

# FOUR YEARS AND FIVE WEEKS



Trump announces the end of the transatlantic alliance

First it was Emmanuel Macron, putting his hand on Trump's knee as he publicly corrected Trump in the Oval Office, in the presence of cameras, on the fact that Europe's contributions to support Ukraine were (a) grants, not loans, and (b) larger than the contributions made by the US. Trump, in turn, tried to toss out his well-worn talking points, but the damage was done. Trump was called out by a foreign leader as a liar, in his very own office and seat of power.

Then it was Keir Starmer, waving a fancy invitation from King Charles to a state dinner, who did exactly the same thing. He publicly corrected Trump in the Oval Office, in the presence of cameras, on Europe's support for Ukraine. Again, Trump hemmed and hawwed, and embraced the (Starmer: "unprecedented!") invitation to a second state visit, but the damage was done. Trump was called out by a second foreign leader as a liar, in his very own office and seat of power.

You had to know this would not sit well.

As network after network played the clip of Macron's hand on Trump's knee, after all the networks showed Trump fawning over the Bright Shiny Thing that Starmer dangled in front of him, as Starmer very politely called Trump a liar, everyone knew that this would not end well.

And today, it was Volodymyr Zelenskyy's turn . . . and as anyone with half a brain could anticipate, it *\*did\** not end well.

Personally, I was amused by J.D. Vance's holier-than-thou whining about Zelenskyy making a benign appearance in Pennsylvania saying "thank

you” to the US for their support and calling it Election Interference. I don’t remember Vance taking up umbrage when the head of DOGE Elon Musk appeared and spoke at the national political rally of the neo-Nazi Alternative for Germany (AfD) party just days ahead of the recent German election, and who repeatedly praised the AfD via Xitter. After the AfD came in second, with a sizable caucus in the new Bundestag, Musk called the head of the AfD to offer congratulations and called her party the future of Germany, and Vance’s reaction was \*crickets\*.

Well, to be scrupulously fair, that’s not true. He *did* say something, but rather than condemning such interference, Vance joined it. At the Munich Security Conference, Vance praised the AfD (not by name but by lauding their political positions on immigration and other policies) and attacked mainstream German political parties for refusing to work with the AfD.

Americans might not have been listening to all of this, but the Europeans were – especially the Germans – and they knew exactly who Vance was praising. After the German elections, the victorious chancellor-elect made a stunning statement. From Deutsche Welle:

After his party’s victory in the election was confirmed Sunday night, [CDU party leader Friedrich] Merz said that he wanted to work on creating unity in Europe as quickly as possible, “so that, step by step, we can achieve independence from the US.”

Until recently, this would have been a highly unusual thing for any leader of the CDU to say. After all, it has always had a strong affinity for the US.

“Merz aligns himself with the legacy of historical CDU leaders such as [former chancellors] Konrad Adenauer and Helmut Kohl, both of whom played pivotal roles

in strengthening transatlantic relations,” said Evelyn Gaiser, a policy advisor on transatlantic relationships and NATO with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, a German think tank that is associated with but independent of the Christian Democrats.

[snip]

Merz spoke out after JD Vance’s speech at the Munich Security Conference (MSC) in February, in which the US vice president said that the biggest threat to Europe did not come from Russia or China, but “from within.”

“This is really now the change of an era,” Merz said on stage at the MSC. “If we don’t hear the wake-up call now, it might be too late for the entire European Union.”

Add this into the context of withdrawing from the World Health Organization and eliminating all the work done by USAID, and the message is crystal clear. While yes, this meeting today in the Oval Office was about Ukraine, it was really a sign of something much much larger.

In April 2021, when Joe Biden addressed a joint session of Congress in a non-State of the Union address, he said this:

I’ve often said that our greatest strength is the power of our example – not just the example of our power. And in my conversations with world leaders – many I’ve known for a long time – the comment I hear most often is: we see that America is back – but for how long?

We now know the answer: four years and five weeks.

RIP the Transatlantic Alliance (1945-2025).