trump is choosing sides—and treating liberal Westerners as adversaries.

“We are in a battle for the West,” says a policy adviser in a European capital, a normally hard-to-alarm veteran who has weathered many squalls in transatlantic relations. He describes a “revolutionary fervour” among ideologues who serve in the second Trump presidency. The most zealous of these have moved far beyond old arguments about burden-sharing in NATO. Instead, he reports, hardliners in the Trump administration seek a fundamental reordering of Europe’s politics. Trumpworld’s dream is for power to shift wholesale to parties of the nationalist right, whether that means Reform UK in Britain, the National Rally in France or Germany’s AfD, whose grievance-stoking, immigrant-scorning agendas overlap with MAGA’s.

As Trump loyalists weigh in on Western culture wars, they sound ever less willing to help allies deter an actual war with Russia. A second official from Europe relates Washington meetings in which MAGA types lay out their reasoning. European governments of the centre-left and centre-right are accused of destroying Western civilisation by allowing mass migration, betraying traditional social values and censoring conservative speech. Those governments are further charged with surrendering their sovereignty to the EU, an organisation that Mr Trump says was created “to screw” America, as MAGA loyalists point out. Meeting after meeting ends with the same conclusion: Europe is an enemy that does not deserve to be defended by America.

Europe is being singled out. In today's Washington, it is often spoken of with greater loathing than either China or Russia. A big theme of the second Trump presidency is that it is done with policing the world, or even trying to make it a kindlier place. In a speech in Saudi Arabia in May Mr Trump deplored the harm caused by "Western interventionists" who lectured Middle Easterners on how to govern themselves. Reinforcing that no-meddling message, in July the State Department instructed American embassies worldwide to stop commenting on the fairness or legitimacy of elections in their host countries, and to focus on strategic interests rather than abstract democratic values.

Against that hands-off approach, prominent members of Trumpworld have strong views about how Europe should be governed. The vice-president, J.D. Vance, used a speech to the Munich Security Conference in February to raise some valid questions about heavy-handed European controls on speech and the "firewalls" erected by mainstream parties against populist rivals in some countries. But Mr Vance crossed the line into partisan point-scoring when he called such policies a "threat from within" that he claimed was more dangerous than Russia.

That line of attack returned on November 24th when the State Department announced that American embassies in Europe, Australia, Canada and New Zealand had been told to collect data on "crimes and human rights abuses" committed by immigrants, with a special mention for attacks by radical Islamists against Christians and Jews. Unveiling the new policy, a State Department official called mass migration an existential threat to Western civilisation and the safety of both the West and the world. Then came a veiled threat. "In order for us to have a strong alliance" with governments in Europe, Australia, Canada and New Zealand, the official explained, their citizens must be heeded when they complain of immigrants taking houses and jobs, triggering spikes in crime or attacking children. Accordingly, American diplomats have been ordered to lobby host governments to tighten migration policies.

In reality, when it comes to influencing immigration policies, American lectures can hardly compete with the pressure that national politicians face from their own voters. The most likely consequence of this new policy will be some horribly awkward meetings for American diplomats. Armed with MAGA talking-points, hapless political counsellors will head to European government ministries past newsstands papered with headlines about border controls and asylum-seekers: for such stories are front-page staples across the West and are prompting tighter migration rules. Then, with a straight face, American diplomats will explain to their hosts that voters are really worried about immigration.

#### **The leader of the free world? Not any more**

Europeans have a right to speculate about the Trump administration's true motives when it accuses them of undermining the civilisation of the West. The term has a narrow, sectarian edge to it, especially given Mr Trump's recent pledges to expel American residents "non-compatible with Western Civilisation". In recent years America's allies in the West have felt themselves united by fundamental values, including liberal democracy, capitalism, the rule of law and the separation of powers. Given Mr Trump's loathing of constraints on his presidential power, it is not reassuring when his officials talk of civilisation rather than values.

Allies may wonder, too, whether America wants an excuse to simply wash its hands of European security. For decades shared values and security needs were seen as mutually reinforcing. One neat line was that the West evolved "from Plato to NATO". Today NATO offers America a lever for coercion. If Trump-defined civilisation is to be the test, then he, not values, becomes the arbiter of membership of the West. If conservative nationalism is what counts, why not include Russia? A battle for the Western soul looms. Unity is already a casualty. ■

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### **Text 3 - U.S. Flips History by Casting Europe—Not Russia—as Villain in New Security Policy**

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An annual strategy document, which has described threats from China to Russia, now directs some of its harshest language at NATO allies

By Daniel Michaels, David Luhnow and Max Colchester; *The Wall Street Journal*, Dec. 5, 2025



President Trump at a NATO summit in The Hague in June with Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, left, and Secretary of State Marco Rubio. Peng Ziyang/Zuma Press

BRUSSELS—For years, the U.S. government has published an annual National Security Strategy that lays

out how Washington sees the world and its approach to dealing with looming threats, from China to Russia to drug-traffickers in Latin America.

This week, the Trump administration's version seemed to reserve its harshest tone for a new target: America's closest allies in Europe.

The 30-page document painted European nations as wayward, declining powers that have ceded their sovereignty to the European Union and are led by governments that suppress democracy and muzzle voices that want a more nationalistic turn.

It says the continent faces "civilizational erasure" through immigration that could render it "unrecognizable" in two decades—as well as turning several North Atlantic Treaty Organization allies into majority "non-European" countries. It concludes the region could grow too weak to be "reliable allies."

The document underscores how radically the Trump administration is reshaping traditional American foreign policy, and it is likely to deepen divisions in the trans-Atlantic alliance, which has largely kept the peace in Europe since World War II and promoted Western values across the world.

The document landed like a bucket of cold water in European capitals. European leaders reading the document need "to assume that the traditional trans-Atlantic relationship is dead," said Katja Bego, a senior researcher at Chatham House, a think tank in London.

Timothy Garton Ash, a prominent British historian, described the document "as the mother of all wake-up calls for Europe."

"We're in this extraordinary position where the U.S. is still objectively an ally of Europe, but subjectively at least in the Trump administration and the view of many Europeans we're no longer seeing each other that way," he said.

Since President Trump returned to office in January, most European leaders have worked to address his concerns while currying favor with him. Those efforts have won kind words from Trump, but others on his team display disdain for Europe and antipathy toward many European policies.

Many points in the National Security Strategy echo critiques that Vice President JD Vance first made weeks into the administration, at a security conference in Munich in February. They amplify criticisms of Europe leveled by MAGA supporters and highlight trans-Atlantic differences.

"It essentially declares outright opposition to the European Union," said Garton Ash. "It's JD Vance's notorious speech in Munich but on steroids, and as official U.S. policy."

The strategy says the EU—an institution that the U.S. helped establish decades ago—and other transnational organizations "undermine political liberty and sovereignty." It also accuses many European governments of "subversion of democratic processes," though it doesn't spell out what it means by that.

Europeans have long acknowledged that their slow-growing economies need fixing and that they must boost military spending, though actions to address those shortfalls have been slow or ineffectual. Many European countries are also clamping down on immigration, which has started to fall. The region remains, by any measure, a critical global bastion of capitalism and democracy, and the U.S.'s strongest historical and cultural partner.

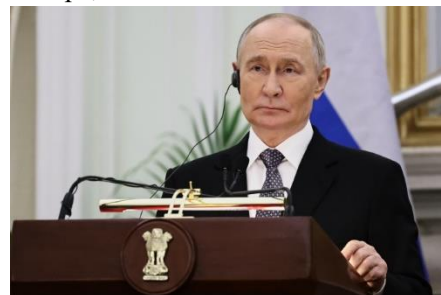
Every Western European country scores higher on the global ranking of freedom and democracy than the U.S. does, according to Freedom House, a U.S.-based nonprofit that ranks countries according to measures such as election process, rule of law and individual rights.

The document casts its criticism of Europe in an almost paternalistic tone—the kind of tough love advice one gives a friend. It begins its three-page section on Europe with the title "Promoting European Greatness."

The tone and pointed criticisms of Europe contrasts with the document's approach to traditional U.S. rivals or threats like Russia. Russia isn't mentioned a single time as a possible threat to U.S. interests.

The section on Europe also highlights differences over the war in Ukraine, accusing European officials of holding "unrealistic expectations" about the war. Significantly, it positions the U.S. as more of an arbiter between Europe and Russia, rather than Europe's ally opposing Russia, which has been America's role since the end of World War II. The document also calls for an end to NATO being "a perpetually expanding alliance."

"The document reads like a brief in favor of the Russian position, calling for European states to get back to work with Russia and offering up the U.S.A. as the vehicle to do this," said Phillips O'Brien, a professor of strategic studies at the University of St. Andrews, in Scotland, in his daily newsletter. "This is a strategy to destroy the present Europe, to make it MAGA."



President Vladimir Putin of Russia, which isn't mentioned as a possible threat to U.S. interests. Alexander Kazakov/Associated Press  
Rather than presenting a more isolationist America—as many in the MAGA movement have advocated—Bego at Chatham House said the document shows the Trump administration wants to actively reshape Europe in its own image.

"Our goal should be to help Europe correct its current trajectory," the strategy says. "We want Europe to remain



European, to regain its civilizational self-confidence, and to abandon its failed focus on regulatory suffocation.”

One section lays out a U.S. foreign-policy goal of “cultivating resistance to Europe’s current trajectory within European nations,” which analysts read as outright American interference in European politics and support for far-right or anti-immigration parties in Germany, France, the U.K. and other countries.

The document makes no mention of shaping political outcomes in other global regions.

Nathalie Tocci, director of the Institute for International Affairs in Rome and a former EU diplomatic adviser, said the document lays out a fairly coherent vision of a world dominated by three big powers—the U.S., China and Russia—who have areas of cooperation and zones of influence.

“I think it’s fairly clear that Europe is seen by the administration as being on the colonial menu” for domination by either the U.S. or Russia, she said. “So to me, the real question is: ‘What else needs to happen for us Europeans to wake up to this?’ ”

A spokeswoman for the European Commission, the EU’s executive body, declined to comment on the whole document but pushed back against the assertion that Europe backs harmful migration policies or undermines

free speech. She added that the U.S.’s new security policy contrasted with the strong ties Europe has traditionally had with America.

“The U.S. national security has been very much linked to Europe’s security, which explains also all the work we are doing with the U.S. as our key ally and partner,” including on Ukraine, said Paula Pinho, chief spokeswoman for the Commission.

Vance and other administration officials have criticized democracy in countries such as Germany and France, where mainstream parties maintain a so-called firewall that bars them from entering governing coalitions with far-right parties because of the legacy of fascism.

Vance has criticized this as undemocratic, but most pro-democracy experts say individual political parties are free to choose which other parties they would work with, and whether or not they share the same values. And voters can give far-right parties an electoral majority, allowing them to govern without coalition partners.

Vance and others have also criticized Europe for laws that restrict hate speech—a legacy of the continent’s wars. Yet analysts said there seems little recognition that Europe upholds free speech broadly, including criticism of politicians and leaders, unlike Russia and China.

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#### **Text 4 - Trump Has Long Disdained Europe’s Elites. Now, It’s Official.**

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A new White House policy document formalizes President Trump’s long-held contempt for Europe’s leaders. It made clear that the continent now stands at a strategic crossroads.

**By Jason Horowitz,** Reporting from Madrid

*The New York Times*, Dec. 6, 2025



A Norwegian soldier during a NATO military exercise this year. European governments have tried to wean themselves off American military might by increasing their own military spending and cooperation. Credit...Davide Monteleone for The New York Times

The Trump administration has not exactly kept its low regard for Europe secret. President Trump has long portrayed European allies as freeloaders that fail to pay enough for their own security and argued that the European Union was “formed to screw the United States.” Now, that hostility is official White House policy.

The Trump administration issued a national security strategy paper this week that called for European nations to take “primary responsibility” for their own defense, indicating that the United States should no longer guarantee Europe’s security. It accused the European Union of stifling “political liberty,” warned that some NATO members risked becoming “majority non-European,” and said the U.S. should align with “patriotic European parties” — code for Europe’s far-right movements.

The blunt, bracing and official nature of the document added injury to incessant insult, making clear to mainstream European leaders that they stand at a strategic crossroads. On a paper stamped with the president’s seal, the trans-Atlantic alliance was being openly denigrated by the superpower across the ocean that has ensured European security in the 80 years since World War II.

“It’s up there at [whitehouse.gov](http://whitehouse.gov) staring the world in the face,” Charles A. Kupchan, who was senior director for European Affairs on the National Security Council in the Obama administration, said of the document. “And that makes it very hard to digest,” added Mr. Kupchan, now professor of international affairs at Georgetown University.

The now explicit prospect of the United States’ withdrawing its protection came days after Russia — whose talking points on European countries, some experts said, were echoed in the strategy document — warned that it was ready for war with Europe. It made more urgent a debate within the continent about whether its long-term interest lay in holding on to America regardless of the humiliations, or in facing a new reality, arming up and going it alone.

“Is this going to be the moment of European awakening?” said Nathalie Tocci, a professor at the School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University, who has worked as an adviser to key European Union officials and wrote one of its strategy reports.



President Trump has long portrayed European allies as freeloaders and argued that the European Union was

“formed to screw the United States.”Credit...Doug Mills/The New York Times

Anticipating a fissure in trans-Atlantic relations, European governments have in recent years tried to wean themselves off American military might by increasing their own defense spending and cross-border military cooperation. Several have introduced or expanded military service, with Germany, one of the countries best placed to defend the continent in a major land conflict, passing legislation on Friday to increase its forces by nearly 50 percent. And the European Union now has a commissioner for defense whose primary job is to boost regional arms production and cooperation.

But the reality remains that Europe — lacking real military integration, key capabilities and ammunition — is hugely reliant on the United States and on an administration that professes to not like it much. A change, some argued, was necessary.

“Till now there was no, let’s say, systemic response,” said Romano Prodi, a former president of the European Commission, the executive branch of the European Union. He said he hoped the bloc would “elaborate a policy” that made it more assertive.

“This does not mean to break the links with the United States,” he said. “This means to have a voice.”

But the lack of strong public outcry from Europe’s leaders about the strategy document indicated that they had gotten used to Mr. Trump’s tantrums — it was, Mr. Prodi said, “Nothing new: dividing Europe and despising Europe” — and had decided the best response was to let him cry it out and then hold him and the alliance close. Kaja Kallas, the European Union’s top diplomat, exemplified that approach on Saturday, saying in response to the document that the U.S. was “still our biggest ally.”

Mr. Kupchan, the professor of international relations, said that Europe’s leaders understood that biting the Trump bullet was the smarter, and perhaps only, long-term play. He said the document made it harder for them to stomach the humiliation and concessions necessary to keep Mr. Trump close to their position on the major issues of the day, from trade policy to Europe’s defense of Ukraine in its war with Russia.

But to keep the trans-Atlantic alliance from going kaput, “flattering Trump and keeping him on their side” was what they had to do, Mr. Kupchan said.

For Europe, analysts said, the challenge was preserving both the process of integration that had made it rich and peaceful, and the American security blanket that had kept it safe. In the 80 years since World War II, European integration, pursued in significant part to limit Germany, was “one of the great accomplishments of modern times,” Mr. Kupchan said.

“Anybody who wants to dismantle Europe should just pick up any history book of the 20th century,” he said, adding “or any history prior to 1945.”



Ursula Von der Leyen, the European Commission president, with President Emmanuel Macron of France and Chancellor Friedrich Merz of Germany at a gathering earlier this year. Europe’s leaders have gotten used to Mr. Trump’s tantrums. Credit...John Thys/Agence France-Presse — Getty Images

But dismantling seems to be precisely what the Trump administration wants to do, analysts said.

Ms. Tocci, the professor at Johns Hopkins University, said that supporting right-wing parties antagonistic to the European Union would divide and weaken the continent, leaving a “fractured Europe which is easily colonizable” by the globe’s great powers.

The effort to divide Europe is hardly new. Russia has been doing it for more than a decade, boosting euroskeptic and often far-right parties who want to weaken the European Union, strengthening Moscow’s hand. Some experts said they considered the United States national security strategy a facsimile of the Russian playbook.

“It’s striking because that is very similar to language which you’ll find in the analogous Russian national security

document,” said Timothy D. Snyder, a prominent scholar of totalitarianism and Russia.

Mr. Snyder added that by suggesting that good foreign policy was about balancing between great powers rather than upholding the rule of law, “the U.S. national security document is now tilting in the basic ideological direction of the Russian one.”

He also said the paper sounded similar to “flat-out Russian propaganda” in its assertions that a majority of Europeans wanted the war in Ukraine to end no matter what, and that it was continued by out-of-touch elites.

Mr. Snyder also echoed other analysts when he said he suspected that the Trump administration’s sub rosa goal in weakening Europe was to free American tech companies from encumbering European regulation, an objective it has previously stated.

Mr. Prodi, the former E.U. Commission president, argued that the Trump administration’s policy prognoses violated the very sovereignty it preached, by “entering in a very inappropriate way into the internal policy of other countries.”

But some of Europe’s sovereigntist right-wing parties welcomed the intrusion and the long-awaited recognition from the White House.

“All these things are our message, our diagnosis, so we’re happy,” said Hermann Tertsch, a member of the European Parliament with Spain’s far-right Vox party, who said that during previous administrations, “we were very afraid” of the United States.

Under Mr. Trump, however, it was a source of comfort, Mr. Tertsch said, adding, “It’s a new era.”

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## Text 5

### **La stratégie de sécurité nationale américaine prend les Européens pour cible et ménage les adversaires des Etats-Unis**

Le document publié vendredi 5 décembre par la Maison Blanche, dans lequel les alliances traditionnelles de Washington n’engagent plus à rien, marque une rupture historique avec l’ère post-1945.

Par Piotr Smolar (Washington, correspondant) , **Le Monde**, 06 décembre 2025

Le divorce est consommé, en attendant la séparation des biens. Ainsi se dessine, du point de vue transatlantique, la publication de la stratégie de sécurité nationale par la Maison Blanche, vendredi 5 décembre. Cet exercice classique, qui permet de formaliser les priorités d’une administration mais aussi plus largement sa vision du monde, marque une rupture historique. Jamais encore un document officiel de cette nature n’avait été marqué par une telle nonchalance envers les adversaires de l’Amérique, et une telle maltraitance réservée à ses alliés traditionnels, surtout européens.

Deux pages et demie pour un enterrement : voilà la place consacrée à l’Europe, dans ce texte d’une trentaine de pages. Ce continent sera « *méconnaissable dans vingt ans ou moins* », si les tendances actuelles se poursuivent. « [Son] *déclin économique est éclipsé par la perspective réelle et plus abrupte d’un effacement civilisationnel.* » Les symptômes énumérés ? La chute de la natalité, la perte des identités nationales, la répression des oppositions politiques, la censure de la liberté d’expression, « *l’asphyxie réglementaire* », et bien entendu, en premier lieu, l’immigration. « *A long terme, il est plus que*

*plausible qu'en quelques décennies au maximum, certains membres de l'OTAN seront à majorité non européenne », prétend le document.*

Il serait contre-productif, estime le texte, de simplement abandonner l'Europe. Washington ne prône pas un isolationnisme, mais au contraire une annexion idéologique. Ce qui est suggéré est un investissement américain conditionné, intéressé et politisé. Dans une ingérence ouverte, le document salue avec « *un grand optimisme* » la montée en puissance des « *partis européens patriotiques* ». Il s'agit de « *cultiver la résistance à la trajectoire actuelle de l'Europe* », c'est-à-dire en creux d'approfondir la fracturation des pays concernés et d'affaiblir Bruxelles.

Ces passages ressemblent à un décalque du discours tenu par le vice-président, J. D. Vance, lors de la conférence sur la sécurité à Munich, en février. Certains participants croyaient bon se rassurer, à l'époque, en évoquant un simple hors sujet. En réalité, c'est le cœur même de l'approche américaine. Coïncidence : en ce vendredi, l'Union européenne (UE) a infligé une amende de 120 millions d'euros au réseau social X d'Elon Musk, pour avoir enfreint ses règles en matière de contenu en ligne. Soit « *une attaque contre le peuple américain* », à en croire le secrétaire d'Etat, Marco Rubio, dans une réaction qui en dit long sur l'administration.

Si les trumpistes fustigent depuis dix ans un « *Etat profond* » à Washington, reposant sur un consensus bipartisan en politique étrangère, ce qui se dessine, à travers cette stratégie, est un nouvel Etat MAGA (« *Make America Great Again* »). Donald Trump en est le véhicule historique, mais il semble déjà dépassé par son envergure. « *On est dans un mouvement de fond, organisé, et qui affiche ses objectifs de subversion en Europe*, souligne Tara Varma, experte des questions transatlantiques au cercle de réflexion Brookings Institution. *C'est pour cela qu'ils sont concentrés sur l'échéance 2027 en France. Si Paris bascule, ça change tout en Europe. Un axe Washington-Paris-Budapest-Moscou devient peut-être envisageable, dont le but assumé est le démantèlement des institutions de l'UE.* »

En matière de sécurité, l'Europe est invitée à assumer « *la responsabilité première de sa propre défense* ». Le document stratégique note qu'il est dans « *l'intérêt primordial* » des Etats-Unis de parvenir à une cessation des hostilités négociée en Ukraine. « *Gérer les relations européennes avec la Russie nécessitera un engagement diplomatique américain significatif, à la fois pour rétablir les conditions d'une stabilité stratégique sur le continent eurasiatique et pour atténuer le risque d'un conflit entre la Russie et les Etats européens.* » Dans cette perspective, les Etats-Unis estiment nécessaire de « *mettre fin à la perception, et empêcher la mise en place, d'un OTAN comme alliance en extension perpétuelle* ». Une formule

adressée à Moscou, signifiant un feu rouge à toute adhésion de l'Ukraine et la reconnaissance tacite de sa zone d'influence.

Sans surprise, la responsabilité de la Russie dans la guerre n'est pas évoquée, ni ses autres capacités de nuisance et de déstabilisation. Washington rêve d'une reconfiguration bilatérale, avec des investissements économiques très lucratifs à la clé. En revanche, les gouvernements européens sont mis en cause, en raison de leurs « *attentes irréalistes* » concernant la guerre. « *Une grande majorité d'Européens souhaite la paix mais ce désir ne se traduit pas en politique, en grande partie à cause de la subversion des processus démocratiques par ces gouvernements* », prétend le texte. De la même façon que Donald Trump a souvent tenu Volodymyr Zelensky pour coresponsable de la guerre, voilà que les dirigeants européens prétendraient la poursuivre indéfiniment. Une reprise exacte de la propagande russe.

« *Ce document est une pilule amère pour de nombreux Européens*, estime Charles Kupchan, expert au cercle de réflexion Council on Foreign Relations. *Il sera plus difficile pour les dirigeants européens de continuer à courtiser Trump et de le garder près d'eux. Mais au-delà du langage irrespectueux, il n'y a pas grand-chose de neuf dans ce texte. Je ne crois pas qu'il aura un impact énorme sur la relation transatlantique.* » Cette vue est partagée par ceux qui relativisent la portée de ce genre d'exercice, attendant surtout des annonces officielles sur les redéploiements militaires américains en Europe.

Si on met de côté les flatteries qui émaillent les pages du document à l'attention de Donald Trump, il s'agit davantage d'un manifeste politique MAGA que de la mobilisation de l'expertise américaine la plus fine, rejetée par cette administration. Cette stratégie revendique l'abandon de toute exhaustivité, car « *se focaliser sur tout, c'est se focaliser sur rien* ». Elle défend une liste courte de priorités qui tournent autour du contrôle des frontières et des ressources stratégiques, de la prédation économique. Pas un mot sur le climat, dont on connaît pourtant l'impact sur les flux migratoires. Pas une référence aux instances multilatérales. Les Etats-Unis renoncent à tout discours sur l'exemplarité de leur modèle. Seul le choc des ambitions et des intérêts reste valable dans la jungle du monde, que plus personne ne peut domestiquer.

### **Alignement exigé**

Ainsi, l'Amérique claque la porte de l'ère post-1945. Les alliances traditionnelles n'engagent plus à rien, puisque tout est extorsion, rapport de force et alignement exigé. Les valeurs n'existent plus, mis à part une brumeuse liberté d'expression absolue à l'export – au profit des droites identitaires – que l'administration méprise pourtant sur son propre territoire lorsqu'il s'agit de la presse et de ses contempteurs.



« Après la fin de la guerre froide, les élites de la politique étrangère américaine se sont persuadées que la domination américaine permanente du monde entier répondait aux meilleurs intérêts de notre pays, assure l'introduction. Mais les affaires des autres pays ne nous préoccupent seulement dans le cas où leurs activités menacent directement nos intérêts. » Autrement dit, « les jours où les Etats-Unis soutenaient l'ordre international complet comme Atlas sont finis ».

La première traduction de ce virage concerne le Moyen-Orient, qui « n'est plus l'irritant constant et la source potentielle de catastrophe imminente qu'il a été ». Cela signifie selon le document que « les jours où le Moyen-Orient dominait la politique étrangère américaine (...) sont finis ». Le conflit israélo-palestinien ? Il « reste épineux ». Mais la région est reconfigurée depuis deux ans, et la « raison historique » de l'investissement américain – l'énergie – n'existe plus, en raison de ses propres ressources nationales.

L'administration Trump confirme la priorité accordée à l'hémisphère occidental, considérant de fait le continent américain comme son pré carré. Elle compte y priver ses adversaires – à commencer par la Chine, non citée – de « la possibilité de positionner des forces ou d'autres capacités menaçantes, ou de posséder ou de contrôler des ressources stratégiquement vitales ». Les gouvernements ou les partis politiques alignés sur les priorités américaines seront « récompensés et encouragés ».

Le Conseil de sécurité nationale est chargé d'identifier les lieux et les ressources stratégiques dans l'hémisphère occidental, pour envisager des partenariats dans leur exploitation. Un redéploiement des forces militaires américaines est aussi confirmé, ainsi que « l'utilisation de la force létale pour remplacer la stratégie de maintien de l'ordre en échec ces dernières décennies ». Une référence claire aux frappes en série dans les Caraïbes, depuis début septembre, contre des embarcations transportant des cargaisons de drogues, selon les autorités.

L'Asie, elle, est vue au travers du prisme exclusif de la Chine. Le Parti communiste chinois n'est même pas mentionné, ce qui va surprendre à coup sûr les républicains à Washington, pour lesquels la rivalité systémique avec Pékin a forcément une dimension idéologique. Le document rappelle qu'un tiers du commerce maritime mondial passe par la mer de Chine du Sud. Dès lors, « prévenir un conflit au sujet de Taïwan, idéalement en préservant une domination militaire, est une priorité ».

Pour cela, la stratégie américaine prévoit d'empêcher toute agression chinoise dans la « première chaîne d'îles » – terme désignant la ligne de défense composée des territoires allant du Japon à Taïwan et aux Philippines. Washington invite ces alliés à dépenser davantage pour leurs moyens militaires et à ouvrir leurs infrastructures aux forces américaines.

## Text 6 - Europe Fears It Can't Catch Up in Great Power Competition

Continent worries it is becoming biggest loser in new era of transactional politics

By Laurence Norman, *The Wall Street Journal*, Nov. 27, 2025

BRUSSELS—In the accelerating contest between great powers, Europe is struggling to keep up.

The continent's leaders have long worried they will be left behind as the U.S., China and Russia vie for economic, technological and military dominance.

Officials now fear they have reached that point.

Their mood darkened over the summer with Europe left on the sidelines as the U.S. and China sought to reset the rules of global trade.

It became bleak when the White House presented a plan for ending the war between Russia and Ukraine this month without consulting European leaders.

In response, the European Union crafted a counterproposal more acceptable to Ukraine, and its member states are rushing to rearm as the bloc looks for ways to break its institutional gridlock.

Change will be hard and take time, something many European officials worry the continent doesn't have.

"Battle lines for a new world order, based on power, are being drawn right now," European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said in her annual address to EU lawmakers in September. "A new Europe must emerge."

How to make that metamorphosis happen is concentrating minds in Europe, where the escalating fear among current and former officials is that the EU's structure and procedures will leave it among the biggest losers in the new geopolitical pecking order.

European officials are warming up to harnessing smaller groups of countries to make the whole bloc militarily and economically fitter.

Mario Draghi, a former European Central Bank president who was asked last year to design a plan to make Europe more competitive, is pushing for groups of countries to conduct joint defense research and procurement, and to design common rules allowing European tech companies to scale up quickly. Draghi, a former Italian prime minister, wants European industrial giants to pool investments in

strategic sectors such as semiconductors to help the continent regain an edge.

It is an approach that is gradually winning support.

“I think that we are finally getting realistic,” said Latvian President Edgars Rinkevics. “You can’t change the dynamics if you don’t have real power—be it political, military or diplomatic.”

For Germany, Europe’s longtime engine of growth, global shifts have dislodged the tentpoles of its economic success: cheap gas from Russia, booming export markets in China and the U.S. defense umbrella.

In response, Berlin has eased its debt brake, allowing it to pour 500 billion euros, equivalent to around \$580 billion, into a decadelong rearmament program.

A rearmed Germany combined with the toughened up militaries of Poland, Scandinavian and Baltic states, and the extra layer of defense offered by nuclear-armed Britain and France, could create a coalition to check Russian expansionism, says Nico Lange, a former chief of staff at the German Defense Ministry.

Yet obstacles to wholesale change abound.

Defense ministries won’t easily surrender control over plans and procurement, nor will Europe’s big industrial players easily pivot from competition to collaboration.



*Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen has warned that Europe is in a dangerous situation. Mads Claus Rasmussen/Zuma Press*

The need for consensus, which defines the 27-member EU, often leaves it flat-footed in response to unreliable actors and fast-changing circumstances although the EU surprised many with its swift and resilient response to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

“I think we are in the most difficult and dangerous situation since the end of the Second World War,” Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen said at a Copenhagen summit last month.

Events over the past few months have hammered those anxieties home.

In July, the EU had to swallow a lopsided trade deal with the U.S. that allowed Washington to impose 15% tariffs without blowback.

President Trump ignored European calls to pressure Moscow and rolled out the red carpet for his Russian counterpart, Vladimir Putin, at a summit in Alaska in August. “This is not to do with Europe, Europe’s not telling me what to do,” Trump said on the way to the summit. Then he sidelined them in drawing up his Ukraine cease-fire plan.

The trade clash between Washington and Beijing threatened Western access to rare earths, which are critical to Europe’s defense and green transition. When a meeting between Chinese leader Xi Jinping and Trump brought about a temporary truce, it demonstrated to European officials that the continent isn’t the master of its own destiny.



*President Trump welcomed his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin in Alaska in August. andrew caballero-reynolds/AFP/Getty Images*

French President Emmanuel Macron in 2017 called for the EU to bolster its military, economic and industrial independence. Last year, in a follow-up speech, Macron warned the European project could die.

“It all depends on the choices we make and these choices need to be made now,” he said.

Pierre Vimont, a former senior EU and French diplomat now at Carnegie Europe, said the EU’s institutions are struggling but that there was little will in capitals to spend years arguing over the bloc’s future setup.

“The whole Brussels institutional framework, its methods, its mindset were not at all tailored” for the current period of “power politics, confrontation, highly brutal competition,” Vimont said.

Looming over it all is the U.S.’s hardening stance toward Europe. Trump has forced European members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to pay more for their defense and that of Ukraine. The EU has set a 2030 rearmament goal. This year, the region is set to spend more than \$560 billion on defense, according to analysts at Bernstein, double what it spent a decade ago.

Still, Europeans remain nervous about Trump’s allegiance to NATO. His covetous comments about Greenland, an autonomous Danish territory, deepened concerns.

Europe had always believed access to its wealthy single market gave it real trade clout. But July’s trade

negotiations with Washington punctured that belief, showing that the U.S. would wield security leverage over Europe to win a trade clash.

Europe had sought to avoid confrontation with China. But Beijing continues to flood Europe with cheap imports as its own domestic economy slows, while China's technological edge and mass market have seen it pull ahead of European competition in industries such as electric vehicles, forcing significant job losses in Germany.

Washington has vacillated between pressing Europe to hit China with tariffs to cutting its own deals with Beijing. The coming years will tell "whether Europe will remain an independent economic power...or whether we will become a pawn of the major economic centers in Asia or

America," German Chancellor Friedrich Merz said last month.

When Josep Borrell became EU foreign policy chief in 2019, he received an intelligence document spelling out threats. It listed the risk that Russia would invade Ukraine, fresh violence would erupt between Palestinians and Israelis and migration flows would increase. It warned of trade friction between China and Europe, and Europe and the U.S.

For Borrell, who stepped down last year, it justified his earlier warning that Europe "must learn to speak the language of power."

"I produced hundreds of EU statements asking other people to behave," Borrell said. "The problem is behind me: There are 27 which are completely divided," he added, referring to the EU's member states.

## Text 7 - What MAGA Republicans really think of Trump's foreign policy

Turns out President Trump understands his base better than the isolationists and the alt-right.

**Marc A. Thiessen**, *The Washington Post*, December 11, 2025

*Marc Thiessen writes a column for The Post on foreign and domestic policy. He is a fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, and the former chief speechwriter for President George W. Bush and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld. He is a Fox News contributor.*

**American Enterprise Institute (AEI)**, a private nonprofit American institution of research founded in 1943 by American industrialist Lewis H. Brown. One of the oldest and most-influential think tanks in the United States, it supports limited government, private enterprise, and democratic capitalism. Its headquarters are in Washington, D.C.

During his first year back in office, President Donald Trump has bombed the Houthis, bombed Iran, bombed Venezuelan drug boats, enabled Ukraine to strike deep inside Russia, and threatened to send the U.S. military "guns-a-blazing" into Nigeria to protect Christians from Islamist radicals.

This is not what many on the neo-isolationist right had in mind for Trump's second term. Now, some are grumbling that Trump is spending too much time on foreign policy.

Here's the good news: Trump's MAGA base disagrees. That's the conclusion of the latest poll from the Ronald Reagan Institute, which finds that self-described MAGA Republicans believe it is extremely important for the United States to lead on the world stage — and they *love* the way Trump is leading.

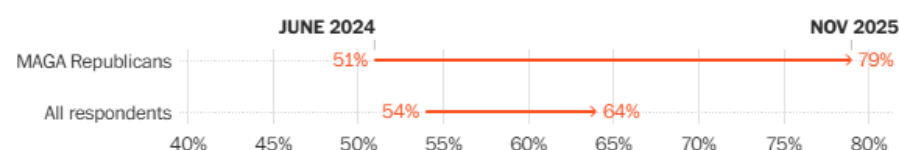
Indeed, the poll shows that MAGA Republicans are more hawkish, and less isolationist, than any other group in America — including Democrats, independents and establishment Republicans. Not only do they reject a "Fortress America" approach to foreign policy; they want even bolder U.S. leadership from Trump.

### U.S. global leadership

Last year, under President Joe Biden, a narrow 51 percent majority of MAGA voters said it is "better for the United States to be more engaged and take the lead" on international events. This year, with Trump back as commander in chief, that number skyrocketed to 79 percent. Only 18 percent of MAGA Republicans think the U.S. should be "less engaged" in the world — down from 39 percent in 2024.

### MAGA Republicans support U.S. global leadership

Share of respondents who thinks it's better for the U.S. to be more engaged and take the lead on international events.



Source: The Reagan National Defense Survey, Ronald Reagan Institute

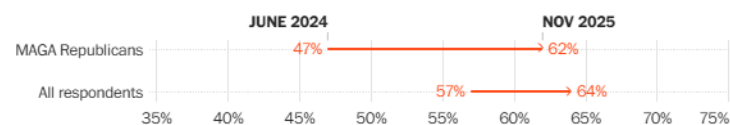
That is a 61-point spread in favor of U.S. global leadership. That's not all. Ninety-two percent of MAGA Republicans say that foreign policy and national defense should be important U.S. priorities — including 59 percent who say they are “extremely important,” more than any other group in the country, including Democrats, independents and non-MAGA Republicans.

## Ukraine

Supermajorities of MAGA Republicans back Ukraine, and that support has grown since Trump put Biden's feckless leadership in the rearview mirror: Sixty-two percent support sending weapons to Ukraine (compared with just 53 percent of non-MAGA Republicans) — a 15-point increase since 2024.

### The majority of MAGA Republicans support sending U.S. weapons to Ukraine

Share of respondents who supports sending U.S. weapons to Ukraine



Source: The Reagan National Defense Survey, Ronald Reagan Institute

When offered the option of selling American-made weapons to European allies, who would then provide them to Ukraine — the policy Trump has implemented — support among MAGA Republicans for arming Ukraine rises to 78 percent.

### MAGA Republicans support selling weapons to Europe

Percentage of respondents who support “shifting the financial burden of the war by selling American-made weapons to European allies, who would then be responsible for providing those weapons to Ukraine”

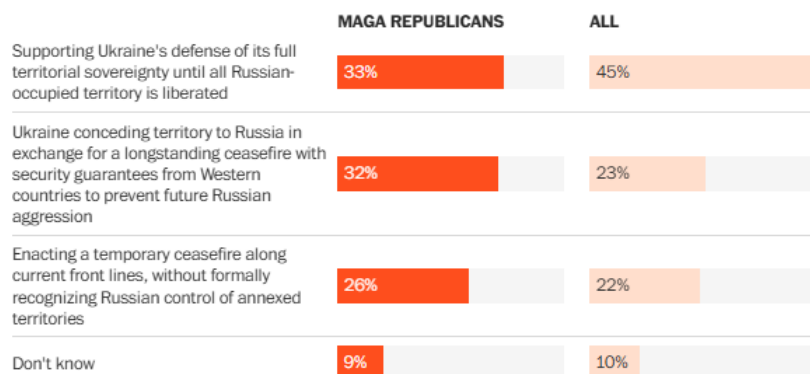


Source: The Reagan National Defense Survey, Ronald Reagan Institute

Not only do MAGA Republicans want to arm Ukraine; they want to send Kyiv even more lethal weapons. Asked whether they supported “sending long-range cruise missiles, like Tomahawks, to Ukraine, which would give [Ukraine] the ability to strike deep inside Russian territory” — something Trump has said he is considering — 61 percent said they did.

When asked what approach the United States should take to resolving the conflict, 33 percent of MAGA Republicans said the U.S. should support Ukraine's defense of its full territorial sovereignty. A similar number said they would support a peace deal involving Ukraine conceding territory in exchange for a long-standing ceasefire with security guarantees. About a quarter support a temporary ceasefire along current lines, without formally recognizing Russian control of territory it holds.

### Which approach to resolving the conflict between Russia and Ukraine do you think the U.S. should push for?



Source: The Reagan National Defense Survey, Ronald Reagan Institute

MAGA Republicans support Trump's peace efforts but don't like or trust Russia: Seventy-four percent see Russia as an enemy, while 73 percent consider Ukraine an ally. And 61 percent don't trust Russia to abide by the terms of any peace deal.

To ensure Russia does not violate a peace deal, 63 percent said they back “providing Ukraine with a collective defense commitment, which would obligate the U.S. and European allies to respond with military force if Ukraine is attacked again, like the U.S. commitment to NATO members.” And 73 percent support the creation of an “international force to police a demilitarized zone between Ukraine and Russia” that would “consist of European troops on the ground, backed by U.S. air power.”

In other words, the anti-Ukraine right is completely out of step with the MAGA movement. Support for Ukraine among MAGA Republicans has risen with Trump's election. They want peace, they distrust Russia, and they do not support abandoning Ukraine.

## The NATO alliance

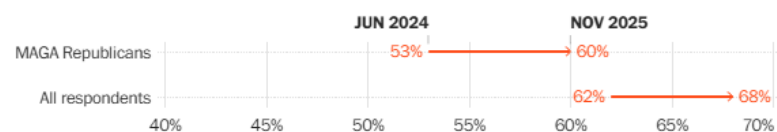


Before Trump took office in 2017, NATO was a deadbeat alliance, with only three allies meeting their commitment to spend 2 percent of GDP on defense. Today, thanks to Trump, every ally is on track to fulfill that pledge. And at the NATO summit in the Netherlands this year, Trump got allies to agree to raise their spending to 5 percent.

In the wake of these changes, Trump declared he felt “differently” about NATO. So do MAGA Republicans. Only 32 percent have an unfavorable view of NATO.

### MAGA Republicans are much more in favor of NATO than a year ago

Percentage of respondents having a favorable view of NATO



Source: The Reagan National Defense Survey, Ronald Reagan Institute

Last year, 69 percent supported “responding with military force if a NATO ally in Europe was attacked.” This year, support for defending an ally under attack rose to 76 percent. Just 14 percent of MAGA Republicans would be opposed to doing so. Finnish President Alexander Stubb said Trump had ushered in “the birth of a new NATO.” He’s also ushered in a rebirth of support for the alliance on the MAGA right.

### Israel and Iran

In the wake of the controversy over Tucker Carlson’s softball interview of neo-Nazi Nick Fuentes, there has been concern about growing antisemitism and anti-Israel sentiment on the right. Well, it turns out that the alt-right is out of touch with the MAGA movement, too. MAGA Republicans are the single most supportive group of Israel in the country: Seventy-nine percent consider Israel an ally, 72 percent support sending U.S. weapons to Israel, and 76 percent back Israel taking further military action against Hamas if the terrorist group does not give up its weapons and demilitarize the Gaza Strip.

MAGA Republicans also overwhelmingly approve of Operation Midnight Hammer, the joint U.S.-Israeli military operation that obliterated the Iranian nuclear program: Eighty-seven percent say they approve of Trump’s decision to launch military strikes against Iran, and 73 percent would back additional U.S. military action to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons (compared with just 61 percent of non-MAGA Republicans).

### Do you approve the U.S. military's targeted airstrike against Iran's nuclear facilities this past summer?

■ Approve ■ Don't know ■ Disapprove



Source: The Reagan National Defense Survey, Ronald Reagan Institute

In other words, the anti-Israel right is loud, obnoxious and utterly isolated.

### The Western Hemisphere

Trump has launched the largest deployment of naval assets to the Caribbean since the U.S. invasion of Panama, and has used that firepower to take out more than 20 speedboats and a submarine deemed to be used by narco-terrorists to bring deadly drugs into our country. In taking military action against the cartels, he has the backing of 90 percent of MAGA Republicans.

### Do you support using military force against suspected drug traffickers in Latin America and the Caribbean?

■ Approve ■ Don't know ■ Disapprove



Source: The Reagan National Defense Survey, Ronald Reagan Institute

### China and Taiwan

MAGA Republicans are more pro-Taiwan than any group polled: Eighty-three percent believe it is important for the U.S. to defend Taiwan against Chinese aggression. If China took military action against Taiwan, 75 percent would support deploying U.S. military assets into the region; 72 percent would support establishing a no-fly zone that could include “shooting down Chinese warplanes”; 63 percent would support committing U.S. ground forces to defend Taiwan; and 84 percent would support the United States officially recognizing Taiwan as an independent country.

### Strong defense

With his One Big Beautiful Bill, Trump added more than \$156 billion to the defense budget, including funding for his “Golden Dome” defense shield to protect America from ballistic missile attack. MAGA Republicans overwhelmingly approve.

## Almost every MAGA Republican wants strong U.S. defense

Percentage of respondents who thinks it's important that the U.S. has the most powerful military in the world



Source: The Reagan National Defense Survey, Ronald Reagan Institute

A 74 percent supermajority say they want the U.S. to have a military large enough to win two wars simultaneously (55 percent indicate large enough to defeat China and Russia at the same time; 19 percent to defeat China and a smaller power like Iran or North Korea at once).

And 89 percent support Trump's Golden Dome.

That is a pretty robust rejection of isolationism and a powerful endorsement of Trump's approach on the world stage this year. Indeed, the Reagan poll has consistently shown over several years that MAGA Republicans, like Trump, are not isolationist. And the Reagan Institute is not alone. Other polls, including from the Vandenberg Coalition, have produced similar results.

Bottom line: A MAGA supermajority supports Trumpian U.S. world leadership. And not surprisingly, Trump understands his movement better than those who want to hijack it to pursue a neo-isolationist agenda.

## Text 8 - Europe Is Delusional



Heads of European nations and other officials attend the European leaders' summit to discuss European security and Ukraine, at Lancaster House in London, March 2, 2025. (NTB/Javad Parsa via Reuters)

By Charles C. W. Cooke, *The National Review*, December 10, 2025

Europe, in the year 2025, is what NPR would look like if it ran a continent.

It is time for a rant about Europe. It has, in fact, been time for quite a while, but there is always a moment at which the straw meets the camel, and, for me, that moment came when the European Union announced that it intended to extort another hundred million dollars or so out of the wildly productive American tech sector, and then the bureaucrats and politicians who staff that dreadful institution took to *the very service they were in the midst of extorting* to offer up generalized attacks on the United States. As a former Brit who enjoys spending time in both France and Italy, I take no particular pleasure in unloading in this manner, but honesty compels it: In its current incarnation, Europe is a poor, corrupt, sclerotic, vampiric open-air museum, and its leadership class is full of priggish, dishonest, supercilious, rent-seeking parasites, whose boundless sense of superiority ought by rights to have vanished in 1901. Europe, in the year 2025, is what a continent would look like if it were run by NPR. It is a librarian in a pair of horn-rimmed spectacles, snobbishly shushing the workers outside. It is a faculty meeting, a Sierra Club protest, a forum for those who believe that words create reality. There is no reason that we in the United States should consent to be lectured by the apologists for such a silly place.

Worse yet is how unabashedly smug those who engage in this lecturing have become. Criticize a European from America and you will immediately be hit with a wall of undeservedly self-righteous disdain. This should not be mistaken for pride; rather, it is that peculiar, negative, defensive sort of *hauteur* that is focused less on the positive virtues of the

speaker, and more on his deeply held conviction that, whatever his deficiencies, at least he's not *you*. That, at root, is the contemporary European mantra — At Least We're Not American — and, like many mantras, it is impervious to fact or repudiation. What about the massive gap in GDP that has opened up between the U.S. and Europe since 2008? *At least we're not American*. What about the anemic performance of European companies relative to those in the United States? *At least we're not American*. What about the gulf between GDP per capita in Europe and GDP per capita in the United States, or about the U.S.'s great advantages in biotech and energy and advanced semiconductors, or the fact that, if most European countries were to join the U.S., they'd have a lower standard of living than people do in Mississippi, or that the average European is six times more likely to die from a lack of heating or air conditioning than an American is from a gun, or that most European countries are unable to usefully project military power? *At least we're not American*.

Why, pray, do Europeans tell themselves that? Because, if they didn't, they might have to account for their failures, and because that would require a capacity for introspection that they simply do not possess. Read any Eurocrat's assessment of the United States, and you will encounter a thoroughly preposterous image of life here, in which science is ignored in favor of superstition; in which nobody is able to read or write; in which only billionaires are admitted to hospitals; in which one is unable to go to the supermarket without being gunned down by gangs; in which the sole food option is McDonald's; and which, absent the benevolent guidance of EU censors, the population is fatally misled by an endless supply of Koran-burning bigots — and yet which, despite all of that, has magically managed to become the richest, most powerful, most sought-after nation in the history of the world. Invariably, these hallucinations are coupled with a penchant for sophistry and excuse-making that would make Gorgias blush. Europe's feeble economic growth is recast as "sustainability." Its habitual censorship of dissenters is brushed away with the contention that any speech that is prosecuted is, by definition, not "free speech" at all. Poor people have adopted a salutary "life balance"; rule by apparatchiks is "sophisticated democracy"; the superintendence of every last thing is the "management of community tensions." Most fun of all, perhaps, is the insistence that all critics of Europe and its governments must by definition be "far right," and even working on behalf of Vladimir Putin — a bizarre charge to hear from the leaders of a continent that has spent 80 years being protected by the carapace of hard American power.

I am a writer, not a politician, and as a result I am free to be as rude as I wish about anything that takes my fancy. Given the geopolitical concerns at stake, I would not recommend that those in power here in America echo my sentiments about Europe in quite this fashion or this tone, but I would hope that they are aware of the problem, which is that Europe — a region that the West needs to remain a useful ally — has become utterly deluded about its fortunes, its importance, its nature, and its very place in the world, and that unless it is told "No" by its suzerains, forcefully, repeatedly, and without any interest in the looks it receives in return, that delusion is unlikely to be dissipated any time soon.

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## Trump Is Betting Against the Future

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*Project Syndicate*, Dec 9, 2025, [Stephen Holmes](#)

*The new US National Security Strategy bears the cognitive signature of a movement that experiences demographic and cultural change as existential catastrophe. The goal is not merely to ignore real threats but to redefine the threat itself as the presence of people President Donald Trump calls "garbage."*

PARIS — The new US National Security Strategy is not, in any meaningful sense, a strategy. A strategy connects means to achievable ends. What President Donald Trump's White House published last week is something else: a 33-page confession that this administration does not believe in the future — and therefore sees no point in investing in it. Trump's NSS oscillates wildly between triumphalism and declinist anxiety. America is the greatest nation in history; America is being invaded. We are winning; we are losing it all. This is not simply incoherence: It is the cognitive

signature of a movement that experiences demographic and cultural change as existential catastrophe.

The NSS announces sweeping objectives without specifying resources, timelines, or mechanisms. Calling it "short-sighted" suggests that a long game is being neglected. But there is no long game. A movement convinced that its world is ending does not plan for the next generation. It smashes and grabs.

The grabbiness is explicit. "All our embassies must be aware of major business opportunities in their country, especially

major government contracts,” the NSS instructs. “Every U.S. Government official that interacts with these countries should understand that part of their job is to help American companies compete and succeed.” Diplomacy has been formally converted into a business development operation. The National Security Council is tasked with identifying “strategic locations and resources” in the Western Hemisphere for exploitation. *Le Monde* calls it what it is: prédation économique – economic predation.

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The Council on Foreign Relations observes that great-power competition has vanished as an organizing principle in this NSS, replaced by economics as “the ultimate stakes.” The document is more polemic than strategy, Council members say, and non-Americans would be wise to discount it as a genuine statement of intent.

Still, the disappearance of great-power rivalry as a framework is not an oversight. It reflects an administration that has quietly abandoned the project of shaping the international order because shaping that order requires believing in the future.

Consider the treatment of allies. The NSS redirects rhetorical fire toward Europe while markedly softening its language about Russia and other adversaries. It warns that Europe risks “civilizational erasure” through immigration and “regulatory suffocation.” It demands that Europeans assume “primary responsibility” for their own defense—while simultaneously announcing that the United States will “cultivate resistance” to Europe’s current political trends by supporting nationalist and populist parties in European Union countries.

This is not alliance management. It is sabotage dressed as burden-sharing.

The administration claims to reject the liberal internationalist habit of lecturing others about their internal affairs. But it then announces a hemispheric sphere of influence that denies Latin American countries the sovereign right to choose their own trading partners and security arrangements. The “Trump Corollary” to the Monroe Doctrine is nineteenth-century great-power politics repackaged for a president who cannot distinguish between national interest and personal enrichment.

The Cato Institute, no friend of liberal internationalism, identifies another contradiction: the tension between rhetoric rejecting “forever wars” and an underlying insistence that the US must remain global arbiter. An “America First veneer” overlays a de facto hegemonic project. The administration wants the benefits of primacy without its burdens – deference without commitment, access without relationships.

This is not foreign-policy realism. It is the doctrine of someone who has never had to honor a promise. What holds its contradictions together is not a theory of international

order or a vision of American leadership, but rather a shared enemy: the future itself.

The NSS is suffused with demographic angst. Migration is framed not as a policy challenge but as an “invasion.” The border is “the primary element of national security.” The document blurs the line between external threats and internal political competition, treating diaspora communities and demographic change as security problems on par with hostile states. This is the “Great Replacement” theory translated into official dogma.

Why does an administration preparing to withdraw from global commitments need to demonize immigrants? Why does a strategy focused on the Western Hemisphere devote so much energy to attacking European migration policy? It is because the fear that animates this administration is not China or Russia or terrorism. Its animating fear is that tomorrow’s America will not look like yesterday’s America. The NSS is not a plan for navigating the future. It is an expression of rage at the future’s inevitability.

This explains the predatory economics. If you have given up on building lasting relationships, you extract what you can while you can. If alliances are just transaction costs, you abandon them. If the international order impedes you in any way, you refuse to maintain it. The logic is that of a liquidation sale: everything must go.

Fear of the future also explains the Trump administration’s softness toward Russia. Vladimir Putin’s Kremlin shares Trump’s demographic anxiety, hostility to liberal institutions, and resentment of a cosmopolitan future, and he has what Trump wants: a revisionist ethnonationalist state that has embraced imperialism and suffered no meaningful consequences. The NSS does not name Russia as a serious threat because this administration does not experience Russia as threatening what it values.

What remains when policy cannot deliver what a movement craves? Demolition. Alliances that took generations to build can be wrecked in months. The NSS provides ideological justification – “civilizational” language, “great replacement” premises, “invasion” rhetoric – for severing the ties that allow democracies to work together to confront the grave challenges of the future.

The goal is not merely to ignore real threats but to redefine the threat itself as demographic change – the very presence of people Trump calls “garbage.” Why preserve alliances to manage the future if the future will not be white?

The NSS is what happens when foreign policy is drafted by those who experience the future as an enemy. Unable to stop time, they settle for smashing the clocks – and pocketing whatever isn’t nailed down.

## Featured

### Stephen Holmes

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