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Geopolitics

Trump, Europe and outraged virtue: malaise in imperial supremacism

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Newly elected United States President Donald Trump has set the tone with some startling foreign policy statements: annexation of the Panama Canal, outright colonisation of Greenland and, for Canada, publication on his social network of a map of North America entirely covered in the Star-Spangled Banner. As if inspired by Netanyahu brandishing the map of a single great Israel before the UN General Assembly, here is Trump, season 2.

Any real plans?

A strategy of unpredictability and generalised threat? Symptoms of the senescence of an authoritarian old man dreaming himself into the master of an empire? We can always speculate on the motives behind such provocations. Whatever his ultimate intentions, this outburst reveals a number of familiar motifs. The first is virilist aggression, which has become a key marker of the political identity of the new global far right, from Trump to Duterte to Bolsonism. Another motif is anti-feminism, from the declared anti-feminism of the former South Korean president (Yoon Suk Yol, now deposed) to that of the Vox movement in Spain and the French version of 'anti-wokism'. From this point of view, these outbursts are fully consistent with the signals sent out by Musk to the leaders of the European far right.

They are also a sign of the clear trend towards concentration of American presidential power that has been underway for the past forty years. Trump's posture is now only the most caricatured manifestation of this.

A return to tradition

The argument of 'national security', on which nothing less than the good order and freedom of the world depend, echoes word for word that of American leaders at the end of the Second World War. Anxious to perpetuate the unprecedented deployment of military bases around the world, they were already making 'security' the key to all their justifications: in the name of 'security', the Pacific, rid of the defeated Japanese power, was destined to become 'our lake'; while some 'didn't care what name we chose, as long as we had absolute, uncontested control over our military base requirements'.

The outraged

The best part of this whole affair lies elsewhere. It is due above all to the spectacle offered by the 'European partners', who are in uproar and 'incomprehension' at the contempt shown by their ally, friend and protector, the universal emblem of 'our Western values'. We learn that France and Germany were 'categorical': 'Borders must not be moved by force'. For German Chancellor Scholz, alongside the President of the European Council (António Costa): 'The principle of the inviolability of borders applies to all countries, whether they are in the East or in the West'. 'This principle cannot and must not be undermined' 'The United States must apply the principles of the United Nations' according to a German government spokesman. Finally, French foreign minister Jean-Noël Barrot, said that the EU would not tolerate US military intervention: 'There is no question of the European Union allowing other nations of the world, whoever they may be [...], to attack its sovereign borders'. French government spokeswoman Sophie

Primas denounced 'a form of imperialism'. A sense of values, high principles, ardent indignation: the White House is shaking, that's for sure.

Sinister liars

One small question comes to mind, along with a feeling of nausea: are these the same leaders who applauded and actively contributed to more than a year of Israeli genocide in Palestine, massively armed by the United States of Biden-Harris, and who allowed international law to be trampled underfoot? Who ferociously repressed all forms of solidarity in Germany, France and Great Britain? And denied any principle of sovereignty to Lebanon, which has been abandoned to Zionist murderous madness? And who are allowing war to rage across the Middle East, as if more than thirty years of carnage and abysmal failure were not enough? The same people are now making sordid faces of outraged virtue against the backdrop of the colonial racism they still share. Hypocrisy doesn't kill, and that's their good fortune.

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