

MACRON, TRUMP AND THE “BOARD OF PEACE”: FROM GREENLAND TO TARIFF WAR THREATS

200% TARIFFS OVER FRENCH WINE

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USPA NEWS - “200% TARIFFS” AND LEAKED TEXTS: INSIDE THE NEW MACRON-TRUMP SHOWDOWN: The latest clash between French President Emmanuel Macron and US President Donald Trump erupted on 20 January, against a backdrop of Arctic tension and diplomatic mistrust. While Trump presses ahead with his controversial ambition to “have” Greenland and backs it with a military posture in the Arctic, France has joined a Danish led NATO exercise and deployed a small contingent of 15 chasseurs alpins to Nuuk. The dispute escalated when Macron declined, “at this stage”, Trump’s invitation to join a new “Board of Peace” unveiled ahead of the Davos World Economic Forum, prompting a furious reaction from the US president as he stepped off his plane en route to Switzerland. Asked about the French refusal, Trump mocked Macron personally and threatened to impose a 200% tariff on French wines and champagnes exported to the United States “if they want to play hostile,” insisting that such pressure would eventually push Paris to join his initiative.

GREENLAND, ARCTIC ENDURANCE AND A FRACTURED ALLIANCE

Trump’s renewed push to annex Greenland has become the central fault line in transatlantic security, with the US leader openly stating that America “must have” the island and downplaying the likelihood of European resistance. In response, Denmark and several NATO partners have launched the “Arctic Endurance” exercise, explicitly framed as a defensive operation to reinforce Arctic security rather than a provocation, and France has joined by dispatching 15 mountain infantry soldiers to Greenland in solidarity with Copenhagen. From Copenhagen to Paris, officials insist that these moves are about sovereignty and international law, not confrontation, warning that any attempt to seize Greenland would undermine NATO itself and normalise the “law of the strongest” in Europe’s northern flank. (Source: CNBC)

A UNITED EUROPEAN FRONT ON SOVEREIGNTY

On 18 January, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom issued a joint declaration underlining their determination, as NATO members, to “strengthen the security of the Arctic” and to stand “fully” with the Kingdom of Denmark and the people of Greenland. The text stresses that “Arctic Endurance” was pre coordinated with allies, “represents a threat to no one,” and is rooted in principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity that these states are “firmly attached” to defending. Crucially, the statement criticises US tariff threats as harmful to transatlantic relations and warns that economic coercion risks triggering “a dangerous negative spiral,” pledging that European partners will “remain united and coordinated” and are “determined to uphold our sovereignty.” (Source France 24 TV)

THE “BOARD OF PEACE” INVITATION & PRESIDENT MACRON’S REFUSAL

Parallel to the Greenland crisis, Trump has been promoting a new global structure he calls the “Council of Peace,” initially presented as part of his plan for Gaza but now envisaged as a body competing with the United Nations for conflict resolution authority. According to information shared with AFP and France Televisions, countries offered a permanent seat are expected to contribute one billion dollars, and Trump has confirmed that Russian President Vladimir Putin has been invited alongside other leaders, even as many capitals quietly question the implications for the UN Charter. France, for its part, has let it be known “at this stage” that it does “not intend to respond favourably” to the invitation, with Foreign Minister Jean Noel Barrot reiterating that Paris “cannot give follow up” for now and underlining France’s attachment to the UN system and to the principles enshrined in its founding texts. (Source: France 24 TV)

THE AIRPORT FLASHPOINT AND TRUMP’S 200% TARIFF THREAT

The diplomatic standoff turned into a public confrontation when Trump was informed, on the tarmac in Florida before boarding his flight to Davos, that Macron would not attend the “Board of Peace.” Visibly irritated, the US president mocked his counterpart “Did he really say that? Nobody wants Emmanuel Macron, he’ll be out of power very soon, it’s not a big deal” before unveiling a threat to impose a 200% tariff on French wines and champagnes if Paris “wants to play hostile.” Trump added that “I’ll put a 200% tariff on his

wines and champagnes, and he'll join, but he doesn't have to join," explicitly linking trade punishment to Macron's participation in his peace initiative and deepening concern in Europe about the use of economic leverage to shape foreign policy choices. (Source : Dwe)

ELYSEE PUSHBACK AND LEAKED PRIVATE MESSAGES

The Elysée swiftly pushed back, with Macron's entourage telling AFP and France info that "tariff threats to influence our foreign policy are unacceptable and ineffective." French diplomats stressed that France remains open to dialogue on Gaza and global security but will not endorse mechanisms that appear to bypass or weaken the United Nations, especially at a time when the Arctic crisis is already testing international law. In a further escalation, Trump published on his Truth Social account a screenshot of a private message from Macron proposing a G7 summit in Paris next Thursday, "after Davos," where Ukrainians, Russians and Danes could be invited "on the sidelines" to discuss both the war in Ukraine and the disagreements over Greenland; Macron's entourage confirmed the authenticity of this message to France Televisions, while refusing to comment on the fact that it was made public without consent (Source France Tv info)

MARKET FALLOUT AND FEARS IN THE VINEYARDS

News of potential 200% tariffs sent a chill through the French wine and champagne sector, already anxious after earlier US threats linked to the Greenland dispute and broader transatlantic trade tensions. Traders reported sharp volatility on equity markets as investors reassessed the outlook for French exporters, with particular concern for producers whose business model is heavily dependent on premium sales to the US. Winemakers' organisations described the comments as "reckless" and warned that thousands of jobs in wine growing regions could be at risk if such tariffs were implemented, especially in Champagne where small and medium sized houses rely heavily on American demand.

BETWEEN DAVOS, DAVOS AND THE G7: A STRAINED PARTNERSHIP

The timing of the spat on the eve of the World Economic Forum in Davos adds an extra layer of symbolism, as both leaders arrive in Switzerland projecting radically different visions of order: Trump championing a billionaire funded "Council of Peace" and the right to annex strategic territories, President Emmanuel Macron defending the UN Charter and calling for an EU "anti coercion" response to tariff blackmail. The leak of Macron's G7 proposal suggests that Paris is still seeking a high level political channel to prevent the Greenland crisis from spiraling further, even as the public rhetoric hardens. For now, however, the combination of Arctic manoeuvres, leaked messages and tariff ultimatums underscores how fragile the Franco American partnership has become, with European allies bracing for a long winter of strategic and economic turbulence. Source: France 24 info)

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