
Trump fires back at European leaders after damp reception in France

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President Trump lashed out at European leaders after French President Emmanuel Macron denounced his 'America First' brand of nationalism and called for the creation of a European army, independent from the US.

"Just returned from France where much was accomplished in my meetings with World Leaders," Trump tweeted on Monday. "Never easy bringing up the fact that the US must be treated fairly, which it hasn't, on both Military and Trade. We pay for LARGE portions of other countries military protection, hundreds of billions of dollars, for the great privilege of losing hundreds of billions of dollars with these same countries on trade."

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@realDonaldTrumphundreds of billions of dollars, for the great privilege of losing hundreds of billions of dollars with these same countries on trade. I told them that this situation cannot continue - It is, and always has been, ridiculously

unfair to the United States. Massive amounts.....

@realDonaldTrumpof money spent on protecting other countries, and we get nothing but Trade Deficits and Losses. It is time that these very rich countries either pay the United States for its great military protection, or protect themselves...and Trade must be made FREE and FAIR!

Trump's tirade came just one day after French President Emmanuel Macron – once regarded as a close confidant of the US president – rebuked Trump's 'America First' brand of nationalism, comparing it to the forces that plunged Europe into conflict in the early 20th Century.

Speaking at an Armistice Day commemoration in Paris, Macron did not address Trump by name, but warned that *"Patriotism is the exact opposite of nationalism...nationalism is a betrayal of patriotism. By saying our interests first, who cares about the others, we erase what a nation holds dearest, what gives it life, what makes it great and what is essential: its moral values."*

At a recent campaign-style rally, Trump described himself as a *"nationalist,"* the first time he has done so since taking office. On Monday, the president's beef with Maron and his European counterparts seemed to be driven more by financial concerns than ideological ones.

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Trump has often criticized his European allies for failing to meet their defense spending targets, leaving the US to foot much of Europe's security bill. At present, only five NATO member states – the US, UK, Greece, Estonia, and Poland – allocate two percent of their GDP to defense spending, a requirement for membership. In 2017, the US spent \$686 billion on defense, over double the expenditure of all 28 other states combined.

However, European leaders as of late seem more interested in looking elsewhere for their defense needs. In a radio interview last week, Macron called for the establishment of an EU [army](#) that can defend the continent "without relying only on the United States."

@realDonaldTrump President Macron of France has just suggested that Europe build its own military in order to protect itself from the U.S., China and Russia. Very insulting, but perhaps Europe should first pay its fair share of NATO, which the U.S. subsidizes greatly!

Macron's view was echoed by liberal MEP Guy Verhofstadt, a long-time proponent of a closer-knit, federal Europe. Tweeting on Saturday, Verhofstadt

said that Europe cannot be *“unprepared for the America First Policy.”*

@guyverhofstadt Yes, [@ischinger](#), we need to go to majority voting in the EU & yes [@p61pavel](#) we need an integrated defence capacity as a European pillar of NATO. We are stronger together, cannot afford 27 parallel defence budgets nor being unprepared for the America First Policy. <https://twitter.com/p61pavel/status/1060976524978016268...>

Petr Pavel [@p61pavel](#)
Replying to [@ischinger](#)

Great idea! Will this European Army be part of or parallel to NATO? And wasn't NATO designed primarily to defend Europe?

With the commemorations marred by gray skies and constant-drizzle, Trump received the cold shoulder from activists and from the French media too. Ahead of his arrival, French comedian Yann Barthès switched to English on his primetime show, telling Trump to *“go and f*** yourself. You're not welcome in this country.”*

As the president's motorcade rolled down the Champs-Élysées, a topless feminist protester hopped the barricades and ran towards the president's car with the words *“fake peacemaker”* scrawled on her chest. Police apprehended the woman, and feminist group FEMEN later released a statement attacking several of the world leaders present at the event, including Russian President Vladimir Putin and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

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“FEMEN believes that restoring world peace with those who are responsible for the ongoing wars is hypocritical,” the statement said.

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