

Episode 57DFP March 19 2025 What the world from South Africa onward thinks of Trump America now

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1 Wisconsin and South Africa and the Wisconsin Supreme Court Race **RAWSEP View** A South African native wants to be immune from conflict of interest rules in Wisconsin which prohibit a car manufacturer from also functioning as a car dealership in Wisconsin From the article Headline As Musk pours millions into Wisconsin Supreme Court race Tesla files case that could reach justices Tesla is suing Wisconsin over a state decision that blocked it from opening dealerships **RAWSEP View** With Tesla vehicles losing popularity and sales this lawsuit may become increasingly desperately important to Musk Every day in Washington we are seeing the repercussions of billionaires like Elon Musk buying our elections Our rights freedoms and way of life are under threat every minute But it is not just in Washington Right now Elon Musk and his right wing allies are meddling in the United States most watched election this year the Wisconsin Supreme Court They have already spent millions in this race to buy this seat and take control of the court so they can roll back reproductive rights voting rights and the freedoms all Wisconsinites rely on Susan Crawford will always stand on the right side of justice Her Musk backed opponent Brad Schimel on the other hand has a history of undermining justice every step he takes as the state attorney general his hand picked team pushed a legal strategy to end Roe and he wasted millions in taxpayer dollars trying to attack the Affordable Care Act Brad Schimel only has loyalty to right wing MAGA billionaires That is why they are trying to buy him this seat **Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501c3 nonprofit organization** Wisconsin Public Radio March 3 2025 Last year the state of Wisconsin denied the Tesla request for dealer licenses saying the company did not qualify for an exemption to a state law prohibiting manufacturers from owning dealerships The company had hoped to convert its galleries in Madison and Milwaukee into dealerships and had additional plans for dealerships in Glendale and the Fox Cities In January Tesla filed a petition for a judicial review in Outagamie County Circuit Court seeking to overturn the decision A hearing is scheduled for later in March 2025 on whether the case should remain in Outagamie County or transfer to either Dane or Milwaukee County **RAWSEP View** Elon Musk is interfering in the Wisconsin Supreme Court Race by contributing millions to the campaign of right wing candidate Brad Schimel probably to influence Schimel to rule in favor of Musk when a Musk appeal of the

Wisconsin block of Musk selling Teslas in Wisconsin may come to the Wisconsin Supreme Court and Musk may also be interfering in the Wisconsin Supreme Court Race as a test case for Musk to see how far he can go in influencing individual state politics through a right wing potential judge while also interfering in United States federal politics and interfering in the politics of other nations around the world most notably in February 2025 attempting to elevate a Neo Nazi party in Germany Susan Crawford has pointed out this Wisconsin Musk interference in ads for her own liberal candidacy Susan Crawford a Liberal has received money from perennial liberal donor George Soros and the Governor of Illinois JB Pritzker in her campaign for Wisconsin Supreme Court Justice The election is April 1 2025 and notably current Minnesota Governor and former 2024 Democratic Vice Presidential candidate Tim Walz is campaigning for Susan Crawford in March 2025 [RAWSEP View](#) Crawford ties Schimel to Musk money in the Wisconsin Supreme Court race [Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501c3 nonprofit organization](#) The Hill March 19 2025 The Musk super PAC America PAC has spent close to \$66 million in support of Schimel and to oppose Crawford according to the latest campaign finance filing available Wednesday morning Building American Future a group that has received funding from the tech billionaire Musk in the past is spending \$45 million so far in the race Musk is not the only major player investing in the race Republicans note Democratic donors like George Soros and Illinois Gov JB Pritzker have also spent heavily

Wisconsin and South Africa and the Wisconsin Supreme Court Race Tim Walz Attacks Musk With Language From the Trump Playbook [Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501c3 nonprofit organization](#) The Guardian March 19 2025 The Minnesota governor derided Elon Musk a naturalized United States citizen as a South African nepo baby Governor Tim Walz of Minnesota spoke to Democrats in Eau Claire Wisconsin ahead of a high profile State Supreme Court election set for April 1 2025 When he took the stage in downtown Eau Claire Wisconsin on Tuesday night to rev up Democrats ahead of a critical State Supreme Court race Governor Tim Walz of Minnesota said he did not think name calling would help things Then he called Musk later a South African nepo baby with the power to cut government programs The crowd roared Walz who was the Democratic Party nominee for vice president in 2024 is one of several Democrats who have referred to the Musk immigrant background as they ramp up attacks on the powerful role of the billionaire in the Trump administration At times their language casting Musk as a foreign outsider has echoed aspects of Trump xenophobic insults of his political foes although the Trump remarks were typically directed toward elected officials of color not white billionaires Musk was born in South Africa in 1971 moved to Canada in 1989 and then to the United States during college He obtained Canadian citizenship just before moving there and became a naturalized United States citizen in 2002 Walz made his remarks at a town hall style event that coincided with the first day of early voting for a State Supreme Court race in Wisconsin That election which will be held on April 1 2025 pits a liberal candidate against a conservative Trump ally who has drawn more than \$13 million in backing from Musk Wisconsin Democrats have seized on those contributions to cast Musk as the main villain of the election It was at least the second time Walz has tagged Musk with the phrase nepo baby slang for someone who inherited wealth or status The father of Musk was a successful engineer and developer in Pretoria At a town hall event Friday in Des Moines the governor criticized the Musk Department of Government Efficiency for recommending cuts to the Veterans Affairs Department There is nothing conservative about an unelected South African nepo baby firing people at the VA he said Trump has frequently

insulted his political opponents by suggesting they are somehow foreign or different from Americans Musk has referred to his earlier green card status as a gray area Musk later denied that he had worked illegally in the United States Musk has made immigration status a major focus of his political rhetoric frequently deriding illegal immigrants and baselessly suggesting that Democrats are using Social Security to draw immigrants to this country

2 Canada Alberta Calgary and Oregon Dear American and Canadian Friends and Neighbors **RAWSEP View** A Canadian and an American exchange letters emphasizing that individual personal friendships still remain between people of the two nations while under the cloud of Trump actions intended to alienate the Canadian American traditional national friendship **Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501c3 nonprofit organization**

The Guardian The Canadian Press March 19 2025 To the Editor My dear American friends Horrified alarmed and offended by the seesaw of threatened tariffs and the implications for our Canadian industries and businesses and all those workers and their families as well as by the ludicrous suggestion that Canada should become the 51st state of the US! I am more concerned about what is happening to you the American people This government is destroying your country stamping on democracy and threatening your country with a rapid descent into dictatorship unless this man and his cronies in government can be stopped now You know your proud history better than I do But I do know that the US is filled with decent kind talented people My family and I lived for three years in Minnesota where we were treated with boundless hospitality and generosity As an immigrant to Canada from Scotland I have many friends who chose to emigrate to the US and who have thrived and helped to build the US to be the openhearted innovative country that it has been and can be again We will never give up on Canada And it is up to you all of you to fight for your amazing country Thank you A woman from Calgary Alberta To the Editor To my wonderful Canadian neighbors In light of the current political situation I want to take a moment to express that many of us here in the US did not vote for the current president and do not support much of what he says or does It is deeply concerning to see the direction things have taken and I share in the frustration and sadness that so many Americans have chosen this path That said I want to acknowledge and appreciate Canada as a great neighbor and friend Please know that many of us value our relationship with your country and regret any harm caused by the actions or policies of our leadership With respect and gratitude A man from Lake Oswego Oregon To the Editor The Voice of America is silent There is a metaphor for you As Trump menaces us in Canada we have a question for Britain when will you stand up to him?

3 Australia foreign policy The impact of Trump 2 point 0 on Australia is evidence of how American we suddenly are not Our two countries once shared a history fighting together for freedom But does the US like even do that any more? **RAWSEP View** Australians are readjusting their view of the United States in light of recent Trump actions and inaction **Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501c3 nonprofit organization** The Guardian March 18 2025 The prime minister Anthony Albanese finds himself weeks out from an election navigating the capricious behavior of the nuclear armed chaotic who Americans re elected as their president and his Trump Make America Like the Start of the Great Depression Again tariffs policy Steel and aluminium exports will be hit with a 25% tariff Beef may be next Our largest export to the United States turns out to be vaccines and related products and ha ha doom is certain given Annexing Canada is

both an active Trump policy and so insane it was not even suggested in Project 2025 Australian leadership must manage an evolving geopolitical economic reality that most closely resembles a bus driver on an eight day coke bender who has just locked his passengers in the vehicle to joyride through a minefield with a rabbit in his pants Ed Husic called the Trump tariffs against Australia a dog act He was deployed because he is minister for science so the Trump GOP cannot acknowledge he exists Resisting temptation to retaliate with a tariff Albanese described the Trump move as unfriendly Peter Dutton with underdeveloped judgment praised Trump as a big thinker with barely a month and US\$4tn since wiped from US stock valuations ago Beyond the Trump splatterfest of the world economy the overwhelming impact of Trump 2 point 0 on Australians is evidence of how American we suddenly are not Our two countries share a history as outposts of brutal British imperialism and the legacy of the language of colonizers yet at key points in our twinned story our decisions have diverged America received entrepreneurial puritans while Australian criminal class settler colonists banged by the beach America chose revolution from Britain Australia the slow path of reform American structuralized slavery ended only after violent civil war Australian historical exploitation of enslaved people was limited and ended through the efforts of a nascent labor movement if one motivated by racist they take our jobs attitudes of the time The differences were not overwhelming when we were both liberal democratic states fighting together for freedom in the first and second world wars but does America like even do that any more? The new reality dawning in Australia it can no longer rely on the US Rather than the competitive individualism Trump personifies Australian mateship persists as a virtue rooted in deep camaraderie mutual support and egalitarian friendship forged in the recognition on this burning flooding even the baby wombats hate you land you depend on each other or you die So while citizens of this sparser less dramatic country stay enthralled by the many US entertainment products we consume it is the very visibility of American culture to us that affirms our alienation from it The internet may speak American but in the wake of Americans complaining online about healthcare struggling through a mismanaged disaster or mourning another mass shooting Australian pity speaks back in a register between how can you let this happen?! and self satisfied relief Cultural relationships are timely for Australia to consider As Trump forsakes old alliances the world realigns The EU tightens its bonds Canada grows closer to Europe could we? China seeks out new spheres of influence Outer rim figures from the Australian Labor party are suggesting the old Commonwealth relationships are worth re formalizing In the scenario of nations obliged to choose between authoritarian allies do we feel more secure with a peace through trade partner or a peace through rage tweeting and Diet Coke one? At least you know what you do not want baby wombat It is narcissistic and reckless and it is causing us distress And everyone wants it gone before the damage gets worse

4 Europe Coalition of the willing regarding the Russia Ukraine War [RAWSEP View](#) What follows is an overview of the actions of the Coalition of the Willing so far in March 2025 [Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501c3 nonprofit organization](#) From Wikipedia the free encyclopedia The coalition of the willing as it is known is a coalition of nations which have pledged support for Ukraine against Russian aggression announced by United Kingdom Prime Minister Keir Starmer following a summit of 18 world leaders in London The initiative announced during the 2025 London Summit on Ukraine on March 2 2025 aimed to strengthen European support for Ukraine amidst shifting US policy and to establish a framework for a lasting peace settlement to end the Russian invasion of Ukraine or Russia Ukraine War Background Participants at the

March 2 2025 London Summit on Ukraine On March 1 2025 Czech president Petr Pavel made a social media post calling for the formation of a broad coalition of those willing to end the Russian invasion of Ukraine On March 2 2025 Prime Minister of the United Kingdom Keir Starmer hosted the 2025 London Summit on Ukraine with 18 world leaders in order to coordinate support for Ukraine during the Russian invasion of Ukraine Starmer characterized the meeting as addressing a once in a generation moment for European security stating that the time had come for decisive action rather than continued deliberation The announcement came two days after a meeting between President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky and Trump with JD Vance at the White House on 28 February 2025 On March 11 2025 security officials from around 30 countries met in Paris on Tuesday for talks on the creation of an international security force for Ukraine to maintain peace should a ceasefire come into effect On March 15 2025 Starmer held a virtual meeting with leaders from European and Commonwealth nations to assemble a coalition of the willing to consider options for a reassurance force to be deployed within Ukraine to deter renewed Russian attacks against the country should a ceasefire be agreed The meeting gathered the leaders of 26 nations including several European nations Ukraine Turkey Canada Australia New Zealand as well as representatives from the European Commission and NATO and was addressed by the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom Keir Starmer as well as French president Emmanuel Macron Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelenskyy and NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte On March 17 2025 a spokesman of the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom stated the coalition was expected growing to more than 30 countries when military chiefs from the willing nations would be meeting on March 20 2025 to discuss the next operational phase in protecting Ukraine as part of a peacekeeping force if a deal can be agreed with Russia The spokesman added the contribution capabilities will vary but this will be a significant force with a significant number of countries providing troops and a larger group of countries contributing in other ways

List of countries and organizations The group consists largely of European and Commonwealth countries The countries that joined the London summit and expressed commitment to providing continued aid for Ukraine were 1 Canada 2 Czechia 3 Denmark 4 Estonia 5 Finland 6 France 7 Germany 8 Italy 9 Netherlands 10 Norway 11 Poland 12 Romania 13 Spain 14 Sweden 15 Japan 16 United Kingdom Representatives for the following were also present at the London summit 17 European Union 18 NATO 19 Turkey Leaders of the following countries have stated that they are also open to considering sending peacekeeping forces to Ukraine 20 Australia 21 Belgium 22 New Zealand

Four point plan In a press conference that followed the London summit Starmer outlined four key components of the approach of the coalition

- 1 Commitment to maintaining the flow of military aid to Ukraine while increasing economic pressure on Russia through sanctions and other measures
- 2 Affirming that any lasting peace agreement must ensure the sovereignty and security of Ukraine with Ukraine being present at all peace negotiations
- 3 Pledging to enhance the defensive military capabilities of Ukraine following any peace deal to deter potential future invasions
- 4 Development of a coalition of the willing consisting of multiple nations prepared to defend the terms of any peace agreement and guarantee the security of Ukraine afterward

Commitments As part of the announcement Starmer committed £16 billion \$2 billion in UK export finances to purchase more than 5000 air defense missiles for Ukraine The missiles will be manufactured in Belfast in Northern Ireland This complemented a previously announced £22 billion loan for military aid to Ukraine backed by frozen Russian assets Starmer emphasized that European nations would need to take primary responsibility for the initiative and do the heavy lifting and that the agreement would require US backing and Russian involvement He indicated that the United Kingdom would back its

security commitments with boots on the ground and planes in the air regarding the possibility of UK and EU direct military presence in Ukraine to carry out a peace enforcement operation President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen emphasized the urgent need to re arm Europe to support such security guarantees after a long time of underinvestment She suggested that the European Union might need to ease its fiscal rules regarding national debt to facilitate increased defense spending by member states Secretary General of NATO Mark Rutte echoed this sentiment noting that the meeting demonstrated European nations stepping up to ensure Ukraine has the resources necessary to stay in the fight as long as it has to continue Right after the meeting the president of Finland Alexander Stubb said that Norway and Finland are working in support of the drafting of the UK France Ukraine peace plan In addition he said that the role of the countries that are neighbors of Russia will be different from providing peacekeeping troops

5 United Kingdom Britain France and Germany are closing ranks to bolster Nato as the unreliable US president marches to his own drum **RAWSEP View** European leaders recognize the unreliability of Trump while planning their own defense against Russian aggression **Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501c3 nonprofit organization** The Guardian March 20 2025 An Atlantic alliance without the United State? Absolutely nothing about the Trump latest phone call with Putin on Tuesday has changed that The scramble of Europe to respond to the Trump return to power was driven initially by the urgency of maintaining support for Ukraine Most of the focus was diplomatic keeping US military aid and intelligence flowing shoring up damaged channels between Washington and Kyiv engaging quietly with both Trump and Volodymyr Zelenskyy to both encourage and deter while moving very publicly to take up more of the security burden Aiding and arming Ukraine remains far and away the first item on the agenda of Europe as well as its most immediate goal Hugging the US as close as possible continues to be fundamental whatever Trump critics may wish There is no disputing that Trump caught the Europeans within Nato napping For now American power remains both indispensable and unreliable A more lasting and more Europe heavy reconfiguration of the western alliance is beginning to take shape For now most of what is being planned is either improvised from existing resources or aspirational A new Atlantic alliance can be discerned A kind of Nato minus supported by most of Europe Britain included potentially plus Canada and with the role of the US uncertain Nato remains the basic framework even if Trump decides to withdraw This adaptive effort is being shaped by an improbable trio a conservative German chancellor who spurns previous orthodoxy a centrist French president who has just destroyed his own power base and a UK prime minister equipped with the smallest British army since the Napoleonic wars The change was reinforced by the Trump 90 minute phone conversation with Putin on Tuesday Any thought that Trump would somehow persuade Putin to reverse his policy on Ukraine or even that Trump wanted to was always a fantasy Everything Putin has ever said about Ukraine attests that he regards it as Russian land The conditions he put to Trump amount to a demand to leave Ukraine defenseless against Russian assault and annexation That assault has continued unabated once again this week This puts the Trump claims as a peacemaker on the spot but the embarrassment though useful to those trying to rein him in is likely to be only temporary The strategic wish is to withdraw US military and financial support for Ukraine preferably amid something he can describe as a peace settlement that only his genius could have engineered But his longer term approach to Europe is simply an extension of this impatience towards Ukraine His aim is to withdraw US support for European defense more generally The most significant

thing that has happened in Europe this week therefore was not the Trump Putin phone call. It was the vote by the Bundestag to loosen the constitutionally protected strict financial borrowing rules of Germany and at the same time to authorize a €500bn fund to boost economic growth infrastructure projects and military spending. If Europe wants to carry its own defense burden as it now claims it has to fire up its own defense industries to scale. More than anything else that means firing up the German defense industry. This is not an overnight process but it can now start. The vote was a triumph for the probable new German chancellor Friedrich Merz who pushed it through the departing Bundestag on its final day. But it was also a genuine turn in the road for postwar Germany. Burdened by its history Germany has consistently avoided large scale borrowing and militarization. Those taboos have now been busted under the pressure of economic stagnation plus the threat from Russia. The internal consequences for 21st century Germany will be major assuming that the upper house of parliament endorses the changes this week. It would be mistaken to think the issue is now settled. Both the far right and far left significantly boosted in the recent German general election voted against the Merz plans. Both will continue to see them as betrayals. If inflation rises the Merz grip will face fierce challenges. But the consequences for Europe as a whole are likely to be equally powerful. Since the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian empire in 1918 Germany has been the most important western European state where foreign policy looks reflexively towards Russia. Earlier in this century under Gerhard Schröder and Angela Merkel those links were always carefully protected. More recently Putin has ensured that German policy first under Olaf Scholz and now under Merz has become more hostile. Germany is still the necessary nation for any Europe wide new political initiative. But now almost at a stroke the Bundestag vote has removed the longstanding excuse behind which some European states have been content to hide over the issue of the inadequate defense investment of Europe. The era of inward turned European denial about Russia and about defense spending has ended and the fresh air of truth is breezing through windows that were once firmly sealed. This is a healthy and overdue moment not least because the danger is real but also because it gives this continent a more unifying purpose than it has had since the cold war. But there can be no disputing the risks. European history is full of terrifying examples of international alliances that have not survived contact with a determined enemy. One lesson of the 2020s is that things many people had assumed had been consigned to history among them epidemics nationalism territorial land grabs and charismatic tyrants have returned in force. Today confronted with an aggressive tyranny and faced with an isolationist US the nation states of Europe with Canada are attempting to uphold the moral and political recasting of the world that took place after 1945. There are echoes here of the conflicts that began in 1914 and again in 1939. Then too Europe found itself in wars which included major Canadian involvement from which an isolationist US stood aside. In both cases the US proved the essential nation to victory and the postwar order. Today the US marches to an unreliable drum.

6 Europe Zelenskyy to debrief EU leaders on the Trump call before military chiefs head to London. European leaders are gathering in Brussels this morning to discuss Ukraine defense and the Middle East. **RAWSEP View** A unified Europe is meeting to plan its own defense without including the United States in their alliance against Russian aggression. **Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501c3 nonprofit organization**. The Guardian March 20 2025. Russian air attacks on Ukraine continue with two reported dead and dozens injured. EU summit about finalizing first stage of perhaps most important European project in decades. Tusk the leader of Poland says That was Macron I will call him back. Zelenskyy briefs journalists on fruitful

perhaps most fruitful we had conversation with Trump Europe rallies to support Ukraine President Zelensky and first lady Zelenska in Finland on Wednesday EU leaders arrive for summit on Ukraine and EU defense EU summit about finalizing first stage of perhaps most important European project in decades says Polish prime minister Donald Tusk spoke with reporters in Warsaw early in the morning before leaving for Brussels saying the EU summit will be about finalizing the first stage of perhaps the most important European project in the last decades making Europe safe armed and united against the Russian threat You may remember how oftentimes we were alone in warning other European partners against the Russian threat and now are about to see Europe unite around the very same problem that often saw Poland stand alone he said Tusk accused Alexander Lukashenko and Putin of encouraging irregular migration to put pressure on the EU external borders waging a de facto war against Poland Russian air attacks on Ukraine continue with two reported dead and dozens injured Latvian prime minister Evika Siliņa said on arrival that Ukraine remains our top priority as she wanted to hear more from the European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen on the plans of the executive for rearming Europe She said Latvia was supporting the EU intention to boost the defense preparedness of the bloc but said it was just one first step She also spoke about the need to take away bureaucratic burden away from companies to help member states arm faster to face the growing Russian threat Siliņa also commented on the Volodymyr Zelenskyy phone call with Trump saying that she thought it was going well and they have negotiated very well She also called out some European countries for not doing their homework on defense spending as they continue to spend below the Nato 2% target Dick Schoof is one of the first European leaders to arrive at the European Council summit In a very extensive Q&A with the Dutch media he was mostly asked about the defense spending and funding issues as well as whether he trusts Putin on any future ceasefire He said the Russian president has shown his intentions with the war on Ukraine and stressed the need for very firm peace agreement that could be enforced He also rejected the Russian demand that Europe stop offering military aid to Ukraine saying it was not an option and pointing to on going talks between Europe the UK Canada and Turkey about a broader role they can play in Ukraine Asked again about the funding element of the package in English he said that the Netherlands was supporting EU proposals and remained constructive but continued to stress that sustainable debt is important which is why it keeps opposing Eurobonds He also hinted at the Dutch interest in direct investment in the Ukrainian defense industry to use its capacity and speed up the ammunition production in Ukraine News from Ukraine reported 171 Russian drone attacks overnight of which its air defense systems shot 71 down and 63 were downed by electronic jamming systems or were lost AFP said Russian attacks reportedly killed two people in Sumy and Kharkiv regions with several others wounded after attacks in the border regions A separate attack in the city of Kropyvnytskyi wounded 10 including four children Their talks are likely to go into late evening but our attention will shift to Britain in late afternoon as UK prime minister Keir Starmer hosts over 30 army chiefs and planners to discuss his plans for the coalition of the willing We should hear from him at some point too but in a show of just how serious he is about defense he made a rare visit to a nuclear armed submarine HMS Vanguard a first such visit by a serving prime minister in more than a decade But his coalition faces a challenge even before it came into existence as Russian president Putin has made clear he would not accept western military aid flowing to Ukraine and Nato forces on Ukrainian soil under any peace settlement Despite this there are no signs that his words in any way affected the continuing planning Ultimately that is what peace through strength is meant to be about

7 Germany Friedrich Merz and German politics is reinventing itself at a dizzying pace The new coalition in Germany Unleashing the radical center Editorial A groundbreaking vote by outgoing MPs has given the chancellor elect Friedrich Merz the chance to renew mainstream politics [RAWSEP View](#) The debt brake has been lifted in Germany to allow that nation to build up its military in defense of Ukraine and of Europe [Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501c3 nonprofit organization](#) The Guardian March 19 2025 The first grand coalition government in German postwar history was formed in 1966 to address an unexpected economic downturn amid concerns over a nascent neo Nazi far right Nearly six decades later as the Christian Democratic Union CDU and the Social Democratic party SPD prepare to join forces across the right left divide for the fifth time following the February snap election the circumstances are superficially similar The scale of the challenges however and the sense of jeopardy are of a different order As geopolitical events have undermined its trade-led business model the German economy has been undergoing the most prolonged period of stagnation since the second world war Not unrelatedly the extreme right Alternative für Deutschland AfD party elements of which are judged a threat to the democratic constitutional order by security services has risen in the polls to become the second biggest party in the most powerful member state in the EU At the same time a Putin sympathetic Trump is dismantling the transatlantic security guarantees on which Germany has relied in the postwar era On Tuesday at the behest of the chancellor elect Friedrich Merz the outgoing Bundestag voted to change the German Basic Law to allow historic levels of public investment in defense national infrastructure and the climate transition The so called debt brake a constitutional restriction on borrowing that had come to symbolize German fiscal conservatism is being unceremoniously sidelined Merz is a former investment banker and avowed economic liberal His welcome conversion to the case for a proactive state and a new leadership role for Germany in bolstering European security has been one of the more eye popping moments in recent political history The scale of investment licensed by the Bundestag vote will need to be rubber stamped by the upper house of parliament on Friday But shares in defense companies and manufacturing giants such as Volkswagen are already up alleviating fears of deindustrialization that were undermining national morale and fueling the rise of the AfD For both the CDU of Merz and the SPD this paradigm shift represents a bold and necessary leap into uncharted territory In recent years coalitions across the political divide have delivered stability but sometimes an impression of paralysis As unhappy sidekicks of Angela Merkel in the 2010s the SPD lost a sense of distinct identity and purpose while blue collar voters drifted to the xenophobic far right in large numbers The Berlin insistent advocacy of a fiscal orthodoxy unfit for the times contributed to a Europe wide crisis of the political center manifested in the rise of rightwing populism across the continent Liberated by the groundbreaking vote this week the Merz grand coalition is set to break that mold

8 Ukraine war briefing Trump wants Zaporizhzhia power plant for US White House has moved beyond minerals deal Zelenskyy expects ceasefire deal to cover civilian as well as energy infrastructure What we know on day one thousand one hundred twenty one [RAWSEP View](#) Trump is focused on a deal securing real estate from Ukraine rather than protecting European freedom from authoritarianism Musk is likely focused on his Starlink company and its profits threatened by the desire of European satellite operators to replace Starlink with their own system for the EU [Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501c3 nonprofit organization](#) The Guardian March 19 2025 Trump told Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Wednesday that the US could own and

run Ukrainian nuclear power plants as part of a ceasefire. The Ukrainian president said following their call that we talked only about one power plant which is under Russian occupation referring to Zaporizhzhia the largest nuclear power station in Europe. The White House said it had moved beyond the idea of taking possession of the mineral wealth of Ukraine as part of negotiations. Kyiv was ready to pause attacks on the energy network and infrastructure of Russia. Zelenskyy said Zelenskyy indicated he did not yet consider a ceasefire to be in place instead saying it could be established quickly and his team would present the Americans with a list of the kind of facilities it should include. Zelenskyy also indicated he expects the ceasefire to apply to civilian infrastructure as well as energy facilities. The Zelenskyy call with Trump came a day after Putin agreed to halt similar strikes on Ukraine but Russia immediately went back on the attack with drones and missiles. The Ukrainian president remained skeptical of the Putin goodwill and intentions after the defense ministry of Ukraine said on Wednesday that an overnight barrage of Russian missiles and drones killed one person and damaged two hospitals. The national railway service said railway energy infrastructure in the central Dnipropetrovsk region was hit. Such actions put the Putin words about ceasing attacks at odds with reality. Zelenskyy said A major Russian oil pipeline station continued to burn at Kavkazskaya in the Krasnodar region of Russia after a successful Ukrainian drone strike. Authorities in the region said a total of 406 firefighters and 157 pieces of equipment had been sent. European leaders reacted skeptically to the Trump Putin limited ceasefire idea saying it showed the Russian president was not serious about seeking a peaceful end to the three year old conflict. The Putin sweeping demands include leaving the Ukraine military weakened and vulnerable with no western arms or intelligence and a depleted army. The foreign policy chief of the EU Kaja Kallas said It is clear that Russia does not really want to make any kind of concessions adding along with other leaders that Kremlin demands to stop arming Kyiv could not be accepted. Zelenskyy said on Wednesday that Ukraine had received more F 16 fighter jets. Several F 16s have flown to Ukraine and Ukraine received its first F 16s in 2024. European Union Leader Kallas said she would present a proposal to European leaders gathering in Brussels on Thursday to provide Ukraine with two million rounds of large caliber artillery ammunition. The EU executive has meanwhile launched a push to buy more weapons in the bloc and from allied countries rather than from the US. The UK US and Turkey will be excluded from defense contracts funded by a €150bn £125bn EU loans programme unless they sign a security and defense partnership agreement with the EU. The €150bn loans scheme will be open to EU member states as part of a massive surge in defense spending but 65% of the costs of equipment funded must come from suppliers in the EU Norway or Ukraine. The rest could be spent in non EU countries with a security agreement. The EU should fund access of Ukraine to satellite services from EU based commercial providers the European Commission said in its white paper on the future of European defense published on Wednesday. The military of Ukraine has been heavily dependent on the Musk Starlink but there have been veiled threats it could be cut off unless Ukraine accepts Trump dictated peace terms. European satellite operators are in talks with the EU as they have been asked if they can step in and replace Starlink. This will help Ukraine to enhance its resilience by diversifying its sources of space based services the paper said.

9 Russian Public Is Ready to End War but Skeptical of Concessions Analysis Finds. There is little appetite in Ukraine and Russia for major concessions according to an analysis by a US firm of online posts. But a minority of Russians want to keep fighting until the president of Ukraine is overthrown. Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501c3 nonprofit organization. The New York Times March 20 2025. An analysis made this week of

Russian attitudes toward a possible cease fire with Ukraine suggests that the Russian public is ready to end the war but skeptical of any concessions Moscow may have to make. Combined with new polling in Ukraine the analysis by a Massachusetts based company Filter Labs shows how difficult selling the terms of a US brokered peace settlement will be to both the Russian and Ukrainian public. While the two countries are war weary there is little appetite for major concessions to either Ukraine or Russia war aims such as the Russian demands for territorial concessions or the desire of Ukraine to integrate with the West. As with all things Ukraine Russia related the picture is complicated though from the borderlands to the big cities one through line exists. Russians feel it is time to end the war but on Russian terms the company found in its analysis. In a phone call with Trump on Wednesday Zelensky agreed to pause attacks on energy targets as long as Russia did the same. The Trump administration sees the limited agreement as a step to a broader cease fire. Filter Labs which scrapes social media and internet posts to measure public sentiment in Russia and other parts of the world has been analyzing the shifts in Russian attitudes toward the war since the Putin full scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. The new analysis written on Wednesday focused on internet posts in recent days from the two largest cities in Russia Moscow and St Petersburg and Russian regions that border Ukraine. The public there reacting negatively to the news that the United States had resumed intelligence sharing and arms sales to Ukraine. While a month ago sentiment in Russia toward Trump was rising recent commentators were more skeptical. You cannot trust the Americans including Trump one Russian wrote in a Telegram post that was reviewed by Filter Labs. Under the talk of peace they have already resumed arms supplies. Their words are a complete deception. We are winning and we do not need any truces. A minority of Russians appear to want to keep fighting until Zelensky is overthrown. Why do we need a truce if we are crushing the Ukrainian Armed Forces on all fronts? one person wrote on Telegram. So that during this time the enemy can lick its wounds and strike with renewed vigor? Only the capitulation of Kyiv will satisfy us! Polling in Ukraine has also shown skepticism about ceding territory or making large concessions to Moscow. Russia has demanded that Ukraine withdraw its forces from the Ukrainian provinces that Moscow annexed after its invasion Donetsk Luhansk Kherson and Zaporizhzhia. The annexation was broadly denounced at the time as illegitimate by the West. A poll conducted in late February and early March by the Razumkov Center a research institute in Kyiv the Ukrainian capital found that 78 percent of respondents opposed the withdrawal of forces from the contested regions. An even larger majority opposed recognizing the illegal Russian annexation. Only a small minority 8 percent favored withdrawal from the regions the poll found. The survey also showed a strong majority were against lifting Western sanctions on Moscow. Opinions on whether Ukraine should become a neutral state a key demand of the Russians were more divided with 56 percent opposing neutrality and 22 percent supporting it.