

Episode 57DEE February 20 2025 Trump and Russia negotiations around Ukraine create an unstable world

In Episode 57DEE 1 United States 2 California The Presidio 3 New York Congestion Pricing 4 German Snap Election on February 23 2025 5 Ukraine 6 Russia Main Content

1A United States and a Trump Get Out of Jail Free card Trump Says He Would Have Had a Very Nasty Life if He Had Lost the Election The Trump remarks were a surprisingly public acknowledgment that he had campaigned for his freedom as much as for the White House itself **RAWSEP View** This admission by Trump fits with the RAWSEP View that Trump views his presidency as primarily a get out of jail free card rather than a chance to help the average American voter **Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501c3 nonprofit organization** New York Times February 19 2025 Trump said Wednesday he would have had a very nasty life if he lost the presidential election a surprisingly public acknowledgment that his legal challenges could have consumed his life and brought jail time If I lost it would have been very bad Trump said at an investment summit in Miami Beach It was dangerous actually very dangerous When Trump won in November the Justice Department abandoned the two federal cases against him and a judge in Manhattan issued an unconditional discharge in his hush money case Trump gave voice to something that his advisers had long said he had in the back of his mind as he campaigned But he did not publicly acknowledge throughout 2024 that he was campaigning for his freedom as much as for the White House itself Trump also said he disagreed with the assessment of historians that Andrew Jackson and Abraham Lincoln who was assassinated were the two most mistreated presidents Nobody was treated like me he said Nobody During the presidential campaign Trump faced dozens of criminal charges across four different cases Jack Smith who served as a special counsel charged him in two different cases one related to the January 6 2021 attack on the Capitol and another related to his handling of classified government documents after he left the White House in 2021 The documents case had been dismissed by a Trump appointed judge but the team of Smith was appealing it He also faced charges in Georgia over attempts to overturn his election loss in 2020 and he was found guilty on all counts in the hush money case in New York where he could have faced up to four years in prison

1B United States Department of Defense Hegseth Orders Pentagon to Draw Up Plans for Cuts The defense secretary has told senior leaders to prepare to trim 8 percent from the budget over each of the next five years officials said **Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501c3 nonprofit organization** New York Times February 19 2025 Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth has ordered senior military and Defense Department officials to draw up plans to cut 8 percent from the defense budget over each of the next five years officials said on Wednesday Hegseth said in a memo issued on Tuesday that a number of branches within the military and the Pentagon should turn in budget cutting proposals by next Monday two officials said the Pentagon is also bracing for proposed cuts to its work force and has already been asked to hand over to the Trump administration lists of probationary employees who could be laid off A senior military official said on Wednesday the Musk so called Department of Government Efficiency had expressed interest in moving full time Pentagon employees to contract positions so that they would be easier to fire

1C United States Senate Then and Now How Republican Senators Have Shifted Tone on Russia and Ukraine Some of the most vocal critics of Vladimir V Putin and proponents of the United States role as a global



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If life is a bowl of cherries, what are we doing in the fire pits?



 The Environment Centre (TEC)

September 7, 2024 · 

What happens when you light a wood fire?

-  Gases are released into the air. Sadly these gases have proven to be incredibly damaging to our health as well as to our air quality.
-  The particles linger in the air and on surfaces for a long time.
-  Wildlife is at risk of being harmed.

defender of democracy have acquiesced to Trump on Russia **Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501c3 nonprofit organization** New York Times February 19 2025 Republican members of Congress have been some of the strongest critics of Russia and Putin keeping in line with the GOP traditional hawkish views about the United States role in upholding freedom and democracy around the globe For years that also translated into strong support within the GOP for aiding Ukraine in its fight against Russian aggression But recently as Trump has cozied up to Putin and moved to normalize relations with Russia Republicans who once vowed to uphold Ukraine sovereignty have stayed silent or moderated their tone On Tuesday while promoting a new book on China during an appearance on Fox & Friends Senator Tom Cotton called for getting creative to try to reach a truce and echoed support of Lindsay Graham for making a deal with Ukraine on its mineral resources On CNN later that day he defended The Trump establishing diplomatic channels with Russia and accused Biden of tempting Russia to invade

1D United States Internal Revenue Services and Tax Collection IRS to Begin Laying Off Roughly 6000 Employees on Thursday The terminations will target relatively recent hires at the IRS which the Biden administration had attempted to revitalize **RAWSEP View** Laying off IRS employees will make tax season refunds slower for the average American **Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501c3 nonprofit organization** New York Times February 19 2025 The Internal Revenue Service will begin laying off roughly 6000 employees on Thursday as part of the Trump push to downsize the federal work force three people familiar with the IRS plans said The terminations will target relatively recent hires at the IRS which the Biden administration had attempted to revitalize with a surge of funding and new staff Republicans have long pushed for cuts at the IRS accusing the agency of taking politically motivated steps against conservatives Some lawmakers including the Trump nominee to run the agency have called for abolishing the tax collector Trump chose Billy Long a former Republican congressman to lead the IRS taking the unusual step of replacing the former commissioner Daniel Werfel Trump has already targeted the IRS for an extended hiring freeze and the Department of Homeland Security has asked for IRS agents to help with immigration enforcement efforts A member of the Musk so called Department of Government Efficiency has also sought broad access to the tax agency sensitive taxpayer records Law firms are getting a fair number of résumés accounting firms are getting a fair number of résumés

1E United States Treasury Department Interest Rate Cuts on Hold Until Inflation Improves Fed Minutes Show Officials are debating when to restart interest rate cuts as high prices linger and the Trump policies add to economic uncertainty **RAWSEP View** The uncertainty Trump generates is not good for controlling inflation **Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501c3 nonprofit organization** New York Times February 19 2025 The Federal Reserve pressed pause on interest rate cuts last month The minutes from its January meeting suggest the hiatus is likely to be a long one A record of the central bank January 28 to 29 meeting released on Wednesday showed that officials have not written off rate cuts completely and they still expect to lower borrowing costs over time But slow progress on taming inflation combined with significant uncertainty about how the Trump economic agenda will shape up has solidified their position that the best course of action for now is to stand pat until they have more clarity on the economic outlook The last change to the Fed quantitative tightening policy occurred in May when it slowed the pace at which it would allow maturing government securities to roll off its balance sheet



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Rep. Christian Phelps  
Yesterday at 11:33 AM

### BUDGET PROCESS

- FEBRUARY**
  - 1 Governor Evers introduces his biennial budget proposal.
- MARCH**
  - 2 Budget listening sessions for constituents to share what matters to them.
- APRIL**
  - 3 The Joint Finance Committee (JFC) hosts public hearings across the state.
  - 4 State agencies meet with JFC about their budget requests.
- MAY & JUNE**
  - 5 JFC has executive sessions to vote on provisions of the budget.  
Republicans may propose & vote on an alternative. Final proposal sent to the Senate & Assembly for a floor vote.
  - 6 Assembly & Senate vote on the JFC budget bill, & amendments are proposed.
  - 7 Governor Evers receives the budget bill & can: sign, veto, or sign & partially veto.
- JULY**
  - 8 The new fiscal year starts with the new budget.

ROBYN VINING  
WISCONSIN STATE REPRESENTATIVE

State Representative Robyn Vining is at Wisconsin State Capitol.  
February 15 at 12:30 PM · Madison, WI

It's a snowy Saturday and I know what you're all thinking about: the STATE BUDGET PROCESS 🤔 But seriously, we did prep this explanation for you so you're looped in to how your hard-earned tax dollars are being spent over the next two years. The explanation is here as you want

United States and Public Health Bird Flu in Cows Is a Slow Motion Disaster **RAWSEP View** A Red Book is needed for Dairy Farmers for when Bird Flu strikes their Cows **Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501c3 nonprofit organization** New York Times February 20 2025 Farmers in the northeastern corner of Georgia woke up on January 15 to discover that birds in their flock of 45000 chickens were ill and dying Within 24 hours the Georgia veterinary laboratory confirmed the problem was bird flu Within two days the Georgia Department of Agriculture sent an emergency team to kill all infected and exposed birds disinfect the barns set up a 10 kilometer quarantine zone around the farm and impose mandatory testing on every poultry operation inside it The agency also told other chicken producers to confine all their birds indoors and ordered an immediate stop to bringing birds out in public no exhibitions no flea market sales Georgia did not invent this fast response There was a checklist to follow the US Department of Agriculture 224 page Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Response Plan known as the Red Book For 15 years the Red Book has laid out how to detect bird flu cull affected birds and prevent further spread Crucially the Red Book mandates that poultry farmers get compensation for birds that are killed by the authorities but not for ones that have died which encourages farmers to report outbreaks as fast as possible Unfortunately bird flu is no longer confined to birds For several years the virus has been jumping from wild birds into wild mammals and last March it was identified in cows for the first time Scientists are sounding the alarm The Bird flu jump into an animal with which humans have such close contact is a serious warning sign If this outbreak is not controlled the virus could mutate and plunge humans into a new public health emergency And by all accounts not enough is being done to control the outbreak Unlike their peers in the poultry business dairy farmers have no Red Book for dealing with bird flu They have been pressured to take instruction from public health authorities but without the support they need to make those steps bearable for their livelihood As a result these farmers have been hesitant to act despite being maligned for moving too slowly Unless something changes the specter of the bird flu devastation will hang over the United States indefinitely as will the threat of other emerging diseases Scientists have long considered bird flu or H5N1 a leading candidate for causing a human pandemic Since 2003 the virus has infected at least 954 people around the world and killed at least 464 an almost 50 percent mortality rate mostly in people in proximity to infected birds These have been largely one off infections including the first US death from bird flu in January a person over 65 with underlying health conditions But scientists fear that bird flu could adapt to pass from one person to another resulting in a fast moving lethal epidemic that would resemble the world spanning 1918 flu The lack of proactive measures and research thus far has left farmers in a terribly vulnerable state To effectively combat bird flu they have to be made comfortable to raise their hands and be part of the solution

1 **United States and Scientific Research Trillions of Viruses Live in Your Body AI Is Trying to Find Them RAWSEP View** The United States needs human scientists to analyze data that AI generates **Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501c3 nonprofit organization** New York Times February 19 2025 The viruses we know best are the ones that make us sick the influenza viruses that send us to bed and the smallpox viruses that may send us to the grave But healthy people are rife with viruses that do not make us ill Scientists estimate that tens of trillions of viruses live inside of us though they have identified just a fraction of them A vast majority are benign and some may even be beneficial We do not know for sure because most of the so called human virome remains a mystery

2 **California San Francisco The Presidio Trump Targets Agency Overseeing the Presidio a Cherished San Francisco Park** An executive order from the president also took aim at three independent agencies that



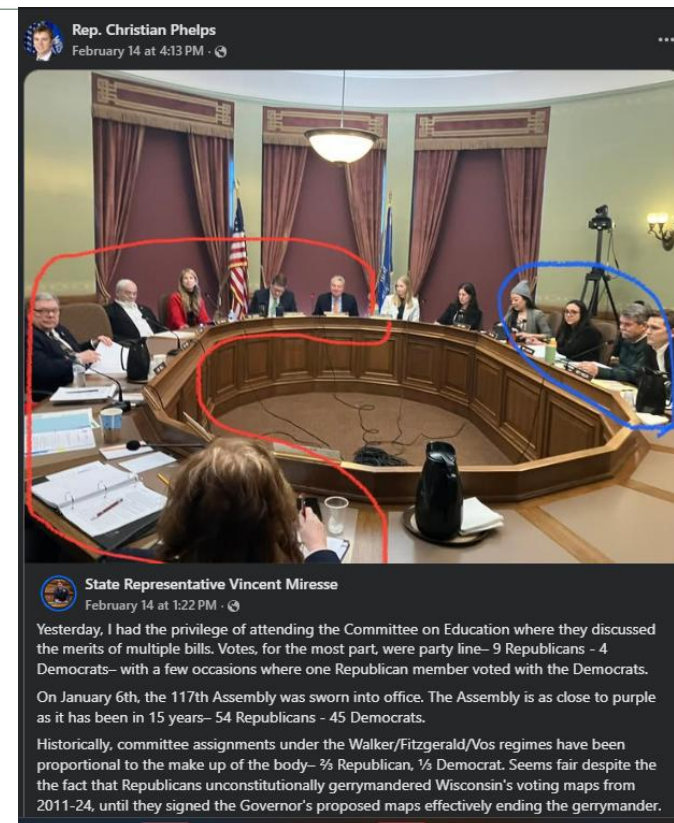
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promote peace abroad and work on development in Latin American and Africa Feb 20 2025 Trump moved to drastically shrink the Presidio Trust the federal agency that oversees the Presidio of San Francisco a national park at the base of the Golden Gate Bridge and one of the city's most cherished public spaces in an executive order issued Wednesday evening The order said the Presidio Trust was an unnecessary governmental entity The order also targeted three other agencies the Inter-American Foundation the United States African Development Foundation and the United States Institute of Peace by requiring them to reduce their work and personnel The Presidio Trust was established by Congress in 1996 to help oversee the Presidio a 1500 acre former military base that today includes hiking trails museums schools campgrounds restaurants a golf course and a hotel according to its website The National Park Service and the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy a nonprofit group also help to oversee the park The trust is led by a board of directors six of whom are appointed by the president and employs a staff of ecologists building stewards utility workers tech professionals and others It was not immediately clear what effect the executive order would have on the park Nancy Pelosi the former speaker of the House and a frequent critic of Trump played a central role in the creation of the trust and the park is in her district The office of Representative Pelosi said it was reviewing the order In 1996 the Presidio Trust Act was passed in a bipartisan way when Republicans held the majority in Congress and has retained bipartisan support ever since The Presidio Trust is statutory and it has been protected from assaults over time by its statutory strength Three years ago Ms Pelosi helped secure \$200 million from the Interior Department for maintenance and climate related upgrades at the park The money was part of the Inflation Reduction Act passed by Congress and signed into law by President Biden in 2022 Some Republicans want the money returned Rescinding the funds for the Presidio was included on a 50 page list of ideas circulated by top Republicans as they looked for ways to cover the cost of a tax cut The Inter American Foundation is an independent agency created by Congress in 1969 to fund development projects in Latin America and the Caribbean The United States African Development Foundation created in 1980 provides grants to community groups and small enterprises that help groups in Africa And the United States Institute of Peace established in 1984 works to prevent deadly conflict abroad and broker peace deals The Trump executive order states that the heads of each agency must submit a report to the director of the Office of Management and Budget within two weeks to confirm their compliance

3A New York and Trump and Congestion Pricing The Trump Push to Kill Congestion Pricing Faces Tall Legal Hurdles Trump made his power to shut down the tolling system sound absolute But legal experts say the law may not be in his favor Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501c3 nonprofit organization New York Times February 19 2025 Trump and his new transportation secretary Sean P Duffy made it sound as if their power to pull the plug on the six week old congestion pricing program in New York City was absolute Duffy who has been on the job for less than a month wrote to the New York governor on Wednesday that I have concluded that the tolling program implemented after a grueling yearlong process was not eligible under the federal statute used to enact it The Trump explanation was even less complex He hit the caps lock button and invoked his authority as king CONGESTION PRICING IS DEAD Manhattan Trump wrote on social media and all of New York is SAVED LONG LIVE THE KING A lawyer who supports congestion pricing and opposed the New Jersey unsuccessful attempts to block implementation of the new tolling program likened the Wednesday effort by Trump to breaking a contract You cannot unilaterally decide to void a contract that the other party has relied on and spent millions of dollars implementing The proper venue for seeking a change to the tolling program would be Congress

3B New York and Trump and Congestion Pricing What is Next for New York Congestion Pricing Tolls The Trump administration revoked federal approval for the tolling plan on Wednesday New York leaders are fighting to



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The following is an interesting article from Doctors and Scientists Against Wood Smoke Pollution that extrapolates findings from a number of studies from various countries:



DSAWSP.ORG

#### Wood smoke health effects

Wood smoke pollution has been linked to a wide range of serious health outcomes, including ...

keep it **Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501c3 nonprofit organization** New York Times February 20 2025 On the campaign trail Trump vowed to end the New York congestion pricing plan His administration followed through on Wednesday by moving to revoke federal approval for the tolling program just weeks after its January 5 debut The program the first of its kind in the nation aims to reduce traffic and pollution on some of the most crowded streets in the world and help raise \$15 billion for mass transit It charges most passenger cars \$9 a day to enter a designated tolling zone below 60th Street in Manhattan Trucks and buses pay varying rates and steep discounts are offered for all vehicles overnight when there is less traffic Early data has indicated that gridlock has eased and foot traffic has increased in the zone since the tolls took effect Sean Duffy the new transportation secretary sent a letter to Gov Kathy Hochul explaining the Trump objections to the program including the burden on working class drivers and the use of the tolling revenue to pay for transit rather than to improve roads The toll revenue has already been earmarked for crucial repairs and upgrades to the New York City deteriorating subway system buses and two commuter train lines Stopping congestion pricing now would leave a multibillion dollar hole in the MTA finances 3C New York and Trump and Congestion Pricing Long Live the King Trump Likens Himself to Royalty on Truth Social A fondness for regal themes was apparent as Trump applauded his move to kill congestion pricing in New York **Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501c3 nonprofit organization** New York Times February 19 2025 Trump is famous for his love of everything gold and other trappings that connote royalty whether it be large military parades or extravagant inaugural balls But in a post on his social media platform Truth Social on Wednesday Trump went a step further likening himself to a king as he celebrated his move to kill the New York City congestion pricing program CONGESTION PRICING IS DEAD Manhattan and all of New York is SAVED he wrote LONG LIVE THE KING! New York Governor Kathy Hochul explicitly pushed back on the Trump presentation of himself as a monarch We are a nation of laws not ruled by a king Ms Hochul said The MTA has initiated legal proceedings in the Southern District of New York to preserve this critical program We will see you in court 4 Germany and the AfD renunciation of Never Again in regard to Nazism **RAWSEP Excerpt** From Clean Energy Wire February 17 2025 The far-right Alternative for Germany AfD the second strongest polling party ahead of Germany's snap elections on February 23 2025 is the only major party to outright reject the scientific consensus behind human induced climate change The AfD will likely remain in opposition for the coming term yet the party's growing strength has influenced the electoral campaign through agenda setting While some of their anti climate protection messages have found support in the wider population their fundamental criticism of climate action relies on exaggerated claims and leaves nuance out of complicated policy decisions Still a growing support base means other mainstream parties might turn quieter on their climate ambition **RAWSEP View** The German right wing neo Nazi AfD Party denies that climate change is human caused and therefore is not involved in helping slow climate change nor in curbing air pollution The German AfD neo Nazi party denies that Nazis ever existed so the AfD concludes that there are no Nazis to renounce or denounce From the article headline for a German Satirist View of the AfD position The fear across democracies is that the AfD Party may come in second in German Snap Elections on February 23 2025 In Germany a Far Right Comeback The Far Right is Rising in the Land of Never Again **Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501c3 nonprofit organization** New York Times February 20 2025 Böhmermann is a German satirist and a comedian Germany is a world champion at confronting its own history Through memorial after memorial the country has attempted to atone for its atrocities during the Holocaust and World War II Never again has become a nationwide slogan In the Opinion Video above the satirist Jan Böhmermann who resembles a German John Oliver argues that the German repeated and hollow attempts to remember away its Nazi past



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## European leaders meet for emergency summit as UK calls for continent to 'step up' defence - Europe live

Keir Starmer has called for European powers to play their 'full part' when it comes to the defence of the sovereignty of Ukraine



French president Emmanuel Macron welcomes German chancellor Olaf Scholz as he arrives for a meeting with European leaders on Ukraine and European security at the Élysée Palace in Paris. Photograph: Abdul Saboor/Reuters

have contributed to the rise of the far right Alternative for Germany Party because the never again slogan can be evaded by is applying it only to the German population in general and not to ones own parents and grandparents even if those individuals acted as part of the German Nazi past Germany is holding federal elections this month and the threat of a fascist resurgence is knocking on the German door The AfD is possibly projected to become the second largest party in the German parliament [RAWSEP View](#) Other news coverage of the Never Again efforts in Germany is not as cynical as this satirical view The CDU Party the SDP Party and the Green Party in Germany are not neo Nazi parties 5A Ukraine As Trump Turns Toward Russia and Against Ukraine Republicans Are Mum Congressional Republicans have mostly tempered their criticism or deferred to Trump as he topples what were once their GOP core foreign policy principles [Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501c3 nonprofit organization](#) New York Times February 19 2025 As Trump makes an abrupt pivot toward Russia upending generations of American foreign policy he is also defying members of his own party in Congress many of whom have spent their careers arguing for a hawkish stance against Moscow and strong backing for allies in Europe facing its most immediate threats But the response from Republicans on Capitol Hill has been muted in some cases to the point of silence There has been little GOP pushback on the Trump efforts to draw closer to Putin of Russia or blame Ukraine as he seeks to bring a quick end to the war that began when Russia invaded the country Senator Lindsey Graham Republican of South Carolina once called Putin a thug and a war criminal saying he needs to be dealt with But shortly after Trump announced that Putin had extended an invitation for Trump to travel to Moscow Graham changed his tune substantially I do not care if they meet Putin in Cleveland 5B Ukraine Trump Flips the Script on the Ukraine War Blaming Zelensky Not Putin As he seeks to negotiate a peace deal with Moscow Trump is rewriting the history of the Russian invasion of its neighbor [Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501c3 nonprofit organization](#) New York Times February 19 2025 When Russian forces crashed over the borders into Ukraine in 2022 determined to wipe it off the map as an independent state the United States rushed to aid the beleaguered nation and cast its president Volodymyr Zelensky as a hero of resistance Three years almost to the day later Trump is rewriting the history of the Russian invasion of its smaller neighbor Ukraine in this version is not a victim but a villain And Zelensky is not a latter day Winston Churchill but a dictator without elections who somehow started the war himself and conned America into helping the Trump revisionism sets the stage for a geopolitical about face unlike any in generations as Trump embarks on negotiations with Russia that Ukraine fears could come at its own expense By vilifying Zelensky and shifting blame for the war from Moscow to Kyiv Trump seems to be laying a predicate for withdrawing support for an ally under attack When Russia mounted its full scale invasion in 2022 Trump offered little sympathy or support for Ukraine even as blue and yellow flags went up around the United States in solidarity In the days leading up to the attack in fact Trump praised Putin is a genius move in putting pressure on Ukraine In the years since he has repeatedly questioned The Biden decision to devote so much American money to defending Ukraine In response to the Trump pressure House Republicans blocked a new aid request for months undercutting Ukrainian forces and giving Russian invaders time to regroup and stabilize their positions Only after GOP allies and foreign dignitaries lobbied him to relent did he permit House Republicans to let the aid go through Trump goes further by questioning whether Ukraine is legitimately the injured party Several times in recent days he has expressed great distress over how many people have been killed and how much of the country has been destroyed Yet in doing so he points to Zelensky rather than Putin 6A Russia and the United States and Britain With The Trump Prostration to Putin Expect a More Dangerous World [Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501c3 nonprofit organization](#) New York Times February 19 2025 Trump




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 Rep. Christian Phelps is at Wisconsin State Capitol.  
33m · Madison, WI · 🌐

Thank you, @repmarkpocan, for stopping by my office this morning to discuss the devastating Trump/Musk federal funding cuts and for sharing stories--about the impact in Wisconsin and about how we fight back--with the press in Madison today.

See you in Chippewa Falls on Friday!



is doing monumental damage to the post World War II order that is the wellspring of American global leadership and affluence He is making the world more dangerous He is siding with an alleged war criminal Putin of Russia and poisoning relations with longtime US allies We have Trump and his oligarchy of ignorant shoe shiners vandalizing the network of organizations agreements and values largely put in place by America since the Second World War which have given most of us including America on the whole an extraordinary degree of peace and prosperity This tough language is a reflection of the distress in Europe from a lifelong Americanophile and now as Lord Patten of Barnes a model of British dignity and restraint Where are the American values that I used to admire? I wish I knew what to tell him But this is a humiliating month to be an American When I was a young reporter we referred to countries like Poland and Romania as Soviet satellites now Trump is doing the bidding of Putin and seems determined to put the United States in the Russian orbit Trump administration officials cozied up to Russian officials in Riyadh Saudi Arabia this week over a lot of jokes as one of the Russians put it The two sides discussed Ukraine and thus the future of Europe while excluding both the Ukrainians and the Europeans There is talk of adopting the position of Russia on Ukraine and dropping sanctions against Moscow This would be grotesque When Trump interacts with Putin Trump has been all give the Trump approach to international relations buttresses Russia in other ways His demands for territory from Panama Greenland and Canada reinforce the Russian position that superpowers can grab whatever they want Trump is making Putin a winner If Trump continues to back Russia and Europe fails to step up then threats to European security will grow immensely Putin will get braver meaning more war in Ukraine Moldova Georgia and beyond The danger goes beyond Europe Perhaps the greatest international relations nightmare in the coming years would be a war between the United States and China beginning near Taiwan or in the South China Sea President Joe Biden deterred Chinese aggression by working closely with allies in Asia and making it obvious that Russia was paying a steep price for its invasion of Ukraine If Trump instead lets Russia win and also frays relations with our allies then China is more likely to move on Taiwan What awful times Patten told me The post World War II era has been a remarkable historical epoch of eight decades of prosperity and progress But now as the British foreign secretary remarked in August 1914 the lamps are going out all over Europe and we must prepare for a more dangerous world 6B Russia and the United States Sanctions Against Russia We explain what Trump may do with them **Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501c3 nonprofit organization** New York Times February 20 2025 Trump wants to end the war in Ukraine quickly This week he falsely accused Ukraine of starting the war and made important concessions to Russia One consistent demand from Russia is that the United States and other countries lift sanctions Washington led an international campaign for tough economic penalties after Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022 Dozens of countries have punished Russian banks businesses and oligarchs They froze \$300 billion of Russian assets barred it from much of the global financial system and restricted what it could buy and sell The Russian economy is stagnating and inflation has spiraled Many products and parts are unavailable More than a thousand foreign companies have limited their operations in Russia Now Russia is pitching itself as a place where American companies can make money Trump could offer to lift sanctions to entice Putin to agree to a deal But he has less leverage if he acts alone Russian frozen assets are held by several countries Two thirds are in Europe and several leaders say the money should pay for the Ukraine reconstruction The European Union previously the largest trading partner of Russia could also keep its ban on most trade and fuel sales Trump suggested this week that Russia could keep territory it captured and he said Ukraine should not join NATO two key Russian demands Its biggest remaining one is about sanctions Trump may drop sanctions anyway



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See more here at yesterday's FORWARD FRIDAYS SPECIAL EDITION ON THE BUDGET PROCESS:

<http://tinyurl.com/FFFebruary14>

● Every two years the Wisconsin legislature passes a biennial (two-year) state budget—this occurs in the odd year of the legislative session (2019, 2021, 2023, 2025). Fun fact: in Wisconsin we must balance the budget.

● The budget process begins in the “even year” (2020, 2022, 2024) with the governor gathering input from state agencies and stakeholders. Lawmakers (that’s me!) also spend the “even year” gathering input from stakeholders—with a lot of input from constituents—and then present funding proposals to the governor.

I met with Governor Evers in December to present my ideas and concerns on behalf of my constituents and my district, and look forward to the state budget he proposes at his “2025 Budget Address” on February 18th. This address takes place in the State Assembly—just like the State of the State—and is presented in the form of a bill.

The next morning (usually) large printed books of information land on our desks at the Capitol, and the process is off and running across the state through an eventual vote in both the state Senate and state Assembly in (usually) June.

● Wisconsinites will have the opportunity to participate in various types of listening sessions across the state between February 19th and the final budget vote. You can also call and email your representatives anytime with your input.

● The final version of the bill comes from the Joint Finance Committee (JFC). JFC (which is currently composed of 12 Republicans and 4 Democrats) spends months deliberating the final version of the bill, and sends it to the Assembly and Senate for (possible) amendments and final passage (final vote).

If the Senate and Assembly pass a budget bill (it must be the same in both houses), the bill is sent to Governor Evers’ desk where he can sign the budget as-is, veto the budget in its entirety, or utilize his partial veto power and then sign the budget. If a budget is not passed by July 1st, the state continues to operate under the biennial budget from the previous session.

Once a budget is signed by the governor, the final state budget goes into effect starting the 1st of July.

● And...that’s how it usually happens.