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## FRANCE – EUROPE



### Macron won from a precarious place: The middle. Governing from there could be even harder. (UNE)

<https://www.facebook.com/griff.witte>

8-11 minutes

(Adam Taylor, Jason Aldag/The Washington Post)

Centrist Emmanuel Macron has won the French presidency. He defeated Marine Le Pen, the leader of France's far-right National Front, a strongly anti-immigrant populist party. Macron, 39, will now become France's youngest head of state since Napoleon Bonaparte. What Emmanuel Macron's victory means for France and the world (Adam Taylor, Jason Aldag/The Washington Post)

PARIS — In the country that invented the modern notions of political right and left, Emmanuel Macron won the French presidency from perhaps the most precarious place possible: the center.

Now he has to figure out how to govern from there.

Macron's victory on Sunday as a 39-year-old political newcomer who enjoyed no party backing and faced a wave of populist anger was improbable enough.

But the task he began confronting Monday is even more difficult. He must figure out how to translate the

poetry of a campaign built on borrowing the best ideas from either end of the political spectrum into the prose of governing in a way that doesn't alienate everyone.

At stake is not only his presidency and the future of a nation of 67 million, but also mainstream politics across the Western world. By thoroughly defeating far-right leader Marine Le Pen, Macron instantly became a symbol among those in Europe and North America who are seeking a new style of politics that can break the populist fever.

(Reuters)

In his first official appearance since he won the presidency, Emmanuel Macron and outgoing President Francois Hollande commemorated the 72nd year of the Allied victory and the end of World War Two in Europe on May 8. In his first appearance since he won the presidency, Emmanuel Macron and outgoing President Francois Hollande commemorate the 72nd year of the Allied victory (Reuters)

If he fails to govern effectively from the middle, the extremes could soon rise again.

"It's a huge challenge," said Dominique Moïsi, a senior adviser at the Paris-based Institut Montaigne, a think tank that is close to Macron. "He's trying to renew politics, to do it

in a different way. I think he can pull it off. But there's no doubt it will be difficult."

Macron will have little time to figure out his strategy. He's due to be inaugurated Sunday and will barely have the chance to unpack bags at the ElyseePalace before he once again hits the campaign trail.

This time, Macron will be advocating not for himself but for the 577 representatives of his movement seeking seats in National Assembly elections next month.

Their fate and Macron's are intimately linked. Without a parliamentary majority, or something close to it, France's new president will have little chance of enacting his ambitious agenda. A poor showing in next month's vote could doom his young government before it really even starts.

Normally, the parliamentary vote that follows a presidential election in France is considered something of a formality — a chance for voters to reiterate their choice and give the president the legislative backing he needs. But not this year.

After a bruising and fragmented campaign — Macron won less than a quarter of the vote in the first round, and most supporters said they were voting against his opponent rather than for him in the

second round — it's not clear whether voters will want to give him a free hand.

There's also the problem that Macron's movement — En Marche, or Onward — is starting from zero, not having existed the last time France chose its lawmakers.

The party will now have to select its candidates — without overly relying on the entrenched political clique that Macron railed against during his campaign.

"There's a contradiction in Macronism. He wants to renew the way we do politics. But for now those who support him are politicians who have been in the game for a while," said Eddy Fougier, a researcher at the Institute for International Relations and Strategies. "He's trying to make something new out of the old."

Fougier said En Marche candidates would likely end up being a combination of familiar political names, as moderate lawmakers from the traditional center-right and center-left parties defect to Macron, and political newcomers from civil society.

Richard Ferrand, secretary general of En Marche, told journalists on Monday that the party would announce the names of its candidates Thursday. Half will be

women, he said, and half will have never held elected office.

Ferrand now represents the Socialist Party in Parliament, but said he would run this year under Macron's banner.

Macron himself was the economy minister under Socialist President François Hollande. But too many ex-Socialists, Fougier said, would be politically fatal for Macron, who must prove to voters that he's not "the second coming of Hollande."

That was the charge that Le Pen leveled at her opponent throughout the campaign. For months, Macron carefully avoided any association with his deeply unpopular former mentor.

But on Monday it was unavoidable. A raucous celebration among Macron supporters Sunday night — which also served as a pep rally for the European Union — gave way Monday morning to a somber procession on the Champs-Élysées as the nation remembered its war dead on Victory in Europe day.

Macron and Hollande together laid a wreath, with the outgoing president making time to pat Macron on the back and offer an apparently

heartfelt "Bravo" — a sentiment echoed by leaders from around the world, including Russian President Vladimir Putin.

In a message to Macron — who has taken a tough line with Moscow, and whose campaign was the victim of a suspected Russian hacking attack in the campaign's closing hours — Putin urged the president-elect to "overcome mutual distrust" and wished him "strong health."

President Trump congratulated Macron in a phone call Monday, the White House said, and the two agreed to meet at the May 25 NATO gathering in Brussels.

But domestically, the bonhomie of Macron's win was already giving way to the usual bare-knuckled politics.

Le Pen, for one, had barely finished conceding defeat in the presidential race Sunday night when she announced her party would be the "primary force of opposition" to Macron's government. (She did, however, take at least a little time off from politics, shimmying with supporters to the tune of the Village People's "Y.M.C.A.")

The remnants of the Socialists will also be gunning for Macron in the parliamentary vote. So, too, will the center-right Republican party, which was widely expected to win the presidency this year before its candidate, former prime minister François Fillon, stumbled badly. Polls show the party is Macron's closest challenger in the parliamentary vote.

Once lawmakers have been elected, Macron will start pushing the agenda he campaigned on. With anything less than an En Marche majority in the multiparty Parliament, he'll have to opportunistically seek out allies across the aisle to avoid gridlock.

Macron's platform includes elements designed to appeal to either side of the political spectrum: smaller class sizes in public schools and a shift to cleaner energy sources to satisfy the left; sharp reductions in government bureaucracy and a more flexible labor system to appeal to the right.

The latter will be especially important to Macron's success. The president-elect has said that loosening the country's notoriously rigid employment system will be key to unlocking greater economic

growth and ultimately bringing down chronically high levels of joblessness.

Today's WorldView

What's most important from where the world meets Washington

But his push for reform could provoke an early showdown with France's influential labor unions — as Macron knows well from his earlier tangles with the unions as economy minister.

Many observers are betting against the new president's ability to deliver. But Moïsi, the analyst whose think tank is close to Macron, said that especially after the last election, no one should be too quick to count him out.

"He has cards to play: his character, his timing, the fact that the global economy, especially in Europe, is picking up," Moïsi said. "The French are politically ready for sacrifices and reforms as long as there's someone in Elysee Palace with credibility, energy and optimism. There's a dynamic behind him that may carry him through."

Virgile Demoustier contributed to this report.

**The  
New York  
Times**

## Emmanuel Macron Will Take Over as President of France on Sunday (online)

Sewell Chan

5-7 minutes

LONDON — Emmanuel Macron will take office as France's next president on May 14, President François Hollande announced on Monday, a day after Mr. Macron, an independent centrist, defeated Marine Le Pen in a battle for the country's leadership.

Mr. Macron appeared beside Mr. Hollande at a ceremony at the Arc de Triomphe to observe the 72nd anniversary of the end of World War II in Europe. He did not make a statement, but his attention will already have turned to the choice of a prime minister and to the legislative elections of June 11 and 18, when all 577 seats in the National Assembly — the lower, more powerful house of the French Parliament — will be up for grabs.

Expectations could hardly be higher. "Beyond the symbols, the new, optimistic president of this country in depression will have to demonstrate by concrete signs, very quickly, that he received the messages from this extraordinary campaign," Jérôme Fenoglio, the editorial director of Le

Monde, wrote in a front-page editorial.

Mr. Macron's year-old political movement plans to field candidates — a mix of newcomers and more experienced figures — for all of the seats. In the meantime, he is expected to name a prime minister and a cabinet.

But if Mr. Macron's party does not win enough seats, the Assembly could essentially force him to choose another prime minister.

The two mainstream parties — the Socialists and the Republicans — hope to reassert themselves in the legislative elections, as does the far-right National Front, led by Ms. Le Pen. The movement of the far-left presidential candidate Jean-Luc Mélenchon also hopes to do well.

In short, the parliamentary elections could easily be a five-party affair, a reflection of the electorate's fragmentation and a loss of faith in mainstream parties.

Richard Ferrand, the secretary general of Mr. Macron's movement — En Marche!, or Onward! — said at a news conference on Monday that the names of the party's candidates would be announced on Thursday. Half will come from civil

society, and half will be women. He added that members of other parties would be allowed to run under the centrist banner, on the condition that they vote with Mr. Macron's government and sit in the majority group in Parliament.

And En Marche! will soon sound a bit more like a traditional party. Mr. Ferrand said the name would be changed at a congress in mid-July to La République en Marche, or Republic on the Move. Mr. Macron resigned as head of the movement after his election victory, and a temporary president has been appointed, Mr. Ferrand said.

Sylvie Goulard, a centrist member of the European Parliament who supports Mr. Macron, told the CNews channel on Monday that Mr. Macron would go to Berlin for his first trip outside France, but that he might first visit French troops posted abroad.

Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany congratulated Mr. Macron on Monday on his "spectacular" victory. "He carries the hopes of millions of French people, and of many people in Germany and the whole of Europe," Ms. Merkel said at a news conference. "He ran a courageous pro-European

campaign, stands for openness to the world and is committed decisively to a social market economy."

A motorcade carrying Mr. Macron and Mr. Hollande after the ceremony at the Arc de Triomphe. David Ramos/Getty Images

Mr. Hollande has privately complained that he was betrayed by Mr. Macron, his onetime protégé, but he showed no signs of bitterness on Monday.

Mr. Macron resigned as economy minister in August to clear the way for a run for president. In December, Mr. Hollande, whose popularity plummeted during his five-year term, said he would not seek a second term.

"It is true that he followed me for many years, but afterward he freed himself," Mr. Hollande said of Mr. Macron on Monday. "He wanted to propose a project to the French. It is up to him now, strengthened by the experience he has acquired with me, to continue his march. I wish him every success."

President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia joined a chorus of world leaders, including President Trump, in congratulating Mr. Macron.

"The citizens of France have trusted you with leading the country at a difficult time for Europe and the whole world community," Mr. Putin said in a statement. "The growth in threats of terrorism and militant extremism is accompanied by an escalation of local conflicts and the destabilization of whole regions. In these conditions, it is especially important to overcome mutual mistrust and unite efforts to ensure international stability and security."

Mr. Putin made no mention of the widespread reports that agents linked to Russia had tampered with the Macron campaign, just as they hacked the Democratic National Committee and the campaign of

Hillary Clinton in the United States last year.

Mr. Macron's campaign said Friday evening that his party had been the target of a "massive and coordinated attack," after a trove of stolen campaign documents and emails was published online.

A New York-based cyberintelligence consultancy, Flashpoint, said there were indications that a hacker group with ties to Russian military intelligence had been behind the attack. Mr. Putin and his spokesman have repeatedly denied interfering in the elections of foreign countries.

The National Front is regrouping after the presidential race. The latest

results showed that Ms. Le Pen won 33.9 percent of the vote — less than expected, but by far her party's strongest showing in a presidential election. (Ms. Le Pen's father, Jean-Marie Le Pen, won 17.9 percent in the 2002 runoff against President Jacques Chirac.)

Echoing Ms. Le Pen's concession speech, Nicolas Bay, the National Front's secretary general, said, "A new divide is emerging: The patriots face the globalists."

He said it was "obviously necessary for the National Front to transform itself." Asked whether the party's name would change, as Ms. Le Pen has hinted, he suggested that it was likely.

"I think it can be one of the means to be even more unifying and to live up to what the French are waiting for," he said. "This decision will not be made in the next few weeks, but rather in the coming months."

As if to highlight how quickly Mr. Macron must act to address the nation's divisions, a few thousand protesters took to the streets of Paris on Monday, answering calls by a collective of unions to demonstrate against his plans to push a contested labor overhaul even deeper.

**The  
New York  
Times**

## Emmanuel Macron Embraces E.U. to Put France 'Back in the Picture' (UNE)

Steven Erlanger

10-12 minutes

President-elect Emmanuel Macron of France in Paris on Sunday, addressing supporters waving French and European Union flags. Julien De Rosa/European Pressphoto Agency

LONDON — It was a striking moment when Emmanuel Macron, newly elected president of France, torchbearer of a new politics, strode onto a courtyard of the Louvre to celebrate his victory: As the crowd cheered, waving the tricolor French flag, the choice of music was "Ode to Joy," the anthem of the European Union. Some people even waved the bloc's flag, with its circle of golden stars.

For the past year, and longer, the European Union has been politically radioactive, deemed untouchable by most mainstream candidates for national office in Europe. Yet Mr. Macron, 39, not only embraced the embattled bloc, he proclaimed membership of it to be a necessity for France's future: needful of reform, certainly, but something to embrace rather than run from. And he defeated the most europhobic of opponents, the far-right nationalist Marine Le Pen.

Nathalie Tocci, director of the Institute for International Affairs in Rome, said Mr. Macron's victory had helped the bloc avoid a cataclysm. "The alternative would have been the end of the European Union," she said. "It means France is back in the picture."

If France is again vital to European affairs, any euphoria is certain to be short-lived. First, Mr. Macron faces many domestic challenges in

translating his centrist promises into policy and in assuaging those millions who voted for Ms. Le Pen, cast blank ballots or did not vote at all.

Beyond that, the European Union can hardly take a victory lap. The bloc has survived the Le Pen threat, but it is still deeply unpopular in many countries and has yet to answer the existential question of what sort of union it wants to be. There are doubts about whether it can inspire Europeans and regain their trust. Nationalism and populism are hardly dead, even in France, where Ms. Le Pen has already pivoted to focus on parliamentary elections next month.

Migrants near Idomeni, Greece, last year. The European Union has been facing a migration emergency. Sergey Ponomarev for The New York Times

The populist threat to the European Union "remains alive and has to be taken seriously," said Stefan Lehne, a former Austrian diplomat and a visiting scholar with Carnegie Europe. In France, "more than 40 percent of French voters opted for anti-European populist parties in the first round," he said, and in Italy, "the Five Star Movement and Northern League could easily win the general election expected to be held in February 2018."

Beyond that, he added, the existing populist governments in Hungary and Poland "constantly put the values on which the E.U. is based into question."

If he is a political novice, Mr. Macron is also suddenly a power broker in a European bloc dominated by a Germany that is largely ecstatic about his victory and eager for him to succeed, but that is also in conflict with some of his priorities.

Mr. Macron has called for a stronger European core built around the euro, for a common eurozone budget and for a new "finance minister" for the eurozone — ideas currently anathema to Germany, let alone other French and southern European demands, like eurozone bonds.

"If Macron manages to stop the populist tsunami, he'll be rewarded by his European counterparts," said Florence Gaub, a senior analyst at the European Union Institute for Security Studies in Paris. "He'll be able to make some demands that other French presidents could not. Because everyone needs him to be a success, and if it stops with France, maybe it stops forever."

Having a strong French partner is essential to Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany, who overshadowed her current French counterpart, François Hollande. The European Union does not function without a committed French-German partnership providing leadership and money, and it will function even worse when its second-largest economy, that of Britain, leaves the bloc.

If Mr. Macron can forge a strong working relationship with Ms. Merkel, they may be able to push through mutually amenable changes to a European Union that has grown too large and diverse for its current structure and that is facing crises of migration, low growth, joblessness, terrorism, debt and a resurgent Russia.

A fishmonger in Calais, France, in April. Mr. Macron has promised to shake up the French economy. Dmitry Kostyukov for The New York Times

But to be credible to Berlin, Mr. Macron needs to deliver on his

promises to shake up France's economy — to produce growth, create jobs, reduce fiscal deficits and cut the size of the state, which currently eats up 57 percent of France's gross domestic product, compared with 44 percent in Germany.

"To be competitive again, France has to reform and kick-start its economy, and the big question is whether Germany and Merkel can help," said Stefan Kornelius, of the German daily Süddeutsche Zeitung, who is a biographer of Ms. Merkel. "Germany has profited from the weakness of France, but France has to do this itself."

There is serious talk in Berlin of some kind of prize to encourage Mr. Macron, with more German investment in European programs and more flexibility on deficit spending. But Germany has its own elections in September, Mr. Kornelius noted, and Ms. Merkel knows that there is little sympathy among German voters — especially among the anti-European party Alternative for Germany — for handouts to France, let alone to southern Europe.

"There will be encouragement but no quick prize for Macron," Mr. Kornelius said. "Just pouring money into those stagnating economies is something she's refused to do for eight years, and she won't change now," he added, referring to Ms. Merkel.

Yet officials in Germany are sensitive to growing resentment in other countries toward their country's trade surpluses and voting power in the European Union, which will only grow with the British withdrawal. And the French have traditionally spoken up for the bloc's smaller countries, especially those

where the state plays a larger role in the economy.

Mr. Macron is pro-European, but he has said that “we have to listen to our people and listen to the fact that they are extremely angry today, impatient, and the dysfunction of the E.U. is no more sustainable.” If the bloc continues as it is today, he told the BBC before the Sunday runoff, it would be a “betrayal” that could lead to “a ‘Frexit,’ or we will have the National Front again.”

Workers at rush hour in the City of London. Mr. Macron, a former banker, has taken a tough stand on Britain’s withdrawal from the European Union. Andrew Testa for The New York Times

On many issues, Mr. Macron will be a natural ally for the Germans, including on European defense. France has been unusually passive in the last six months on the

question of European security, whereas it is normally vocal, said Ms. Tocci of the Institute for International Affairs. “Having France back is essential for European defense, and if Macron could install some ambition, it would be very welcome,” she said.

Mr. Macron has been critical of Russia and of Moscow’s more aggressive policies in Europe, a stance likely to be strengthened by a hacking attack on Mr. Macron’s campaign thought to be carried out by groups linked to Russia just before the French presidential vote. At the same time, Tomas Valasek, director of Carnegie Europe and recently Slovakia’s ambassador to NATO, described France as “a difficult but constructive ally” inside NATO, saying that Paris would continue to be skeptical about further enlargement of the alliance

and would encourage NATO-Russia dialogue.

For Britain, Mr. Macron’s election is not good news, at least on the face of things. Prime Minister Theresa May says that Britain wants a strong European Union as a partner even after it leaves. But Mr. Macron, a former banker, has taken a tough stand on the British withdrawal, known as Brexit, criticizing European leaders for trying to make a special deal with former Prime Minister David Cameron before Britons even voted to leave the bloc.

Mr. Macron has refused any special post-withdrawal deal for the City of London, Britain’s financial heart. He has also warned that British financial institutions should not be able to sell their services in the eurozone and has called openly for bankers, researchers and academics to leave Britain and move to France.

“It’s the British who will lose the most,” Mr. Macron said in a pre-election interview with the global affairs magazine *Monocle*. “You cannot enjoy rights in Europe if you are not a member — otherwise it will fall apart,” he said. “Europe is what has enabled us since 1945, in an unprecedented way, to preserve peace, security, freedom and prosperity in our continent. The British are making a serious mistake over the long term.”

After Mr. Macron’s victory, however, his top economic adviser, Jean Pisani-Ferry, used softer words on Monday. “I don’t think anybody has an interest in a hard ‘Brexit,’” Mr. Pisani-Ferry told the BBC. “There is a mutual interest in keeping prosperity that exists.”

Still, he said of Mr. Macron, “There will be a tough negotiation, and he will be tough.”



## Macron’s victory buoys the European Union after a string of setbacks

<https://www.facebook.com/anthony.faiola>

8-10 minutes

(Adam Taylor, Jason Aldag/The Washington Post)

Centrist Emmanuel Macron has won the French presidency. He defeated Marine Le Pen, the leader of France’s far-right National Front, a strongly anti-immigrant populist party. Macron, 39, will now become France’s youngest head of state since Napoleon Bonaparte. What Emmanuel Macron’s victory means for France and the world (Adam Taylor, Jason Aldag/The Washington Post)

BRUSSELS — As French President-elect Emmanuel Macron strode to his victory rally to the tune of the European Union’s anthem, E.U. advocates could scarcely believe their luck: The next French leader had scored an emphatic win embracing a partnership loathed by populist voters across the continent.

His opponent, Euroskeptic Marine Le Pen, could have shattered the European Union, already hit hard by Britain’s decision to file for divorce. Now, though, the E.U. has a new lease on life, as Macron and other pro-European leaders ready what could be a make-or-break reform effort for a bloc that has suffered repeated blows since the Great Recession in late 2007.

*[Macron fields congratulations but has little time to bask in glory]*

The dramatic turnabout serves as a rejoinder to President Trump, who

has questioned the E.U.’s value and embraced nationalists around the world. And it is likely to complicate Britain’s exit negotiations, providing a boost to the representatives of the 27 nations who will sit down later this year with Prime Minister Theresa May to hash out terms.

Macron “bears the hopes of millions of French people, but also of many people in Germany and the whole of Europe,” German Chancellor Angela Merkel told reporters Monday. “He led a courageous, pro-European campaign. He stands for openness to the world.”

(Reuters)

Speaking at a campaign event, May 8, in northwest London, British Prime Minister Theresa May urged voters to give her a mandate to match that of French President-elect Emmanuel Macron. British Prime Minister Theresa May urges voters to give her a mandate to match that of French President-elect Emmanuel Macron. (Reuters)

Macron now faces June legislative elections that will determine his mandate for sweeping reforms in France; if he fails to garner support, his victory Sunday could also prove to be just a temporary reprieve for the E.U. The magnitude of his win — 66 percent of the vote — is offset by many citizens appearing to have voted to keep Le Pen out, not because they embraced Macron’s centrist vision.

Still, it marked a rare achievement for a candidate who had campaigned on the promise that France could flex its sovereign power through the European Union, rather than in tension with it. Even

nominal pro-E.U. leaders such as center-right Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte have more typically vowed to protect their citizens from E.U. overreach — hardly a message that would rejuvenate the beleaguered bloc.

*[Emmanuel Macron’s unlikely path to the French presidency]*

Macron’s win “could lead to a strengthening of the European Union as a capable actor,” said Sabine von Oppeln, a professor of political science at the Free University of Berlin. “The European Union got away with a black eye. . . . Now it has to do something with the election result.”

Macron has outlined an ambitious agenda that would knit together the countries that use the euro currency, through a common euro-zone budget and finance minister. He has pushed for a new European unemployment-insurance system, which would mean German taxpayers would underwrite out-of-work Greeks. But he also has expressed support for a buy-European-first rule for government purchasing, a protectionist measure that could cheer nationalists.

Any new effort will require quick action, given the challenges that abound. Greece’s economy remains moribund. And the Italian populist Five Star Movement — currently topping the polls ahead of elections that will take place by spring 2018 — threatens to hold a referendum on Italy’s use of the euro, a move that could rekindle Europe’s financial crisis.

“Most people realize that the euro zone, as it is, is not sustainable. A

new crisis will come,” said Stefan Lehne, a former Austrian diplomat who is a fellow at Carnegie Europe, a think tank.

(Reuters)

German Chancellor Angela Merkel told reporters in Berlin, May 8, that she was looking forward to working with the French President-elect Emmanuel Macron on issues such as youth unemployment. German Chancellor Angela Merkel says she looks forward to working with the French President-elect Emmanuel Macron on issues like youth unemployment. (Reuters)

Now the focus will shift to Berlin, whose cooperation is vital to any French effort to alter the way Europe works. To secure German flexibility, Macron will first need to prove he is serious about trying to push through the kind of free-market labor and business reforms that economists say are needed to jump-start the French economy and improve the investment climate there.

*[Macron defeated Le Pen in France’s presidential election. Here’s what happens next.]*

“The prospects of actually advancing, if France has stronger credibility in the eyes of the Berlin policy community, is pretty good,” said Guntram Wolff, the director of Bruegel, a Brussels-based policy think tank.

Indeed, the next major test for Europe is Germany’s September elections, in which the staunchly pro-E.U. Merkel is seeking a fourth term. Unlike the cliffhanger in France, however, the outcome is set to be a win-win for Macron, as well

as for the bloc. Merkel's closest rival, the Social Democrat Martin Schulz, served as president of the European Parliament until last year, and he is likely to be far more flexible than Merkel on demands from across the bloc to finally ease the German-backed policy of austerity that some blame for the region's economic stagnation.

In addition, analysts say, a weak showing by the far-right Alternative for Germany party, currently slipping in the polls, could embolden Merkel to cooperate more closely with Macron and other E.U. leaders who are pressing for an end to the age of austerity.



## France's new leader untested on foreign policy, but no dummy

PARIS –  
6-7 minutes

Elected on a reform agenda for France, President-elect Emmanuel Macron will quickly discover that foreign policy — an area not yet in his comfort zone — will eat up buckets of his time.

On Europe, Macron has been crystal clear and vocal: keeping France at the center of the European Union was the dominant theme of his campaign. On global crises beyond Europe, such as North Korea, France's youngest ever president has kept his cards closer to his chest.

That is partly because, in previous jobs as an investment banker and from 2014-16 as France's economy minister, foreign policy wasn't among Macron's areas of expertise. His careful, measured forays into foreign affairs during the campaign signaled that Macron is aware of his own limitations and is allowing himself time to bone up on the issues before crafting his diplomacy.

"You have politicians who know that they don't know and want to learn. And you have those who don't know that they don't know and who shoot off their mouths. He belongs, quite clearly, to the first category," says Francois Heisbourg, a leading French expert on foreign affairs, defense and terrorism who has been advising Macron and his campaign team.

Macron has given some broad outlines but, on more than one occasion, has been wishy washy.

On the Middle East, Macron has

"It would free Angela Merkel to be more forthcoming in proposing a more centrist agenda for Europe," said Cornelius Adebahr, an associate fellow at the German Council on Foreign Relations. "That could mean more investment and more integration in the euro zone."

Macron's victory also comes as a jolt to British leaders negotiating their departure from the E.U., who have counted on European disunity as their best path to winning a good deal. Macron has called Brexit a "crime" and vowed to be tough on London, even though his victory is probably better for Britain than Le Pen's would have been. Had she won, the country could well have

repeatedly said his top priority will be to continue the fight against the Islamic State group, which has claimed or inspired multiple attacks in France since 2015 that killed more than 230 people. French warplanes have flown thousands of sorties and carried out hundreds of airstrikes in Iraq and Syria against the extremists, working in an international coalition.

Macron has also said he wants an engineered exit from power of Syrian President Bashar Assad. He labeled Assad "a criminal" after a sarin gas attack killed dozens in the town of Khan Sheikhoun on April 4.

The president-elect said the use of the deadly nerve agent should be punished with U.N.-sanctioned military force if Assad's involvement is proven. But Macron has also expressed concerns that Syria could become an even more chaotic failed state if Assad is ousted suddenly, without a carefully planned transition.

"It's very complicated," Macron said last month. "We have to be serious."

With regard to Russia, Macron set himself apart from other candidates in the election by adopting a tougher stance toward President Vladimir Putin.

He said he wants to work with Russia, which backs Assad's regime, in the fight against IS. But he laced his appeals for cooperation with warnings that Moscow "doesn't share our values and preferences."

Vowing not to be "accommodating" with Russia, he said last month: "We need an extremely demanding dialogue."

faced a chaotic rupture rather than an orderly exit.

World News Alerts

Breaking news from around the world.

The Daily Telegraph, a right-leaning British newspaper, on Monday ran a front-page headline saying that "France's new hope puts cloud over Brexit."

May, who is fighting her own election battle, was quick to congratulate Macron on Sunday night. But in a campaign rally Monday, she warned that the French leader's victory means that she too needs a decisive mandate in

Macron favors renewed peace talks to stabilize the situation in eastern Ukraine in order to gradually diminish sanctions against Russia.

Macron's tone hardened as the campaign wore on. There was widespread — but as yet unproven — speculation that Russia may have had a hand in the document leak that targeted Macron's campaign in the final hours of the race.

Foreign affairs expert Heisbourg said that Russia and France's allies will be watching how Macron now handles the aftermath of the hack, which is being investigated by the French government's cybersecurity agency, ANSSI.

"The cyberattack was timed exquisitely. Russia's fingerprints were all over the place. This was not simply a belated attempt to disrupt the campaign. It was a gauntlet, a challenge," said Heisbourg, an adviser at the Paris think-tank Foundation for Strategic Research.

"He will be expected to respond one way or another to the challenge," Heisbourg said.

With the U.S., Macron says he wants continued intelligence-sharing and cooperation at the United Nations, and he hopes to persuade President Donald Trump not to pull Washington out of a global climate change accord.

Macron, committed to free trade, and Trump, who campaigned on promises to protect American jobs from foreign competition, appear poles apart. They're also from different generations — Macron is 39, Trump 70.

They will likely meet for the first time at a NATO summit in Belgium on

the June 8 vote to bargain with Europe.

"Yesterday a new French president was elected," May said at a campaign speech in London. "He was elected with a strong mandate, which he can take as a strong position in the negotiations. The U.K., we need to ensure we've got an equally strong mandate and equally strong negotiating position."

Faiola reported from Berlin. Stephanie Kirchner in Berlin and Karla Adam in London contributed to this report.

May 25 and they could surprise everyone by showing they have more in common than first meets the eye.

Macron's fluent English could help make personal chemistry easier. Both beat the odds and expectations by winning unlikely election victories. Both positioned themselves as outsiders in their respective political systems, which they promised to change. Trump was among the first world leaders to congratulate Macron on "his big win," in a tweet Sunday night.

"They flouted all the rules of the established game. They were unelectable and they both got elected," Heisbourg said. "They will probably find each other interesting."

Trump used foreign policy on the campaign trail to project himself as defender of U.S. interests, notably with China, which he called a "tremendous problem." In power, he continues to shoot from the hip, recently calling North Korean dictator Kim Jong Un a "smart cookie."

Macron has been more circumspect. One exception was during a televised debate with other candidates in March, when he launched into a long-winded and muddled explanation of what he called his "diplomatic roadmap."

"It was miserable. It was exactly what you shouldn't do: shooting off your mouth when you actually have a weak basis of knowledge, have not formed any reasoned and structured doctrine, and you just jabber and jabber," Heisbourg said.

"That was seen as a mistake. He tended to avoid repeating it."



## Macron Win Is Bad for Putin, Good for Team Merkel on World Stage

@MarcChampion Marc Champion  
1 More stories by

6-8 minutes

- Unraveling of Ukraine sanctions has become less likely
- Merkel, Trudeau gain new ally in handling unpredictable Trump

The standard bearers for liberal democracy and global free trade were quick to welcome Emmanuel Macron as France's next president, and there's already one likely loser on the international stage: Russia.

With German Chancellor Angela Merkel gaining the 39-year-old as a team member, President Vladimir Putin will face a re-energized front in Berlin and Paris as he seeks to expand Russia's influence in Europe and end sanctions over military intervention in Ukraine.

Emmanuel Macron on May 7.

Photographer: Christophe Morin/Bloomberg

"Vladimir Putin emerges as loser and perhaps a serious loser in this election," said Daniel Fried, a former U.S. assistant secretary of state for Europe and Eurasia. "It was clear that Putin's preferred candidate lost and lost decisively."

Macron also joins like-minded world leaders as they try to manage an unpredictable U.S. President Donald Trump on the global circuit of G-7, G-20 and NATO summits. His addition could prove uncomfortable for Trump, too. Macron has promoted his own "buy Europe" campaign that could bump up against the U.S. administration's trade agenda.

Macron ran as the candidate of change, "but he didn't run on a ticket of nostalgia and nationalism," said Fried. "So he now stands as an immediate counterweight to Trump intellectually and ideologically."

#### Russian Stance



## Macron's Brand New Party Shoots for Parliament Takeover

Stacy Meichtry and William Horobin

7-8 minutes

Updated May 8, 2017 7:03 p.m. ET

PARIS—After winning his bid to lead France, Emmanuel Macron got to work Monday on his next challenge: gaining control of its parliament.

Mr. Macron faces a tough balancing act in the wake of his landslide victory against Marine Le Pen of the far-right National Front. His fledgling party, En Marche (On the Move), needs to forge alliances with, or

In contrast to defeated nationalist Marine Le Pen, France under Macron looks set to back the European Union, help safeguard the euro and maintain his country's position in NATO. More concretely, his election program committed to continue economic sanctions against Russia until it complies with the terms of the 2014 Minsk peace agreement. Le Pen had said she would lift them.

Russia and its leader were open in their support of Le Pen. A Russian bank gave her party a 9 million-euro (\$9.9 million) loan in 2014, when French banks would not.

During the presidential election campaign this year Putin met her in Moscow, allowing Le Pen to argue she would be better able to talk to Russia and Trump, as president, than her rivals. Russia's state controlled media, meanwhile, lavished personal attacks on Macron, including questioning his sexuality.

Most recently, suspicion yet again fell on Russian hackers for the mass leak of emails from the Macron campaign team on the eve of the vote, as cyber analysts found indications the hack came from Russian language computers. No connection with Russia has been confirmed and the Kremlin has repeatedly denied any connection with such hacks, including in the U.S.

#### Confidence Boost

Macron's decisive win will bring a welcome boost of confidence for defenders of the "old" postwar liberal order -- and the institutions that underpin it -- after a year that produced the dual shocks of Britain's vote to leave the EU and Trump.

"The world now knows where France will stand," said Simon Fraser, who retired as the U.K. foreign service's top diplomat last

year and now runs a consultancy, Flint Global. "Le Pen was the opposite for all these things. Frankly had she won, it would have been a very serious problem for the international system that these institutions represent."

As global leaders congratulated Macron, Trump said in a phone call he wanted to work closely with the new French president on confronting "shared challenges." Putin sent a telegram, saying it's important for countries to overcome "mutual mistrust" and join forces for international security, according to the Kremlin.

Leaders of the 28 NATO member states will meet in Brussels on May 25. Then G-7 leaders -- including Merkel, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, and the premiers of Italy, Japan and the U.K. -- are due to convene in Sicily the following day.

#### International Baptism

Both events will carry added significance, and not just because they mark a quick international baptism for Macron.

They're expected to mark the first time Trump has sat down collectively with traditional U.S. allies. Until now, they have had to make do with his vice president and national security team to reassure them that much of what Trump said before his own inauguration in January -- about the obsolescence of NATO and EU, protectionism or legitimizing Russia's annexation of Crimea -- is not U.S. policy.

In July and September, the EU will decide whether to roll over two sets of Russia sanctions for a further six months each. Any one of the EU's 28 members has the power to block them, making French support for Merkel as she tries to maintain a unified EU front all the more material.

Read More: What Macron's Victory Means for Europe and Merkel

As a February U.K. parliamentary report found, EU support for the sanctions regime has been fraying lately. Trump's ambivalence encouraged several members -- including Austria and Bulgaria -- to press the case for lifting them.

#### Get Ready

Yet Macron's arrival also guarantees nothing, according to Jeffrey Gedmin, a non-resident senior fellow at the Atlantic Council, a Washington think tank.

Macron might have to temper his pro-EU and pro-trade enthusiasm knowing that some 40 percent of French voters chose candidates who advocated isolationism in the first round. In addition, the strength of his domestic political mandate, an important currency in international diplomacy, will be decided by next month's parliamentary elections.

What's more, supporters of the U.S.-Europe alliance won't be able to count on cooperation from an unpredictable American president when it comes to the risks facing their world, said Gedmin. Russia plays over a longer horizon and can wait for another opportunity to split the EU over sanctions, while the last has not been heard from China, Iran or North Korea, he said.

"Yes it's a short term win for the transatlantic team, but they still have the populists nipping at their heels and restive publics," said Gedmin. "At a certain point, the world is going to come at us and we will see how in fact, Merkel, Macron and Trump deal with it. They'd better be ready."

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recruit, establishment politicians from both sides of the political aisle to create a Macron majority when the French return to the polls for a two-round legislative vote scheduled for June 11 and 18.

That effort, however, involves horse-trading over who will eventually sit in Mr. Macron's cabinet after he takes office on Sunday. The specter of unseemly backroom dealing with establishment politicians, analysts say, risks undermining Mr. Macron's vow to make En Marche a party of political renewal.

U.S. President Donald Trump congratulated Mr. Macron in a

phone call on Monday, pledging to work closely with the French leader on joint challenges, the White House said. The two agreed to meet May 25 at a North Atlantic Treaty Organization summit in Brussels, it added.

Mr. Macron has staked out positions on issues such as climate change and the war in Syria at odds with those of the U.S. president. Mr. Trump didn't formally endorse Ms. Le Pen but called her "strongest on borders" and "the strongest on what's been going on in France." Former President Barack Obama endorsed Mr. Macron.

One of Mr. Macron's first orders of business will be appointing a prime minister to head a government.

"He needs a prime minister who can shape the election, but allying with somebody from the failing establishment would make it look like continuity," said Charles Lichfield at Eurasia Group, a risk consulting firm.

Mr. Macron may need to opt for a prime minister from the center-right party, Les Républicains, since it is likely to win a large number of seats in parliament, Mr. Lichfield said. But officials from En Marche have circulated names of Socialists,



including lawmaker Richard Ferrand, who helped found Mr. Macron's party, and Defense Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian, who rallied to Mr. Macron during the campaign.

Asked Monday if he is in the running, Mr. Ferrand said only Mr. Macron knows who will be prime minister. "If I knew, I would be obliged to lie," he said.

If Mr. Macron fails to secure more than half of the National Assembly's 577 seats, he risks being reduced to a mere figurehead. Historically, French presidents who fall short of a majority have ended up in a political limbo known as "cohabitation"—a form of power-sharing under which a prime minister from the opposition runs the government.

Three times in the past three decades, French presidents failed to secure a majority in parliamentary elections occurring after their terms began. The last time, in 1997, conservative President Jacques Chirac had to pick a prime minister from Socialist ranks. Landing the job was Lionel Jospin, who ran the government for the ensuing five years—pushing laws such as the 35-hour workweek—through the end of Mr. Chirac's first mandate.

Such an arrangement would likely endanger Mr. Macron's economic agenda. He has proposed

overhauling labor rules to make the country more business-friendly. A more competitive France, he says, would encourage Germany to boost spending, correcting what Mr. Macron considers major imbalances between the eurozone's two biggest economies.

Mr. Macron has said he plans to sign a series of ordinances this summer that would change France's labor code, lifting restrictions on hiring and firing and making it easier for companies to negotiate directly with their employees.

In a sign of the social unrest facing Mr. Macron if he moves ahead with the overhaul, thousands of people packed into Place de la République to protest his plans.

The ordinances would allow the contentious changes to go into effect without parliamentary approval. But Mr. Macron still needs to seek parliament's permission to legislate by ordinance and then the measures would be subject to ratification by the body.

In a bid to represent political renewal, Mr. Macron has vowed to field candidates for his party for every single seat in the National Assembly. That closes off the option for En Marche to sit out the election in certain districts to help political allies from different parties win seats.

The choice of joining Mr. Macron or running against his party in June puts potential allies in a bind. On Monday, Bruno Le Maire, a significant figure in Les Républicains, said on French radio that he had told Mr. Macron in a phone conversation that he needed to reach out to center-right voters who may have voted for him "by default."

Mr. Le Maire, a former minister who lost to François Fillon in his party's presidential primary, questioned the wisdom of Les Républicains campaigning against En Marche in the legislatives "and then the day after, all of the sudden, we go work with you as part of a grand coalition."

"How is that coherent?" he said.

Mr. Macron is also under pressure to reach out to the Socialist Party of departing President François Hollande while keeping his distance from the unpopular leader.

A World War II commemoration at the Arc de Triomphe Monday brought Mr. Macron shoulder-to-shoulder with Mr. Hollande, under whom he once served as deputy chief of staff and then economy minister. Mr. Hollande, a former Socialist Party boss, said he was ready to offer the young president-elect advice "if he wants it."

"It's true he followed me in recent years, but then he freed himself," Mr. Hollande said.

On Monday, Mr. Macron huddled with Mr. Ferrand and his fellow Socialist parliamentarian Gérard Collomb—two of his earliest backers for the presidency—to discuss strategy. Mr. Ferrand told reporters Mr. Macron's party planned to change its name to La République en Marche. On Thursday, the party will announce a full roster of candidates, he said.

The party would adhere, Mr. Ferrand said, to criteria the president-elect established months ago, requiring that half its candidates be women, as well as that half be persons who never previously held elected office. His rules also bar anyone with a criminal record from running.

The party has already chosen nearly all of the 577 candidates it will field, Mr. Ferrand said, adding that some of them will be defectors from other parties.

**Write to** Stacy Meichtry at [stacy.meichtry@wsj.com](mailto:stacy.meichtry@wsj.com) and William Horobin at [William.Horobin@wsj.com](mailto:William.Horobin@wsj.com)

Appeared in the May. 09, 2017, print edition as 'Macron's New Party Aims at Parliament.'



## France Has a Leader, But Not Yet an Opposition

7-9 minutes

As Macron redefines French politics, traditional parties are scrambling for a role.

8 mai 2017 à 12:31 UTC-4

Not an alliance-builder.

Photographer: Thierry Chesnot

When I arrived in France a week ago, many Americans were asking whether this election was going to be the French Brexit, and Marine Le Pen the French Trump. Given the strength of Emmanuel Macron's lead in the polls, I thought this was the wrong question. France, in fact, already had a Brexit-sized political earthquake, when neither of the two mainstream parties of left and right made it into the second round.

The center-right Republican Party currently seems to be flailing around, trying to decide where it goes next. It is nonetheless in better shape than the left's Socialist Party, whose devotees are currently standing around its sickbed, speaking in hushed tones. Jean-Luc Mélenchon pinched many Socialist voters, particularly lower-income

and unemployed urban dwellers, with his "France Insoumise" (France unbowed) platform; Macron won over the prosperous by coming out full-bore for Europe, globalization, economic reform, and immigration. Even Le Pen got a few in the second round, mostly those who identify as "far left." One hates to prematurely report a death, of course, but it's certainly hard to see how the Socialists manage to recover from their humiliating single-digit performance in the first round of this election.

With both major parties in disarray, the question naturally arises: If Emmanuel Macron's brand of ardent globalization becomes the focal ideology for one side of the political spectrum, what will constitute the natural opposition?

Electoral systems can be roughly divided into two sorts: those that tend to produce bipolar results, and those that tend to be run by coalitions of varying degrees of stability. Single-member districts with a first-past-the-post system (where the person with the highest votes takes the office), tend to produce two strong parties. Proportional representation systems

tend to be more favorable to small parties, at the cost of somewhat weaker heads of government.

America, of course, is a bipolar system. And so, sort of, is France. They don't have two centuries-old political parties. But control of the government has tended to alternate between the mainstream parties of right and left, though the identity of those parties has altered somewhat since Charles De Gaulle ushered in the Fifth Republic. The runoff system narrows down the field of candidates, forcing voters to choose between more popular options -- and the parties have tended to help this process along through strategic withdrawals from the second round. Too, the structure of the system gives both voters and politicians incentives to hand the head of state majorities in the legislature.

Bipolar systems often divide along the great fault lines in their societies: capital and labor, urban and rural, taxpayers vs. net beneficiaries of government programs. In recent decades, those fault lines have mostly been over the size of government, both its spending and its regulation. But the past year has brought forward a divide that doesn't

quite map onto those well-trodden paths: between those who embrace globalization, and benefit from it, and those who want less immigration, less free trade, a return to the economic and social order of what was, for them, a happier past.

Macron is the distilled essence of one side of this debate: a Rothschild banker, the graduate of an elite school, an unapologetic extoller of social liberalism and an open economy. If his brand of technocratic globalism is one pillar of a new French political divide, then that implies that the other side of the political spectrum will shape itself in opposition to him: less friendly towards the European Union and free trade more generally; less interested in dismantling France's somewhat overbearing labor market rules; less friendly to immigrants from distant places and cultures.

That sounds a lot like "Marine Le Pen," and indeed, I have heard mainstream conservatives worrying about just that. But that's not the only possibility; given how toxic her party's name seems to be, it is not even necessarily the most likely one.

To take an American parallel, look at the presidency of Ronald Reagan. The winning electoral formula for Democrats turned out not to be "The opposite of everything Reagan says," but Bill Clinton, a sort of "kinder, gentler Reagan," one who criticized Sister Souljah for making inflammatory racial remarks, and spoke about making abortion "safe, legal, and rare"; who used tax cuts instead of subsidies to help selected constituencies; who pushed for a national health care system, but ended up signing a historic welfare reform (even if under electoral pressure to do so). It's possible that French politics could evolve

similarly.

And yet, it's also possible that it won't. Right now French politics doesn't have two poles; according to political scientist Arun Kapil, it has five: the far left, the small and hardy band of loyal Socialists, En Marche!, the Republicans, and the National Front. And one possibility is that these poles winnow somewhat, but never come back to the old intra-right and intra-left alliances that stabilized French politics into something approaching a two-party system. Mélenchon is a true believer who so far seems unwilling to make strategic alliances, and the National Front is similarly uncooperative,

even if other parties wanted to cooperate with them, which they don't. If those blocs hold onto enough voters to tip an election, but never quite enough to win one, future French elections may get kind of wild.

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It's too early to tell yet which of these possible futures will hold. But we may start to get some guess in June's legislative elections. How well En Marche! does will provide clues to just how big a shift Macron

has actually achieved in French politics. How well the Republicans do will give us some sign of whether they can get their mojo back. And the performance of the far left and the far right will indicate whether France is on its way to establishing a "new normal" not that much different from the old -- or striking out for uncharted territory, where there may well be some dragons lurking.

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## A record number of French voters cast their ballots for nobody

By Eliza Mackintosh and

Judith Vonberg, CNN

French voters: This election is a 'second revolution' 01:44

### Story highlights

- Third of French voters spoiled ballots or abstained
- More voters rejected candidates than voted for Le Pen
- Highest ever number of blank ballots

(CNN)Emmanuel Macron's triumph over Marine Le Pen in the French presidential election has been hailed as a landslide victory for the centrist candidate and a widespread rejection of his rival's far-right platform.

But Macron's mandate may not be as overwhelming as it seems. A record number of French voters were so dismayed by their options that they either skipped the election or cast their ballots for no one at all.

The so-called "ballot blanc," or white ballot, has a long history as a protest vote in France, going all the way back to the French Revolution. This time around, nearly 9% of voters cast blank or spoiled ballots -- the highest ever since the Fifth Republic was founded in 1958.

For now, the votes, which are counted towards the turnout, are largely symbolic. But there is a movement underway for the blank ballots to count as a share of the overall election vote. According to a recent Ifop poll, 40% of French

voters said they would cast a blank vote if it were recognized under French law.

A woman in Bordeaux reads campaign posters urging voters not to turn out.

### The protest vote

Guillaume Castevert, 46, from Bordeaux in southwest France, said he voted blanc in the final round after his favored candidate, Jean-Luc Mélenchon, of the left-wing Le France insoumise movement, was knocked out in the first round.

Like many voters, Castevert was scared of a Le Pen win and wanted his voice to be heard, but refused to vote for Macron, whose policies he disagrees with. "I don't want to vote against something," he told CNN. "I want to vote for something."

France: Emmanuel Macron eyes legislative elections after landslide win

He's also deeply unhappy with the French electoral system. "I'm quite convinced that the election system is not very democratic. In fact, it's quite the opposite," he said. "Every five years you make people feel like they are important, like their vote counts, but it doesn't really matter."

Castevert said his white ballot represented a vote against both candidates and against the system he believes they represent.

Democracy should be about the people, he said. "Now it's not the power of the people, it's the power of a few people."

READ MORE: Macron, Le Pen, or neither? French voters mull third option

### Highest number of abstentions since 1969

For disillusioned voters, the only other option was to abstain -- and nearly one quarter of French voters did just that.

This year's election marked the highest number of abstentions the country has seen since 1969, when the conservative candidate Georges Pompidou crushed centrist Alain Poher.

Much like in 1969, disaffected left-wing voters were apparently behind the high abstention rate.

In all, a third of voters spoiled their ballots or abstained. Taking abstentions and white votes into account, more people rejected the candidates than voted for Le Pen.

Rim-Sarah Alouane, a PhD candidate and researcher in public law at the University of Toulouse, says that this wasn't a surprise.

In the lead-up to the vote, hashtags such as #SansMoiLe7Mai (without me on May 7), #NiPatrieNiPatron (neither country, nor boss) and #NiMarineNiMacron (neither Marine, nor Macron) emerged on social media platforms.

"These hashtags show how society has changed, how the political landscape has changed, and how people are trying to take back what is theirs ... democracy," Alouane said.

READ MORE: Does Emmanuel Macron's win signal the end of populism in Europe? Not likely

### Not voting: A conscious decision

In the same vein, campaigns urging voters to stay at home, leave their ballot envelope empty or submit a blank piece of paper in protest gained traction ahead of the vote. One such campaign, the Boycott 2017 group, called on French people to reject both candidates.

Jeremy, a campaigner for Boycott 2017 who declined to give his last name, believes that voting legitimizes what he described as France's anti-democratic election system.

Boycott 2017 badges at a rally in Paris. Boycott 2017 is calling on voters to back neither candidate.

"The current system is not democratic -- it's a bourgeois dictatorship that does not benefit the working class," Jeremy said.

In France, a country with traditionally high rates of voter participation, deciding not to vote is a very conscious decision.

"This is a signal. There is a voice, a big voice from the people that has gone unheard. These people decided that both candidates who ended up in round two did not address their concerns," Alouane said.

"At some point, we need to reform our electoral process and take into account abstentions and blank votes. We elected a president, but what is his legitimacy in the end if so many people didn't go to vote?"

CNN's Bryony Jones contributed to this report.



## In France, Divisions Remain Despite Macron's Landslide Win

Max Colchester

4-5 minutes

Updated May 8, 2017 1:40 p.m. ET

BOUZY, France—Emmanuel Macron's resounding win in Sunday's elections papered over

deep fissures across France, no more so than in this region famed for its vineyard-carpeted rolling hills.

At a lunch with owners of Champagne houses that export across the globe, vineyard laborer Fred Buisson ranted about how trade harms local workers even as news of Mr. Macron's victory trickled in.

Mr. Buisson and 52% of voters in Bouzy in eastern France—well above the national average of 34%—supported Marine Le Pen in the second runoff. The nationalist leader campaigned on leaving the European Union, saying immigrants took away French people's jobs.

"You can't move Champagne out of France, but you can replace the workers," the 36-year-old Mr. Buisson said as the group ate grilled sausages and drank from magnums of red wine.

Mr. Macron drew large swaths of voters in this region, but their reluctant support might not deliver him a parliamentary majority in the June legislative election—key for Mr. Macron if he is to come good on his pledge to reinvigorate the French

economy.

The hundreds of World War I battlefield cemeteries that dot the region offer a grim reminder of another time when Europe was pulled apart. Decades of peace have brought prosperity to the region that exports over €2 billion (\$2.18 billion) worth of Champagne around the world every year. In Bouzy, the unemployment rate is at 5%, roughly half of the national average. Yet many fear the impact of untrammelled globalization, an issue that will resurface again next month when France heads back to the polls to elect a new National Assembly.

Mr. Macron has more to fear than just Ms. Le Pen's supporters. In Bouzy, Maëlle and Jean-Christophe Delavenne manage one of the village's Champagne houses. They describe themselves as conservatives at heart, but voted for Mr. Macron on Sunday, saying they feared Ms. Le Pen would ruin their export business if she reached the Élysée Palace.

Now the couple wants to ensure that Mr. Macron is hamstrung in the legislative election. Ms. and Mr. Delavenne don't plan to vote for the

president-elect's political party, En Marche, and are likely to favor a candidate from the conservative party, Les Républicains.

They hope the center-right party gains a majority, forcing Mr. Macron into so-called cohabitation, a form of power-sharing under which a prime minister from the opposition runs the government. "That would be the best of a bad situation," said Ms. Delavenne.

Drinking Champagne a few chairs away, Hugues Beaufort, whose family has made wine since 1655 and now runs Champagne Herbert Beaufort, which exports as far afield as Japan, said he also wouldn't back Mr. Macron—whom he views as a leftist spawned by Mr. Macron's former boss, Socialist President François Hollande.

As a guest sitting next to Mr. Beaufort urged him to give Mr. Macron and his party a chance, the businessman said: "I am not voting for the left." Mr. Beaufort voted for Mr. Macron in the second round of the presidential election.

Mr. Macron, who served as economy minister in the administration of Mr. Hollande, says

he espouses positions from both the left and right.

At the end of the banquet table, Mr. Buisson said he feared that Polish workers undercut local grape pickers.

He charged that the Polish workers get paid €11 (\$12) an hour, compared with €9 for French workers, but the addition of payroll taxes on French workers makes hiring locals uncompetitive. "Politicians must wake up," he said. "People have had enough."

Ms. Delavenne, the Champagne house manager, however, takes a different view, advocating that borders remain open in part because locals aren't willing to do the backbreaking work. "We can't just close ourselves off from Europe," she said.

**Write to** Max Colchester at max.colchester@wsj.com

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## French ex-PM Valls wants to join Macron's movement (online)

By Samuel Petrequin | AP

3-4 minutes

By Samuel Petrequin | AP May 9 at 8:26 AM

PARIS — Manuel Valls, the former French prime minister, said Tuesday he wants to turn his back on the Socialists and run under President-elect Emmanuel Macron's new political movement. It's not clear, however, if he will be able to do so.

All 577 seats in France's lower chamber are up for grabs in the country's two-part June 11 and June 18 parliamentary election. Macron's 577 candidates are expected to be announced Thursday and Macron himself will be sworn in on Sunday.

Valls told RTL radio that France's Socialist party "is dead and behind us" and said he wants to join Macron's Republic on the Move to run for a seat in parliament. He's hoping to run in

the Essonne department, his fiefdom south of Paris, but Republic on the Move officials said his nomination won't be automatic.

"All support for the president is welcome," said Jean-Paul Delevoye, head of the Republic on the Move panel assessing the candidates. "But support doesn't necessarily translate into a nomination. (Vall's) voice is not insignificant, but his candidacy will be treated like anyone else's."

Valls, a center-leaning politician in favor of relaxing France's tight labor protections, could not even win his own Socialist party's presidential primary, losing to Benoit Hamon. After that, he threw his support to Macron before the presidential election.

Hamon came in a distant fifth in the first round of France's presidential election, capturing just over 6 percent of the vote, the Socialist Party's worst result since 1969. The poor result has triggered a fierce debate within the Socialists about

whether to stick with Hamon's left-wing platform or to switch back to the more centrist views of Valls and his allies.

Socialist Party official Jean-Christophe Cambadélis stressed Tuesday that it is "impossible" to remain a Socialist party member and run for office under the Republic on the Move banner.

"If some (people) want to leave and go apart, they can do so and let us work," he said.

Valls said Macron's victory Sunday over far-right leader Marine Le Pen it was a blow to populism across Europe that gave a "terrific" image of France to countries abroad.

"The old parties are dying or are already dead," Valls said. "I'm not living with regrets. I want Emmanuel Macron, his government and his majority to succeed, for France. I will be a candidate in the presidential majority and I wish to join his movement, the Republic on the Move."

Macron has said he is aiming for an absolute majority in the lower chamber in June's elections. If so, he'll be able to choose a prime minister. If another party wins a majority, Macron could be pressured to choose a prime minister from that party.

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If Macron's party performs poorly, he could also be forced to form a coalition government, a common occurrence in many European countries but something very unusual in France.

Sylvie Corbet in Paris contributed.

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## Europe Expresses Caution on Macron's Reform Ideas

Anton Troianovski and Andrea

Thomas in Berlin and Laurence Norman in Brussels

6-8 minutes

Updated May 8, 2017 4:26 p.m. ET

Europe on Monday cheered Emmanuel Macron's French presidential victory on a platform of

a domestic economic overhaul and greater European integration, but it added a caveat: Show us that you mean it.

Mr. Macron has pledged to energize France's drowsy economy with

tough fiscal and labor market changes. But he also wants the 19 countries that use the euro to pool budget resources and Germany, the bloc's heavyweight, to spend more to support the regional economy.

On Monday, European officials said Mr. Macron would have to deliver on his part of the bargain before he could expect a quid pro quo—if it comes at all.

While they expressed relief at the defeat of Marine Le Pen, Mr. Macron's euroskeptic challenger, government officials in Brussels and Berlin said they would be watching the president-elect's moves in France closely for signs his promises of domestic changes are credible before making any concessions of their own.

The wait-and-see posture, some said, underlined the loss of credibility suffered by successive French administrations that all promised serious economic overhauls and tighter spending but often failed to follow through, resulting in repeated breaches of European Union government spending rules and leaving persistently high unemployment.

Mr. Macron's requests from his future partners include a common eurozone budget, financed by jointly issued bonds, to stimulate growth via infrastructure spending. By virtue of its size, Germany would be the bonds' main underwriter, something German politicians have long rejected as effectively taking over other countries' public debt.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel on Monday praised Mr. Macron for his "courageous, pro-European campaign." But when her spokesman was asked about euro bonds—jointly issued bonds with shared liability—at a regular government news conference, his reply was terse: "The German government's negative view of euro bonds remains in place."

Instead, Ms. Merkel and her conservative allies in Germany suggested the onus would be on Mr. Macron and his future government to first make unpopular changes at home. Those changes would be for the good of France, they said, and shouldn't be viewed as the outcome of German prodding.

"Given the situation that we have in Germany, I don't think we must now give priority to changing our policy," Ms. Merkel said.

"German support can of course be no substitute for French policies. France must take its own decisions and will take its own decisions," she said.

Diplomats from countries that would have to share the bill with Germany for some form of common eurozone budget said their governments will want to see a record of at least a year of domestic revisions in France before they are willing to enter a serious debate on future pooling of resources. That will inevitably mean constructing a government after June's parliamentary elections that can govern effectively, one diplomat said.

Even in countries that back deeper eurozone integration and would stand to gain from broader German largess, there is a clear understanding that France's new president will have little power of persuasion in Berlin until he has proven his political mettle at home.

"I think it would be very useful that in the leading European capitals, people perceive that France...is willing to make the reforms, to do what they have to do," one senior diplomat said.

In recent years, France has repeatedly demanded—and

obtained—extensions of the deadline for bringing its budget deficit below the cap of 3% of gross domestic product.

Similarly, EU demands for overhauls of France's labor market and unemployment benefits system have been largely brushed off by Paris while other governments, such as Italy and Spain, were obliged to comply.

European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker voiced those frustrations on Monday, saying that while he was delighted by Mr. Macron's victory, the French government couldn't continue with its high level of spending as a percentage of the economy.

"We have a special problem with France. I am extremely Francophile, but the French spend too much money. And they spend it in the wrong place," Mr. Juncker said.

Mr. Macron's closest ally in his efforts to convince Germany to change course on austerity may be German Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel—a member of the Social Democratic Party, the center-left junior coalition partner to Ms. Merkel's Christian Democrats. He has gushed about his personal friendship with Mr. Macron and said Monday that Germany should offer more flexibility on the eurozone's fiscal rules to prevent nationalist leader Marine Le Pen from winning the presidency when France votes again in 2022.

"I once asked the German Chancellor, 'What's really more expensive—0.5% higher deficits for France or Ms. Le Pen as president?'" Mr. Gabriel said Monday, referring to Ms. Merkel.

"That is why I think we Germans must change our position."

But in an election year, such comments could turn off German voters already unnerved by the large bailouts required to keep such countries as Greece, Ireland and Portugal afloat during the eurozone debt crisis. Hans Michelbach, a senior conservative lawmaker allied with Ms. Merkel, dismissed Mr. Gabriel's comments as evidence of his party's "economic incompetence."

Rather than make domestically unpopular concessions to Mr. Macron's fiscal agenda in the coming months, Ms. Merkel might look for other areas to boost European integration, a German official said. That could include defense or foreign policy, where Berlin and Paris have already been working on deepening ties.

"We take Emmanuel Macron by his word and believe that he will carry out the reforms that he laid out in his campaign," said German lawmaker Jürgen Hardt, a specialist on foreign affairs in Ms. Merkel's Christian Democratic Party. "Should his new government decide to depart from these reforms, then there is the danger that in five years the situation will be even worse and the breeding ground for Le Pen even better."

**Write to** Anton Troianovski at [anton.troianovski@wsj.com](mailto:anton.troianovski@wsj.com), Andrea Thomas at [andrea.thomas@wsj.com](mailto:andrea.thomas@wsj.com) and Laurence Norman at [laurence.norman@wsj.com](mailto:laurence.norman@wsj.com)

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## Business Insider : President Macron may dramatically change France's position on Brexit

Ariane Bogain, The Conversation

6-7 minutes

French president Emmanuel Macron. Christophe Ena/AP

The campaign for the French presidency revealed a stark fault line on Europe.

The openly pro-European Emmanuel Macron called for the EU to be strengthened while the staunchly anti-EU Marine Le Pen promised a referendum on Brexit. Victory for the former therefore raises interesting questions about what his stance will be on negotiating the UK's exit from the union.

British headlines after the first round of voting portrayed Macron as bad news for Brexit. The Daily Telegraph described him as "the standard-bearer for open borders and the liberal global economic order" while the Guardian and the Financial Times both suggested he would drive a hard bargain in Brexit talks.

Macron believes in a strong France within a strong EU and is very keen to rekindle a Franco-German engine that has been stuttering for many years. He also wants to make the eurozone stronger, with specific proposals to establish a eurozone budget along with a parliament and a finance minister.

The new president has made no secret of his deep distaste for Brexit,

defining it as a crime that will leave the UK facing servitude. He has repeatedly stressed the integrity of the EU's four freedoms and insisted the UK should not be allowed to pick and choose from the menu. He is also very skeptical about future trading arrangements, based on the premise that "the best trade agreement for Britain is called membership of the EU." His hard stance was all too clear when he explained that the UK could only hope for a Canadian-style agreement, which of course excludes many sectors. The financial sector in particular, so important for Britain, is heading for a rude awakening as he rejects any possibility of financial passporting rights.

At the same time, Macron sees opportunities for France in Brexit. Most notably, there is the chance to attract banks, researchers and other talent across the channel.

Then, there is Le Touquet agreement, which sees migrants trying to reach Britain facing border checks in Calais rather than Dover. He has strongly hinted that he would consider dropping this deal and leaving the UK to manage its own checks. Peter Kurdulija / Flickr

But whether Macron really is bad news for the UK's negotiating position depends on the true meaning of the nebulous mantra "Brexit means Brexit." Beneath the brouhaha, four broad stances can be distinguished: Brexit as a

stepping stone to dismantling the EU, with each country following Britain's glorious lead out of the EU; the have-your-cake-and-eat-it position, where Britain would leave the EU but keep its advantages; the "soft" Brexit based on a new close relationship with the EU; and the "hard" Brexit, with all ties severed and trade carried out under the World Trade Organisation (WTO) framework. Macron's victory brings with it a mixed bag of good and bad news for everyone.

For those who supported Le Pen hoping that she would bring the whole house down, due to France's central role in the EU, Macron's victory is bad news. The EU is not going to disappear any time soon and the dream of a brand new world

order arising from its ashes is not going to be fulfilled just yet.

For the have-your-cake-and-eat-it battalions and "soft" Brexit supporters, Macron's victory is, on the face of it, also bad news. His refusal to give Britain any special arrangements or a comprehensive trade deal make that clear enough. And yet, Macron may well, as counter-intuitive as it sounds, turn out to be not such a bad news after all. Marine Le Pen, French National Front (FN) political party leader. Reuters

A victory for Le Pen would have plunged the EU into existential turmoil, leaving no time or inclination to spend time talking about Brexit. The UK would have been pushed so

low down the list of priorities that a deal would never even have been in the offing. A Macron victory is therefore not entirely bad news. The same goes for "hard" Brexit. Had Le Pen won, the UK would be falling back on WTO tariffs with a president intent on protectionism for France.

And of course, Brexit is not a national obsession in France as it is in the UK. Far more pressing matters are already piling up in Macron's in-tray, from sluggish economic growth to the terrorist threat. He also needs to fight for a parliamentary majority, or engineer one, in June. For all anyone knows, Macron might end up having to work with political partners who will push him to soften his stance on Brexit.

Macron will undoubtedly be vilified as a die hard pro-European who wants to bully Britain out of a good deal but let's not make him into a bogeyman. Yes, he will take a hard stance and try to get some of the spoils for France, but why shouldn't he seek the best deal for his own country? His priority is the eurozone and a new relationship with Germany.

Britain's fate is secondary. And let's not forget that the Brexit negotiations are to be carried out by the EU as a whole. France has undoubtedly a big voice but it won't decide all by itself. And at least under Macron, Britain will not be trying to strike a deal with a burning ship.

## The New York Times

### Why the Macron Hacking Attack Landed With a Thud in France (UNE)

Rachel Donadio

6-8 minutes

PARIS — Maybe it was the suspect timing of the leaked documents. Or the staggering amount and possibility that some were fake. Or a feeling among the French that, having witnessed how hacking may have altered the American election, they would not fall for the same ploy.

Whatever the reasons, newspapers and broadcasters in France have so far conspicuously avoided reporting any details of what was described on Friday night as a "massive" pre-election hacking attack on Emmanuel Macron's campaign.

The bereft coverage extended into Monday night, well after a 44-hour legal ban on election reporting surrounding the Sunday vote had lifted.

By then it was clear that the hacked material — regardless of what it might contain — had caused no ill effects on the campaign of Mr. Macron, who won decisively over the far-right candidate Marine Le Pen.

Continue reading the main story

The contrast with the United States presidential campaign was sharp: Hacking of Hillary Clinton that was traced to Russia may have played a role in her defeat by Donald J. Trump, but news of the hacking in France was met with silence, disdain and scorn.

The contrast with the United States presidential campaign was sharp: Hacking of Hillary Clinton that was traced to Russia may have played a role in her defeat by Donald J. Trump, but news of the hacking in France was met with silence, disdain and scorn.

The contrast may have been amplified further by the absence of a French equivalent to the thriving tabloid culture in Britain or the robust right-wing broadcast media in the United States, where the Clinton hacking attack generated enormous negative coverage.

"We don't have a Fox News in France," said Johan Hufnagel, managing editor of the leftist daily Libération. "There's no broadcaster with a wide audience and personalities who build this up and try to use it for their own agendas."

He also said that French voters, with the benefit of hindsight, were suspicious of destabilizing developments like the ones that may have affected the vote in the American presidential election and Britain's so-called Brexit referendum last June to leave the European Union.

"French voters didn't want to get into that game," Mr. Hufnagel said. "They were mentally prepared after Trump and Brexit and the Russians, even if it's not clear they're behind it."

Some Macron supporters initially feared that the reports of the hacking and his inability to respond could be devastating on the eve of voting.

The hacking lit up social media, especially in the United States, where far-right activists have joined together to spread extremist messages in Europe.

On Election Day, the French-language version of Sputnik, the Russian news outlet, played up social media coverage of the leaks.

But the leaks did not get much traction in France, where news outlets respected the blackout. The documents landed at the 11th hour,

without time for journalists to scrutinize them before the ban went into effect.

The news media also heeded an admonition by the government's campaign regulatory body not to publish false news. Mr. Macron's campaign said that fake documents had been mixed in with authentic ones.

There were also reports that Mr. Macron's campaign, well aware that it was a hacking target, had deliberately fed hackers false information in responding to phishing emails, which may explain why the leaked data was disseminated late in the campaign.

"You can flood these addresses with multiple passwords and logins, true ones, false ones, so the people behind them use up a lot of time trying to figure them out," The Daily Beast quoted Mounir Mahjoubi, the head of Mr. Macron's digital team, as saying.

Mr. Hufnagel said that Libération would take time to evaluate and verify the leaked documents before writing any articles.

Le Monde, the country's leading daily, said in an article published Saturday that it would also scrutinize the leaked material before writing.

"If those documents contain revelations, Le Monde, of course, will publish them, after having investigated in accordance with our journalistic and ethical rules, without letting ourselves be manipulated by the publishing agenda of anonymous actors," the newspaper said.

After that blackout ended Sunday night, most news outlets said only that the French authorities had opened an investigation.

That reticence stretched across the landscape of newspapers in France, regardless of political leaning. Several weekly newsmagazines — the conservative Le Point, the centrist L'Express and the left-leaning L'Obs — also held back.

The Macron campaign has said little about the hacking and leaks beyond a statement late Friday night — just minutes before the blackout began — describing the operation as "massive and coordinated" and an effort to destabilize French democracy.

For now, it appears the attack turned up mostly mundane documents. Although the coverage has hardly been comprehensive, no real smoking guns have been uncovered.

"The good news is that there was an attempt at destabilization that didn't work," said Céline Pigalle, the top editor at BFM-TV, a private broadcaster. "The elements weren't strong enough. But what would have happened if they had been?"

Ms. Pigalle said the late-breaking document dump provided a reason to revise the news blackout law. It was created to give citizens time to reflect before voting, but in the era of social media, it gives anyone with a Twitter account an edge over France's respected news outlets.

"It denies the world as it exists today, when social media don't stop," she said.

The National Front, Ms. Le Pen's party, has a vexed relationship with the mainstream news media, which it has at once scorned and used.

Ms. Le Pen and her aides have at times floated conspiracy theories, asserting — without evidence — that Mr. Macron had an offshore bank account, for instance. But her

campaign did not have enough time after news of the hacking attack became public to seize on any damaging findings.

Just before the campaign blackout deadline, a senior National Front official, Florian Philippot, said on Twitter: "Will Macron leaks teach us things that investigative journalism deliberately killed? It's shocking, this shipwreck of democracy."

But his message came across as a last-minute act of desperation. On a popular morning radio show on France Inter on Monday, the journalist Léa Salamé asked a National Front official, Nicolas Bay, about Mr. Philippot's post on Twitter. Mr. Bay said that the methods used to disseminate the Macron campaign documents might be questionable, but that it was important to discover their contents. The conversation ended there.

The National Front does not have the equivalent of a Bill O'Reilly or a Sean Hannity, the right-wing commentators who helped shore up Mr. Trump's presidential bid. While French commentators such as Éric Zemmour, a regular on radio and television who has a column in *Le Figaro*, have fed into a sense of decline and insecurity that the National Front tried to capitalize on politically, neither he nor other so-called neo-reactionary

commentators endorsed the far-right party.

In the United States, reaction to the Macron leaks was more animated, and Hillary Clinton took to Twitter to comment. "Victory for Macron, for France, the EU, & the world. Defeat to those interfering w/democracy. (But the media says I can't talk about that)."

## Newsweek : How the Macron Campaign Fought Back Against Putin's Hackers in the Final Hour

By Chris Riotta On 5/8/17 at 11:23 AM

5-6 minutes

Far right nationalist Marine Le Pen was offered a controversial photo of her happily accepted when touring Moscow in March during the French presidential election campaign. Russian President Vladimir Putin expressed his desire to shake hands with the populist candidate and wished her luck in the upcoming vote.

Le Pen walked out of her meeting with the Kremlin leader to tell reporters: "A new world has emerged in these past years. It's the world of Vladimir Putin, it's the world of Donald Trump in the United States ... and I think that probably I am the one who shares with these great nations a vision of cooperation and not a vision of submission."

A month earlier, Le Pen's main opponent, Emmanuel Macron, was gaining steam as an insurgent, albeit centrist candidate also vowing to shakeup the nation's status quo. Shortly after, his campaign reportedly fell victim to cyber attacks by the same group of hackers that targeted former Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton's campaign in last year's U.S. elections. That group was

comprised of infamous hackers like STRONTIUM, Apt28 and Pawn Storm, which most experts throughout the intelligence community agree work—at least in part—for the Russian government.

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The only difference was, Putin's hackers had finally met their match in Macron. French President-elect Emmanuel Macron celebrated on the stage at his victory rally near the Louvre in Paris, France May 7, 2017. Reuters

The French president-elect cruised to victory Sunday, garnering nearly two-to-one of the total votes against Le Pen with final projections placing him above 65 percent. And yet the world watched the election on the edge of their seats, following a last-minute "massive" hacking attack against Macron's new one-year-old political party, *En Marche!*, as well as his campaign.

**Related: Emmanuel Macron's French Election Win Sours the Mood in Moscow**

Both Macron and France were well-prepared for any sort of last-minute shakeup that had the promise of throwing a historic election on its head, however. The incoming French president and his campaign refused to take such attacks lying

down, after first reporting several of its members were targeted in online phishing incidents weeks before Le Pen visited Russia and met with Putin.

Macron's *En Marche!* campaign unleashed an operation attacking those hackers and their ability to gain accurate log-in information. "Every week we send to the team screen captures of all the phishing addresses we have found during the week ... we also do counteroffensive against them," Mounir Mahjoubi, Macron's head of digital, told the *Daily Beast* in the final weeks of the election.

When staff members received fake emails leading them to log-in pages hackers could use to record keystrokes, Macron's digital team flooded those landing pages with fake passwords and other data, confusing the hackers and making it virtually impossible to gain access to the campaign's emails.

"You can flood these addresses with multiple passwords and log-ins, true ones, false ones, so the people behind them use up a lot of time trying to figure them out," Mahjoubi said.

Meanwhile, France has several measures in place to avoid damaging the integrity of the national ballot in the eleventh hour;

the country restricts all election campaigning, reporting and polling on Friday at 6 p.m. before the Sunday vote in an effort to avoid sensationalized reporting—like, for example, more than 14 gigabytes of both private- and business-related emails and data dumped onto Pastebin on the eve of the election, which happened Friday at 2 p.m.

Eventually, the hacking group was successful in its attempt to unleash an assault on Macron's campaign. But it was too late to affect the vote. Supporters of French President-elect Emmanuel Macron, head of the political movement *En Marche!*, or *Onwards!*, reacted after announcement in the second round of 2017 French presidential election at *En Marche!* local headquarters in Marseille, France, May 7, 2017. Reuters

Still, those hackers haven't retreated offline; instead, they could look to the upcoming U.K. general election vote as their next opportunity for disruption.

"The only way to be ready is to train the people," Mahjoubi said. "Because what happened during the Hillary Clinton campaign is that one man, the most powerful, [campaign chairman] John Podesta, logged on to his [fake] page."

**NATIONAL  
REVIEW  
ONLINE**

8-10 minutes

Emmanuel Macron vanquished Marine Le Pen in yesterday's French presidential election. The result again confounded pollsters, who had largely converged on a prediction that Macron would take 62 percent of the vote. He instead took 66.1 percent. As Nate Silver noted on Twitter: "A bigger error than Brexit and much bigger than Trump."

## French Presidential Election: Emmanuel Macron Overcomes Russian Hacking, Faces Huge Challenges Ahead

If we calculate the tally to include abstentions and blank ballots, another remarkable result emerges: Le Pen managed to come in third in a two-man race. According to the Interior Ministry, 20.8 million voters backed Macron, 16.8 million abstained or cast blank votes, and just 10.6 million pulled the lever for Le Pen. This was a sharp slap in the face to her, her party, and everything in French history it represents.

For those of us who feared Le Pen would do well enough to claim a moral victory, the relief was immense, and any American with his head screwed on straight should share in it. Le Pen's most memorable line in last Wednesday's debate may have been, "France will be led by a woman. It will be me or Mrs. Merkel," but in truth, France under Le Pen would have been led by a man, and that man would have been Vladimir Putin. As has been widely reported, Le Pen is in hock to the Kremlin, which funded her

campaign. During one of her visits to Moscow, Le Pen explained her views to *Kommersant*. "The economic crisis gives us the opportunity to turn our back on the United States and turn to Russia." That many Americans found this fact irrelevant when asking themselves whether Le Pen's victory would be in their interests reflects a new and strange species of geopolitical masochism. That members of Congress, including Steve King and Dana Rohrabacher, travelled to

France to endorse Le Pen is both incomprehensible and unforgivable.

Election silence descended upon France at midnight on Friday. By long-established law, this is when campaigning must end. Directly before the silence fell, however, nine gigabytes of data, putatively e-mails stolen from Macron's campaign, were dumped onto Pastebin. The campaign had only enough time to confirm it had been the victim of a massive hack; it could not otherwise respond, nor could French journalists report on the contents of the documents. It looked to be what it probably was: a last-minute Russian bid to tip the scales in favor of Le Pen. On Saturday, France's election commission met and confirmed to the public that the leaked data apparently came from Macron's "information systems and mail accounts from some of his campaign managers." The documents, they said, were probably mingled with fakes. They urged French media and citizens not to relay their contents.

Some Americans, surprised by this, mistakenly concluded the blackout had been imposed specifically in response to the attack; a number of them even embellished this theory by envisioning an establishment bent on protecting its privileges and concealing the truth about Macron. Others concluded the silence of the French media was voluntary. Michael Tomasky of the *Daily Beast*, for example, tweeted, "Most French media ignoring the hack. See? It can be done. It's called news judgment." Neither was the case. This is longstanding French election law. Had evidence surfaced that Le Pen was a shapeshifting reptile from outer space, it wouldn't have been

any different. Once election silence descends, it descends.

Because the leak hit right before the pre-election news blackout, there wasn't time to pinpoint its provenance, but French voters were already entirely aware that the Kremlin had been busily involved in this election. The French edition of *Sputnik*, along with the Kremlin's other local propaganda organs and organelles, pumped out rumors that Macron was a closeted homosexual supported by a "very rich gay lobby." That charge reflected Russian obsessions more than French ones; no one here seemed much to care. But other Kremlin propaganda was better targeted to French culture, including insinuations, quickly reproduced throughout France's *faschosphère*, that Macron was something like an honorary learned elder of Zion, a man so tainted by his appetite for banking and his rootless cosmopolitanism as to be Jewish in function if not in form. The hacking and phishing attacks on Macron's campaign were sufficiently unrelenting that Foreign Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault issued a warning to Moscow in February: "This kind of interference in French political life is unacceptable."

It is possible that French voters previously inclined to dismiss the warnings of Russian tampering as exaggeration or partisanship were sobered by the last-minute leak.

And it was. It is possible that French voters previously inclined to dismiss the warnings of Russian tampering as exaggeration or partisanship were sobered by the last-minute leak. It's even possible, if not provable, that some of the

discrepancy between the polls and the results was owed less to a flaw in the pollsters' methodology than to voters' disgust with the effort to manipulate them.

American cyber-security experts quickly spotted Cyrillic script in the metadata, which suggests either that the authors of the attack were the usual suspects or that someone wanted it to look that way. It would be highly pleasing to think that the discrepancy between the polls and the final vote was owed to the decision by French voters to uphold the French tradition and round up the usual suspects.

It is true that there is no cause now for an excess of optimism. A France so furious and frustrated that 10.6 million of its citizens would vote for the National Front will not easily be repaired. The country is balkanized: It has been whipsawed by rapid deindustrialization; it is plagued by high unemployment; and it has failed to properly integrate many of its Muslim citizens — although Americans who believed this problem to be so severe as to warrant the election of Le Pen, and even to mount their own efforts to elect her, have been deceived. It is a fortunate thing that they succeeded only in insulting the people they had hoped to manipulate. That our own citizens, in turn, were obviously manipulated is now our problem to solve, not France's.

We should be pleased by the result but realistic. Macron is too young for the job, he has never been elected to any office before, and he has no established party. He owes much of this victory to luck, in the form of his major rivals' self-destruction. But at

least (unlike, for example, Obama, to whom he has been compared) he seems aware of all of this. His first speech as president-elect in the courtyard of the Louvre struck a grave tone. The solemn stagecraft — he spoke before the symbol of France's royal power, now the center of its republican culture, following the playing of the European anthem, Beethoven's "Ode to Joy" — seemed required to soften the unnerving reality: France still has serious problems, and now it has an untested, 39-year-old president, too.

"The task before us, my dear fellow citizens, is immense," he said, repeating the word "immense" several times. "We must restore morality to public life, defend the vitality of democracy, strengthen our economy, build new safeguards in the world arounds us, put Europe on a new foundation, give everyone a place, assure the security of French citizens." All of this is true, and there's little time to do it.

His tone frustrated those in the mood to celebrate, but I thought it suitable. "I'm aware of the divisions in our nation which have led some people to extreme votes," he said. "I'm aware of the anger, anxiety, and doubts that a large proportion of you have also expressed. It's my responsibility to listen to them," he said. He promised the voters that he would do his utmost to ensure that in five years' time, they would have no reason to vote for extremes.

It is a big job. It will take a lot of luck to pull off, even for Macron, who so far has been one of the luckiest French politicians I've seen. Here's hoping he succeeds.

**The  
New York  
Times**

## French Voters Defy Putin's Meddling, but You'd Hardly Know It in Russia

Neil MacFarquhar

8-10 minutes

MOSCOW — The official tone from the Kremlin on Monday, the day after the pro-Europe Emmanuel Macron was elected France's president, was that Russia can work with anybody. But the snow falling on Moscow was perhaps more reflective of the damp chill in the Kremlin's relations with Europe after yet another fruitless attempt to influence an election abroad.

For the last three years, since Europe slapped sanctions on Russia over the Ukraine crisis, the Kremlin has sought to undermine and weaken the Western, trans-Atlantic alliance arrayed against it. Elections

in particular have been viewed as a prime moment to try to exploit Western weakness — and openness — to help bring to power leaders more sympathetic to Russia.

France was the latest potential prize. Moscow backed one losing candidate after another, including an unusual, high-profile endorsement of the pro-Russia, far-right leader Marine Le Pen, whom French voters rejected soundly on Sunday.

On Monday the Kremlin tried to put the best possible outlook on the election of her opponent. President Vladimir V. Putin sent Mr. Macron a congratulatory message, expressing the desire to "overcome mutual distrust" and wishing him "good health, well-being and success."

Never mind that before the vote Russian-state run media profiled Mr. Macron as probably gay, in thrall to Jewish bankers and among the enthusiastic "demons of globalization."

Still, the nationalist, anti-globalization camp did not lose all hope. "In France the battle is lost, the war is not," wrote Alexander Dugin, a central philosopher of the nationalist right who also lectures periodically in France. "Transnational (and transgender) elites defeated the people."

Workers in Crimea placed a billboard reading "Together With Russia" before the referendum on joining the Russian Federation in 2014. Ms. Le Pen endorsed Russia's annexation of the region.

Sergey Ponomarev for The New York Times

Outside the ranks of Kremlin acolytes, however, political analysts aimed their criticism directly at Mr. Putin's foreign policy, saying it was time to recognize that Russian attempts to influence elections abroad, including in the United States, were a disaster and damaging Russian interests.

"One more defeat for the Kremlin," wrote Konstantin von Eggert, a program host and political analyst on the independent Dozhd television channel.

Last fall, the Kremlin thought it had found a natural ally in François Fillon, a conservative former prime minister chosen as the center-right candidate in the primaries. Long

warm toward Russia and Mr. Putin personally, he called for ending the sanctions.

When a scandal sank his chances, the Kremlin turned to Ms. Le Pen. She has made no secret of her love for Russia, endorsing its annexation of Crimea. Her National Front had also received a \$11 million loan from the now-defunct First Czech-Russian Bank in Moscow.

In March, while professing neutrality in the French race, Mr. Putin hosted her in the Kremlin, an unusual move for Moscow in the midst of an election campaign and effectively a Kremlin endorsement.

Then came accusations from the Macron campaign that Russia had hacked its computers. On the eve of the vote, a huge trove of stolen campaign emails was posted anonymously on the internet. French law prohibited any discussion of them in the final two days of the election, but Russia remains a prime suspect.

François Fillon, the former conservative presidential candidate, was warm toward President Vladimir Putin and called for ending the economic sanctions against Russia. Martin Bureau/Agence France-Presse — Getty Images

The leak did not seem to have much effect, landing with something of a thump in France. Even the main hashtag being #MacronLeaks, in English rather than in French, smacked of foreign meddling.

Mr. Putin, with his message of traditional family values and national pride, does have some support in Europe, particularly among far-right and populist movements, like the National Front as well as the Five Star Movement in Italy.

"In French terms, the alt-right and the far right overestimated the effect you can achieve

through social media," said Ben Nimmo, who studies disinformation and other online efforts for the Atlantic Council. "I don't for a moment think that the game is over and I don't think for a moment that the Russian disinformation campaign has admitted defeat."

After the result emerged, much Russian coverage focused on the fact that one-third of the votes went to Ms. Le Pen, and suggested that the election was somehow tainted by many people casting either blank ballots or not voting.

Rossiya-24, the main Russian satellite news channel, kept repeating that Ms. Le Pen had achieved a "phenomenal result." (Her party's showing was its best ever but still well below the threshold that even her own advisers said they would regard as a success.)

Sputnik, a Russian government press agency, posted a story on its French service emphasizing that Ms. Le Pen would most likely emerge victorious in two voting districts. (The fact that Mr. Macron would take the other 99 came in the fourth paragraph.)

Mr. Putin found allies among far-right and populist movements, like Marine Le Pen's National Front. Pascal Rossignol/Reuters

"The victorious defeat of Marine Le Pen," read one headline on the French service of RT, the international TV service for the Kremlin.

Some mocked the French for their choice.

While much of Europe remembers the 1945 defeat of Nazi Germany on May 8, Russians commemorate it on May 9, and generally believe that they receive insufficient credit.

Marine Le Pen, the leader of France's far-right National Front, a strongly anti-immigrant populist party. Macron, 39, will now become France's youngest head of state since Napoleon Bonaparte. What Emmanuel Macron's victory means for France and the world (Adam Taylor, Jason Aldag/The Washington Post)

PARIS — It was an 11th-hour surprise that seemed to offer final proof of how closely this weekend's critical French election mirrored the high-stakes American contest last fall.

And yet the reaction couldn't have been more different.

"The French deserve the 'elastic' Macron; they must go through globalist hell," wrote Daria Aslamova, a columnist in Komsomolskaya Pravda, a popular, pro-Kremlin tabloid. "They do not deserve democracy paid for by the lives of millions of Soviet soldiers."

Given the Macron-bashing on Facebook, one music promoter in Siberia joked that Russia had finally found a substitute punching bag for President Barack Obama. "Judging by Facebook — all Soviet people have with relief and joy received the election of Comrade Macron to the vacant post of our Russian Obama," he wrote.

Elsewhere in the Russian media there was some straightforward analysis of Mr. Macron's prospects, including his desire to strengthen the European Union and to institute broad economic change.

On the opposite end of the spectrum were those who argued that Mr. Putin had not only failed to help elect a candidate sympathetic to Russia but, as in the United States and elsewhere, was effectively turning both politicians and the public against Russia.

A Paris studio of Sputnik, a state-funded Russian news operation whose reporting was criticized by the Macron campaign. Dmitry Kostyukov for The New York Times

"Macron was the most anti-Kremlin candidate," Mr. von Eggert said in an interview.

Mr. Macron, like Angela Merkel, the German chancellor, essentially addresses Moscow as a problem rather than a partner, the analyst said, and Moscow's recent foreign policy initiatives, from campaign meddling to sending its military into Syria, have brought little of positive substance for Russia.

A centrist candidate who embraced globalization was facing off against a populist, anti-immigrant firebrand who spoke warmly of Russia. Terrorism was at the forefront of the discussion. Voter distrust ran high.

And then, minutes before the close of campaigning Friday night, the campaign team of Emmanuel Macron — an independent running under the banner of his brand-new "En Marche!" (Onward!) party — announced that its internal communications had been compromised and scattered across social media.

"Intervening in the last hour of the official campaign, this operation is obviously a democratic

"When you are talking about pro-Kremlin policy change, we have not seen much," Mr. von Eggert said.

The Macron campaign was so incensed by the tenor of reporting by the Russian outlets Sputnik and RT that it banned them from some campaign events, provoking protests from Moscow.

Mr. Macron, in his debate with Ms. Le Pen right before the vote, vowed to take a harder line with Mr. Putin. While acknowledging that Russia had to be at the table to help solve problems like the wars in Ukraine and Syria, he underscored that its values were different.

"In no case will I submit to Mr. Putin's diktats," Mr. Macron said. "He will be a working partner on a number of regional issues, someone I will talk with, but with the awareness that on a lot of issues we don't have the same values or the same priorities."

After the French election, the next major vote in Europe will be elections in Germany in September. The Germans, too, have expressed concern about Russian hacking and possible influence among more than 3.5 million German-Russians repatriated from the Soviet Union, many of whom still watch Russian television.

Over all, experts said, Russia has been able to obtain a toehold in the influence game because it is addressing angry populations alienated by current governments.

"If our societies continue to stumble because we have a large segment of disaffected voters, Russia might be able to undermine the system that we built," said Charles Kupchan, a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations. "In many respects the best way to deal with Russia is getting our own house in order."

destabilization, as has already been seen in the United States during the last presidential campaign," Macron's staff said Friday night, minutes before the start of a strict curfew on campaigning, which made further public response off-limits.

The announcement was all too familiar for those who had watched as embarrassing internal communications from Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign seeped onto the Internet last summer, much to the delight of her opponent, Donald Trump, who won an upset victory in November. The correspondence, which included discussion of the Democrat's private email server and the assessment of

## The Washington Post In France, a hack falls flat (online)

<https://www.facebook.com/ellennak>

ashimapost/

8-11 minutes

Centrist Emmanuel Macron has won the French presidency. He defeated Marine Le Pen, the leader of France's far-right National Front, a strongly anti-immigrant populist party. Macron, 39, will now become France's youngest head of state since Napoleon Bonaparte. (Adam Taylor, Jason Aldag/The Washington Post)

Centrist Emmanuel Macron has won the French presidency. He defeated



her own aides that her instincts could be “terrible,” became one of the tools Republicans used to disparage Clinton.

*[Clinton blames Russia, FBI chief for 2016 election loss]*

In France, few people even knew what was in the Macron team's emails. The blanket ban on campaigning meant that far-right candidate Marine Le Pen and her National Front couldn't mention them, though a deputy leader of her party did tweet early Saturday, “Will #Macronleaks teach us something that investigative journalism has deliberately killed?”

The answer was no. Most media chose to heed a request from the France's electoral commission not to reproduce the emails' contents. Le Monde, the major French daily, said in a statement that it had seen part of the documents but would not publish their details before the election, due to the volume of the dump and because the release had “the clear goal of harming the validity of the ballot.”

The paper's editor, Jerome Fénoglio, said in an interview that the documents would have been leaked earlier if they had contained damaging information. As it was, he said, “the best hope was to make noise.”

He said the response of the media in France carried lessons for journalists elsewhere, including those in the United States who rushed to reproduce pre-election leaks without thoroughly investigating their origins.

“Hiding information is not the same thing as refusing to be manipulated by those who diffuse the information,” Fénoglio said.

Voters, meanwhile, mostly waved away the news, saying their decision came down to more consequential matters. And they backed Macron by a wide margin, 66 to 34 percent,

handing him a decisive victory over Le Pen.

“The release is not important to me,” said Michèle Monnery, 74, after casting her vote for Macron in Laon, a small city in the north. “What matters to me is stopping Le Pen.”

*[Emmanuel Macron's unlikely path to the French presidency]*

Analysts immediately presumed the intrusion was designed to prop up Le Pen in the final stretch of a bruising campaign that had the power to dictate the future of an integrated Europe. They refrained, initially, from assigning blame for the hack, although experts concluded that its propagation began in the United States with a cluster of Twitter accounts run by members of a far-right movement whose aim is a whites-only state.

Now multiple research firms have linked the hacks to those that compromised the Democratic National Committee last year — links suggesting that Russian intelligence services accused of interfering in the American election may have sought to do the same in France. The finding was made last month, after the first round of voting, by Trend Micro, a Tokyo-based cybersecurity firm that fingered Russian hackers, known variously as Pawn Storm, APT28 and Fancy Bear. Recent analysis by Flashpoint Intel in New York came to the same conclusion, namely that the French hack “appears to be linked to the Russian state-sponsored campaign by APT28.”

Trend Micro, which has been tracking the Russian cyberthreat for years, briefed U.S., French, British and German government officials on a dramatic escalation of the Russians' hacking campaign in the spring of 2015, said Tom Kellermann, who was the firm's chief cybersecurity officer until last year.

“The Russians had taken the gloves off,” he said, including by calling on cybercriminals — or what he called

“the dons of the cybercriminal community — to act as their Rottweilers.”

The campaign was being carried out by hackers working for the GRU, the military spy agency, under numerous monikers. PawnStorm, as Trend Micro calls the group, uses cybercriminals in part to distance its activities from the Russian government.

Macron's campaign said the documents included routine emails and other internal communications interspersed with fake materials. A statement Monday from Mounir Mahjoubi, Macron's digital director, said his campaign had taken numerous cybersecurity precautions, notably by flooding phishing attempts with fake passwords. Mahjoubi said the campaign has faced several attempts each week to access its accounts.

The foresight to plant false information represents a savvy strategy on the part of the campaign, cyber-experts said.

“It's a good practice to do that more and more,” said Alexander Klimburg, an expert on cyberwarfare at The Hague Centre for Security Studies who has been in regular contact with French civil service officers. “For me the question would be more if they were advised by the government to take certain steps.”

Here is what you need to know about spear phishing: a targeted attack hackers use to steal your personal information. (Sarah Parnass, Dani Player/The Washington Post)

Here is what you need to know about spear phishing: a targeted attack hackers use to steal your personal information. Here is what you need to know about spear phishing: a targeted attack hackers use to steal your personal information. (Sarah Parnass, Dani Player/The Washington Post)

Frederick Douzet, a professor of cybersecurity and geopolitics at Paris 8 University, said the ordeal — addressed highly professionally by Macron's campaign — did no visible damage to his candidacy.

“If anything, the hack and leak appeared as a desperate maneuver,” she said. Precisely because of the example of the American election, “people are aware that fake news is around, fake documents could be mixed with real documents and that some people are trying to influence the election,” she said. “People are not naive.”

Today's WorldView

What's most important from where the world meets Washington

Not just France, but Europe at large, has taken note, said Matthias Wählisch, a computer scientist and expert on Internet technologies at the Free University in Berlin. France knew it was not immune from the sort of attacks that occurred in the United States, he said, and now Germany, which has a consequential election of its own this autumn, is preparing itself, too.

Kellermann, the former Trend Micro officer, said he believes that the Obama administration's response to Russia's provocations last year was too little, too late — and thus emboldened the Russians to undertake a similar campaign in France.

“President Obama should have taken the gloves off ... to block and tackle in networks outside of the United States, and he should have initiated economic sanctions in the summer of 2016,” Kellermann said. If Washington had imposed forceful measures then, “I don't think the European governments would be dealing with the overt types of influence campaigns that they're dealing with now.”

*Nakashima reported from Washington.*

## POLITICO Trump's silence on French hacks troubles cyber experts

By Eric Geller

8-10 minutes

Tens of thousands of internal documents and emails appeared online late Friday after being pilfered from the political party of Emmanuel Macron, who went on to beat Marine Le Pen. | AP Photo

The Trump administration is so far ignoring pleas from both on and off Capitol Hill to denounce the suspected Russian-backed digital

assault that appeared aimed to tilt Sunday's French presidential election toward nationalist candidate Marine Le Pen.

The White House's failure to mention the attack on one of America's oldest allies has worried Democrats, cyber policy specialists and former White House officials, who say the omission reveals a troubling inability to call out Russia over its digital aggression.

Story Continued Below

“This is an issue that should provoke grave concern in both parties,” Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer said on the floor Monday afternoon. “It should compel us, Democrats and Republicans, to take proactive actions against this new threat.”

In the hack — which some researchers have linked to Russian intelligence — tens of thousands of internal documents and emails appeared online late Friday after being pilfered from the political party of centrist candidate Emmanuel

Macron. The dump came less than two days before Macron's resounding victory on Sunday.

The White House's lack of comment on the incident comes just over a week after President Donald Trump publicly renewed his own skepticism about Russia's role in the hacking of Democratic Party emails during the U.S. presidential race, despite the U.S. intelligence community's forceful conclusion that senior Kremlin officials personally orchestrated the campaign with the aim of undermining Hillary Clinton.

"The silence is just a sign of how unprepared we are to deal with these things," said James Lewis, a cyber expert at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

After Macron's victory, the White House issued a congratulatory statement from press secretary Sean Spicer that made no mention of the email hack. Trump's tweet congratulating Macron on his "big win" likewise ignored the hack. Trump later spoke with Macron by phone, but a readout of the call didn't mention the cyberattack.

White House spokespeople did not respond to emails asking whether the administration would denounce the apparent Russian operation.

"In a different world, with a different U.S. government, yes, we would have spoken up, and we should have," said Herb Lin, a senior cyber policy researcher at Stanford University. "I think it was a mistake not to."

"It tells people that we're not willing to even acknowledge that they're under threat," added Lin, who served on former President Barack Obama's independent cyber commission.

In recent years, lawmakers and cyber specialists have increasingly urged the U.S. government to reprimand foreign governments publicly for online meddling campaigns that they say are quickly escalating into dangerous territory.

Traditionally, the White House has been hesitant to discuss openly which overseas adversaries officials believe are behind specific digital intrusions. It's difficult to link any hack to a foreign government conclusively, and public accusations risk derailing already-tense relationships with digital adversaries such as Russia, China and Iran. Going public also exposes the U.S. to being called out over its own

digital snooping operations around the globe.

But as cyber activity has graduated from stock-and-trade espionage to the potential sabotage of critical infrastructure — such as power plants or the electric grid — or interference in democratic elections, experts say governments must break their silence.

In its final years, the Obama administration started to speak out cautiously. In late 2014, it formally blamed North Korea for the bruising digital attack that took out Sony Pictures' computer network. And in late December, Obama publicly fingered Russia for the hacks that felled the Democratic National Committee and Hillary Clinton's campaign.

And since 2014, the Justice Department has also brought charges against government-backed hackers in China, Iran and Russia.

But the Obama administration also received criticism for waiting until after Election Day to officially condemn Russia for the presidential race hacks.

Lawmakers and cyber experts say the White House cannot continue to waver in such instances — even if the attacks aren't in the U.S.

Washington Rep. Adam Smith, the top Democrat on the House Armed Services Committee, called the French election hack "a threat to all of us, and our way of life," and called on Trump "to respond forcefully to this attack."

"He must not downplay, ignore, or encourage such an assault," he added in a statement.

Staying quiet after the France attack, said ex-Obama administration cyber official Megan Stifel, "doesn't send a very clear message to our allies, let's put it that way."

Stifel, who served as director for international cyber policy on Obama's NSC, said a forceful condemnation was necessary to "advance the norms the U.S. has been pursuing" in the international community.

Lin, the Stanford researcher, warned that by remaining tight-lipped, the White House risks allowing Russia's election meddling to become "normalized."

If nations don't complain about this kind of attack, he said, "then by de facto practice it becomes okay under international law."

Complicating Trump's silence is the fact that the president recently praised Le Pen, who is friendly with Russian President Vladimir Putin. She visited the powerful leader at the Kremlin in March and promoted a number of Kremlin-favored positions during her campaign, including plans to curb immigration, withdraw from the European Union and repeal the EU's sanctions on Russia.

Additionally, the leaked documents from Macron's campaign — which have yet to produce any major revelations — spread online because of a barrage of tweets from Trump-supporting, U.S.-based, far-right activists, as well as WikiLeaks, the government transparency activist organization that posted the pilfered Clinton campaign emails during the U.S. election.

According to the Digital Forensic Research Lab at the Atlantic Council, Jack Posobiec, a journalist with the far-right news outlet The Rebel, was the first to tweet out a link to the documents using #MacronLeaks. The hashtag quickly took off after it was promoted by WikiLeaks and other far-right Twitter personalities, the researchers said.

If Trump weighed in on the Macron leaks, it would bring attention to

these issues, not to mention the ongoing FBI investigation into whether Trump's camp colluded with the Kremlin over its apparent hacking of Democratic targets during the 2016 election.

"It's actually pretty shrewd not to say anything, because there's no way to win in this situation," said CSIS's Lewis. "I think that until we end the Russia investigation here one way or the other, the administration's going to be very cautious in saying anything."

James Norton, a Department of Homeland Security official during the George W. Bush administration, added that it was "unrealistic to expect President Trump to recognize a reported cyberattack in a foreign country."

Norton and others noted the Trump administration was likely working behind the scenes with French intelligence officials to help with any investigation. U.S. intelligence agencies have already shared with European allies the classified version of a deep-dive report on Russia's 2016 digital meddling.

Regardless, the drumbeat on Capitol Hill to take more public action is unlikely to cease.

"We should begin an extended, bipartisan discussion about how to combat foreign information operations campaigns and safeguard the integrity of democratic elections all over the world and, most importantly, in our own country," Schumer said.

*Tim Starks and Cory Bennett contributed to this report.*

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## What the French election highlights about Trump and U.S. politics (online)

<https://www.facebook.com/ishaantharoor>

7-9 minutes

WorldViews

Analysis

**Analysis** Interpretation of the news based on evidence, including data, as well as anticipating how events might unfold based on past events

By Ishaan Tharoor

WorldViews

Analysis

**Analysis** Interpretation of the news based on evidence, including data, as well as anticipating how events might unfold based on past events

May 9 at 1:00 AM

*Want smart analysis of the most important news in your inbox every weekday along with other global reads, interesting ideas and opinions to know? Sign up for the Today's WorldView newsletter.*

**France and the United States have vastly different political**

**systems, cultures and parties. But in the wake of Emmanuel Macron's landslide win in the second round of France's presidential election on Sunday, there are some important and interesting storylines that also cross the Atlantic.**

The first has to do with President Trump's own politics. Well after leading European leaders had already congratulated Macron, Trump issued a tweet hailing the French centrist's success. (On Monday, the White House followed up with a readout of a phone call

between the two in which Trump expressed "his desire to work closely" with Macron.)

**But, as was obvious to most people who watched Trump during the past year, Macron was never the American president's favored candidate.** At various moments, Trump had indicated his support for far-right leader Marine Le Pen, a politician who was "strong" on borders, tough on Islam, and opposed to globalization and free trade — just like him. Some observers believe that the ideology and rhetoric of Stephen K. Bannon,

now the White House chief strategist, was directly borrowed from Le Pen, who has spent years advocating an ultra-nationalist, protectionist platform hostile to immigrants and multiculturalism.

Other hard-line Republican politicians even journeyed to France ahead of the election to offer Le Pen public support.

"In France, Trump really went out on a limb, suggesting momentum for a candidate who was ideologically similar to him — very clearly hoping that his brand of nationalism would get a boost in an allied country," wrote my colleague Aaron Blake. He added that Le Pen's loss "suggests the nationalist, anti-Islam rhetoric that populated [Trump's] campaign isn't quite so ascendant across the pond."

That's a debatable assertion. The fact of the matter is that a third of French voters cast their ballot for a candidate whose party is tied to a history of fascism. The disaffection, anger and fear that fuel Le Pen's politics have hardly been dispelled. Le Pen's National Front will be campaigning hard in parliamentary elections next month, while she herself retains hopes of challenging Macron again in the 2022 presidential race.

Macron faces an unenviable task in the months and years ahead, as my colleague Griff Witte put it: "He must figure out how to translate the poetry of a campaign built on borrowing the

best ideas from either end of the political spectrum into the prose of governing in a way that doesn't alienate everyone."

Nevertheless, Le Pen's defeat was the latest sign that there is nothing inexorable about the rise of her — or Trump's — brand of right-wing nationalism. And while analysts banged on and on about the depth of political polarization in France, the election campaign also underscored how the polarization in the United States is all the more virulent.

After all, a wide swath of French political leaders opted to back Macron over Le Pen, siding with the candidate associated with the mainstream over a once-fringe figure surrounded by Holocaust deniers and Vichy apologists. Yet, in the binary American system, supposed moderates and establishment Republicans went along with Trump's undeniably extremist agenda, even when it was set against the neo-liberal centrism promised by Hillary Clinton.

Of course, what's centrist in the United States is very different from what it is in France, a country with a strong welfare state and where the idea of "big government" doesn't carry the same toxic load that it does in the United States.

"In the American context, 'centrism' usually implies a politics of compromise, a balancing act among competing interests and ideologies, an embrace of trade-offs between

parties and the messy, sausage-making aspects of political life," wrote Princeton academic David Bell. "But in France, throughout modern history, centrism has most often stood for a rejection both of ideology and of dealmaking politics."

**Macron channeled that kind of "centrist" idealism, which is virtually nonexistent in the United States. But he was also buttressed by a more sober, responsible media at home.**

"France does not have an equivalent to the thriving tabloid culture in Britain or the robust right-wing broadcast media in the United States," wrote Rachel Donadio of the New York Times.

When the efforts of Russian hackers and Trump-supporting members of the online alt-right yielded a cache of supposedly compromising Macron-related emails on the eve of the election, the French public and media outlets chose not to give it air time. Because of both propriety and election law, French politicians and pundits did not grandstand on the dubious leaks.

"We don't have a Fox News in France," Johan Hufnagel, managing editor of the leftist daily *Libération*, told the Times. "There's no broadcaster with a wide audience and personalities who build this up and try to use it for their own agendas."

Today's WorldView

What's most important from where the world meets Washington

In an interview with *The Washington Post*, Jerome Fénoglio, editor of *Le Monde*, said the French media's conduct held lessons for American colleagues, who rushed to reproduce pre-election leaks last year without scrutinizing their origins. "Hiding information is not the same thing as refusing to be manipulated by those who diffuse the information," Fénoglio said.

Of course, this may change. Macron's potentially difficult years in power may stoke further radicalization on both the left and right and see France's divisions grow wider. But for the time being, his victory draws a line in the sand.

"At a minimum, Macron represents a triumph of what in France are known as 'republican values' — the equal value of each individual, free and truthful speech, above all the idea of a just and impartial state," wrote James Traub in *Foreign Policy*. He concludes: "France has defended its national values in a way that the United States, in electing Donald Trump, failed to do."

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## Editorial : Here's how the West should respond to the Macron hack

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the way of compromising information.

4-5 minutes

By Editorial Board

The Post's View

Opinion

**Opinion** A column or article in the Opinions section (in print, this is known as the Editorial Pages).

May 8 at 7:17 PM

THE MASSIVE leak of documents from the campaign of Emmanuel Macron failed to prevent his landslide victory Sunday in the French presidential election. But perhaps his defeat was not the goal of the leak. Mr. Macron already had a wide lead when the files were posted on the Internet Friday night, the result of a hack that cyber-experts said bore the fingerprints of a group tied to Russia's military intelligence service. Nor did the archive appear to contain much in

What was most striking about the operation was not its impact on the election, but its sheer audacity. The Russians who participated in the attack appeared unconcerned about disguising their identity; experts reported that one modified an Excel worksheet using a Russian version of the software. It was as if the regime of Vladimir Putin wanted to send a bald message to Western democracies: We can hack your election systems and have no inhibitions about openly doing so.

That's why it is essential that Western governments respond forcefully and effectively to the intrusions. Russia must be deterred from waging cyberwar against core democratic institutions of the United States and its NATO allies.

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An appropriate response must begin with full investigation and disclosure.

Congressional investigations into the hacks of the Democratic National Committee and Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign, which the U.S. intelligence community concluded also originated with Russian intelligence, must be comprehensive, and the results made public.

Both in the United States and France, the attacks were facilitated or amplified by the WikiLeaks website and a broad network of social-media users and bots; among the biggest sharers of the Macron leak were Americans associated with the white-nationalist alt-right movement. More light must be shed on the connections, if any, among those private networks, WikiLeaks and Russian intelligence, as well as any ties between Western political campaigns and Moscow. Marine Le Pen, Mr. Macron's neo-fascist opponent, traveled to Moscow to meet Mr. Putin during the campaign and spoke publicly about what Mr. Macron says were fabricated reports that he holds an offshore bank account.

The Obama administration responded to Russia's interference in the U.S. election with sanctions on a few individuals and the shutdown of a couple of Russian compounds in the United States. The intervention in France, and reports of similar meddling in Germany's upcoming election, show that the Kremlin has not been chastened. What is needed are measures that will get Mr. Putin's attention, such as collective economic sanctions by European Union and NATO member states. Another worthwhile response would be disclosure of intelligence information on Mr. Putin's personal corruption and that of the elite surrounding him.

The encouraging news is that Russia's hacking operations appear to be yielding diminishing returns. Western news outlets and their consumers are becoming wise to Moscow's tactics: In France there has been more attention paid to the authors of the Macron hack and the network that promoted it than to the disclosed files. Moscow's influence

operations will fail when Western publics understand them for what

they are: cold war by 21st-century means.

**The  
New York  
Times**

6-8 minutes

## A Global Trump Movement? France Election Signals No

Peter Baker

operate.”

WASHINGTON — After his November election, President Trump and his strategists foresaw the beginning of a populist wave washing over the developed world. But instead of being joined by like-minded counterparts across the Atlantic, Mr. Trump finds himself facing a European leadership that has repudiated his fiery brand of politics.

The decisive defeat in Sunday's election of his preferred choice for president of France underscored the limits of the nationalist populism that Mr. Trump has come to represent. It also further complicated a trans-Atlantic relationship already stressed by issues like the future of trade, a resurgent Russia, the mission of the NATO alliance, and extremism and war in the Middle East.

Mr. Trump called to congratulate President-elect Emmanuel Macron on Monday, a day after voters picked him by a 2-to-1 margin over Marine Le Pen, the far-right nationalist who had the American president's implicit support. Mr. Trump emphasized his desire to cooperate on “shared challenges,” the White House said afterward, and the two leaders will meet for the first time on the sideline of a meeting of NATO leaders in Brussels on May 25.

But Mr. Trump will find more shared challenges than shared values as he encounters the new tandem of Mr. Macron and Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany, both champions of the European project and skeptics of Russian adventurism. With Ms. Merkel in strong shape heading into an election this fall — and facing an opponent who, like her, supports the European Union — the French election was perhaps the last, best chance for Mr. Trump to secure a major ally this year through a populist electoral uprising.

“The notion of a kind of ‘Internationale’ of the nationalists is no longer going to be viable at all,” Daniel Fried, a former assistant secretary of state for European affairs, said on a conference call organized by the Atlantic Council on Monday. “It changes the landscape in which Trump's foreign policy will

Mr. Macron “now stands as a counterweight to Trump,” Mr. Fried added. The combination of a dominant, seasoned veteran like Ms. Merkel and a young, dynamic newcomer like Mr. Macron, he said, creates an “implicit challenge and perhaps an explicit challenge to the Trump ideology.”

It might be too much to say the French voted to reject Mr. Trump, given the many economic and security issues that confront France and defined the campaign, yet the larger trends he reflected were at stake. “I don't think it's a repudiation of Trump,” said Benjamin Haddad, a research fellow at the Hudson Institute in Washington. “I do think it's a political answer to the challenge of populism.”

The French election followed contests in Austria, where voters rejected the far-right presidential candidate Norbert Hofer in December, and the Netherlands, where the far-right party of Geert Wilders fell short of expectations in parliamentary elections in March.

Mr. Trump had assumed that his own election and Britain's vote to leave the European Union were harbingers of other establishment dominoes that would fall. “He seemed so convinced coming in that ‘Brexit’ was just the beginning and other countries would be leaving,” said Karen Donfried, president of the German Marshall Fund of the United States. “Clearly, he's got to correct that assessment.”

Ms. Le Pen had initially sought to capitalize on the momentum from Mr. Trump's victory in November. She was among the first foreign leaders to congratulate him, and she made an unannounced but highly visible visit to Trump Tower before his inauguration, though she did not see the president-elect. By spring, however, with Mr. Trump highly unpopular in France, she was distancing herself, rarely mentioning him.

Mr. Macron, by contrast, posted a video in February tweaking Mr. Trump by inviting American climate change scientists to move to France since “your new president” is “extremely skeptical about climate change.” In the final days before Sunday's second-round runoff election, Mr. Macron attempted to persuade his supporters not to take

victory for granted by airing an advertisement showing American pundits predicting a decisive election defeat for Mr. Trump.

Police officers blocked access to the Champs-Élysées in Paris after a shooting in April. President Trump suggested it would help the far-right candidate Marine Le Pen's campaign. Thomas Samson/Agence France-Presse — Getty Images

But Mr. Macron also showed restraint in the final stage of his campaign. For his debate with Ms. Le Pen, his campaign team prepared talking points with plenty of attack lines tying her to Mr. Trump, according to an adviser to Mr. Macron, who asked for anonymity to discuss internal deliberations. Mr. Macron disregarded them. “Instead of scoring cheap points, he went for the more prudent and anticipatory attitude,” the adviser said. “He didn't want to jeopardize the relationship just for a punch line.”

For his part, Mr. Trump made little secret of his preference in the French contest. After a police officer was killed on the Champs-Élysées in Paris just before the first round of voting, Mr. Trump suggested it would help Ms. Le Pen's campaign, which focused in part on what she said was the threat of foreigners allowed into France.

“Another terrorist attack in Paris,” he wrote on Twitter. “The people of France will not take much more of this. Will have a big effect on presidential election!”

### Supporters Elated by Macron's Election

French citizens hoping the centrist candidate would become France's next president were overcome with joy and relief as the final result came in.

By CAMILLA SCHICK and STEFANIA ROUSSELLE on May 7, 2017. Photo by Eric Feferberg/Agence France-Presse — Getty Images. Watch in Times Video »

In case anyone doubted whom he was referring to, Mr. Trump mentioned Ms. Le Pen in a subsequent interview. “I think that it'll probably help her because she is the strongest on borders and she is the strongest on what's been going on in France,” he told The Associated Press.

But once the vote was in, he too put aside the election. “Congratulations to Emmanuel Macron on his big win today as the next President of France,” he wrote on Twitter on Sunday. “I look very much forward to working with him!”

One area where Mr. Trump and Mr. Macron may clash is Russia. Mr. Trump has spoken flatteringly of President Vladimir V. Putin and vowed to improve Russian-American relations, but Mr. Macron has taken a tougher line. Mr. Putin hosted Ms. Le Pen in Moscow during the campaign in a virtual endorsement, and the Russian government is suspected in the hacking of the Macron campaign and the leak of documents, an episode that echoed last year's Russian meddling in the American campaign.

Mr. Trump has made clear he thinks international relations are built in part on his personal chemistry with foreign leaders. If he can put aside his vitriolic attacks on China to forge what he now calls a strong relationship with President Xi Jinping, it seems plausible he could find common ground with Mr. Macron. He could focus on their similarities rather than their differences; neither had been elected before, and each ran against the establishments of the mainstream parties in their countries.

Besides, while Mr. Trump surely would have interpreted a victory by Ms. Le Pen as a validation of his own politics, she would not necessarily have been an easy partner, given that her promises to pull out of NATO and the European Union could have created a less stable situation for the United States.

Still, Mr. Macron, young, diffident and intellectual, is more often compared to President Barack Obama. “He's sort of the antithesis of Donald Trump,” said Mark Leonard, director of the European Council on Foreign Relations. “He does share this odd thing of running as an outsider when he's obviously an insider. But I don't think they could be any further from each other in terms of their ideas, their philosophy.”

**The  
Washington  
Post**

## Why the populists didn't win France's presidential election

Revue de presse américaine du 9 mai 2017

20

By James McAuley

7-9 minutes

(Adam Taylor, Jason Aldag/The Washington Post)

Centrist Emmanuel Macron has won the French presidency. He defeated Marine Le Pen, the leader of France's far-right National Front, a strongly anti-immigrant populist party. Macron, 39, will now become France's youngest head of state since Napoleon Bonaparte. What Emmanuel Macron's victory means for France and the world (Adam Taylor, Jason Aldag/The Washington Post)

PARIS — France was supposed to be next.

Following the seismic shocks of the Brexit referendum and the victory of Donald Trump, commentators worldwide fixed their sights on the French presidential election as the next potential populist upheaval. But it never happened. Emmanuel Macron, the centrist, pro-European Union candidate, demolished Marine Le Pen, the far-right ultranationalist, in a landslide victory.

"Everyone told us it would be impossible," Macron declared Sunday of his victory, to a crowd that erupted in cheers. "But they did not know France."

Why did right-wing populism fall flat on its face in France, a country that would seem such a fertile breeding ground?

The country, after all, has had double-digit unemployment for years. It has been rocked by terrorist attacks — perpetrated mostly by Islamist militants. In the aftermath of that violence, there has been a strong anti-immigrant backlash.

But compared with Britain and the United States, analysts say, there were two important factors that helped explain why the center held in France: the country's history and a lower level of inequality.

French voters were clearly ready to back a political outsider. But for many, the National Front — Le Pen's party — did not represent change in the same way that Trump did in the United States. Co-founded in 1972 by Le Pen's father, the convicted Holocaust denier Jean-Marie Le Pen, the party has existed on the margins of public life for decades. Its identity is well known.

"The rejection of Le Pen was a basic rejection of the extreme right and its racist, anti-Muslim sentiment," said Vivien Schmidt, an expert in French and European politics at Boston University. "In a country that's already experienced the extreme right in power before, you can put the rejection of Le Pen in a direct line with the rejection of Vichy."

The Vichy government assumed power after France fell to Nazi Germany in 1940. Although Vichy is infamous in France for having complied with German demands to deport tens of thousands of Jews to death camps, the regime also passed a slew of anti-Jewish regulations on its own.

Although the younger Le Pen sought to change the National Front's reputation for anti-Semitism and racism, her efforts were undermined by revelations in French media that several of its high-ranking members had committed variations of Holocaust denial. In a poll conducted before the election, 58 percent of voters said that the National Front presented a "threat to democracy."

At Macron's victory party outside Paris's Louvre Museum, many described their primary emotion as relief, rather than excitement.

Simon Moos, 18, a high school student, braved the unseasonable chill to catch a glimpse of Macron at the rally, even though he had not supported the candidate in the first round of the election.

"I'm relieved, honestly," he said. "Really relieved. France will remain France. I'd cut my throat before Le Pen was president."

In terms of economics, analysts said, the populist platform was likely less appealing in a country where a strong, centralized state has maintained a variety of social benefits.

Despite a recently widened gap between rich and poor, France still trails the ratios of Britain and the United States, according to statistics from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

In the 1980s, Ronald Reagan in the United States and Margaret Thatcher in Britain, both conservatives, began implementing reforms intended to stimulate economic growth, including deregulation, privatization, free trade, fiscal austerity and cuts in government spending. Some of these ideas were ultimately incorporated in the platforms of their more liberal successors.

France adopted some of those "neoliberal" reforms in the 1980s. But it never relinquished its statist economy and especially its extensive system of welfare protections in the same way, said Daniel Stedman-Jones, a historian and the author of an acclaimed study of neoliberalism.

"It may be no surprise that we see this populist backlash against globalization and immigration in the U.K. and the U.S., because these were the countries where Thatcher and Reagan introduced the most radical neoliberal policies," said Schmidt. "You had them in France to some degree, but never to the same extent."

Although Marine Le Pen was a staunch defender of France's famous welfare state, she did not benefit from a swelling tide of protest votes. Le Pen received roughly 34 percent of the ballots cast, but a larger percentage of voters abstained or turned in blank ballots.

"People may be feeling insecure and left behind, but the situation is not nearly as bad" as in other countries, Schmidt said.

There is also the reality that the National Front did not have a monopoly on the populist market, others said, pointing to the astonishing rise of Jean-Luc Mélenchon, a far leftist who advocated withdrawing from NATO. He did not make it past the first round.

"In France, we have two populisms — one of the extreme right, but another of the extreme left. To understand this, you have to understand the history of France," said Michel Wieviroka, a sociologist. "This is essentially the legacy of the old Communist Party. Britain never had that same history, and neither did the U.S."

Perhaps the most visceral challenge to France's political establishment in recent years has been terrorism. More than 230 people have died here in terrorist attacks in the last two years, many committed by men from immigrant backgrounds who held French or other E.U. passports.

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Despite the rise in popularity of Le Pen's anti-immigrant platform in the aftermath of these attacks, most French voters seem to have rejected her appeals to sharply reduce immigration, at least for the moment.

Antoine Leiris, a French journalist, lost his wife, Hélène, in the Islamic State attack on the Bataclan concert hall in Paris in November 2015. In a best-selling book, Leiris addressed the extremists who murdered his wife: "You will not have my hate," he wrote.

The same message, he said in an interview, emerged from the 2017 election.

"Despite these horrible attacks, the French chose intelligence and wisdom," he said.



## France continues populists' losing streak (online)

By Jennifer Rubin

6-8 minutes

Right Turn

Opinion

**Opinion** A column or article in the Opinions section (in print, this is known as the Editorial Pages).

By Jennifer Rubin

Right Turn

Opinion

**Opinion** A column or article in the Opinions section (in print, this is known as the Editorial Pages).

May 8 at 11:30 AM

Marine Le Pen and her anti-E.U., pro-Russia, nativist philosophy were defeated decisively in French presidential elections, by an even bigger margin than pollsters estimated. Pre-election polling set the margin of victory for winner Emmanuel Macron at 60-40 percent;

with 98 percent of the vote reporting, Macron led Le Pen 65.8 to 34.2 percent, more than a 30 percent margin.

The Post reported:

The result brought to a close a tumultuous and polarized campaign that defied prediction at nearly every turn, although not at the end. Pre-election polls had forecast a sizable Macron victory, and he delivered — winning some 65 percent of the vote.

The landslide was just the latest blow in 2017 for far-right movements that had seemed to be on the march last year but have suffered a series of setbacks in recent months across continental Europe.

In a pointed endorsement of European unity, Macron strode to the stage at his raucous victory party in the grand central courtyard of Paris's Louvre Museum on Sunday night to the strains of Beethoven's Ode to Joy, the European Union's anthem.

Critical to his victory seemed to be an appeal to the true values of French democracy without relying on a defense of the status quo. (“[B]y bucking France’s traditional parties and launching his own movement – En Marche, or Onward — Macron managed to cast himself as the outsider the country needs. And by unapologetically embracing the European Union, immigration and the multicultural tableau of modern France, he positioned himself as the optimistic and progressive antidote to the dark and reactionary vision of Le Pen’s National Front.”)

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President Trump had made clear he favored Le Pen, whose victory would have served presidential adviser Stephen K. Bannon’s vision of an international, populist, right-wing movement characterized by xenophobia, protectionism and hysterical accusations against governing “elites.” At least some French voters wanted to avoid making the “same mistake” as Americans had, in their estimation, in electing an authoritarian nationalist.

In his victory speech Macron vowed that “France will be France again,” a repudiation of the populists’ accusation that defenders of modernity and democratic traditions are somehow captives of impersonal globalism, traitors to their country. “We are the heirs of a great history and the great humanist message for the world,” Macron said. “We must carry them into the future and give them a new lifeblood.” He spoke specifically of the need to defend the “spirit of the Enlightenment,” an appeal to truth and reason.

Macron’s win follows that of Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte, who defeated right-wing populist Geert Wilders. It came on the same day as German Chancellor Angela Merkel’s conservatives declared victory in local elections in Schleswig-Holstein. “Regardless of the outcome of local coalition talks, the result was a damper on the mood among Social Democrats and unexpected good news for Merkel,” the Associated Press reported. “Polls had suggested a neck-and-neck race.” (Merkel will face the voters in the fall, another test of pro-E.U., anti-Russia sentiment.)

Perhaps Trump’s victory was not a harbinger of an era of right-wing populism, but an aberration that serves as a warning to Western

democracies about the danger of embracing demagogues who do not embrace the values of freedom, tolerance and the rule of law.

Macron’s was also a victory over foreign interference in France’s elections. Macron reportedly was the victim of a “massive” hacking and document dump on the last day of campaigning, another alleged instance of Russia’s alleged efforts to undermine pro-Western, pro-E.U. candidates. Hillary Clinton, who knows something about Russian counterintelligence, tweeted, “Victory for Macron, for France, the EU, & the world. Defeat to those interfering w/democracy. (But the media says I can’t talk about that).”

“Today’s result . . . was much bigger than the candidacy of Mr. Macron — it sent the strongest possible message to Russian President Vladimir Putin that his worldview has once again been rejected by European voters who embrace democratic values, human rights, and institutions such as the European Union,” said Sen. Ben Cardin (Md.), ranking Democrat on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in a written statement. “In spite of allegations of Russian interference similar to that seen in our country last year, democratic institutions across France proved

resilient. I hope that French authorities will conduct a full investigation into the scope of Russian interference in order to build even better defenses for the future and to share lessons with other democracies vulnerable to Russian aggression.”

In sum, Macron shows one possible strategy for defeating pro-Russian populists: Unflinching optimism, defense of democratic values and the promise of something new, an effort to respond to the needs of the dispossessed and disgruntled countrymen who have not shared in the promise of globalism. Whereas other traditional parties faltered, Macron could present himself as a reformer, an outsider — but one with an authentic voice in keeping with the country’s democratic traditions and commitment to inclusiveness.

The challenge, as Macron put it, is “immense” — for after campaigning there is governing. Macron must show how in practice his centrism works to the advantage of the have-nots. If he does not, the extremists will be back in force. For now, however, France, Europe and the West can celebrate the victory of light over darkness, reason over fear and true patriotism over angry nativism.



## Populists Don't Need to Win to Reshape Western Democracy

Shadi Hamid

Related Story

8-10 minutes

Marine Le Pen's Real Victory

We know, as a matter of fact, that centrist candidate Emmanuel Macron won 24 percent of the vote in the first round of the French elections, while the far-right Marine Le Pen won just over 21 percent. He exceeded expectations in the tense runoff, with a resounding defeat of Le Pen, 66 to 34 percent. Two people, however, can look at these same results and come to quite different conclusions. For those who fear the rise of populism, this was a victory for humanity’s better angels and a seemingly decisive defeat for Europe’s populist “wave.”

But there is a different way of interpreting the results. In the first round, the reactionary, but not necessarily far-right, Francois Fillon—a pro-Putinist to boot—won 20 percent while the far-left Jean Luc Melenchon came out with 19.6 percent, his best-ever result. When French voters felt free to vote their conscience, the “non-centrist” candidates, in other words, won 61 percent of the vote to Macron’s 24 percent.

Marine Le Pen won around 34 percent in the second round on May 7, slightly less than polls predicted. She lost by a landslide to Macron, but *she still won 34 percent* in one of the world’s most established democracies, easily her party’s best-ever result. Le Pen also happened to be, if anything, a weaker candidate than Donald Trump, who won not in spite of his idiosyncrasies and lack of political experience but because of them. That he was different than the rest was his *raison d’être*. On the campaign trail, Trump, in addition to being vindictive and mean-spirited, could just as easily be charming and funny. Le Pen is none of these things. She is solid. She is a professional politician, and a known political quantity, something that Macron was more than happy to point out in their presidential debate.

Perhaps more importantly, Le Pen suffered from a longtime association with her National Front party, with its history of anti-Semitism, fascism, and its weak spot for Vichy collaboration during World War II. Trump, on the other hand, was able to basically a rent a major center-

right party—one of only two that Americans can realistically choose from—for his own purposes. Oddly enough, it is precisely America’s two-party system, long thought of as a moderating influence, that propelled a president, Donald Trump, who is, at once, the most radical, the most secular, and the most ideologically promiscuous candidate in American history.

The French election results are likely to represent the new normal: populist-nationalists representing the second-largest parties in either presidential or parliamentary elections, rather than merely the third or fourth. This has now been the result in the three most closely watched elections in Europe beginning last December, in Austria, the Netherlands, and now France. Even when populism wins, as it did in the United States, it will not win outright, as evidenced by the stark disagreements among the Trump administration’s various factions. But populism doesn’t need to win outright to reshape Western democracy. It can still even hover in the low double digits, as long as it is able to influence, or even capture, the larger right. Max Fisher and Amanda Taub of *The New York Times* write that “as Brexit proves, the populist wave can do plenty at 13 percent,” referring to the portion

of the vote the U.K. Independence Party, or UKIP, won in the most recent elections.

European parliamentary systems make it hard for a single ideological current to dominate, and this is a virtue, as I discussed in a previous post. During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Marxist and socialist parties made considerable gains, but eventually reached their natural limit. As Adam Przeworski and John Sprague write in their seminal history of electoral socialism: “All growth was arrested as [they] approached 50 percent, almost as if electoral institutions were designed in a way that would prevent any political force from obtaining overwhelming support for any social transformation.”

Socialist revolution through the ballot box failed, but the populism of the far right (or of the far left) is something different. It’s ideological, without offering an ideology, at least not a coherent one. It’s a set of feelings, frustrations, and sentiments. It’s a valorization of “the people,” and the people, whoever they are, will remain. Socialism, as an ideology, is more likely to fail if the socialist program fails, but populism can attract a more diverse group of supporters from left and

right, precisely because of its lack of a defined program.

The counter to the populists, whether it's Emmanuel Macron in France or Democrats in the United States, have either won already or might soon win, but then what? Across Western democracies, the technocratic liberalism of the center-left has suffered a series of defeats, with establishment parties collapsing in dramatic fashion. The liberal consensus—which became more about preserving the status quo by tinkering around its margins than about articulating a new vision—plainly does not speak to the increasingly visceral, supposedly “irrational” tenor of modern politics in old and new democracies alike. And this supposed irrationalism, of not recognizing what others say our interests must be, is the way that so many of us, despite our best efforts, feel. (It's not irrational to want to vote in



4-5 minutes

Far-left candidate Marine Le Pen might not have won the French presidential election on Sunday, but in 2022 she will likely become president, former UKIP leader Nigel Farage told Fox News on Monday.

"She got 35 percent of the votes this time, and in 2022, I believe [Le Pen] will win," Farage told Shannon Bream on "America's Newsroom."

Farage defended his bold prediction by citing voting statistics that showed the older generation supporting France's president-elect Emmanuel Macron over Le Pen in this election.

"Eighty percent of the over 65's voted for Macron. So generationally, it's the older people that are sticking to the older European model and the younger people that are rejecting it," Farage added.

Macron won the election on Sunday, collecting 66.1 percent of the vote, while Le Pen took away 33.9 percent. Macron received 10 million more votes than



Sherrrod Brown Published 3:16 a.m. ET May 8, 2017 | Updated 14 hours ago

4-5 minutes

## Le Pen will become France's president in 2022, ex-UKIP leader Farage says

accordance with what you feel viscerally, if for example you feel that immigrants are or, at least can be, a threat to what you perceive your national identity to be. Or, for the more religious, what could be more rational than wanting eternal salvation, if your starting assumption is that paradise exists and that you must please God to be granted it?)

Some like the *New York Times* columnist Ross Douthat have argued that Emmanuel Macron is “a callow creature of a failed consensus.” While Macron's vision isn't necessarily clear—how exactly would he be different than other young, center-left “post-ideological” presidents?—what he does stand for matters. Being open to the European Union and to the world and being unapologetic about supporting democratic values abroad are more significant statements of intent today, now that they are under greater threat.

Le Pen to become France's youngest president at the age of 39.

The president-elect ran on a vastly different platform than his opponent, campaigning on pro-business and pro-European Union policies. Farage told Fox News that Macron's policies will not bring change to the country that's suffering from sluggish economic growth.

"In the end, what the French are going to see is five more years of failure, five more years of being stuck in the wrong currency, and five more years of increasing terrorist attacks," Farage said of Macron.

Farage said in order for Le Pen to rise to the top by 2022, she and the Front National would need to shed the old image that caused them to lose votes.

"The Front National needs to get rid of the baggage of the past, of the shadow of her father. When [Le Pen] does that, she'll be in a stronger position," Farage said, referencing party founder Jean-Marine, who Le Pen forced out during the last image change.

Le Pen concedes defeat in France's electio...

CLOSE

Marine Le Pen thanked her supporters after pollsters projected that her rival Emmanuel Macron will be France's next president. Le Pen,

Macron may not be an American-style multiculturalist, but he has tried to minimize tensions around Islam, arguing that “no religion is a problem in France today.” He has hinted at a more permissive interpretation of French secularism, or laïcité, saying that “too many Frenchmen confuse secularism and the prohibition of religious manifestations.” He has also reckoned with France's past of brutal colonization. So when people criticize Macron's lack of a clear, coherent ideology, they may be right, but for the French Muslims who worry about their future in France, that Macron would be openly more accepting of them is no small matter. For those who worry about whether they can be both French and Muslim, without having to choose, it might as well be everything.

Still, Macron being significantly better than the alternative does not mean Macron solves the problems

The party has already begun implementing changes before June's parliamentary elections. On Sunday, the National Front's interim president Steeve Briois announced that the party will receive a name change.

"It's opening the doors of the movement to other personalities," Briois told The Associated Press, "then give it a new name to start on a new basis."

A new name would help separate the anti-semitism and racism reputation that was left by Le Pen's father and original party leaders.

Le Pen, despite her defeat, won a historic amount of votes that has made the National Front a political heavyweight in France.

"It is this great choice ... that will be submitted to the French in legislative elections," Le Pen said during her concession speech. She also credited herself for creating a divide "between patriots and globalists" in the country's political landscape.

"Those who choose France, defend its independence, its freedom, its

that have allowed the French far right to inch ever more closely toward France's permanent mainstream. To truly stem the populist tide in any lasting, meaningful way will require going well beyond what Macron or anyone else of the center-left has so far offered. It is not enough to be better. Macron has often been compared to another “post-ideological” president, Barack Obama, which might sound encouraging. Except that populist nationalism's greatest victory came to pass after Americans experienced eight years of Obama's once supposedly transformational presidency. That presidency didn't transform politics, at least not in the way his supporters had hoped when they celebrated on November 4, 2008.

prosperity, its security, its identity and its social model," Le Pen said.

### IN A DIVIDED FRANCE, CHALLENGES AWAIT PRESIDENT-ELECT MACRON

Le Pen pledged to pull France out of the European Union and NATO and to back away from the euro currency if she had become president.

Germany's foreign minister, Sigmar Gabriel, in his welcome for Macron, also warned the French that if the president-elect fails to bring on change, "In five years Mrs. Le Pen will be president and the European project will go to the dogs."

Farage believes that vision of Le Pen in office will come with Macron as France's president.

"The French may not have gone for Frexit yesterday in the way the Brits did last year in our referendum, but I believe genuinely, sincerely, that it is only a matter of time," Farage said.

*Fox News's Shannon Bream and The Associated Press contributed to this report.*

## Sen. Sherrod Brown: Donald Trump and Marine Le Pen are fake populists:

Sherrrod Brown Published 3:16 a.m. ET May 8, 2017 | Updated 14 hours ago

4-5 minutes

Le Pen concedes defeat in France's electio...

CLOSE

Marine Le Pen thanked her supporters after pollsters projected that her rival Emmanuel Macron will be France's next president. Le Pen,

his far-right opponent in the presidential runoff, quickly called the 39-year-old Macron to concede defeat. (May 7) AP

Sen. Sherrod Brown, D-Ohio, at Kent State University on Oct. 31, 2016. (Photo: John Minchillo, AP)

Donald Trump is a populist. So are Marine Le Pen and Steve Bannon.

Really?

Populism does not divide our society into these people here or those people over there. It doesn't fan resentments and exploit

grievances. Populism never excludes based on race or gender or religion. It doesn't appeal to some by pushing others down; it embraces everyone.

Populism speaks out against a church shooting, or a threat against a Jewish center, or the bombing of a mosque. A populist stands in solidarity against all acts of hate.

Populism is a belief that you build the economy from the middle class out, not by demanding tax cuts for the most affluent, with the long-discredited argument that prosperity will trickle down.

Populism is a trade policy that puts American workers and small businesses first, but never pits foreign workers against our country's workers. We never confuse populism and jingoism.

Populism doesn't preach hate. Populism preaches hope — hope that all workers will have the opportunity to build better lives for their families. I hear that same hope all over Ohio, from the young, diverse workers at a software

company outside of Cleveland, to coal country, where people aren't willing to give up on their hometowns.

I heard it in Cincinnati, where I met with janitors who had just signed their first union contract. One woman told me this was the first time in her 30 years of working she would be able to take a one-week paid vacation.

A true populist looks out for people like her, because populism values work and it respects the people who do it — every last one of them. Our society doesn't value work the way we once did; Americans work harder and have less to show for it.

If you want to call yourself a populist, you better be ready to stick up for the little guy — whether she punches a time clock or earns tips. Whether she works in a call center or a hospital or on a factory floor. Whether he is a contract worker or a temp.

And you better be willing to be straight with the people you serve. A

true populist tells the truth, because she respects people's intelligence.

### **POLICING THE USA: A look at race, justice, media**

Of course we've always had cynical politicians. They — and the media that cover them too — often confuse popularity with populism. Populism and popularity may share the same Latin root, but not the same political home. An opportunist politician divides people and kowtows to the powerful. He spreads blame instead of solutions, and lies about bringing back an idyllic past that never was. And he often treats those with less power and privilege with disdain.

In Matthew 25, Jesus said, "When I was hungry you gave me food. When I was thirsty, you gave me drink. When I was naked, you clothed me. When I was sick, you visited me. ... What you did for the least of these, you did ..."

Wait. Not exactly. Jesus would never have said that one human being is less than any other. Certainly Mohammed or Moses or Gandhi would never have

preached that the worth of one human being is greater than the value of another.

In the translation published by the American Bible Society, the Poverty and Justice Bible, Jesus said, "What you did for those who seemed less important, you did for me."

A populist recognizes that no one is less important or of less value. That's the heart of populism: respect for all people — their work, their dignity, their intelligence. Our spiritual leaders embrace everyone. So must we.

Sen. Sherrod Brown, D-Ohio, is the ranking member of the Senate Banking Committee.

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## **NATIONAL REVIEW ONLINE**

8-10 minutes

# **Emmanuel Macron's Win - French Establishment Should Temper Celebration**

The outcome of yesterday's French presidential election is easily explained. In the qualifying round two weeks ago, Emmanuel Macron defeated all the other non-Front National candidates in the competition to be least like Marine Le Pen. And because he was obviously much less like Marine Le Pen than Marine Le Pen herself in yesterday's final round, he defeated her by roughly two to one.

Indeed, it is looking as if Le Pen underperformed even the low expectations of those who thought she would lose, getting only 34 percent when some observers expected her to break the 40 percent barrier. Michael Barone points out that she lost *la France profonde* as well as Paris to Macron, winning just two regions outright, and doing relatively well only in areas hit by recession or by high Muslim migration.

Though its size is remarkable, however, Le Pen's defeat is the opposite of a surprise. It's long been clear that most French voters would not support Le Pen or the National Front at any price. Earlier polls had shown that every other presidential candidate would defeat her in a runoff. The entire French establishment and all the other parties called for her to be crushed. And she suffered

from the standard bias of the media and political elites that the most extravagant charges can be leveled against "right-wing" politicians with no need for evidence or penalty for error.

That said, there were surprises buried — and not far down — in the statistics. No fewer than 12 million voters cast "spoiled" ballots when confronted with these two candidates (some writing rude remarks on the ballot paper, I regret to tell you). If you count those abstentions as votes, they mean that though Macron won two-thirds of the Macron-Le Pen total, he won less than 50 percent of all who went to the polls either to vote or to protest. Other Macron supporters told pollsters they had voted against Le Pen rather than for Macron. And since turnout itself was slightly lower than usual in presidential elections, everything suggests a very high level of disaffection among French voters.

It contrasts oddly with the unqualified expressions of euphoria among European and national leaders welcoming a historic victory for France and Europe with "Ode to Joy" as their anthem. All that seems a little unreal. Indeed, before a single vote had been cast, observers such as Charlie Cooke and Christopher Caldwell pointed to the curious likelihood that a country moving right was about to elect a leftist president and that a nation

angry with both the governing Socialists and the establishment was about to choose an *énarque* graduate of an establishment training ground who was in the Socialist government until yesterday to govern it.

Now it's happened. So it inevitably seems less odd. But common sense suggests that some serious clashes are about to erupt between Macron's ideas and political realities and between some of the different ideas wrestling inside for mastery of his mind. He is, for instance, a passionate Europhile who wants to relaunch the European Union. His commitment to the euro goes to the extent of wanting a fiscal government with a single finance minister for the eurozone that would then become a transfer union with "mutualization" of debts. Germany will like almost all of this because it promises to impose fiscal discipline upon otherwise unruly eurozone countries. But the Germans are determined to avert the threat of a transfer union with debt mutualization, which, as they see it, would amount to giving Greece and Italy the keys to the German treasury at the very moment that the U.K. will have opted out of subsidizing Europe in any way. Expect communiqués written in vanishing ink.

Macron is also talking up his intention to reform the over-regulated French economy and

dash for prosperity. We've heard these plans before — in particular from Jacques Chirac (in his first presidency) and Nicolas Sarkozy. But they were very soon abandoned. They inevitably bump into obstacles such as the labor unions, the entrenched belief in the "French social model," and not least the chains of an overvalued exchange rate, today's euro, that makes French industry uncompetitive (and German industry highly competitive).

A restructuring of the euro (probably into a northern and southern one) would seem to be the practical solution to France's and Europe's problems here. But Macron is viscerally opposed to that particular reform, and so is Germany. Worse, if the euro were divided, France would probably be compelled by its sense of prestige to remain in the northern euro when its economic interests plainly indicate that it seek the relief and greater competitiveness of a southern euro. All in all, the prospects for Macron's "pro-market" reforms — which explain why some conservatives and classical liberals support him — look distinctly gloomy. But it was Europhiliac French bureaucrats who designed the euro to be a house with no exits.

Macron must be considered an apprentice Man of Destiny—one facing difficulties as harsh and complex as those facing more



experienced such figures as de Gaulle and Napoleon.

That brings us to perhaps the most fateful of Macron's instincts on policy: his passionate multiculturalism, his post-nationalism, his hostility to "Islamophobia," and his belief in a liberal migration policy or, in the jargon, "an open society." He seems to believe in the limitless capacity of France to absorb more migrants and more cultures in a common multiculturalism even to the extreme of saying, "There is no such thing as French culture." Yet France is at present divided bitterly between the native-born and migrants, facing another surge of lawless migration from the Mediterranean, and disturbed by near-constant acts of murder and terrorism. It is not yet in a state of civil war, but scores of

automobiles are burned every night in the major cities, the spread of "no-go areas" continues steadily, and the imposition of Muslim rules on both Muslims and others living in these areas becomes increasingly oppressive. It is hard to see how all this can go right, especially if Macron's economic reforms don't produce the prosperity on which any social easement will depend.

Macron may not even have the parliamentary support of a substantial number of MPs. There will be elections for the National Assembly in six weeks, and his new party could win a majority, but if the voters are suffering from buyer's remorse by then, it might not. The statistics all suggest that, in the American phrase, his support is wide but shallow. Until we know the results, Macron must be considered an apprentice Man of Destiny — and one facing difficulties as harsh and

complex as those facing more experienced such figures as de Gaulle and Napoleon.

A more ominous pointer towards the future is also visible in the post-election polls. Macron was elected by the old. Voters over 65, presumably with memories of the Second World War, the colonial wars, and a prosperous postwar France, supported him by margins of 80–20. Marine Le Pen pulled in 44 percent of the vote of 18- to 25-year-olds — the largest share she won from any age group. They are presumably less subject to post-colonial guilt and less willing to yield their interests or compromise their loyalties because of it. So the next five years could well see a series of social crises in which two versions of young France — a multicultural one swollen by migration and a native-nationalist one fed by the arrival of a post-guilt generation —

will find themselves on opposite sides of a worsening political divide. Will Marine Le Pen emerge stronger as a result in 2002? Or will the National Front split and merge with post-Gaullists and others on the center-right to form a new party? Or will a political entrepreneur in the Republicans do successfully what François Fillon attempted this time — namely to take his somnolent establishment party to the right and win the kind of socially and nationally conservative voters in France that Theresa May has won in the U.K.?

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— John O'Sullivan is an editor-at-large of National Review.



## Emmanuel Macron Embodies French Ambivalence

Scott Sayare

8-10 minutes

PARIS — Shortly after 10:30 on Sunday night, as the elegiac strings of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony filled the darkened courtyard of the Louvre, Emmanuel Macron, France's president-elect, began a long, solitary march to the stage where he was awaited by a crowd of many thousands and a nation almost entirely uncertain of what to expect from its fresh-faced new leader. It is often said that the president of the French Fifth Republic is an elected monarch, and Macron indeed looked very much the young king, a bit stiff with awe and entirely alone but for the glare of a spotlight and a clutch of television cameras, there to capture his rehearsed solemnity and the nervous movements of his eyes.

His first order of business will be to prevent this lonesome spectacle from serving as an allegory for his presidency. Though he was elected by a vast margin over his opponent Marine Le Pen, the populist reactionary who leads the National Front party, Macron owes his victory far more to the country's fear of Le Pen than to any particular taste for his own centrist politics. At nearly 25 percent, abstention was up from the first round of the election and at a 48-year high, and 9 percent of voters cast blank ballots in protest, an all-time record. Macron won almost 66 percent of the vote, but this represented only about 44 percent of registered voters, and polls show that nearly half of these were motivated primarily by a desire to block Le Pen. Macron's economic

liberalism frightens most of the left; his social liberalism alienates much of the right; his Europeanism angers the extremes of both. (The fourth movement of Beethoven's Ninth, or "Ode to Joy," was selected for Macron's grand entrance because, in addition to being lovely and optimistic, it is the official anthem of the EU.)

### Related Story

What Macron's Victory in France Means for the European Union

Speaking Sunday night, Macron offered "a word for the French who voted for me without sharing our ideas." "I know that this wasn't about giving me *carte blanche*," he said, acknowledging that many had voted "simply to defend the Republic." If he is to accomplish the economic and governmental reforms for which he has called, and to serve as more than a lonely figurehead, he will need either to convince these reluctant supporters to accord him a parliamentary majority in the legislative elections next month; or to convince whomever they elect to abandon partisanship and work with him in a coalition. Both of these outcomes are within reach, polling indicates, but neither is by any means a given.

Le Pen underperformed, having been expected to win as much as 45 percent of the vote but finishing with only 34. An almost comically bilious performance in a televised debate against Macron is thought to have cost her several points, and perhaps also to have undermine her efforts

to lastingly *dédiaboliser*, or "demonize," the National Front. Her second-round campaign slogan was "Choose France," and she sought to cast the election as a referendum on French identity and independence; in fact, it was a referendum on her. Still, Le Pen received more than 10.5 million votes, several million more than she or her party have ever won in any previous election, an "historic and massive result" that has made her the leader of the country's de facto "primary force of opposition," Le Pen told her supporters. The traditional parties of the left and right, which after losing in the first round of the election had called upon their supporters to vote for Macron, have "discredited themselves, and forfeited any legitimate claim to representing a force of change, or even credible opposition," Le Pen said.

Her score augurs a "recomposition" of the French political field, she said a bit hopefully, with the traditional designations of left and right giving way to those of "patriots" and "globalists," but the Front National must undergo a "deep renewal" in order to rise to this occasion. A change in name may be in the offing; some party officials, frustrated with the election result, have gone so far as to begin calling for Le Pen or her close advisors to resign. "For the time being, that's off the record," one party official told *Le Monde*. "After the legislative elections, it won't be off the record anymore." The National Front is expected to win no more than a modest handful of seats in parliament. But it holds only two at the moment, and Le Pen's score confirms that, at the very least, the party will likely remain a center of

gravity in French politics in the years to come.

Both the National Front and Macron may benefit from a divided right, with Macron drawing away moderates and the National Front attracting identity and security hardliners. Most prominent members of Les Républicains, the major party of the right, called upon voters to back Macron in the second round, and some have now been speaking of him in particularly admiring tones, angling, presumably, for ministerial appointments or for help with their legislative reelection campaigns. (On Sunday night, a handful of them shuttled between television sets, currying favor.) Other LR party leaders, fearful that the party might break apart, have firmly refused any alliance with Macron or any participation in his eventual parliamentary coalition. "I'm obviously in the opposition," said François Baroin, the party official tasked with leading the party's campaign for the legislative elections. His party's candidate, François Fillon, won 20 percent of the first-round vote, he noted in an appearance on television station France 2, just 4 percent less than Macron and 1 percent less than Le Pen. If LR does not win a majority in parliament, it intends, like the National Front, to serve as the prime opposition to the president.

So too does Jean-Luc Mélenchon, the erudite and sneeringly self-regarding leftist who placed just behind Fillon in the first round, with slightly less than 20 percent of the vote. Mélenchon refused to call for his supporters to back Macron in the second round, though he also

enjoined them not to vote for Le Pen. In an address Sunday night, he said: "The new president has been elected. Courtesy, and love for our democracy, demand that we duly note this, without dithering, and that we present him our best wishes. May our nation's sense of destiny inhabit you, Mister President, and may the thought of the misfortunate—without rights, without roofs, without work—obsess you. May France find its satisfaction. But better that we see to it ourselves."

The Socialist Party, the traditional force of the left and the party of outgoing president François Hollande, has been squeezed by the rise of both Mélenchon, on its

leftward edge, and Macron, on its right. It is expected to lose scores of seats in the elections next month, but has not yet adopted a clear line with regard to Macron, and those of its members who may wish to run under the auspices of his movement, *En Marche!* The political landscape is fracturing; whether this will be to Macron's benefit or disadvantage remains to be seen.

Though *En Marche!* is only a year old, Macron has pledged to run candidates in each of France's 577 parliamentary districts, half of them politicians, half of them members of civil society without political experience. (Their names have yet to be announced.) This half-and-half

approach is a gesture both to popular exasperation with the traditional political class and to the virtues of experience in leadership. Macron himself has never held elected office and exalts the virtues of private initiative, but he is also a former Economy Minister and a product of the same elite institutions that have traditionally trained the country's politicians and top public officials. During his campaign, detractors and supporters alike frequently joked that his favorite expression was "*en même temps...*," or, "on the other hand..." which, depending upon one's affinities, suggested either a willingness to listen and reflect, or an unwillingness to choose.

Since their revolution, at least, the French have been pondering whether they ought to think of themselves as a nation of insurrectionists with a pronounced taste for the status quo or rather as a nation of conservatives who occasionally spasm into rebellion. They have elected as their president a man who embodies this national ambivalence quite thoroughly. It is perhaps his prime appeal, but it will doubtless be his prime risk, as well: If he sets out to offend no one, he may succeed only in disappointing everyone, and thus find himself entirely politically alone.



## In Macron, supporters see a champion of optimism

The Christian Science Monitor

8-11 minutes

May 8, 2017 Paris—The improbable rise of Emmanuel Macron as the youngest president in modern French history – held up as a rebuke to transatlantic populism and generating expectations from Boston to Berlin – started with the big hope of women like Christelle Deron.

Ms. Deron was one of thousands of French people who signed up for the political movement "En Marche" that Mr. Macron started just a year ago, knocking on doors across the country and helping create and curate the message of optimism that ultimately prevailed at the polls Sunday night.

At the time the then-economy minister was not a presidential candidate. In fact, his name was barely known, and certainly not outside of France. But Deron was impressed by her perception that he put projects above politics, and when he started his movement outside the traditional party apparatus – claiming to be neither left nor right – the 25-year-old who didn't even vote in the previous presidential election joined his army of volunteers.

"He was talking to people, engaging in dialogue, something that we don't see that often in France," she says on a recent evening outside his headquarters where she has put in almost as many hours as into her day job as a public affairs consultant. "I subscribed right away. I wanted to be part of it."

"When we started we just thought that we were building a project, a platform but probably for 2022," she adds. "So it went way faster than we imagined."

Indeed, Macron's victory Sunday night not only surprised his own movement, it caps one of the most extraordinary races in French history. Both mainstream parties were ousted from the race, and the runoff featured two outsider candidates with wildly divergent ideas for France's future. Marine Le Pen made it to round two with an anti-immigrant, anti-EU message that tapped into pessimism in French society, while Macron forged forward, unapologetically pro-global and pro-European. The French opted for the latter, with 66 percent choosing Macron, compared to 34 percent for Ms. Le Pen, a larger margin than polls predicted.

And now he faces the enormous task of channeling the expectations – and some would say idealism – of Deron and the movement he founded into a reformist, centrist presidency that pushes back against the populist forces that still lurk.

### 'Oui, nous pouvons'

If all of this sounds familiar – perhaps too familiar, from some vantages – to the American election of Barack Obama, it's not a coincidence.

The first major action of "En Marche" was the door-to-door campaign of which Deron became part, marching across France in a listening tour. Called the "Grande Marche," it was unabashedly American in style, and, organized by the electoral technology startup Liegey Muller Pons, it borrowed directly from Mr. Obama's 2008 presidential bid.

What they found, in conversations across the country that focused on what's working at the local level and what could be expanded, is that polls didn't always reflect the full scope of people's views. "There is a tendency among French people to be pessimistic about their future,"

says Vincent Pons, a co-founder of Liegey Muller Pons. "But during these interactions Emmanuel Macron found out that there were many people who had ideas, who had a positive outlook of the country."

It's one reason Macron so enthusiastically embraced optimism as a guiding message, despite the general sense that it is pessimism that is winning the era.

But now he faces the gargantuan task of unifying the nation. Despite Macron's decisive victory, Le Pen still won a third of the electorate – a historic win for her National Front – while another third either abstained or cast blank votes, refusing to endorse either candidate. While "En Marche" calls itself a movement of optimism, of the two-thirds of voters who cast ballots for Macron, many did so begrudgingly – because they feared Le Pen's rise. Despite his outsider claims, many see him as a continuation of President François Hollande, the most unpopular president of the Fifth Republic. He faces the immediate challenge of legislative elections – where a man without a party seeks to secure a majority next month.

"He is a candidate who did not play on people's fears, on people's resentments, anger. He did not try to look for scapegoats, Islam, immigration, or European institutions," says Karim Bitar, a senior research fellow at the Institute for International and Strategic Relations in Paris. "But many of the 66 percent of voters who chose him did not necessary adhere to this message of hope that he was carrying. They were basically trying to say no to Marine Le Pen. It is going to be quite difficult to maintain the climate of hope."

### Dialogue, not condemnation

As thousands of supporters cheered and danced in the courtyard of the Louvre Palace, in front of I.M. Pei's glass pyramid Sunday night, Macron seemed to acknowledge the doubts after his victory was announced. "I know the anger, the anxiety, the doubts that very many of you have also expressed. It's my responsibility to hear them," he said.

That's the kind of message that first piqued Deron's interest. After the Bataclan terrorist attack in November 2015 that rocked Paris, she says he was the only one who wasn't fixating on a foreign threat. "He said, 'This is the second time we are attacked by French people on French people. We need to think about the roots of this to solve the problem.' I appreciated he had the courage to say this at that time, no one was saying that," she says.

Later, when his government tried to push forward deeply unpopular labor reform, she was drawn to his style that seemed not to bash people or parties but to debate projects.

"When you hear the Socialists, or the rightwing party, they are just always about bashing the other," says Christelle Deron, a volunteer for Emmanuel Macron's 'En Marche' movement. "They never suggest anything to improve things."

Sara Miller Llana/The Christian Science Monitor

|  
Caption

She still thinks economic reform will be his biggest bugaboo. Many already dismiss him as a candidate of corporatism and could resist his reform agenda. But Deron says that his gift for dialogue will make the difference. "When you do political reform in France no one explains it. It's just, 'We are going to do this.' Then everyone goes on strike. Then nothing happens. It has

been the same thing since I was born," she says.

"People don't understand that the social rights come from a different time. There are jobs that are disappearing and we have to adapt our system," she says. "This is not saying we are going to do everything like the US, it's not working in the US either. We have to build our own system protecting people but also bringing more mobility and possibility for people to move into jobs."

Mr. Pons, also an associate professor at Harvard Business School, says the timing might be right for him to effect change. The same breakdown in ideological divides that ushered him into power

could also boost his leadership, since so much resistance to reform came from the rejection of the political class in the first place.

"The strength of Macron is that he is a new face. He is really young, relatively charismatic, his movement is entirely new," Pons says. "So he benefits from a lot of credit. He benefits from much more trust by French voters than moderate parties do. This trust maybe could be very instrumental in helping him implement reforms."

#### Waiting for change

For a man whose party is just over one year old, these are outsize expectations – another parallel, this one ominous, with Obama, who won

the Nobel Peace prize early in his term with the world looking on, setting expectations that left many deeply disappointed.

But not Derron. She says her political activism was directly inspired by the former American president, and when she heard his "yes we can" spirit in Macron's movement – including Obama volunteers working directly in their campaign – she joined without hesitating. On a trip to Washington in January, she says she bumped into Obama's daughter Malia in a park – something she considers more than a coincidence.

Cognizant of what followed Obama's two terms in office – the arrival of Mr. Trump – she has hope that

Macron is the man to effect change without populism winning in the future. She says she's not an idealist, something she couldn't be after knocking on thousands of doors. "Sometimes you have a conversation with someone who doesn't understand anything, or who is just aggressive," she says. "In the end you are just like, 'What is the point of doing all this?' It can feel quite frustrating and disappointing."

And yet amid hundreds of slammed doors were hundreds more that opened. Her lasting impression: "People are waiting for this kind of change."

## Newsweek : As French Population Increases Abroad, So Does Number of Expat Voters

By Max Kutner On 5/8/17 at 5:16 PM

7-8 minutes

When Clément Faydi visited a gymnasium in Brooklyn in April to cast his vote in the first round of the French presidential election, he said it was the first time in eight years of living in New York City that he heard only French. Faydi, 28, a designer for the software company Adobe, was among the 46,000 French citizens who voted from the United States in the election's first round in April, and he voted again in the second round to determine the winner: his candidate, Emmanuel Macron.

More than 1.3 million French citizens living abroad registered to vote in the election, according to the French government. Forty-four percent of French expatriates voted in the first round of the election, six percentage points higher than did in the first round of the 2012 election, the government said, and 45.8 percent voted in the second round. That increase since 2012 reflects the interest abroad in the polarizing election as well as the growing number of French people overseas, which has risen to 1.6 million. That is 60 percent higher than in 2000, with the number growing by 4 percent each year, according to the French government.

#### Related: French election data: How Emmanuel Macron won

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Unlike in the U.S., where voters living abroad must submit absentee ballots by mail, French voters abroad can cast their ballots at designated locations, and the ballots

are tallied locally. For the recent presidential race, the French government opened 866 polling stations at 450 sites abroad, according to the government, a more than 10 percent increase versus the 2012 election. French people living in the U.S. voted on May 6, and those in other countries outside of France did so on May 7. (The French are also allowed to vote by proxy, meaning they can designate people in their home municipalities to vote on their behalf.)

"It was actually pretty easy to vote here," Faydi says, explaining that he registered to vote and received an email from the French government telling him where to go. For the first round, he arrived at his polling place, an international school, at 11 a.m. and had to wait in line for about an hour. For the second round, he arrived earlier and says he didn't have to wait. "It really felt like we were in France, which was kind of surreal," he says. "It was only French people around us. So it's really the first time in the past eight years where I'm in the city and I feel like I'm actually in France." He recalls that a woman bumped into him and said "sorry," and then corrected herself and said, "Désolé." Patrons of Bar Tabac watch French President-elect Emmanuel Macron deliver a speech while they eat in New York City on May 7. In New York, almost 95 percent of French voters cast their ballots for Macron. Lucas Jackson/REUTERS

In New York City, home to some 31,000 French people, 52.5 percent of eligible French people participated in the second round of voting, according to a tweet by Anne-Claire Legendre, head of the local French Consulate. Of the

ballots cast in New York, 94.7 percent went to Macron (compared to around 66 percent in France) and 5.3 percent went to Le Pen (compared to 34 percent in France). The celebrity chef and restaurateur Daniel Boulud and the novelist Marc Levy were among those who voted in New York, the Consulate tweeted.

The French consulate in London reported similar numbers for the second round to New York: 43,629 votes for Macron, or 95.2 percent, and 2,205 for Le Pen, or 4.8 percent.

As of Monday night in France, the French government had not yet released the voting results for all people overseas. In the first round of voting, French people abroad cast 554,119 votes: 223,879, or 40.4 percent, went to Macron, and 35,926, or 6.5 percent, voted for Le Pen. (The other votes went mainly to François Fillon and Jean-Luc Mélechon, candidates who were not in the second round.) In the U.S., French people cast 45,938 votes in the first round: 23,489, or 51 percent, were for Macron, and 2,302, or 5 percent, were for Le Pen.

The growing number of French voters abroad reflects an increase in people leaving France. Half of the 1.6 million French people abroad live in Western Europe, while 13 percent live in North America, 8 percent live in the Near and Middle East, 7 percent live in Asia-Oceania, 7 percent live in French-speaking Africa and 6 percent live in North Africa, according to the government. Three-quarters of French abroad are "professionally active," the government says, and almost as many are at least 18 years old.

The main reason French people cite for moving away is for professional

reasons, according to the government. Others say they move for new experiences, to accompany a spouse or to learn a foreign language.

But the increase in expatriation also reflects a view among many French people that conditions there are worsening. In 2015, the country's gross domestic product dropped to its lowest level in at least a decade, and the unemployment rate there is more than twice that of countries such as the U.S. and Germany. The French are also becoming increasingly worried about terrorist attacks such as those in Paris in January and November 2015 and Nice in July 2016, according to a 2016 survey by the National Observatory on Delinquency and Penal Responses, with 30.4 percent of people saying such attacks are the problem that most worries them, up more than 12 percentage points in a year.

Among those leaving the country in large numbers are French Jews, who believe that anti-Semitism there is worsening. In 2015, 7,469 French immigrants moved to Israel, up from 6,658 in 2014 and 3,263 in 2013, according to the Israeli government. A decade ago, the number was 2,948. There were 808 anti-Semitic incidents reported in France in 2015, nearly double the number just two years earlier, according to the Jewish Community Security Service, a not-for-profit.

It's those conditions that many French voters hope will change under the new president. Faydi says he voted for Macron in both rounds. "I think he actually has an energy and is way more optimistic about the future of the country than any other candidates," he says.

As the election results came in on Sunday, French people gathered at the restaurant Bar Tabac in Brooklyn, near the school where Faydi had voted. The late-night celebration was last-minute and

“organic,” says owner Georges Forgeois, with a band playing and employees there jumping on social media to invite patrons to come “celebrate with us.”

“A lot of young people live in the neighborhood,” says Forgeois, who moved to the U.S. in 1979 and says he voted for Macron at the consulate. “It looks like the [new] president reflects on these young

people. Like, hope, a new beginning. Honestly, myself, I haven’t seen that [optimism] in 20 years.”

**The  
New York  
Times**

## Right and Left React to France’s Election (online)

Anna Dubenko  
8-10 minutes

### From the Right

• David Benkof in The Daily Caller:

**“Trump continues to fulfill his campaign promise to be a real friend to LGBT people.”**

David Benkof, a conservative opinion columnist whose writing focuses on religious and gay rights issues, argues that President Trump’s executive order on religious liberty should reassure gay Americans worried that this administration would enact discriminatory policies. He accuses gay organizations of “fear-mongering” and defends the president against some of the accusations leveled by gay rights activists. [Read more »](#)

David French would likely agree with Mr. Benkof’s diagnosis of the religious liberty order but draws a different conclusion about what it means for President Trump’s fidelity to his campaign promises. Echoing other writers on the right, Mr. French is frustrated that the order does little to address what he sees as real threats to religious freedom. Repealing restrictions on churches’ participation in politics or overturning regulations against the “contraception mandate” cannot be accomplished by executive order, Mr. French reminds his readers, but with legislative power. [Read more »](#)

Marine Le Pen conceded defeat in the French presidential election on Sunday. Charles Platiau/Reuters

• Noah Millman in The American Conservative:

**“You can’t crow about the decisive defeat of a symptom. You can only be pleased when the disease itself goes into remission.”**

Noah Millman warns his readers not to draw too many firm conclusions about Emmanuel Macron’s defeat of Marine Le Pen in France’s election this weekend. The roots of populist discontent that propelled Ms. Le Pen to the fore have not magically disappeared with Mr. Macron’s

victory. And Mr. Millman is skeptical that the solutions neoliberalism provides are an adequate cure for what ails the French people. [Read more »](#)

• Erick Erickson in The Resurgent:

**“Ossification has set in within the conservative movement.”**

Erick Erickson is worried about the state of conservatism. A staunch never-Trump-er, he worries that, just as some Republicans justified the Bush administration’s “big government agenda,” too many today are willing to “put the square peg of Trumpism into the round hole of conservatism.” [Read more »](#)

### From the Left

Emmanuel Macron won a resounding victory in the French presidential election on Sunday. David Ramos/Getty Images

• Heather Hurlburt in New York Magazine:

**“The National Front is not going away, and neither are the issues that fueled its rise.”**

Heather Hurlburt shares Noah Millman’s view that Mr. Macron’s victory is less than decisive. Liberals, she writes, should not celebrate the election results for too long. Mr. Macron’s party does not have the candidates or nationwide infrastructure of the National Front, and his government is built on a shaky coalition that should make “Macron fans sober up fast Monday morning.” [Read more »](#)

• John Nichols in The Nation:

**“This election was not really about Macron. It was about the threat posed by a far-right fantasy that never ends well.”**

This is about as full-throated a defense of centrism as you’ll get in the pages of The Nation. Although he finds it “profoundly frustrating” that France’s left-wing parties couldn’t put up a candidate for the country’s runoff election, John Nichols is nonetheless optimistic about Mr. Macron’s victory.

Unlike Ms. Hurlburt and Mr. Millman, Mr. Nichols sees the broad coalition

of voters who supported the centrist candidate as a rejection of the populism that ushered in “Brexit” and the Trump presidency. Moreover, the American left, he notes, should be particularly happy that France did not vote for someone who would work as “Trump’s ally or enabler.” [Read more »](#)

A Trump supporter demonstrating on Saturday in Bedminster, N.J., near where President Trump was staying. Karsten Moran for The New York Times

• Bill Scher in Real Clear Politics:

**“Conservatives are more defined by what they oppose than what they support.”**

Why don’t President Trump’s supporters abandon him when he fails to keep campaign promises? Bill Scher argues that legislative victories matter less to his base than the president’s willingness to take on the right opponents: the media, “elites” and the Democrats. The only problem with this strategy? It doesn’t win the president any of the new voters he might need for the next election. [Read more »](#)

• Jacob Bacharach in Jacobin:

**“The Democratic Party is a ghost — diaphanous, spooky, and utterly unable to interact with the actual world.”**

While Erick Erickson diagnoses his side of the ideological divide with ossification, Jacob Bacharach contends that the Democratic Party is already dead. The elites of the party, Mr. Bacharach writes, are devoid of ideals and ideas save one: Be scared of Republicans. [Read more »](#)

A sign welcoming visitors to public lands near Burns, Ore. Ruth Fremson/The New York Times

### And Finally, From the Center:

• Hal Herring and JR Sullivan with T. Edward Nickens and Josh Parks in Field and Stream:

**“States are trying to wrench control of public lands from the federal government in order to drill, mine, sell off, and —**

**ultimately — steal our national sporting heritage.”**

The battle over who should control public lands — the federal government or the state — has been raging since before President Trump took office, and his administration has so far sent mixed signals about its policy. If you’re a hunting or fishing enthusiast, however, writers for Field and Stream think you should support federal control over public lands. Here, in charts and maps that explain how the current laws affect sportsmanship across the country, they lay out a case for public lands to remain in public hands. [Read more »](#)

• George Lakoff in conversation with Daphne White in Berkeleyside:

**“It is a myth that the truth will set us free.”**

George Lakoff is a newly-retired professor of cognitive science and linguistics, which is perhaps why Democratic operatives didn’t listen to him when he predicted President Trump’s victory in 2016. For over a decade, Mr. Lakoff has been arguing that “voters don’t vote their self-interest, they vote their values,” and that two distinct and often unspoken worldviews divide conservatives from progressives. If Democrats want to appeal to swing voters, Mr. Lakoff claims that they must dispose with an Enlightenment worldview dictated by logic and rules and embrace a rhetoric that trades on metaphor and emotion. [Read more »](#)

Former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr. spoke at a conference in Beverly Hills, Calif., last week. Frederick M. Brown/Getty Images

• Perry Bacon Jr. and Dhruvil Mehta in FiveThirtyEight:

**“Figuring out who will win the election is complicated. It may be even more difficult to figure out who is running.”**

It’s never too early to start speculating about who will run in 2020. At least not for the folks at FiveThirtyEight who deployed some sophisticated data science to determine, with varying degrees of precision, the seven signs that someone will run for president

during the next election cycle. After reading the piece, you'll most likely read a lot into Joe Biden's next trip to Iowa. Read more »

• Tim Alberta in Politico:

**“My hypothesis is that 80 percent of Americans are around the**



9-11 minutes

Monkey Cage

Analysis

**Analysis** Interpretation of the news based on evidence, including data, as well as anticipating how events might unfold based on past events

By Verónica Hoyo and William M. Chandler

Monkey Cage

Analysis

**Analysis** Interpretation of the news based on evidence, including data, as well as anticipating how events might unfold based on past events

May 9 at 5:00 AM

On May 7, in the second round of their presidential election, French voters elected Emmanuel Macron with 66.10 percent of the vote, as the eighth — and youngest ever — president of the French Fifth Republic. His victory marks an end to the dominance of France's two main political parties: the socialist party, *Parti Socialiste* or PS; and the traditional right, incarnated today as *Les Républicains*, or LR. This suggests to many that the French party system is being reshaped in response to a popular desire to replace an out-of-touch political elite.

There are four important takeaways from this election:

**Lesson 1: This election was less surprising than others, but voter abstention is a noteworthy trend**

As French scholars know too well, French citizens often surprise observers. That happened in the 2002 presidential ballot, when the *Front National* (FN) candidate, Jean Marie Le Pen, shocked France by coming in second during the first round, knocking the incumbent Socialist prime minister, Lionel Jospin, out of the race. In a similar surprise, French voters rejected the 2005 referendum on the European Constitution.

**center — 40 percent left of center, 40 percent right of center — and they're all persuadable.”**

We occasionally use the “center” category to highlight profiles of up-and-coming political stars who defy, in some way, hardened partisan expectations and traits. In this feature for Politico Magazine, Tim

But this year's election was not a political earthquake. France is suffering from a slow economic recovery, with a 10 percent unemployment rate and only 1.2 percent GDP growth in 2016. With the rest of Europe, it faces an unresolved and unprecedented migrant crisis. Its two most recent presidents have been highly unpopular: Nicolas Sarkozy failed to get reelected; and François Hollande's record as the most unpopular president prevented him from running again. And so a vote rejecting the establishment is readily understood.

In contrast to the recent British and U.S. votes, French pollsters called this one correctly. That was challenging, considering that 11 candidates ran in the first round, many of whom were quite close; citizens increasingly mistrust the media and pundits; and pollsters have been accused of “herding,” or adjusting their findings to match other pollsters' results. The second-round polls, however, underestimated the actual size of Macron's victory by eight to 10 percentage points.

But two trends are noteworthy: First, high numbers of citizens abstained from voting — or cast blank or spoiled ballots. The abstention rate was 22.23 percent in the first round and is expected to be 25.4 percent in the second round, once the official data are confirmed. That second-round figure would be the largest since 1969 — and the first time that voting participation failed to increase since that year. The anticipated 11.47 percent tally of blank or spoiled ballots, similarly, would be another record-breaking result.

*[Here's what happened in the first round of France's presidential election, and what happens next]*

The second big surprise was how large a vote share Marine Le Pen managed to achieve. Her vote tally increased from 21.3 percent in the first round to 33.9 percent in Sunday's runoff. She brought in almost double her father's vote share, which was 17.79 percent at its peak. Even though she lost the race, these achievements guarantee her political survival.

Alberta identifies Representative Will Hurd of Texas as one such figure. As long as the 39-year-old black Republican can hold on to his majority-Hispanic district, he might even be the future of the G.O.P. Read more »

**Lesson 2: The French party system is changing from within**

Across the developed world, voters are making clear their disenchantment with political elites. So it's no accident that all the candidates attempted to define themselves as anti-system. This was much easier, of course, for the parties of *la France protestataire* — the parties voicing fundamental disagreement with the political and economic status quo. Together, first-round scores for the extreme left, radical left (the *France Insoumise* of Jean-Luc Mélenchon) and the extreme right amounted to 42.61 percent. That distrust has been accelerated by recent corruption scandals. For instance, François Fillon, candidate of the main right-wing party, was accused of nepotism (“Penelopegate”), with charges pending on embezzlement. And E.U. authorities are investigating Marine Le Pen, charging that she illegally used E.U. funding on her presidential campaign.

*[France's National Front scandal has exposed the dirty little secret of Europe's far right]*

This anti-establishment impulse delivered two “unconventional” candidates to the race's second round. But while neither Emmanuel Macron nor Marine Le Pen has previously held office, we can hardly call them “outsiders.” Although Marine Le Pen's political views mark her as extreme, she is a political veteran. She was elected to the European Parliament, where she has served since 2004 and became FN president in 2011.

Macron is much more a political novice. He served as former President Hollande's economics minister for about two years, but has little other government experience. He has never been elected to office but has all the elite connections: he graduated from *École Nationale d'Administration* (ENA), the epitome of elite schools for senior civil servants, and was an investment banker at Rothschild & Co. His election to the presidency represents, so far, a change from within.

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But this change has been underway for decades. The establishment parties have been losing votes since the 1990s, with the exception of 2007, which was a direct response to the “shock” of Jean-Marie Le Pen reaching the second round in 2002 (see figure). To avoid further bleeding, this time around both main parties held party primaries to select their presidential candidates, something new in France (only the Socialists had previously held a primary, in 2012). These backfired, however, and exposed the parties' division and factionalism. Voters selected relatively extreme candidates — Benoît Hamon for the PS and François Fillon for the LR — who did not represent the center of gravity of either of the establishment parties.

Unable to energize an already-fractured electorate, the Socialists suffered a catastrophic blow in the first round by coming in fifth place, with a meager 6.36 percent of the vote. And though LR's Fillon garnered 20 percent, it simply was not enough to get to the second round.

Both parties will now need to seriously restructure, but LR seems in a better place than the battered PS. Party labels may change — but historically, the party system, and the main political traditions associated with them, have been very stable in France.

Perhaps most interesting, Macron's election has gone against the global tide of populist extremism and endorsed a functioning centrist discourse. This may be the biggest mark of France's president-elect. His victory speech last night further stressed his differences with Le Pen's extreme populism while striking a conciliatory tone that emphasized the need to govern for all French citizens alike.

**Lesson 3: The French Fifth Republic has rebounded, but the Front National is no longer a fringe party**

The single most important lesson from this election is the weakening of one unwritten rule of the French model: the “*cordon sanitaire*” imposed against the FN. By securing its first-ever political

endorsement from a conservative politician — Nicolas Dupont-Aignan, a dissident Gaullist — the FN has consolidated as a mainstream party. Similarly, the radical left-wing Jean-Luc Mélenchon's refusal to join the "republican front" against the extreme right contributed to further normalizing the FN.

Not surprisingly, in her concession speech, Marine Le Pen announced a new political movement to carry

her cause onward. It is too early to tell what her plans are exactly, but she has definitely carved a niche for herself. It seems likely that she will finally be able to break completely free from the shadow of her father (and her father's party, the FN) by becoming a mainstream actor.

Monkey Cage newsletter

Commentary on political science and political issues.

#### Lesson 4: It's all about the June legislative elections

The biggest unknown now is whether and how Macron and Le Pen will transform their movements into solid party structures capable of standing in all 577 legislative districts. France's current system makes it relatively easy for presidents to win majorities in the National Assembly. However, local notables and party structures are

influential in winning local seats — and, therefore, in creating parliamentary majorities. To really start changing things, as he promised, Macron will need to build coalitions and a party.

*Verónica Hoyo is a PhD in political science and research associate at the Center for Comparative Immigration Studies (CCIS) at the University of California, San Diego.*

## NATIONAL REVIEW ONLINE

### Emmanuel Macron: French President Faces Dangers & Opportunities

5-6 minutes

On Sunday, Emmanuel Macron became the youngest leader of France since Napoleon. A handsome, young man whom his fans credit with saving the Republic from Marine Le Pen, he is the French establishment's most flattering self-image. That's an opportunity and a danger.

It is easy enough to say how it happened. He was the alternative to Marine Le Pen and the widely detested Front National. She represented the most concentrated form of populist nationalism. Meanwhile, Emmanuel Macron said all the right and reassuring things to the French and European Center and Left. He was for strengthening European institutions. He defended abortion. When he suggested that some kind of sanctions or punishments be meted out to Hungary and Poland for violating fundamental European values with their migrant policies, he was taking up the fight that Angela Merkel dares not take up herself, lest she further weaken a suddenly fragile European alliance.

Emmanuel Macron is something of a cipher as well. Like Donald Trump, his first election campaign ended with him swiftly becoming president. But unlike Trump, Macron was basically unknown to his countrymen five years ago. A frustrated liberal reformer in

François Hollande's Socialist government, Macron ran as the leader of his own movement, *En Marche!* (Forward!), which barely qualifies as a political party. He received the elite *fonctionnaire* formation at the *École nationale d'administration*, and was quickly put on an ambitious track among members of the state's *Inspection des Finances*. He also did some work in investment banking between jobs. He was a man from the inside, but he was an outsider to elective politics. A man who could make the system work. Or not.

And this is why many fear that Macron's failure would mean the final discrediting of the establishment in the face of populist challenge. He will have difficulty commanding majorities in France's national assembly. French people may not be ready to elect the Front National, but they are clearly unhappy with their sluggish economy and troubled or despairing about their nation's failure to assimilate Muslim immigrants and their descendants. His liberalizing ideas for the French labor market are likely to inspire resistance on the left and right.

And Macron will have to take on a larger portfolio of issues than merely the French economy. His advisers admit that, prior to mounting his campaign, he'd had little interest in foreign policy beyond what could be practiced in Brussels. "He hadn't made any particular statements on

China or on Russia. He hadn't identified himself as being from a values-based or a realpolitik school," said François Heisbourg, chairman of the council of the International Institute for Strategic Studies in an interview with *Politico*. "He came with a low base of knowledge and no biases."

And yet, France has real foreign policy to conduct. Outgoing Socialist president François Hollande had committed the French to fighting ISIS and to seeking some resolution to the civil war in Syria. France and its political class is deeply implicated in the unrest that mars the African country of Gabon, unrest that could lead to civil war. And France is the major power supporting governments in Chad and Mali that are trying to resist Islamist subterfuge.

Macron was a man from the inside, but he was an outsider to elective politics.

All these are good reasons to worry, but Macron may become a more interesting figure than even his supporters credit. Marine Le Pen's best line of the campaign was her assertion that France would be ruled by a woman in any case. Either herself or Angela Merkel, through Macron.

But Macron may prove more independent. Though he has criticized Brexit and said he wants

the United Kingdom to pay a full divorce bill, he is likely to become a voice for moderation as Europe debates Brexit. He has no illusions about financial institutions relocating to Paris from London post-Brexit; financial institutions simply don't trust the neutrality of French regulators. The deep ranks of French workers in London's financial center constitute Macron's most significant political and fundraising base. During his campaign, Macron referred to London as the sixth largest French city in the world, owing to its sizable population of expats. Macron's position on Brexit matters because this political separation will be negotiated not by the European institutions, but by the 27 heads of state in the Union.

If he has the determination, Macron can lead France into the position Britain now vacates within the EU, standing for a European Union that is economically liberal, and not tilted so precariously in favor of Germany and maintaining its high employment. In fact, for the sake of the French economy and the European Union as a whole, he must.

#### READ

The Euphoria over Macron's Victory Ignores Reality  
Beating Le Pen Was Just a Start  
Macron's Victory a Vote for Europe?

#### MORE:

— *Michael Brendan Dougherty is a senior writer for National Review.*

## THE NEW YORKER

### The French Vote, Celebrate, and Return to Normal in Grand Style

by Anthony Lane

6-8 minutes

On Sunday, at Emmanuel Macron's victory celebration, there was drama, grandiloquence, and scantily clad performers. On Monday, French reality resumed its brooding normalcy. PHOTOGRAPH BY VINCENT BOISOT / RIVA PRESS / REDUX

On Sunday, in the pretty village of Noyers-sur-Serein, in Burgundy, the mayor, wearing her sash of office,

presided over the voting in the Presidential election from behind a table set up in the stone town hall. She was flanked by two women, one of whom checked names off a voter roll. As the town's citizens filed in—three hundred and eighty out of four hundred and sixty-three who were registered to vote—they politely greeted the officials. After being ticked off the roll, each walked over to a table on which there were two stacks of folded paper ballots, one for Emmanuel Macron and the other for Marine Le Pen. The voters

dutifully picked up ballots from both stacks before going into one of the two curtained booths, where they marked the ballot they favored and discarded the other in one of two plastic trash bins. The ritual, as the officials explained to me, is aimed at reinforcing the appearance of voter open-mindedness up to the very last, and to avoid influencing potentially undecided voters in the room.

In the end, the votes from Noyers uncannily reflected the overall national tally: a hundred and

ninety-nine votes for Macron, a hundred and twenty for Le Pen, and forty-three blank ballots.

After watching the solemn ritual of voting in Noyers, I headed up, by train, to Paris, where Macron's held a victory celebration at the Louvre on Sunday night that was Gallic in its grandiloquence. An hour or so after the electoral results were made public, the new President-elect of France entered the magnificent esplanade of the museum—alone and on foot. A delighted exclamation of surprise erupted from the crowd

of well-wishers awaiting him, his approach cinematically reproduced on four giant screens. As he strode purposefully through the great stone emptiness, his face carefully illuminated and his shadow thrown long upon the noble ramparts, his heels made a percussive staccato rhythm against the strains of Beethoven's "Ode to Joy." The moment seemed to go on and on.

When Macron finally stepped up to the stage that had been erected in front of I. M. Pei's glass pyramid, the crowd roared its approval with gusto and waved tricolor flags. He walked up to a microphone set on a podium draped in the red-white-and-blue colors of France. After thanking the crowd for being there, he said, "You won. France won."

In a ten-minute speech, Macron reassured the French people that he would try to be a President to all of them; to those who had voted for his right-wing rival, Marine Le Pen—thirty-four per cent of the electorate—he said that he was "mindful of their anger," and he added, tactfully, that they had his "respect," and that he would do everything in his power to insure that they would "never feel the need to vote for the extremes again." (His mention of Le Pen elicited a chorus of boos, but otherwise the atmosphere was merry.)

The event ended with Macron's family and closest supporters climbing onstage to join him. They included his wife, Brigitte, who is twenty-four years his senior, her children from her previous marriage, and her grandchildren. After assuring his audience that he would "serve them with love," Macron and his retinue vanished. After Macron left the Louvre, a d.j. appeared onstage, and there was music. This time, a performance seeming to have more in common with the Eurovision Song Contest than an august Presidential event, a troupe of scantily clad women wearing red-plastic monster masks gyrated onstage.

There was, throughout the evening, an odd sense of ahistorical detachment from the issues that challenge France, and the new President. Immediately after Macron's win, Cris Cab, an American singer, had come onto the stage to sing a few songs, including Sting's "An Englishman in New York"—the lyrics of which he changed awkwardly to "An Englishman in Paris"—and, when he was done, he shouted, "Congratulations, Emmanuel! Congratulations, Paris! I love you guys!"

Even Marine Le Pen, having suffered a considerable defeat, seemed spirited. After giving her

concession speech, across town, in the Chalet du Lac, a legendary tearoom and dance hall that she had hired for the night, Le Pen was seen dancing to the strains of the Village People's "Y.M.C.A." along with some of her supporters, apparently resigned to the fact that they wouldn't, after all, be rescuing France from the clutches of a dictatorially multicultural Europe Union.

On Monday, French reality resumed its brooding normalcy. In *Le Monde*, the prominent essayist Raphaël Glucksmann warned about the need to overcome the divisions that still polarize France, writing, "We have avoided clinical death but the disease remains." In an interview with Radio France, the left-wing philosopher Régis Debray was churlish about Macron's victory, saying, "Emmanuel Macron is the product of Americanization, of postmodernism; the primacy of the image," and he warned that, while Macron may have been a necessary "lifeboat" to save France from Le Pen, he should not be regarded as an "admiral's flagship." Later, over lunch in a Saint-Germain restaurant, Debray conceded that, despite his misgivings about Macron's Americanized "business" style, the President-elect was clever and seemed aware of his own inadequacies. He might yet be able

to find the political tools necessary to govern France.

The French political choreography continued, as well, on Monday. Under gray and chilly morning skies, Macron today went to the Arc de Triomphe with François Hollande, whom he is replacing. In a ceremony to mark the seventy-second anniversary of the end of the Second World War, the two men laid a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, and relit its eternal flame. French television commentators covering the event observed, benignly, that the ritual represented a tradition of "Republican continuity."

If Le Pen had won yesterday's elections, "continuity" would surely not have been the word to describe the atmosphere at the Arc de Triomphe. The France Culture radio journalist Frédéric Martel told me that, while it remained an open question whether Macron would be able to effectively govern (the outcome of next month's legislative elections will determine that), he was fairly confident about France's political stability for the near future. "I think it's safe to say we've been saved from the extremes of left and right for another five years, at least."

## THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

### Macron Will Find a Potential Ally in Estonia's President

Valentina Pop  
4-5 minutes

FLORENCE, Italy— Emmanuel Macron has a potential ally in Estonia, which will soon be a big fish in Brussels.

Tiny Estonia takes on an outside role next month when it assumes the European Union's rotating presidency and kicks off Brexit talks. Estonian President Kersti Kaljulaid said Brexit negotiations shouldn't distract the bloc from moving ahead.

Ms. Kaljulaid, like the French president, is a political newcomer who emerged as a dark horse to win election in October, backed by a large majority. Both are the youngest-ever presidents of their countries, and both see the EU as a positive force, though in need of reshaping.

"The EU is a common platform where we come together and agree to do certain things. But the EU is never going to take over the responsibility which governments

have, for prosperity and security of their people," Ms. Kaljulaid, 46 years old, said in an interview Friday on the margins of an EU conference in Florence and before Mr. Macron's decisive victory over nationalist, anti-EU Marine Le Pen.

Ms. Kaljulaid, Estonia's first female president and a former member of the EU's European Court of Auditors, acknowledged the bloc's failings but said its benefits to citizens outweigh its shortcomings.

"The EU is very popular in Estonia, and for very good reasons—not because Estonia has received considerable support from the EU, but because Europe supports the values which keep small states safe in this world. Everybody has the right to decide their own fate," she said.

Ms. Kaljulaid dismissed the idea that the European project faced an existential crisis. She blamed politicians who criticize Brussels in their home countries while helping form EU policies with fellow members.

"I am very worried about politicians who know that their countries are greatly benefiting financially and at the same time are saying that the European Union is not good for us. The message has to be coherent," she said.

Holding the presidency for six months will allow Estonia to set priorities for the bloc's policy-making machinery and decide on the agendas of ministers' meetings. Estonian officials will also represent the EU governments in debates with the European Parliament and on trips abroad.

Like Mr. Macron, Ms. Kaljulaid has a vision of a reformed Europe.

"The EU probably needs to concentrate more on issues which are by definition cross-border: environment, big infrastructure, migration crisis, protection from terrorism," she said. "And there may be room to think if we could do less where national governments can manage better."

For example, she wants to see areas such as scientific research, on

which the EU already spends billions of euros annually, boosted significantly to bolster cross-border, pan-European projects. Other areas, such as EU programs to encourage children to stay in school, should be left to national governments, she said.

And even where the EU is often seen as failing, she sees some hope. Starting with the 2008 global financial crisis, which almost broke up the eurozone, through the 2015 migration wave that pitted EU countries against each other, Ms. Kaljulaid observed a pattern in which EU countries were seen as bickering too much and then acting too little.

"But the final result is," she said, "countries always get solutions before it's too late."

Write to Valentina Pop at [valentina.pop@wsj.com](mailto:valentina.pop@wsj.com)

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## Sciencemag : French scientists cheer Macron's victory | Science

By Elisabeth PainMay. 8, 2017 ,  
2:15 PM

3-4 minutes

French President-elect Emmanuel  
Macron celebrates in Paris.

Christian Hartmann/REUTERS

**PARIS**—The French scientific community is breathing a deep sigh of relief today after Emmanuel Macron's victory in the national presidential election over far-right candidate Marine Le Pen. But although most scientists felt that Le Pen's National Front party represented a threat to tolerance, openness, and evidence, many remain unconvinced that Macron's policies will benefit research.

"We've escaped the black plague [and] ... the danger was so dreadful that it is a relief,"



The Christian  
Science Monitor

3 minutes

May 8, 2017 —In his victory speech Sunday after being elected France's next president, Emmanuel Macron made an unusual promise for a national leader: "I will work to mend the bond between Europe and its peoples." Indeed, if Mr. Macron's mandate from French voters means anything, it is that trust across the Continent must be rebuilt after 60 years of trying to form a European identity.

The 28-member European Union is



The Editors

4-5 minutes

All eyes on Macron.

Photographer: David Ramos/Getty  
Images

Europe's leaders are thrilled that Emmanuel Macron beat Marine Le Pen in the French presidential election -- and they should be. Yet they ought to keep their celebrations brief, because they need to start thinking now about how to help Macron make a success of his presidency.

Le Pen's angry nationalism gave voice to widespread dissatisfaction with the European Union, which threatens not only the political and economic stability of the euro zone,

says theoretical physicist Édouard Brézin, a former president of the French Academy of Sciences in Paris. He believes that many people who supported Macron simply as a rejection of Le Pen are now hoping that "he may also be a president of quality."

Macron's massive margin of victory in yesterday's runoff—66% to 34% for Le Pen—also reflects disenchantment for the traditional left and right parties, which weren't on the ballot. Neither Macron nor Le Pen offered detailed plans on science, but scientists were appalled by Le Pen's proposals to curb immigration and take France out of the European Union.

Thirty-nine-year-old Macron, a former financial banker who created his own centrist movement just a year ago, largely remains an unknown quantity. Brézin praises

hardly unraveling. But it certainly is under strain. Britain, its second-largest economy, is leaving. Greece, whose lies about its debt triggered the Continent's 2008 financial crisis, still falters as a partner. EU states differ over how to counter Russian aggression, share the burden of settling refugees, or change bureaucratic rules that impinge on daily life. And many of the 19 states in the eurozone are violating a basic rule on fiscal discipline.

Despite those divisions, two-thirds of Europeans consider themselves to be citizens of the EU, according to a poll last year. Trust in the EU is higher than trust in most national governments. Like Macron himself,

but the survival of the union itself. This anti-EU sentiment will outlast her candidacy. One voter in three backed Le Pen, and many of Macron's supporters are less than enthusiastic. Resentment of the EU persists, and not just in France. Europe's leaders need to recognize this, and help Macron prove that Le Pen was wrong.

To be sure, the new French government must be ambitious on its own account. Domestic reform aimed at making the French economy more efficient is essential, as Macron has argued, and that won't be easy for a president lacking a political party. But he was also right to argue that the EU needs to change. In particular, he called for greater budget flexibility and steps toward closer fiscal integration. Europe needs both.

Why would further European integration appease anti-EU

what he sees as Macron's determination and honesty in promoting Europe and welcomes Macron's support for having national spending on research reach 3% of the country's gross domestic product. The nature of Macron's political program will only become fully clear after parliamentary elections in June, says Brézin, who this winter conducted an online questionnaire of the candidates' views on science-related issues.

Some scientists are wary of Macron's liberal views and his apparent willingness to continue controversial reforms initiated by his predecessors. In an online petition issued in late April, more than 1500 researchers said they would "fight" his plans to give yet more autonomy to universities and exacerbate competition after voting for him on Sunday. The researchers also criticized Macron's invitation to U.S.

Europeans can easily adapt to multiple identities – either as a nation or the EU – as long as those institutions share common values and rights.

Macron knows his first task is to reform a France where 25 percent of youth are unemployed and where government spending eats up 57 percent of the gross national product. To do that, his fledgling centrist party, En Marche! (Forward!) will need to win an election in June for a new French Parliament.

He admits that economic reform in France is needed to win the trust of the EU's other major partner,

feelings, rather than inflame them? Because the existing arrangements have held back Europe's recovery and threaten to hobble its economies over the longer term. The best way to fight EU antipathy is to treat this underlying economic illness.

A new approach to fiscal policy is crucial. EU rules put unduly tight limits on government borrowing. Yes, they're almost routinely broken; nonetheless, they're damaging. They make it harder to get national budget policy right while persuading voters that EU commitments are adding to their economic woes.

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To make matters worse, the euro-zone countries almost never pool

climate researchers to come work in France if their research programs are eliminated by President Donald Trump's administration, citing the underfunding of French universities and the scarcity of permanent positions.

Patrick Monfort, secretary general of SNCS-FSU, a trade union for researchers based near Paris, says that creating a separate ministry for research and higher education would be "a strong sign" that science will be a priority in Macron's government. Monfort also hopes Macron will pay closer attention to the views of trade unions as part of his promise to overcome the country's political divide. "I would like a true social dialogue to be put in place," Monfort says.

Germany. "There is a French responsibility to fix the situation," he says. Only then can the EU tackle its needed reforms. He likens the union as a "half-pregnancy" in achieving the mission of an integrated Europe.

Macron was elected in part because he has said a politician must constantly earn the trust of voters. France's longtime ruling parties lost the trust of voters in this election, as did the anti-EU National Front of Marine Le Pen. Having correctly defined the key issue for both France and the EU as broken trust, he now enters the Élysée Palace as a president eager to fix it.

their fiscal resources: Money doesn't flow automatically from areas that are growing quickly to those that aren't, as in any normal well-functioning economy. This is the euro system's fatal flaw, because monetary policy can't be used on a country-by-country basis to combat downturns. Europe's protracted slump proved what economists had known all along: Monetary union requires at least some limited form of fiscal union.

Macron has proposed a common euro-zone budget, allowing for infrastructure spending financed by eurobonds. Europe's fiscal conservatives, led by Germany, will be reluctant, fearing their own taxpayers will be left to foot the bill for other governments' excesses. The suspicion is warranted, but there are ways to guard against it. This discussion needs to start in earnest.



Macron has promised to reform the EU -- and the union, without doubt, needs reform. This election has

given Europe's leaders a fresh opportunity. They should seize it.

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## Editorial - Houston Chronicle : Vive la France

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4-5 minutes

Emmanuel Macron, French presidential candidate, waves to supporters in front of the Pyramid at the Louvre Museum in Paris, France, on Sunday, May 7, 2017. Macron pledged to unite France's rifts after his victory over Marine Le Pen in the presidential election, saying that he'll work to address the concerns that were exposed during one of the most divisive campaigns of recent history. (Photo by Christophe Morin/Bloomberg)

Emmanuel Macron, French presidential candidate, waves to supporters...

The center held.

Political neophyte Emmanuel Macron crushed far-right nationalist Marine Le Pen in Sunday's race to become president of France.

The French tricolor didn't wave alone at the 39-year-old former economy minister's victory party. The European Union's stars of unity fluttered throughout the crowd as Macron took the stage to the sounds of "Ode to Joy," the EU's anthem. His election delivers not only a clear rejection of Le Pen's loathsome attitude toward immigrants and Muslims, and her political party's longtime embrace of anti-Semitism, but also her promise to follow Britain in leaving the EU.

The post-war dream of a united Europe currently faces a rogues gallery of opponents ranging from Le Pen to Russian President Vladimir Putin, and even our own President Donald Trump. And make no mistake, the battle to save Europe is not over.

Macron ran on his own political movement - "*En Marche!*" - while voters rejected his nation's traditional political parties. The passions of populism and nationalism will again be on the

ballot in France's legislative elections in June. Now the new president must confront the cultural and economic crises that continue to vex not only France, but also the rest of the trans-Atlantic alliance.

### Translator

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Macron has promised to boost France's economy by cutting the nation's notoriously restrictive regulations, investing in green energy and strengthening the EU. That's all well and good, but cautious moderation is no answer to the illiberalism that's set across both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. People need to know that their government is working for them. A growing stock market doesn't mean much to a 50-year-old worker who hasn't seen a raise in years. And a single charismatic politician is not a policy prescription for fixing the global economic trends that continue to disrupt the developed world.

Political victories can be fleeting. Barack Obama ran on the English version of "*En Marche!*" - Forward! - in 2012. He was followed by Trump.

The change that people need is the kind that jingles in their pockets. The hope that truly helps is the well-informed optimism of parents thinking about their kids' futures.

Since the Great Recession, the Western world has seen the rich grow richer while the criminal bankers who precipitated the global financial collapse went unpunished. If centrist candidates cannot finger the bad guys in our economic order, then people will find their own scapegoats - immigrants, Muslims, international trade, conspiracy theories. Clever politicians have no problem leaping on that wave of anger and riding it to victory, even if it means abandoning Western ideals of *egalité, liberté* and *fraternité*.

Yes, the center held in France. Now it needs to think about the next move.

**Bloomberg**

## Bershidsky : Why Macron Won and Clinton Lost

@Bershidsky  
More stories by

Leonid Bershidsky

9-11 minutes

Politics

Internet-based dirty tricks only work against voters willing to be misled and weak candidates.

by

8 mai 2017 à 13:50 UTC-4

Pepe the Frog didn't resonate in France.

Photographer: Josh Edelson/AFP/Getty Images

Hillary Clinton blames her electoral defeat, in part, on what she has called "Russian WikiLeaks" which "raised doubts" in the minds of her likely supporters and "scared them off." Yet the very same arsenal -- bots, fake news, hacking -- was used against Emmanuel Macron -- and he still won the French presidential election against his populist rival by a two-thirds vote.

The internet-based election disruption toolkit is familiar by now. A network of social media accounts, both real and bot-run, agitates for a populist candidate and against his or

her centrist rival, posting and reporting memes and stories that are often fake but believable to people in a certain filter bubble. At the same time, hackers launch phishing attacks against the centrist candidate's campaign and then leak their spoils, helped by the same activist-and-bot network. This is what happened in the U.S. in 2016 and in France in 2017. In both countries, the campaigns were blamed on Russia, because they were run against the candidates who were relatively hostile to Russia.

The use of the toolkit in the French campaign has been well-documented by cybersecurity experts and fact-checkers.

The Atlantic Council's Digital Forensic Research Lab, for example, described Marine Le Pen's "online army" on Twitter. A cluster of key accounts launched a hashtag with a barrage of simultaneous posts. The accounts retweeted each other, then an "amplification network" including automated accounts (bots) picked up the tweets and tried to spread them further. In some cases, this approach succeeded in lifting the hashtags into Twitter's top trends. But, the DFLR noted:

There is no evidence to suggest that any of the hashtags studied here spread significantly beyond the community of Le Pen's online supporters. They did make it into the overall trending lists, but they did not become self-sustaining trends. Instead, they faded away within a few hours.

The U.S. alt-right community, perhaps empowered by claims in the news media that they helped elect Trump, tried to help, but was largely defeated by the language barrier; Pepe the Frog, the alt-right symbol, didn't quite resonate with French voters.

Pro-Le Pen accounts, both French and foreign ones, as well as accounts supporting far-left candidates such as Jean-Luc Melenchon, tried to spread narratives countering those of traditional media. A study by the social networking consultancy Bakamo, published in April, found that about 24 percent of all election-related links that have been shared in France pursued this goal. A significant share of these links were from Russian state propaganda sources, such as RT and Sputnik, accused by the Macron campaign of spreading fake news.

Those who posted these links were more prolific and engaged than

those who cited traditional news stories. But the latter made up 56 percent of the shared links. The reframing of media narratives and the fakes -- tracked rigorously by platforms such as CrossCheck and the daily Le Monde's Les Decodeurs -- failed to sway a significant number of voters.

An Oxford University study published in late April concluded that "the people discussing French and German politics over social media tend to use more high quality information sources than those discussing US politics." The conversation, according to the study, is "less poisoned" in France than in the U.S., and less of the content was being spread using bots. The Oxford researchers, like Bakamo, noted that twice as many election-related links reposted by French users led to quality news stories as to various junk and fakes. In the U.S. last year, the ratio was almost 1-to-1.

Perhaps the most dangerous fake -- "documents" about Macron's offshore account which surfaced between the rounds of voting -- was quickly and convincingly debunked; it did no damage.

Hackers, too, failed to influence the French election's outcome. Before

the first round of voting, there was a real chance Macron would be eliminated if compromising information about him came to light; that's what happened to the early favorite, conservative candidate Francois Fillon. But no spectacular stolen data about Macron was published anywhere while he was vulnerable. Only last Friday, just before the French media and both candidates went into the legally mandated quiet period, hackers released a trove of stolen emails from Macron associates and campaign officials.

The timing is curious. The French media and bloggers could do nothing with the data because, as the government promptly warned them, they could be prosecuted for violating the quiet period. But apparently whoever compiled and released the trove (an employee of a Russian government's IT contractor? Someone with an email address on a German public email service? A group that includes these and other people?) hadn't found anything interesting in it. Two days of frantic efforts to unearth juicy tidbits from it produced no results for

WikiLeaks or the foreign reporters who were not bound by the media blackout. All that pro-Le Pen diggers managed to find was a clearly humorously meant "Je baise le peuple" ("screw the people") at the end of an email by a Macron campaign staffer.

The release will be scrutinized post-election, and maybe some minor transgressions or missteps will be highlighted. But that won't change the outcome or, judging by what I've seen of the stolen data, make Macron's life any more difficult as president. The hapless hackers must have hoped to create confusion and an atmosphere of suspicion on election day. Macron won anyway by a wider margin than polls had predicted.

To sum this up:

- The pro-Le Pen campaign on the social networks failed to travel beyond Le Pen's base, which was more clearly defined than Donald Trump's in the U.S. since Le Pen was far more of a known political quantity;

- The spread of fakes was thwarted by French voters' relative sophistication compared with American ones;

- Unlike in the U.S., the centrist candidate's campaign had little to hide -- or had the good sense not to put sensitive material online.

Clinton didn't lose because the internet-based toolkit was used against her. She lost because a sizable number of Americans did not consider her trustworthy. So they easily accepted both the fake news about her and the hints of corruption and dishonesty contained in the leaked emails.

Months of postmortems of Clinton's loss to Trump overshadow one of the simplest explanations: It's important to convince voters that you are not corrupt. Macron also benefited from voters who refused to give Le Pen a free pass on her party's history of racism and xenophobia the way Americans let Trump get away with his inflammatory statements.

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Clinton rejoiced at Macron's victory and what she called a "defeat to those interfering with democracy." Democracy, however, includes a long history of dirty campaigning. The internet toolkit -- call it Russian, alt-right or by any other name -- is far from a superweapon. It's merely a collection of dirty techniques based on modern delivery methods. These methods are not a silver bullet. A country with a healthy political culture and engaged voters can reject them. It's not for nothing that in France, Sunday's turnout of 74.56 percent counted as relatively low, while in the U.S. it would have been the highest since 1896.

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## Falk : Morning after with Macron: US-French relations are looking up

Pamela S. Falk,

opinion contributor

5-7 minutes

PARIS. Sunday's French presidential contest between centrist Emmanuel Macron and far-right Marine Le Pen drew interest among American political junkies as well as the public, because it was the first major election to test the limits of the "drain the swamp" message.

The European Union's Brexit referendum vote, followed by the successful Trump coalition of disaffected once-Democrat isolationists and "hold their nose Republicans" appeared to have set a rightward, anti-immigrant, protectionist trade, and go-it-alone defense trend.

In the U.S., that message has been reshaped significantly since the election, and it is likely that Macron and Trump will see eye to eye on a host of issues: increase of military spending, going tough on

Syria's government

, as well as support for NATO and the

European Union

. It is even likely that Macron will join the chorus of those weighing in to Trump to stay the course on the Paris climate agreement.

The French election arrests the isolationist trend and bodes well for political centrism regarding global alliances related to security, trade and migration. Given the vital U.S. interest in all three, the French election matters.

The first lesson on the day after the election, is that even old-line liberals need to be re-packaged as young independents.

Marlise Simons, a New York Times correspondent who lives in Paris and has covered international organizations for decades, sees the value of the new blood. She told me, "This has been the most riveting and also momentous French election in a long time...the French widely see this as an historic moment with its youngest president ever, even younger than the other youthful upstart, Napoleon, who before this week, was the youngest French leader thus far."

The two candidates, she said, were both "outliers," neither from a mainstream party: "The stakes are enormous: The outcome this time most likely will not just affect France, but the future of the European Union and its single currency, the Euro."

In reality, Macron was as connected to the old establishment as Hilary was to the entrenched Democratic Party. But it was a new face who cast a youthful glow on well-established principles of peace through dialogue and multilateral engagement.

France and Great Britain have been America's strongest allies in every way for over two centuries. With Britain halfway out of the European Union, France becomes the key U.S. partner to fight terrorism, manage the Western economy and stabilize the now dangerous refugee flows. Instead of leaving the EU to Germany's Angela Merkel, Macron represents a pro-American, but independent, leader of a country that claims as long and proud a tradition of liberty and democracy as we do.

On Syria, where the U.S. and Russia disagree over how to resolve the conflict, Macron will also strengthen the U.S. approach.

And, as for migration, there were key differences between the two candidates. Large refugee flows resulting from war, famine and climate, remain a hot topic for all countries, including the U.S., at a time when the world is facing the largest refugee crisis since World War II.

On the campaign trail Macron talked about more effective policing of immigration, important to Europe as a whole because of open borders within the EU. Le Pen talked about banning Muslims from entering France,

"France is about Bardot, not burkinis," Le Pen said, referring to the famous actress and the confrontation between police and Muslim bathers this past summer.

Countering violent extremism is probably the biggest gain for the U.S. and France, as a result of the Macron victory.

Several recent terror attacks in France have put counter terror high on the U.S.-France agenda: the truck attack in Nice, the Bataclan attack in Paris and the recent Champs Elysee shooting make French terrorism high on everyone's agenda and France and the U.S. have strong cooperation in this area.

Last week, the U.S. Transportation Security Administration warned truck companies to exercise caution in their rentals, in order to be vigilant about the threat of vehicle ramming attacks, based in part on intelligence and in part on coordination with French authorities.

Within the French counter-terror command in Paris, there are FBI and New York Police Department agents, conveying information in real time, and French police officers spend time in the U.S. to train. Because France is in many ways the epicenter, along with Brussels and several cities in Germany, of the “lone wolf” terrorist, cooperation in terms of lessons learned is vital.

## THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

### McGurn : Taking Liberties with France

William McGurn  
5-7 minutes

May 8, 2017 7:13 p.m. ET

France's long and troubled relationship with the liberty part of *liberté, égalité* and *fraternité* isn't hard to understand once you realize that the national motto goes back to Robespierre.

Unfortunately, Sunday's presidential election confirms that the French ambivalence to liberty remains alive—and debilitating.

In his victory speech, Emmanuel Macron told his fellow French citizens that the election turned “a new page in our history.” This is doubtful. The more prosaic explanation is that, given the choice before them, French voters reasonably opted for the certainty of a status quo with some tinkering around the edges over the uncertainty of radical disruptions promised by Marine Le Pen and her National Front party.

In an election that saw the first French president decline to seek a second term, the humiliating public repudiation of the establishment parties, and the election of the youngest French leader since Napoleon, the most striking aspect was that there was no real challenge to the reigning political orthodoxies. Indeed, in a race supposedly filled with so much anger and angst, the greatest irony is that the candidate furthest outside the French

There are, doubtless, challenges ahead for Macron including the French economy, his need for Parliamentary support, and the continuing migrant issue, but next Sunday's inauguration is a new day for the survival of the European Union and the global defense and economic benefits that come with it.

The mood in Paris — at the Louvre, on the Champs Elysee, and around

mainstream, Ms. Le Pen, far from questioning these orthodoxies promised to double down on them.

What are these orthodoxies? There are two. The first is the state's dominant role in the French economy. The second is the state's role as enforcer of France's official nonreligion, done formally under the principle of *laïcité*, a century-old innovation whose original purpose was to check the Catholic Church.

Apparently it occurs to no one in France that a fair part of their two chief crises—a stagnant economy and a Muslim minority that has not assimilated—are fueled by the same source: a lack of liberty.

France's lack of economic freedom is no secret. Whether it is the exalted role the French government plays in private enterprises or the state itch to intervene in any economic arrangement between consenting French adults, the assumption is that government knows best. One price of this arrangement is unemployment that hovers at around 10% overall, and at more than 20% for people under 25.

To his credit, Mr. Macron promises reforms such as eliminating 120,000 state jobs, cutting the corporate tax rate and making it easier to hire and fire workers. But anyone who thinks Mr. Macron a champion of economic freedom would do well to check out his Trump-like push for a “Buy European” program, as well as his vow to make “the protection of

the town in poorer neighborhoods — was proud, and relieved that France has stemmed the flow of international isolationism and division. That bodes well for Americans and for the European Union.

*Pamela Falk, former staff director of a House of Representatives Subcommittee, is CBS News TV & Radio Foreign Affairs Analyst & U.N.*

European industry” central to “re-inventing” the European Union.

Even so, while it's easy to blame France's leaders for their *dirigiste* instincts, the sad truth is that these men and women are probably more liberal than the people they represent. Put it this way: Whenever some foreign producer introduces the least form of competition—whether it's an Uber car ride or Spanish fruit—what's the popular response? Riots and resentment.

There's a similar dynamic in religion. In the past, a right-wing French candidate might have opposed *laïcité* in an effort to consolidate support from the nation's Catholic voters. But Ms. Le Pen recognized that *laïcité* could be a club against Muslims.

It's worked that way, too, on everything from the ban on headscarves to the removal of non-pork alternatives from school menus. The state strategy is to force French Muslims to assimilate by cracking down on their religious expression and demanding they become good European secularists. In an article last year in the *New Republic*, Elizabeth Winkler addressed the flaw in this approach:

“In the wake of terrorist attacks, it may strike some as counterintuitive to loosen—or even abandon—*laïcité*,” she wrote. “But allowing Muslims greater freedom to express their beliefs in peaceful ways may make them feel more accepted and

*Resident Correspondent and holds a J.D. from Columbia School of Law. She can be reached at @PamelaFalk.*

*The views expressed by contributors are their own and are not the views of The Hill.*

less stigmatized by the country they have made their home.”

Again, French orthodoxy holds that strictly enforcing secularity will make societies tolerant. But even on its own terms, that's not the way it's working out. The same French government that insists on limiting religious expression has proved unable either to assimilate French Muslims or to keep French Jews safe from Islamist attack.

The somewhat hopeful news is that Mr. Macron has made comments—e.g., that *laïcité* should not be “vindictive”—that hint he might recognize that a cramped French secularism may be making things worse rather than better. But even if he does, it's not clear the French public is ready for more religious freedom. A recent poll by Ipsos, for example, found the vast majority welcoming restrictions on Muslim expression.

This is the France Mr. Macron inherits, whose citizens believe authorities should police the bathing suits of Muslim women and make life difficult for any foreigner who dares to offer French men and women some product or service at a better value than what they are now getting. If Mr. Macron really hopes to reinvigorate this France, the best way to start is by pushing for more *liberté*, not less.

*Write to mcgurn@wsj.com.*

Appeared in the May. 09, 2017, print edition.

## The New York Times

### Leonhardt : A French Lesson for the American Media

David Leonhardt  
4-5 minutes

Despite the mundane quality of the Clinton emails, the media covered them as a profound revelation. The tone often suggested a big investigative scoop. But this was no scoop. It was material stolen by a hostile foreign government, posted for all to see, and it was only occasionally revealing. It deserved some coverage, but far less.

I say this as someone who likes journalism so much that I've never had another full-time job. I also say it with reverence for the many journalists doing good, hard work that, as Thomas Jefferson explained, is vital to democracy. With a president who lies all the time, often about the media, journalism becomes all the more important. And because it's so important, those of us practicing it need to be open to reflection and criticism.

The overhyped coverage of the hacked emails was the media's worst mistake in 2016 — one sure to be repeated if not properly understood. Television was the biggest offender, but print media was hardly blameless. The sensationalism exacerbated a second problem with the coverage: the obsession with Clinton's private email server.

I disagree with people who say that the server was a nonstory. Clinton violated government policy and was not fully honest. The F.B.I.

conducted an investigation, whatever you think of it. All of that adds up to a real news story.

The question is scale. Last fall, Gallup asked Americans what they were hearing about the candidates. The answers about Donald Trump were all over the place: immigration, his speeches and his criticism of Barack Obama, among other things. When people described what they were hearing about Clinton, by contrast, one subject towered over every other: email.

That's a pretty harsh indictment of the coverage (and Gallup's research was done well before James Comey wrote his infamous letter). It is a sign that Clinton's private server and the hacked emails crowded out everything else, including her plans for reducing inequality, addressing climate change and conducting a more hawkish foreign policy than Obama. It's a sign that the media failed to distinguish a subject that sounded important — secret emails! — from subjects that were in reality more important.

Last weekend, France's mainstream media showed how to exercise better judgment.

Late Friday, two days before the election, hackers released the Macron campaign emails. French media laws are stricter than American laws, and government officials argued against publication of the hacked information. But only the campaigns themselves were legally barred from making statements during the final weekend. Publications could have reported on the substance of the emails.

They largely did not. "It was a manipulation attempt — people trying to manipulate our voting process," Gilles van Kote, deputy chief editor of Le Monde, told me.

French journalists rightly did not focus on what *seemed* like big news, because the emails surely did. They evaluated what truly was major news. Material released by a hostile foreign government, with the aim of confusing voters and evidently without significant new information, failed to qualify. Van Kote said reporters are continuing to read the emails to see if they warrant future stories.

The two cases obviously are not identical. (And van Kote wasn't criticizing American journalism; the criticisms are mine.) But they are similar enough to say that the French media exercised better,

more sober judgment than the American media.

This issue isn't going away. Our digital world ensures that the private information of public figures, and not-so-public ones, will be released again in the future.

The media cannot always ignore that information, tempting as it may seem. But it also should not pretend that the only two options are neglect and sensationalism. There is a middle ground, one where journalistic judgment should prioritize news over the whiff of news.

## CNBC - Aslam : What Macron's victory means to the markets-commentary

Naeem Aslam

4-5 minutes

Philippe Wojazer | Reuters

French presidential election candidate Emmanuel Macron, head of the political movement En Marche !, or Onwards ! greets supporters as leaves a polling station during the the second round of 2017 French presidential election, in Le Touquet, France, May 7, 2017.

It was an historic day in France on Sunday as Emmanuel Macron claimed victory in the French presidential elections.

The Frexit goblin (the fear of France leaving the European Union) remains locked up as voters rejected the populist surge that resulted in Brexit (the UK leaving the EU) and carried Donald Trump to the White House. As a result, we expect the European markets to perform well given that the political risks have dissipated.

But Macron will have to deliver higher growth and lower unemployment. That will be the focal point as all eyes turn towards the

June parliamentary elections.

We have a non-traditional candidate in office, so the challenges he is facing are enormous as he tries to work with other parties. Macron needs a strong hand in the parliament which will help him to make swift movements. The unemployment rate in the country remains stuck at 10 percent, greater than that of the UK and Germany, so it clear that the country needs critical reform.

### Reaction in the Forex market

This was a perfect textbook trade. We saw a little upward move for the currency but then it reversed direction. A lot of upward movement was already baked in. Nonetheless, the downward risks have diminished in the longer term and we could see the euro/U.S. dollar price moving to between 1.12 and 1.14 as the European Central Bank will have one less thing to worry about.

We could continue to move higher but this momentum is more likely to change into consolidation. At this consolidation stage, we would need a bigger and stronger catalyst to move the euro-dollar pair out of that consolidation movement.

Traders are going to trade the economic data given that the political concerns are behind us. The upcoming German factory orders number will be important and if we beat the forecast, the euro could find some momentum which could help the currency move higher.

### Debt market reaction

We are also expecting the French and German sovereign spread to tighten up. The French people have made the right choice, which has eased many concerns and given investors more confidence in holding riskier assets. We must thank the French people and the polls, which finally got it right, for the great result.

### Focus back on the central bank

Given that the threats of the French elections are over, investors are going to refocus on the European Central Bank's money printing machine, the stimulus which pulled the euro zone out of double-dip recession, and the bank's plans to slow this machine right down.

### What is ahead for the new French president?

It was a bitter campaign and the Frexit threat could surface again, even before Macron's five-year term expires. If he fails to establish a strong relationship with Brussels, then the president will be under pressure. The opposition party's leader, Marine Le Pen, will gather momentum over the coming years and could come back much stronger in five years' time.

On the bright side, the French economic data of late has been showing that the ECB's quantitative-easing policy, where it has bought public and private debt, is producing its fruit. Consumer confidence is strong and the GDP data are not falling off the cliff.

Nonetheless, economic reforms are essential and Macron will have to make it happen in order to bring the divided country together and lower the unemployment rate.

*Commentary by Naeem Aslam, chief market analyst at ThinkMarkets. Follow him on Twitter @NAEEMASLAM23.*

*For more insight from CNBC contributors, follow @CNBCopinion on Twitter.*

The Washington Post

## France sent 42 people to a global climate summit. The Trump administration sent 7.

<https://www.facebook.com/chrisccooney>

7-9 minutes

The U.S. government has sent just seven registered participants to a key United Nations meeting on the Paris climate agreement — a smaller delegation than Zimbabwe's — underscoring the Trump administration's deep ambivalence about the historic agreement.

White House officials are expected to huddle Tuesday to discuss the fate of the agreement — with business leaders and the international community pressing the United States to stay in the agreement, and President Trump's conservative allies urging an exit.

The meeting in Bonn, Germany, represents the first of two gatherings this week where international partners will pressure the increasingly recalcitrant United States to affirm its role in the

agreement of more than 190 nations.

Other industrialized nations, such as China, France and Germany, each sent dozens of officials — the French delegation alone had 42 official participants. The United States sent 44 official participants just last year.

In Fairbanks, Alaska, on Thursday, the United States will host a ministerial of the eight-nation Arctic Council, an event sure to highlight

rapid changes to the fastest warming part of the Earth.

In recent days, White House officials have taken an apparent turn away from remaining in the Paris climate agreement, with several administration officials arguing that the accord binds the Trump administration to the ambitious greenhouse gas reduction goal promised by the Obama administration, or something even stronger.

That interpretation is contested by many legal experts, however, as well as participants in past international climate negotiations.

"Having been intensely involved in such negotiations for a long time, there can be no doubt that Paris is utterly nonbinding, and therefore, each country is free to adjust their pledges in accordance with their own national circumstances," said James Connaughton, who headed up the White House Council on Environmental Quality under President George W. Bush.

Meanwhile, a wave of international and domestic lobbying has intensified, with foreign allies and many corporations calling for the United States to stick with the deal, even as U.S. political conservatives push for a withdrawal — matching a similar tension between internationalists and conservatives within the White House itself.

"We strongly hope that the US will stay committed to the Paris Accord," Francois Delattre, the French ambassador to the United Nations, said in an email to The Washington Post. "This is key in itself but also as an illustration of America's commitment to world affairs."

Delattre said he "underscored this point" in a White House lunch with Trump, when the president met with members of the U.N. Security Council late last month.

It has all set the stage for a potentially dramatic decision — precisely the type that Trump seems to enjoy making.

The Paris climate agreement, struck at U.N. talks in December 2015, joins the voluntary carbon-cutting

pledges of more than 190 countries. The parties to the agreement are expected to increase their ambitions over time, with the goal of eventually setting the world on a course to limit global warming to "well below" a 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) rise over temperatures seen in the late 1800s.

The Obama administration pledged to reduce U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 26 to 28 percent below their 2005 levels by the year 2025 — less than 10 years from now. Yet even this ambitious pledge, combined with those of other nations, is not enough to keep the world within the 2-degree temperature limit, which is why increased ambition over time is central to the agreement.

The divide within the White House is between those, like Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and Energy Secretary Rick Perry, who would have the United States revise its commitment downward, and those like Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Scott Pruitt, who think simply remaining in the deal at all opens the Trump administration up to legal challenges to its domestic energy policies.

On Monday, 40 conservative organizations sent president Trump a letter "in enthusiastic support of your campaign commitments to withdraw fully from the Paris Climate Treaty and to stop all taxpayer funding of UN global warming programs." The groups argue that the United States might consider withdrawing from the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change, a 1992 Senate-ratified treaty that is the foundation for subsequent U.N. climate

deliberations, including the Paris agreement.

Meanwhile, Google, Apple and more than 20 other firms took out an ad in the New York Times on Monday throwing their support behind the agreement.

"By expanding markets for innovative clean technologies, the agreement generates jobs and economic growth," the companies' letter says. "U.S. companies are well positioned to lead in these markets. Withdrawing from the agreement will limit our access to them and could expose us to retaliatory measures."

It is unclear how other nations would react if the United States were to withdraw from the deal, but "retaliatory measures" have certainly been mentioned in the past.

Nicolas Sarkozy, the former president of France, has even suggested "a carbon tax at Europe's borders, a tax of 1 to 3 percent for all the products that come from the United States, if the United States exempts itself from the environmental regulations that we ourselves have imposed on our businesses."

The United States, as the world's second largest emitter, is central to the Paris accord, both symbolically and also mathematically. Indeed, the country lowering its emissions as promised by the Obama administration could determine whether the world itself is positioned to curb global warming significantly in coming years.

Energy and Environment newsletter

The science and policy of environmental issues.

According to an analysis by the think tank Climate Interactive, the Paris agreement pledges would shift the world from a path in which global emissions are expected to rise significantly out to the year 2030 (as economies grow and populations boom), onto one in which emissions remain relatively flat over the next 13 years. That's not enough to hit the 2 degrees Celsius goal, but it is enough to keep global warming at least somewhat under control.

However, the group found, 21 percent of that achievement — or about one-fifth of the emissions cuts — depend on the United States. Therefore, if the United States doesn't hit its promise to the world under Barack Obama, global emissions will keep growing to 2030 at least (assuming other nations do not pitch in with far deeper cuts than proposed so far, deep enough to offset the United States' failure to contribute).

"The United States is contributing 21 percent of the pledged global reductions in greenhouse gas emissions," said Ellie Johnston, the climate and energy lead at Climate Interactive. "If the United States doesn't follow through on its commitment, it will shift more of the burden of climate action to those countries who have polluted the least. It's unfair by any measure."

White House spokesman Sean Spicer has said that the Trump administration will make up its mind about whether to stay in the Paris agreement before the Group of 7 meeting in Italy at the end of this month.

## The New York Times **A New Age in French — Modeling**

4-5 minutes

The law, which applies to all models working in the European Union and the European Economic Area, states: "Unless specified and identified in medical records for a model over 16, the body mass index will be taken into account, particularly when its value suggests moderate or severe thinness after the age of 18, and is lower than the third percentile in French references for height and gender before that age."

Separately, beginning Oct. 1, any "commercial" image of a model whose bodily appearance has been digitally or otherwise altered will have to be labeled "photographie

retouchée," or retouched photograph.

Those who do not disclose image retouching are subject to a fine of 37,500 euros, or more than \$41,000; employing a model without the health requirements and certificate carries a fine of €75,000 and six months in jail.

Though the law had been under discussion for a long time and was approved by the National Assembly in 2015, its publication in the Official Journal was required for it to take effect, a move that occurred last week, spurred in part by the desire of the health minister, Marisol Touraine, to put it in place before the change of administration.

Whether the law will really make a difference, however, remains to be seen.

"I applaud the motivation and appreciate that France has taken a leadership role," said Sara Ziff, founder of the Model Alliance, an advocacy group. "That said, there needs to be careful attention to how this plays out over the next year or two in France. Are the decrees being implemented and are they achieving their intended effects?"

After all, a primary reason for the prevalence of anorexia among models, and for their exploitation, is the skewed balance of power in the industry, which places models at the bottom of the totem pole, at the mercy of agents, bookers, photographers, stylists and so on. It is possible that insisting that models be "certified" by yet another authority figure will simply add to the concerns, again putting someone other than the model in the position of judging her health.

In addition, the retouching law applies only to advertising, not to editorial images in magazines or newspapers. And in the hierarchy of fashion, editorial is seen as much more desirable (if less lucrative) than commercial campaigns. Additionally, models are most often discovered and break through in magazines before they are snapped up by brands for marketing campaigns. So the new law would not alleviate the pressure for thinness emanating from the glossy side.

"Will it fix all the problems created by these deceptive images that saturate our mass media?" asked S. Bryn Austin, director of the Strategic Training Initiative for the Prevention of Eating Disorders at Harvard's School of Public Health. "No, probably not. But it will be one step closer to stemming the well-documented psychological harm

these images cause, especially to young and vulnerable consumers. France is saying to the fashion and advertising industries that it's time they acted responsibly toward the people on whom their livelihoods depend."

Fashion has a history of periodically

**THE WALL  
STREET  
JOURNAL.**

## Righter : Theresa May Is No Maggie Thatcher

Rosemary  
Righter

5-7 minutes

Updated May 8, 2017 6:26 p.m. ET

Unflashy, camera-shy, socially awkward and a hit with British voters—at least, the English and Welsh variety—Theresa May is leading her Conservative troops into battle as the self-proclaimed champion of "ordinary working people" ahead of June's general election.

Coming from almost any other Tory, this might have been a cheeky joke at the clique of half-baked revolutionaries in Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn's camp. But Mrs. May doesn't "do" jokes. If she wins the sweeping Conservative victory she seeks, Britons will have given their mandate to an unabashed interventionist, passionately convinced of "the good that government can do" and the duty of the state to mend society's ills, curb capitalism's excesses and stand as a bulwark against the unsettling forces of globalization.

Welcome back—just possibly—to the pre-Thatcher Britain I grew up in, the land that coined the word "Butskellism." A conflation of the surnames of the Tory Party's Rab Butler and Labour leader Hugh Gaitskell, Butskellism was shorthand for a left-leaning, corporatist postwar mind-set in both main parties. Fear of change—and, in the Tory case,

engaging in self-recrimination, especially when it comes to models, but of then settling back into familiar patterns. See, for example, the discussion about diversity on the runway, as well as the question of models' weight. Perhaps the

fear of an increasingly welfare-dependent electorate—kept much of the economy unprofitably in state hands for fear of committing the crime of "selling off the family silver," and the whole country in thrall to over-mighty trade unions.

It trapped politicians into generally fruitless efforts to banish stagflation by controlling prices and wages, and to ward off economic decline with "industrial strategies" that mainly amounted to subsidizing flagging industries. These were decades sacrificed to a bungling corporatism, culminating in the late 1970s in near-bankruptcy. They should have taught us that the most untrustworthy of all political phenomena is "a safe pair of hands."

Margaret Thatcher took risks; calculated risks, for the most part. Like the Greek goddess Pallas Athene, she took care to pick battles she could win, but she was no less a radical for that because at its core hers was a gamble that the British could be persuaded that the key to national recovery was to reward individual effort, encourage ambition and open up the marketplace to competition.

Mrs. May's ambition to make Britain "a country that works for everyone" and promote social mobility isn't that far off from Mrs. Thatcher's pitch. Yet she has overtly positioned herself in the opposite ideological corner. For her, "markets are broken" and need "strong" government action to tackle "burning

situation will change, however, now that there is actual financial risk.

"To know how much of a difference the new law will eventually make for the health and safety of fashion models and consumers, we need policy makers to now support evaluation of how the law is

injustices" that blight the life chances of the children of poor families, to transform the prospects of the "just-about-managing" income bracket and at the top, to rein in corporate excess.

Some of her ideas, such as her flirtation with workers on company boards and the economically illiterate proposal to cap domestic energy bills, echo the socialist agenda of Ed Milliband, loser of the 2015 election, and put her well to the left of former Labour Prime Minister Tony Blair.

But is she really a left-wing statist in Tory twinsets? Or is she a conservative with a small "c," who, like Prince Tancredi in Lampedusa's novel "The Leopard," believes that "for things to remain as they are, everything must change"? She argues forcefully that uneasiness about globalization, rising hostility to the mantras of liberal capitalism and resentment of widening income disparities among those "left behind" have reached such a pitch that the state must act as a protective counterpoint, intervening to right the social and economic balance in the name of what she repeatedly refers to as "the common good." Then again, in terms of what it implies for expanding the role of the state, is this a distinction without a difference?

Mrs. May has a disconcerting propensity to micromanage every decision. The unintended consequence is that the big ideas in her speeches get stuck in the works

implemented across the country, and what effects it has in France," Dr. Austin said. "We may also expect to see ripple effects throughout the global fashion industry, which looks to France as the industry leader. Only time will tell."

long enough to be watered down. Consider the ill-conceived scheme to put workers on company boards, quietly replaced by proposed worker and consumer "advisory panels," and the unpleasantly xenophobic idea, now dropped, that companies could be named-and-shamed into hiring British workers by forcing them to list their foreign employees. The government's green paper on corporate reform reads more like an effort to bolster public trust in business than a declaration of war on private enterprise. Her vaunted "proper industrial strategy," rather than laying out a grand interventionist framework, has dwindled into a rather incoherent laundry list of small-scale interventions.

For this relief, much thanks—as also for Mrs. May's Brexit-driven pledge to make Britain "the strongest global advocate for free markets." Her recent proposal to endow government with French-style powers to block foreign takeovers is likely to be checkmated by Britain's pressing need to demonstrate that it is more than ever a country open to foreign investors. Her actions to date have been much more cautious than her speeches. With luck, Mrs. May will turn out to be interventionist by instinct, but liberal by default. But that "safe pair of hands" will need watching like a hawk.

*Ms. Righter is an associate editor of the Times of London.*

## INTERNATIONAL

**The  
New York  
Times**

### Syria Rejects U.N. Monitoring Role in 'De-Escalation Zones'

Rick Gladstone  
4-5 minutes

Destroyed buildings in the rebel-held town of Douma, Syria, last week. The creation of four "de-escalation zones" is intended to halt hostilities in those areas, according to a pact reached by Russia, Iran and Turkey. Sameer Al-Doumy/Agence France-Presse — Getty Images

The Syrian government said on Monday that the "de-escalation zones" negotiated by Russia, Iran and Turkey, which took effect this weekend, could not be monitored by others, including the United Nations.

The declaration, made by Foreign Minister Walid al-Moallem at a news conference in Damascus, Syria, added to uncertainty over how to ensure compliance with the agreement, which theoretically halts

hostilities in four regions of the country.

"We do not accept a role for the United Nations or international forces to monitor the agreement," Mr. Moallem told reporters. Should there be violations, he said, "the Syrian Army will be prepared to respond in a decisive manner."

Russia, the main ally of President Bashar al-Assad of Syria and the principal author of the agreement,

had suggested when it was announced last week that outside powers could play a monitoring role. But Mr. Moallem's remarks appeared to rule out that possibility.

Even so, Russia has sent signals that it is hoping to gain support for the agreement from the United States despite their deep differences over the Syrian war, now in its seventh year.

Foreign Minister Sergey V. Lavrov of Russia will meet with his American counterpart, Secretary of State Rex W. Tillerson, in Washington on Wednesday to discuss Syria and other issues, both sides announced on Monday.

Mr. Lavrov will be the highest-ranking Russian official to visit Washington since the Trump administration took office, and it will be his first trip there in years.

The de-escalation zones agreement, reached in Astana, Kazakhstan, on Thursday, is regarded as one of the more ambitious diplomatic undertakings by outside powers to halt the war, but it has also raised intense skepticism from insurgents and from some of their

supporters, including the United States.

"Moscow has invested all of its cards in the Astana process," Charles Lister, a senior fellow at the Middle East Institute in Washington, said in a briefing posted on the institute's website. "Russia has a great deal to lose should this initiative fall apart, which makes acquiring a more committed U.S. statement of support extremely important."

The State Department has expressed concern about the role of Iran in the agreement and the history of failed cease-fires in the war, which has claimed hundreds of thousands of lives and left millions of Syrians displaced.

But Defense Secretary Jim Mattis appeared to offer a muted expression of support on Monday, telling reporters during a visit to Denmark that the United States would closely examine the agreement.

"All wars eventually come to an end, and we've been looking for a long time how to bring this one to an end," he told reporters. "So we'll look at the proposal and see if it can work."

Under the agreement, which is to last initially for six months, all combatants in the conflict are forbidden to use weapons in the de-escalation zones, including warplanes. The agreement also allows humanitarian aid to civilians in these areas.

The agreement does not apply to fighters loyal to the Islamic State or a Qaeda-linked group commonly known as the Nusra Front, which theoretically remains vulnerable to attack.

It is still unclear how the agreement might affect American airstrikes on Islamic State targets in Syria. A senior Russian diplomat, Aleksandr Lavrentiev, said on Friday that the agreement would effectively stop American warplanes from flying in Syria's airspace. But a State Department spokesman, Edgar Vasquez, disputed that assertion, saying it "makes no sense."



## Syria rejects international forces in safe zones

BEIRUT —  
4 minutes

May 8 at 3:59 PM

Syria on Monday dismissed the idea of foreign forces patrolling four "de-escalation zones" that are to be established under a deal struck by Russia, Iran and Turkey, suggesting that Damascus would settle only for Russian "military police" already on the ground.

Damascus would abide by the agreement signed in Kazakhstan last week, Foreign Minister Walid al-Moualem told reporters in the Syrian capital, but cautioned it was "premature" to say whether the deal would succeed.

"There will be no presence by any international forces supervised by the United

Nations," Moualem said. "The Russian guarantor has clarified that there will be military police and observation centers."

Although he did not specify who the military police would be, he appeared to be referring to Russian observers already in Syria.

Moualem also vowed that Syrian government forces would respond "decisively" to any violation by the rebels.

The cease-fire deal went into effect over the weekend, bringing a general reduction in violence, but clashes continued. There are still questions about how the agreement will be enforced.

Russia and Iran, which support Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, and Turkey, which backs the rebels, may deploy armed forces to secure the de-escalation zones, in what would amount to unprecedented

coordination between the three regional powers.

Uruguay, which holds the U.N. Security Council's rotating presidency this month, said Russia wants a vote this week on a resolution supporting the deal. Uruguay's ambassador, Elbio Rosselli, told reporters that "there are consultations ongoing" on the text.

Today's Headlines newsletter

The day's most important stories.

The United States is not party to the de-escalation agreement. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said the United States would take a close look at the proposal for "safe zones" in Syria, but he said the plan poses many unanswered questions, including whether it would be effective.

"We'll look at the proposal, see if it can work," Mattis told reporters traveling with him to Copenhagen, where he will attend a meeting of the U.S.-led coalition battling the Islamic State extremist group. "Will it affect the fight against ISIS? I think the international community is united in the sense of wanting to see ISIS put on its back foot."

Moualem said he hopes the agreement will, as a start, achieve a separation between Syrian armed opposition groups and extremist groups such as al-Qaeda, saying the former must force the latter to leave the de-escalation zones.

But even if the agreement is enforced, it is unlikely to end the conflict. Despite several rounds of U.N.-mediated negotiations in Geneva, the government and opposition remain at odds over Assad's future role in Syria.



## Watchdog Group Sues Trump Administration, Seeking Legal Rationale Behind Syria Strike

Charlie Savage  
4-6 minutes

WASHINGTON — A month after President Trump ordered a military strike on the Syrian regime as punishment for using chemical weapons, his administration has yet to offer a rationale for what lawful authority he had to carry out the attack.

Now, a government watchdog group run by former Obama administration lawyers is suing to force the Trump administration to disclose its legal theory — or concede that it launched the April 6 attack without thinking about the law. While the

attack attracted bipartisan support as a political and policy matter, its legal basis was disputed.

The United States had no self-defense rationale, and neither Congress nor the United Nations Security Council authorized the attack, raising questions about the scope and limits of Mr. Trump's power as a matter of domestic law and the United States' power as a matter of international law. The Trump administration has not answered them.

On Monday, the watchdog group, Protect Democracy, filed a lawsuit under the Freedom of Information Act for all emails, memos and other

records discussing Mr. Trump's legal authority to launch the strike.

"We should all agree that in our constitutional democracy, the executive's ability to attack another country is constrained by the law," Justin Florence, the group's legal director and a former Obama White House lawyer, wrote in an essay announcing the lawsuit. He added, "Some countries may tolerate a head of state launching a new conflict without offering a clear legal justification, but we should not."

In a letter to Congress, Mr. Trump asserted, with little detail, that his constitutional powers as commander in chief gave him sufficient basis to unilaterally launch

the attack to advance American interests, including deterring further use of chemical weapons.

Many presidents of both parties have claimed a right in domestic law to make unilateral use of limited force abroad to advance American interests. For example, President Barack Obama did so in 2011, when he directed the American military to take part in the NATO intervention in Libya without congressional authorization.

Still, the Obama administration released a memorandum from the Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel laying out a rationale for why the American interests at stake

in Libya were sufficient to justify his move.

Shortly after the Syria strike last month, the Trump administration distributed unsigned talking points among representatives in various agencies about the strike's legal basis. They were never formally made public, but Martin Lederman, a former Justice Department lawyer in the Obama administration, obtained a copy and published them on the Just Security blog. An administration official later confirmed their authenticity.

"This domestic law basis is very similar to the authority for the use force in Libya in 2011, as set forth in an April 2011 opinion by the Department of Justice's Office of Legal Counsel," the unused Trump talking points said.

However, as Mr. Lederman pointed out, the 2011 rationale relied in part on the need to

bolster the credibility of the United Nations Security Council, which had authorized nations to use force to protect Libyan civilians. By contrast, the Security Council did not authorize a strike to punish Syria's use of chemical weapons, so the Syrian intervention undermined the United Nations system for constraining war, he said.

The United Nations Charter, a treaty the United States ratified, recognizes only two legal ways for a country to use force on another soil without its consent: if the Security Council has authorized an attack, or in self-defense. The Trump talking points memo had a section labeled "international," but it consisted of policy arguments, not legal ones, and did not mention the United Nations Charter.

There are some precedents. The United States bypassed the United Nations system in 1999, when the

Clinton administration directed the military to participate in the NATO intervention in Kosovo. Still, that administration put forward something of a public legal rationale, citing a list of factors that it argued made the operation legitimate.

The Obama administration considered attacking Syria in 2013 for using chemical weapons, too, and during preliminary deliberations Mr. Obama's legal team developed an argument that was similar to the Kosovo precedent. But in the end, in part because that international law argument was so thin — unlike Kosovo, not even the multilateral NATO alliance was going to be involved — Mr. Obama pulled back and asked Congress for authorization. The crisis was then resolved in a different way and no strikes were conducted.

Late last month, two Democrats in Congress — Representative Adam B. Schiff of California and Senator Tim Kaine of Virginia — sent a letter to Mr. Trump urging him to explain the legal basis for the strike. But the administration has not responded, aides said.

Now, Protect Democracy is hoping to shed some light with a lawsuit that, at the least, might identify whether legal memos exist, whether or not they are made public.

Mr. Florence wrote that the Trump administration's silence suggests one of two "disturbing" possibilities: Either it is trying "to prevent informed debate and oversight of the president's ability to take the country into a new armed conflict with another country," or it "never rigorously made an assessment about the legality of the Syria strikes" in the first place.

**THE WALL  
STREET  
JOURNAL.**

Gerald F. Seib

5-6 minutes

May 8, 2017 11:43 a.m. ET

Nearly lost amid the hubbub over health care last week was the other piece of big news: President Donald Trump plans to make his first trip abroad by going to Saudi Arabia and Israel, followed by the Vatican, later this month.

This is significant because, unlikely as it sounds, Mr. Trump actually has a chance to make a lasting mark in the world's most troubled region: the Middle East. Whether he has the skill, patience or simple good luck to do so is another question, of course.

This opportunity arises because of the rapid emergence of an unusual strategic alignment. Historically, America's three most important partners in the region are Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Israel. At the moment, all three of those nations actually are strategically in sync with one another—and, simultaneously, on good terms with the new American administration.

Often Egypt and Saudi Arabia are out of sorts with one another—or with whatever American administration that happens to be in office—and they've been at war, literal or figurative, with Israel more often than not. That's not the case now. Throw in Jordan, the other traditional American partner now

## Opportunity Knocks for Trump in the Middle East; Answering Will Be Hard

generally in step with the others, and you have a new state of affairs.

This alignment has emerged, as is so often the case, less because of common interests than common enemies. The Saudis, Egyptians and Israelis all see both Iran and Islamic State—one a Shiite nation and the other a Sunni radical movement—as existential threats. They also see a new administration in Washington that, unlike its predecessor, shares their view that Iran is to be confronted rather than cajoled and that is more willing to look past the internal human-rights issues in friendly states.

Add it all up, and "there is an opportunity," says a senior administration official. "We'll see shortly how that opportunity can be turned into reality."

And what might that reality be? One possibility is a new security structure, created with American help, that knits together Sunni Arab States and pulls in tacit security and intelligence cooperation from Israel to confront the Iranian and Islamic State threats. "The goal is to have a bigger burden being borne by the countries" in the region, says a second administration official. "But also to be in a position where they can have their own regional alliance against Iran to counter Iran, and then also to be in a position where there is a security blanket that is provided by them for them."

Making good on that possibility will require a lot of steps that have been somewhere between difficult and impossible in the past. The fact that Mr. Trump's first stop abroad will be in Saudi Arabia, where leaders of other Muslim nations will be gathered, signals that the administration is counting on the chronically cautious Saudis to shoulder a bigger leadership role than they've been willing to in the past.

The second needed step will be turning hypothetical alignment between Israel and Arab states into something real. Already, there is a new level of security cooperation between Egypt and Israel in confronting extremists in the Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip. Meanwhile, quiet unofficial contacts between Saudis and Israelis have begun.

But Arab leaders are trapped by decades of their own anti-Israel rhetoric, which inflames their populations and restricts their ability to adopt a new posture now. Indeed, Israel withdrew its ambassador to Egypt recently because of local security concerns.

Which leads to the third necessary step: progress in making peace between Israel and the Palestinians. Movement on the Palestinian problem has always been a prerequisite for any Arab opening to Israel or closer Arab-American cooperation. In the face of bigger problems, Arab leaders increasingly

appear to be losing patience with and interest in the Palestinians' problems. But decades of preaching to their own people about the primacy of the issue can't be simply brushed away.

The Trump team seems willing to invest time and capital on the Palestinian issue. Still, the president "is banking on something that has never been bankable before, which is that you can convert a stronger U.S.-Arab Sunni state relationship into real currency on the peace process," says longtime American Mideast diplomat Aaron David Miller.

Mr. Trump has some other tough decisions. Is he going to honor campaign-season promises to move the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem from Tel Aviv, which would inflame Arabs' passions and undercut their willingness to cooperate? How will he approach the civil war in Syria, where Egypt tacitly supports the Iran-friendly dictator, Bashar al-Assad, while the Saudis want him gone?

In sum, opportunity is knocking for Mr. Trump in the Middle East. As ever, though, opening the door will be hard.

**Write to** Gerald F. Seib at [jerry.seib@wsj.com](mailto:jerry.seib@wsj.com)

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# U.S. poised to expand military effort against Taliban in Afghanistan (UNE)

<https://www.facebook.com/greg.jaffe.5>

9-11 minutes

President Trump's most senior military and foreign policy advisers have proposed a major shift in strategy in Afghanistan that would effectively put the United States back on a war footing with the Taliban.

The new plan, which still needs the approval of the president, calls for expanding the U.S. military role as part of a broader effort to push an increasingly confident and resurgent Taliban back to the negotiating table, U.S. officials said.

The plan comes at the end of a sweeping policy review built around the president's desire to reverse worsening security in Afghanistan and "start winning" again, said one U.S. official, who like others spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss internal deliberations.

The new strategy, which has the backing of top Cabinet officials, would authorize the Pentagon, not the White House, to set troop numbers in Afghanistan and give the military far broader authority to use airstrikes to target Taliban militants. It would also lift Obama-era restrictions that limited the mobility of U.S. military advisers on the battlefield.

The net result of the changes would be to reverse moves by President Barack Obama to steadily limit the U.S. military role in Afghanistan, along with the risk to American troops and the cost of the war effort, more than 15 years after U.S. forces first arrived there.

Trump is expected to make a final call on the strategy before a May 25 NATO summit in Brussels that he plans to attend.

Officials said it is unclear whether Trump, who has spoken little about the United States' longest war, will look favorably upon expanding the U.S. role in Afghanistan. While he has voiced skepticism about allowing U.S. troops to become bogged down in foreign conflicts, the president has also expressed a desire to be tough on terrorism and has seemed to delight in the use of military force.

"The review is an opportunity to send a message that, yes, the U.S. is going to send more troops, but it's not to achieve a forever military victory," said Andrew Wilder, an

Afghanistan expert at the U.S. Institute of Peace. "Rather, it's to try to bring about a negotiated end to this conflict."

*[In Afghanistan, Trump will inherit a costly stalemate and few solutions]*

## Taliban dangers

The new strategy is a product of the U.S. military's mounting worries that the fragile stalemate with the Taliban has been steadily eroding for years, jeopardizing the survival of an allied government and endangering a key U.S. base for combating militant groups such as al-Qaeda and the Islamic State throughout South Asia.

Even as it moves to the president's desk, the proposal faces resistance from some senior administration officials who fear a repeat of earlier decisions to intensify military efforts that produced only temporary improvements.

Inside the White House, those opposed to the plan have begun to refer derisively to the strategy as "McMaster's War," a reference to H.R. McMaster, the president's national security adviser. The general, who once led anti-corruption efforts in Afghanistan and was one of the architects of President George W. Bush's troop surge in Iraq, is the driving force behind the new strategy at the White House.

(Reuters)

Defense Secretary Jim Mattis says he sees 2017 as "another tough year for the valiant Afghan security forces and the international troops." Defense Secretary Jim Mattis says he sees 2017 as "another tough year for the valiant Afghan security forces and the international troops."

(Reuters)

The White House declined to comment.

The plan envisions an increase of at least 3,000 U.S. troops to an existing force of about 8,400. The U.S. force would also be bolstered by requests for matching troops from NATO nations.

But, in keeping with the Trump administration's desire to empower military decision-making, the Pentagon would have final say on troop levels and how those forces are employed on the battlefield. The plan would also increase spending on Afghanistan's troubled government in an effort to improve its capacity.

The additional troops and aid spending would add to the fiscal toll of a war that already costs \$23 billion annually, a factor Trump advisers expect will weigh heavily in the president's consideration of additional military actions.

In a break with the past, U.S. officials said that increases in U.S. troop levels and support to the Afghan government and military would be heavily conditioned on the ability of Afghan President Ashraf Ghani, who heads a fragile unity government, to weed out ineffective military commanders and reduce corruption, both of which have led some aggrieved Afghans to turn to the Taliban as a better alternative.

*[U.S. watchdog finds major internal flaws hampering Afghanistan war effort]*

The question at the heart of the new strategy is whether U.S. and Afghan forces, even if bolstered by new troops and authorities to target the Taliban, can create enough pressure to push the war toward a negotiated settlement. Those opposing the escalation have argued that even the Obama-era surge, which peaked at 100,000, did not result in Taliban concessions in on-again, off-again U.S.-Taliban talks begun in 2011.

That effort eventually crumbled amid U.S. government divisions and resistance from the Afghan government, which feared being cut out of the process. While Pakistan and other governments have sought to foster separate talks in recent years, progress has been scant since the 2016 death of Taliban leader Akhtar Mohammad Mansour in a U.S. airstrike.

Those failures, and his deep-seated desire to end the war before leaving office, led Obama to craft a plan to cut U.S. troop levels to 1,000 before leaving office. In late 2014, he also took away the military's authority to directly target Taliban leadership, stating that the United States was no longer at war with the insurgent group.

But the Taliban's advance across Afghanistan, where it has chipped away at government control of rural areas and occasionally seized a major city, eventually compelled Obama to abandon that low troop target.

Obama also loosened rules so U.S. forces could target the Taliban with airstrikes in limited situations, for example when Afghan troops faced danger of being overrun or needed

support from American warplanes for major operations.

Under the steps proposed in the new strategy, U.S. aircraft would again be permitted to strike the Taliban in a broader array of situations, allowing for greater air support of Afghan offensives. The new rules would also enable U.S. military advisers to accompany conventional Afghan forces closer to the front lines, similar to the freedom they have with elite Afghan forces in a separate counterterrorism mission.

*[Russia is sending weapons to Taliban, top U.S. general confirms]*

Similar measures proposed last year by the outgoing U.S. military commander for Afghanistan provoked a backlash among top Pentagon leaders, but this time military leaders including Defense Secretary Jim Mattis are supportive.

## Afghan losses

The new strategy comes at a critical time for Afghan forces, which have taken massive casualties and continue to suffer from corruption and poor leadership. Their vulnerability was exposed last month when a handful of Taliban militants killed 140 soldiers in an assault on a military base in northern Afghanistan.

Even proponents of the plan have modest expectations for what an enhanced military effort, given the Taliban's strength, can achieve. Rather than stopping the militants from taking over additional territory, officials expect that Afghan forces will at best be able to "hold the line" this year and begin to recapture some key terrain from the Taliban next year.

The goal is to make "incremental progress" in coming years in the hope that those gains will be enough to persuade the Taliban to make concessions that will lead to peace, said a U.S. official familiar with the plan.

## Checkpoint newsletter

Military, defense and security at home and abroad.

Daniel Feldman, who served as Obama's special representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, said that to achieve a sustainable resolution, security investments must be matched by actions to support political and economic stability. "All of this leads back to prioritizing the launch of a viable peace process in Afghanistan and using any military

decision to support that process," he said.

Wilder said that the emphasis on using military pressure to reach a political agreement made sense but

that there is no guarantee it would work given the diverse objectives of key players in the war, such as the Taliban, the Afghan government, Pakistan, Iran and increasingly Russia.

Even backers of a more robust approach concede that the chances of a major peace deal to end the war are low.

"If we don't achieve that, Plan B should be to prevent state collapse, which would also require additional military resources," Wilder said.

**The  
Washington  
Post**

## After killing militant commander, Afghan forces push deeper into Islamic State territory

[https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100011342442800&ref=br\\_rs](https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100011342442800&ref=br_rs)

6-7 minutes

KABUL — Seeking to capitalize on the death of a top Islamic State commander, Afghan forces have surged through districts in eastern Afghanistan long held by the radical Islamist group as warplanes have pounded militant hideouts in the past week, officials said Monday.

The offensive in Nangahar province is targeting Islamic State fighters at a time when their numbers are down and their leadership is in disarray after a U.S.-Afghan commando raid in late April killed the group's senior regional leader, Abdul Hasib.

It also underscores the intensifying focus on Nangahar, where on April 13 the U.S. military dropped its largest non-nuclear bomb on a complex of caves and tunnels used by the Islamic State, reportedly killing 36 militants. Nangahar, on the border with Pakistan, is a main route for militant fighters and supplies.

As Afghan forces have advanced into some villages for the first time in months, Islamic State fighters are pushing back amid heavy fighting in several adjacent districts, officials said.

Afghan officials said at least 34 militants had been killed by Afghan airstrikes since Sunday but gave no figures on Afghan casualties. The role of U.S.-led

coalition forces in the latest phase of the offensive was not immediately clear.

The killing of Hasib in an April 27 night raid, announced Sunday by the Pentagon and Afghan President Ashraf Ghani, was carried out by a team of 50 U.S. and 40 Afghan special-operations forces. They assaulted a cluster of village buildings where Hasib and other Islamic State militants were staying, killing all of them and 35 guards.

Officials said the announcement of Hasib's death was delayed until his remains could be positively identified.

*[U.S. watchdog finds 'shockingly high' Afghan casualties]*

The killing was the third major blow in recent months to the Islamic State in Khorasan, or ISIS-K, the regional branch of the Sunni extremist group based in the Middle East. The branch's forces include former Pakistani Taliban, Uzbeks and other foreign fighters.

Two U.S. Army Rangers also died during the April 27 operation, U.S. officials have said. They have been identified as Sgt. Joshua P. Rodgers, 22, of Bloomington, Ill., and Sgt. Cameron H. Thomas, 23, of Kettering, Ohio. Military officials said that their deaths may have been caused by friendly fire and that the incident is under investigation.

That raid came eight months after the previous ISIS-K leader, or emir, Hafiz Saeed Khan, was killed in a U.S. drone strike.

"This successful joint operation is another important step in our relentless campaign to defeat ISIS-K in 2017," Gen. John Nicholson, commander of U.S. forces in Afghanistan, said in a statement about Hasib's death.

Afghan officials described Hasib as a charismatic and ambitious commander who orchestrated several high-profile attacks, including the March 8 stealth assault on Kabul's military hospital that killed scores of patients and staffers. Hasib, whose age was not known, was a Taliban commander in Logar province who defected to ISIS-K. He was also known as Abdul Hasib Logari.

"He was responsible for ordering the attack on the 400-bed hospital in Kabul, he kidnapped girls and beheaded elders in front of their families," the president's office said Sunday night on Twitter.

In early March, Afghan and U.S. special forces launched the current counteroffensive against ISIS-K, backed up by drone strikes, killing hundreds of its fighters and clearing numerous villages.

A U.S. military spokesman in Kabul, Navy Capt. William Salvin, estimated that the ISIS-K force has been reduced from more than 2,500 fighters at its peak in 2015 to fewer than 600, mostly confined to several adjacent districts in Nangahar.

"They are still fighting very hard, but we intend to keep the pressure up until we destroy them," Salvin said Monday.

Ataullah Haghiani, a spokesman for the Nangahar governor, said the Islamic State had lost 40 percent to 60 percent of its fighting strength in the province. The Interior Ministry said government airstrikes had also destroyed a clandestine radio station that ISIS-K used to broadcast religious messages.

The presence of the Islamic State in Afghanistan has complicated the fight against the indigenous Taliban insurgents, stretching Afghan forces thin and introducing extreme anti-Shiite sectarianism in a country with a large Shiite minority. It has lured some Taliban members and created rivalries with others.

World News Alerts

Breaking news from around the world.

Over the past several days, Taliban fighters have overrun a district in the northern province of Kunduz, and local security forces and officials said they were waiting for help and reinforcements.

A local police official, Azizullah Ayar, said that numerous wounded officers were in need of evacuation and that he had urgently asked for help but none had arrived.

"The government does not seem capable to deal with this issue," Ayar said in a telephone interview. "We have seen no airplanes, even to frighten the Taliban, let alone bomb them."

Sayed Salahuddin and Sharif Walid contributed to this report.

**The  
New York  
Times**

## Trump Advisers Call for More Troops to Break Afghan Deadlock

Michael R. Gordon

5-6 minutes

WASHINGTON — Senior Trump administration and military officials are recommending sending several thousand additional American troops to Afghanistan to try to break a military deadlock in the 15-year war there, in part by pressuring the Taliban to negotiate with the Afghan government.

The added troops would allow American advisers to work with a greater number of Afghan forces, and closer to the front lines.

The recommendation, which has yet to be approved by President Trump, is the product of a broad review by the Pentagon, the State Department, intelligence community and other government agencies on America's longest war. It is broadly consistent with advice Gen. John W. Nicholson, the top American commander in Afghanistan, gave Congress in February.

Warning that the United States and its NATO allies faced a "stalemate," General Nicholson told lawmakers that he had a shortfall of a "few thousand" troops and said more personnel would enable the American military to advise the Afghan military more effectively and at lower levels in the chain of command.

The international force assisting the Afghans has about 13,000 troops, of whom about 8,400 are American.

American officials said that 3,000 to 5,000 additional troops, including

hundreds of Special Operations forces, could be sent. The officials spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss internal deliberations.

NATO nations would also be asked to send thousands of troops, and the precise number of American forces deployed would probably depend on what those allies were prepared to do.

Mr. Trump is expected to make a decision on his Afghan strategy before a May 25 NATO meeting in Brussels. The recommendation of

his top advisers was first reported by The Washington Post.

How to handle the situation in Afghanistan, which was rarely discussed during the presidential campaign, looms as a major decision for Mr. Trump. In some respects, it is a liability for a president who has called for putting "America first." Deploying more troops would cost billions of dollars, and there is no guarantee of a clear win. The United States failed to produce successful negotiations when it had 100,000 troops in Afghanistan, a poor country with little in the way of natural resources.

But without a strong American military role, the Taliban and more extreme groups like the Islamic State's Afghan wing would most likely gain ground, weakening Mr. Trump's vow to defeat Islamic extremists. Pulling back would also put Mr. Trump at odds with generals whom he embraced and turned to for national security advice.

The shift of strategy recommended by Mr. Trump's advisers reflects the assessment that a major new troop commitment — like the 30,000-troop reinforcement President Barack Obama announced in

December 2009 — is undesirable and politically impossible. But it also reflects the assumption that maintaining the current level of forces could leave the United States presiding over a slow deterioration in security, with fading hopes for a negotiated settlement between the Taliban and the Afghan government.

One twist is that the new strategy would dispense with the hard deadlines the Obama administration set, and was sometimes forced to revise, for gradually withdrawing troops.

Many military officers have argued that setting a public deadline for withdrawal is counterproductive because it allows adversaries to wait out the American and NATO troop commitment instead of forcing them to the negotiating table.

But Mr. Trump's advisers do not want a new American commitment to be open-ended, and they are suggesting that its duration be dependent on steps by President Ashraf Ghani to fight corruption and appoint more effective commanders.

## THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Totakhil

7-9 minutes

Updated May 8, 2017 7:00 p.m. ET

MOHAMMAD AGHA, Afghanistan—The Taliban have expanded their military fight against Afghanistan's government into a drive to govern villages across the country, deepening the formidable challenge U.S.-backed forces face in trying to uproot the insurgency.

The insurgents, once focused on waging guerrilla war from strongholds in opium-rich provinces like Helmand, are now emerging in a swath of districts to fill a governance vacuum left as foreign troops depart. As a result, millions of Afghans are once again having to adapt to life under Taliban rule.

More local Taliban groups are now functioning as governing entities, administering services for which the state pays, such as education and electricity, and collecting their own taxes from farmers and sometimes protection money from businesses. The growing influence is helping them generate revenue for recruits and spread distrust in Afghanistan's shaky government.

## Taliban Broaden Their Reach in Villages Across Afghanistan (UNE)

Jessica Donati and Habib Khan

The Taliban wielded significant control over 8.4 million Afghans—almost a third of the population—at the end of 2016, up from 5 million a year earlier, according to a confidential United Nations report reviewed by The Wall Street Journal. The report showed that the territory over which the insurgents have significant influence or control increased from 30% to 40% of the country over the same period.

The Trump administration is expected to approve a U.S. military request for more troops for Afghanistan, coalition officials said, and Pentagon officials said they expected to make a recommendation to the White House as soon as this week. But with 8,400 troops on the ground now—down from a high of 100,000 in 2011—even a somewhat fortified coalition would likely struggle to reverse the Taliban's territorial gains.

A U.S. military spokesman in Kabul said the coalition planned to reverse the Taliban gains by continuing its mission to train, advise and assist Afghan forces. He said the Afghan government made a 3% gain in areas under its control in the first quarter of this year, while the Taliban increased its holdings by only 1%, suggesting the government has begun to win back lost territory.

Lt. Gen. H. R. McMaster, Mr. Trump's national security adviser, led an anticorruption task force in Afghanistan and is especially sensitive to the need for better governing in Kabul. Jim Mattis, the secretary of defense, also has extensive experience with Afghanistan, having overseen the military effort there as head of the United States Central Command.

The generals, however, are not the only ones who favor a stronger commitment to Afghanistan. American intelligence officials also want more support, calculating that a stronger military presence would assist their intelligence efforts against extremist groups in Afghanistan and neighboring Pakistan.

One issue that remains unclear is how the new strategy would deal with the safe havens the Taliban and other militant groups have in Pakistan.

General Nicholson acknowledged to Congress that it was "very difficult to succeed on the battlefield when your enemy enjoys external support and safe haven." He urged "a holistic review" of American policy toward Pakistan.

American forces have two basic missions in Afghanistan: advising and training Afghan forces and conducting counterterrorism missions, like a recent operation in which about 50 Army Rangers and a similar number of Afghan commandos killed the leader of the Afghan branch of the Islamic State.

General Nicholson told Congress the shortfall was mainly in forces for training and advising the Afghans. Currently, advisers are working with Afghans mostly at the command level of the army corps. But more advisers, he said, would enable the American-led coalition to work at the level of the Afghan brigades.

Military advisers are generally considered more effective if they are not limited to advising foreign armies in their headquarters, but extend to units in the field.

The Obama administration's decision last summer to give American commanders more flexibility to provide air support for Afghan forces fighting the Taliban increased the need for advisers below the level of the Afghan army corps, General Nicholson told Congress.

The spokesman's comments last week echoed the testimony of U.S. Army Gen. John Nicholson, commander of U.S. forces in Afghanistan, before Congress in February, when he said Afghanistan was in "a stalemate where the equilibrium favors the government."

The Taliban are seeking to extend their gains during their annual spring offensive. This year's onslaught was announced in April after a brazen attack on the army's regional headquarters that Afghan officials said killed at least 170 soldiers. The massacre exposed disarray in the government's defenses and led to mass high-level departures. Afghanistan's defense minister and army chief of staff resigned and four corps commanders were reassigned.

The Taliban ruled most of the country under strict Islamic law for five years until the U.S. invasion of December 2001.

The Taliban said the spring offensive would focus on "foreign forces, their military and intelligence," a reference to the U.S.-backed coalition, as well as its "mercenary apparatus." In April, the Taliban produced a slick, 30-minute video promoting civic life under their rule, including clips of children in classes and competing at sports.

The Afghan government says it is progressing in its campaign to drive the Taliban out of its strongholds, killing dozens of senior insurgent leaders in the past month alone, including two shadow governors.

"Afghan security forces have been instructed to target the Taliban in their hideouts and take revenge," said Sediq Sediqqi, a government spokesman. "It will be a bad year for the Taliban."

Little evidence currently supports that prediction. In places like Mohammad Agha district, a part of Logar province around 25 miles south of the center of Kabul, the capital, government control is tenuous at best. Officials rarely venture off the main highway. Taliban flags flap in mud-brick villages in plain view of the Afghan forces that patrol the road during daylight hours.

Schools are supposed to offer a wide range of classes, but now many subjects are forbidden and taught at a teacher's own risk—including music, culture and "other things that Taliban consider evil," one teacher in the district said.

The war has split families, with some fleeing Taliban-controlled territory for work in the capital. A teacher in Mohammad Agha said his brother, a lawyer in Kabul, fears

the Taliban would kill him if he returned. Other families have hedged their bets on who will control the district's future, dispatching sons to both the police and the Taliban.

Families often are reunited only in death. In the village graveyards, police and Taliban lie side by side, sons of the same families.

Companies operating in territories the Taliban have newly overtaken are also caught between the rival administrations. The Taliban extort protection money for businesses in areas including mining and telecommunications, provincial officials said. In return, the businesses are allowed to operate, transport goods and maintain infrastructure.

Telecoms companies have been among the hardest hit, officials said, as insurgents can easily topple a

telecom tower by detonating explosives at the base. The Taliban also force the companies to turn off cellphone towers at night, when signals could give away their positions during operations. One telecom company official estimated a quarter of its towers were off at any one time, because of either threats or attacks from the Taliban.

Mohammad Rahman Qaderi, a member of the provincial council in eastern Paktia province, says telecom, construction and mining companies "all give the Taliban money." The financial burden of these payments has forced construction firms, for example, to skimp on the quality of materials, he said.

Narcotics remain the Taliban's primary source of income, according to the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime. Sales from opium fields under the insurgents' control

yielded around \$400 million last year, the agency's 2016 survey estimated.

But territorial expansion is giving the Taliban access to fresh and more varied cash flows. Global Witness, an investigative nonprofit organization, says mining has become Taliban's second-largest source of revenue. It found that in Badakhshan province alone, the Taliban raise several million dollars a year from illegal mining of lapis lazuli. The blue semiprecious stone is largely exported to China and Pakistan, traders say, helping to fund the insurgency.

Mr. Sediqqi, the government spokesman, said military efforts would focus on ensuring contested rural areas continue to receive education and basic services. "People need our support," he said. "The Taliban are criminals—they

are involved in drug trafficking, kidnappings, killings and extortion."

When the government resists Taliban gains, however, locals are often caught in the middle. In Mohammad Agha district, police set up a checkpoint recently to stop teachers from attending a meeting with the Taliban. When some did anyway, police beat the teachers, said Mohammad Hanif Stanikzai, the district education chief.

"We administrate and compromise," he said. "The employees of the education system are like chickens, caught between a tiger and rock."

**Write to** Jessica Donati at [Jessica.Donati@wsj.com](mailto:Jessica.Donati@wsj.com)

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**The  
Washington  
Post**

## Putin uses the Soviet defeat of Hitler to show why Russia needs him today

<https://www.facebook.com/david.filipov>

6-8 minutes

MOSCOW — A takeout sushi place offered a Victory Day roll, covered in black and orange roe. Superstores stocked balloons, coffee mugs, T-shirts and flip-flops, all decorated in orange and black.

Orange and black — once the colors of the Soviet World War II service medal, now the hues of Russian patriotism — adorned the lapels of TV talk-show hosts, the home pages of news sites and billboards urging people to join Tuesday's celebration of the defeat of Nazi Germany.

The Soviet Union lost more than 20 million people in World War II and bore the brunt of the fighting in Europe between 1941 and 1944. Pretty much everyone in Russia has a forebear who fought or died as a result of the war. And some Russians are turned off by the way the holiday is taking on aspects of a great orange-and-black celebration.

"This was always a holiday with tears in your eyes, but now the tears are gone, and what's left is naked fun, although there's no reason to have fun with this," journalist and historian Nikolai Svanidze said in a recent interview with the independent TV Rain news site.

But getting people to rally around the orange-and-black is something that comes straight from the top. The Soviet victory in World War II

— called the Great Patriotic War here — is central to Russian President Vladimir Putin's effort to portray his regime as the logical outcome of the country's history.

*[Putin searches for a 'national idea' to unite Russia]*

In the Kremlin's view, saving the world from fascism was not just the Soviet Union's greatest achievement. It also provided the basis for post-Cold War Russia's return as a great world power, as reestablished by Putin, a point underscored by the nuclear missiles that will rumble across Red Square on Tuesday morning and by tanks and other military hardware in parades across Russia.

"War is one of the things that legitimize the Putin regime: It names itself the inheritor of the victory that is sacred for all Russians, and therefore, the government is above all criticism," said Andrei Kolesnikov, a senior associate at the Carnegie Moscow Center. "If you criticize the government, you are criticizing Russia."

What some in the outside world may describe as Russian adventurism in Syria, occupation in Crimea and interference in eastern Ukraine, the Kremlin and its news outlets portray as Russia's continuing effort to protect the world from the forces of chaos and fascism. In this view, criticism of Russia today is tantamount to criticizing the Soviet Union for saving the world from evil.

"Over recent years, history has become a target for the large-scale information campaign unleashed against our country and aiming to contain it and weaken its authority on the international stage," Deputy Foreign Minister Grigory Karasin said at a recent Kremlin meeting.

*[Here's the new target in Russia's televised hunt for Islamic State terrorists]*

Soviet leaders also used Victory Day to justify communist rule. They had to leave out some of the ugly parts of Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin's history, such as the German-Soviet Nonaggression Pact that aided Adolf Hitler at the outset of the war, or the Soviets' brutal subjugation of Eastern Europe after the Nazi surrender.

As the communist grip on power began slipping in the late 1980s, those omissions were exposed as Red whitewashing. Under Putin, mentioning Stalin's errors or excesses amounts to "attempts to paint with the same brush Nazi Germany, the aggressor country, and the Soviet Union, whose people bore the brunt of the war and who freed Europe from the fascist plague," as Karasin put it.

The result has been a recent spate of state-subsidized movies that emphasize the heroism of Soviet soldiers and play loose with the facts. But who needs facts? "The facts themselves don't mean too much," wrote Russia's culture minister, Vladimir Medinsky. "If you love your motherland, your people, history, what you will be writing will always be positive."

*[Anyone who questions this tale of Soviet bravery is 'filthy scum']*

Being seen as the architect of military victory works wonders for popularity ratings. Putin's hasn't dropped below 80 percent since he annexed Crimea in March 2014. A poll in March 2016 suggested that 71 percent of Russians believe that "whichever mistakes and vices can be attributed to Stalin, the most important thing is that under his leadership, the nation emerged the victor in the Great Patriotic War."

That attitude might have informed the design of a children's version of the World War II-era uniform worn by Stalin's notorious NKVD secret police, which was on sale until a few days ago, when an uproar on the Russian Internet apparently drove it off the market.

World News Alerts

Breaking news from around the world.

Another sign of the patriotic commercialization of Victory Day is the company that, for no more than \$20 a pop, can turn a picture of your parent or grandparent or great-grandparent whose life was touched by World War II into a tasteful poster, decorated in orange and black.

These are for the march of the "Immortal Regiment," something that started as a grass-roots effort to remember veterans and those who died in the war. Citizens carried pictures of their loved ones and shared their stories, without the patriotic hoopla.

The event has been appropriated by Putin's government, and big organized marches — powerful expressions of apolitical solidarity

that they are — have become as much a part of the official celebration as tanks and nuclear

missiles and the fireworks that will light up Moscow on Tuesday night.

"The administration has nationalized a private memorial, and intercepted

its agenda," Kolesnikov said. "Now it's officious, mandatory, something imposed from above."



## U.S. Allies in Asia Are Anxious, Pacific Fleet Commander Says

Jake Maxwell  
Watts

4-5 minutes

Updated May 8, 2017 11:14 a.m.  
ET

SINGAPORE—America's allies and partners in Asia are feeling angst over security matters as Washington's commitments come under question, U.S. Pacific Fleet Commander Adm. Scott Swift said.

Adm. Swift, who oversees U.S. Navy assets in the Pacific, said during an interview on Monday with media outlets in Singapore that his goal is to work with Asian navies on security issues including North Korea and piracy—but that he has had to reassure allies that the U.S. will back up words with action.

"I think if the entire United States Navy was forward-deployed to the Western Pacific there would still be this sense of uncertainty of commitment," Adm. Swift said. "It's a reflection of the uncertainty and angst in the region."

Officials in Southeast Asia, particularly, have expressed

concern about President Donald Trump's commitment in the South China Sea, which is claimed in part by several countries and almost wholly by China. Beijing has asserted its claims by building and fortifying artificial islands.

Under Mr. Trump, whose foreign-policy focus has been building support to address North Korea's nuclear ambitions, the Navy hasn't yet conducted any so-called freedom of navigation patrols in the South China Sea, as it had under Barack Obama.

Security experts say this is being read internationally as a concession to China to secure cooperation on North Korean sanctions. The patrols, which tend to involve sailing through disputed waters, challenge maritime claims the U.S. sees as unsupported by international law.

China's claims to most of the South China Sea were invalidated last year by an arbitration tribunal in The Hague in a case brought by the Philippines, which hasn't pressed the issue since President Rodrigo Duterte took office and sought a closer relationship with Beijing.

The patrols "have become over the past three years a reliable benchmark of assessing how far the U.S. is willing to go to check China's rising assertiveness in the South China Sea," said Richard Heydarian, an international affairs expert at De La Salle University in Manila. Any concession, he said, "may compromise the security of the smaller countries" in Asia.

Adm. Swift played down concerns, saying many freedom-of-navigation operations have taken place this year in other parts of the world.

"We just present the opportunities [to the Pentagon] when we have a ship in the area and there's an area of interest. They are either taken advantage of or not," he said. "There's nothing that has significantly changed in the last two or three months."

"What the United States has to do is walk that tricky line," said Richard Bitzinger, a security and defense expert at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies in Singapore. That means reassuring Southeast Asian countries without raising the stakes so much that it sparks a conflict.

Adm. Swift said he would welcome proposed additional funding of as much as \$8 billion to bulk up the U.S. presence in the region over the next five years, which The Wall Street Journal reported over the weekend had been endorsed by the Pentagon.

As to where it would best be spent, Adm. Swift said he favors investment in software and hardware that would improve the awareness of the U.S. and partners to such threats to security and stability as piracy and illegal fishing.

Adm. Swift said he isn't concerned by China's naval buildup, which includes the launch last month of its second aircraft carrier.

"China is emerging on the global stage and in my view that stage isn't getting any bigger so we need to make space," he said. "If you have a global economy, I think you need a global navy to look after that economy."

Write to Jake Maxwell Watts at [jake.watts@wsj.com](mailto:jake.watts@wsj.com)

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## Editorial : China holds key to North Korea's nukes

The Editorial  
Board , USA

TODAY

4-5 minutes

President Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping on April 7, 2017, in Florida. (Photo: Alex Brandon, AP)

North Korea is among the most isolated and sanctioned countries on the planet. And yet it still somehow has enough cash to develop a nuclear weapons arsenal capable of threatening much of the eastern Pacific and, some day, the United States.

The reason is simple. The regime of Kim Jong Un continues doing \$5.3 billion in business each year — 85% of its trade — with China. Amid rising tensions and the threat of war, the best way to force North Korea to curb its nuclear ambitions is if China brings its considerable economic leverage to bear.

For decades, the Chinese have tolerated the Kim dynasty because it serves as a buffer against a U.S. ally in South Korea, and because any collapse risks a tide of refugees flowing across the Yalu River into China. But Kim's pugnacious obsession with achieving a long-range delivery system for nuclear weapons has changed the calculus. China's patience is wearing thin. A survey last year found that two-thirds of its people actually favor a U.S. airstrike against North Korea's nuclear weapons program.

In the past, China quietly flouted United Nations Security Council sanctions by employing a loophole allowing trade with North Korea if it helps the "livelihood" of ordinary citizens. The result: China was buying \$1 billion of North Korean coal per year. But in February, after another North Korean missile test and the alleged assassination of Kim's half-brother, someone Beijing supported, China finally set aside the "livelihood" loophole and slashed its annual importation of North Korea coal.

**Chinese ambassador:** 'China has done its utmost' on North Korea

The Kim regime has already responded with angry, rhetorical darts in recent days — evidence of just how much clout the Chinese carry. That's a start. But China could also:

1. Favor a Security Council resolution restricting oil to North Korea, a true lifeline for the hermit kingdom, which has one refinery along the Yalu River border with China. The idea has gained traction within China, where the state-controlled *Global Times* has urged leaders to take this step should North Korea continue its nuclear or missile testing.
2. Aggressively prosecute Chinese companies that funnel advanced technology for long-range missiles or uranium-enriching centrifuges into Kim's regime. North

Korean rocket boosters that fell into the sea after a successful launch last year were scooped up by the South Korean navy and found to contain transmitters, circuitry and specialized pressure sensors made by Western countries. They were shipped to North Korea by Chinese distributors, according to a *Washington Post* report. Eighty percent of foreign goods flowing into North Korea run through Chinese companies. That has to stop.

3. Crack down on Chinese financial institutions that launder North Korean purchasing money, much of it illegally acquired through drug dealing, counterfeiting and arms sales.

China has already garnered American dividends for showing signs of getting tougher with its neighbor. Gone is President

Trump's fiery rhetoric about a trade war or declaring China a currency manipulator. "I actually told (Chinese President Xi Jinping) you'll make a much better deal on trade if you get rid of this menace," Trump said.

Trump is even turning a blind eye for now on Chinese power grabs in the South China

Sea, where Beijing has laid claim to disputed islands and reefs. U.S. Navy commanders eager to test those island claims by running warships within 12 miles of disputed shoals have been told to back off and not challenge the Chinese.

Tens of thousands, perhaps millions, of lives on the Korean

Peninsula are at stake if the tensions flare out of control. China holds the key to keep that from happening.

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## Amb. Tiankai : 'China has done its utmost' on North Korea

Cui Tiankai

Published 5:25 p.m. ET May 8, 2017 | Updated 15 hours ago

3 minutes

President Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping on April 7, 2017, in Florida. (Photo: Alex Brandon, AP)

China is deeply concerned about the current tension on the Korean Peninsula, which poses a grave threat to our national security. China has more than 750 miles of borders with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea). The DPRK nuclear test site is just dozens of miles away from Northeast China. Any accident, nuclear or military, will have a catastrophic spillover on us.

China has done its utmost for years to help stop the DPRK nuclear program. We voted for all the United Nations Security Council resolutions sanctioning the DPRK for its nuclear tests, and have been faithfully implementing them. Most recently, we suspended coal imports from the DPRK for the whole year. And we will continue to enhance law enforcement along our border with the DPRK.

The pressure, economic and military, on the DPRK continues to build up. Yet how much is sufficient without triggering a humanitarian crisis or pushing Pyongyang into desperation? Another Iraq, Libya or Syria in Northeast Asia is a nightmare for all. Sanctioning alone will not work. Pressure must be coupled with direct talks with the DPRK.

However, China does not hold the key to the issue. While the U.S. worries about the DPRK nuclear ambition, the DPRK justifies it by the U.S. threat to its survival. Suspicion is mutual and runs deep. Both sides are locked in a chicken-or-egg dilemma, and neither intends to take the first step.

To break this impasse, China has proposed that the DPRK suspend its nuclear and missile activities, and the U.S. its targeted joint military exercises with the Republic of Korea (South Korea). The two sides should talk to each other, as required by the Security Council resolutions.

**Our view:** China holds key to North Korea's nukes

It is not an award to anyone, nor will it solve the issue overnight. But it is

a good first step toward building trust and defusing crises, which, if managed well, will bring about parallel progress in denuclearization and a peace mechanism on the peninsula.

China's goals are clear and consistent — a nuclear-weapon-free peninsula, regional peace and stability, and a peaceful means to achieve them. These should be the shared goals that serve the interests of all parties, including the U.S.

*Cui Tiankai is China's ambassador to the United States.*

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## South Korea's Presidential Election: A Look at the Pivotal Issues

Gerry Mullany

4-5 minutes

Campaign posters last month in Seoul, South Korea. Among the major issues at play are relations with North Korea and the United States, as well as the power of family-controlled conglomerates. Ed Jones/Agence France-Presse — Getty Images

South Koreans began the process of selecting a new president on Tuesday, in a vote that will turn on several crucial issues: relations with North Korea and the United States; economic inequality; and the enduring power of the country's family-controlled conglomerates, known as chaebol. Here's how these issues are playing out in the election.

### Handling North Korea

Under the current conservative government, South Korea has taken a confrontational approach toward the North, engaging in military exercises with the United States off the peninsula and participating in tightening sanctions over the North's missile and nuclear

weapons programs. But the candidate leading in the polls, Moon Jae-in, has said he is open to a dialogue with North Korea's leader, Kim Jong-un, over the nuclear issue, a sharp break with recent policy. Mr. Moon, the candidate for the Democratic Party of Korea, says sanctions alone are not enough to persuade the North to freeze and then dismantle its nuclear programs.

One of his rivals, Hong Joon-pyo, the candidate for the Liberty Korea Party, has said that a government under Mr. Moon would be too soft on North Korea. Mr. Hong says he is the true representative of conservatives, who favor close ties to the United States, and is calling for "armed peace" that supports the status quo of being tough on North Korea.

### U.S. Relations

A defining issue has been the current government's acceptance of an American antimissile system on South Korean soil to guard against missile attacks from the North. Mr. Moon's main opponents — Mr. Hong and Ahn Cheol-soo, a centrist who represents the People's Party — have expressed support for the

deployment of the system, called the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense system, or Thaad. Mr. Moon, by contrast, has called the system's recent deployment "very regrettable" and said in a book published recently that South Korea should learn to "say no to the Americans."

### Corporate Corruption

The impeachment and recent removal from office of President Park Geun-hye in an influence-peddling case underline the strong influence of the chaebol in the upper reaches of government. Similar scandals have failed to curb the power of these family-controlled conglomerates.

As in the past, most candidates have promised legislation to make the chaebol more transparent and to make it harder for chairmen to help their children amass fortunes through dubious but lucrative deals involving their companies. Mr. Moon wants to give minority shareholders more power in electing board members of such conglomerates, which he says could ultimately dilute the families' control over the chaebol. Mr. Ahn, the centrist, has been similarly critical, suggesting

that the government's Fair Trade Commission should have more power to regulate the chaebol.

Mr. Hong, the conservative, has colorfully pledged to rid the country of corruption by putting it through a washing machine. He wants to crack down on the power of labor unions and is candid about favoring the chaebol because of their importance in the economy.

### Economic Inequality

The youth unemployment rate, for people 25 to 29, reached 8.2 percent in November, its highest level since 1999, raising questions about the country's ability to create jobs for recent college graduates.

Mr. Moon has vowed to create 810,000 jobs in the public sector and raise taxes for the wealthy. But Mr. Ahn, an entrepreneur, has said that plan would be too costly. He has instead focused on the private sector, saying "companies underpin growth of the country while creating jobs." He wants to guarantee employment for young people for five years, while promising wages at small companies that would be comparable to what they could earn at conglomerates.

# ETATS-UNIS

THE WALL  
STREET  
JOURNAL

## Sally Yates Warned That Mike Flynn Misled Officials About Contact With Russian Envoy (UNE)

Del Quentin Wilber and Byron Tau

7-9 minutes

Updated May 8, 2017 10:12 p.m.  
ET

Former acting Attorney General Sally Yates told Congress on Monday she had warned a top White House official that then-national security adviser Mike Flynn had misled the vice president and others about his conversations with a top Russian diplomat, and that it had put him at risk of blackmail.

"Logic would tell you that you don't want the national security adviser to be in a position where the Russians have leverage over him," Ms. Yates said.

Although she spoke cautiously, Ms. Yates offered a dramatic airing of details about a controversial early chapter of the Trump administration, its relations with the Russian government and a secretive Justice Department investigation. She painted a striking picture of one of the nation's top security officials, a former general, making himself vulnerable to blackmail by a major adversary.

Ms. Yates testified she visited White House counsel Donald McGahn on Jan. 26, two days after the Federal Bureau of Investigation had interviewed Mr. Flynn, presumably about his contact with Sergei Kislyak, the Russian ambassador to the U.S.

Ms. Yates, an Obama administration holdover, testified she raised her concerns about Mr. Flynn after reading media reports of comments by Vice President Mike Pence and other White House officials describing the nature of calls between Mr. Flynn and Mr. Kislyak.

Mr. Pence, relying on Mr. Flynn's assertions, told a national television audience on Jan. 15 that Mr. Flynn hadn't discussed sanctions with the Russian ambassador when, in fact, he had done so, according to law enforcement and intelligence officials.

Ms. Yates and others had access to transcripts of intelligence intercepts of Mr. Kislyak's calls, including those with Mr. Flynn, according to U.S. officials.

Citing restrictions on disclosing classified information, Ms. Yates didn't specify what she called Mr. Flynn's "troubling" and "problematic" conduct.

However, she said she told Mr. McGahn that she was concerned the national security adviser hadn't been truthful with Mr. Pence and, by extension with the American public. Such actions made Mr. Flynn a mark for blackmailers, she testified.

Ms. Yates made it clear in her testimony that Justice Department officials didn't believe Mr. Pence had knowingly made false statements, but rather that he had been misled by Mr. Flynn.

"Not only did we believe that the Russians knew this, but that they likely had proof of this information," Ms. Yates said. "That created a compromise situation, a situation where the national security adviser essentially could be blackmailed by the Russians."

Mr. Flynn resigned under pressure after information about his Russian contacts became public.

An attorney for Mr. Flynn declined to comment. Mr. McGahn didn't respond to a request for comment. A White House spokeswoman declined to comment further, pointing to President Donald Trump's tweets Monday evening.

Writing on Twitter, Mr. Trump called the congressional investigations a "taxpayer funded charade."

"Sally Yates made the fake media extremely unhappy today --- she said nothing but old news!" Mr. Trump wrote. He added that the focus should be on the questions of surveillance—how Mr. Flynn's conversations were intercepted in the first place.

Ms. Yates was joined by James Clapper, President Barack Obama's director of national intelligence, at the hearing before a Senate

Judiciary subcommittee headed by Sen. Lindsey Graham (R., S.C.) to examine alleged Russian interference in the U.S. election.

The House and Senate Intelligence Committees are conducting high-profile inquiries into any Russian interference in the election, but those investigations have been slow to gain momentum. The FBI is leading a probe into whether there was any collusion between members of the Trump campaign and Russian operatives.

Russia has denied any election interference, and Mr. Trump has rejected allegations that anyone connected to his campaign coordinated with Russian officials to influence the election.

Ms. Yates also described a previously unknown second meeting at the White House on Jan. 27, the day after the first meeting, held at the request of Mr. McGahn. In that session, she said, the White House counsel asked such questions as why the Justice Department cared whether one White House official had lied to another, and whether the department intended to pursue a criminal case against Mr. Flynn.

Ms. Yates, who was Mr. Obama's deputy attorney general, was elevated to acting attorney general after the departure of Attorney General Loretta Lynch at the end of the last administration, and served in that post for just 10 days. She was fired by Mr. Trump on Jan. 30 for ordering Justice Department lawyers not to defend Mr. Trump's initial travel ban in court.

In her testimony, Ms. Yates said she felt Mr. Flynn's conduct was so serious that she needed to alert the White House, so she called Mr. McGahn on Jan. 26 and asked for a meeting to discuss a matter too sensitive for the telephone.

She then met Mr. McGahn in his secure office, Ms. Yates said. After she explained her concerns, Mr. McGahn asked her if she thought Mr. Flynn should be fired.

Ms. Yates said she declined to provide such advice. She said she told Mr. McGahn she was providing the information so the White House could "take action" it deemed necessary.

Mr. Clapper told the senators that Russia's "egregious" actions to influence the 2016 election represented "the high-water mark of their long-running efforts since the 1960s to disrupt and influence our elections."

"They must be congratulating themselves for having exceeded their wildest expectations," he said, adding they were certainly "emboldened to continue such activities."

At the hearing, Mr. Clapper, responding to a question from Senator Dianne Feinstein (D., Calif.), confirmed that the U.K.'s intelligence service and other European intelligence agencies handed over information to their U.S. counterpart regarding links between Trump associates and Russia. Mr. Clapper said he couldn't provide details because of the matter's sensitivity.

In the hours before Ms. Yates's testimony, White House press secretary Sean Spicer responded to questions about Mr. Flynn by noting that the Obama administration allowed him to maintain his clearance.

"If President Obama was truly concerned about General Flynn, why didn't he suspend General Flynn's security clearance, which they had just reapproved months earlier?" Mr. Spicer said.

The hearing came on the same day a former Obama administration official said Mr. Obama had warned Mr. Trump against hiring Mr. Flynn as his national security adviser.

That warning came shortly after the November election and concerned Mr. Flynn's service as head of the Defense Intelligence Agency. In 2014, Mr. Obama fired the then-lieutenant general from that senior Pentagon post.



## Yates says she expected White House to take action on Flynn (UNE)

<https://www.facebook.com/sarihorwitz>

Russian Ambassador Sergey Kislyak.

9-11 minutes

(Bastien Inzaurrealde/The Washington Post)

Former acting attorney general Sally Yates on May 8 testified before senators about her conversations with a White House lawyer that ultimately led to the ouster of former national security adviser Michael Flynn. Former acting attorney general Sally Yates tells senators that she warned the Trump administration that Michael Flynn "could be blackmailed" by Russia. (Video: Bastien Inzaurrealde/Photo: Bill O'Leary/The Washington Post)

Former acting attorney general Sally Yates testified Monday that she expected White House officials to "take action" on her January warning that then-national security adviser Michael Flynn could be blackmailed by Russia, offering her first public statements about the national security concerns that rocked the early days of the Trump administration.

Yates's testimony to a Senate Judiciary subcommittee capped months of debate over her role in the ouster of Flynn, a retired general who stayed on at the White House for 18 days after Yates's warning.

The unanswered questions about whether any of President Trump's associates coordinated with Russian attempts to meddle in last year's presidential election has dogged the new administration since its first weeks, when the FBI's investigation into Flynn first came to light. Congressional committees have been seeking answers to the same questions, but those efforts have been bogged down by partisan finger pointing and accusations that lawmakers are using important national security issues to score political points.

In more than three hours of closely watched testimony inside a packed hearing room, Yates described discussions she had with White House Counsel Donald McGahn, beginning on Jan. 26, in which she laid out her concerns about public claims made by Vice President Pence and other White House officials regarding Flynn's conversations in December with

At the time, Pence and others had publicly denied that Flynn had discussed easing U.S. sanctions with the Russian official. Intercepts reviewed by U.S. intelligence officials showed that he had, according to people familiar with the matter.

"We began our meeting telling him that there had been press accounts of statements from the vice president and others that related to conduct that General Flynn had been involved in that we knew not to be the truth," Yates said. "The vice president was unknowingly making false statements to the American public, and General Flynn was compromised by the Russians."

*[Full transcript: Sally Yates and James R. Clapper Jr. testify on Russian election interference]*

The hearing marked the most intense public scrutiny Yates has ever faced, but she did not appear rattled. The longtime prosecutor had kept a low profile until her brief tenure as acting attorney general, when she instructed government lawyers not to defend the president's first executive order on immigration temporarily barring entry to the United States for citizens of seven majority-Muslim countries and refugees. Trump immediately fired her.

Sen. John Cornyn (R-Tex.) challenged her on that move, saying that while he voted to confirm her as deputy attorney general, "I find it enormously disappointing that you somehow vetoed the decision of the Office of Legal Counsel with regard to the lawfulness of the president's order."

Yates calmly replied that she remembered her confirmation hearing as one "where you specifically asked me in that hearing that if the president asked me to do something that was unlawful or unconstitutional . . . would I say no? . . . That's what I promised you I would do, and that's what I did."

After further criticism on the same subject from Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Tex.), Yates made her point even more plain, saying: "I did my job."

During the hearing, Yates described her concerns about Flynn but was careful not to say anything that would reveal the classified details that sparked them.

"The first thing we did was to explain to Mr. McGahn and say the underlying conduct that General Flynn had engaged in was problematic in and of itself," she said.

But the larger issue, she added, was concern among senior Justice Department officials that the Russians could try to use the information to manipulate Flynn.

The Russians "likely had proof of this information and that created a compromise situation — a situation where the national security adviser could be blackmailed by the Russians," Yates said. "Finally we told them we were giving them all of this information so that they could take action."

Team Trump's ties to Russian interests

After the initial meeting, Yates met with McGahn the following day to discuss the issue further. She said McGahn asked her why the Justice Department cared if one government official lied to another.

Yates said she emphasized that she was trying to warn them of a potential future vulnerability to Russian intelligence operatives.

"We were really concerned about the compromise here and that is why we were encouraging them to act," she said.

Yates said she did not urge the White House to take any specific action, such as firing Flynn. Asked if she thought Flynn had lied to the vice president, Yates replied: "That's certainly how it appeared, yes."

White House officials have said McGahn immediately took the issues raised by Yates to the president but determined there was no pressing criminal issue. It is not clear what other actions, if any, White House officials took after the warning from Yates.

The FBI has been probing whether any Trump associates may have coordinated with Russia's efforts to meddle with the presidential election last year. Two days before Yates took her concerns to McGahn, agents interviewed Flynn about his contacts with Russians. Yates repeatedly refused to say whether she thought Flynn faced potential criminal charges over any statements made in that interview.

Former acting attorney general Sally Yates testified before a Senate subcommittee on May 8, about alleged Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election. Former acting attorney general Sally Yates testified before a Senate subcommittee on May 8. (Photo: Bill O'Leary/The Washington Post/Video: Reuters)

(Video: Reuters)

Anticipation over Yates's testimony has been growing since a scheduled appearance in March before a House committee was scratched.

Democrats repeatedly pointed out that 18 days passed after Yates's warning before the White House moved to force out Flynn — and that move came only after The Washington Post reported details of the Flynn-Kislyak conversation.

Even the run-up to the Yates hearing was eventful. Current and former officials said that in November, President Barack Obama warned the president-elect not to hire Flynn.

Word of that warning came shortly after Trump tried to shift the focus toward alleged leaks of classified information.

"Ask Sally Yates, under oath, if she knows how classified information got into the newspapers soon after she explained it to W.H. Council," wrote Trump in a Twitter post early Monday, apparently misspelling the word counsel. He later retweeted the message with the word spelled correctly. The president offered no further details about his suggestion that Yates knew who might have leaked classified information. At the hearing, Yates denied leaking sensitive information to reporters or knowing who might have done so.

The president tweeted again after the hearing ended, saying Yates "said nothing but old news" and adding: "The Russia-Trump collusion story is a total hoax, when will this taxpayer funded charade end?"

Yates's testimony seemed to contradict public statements made by White House press secretary Sean Spicer and White House Chief of Staff Reince Priebus. Both men described the Yates-McGahn meeting as less of a warning and more of a "heads-up" about an issue involving Flynn. Repeatedly in her testimony, Yates emphasized how concerned she was that



Flynn's situation could compromise national security.

Checkpoint newsletter

Military, defense and security at home and abroad.

Testifying alongside Yates was former director of national

intelligence James R. Clapper Jr., who warned that Russian efforts to interfere with the U.S. election were so successful they "must be congratulating themselves for having exceeded their wildest expectations with a minimal expenditure of resource."

"And I believe they are now emboldened to continue such activities in the future both here and around the world and to do so more intensely," he said.

Lawmakers said after the hearing that Yates had revealed a number of new details they had not known

before, particularly about her conversations with the White House on Flynn.

"I thought it was one of the most riveting hearings I've ever taken part in," said Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.).

**The  
New York  
Times**

## Sally Yates Tells Senators She Warned Trump About Michael Flynn (UNE)

Matt Apuzzo and Emmarie Huetteman

7-9 minutes

WASHINGTON — Less than a week into the Trump administration, Sally Q. Yates, the acting attorney general, hurried to the White House with an urgent concern. The president's national security adviser, she said, had lied to the vice president about his Russian contacts and was vulnerable to blackmail by Moscow.

"We wanted to tell the White House as quickly as possible," Ms. Yates told a Senate Judiciary subcommittee on Monday. "To state the obvious: You don't want your national security adviser compromised with the Russians."

But President Trump did not immediately fire the adviser, Michael T. Flynn, over the apparent lie or the susceptibility to blackmail. Instead, Mr. Flynn remained in office for 18 more days. Only after the news of his false statements broke publicly did he lose his job on Feb. 13.

Ms. Yates's testimony, along with a separate revelation Monday that President Barack Obama had warned Mr. Trump not to hire Mr. Flynn, offered a more complete public account of Mr. Flynn's stunning fall from one of the nation's most important security posts.

It also raised fresh doubts about Mr. Trump's judgment in keeping Mr. Flynn in place despite serious Justice Department concerns. White House officials have not fully explained why they waited so long.

"I don't have any way of knowing what, if anything, they did," Ms. Yates said. "If nothing was done, then certainly that would be concerning."

At the heart of Monday's testimony were Mr. Flynn's conversations with the Russian ambassador to the United States, Sergey I. Kislyak. Mr. Flynn denied that they had discussed American sanctions, an assertion echoed by Vice President Mike Pence and the White House

press secretary, Sean Spicer. But senior F.B.I. and Justice Department officials knew otherwise. Mr. Kislyak, like many foreign diplomats, was under routine surveillance, and his conversations with Mr. Flynn were recorded, officials have said. Investigators knew that Mr. Flynn had, in fact, discussed sanctions.

Senators Richard Blumenthal, left, Patrick J. Leahy and Al Franken, all Democrats, on Monday. If not for public disclosures, Mr. Blumenthal said, "Michael Flynn might still be sitting in the White House." Stephen Crowley/The New York Times

Much of what Ms. Yates said was previously known, but her testimony offered a dramatic firsthand account of a quickly unfolding scandal at the highest level of government.

On Jan. 26, Ms. Yates said, she called the White House counsel, Donald F. McGahn II, regarding "a very sensitive matter" that they could discuss only in person. Later that day, at the White House, she warned Mr. McGahn that White House officials were making statements "that we knew not to be the truth." Ms. Yates said she explained to Mr. McGahn how she knew Mr. Flynn's statements were untrue, though she did not go into details Monday, citing concerns about sensitive information.

"Why does it matter to D.O.J. if one White House official lies to another White House official?" Mr. McGahn asked at a second meeting the next day, according to Ms. Yates.

It was not just a political concern, Ms. Yates replied. Intelligence services constantly look for leverage against foreign officials. If Mr. Flynn lied to his bosses, and Russian officials knew it, Moscow could use it as leverage against him. "This is a classic technique they would use going back to the Soviet era," said James R. Clapper Jr., the former director of national intelligence, who testified alongside Ms. Yates.

Mr. McGahn also asked Ms. Yates for the underlying evidence, she said, and she told him how he could see it.

Nearly two weeks later, The Washington Post reported that Ms. Yates had expressed concerns to the White House about Mr. Flynn. He was fired, with the White House citing "an eroding level of trust."

But it was clear from Ms. Yates's testimony that the White House had known for weeks that Mr. Flynn had been untruthful. Senator Richard Blumenthal, Democrat of Connecticut, said that if the information had never been made public, "Michael Flynn might still be sitting in the White House as national security adviser."

Even since leaving office, Mr. Flynn has been a persistent headache for Mr. Trump. He retroactively registered as a foreign lobbyist and failed to disclose Russian contacts, resurrecting questions about the administration's close ties to Russia. The F.B.I. is investigating whether members of the Trump campaign colluded with Russian operatives to influence the 2016 presidential election.

Mr. Trump blamed Obama officials on Monday, noting on Twitter that it was his predecessor's administration that gave Mr. Flynn a security clearance.

"General Flynn was given the highest security clearance by the Obama Administration — but the Fake News seldom likes talking about that," Mr. Trump wrote.

Mr. Flynn, a former head of the Defense Intelligence Agency, has long been a controversial figure. He has incorrectly declared that Shariah, or Islamic law, is spreading in the United States and once wrote on Twitter, "Fear of Muslims is RATIONAL." His dubious assertions were so common that subordinates called them "Flynn facts."

Mr. Obama fired Mr. Flynn from his defense intelligence job. And two days after the election, he warned Mr. Trump against making Mr. Flynn his national security adviser, two former Obama administration officials said on Monday. Mr. Obama said he had profound concerns about Mr. Flynn's taking such a job.

Mr. Spicer sought to cast doubt on Mr. Obama's warning, noting that the Obama administration had renewed Mr. Flynn's security clearance in April 2016, well after his departure from the D.I.A.

"If President Obama was truly concerned about General Flynn, why didn't they suspend his security clearance, which they approved just months earlier?" Mr. Spicer asked during his daily press briefing.

Sally Q. Yates and James R. Clapper Jr., the former director of national intelligence, during the hearing on Monday. Stephen Crowley/The New York Times

But Mr. Spicer's comments also called into question the Trump transition team's own assessment of Mr. Flynn. Gov. Chris Christie of New Jersey, who led the transition in the days after the election, wanted Mr. Flynn to be slotted as director of national intelligence, a cabinet-level job but one with narrower responsibilities. Mr. Christie had reservations about Mr. Flynn that he shared with Mr. Trump, according to three people close to the transition.

The wiretapped conversations between Mr. Flynn and Mr. Kislyak remain classified, and Ms. Yates avoided even acknowledging them. Senators, though, were far less circumspect in both their questions and their commentary.

Though Ms. Yates said she had expected the White House to act on her concerns, she spared the Trump administration outright criticism for not doing so. That is because she was fired on Jan. 30 after refusing to defend the president's executive order banning refugees and travel from several predominantly Muslim countries. She said she was not sure what the White House had done after she left.

Ms. Yates said she stood by the decision that got her fired. She said she could not defend the president's executive order, largely because Mr. Trump himself had indicated that it was intended to single out Muslims. Federal judges have since made similar findings.

Ms. Yates sidestepped questions about the F.B.I.'s investigation of Mr. Trump's campaign and Russia. Mr. Clapper said he had seen no evidence of collusion between Russian operatives and the Trump campaign. But he also revealed that he had been unaware of the F.B.I. investigation and so was clearly not

privity to all the facts. He said he had often left it to the F.B.I. director, James B. Comey, to decide when to tell him about open criminal investigations.

Mr. Comey revealed the investigation during congressional testimony in March, after it had

been widely reported. Senior government officials have said that its existence was a closely guarded secret last year.

Mr. Clapper confirmed, though, that European officials had shared information on Russian links to Mr. Trump's associates. The New York

Times reported this sharing — from Britain, the Netherlands and other allies — in March.

"The specifics are quite sensitive," Mr. Clapper said. He did not elaborate.

**THE WALL  
STREET  
JOURNAL.**

Wilber

3-4 minutes

## Obama Warned Trump Against Hiring Flynn

Carol E. Lee and  
Del Quentin

job under pressure for having misled Vice President Mike Pence about the nature of his conversations with a Russian diplomat during the presidential transition.

Mr. Flynn told Mr. Pence that he hadn't discussed Obama administration sanctions on Moscow with the ambassador when in fact he had, according to people familiar with the matter.

fan of Michael Flynn's," Mr. Spicer said. He also said Mr. Obama's administration should have suspended Mr. Flynn's security clearance if it had concerns about him.

Updated May 8, 2017 3:37 p.m. ET

Former President Barack Obama warned then President-elect Donald Trump against hiring Mike Flynn as his national security adviser, a former Obama administration official said Monday.

Mr. Obama's warning during a Nov. 10 Oval Office meeting with Mr. Trump focused on Mr. Flynn's performance as head of DIA, not his dealings with Russian officials, the former official said.

Ms. Yates was concerned that Mr. Flynn could be compromised by Russian intelligence services for misleading the vice president and others in the administration, according to those familiar with Ms. Yates's account.

Mr. Trump himself tweeted Monday morning: "General Flynn was given the highest security clearance by the Obama Administration—but the Fake News seldom likes talking about that."

The warning by Mr. Obama came shortly after the November election and concerned Mr. Flynn's checkered service as head of the Defense Intelligence Agency. In 2014, Mr. Obama, a Democrat, fired the then-lieutenant general from that senior Pentagon post.

Mr. Obama's concerns became public Monday, the same day that a former acting attorney general is set to testify before Congress about a warning she issued top White House officials in January about Mr. Flynn.

Ms. Yates was fired by the White House in January after telling government lawyers not to defend Mr. Trump's executive order that suspended immigration from seven Muslim-majority countries.

The president also tweeted his concern that reports about Mr. Flynn were published in the press. "Ask Sally Yates, under oath, if she knows how classified information got into the newspapers soon after she explained it to W.H. Counsel," Mr. Trump posted on Twitter.

Mr. Flynn later became a vocal supporter of Mr. Trump, a Republican, and was tapped to be his first national security adviser.

Sally Yates, an Obama administration holdover, told White House officials in the days after Mr. Trump took office that Mr. Flynn wasn't being truthful with them about his conversations with Sergei Kislyak, the Russian ambassador to the U.S..

White House press secretary Sean Spicer suggested Mr. Obama's cautionary message about Mr. Flynn was due to "bad blood" between Messrs. Obama and Flynn and stemmed from the outgoing president "not liking him."

**Write to** Carol E. Lee at [carol.lee@wsj.com](mailto:carol.lee@wsj.com) and Del Quentin Wilber at [del.wilber@wsj.com](mailto:del.wilber@wsj.com)

Mr. Flynn resigned weeks into the national security

"It's true that President Obama made it known he wasn't exactly a

**THE WALL  
STREET  
JOURNAL.**

## Editorial : When the Senate Met Sally

May 8, 2017 7:46  
p.m. ET 178

Mrs. Yates, an Obama appointee, declined to specify the conduct to the Senate, but thanks to Obama-team leaks we know it involved Mr. Flynn discussing sanctions on Russia with the Russian ambassador though he had publicly said he hadn't. Mrs. Yates said that because the Russians knew about his lying, Mr. Flynn had been "compromised" and was vulnerable to "blackmail." Democratic Senators repeated the "compromised" line.

reference Mr. Flynn says he forgot. What was there to blackmail him over?

We don't know who did the unmasking, but on Monday both Mrs. Yates and former Director of National Intelligence James Clapper admitted that while in office they had personally reviewed classified reports about "Mr. Trump, his officials or members of Congress" who had been "unmasked." Both also admitted that they had shared that information with others in government, though they did deny leaking to the press.

COMMENTS

3-4 minutes

Former Acting Attorney General Sally Yates took her turn before the Senate Monday, in a hearing focused on her role in the firing of former Trump National Security Adviser Michael Flynn. As is now routine in any discussion of the Trump-Russia story, some important details were buried amid the speculation.

Yet the salient political fact is that President Trump then fired Mr. Flynn for misleading Vice President Mike Pence and the public. Moreover, Mr. Flynn was fired despite the lack of evidence that he conveyed any truly compromising information to the Russian ambassador.

The important question is whether there was collusion between Russians and the Trump campaign, and on that score the Yates appearance turned up nothing new. For that matter, we're still waiting for any such evidence from the House, Senate and FBI investigations. Maybe it exists, but no one has produced it.

We thought readers might like to know those details in case they go unreported anywhere else in the press. The unmasking of the names of political opponents is a serious concern, and the American people need to know how and why that happened here.

Mrs. Yates recounted in detail her unusual visit in January to White House Counsel Donald McGahn, when she said she'd warned that the Justice Department had evidence that Mr. Flynn had lied to White House officials and the public about certain "problematic" conduct.

All we know is that Mr. Flynn made a passing reference in his conversation with the ambassador to U.S. sanctions against Russia—a

So far the only crime we know about in this drama is the leak of Mr. Flynn's name to the press as having been overheard when U.S. intelligence was eavesdropping on the Russian ambassador. Mr. Flynn's name was leaked in violation of the law after he was "unmasked" by an Obama Administration official and his name was distributed widely across the government.

Appeared in the May. 09, 2017, print edition.

**THE WALL  
STREET  
JOURNAL.**

## Trump Considers What Steps U.S. Should Take on Climate Change Accord

Eli Stokols  
5-6 minutes

Updated May 8, 2017 9:42 p.m. ET

President Donald Trump has told top aides he wants to decide the U.S. role in the Paris Agreement on climate change, and what course to take will be debated in two high-level meetings at the White House on Tuesday, according to multiple administration officials.

Two weeks after his electoral victory last November, Mr. Trump said he had "an open mind" about the agreement by 190 countries aimed at combating climate change, reversing his campaign pledge to withdraw completely. But after softening other campaign positions on China and NATO in recent weeks, the president may be looking to rebalance his approach on the world stage with a major move reaffirming his commitment to "America First" principles.

The faction for withdrawing completely is led by EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt, senior adviser Steve Bannon and White House counsel Don McGahn, several officials said. They are eager for the decision to come ahead of the G-7 and G-20 summits later this month in Italy and Germany, respectively, where world leaders are likely to pressure Mr. Trump to stay in the agreement.

France's president-elect, Emanuel Macron, urged Mr. Trump not to dismantle the Paris agreement during a congratulatory phone call Monday, his spokesman told CNN.

But others inside and close to the administration are urging more tempered steps, such as paring the U.S. carbon emission reduction targets.

In a recent Oval Office meeting, Condoleezza Rice, former Secretary of State in the Bush administration, also implored the president to avoid the diplomatic backlash that could result from the U.S. fully withdrawing from the agreement according to two White House officials.

Within his administration, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, Secretary of Energy Rick Perry and the president's daughter Ivanka Trump are all pushing for a more measured response.

Mr. Pruitt and Ms. Trump are scheduled to meet at the White House on Tuesday to discuss the agreement ahead of a second meeting of the principals committee of the National Security Council that afternoon at which a formal recommendation may be presented.

Environmental groups, alarmed for weeks over the rising possibility that the administration may withdraw, have been preparing a response

should that occur and simultaneously attempting to undercut the White House's legal rationale for pulling out.

At the last principals committee meeting, Mr. McGahn took Mr. Pruitt's side, arguing that remaining in the Paris Agreement could lead to litigation against the U.S. should the administration ratchet down its carbon emission reduction limits, according to administration officials present. Mr. McGahn declined a request for comment.

Under the Paris Agreement, each participating country determines its own set of emissions targets and a plan to reach them. Mr. McGahn has pointed specifically to Article 4.11, which says that any nation "may at any time adjust its existing nationally determined contribution with a view to enhancing its level of ambition," noting that lowering goals could prompt lawsuits, multiple administration officials said.

Advocates for the agreement disagree with that analysis.

"That is a made up strategy by parts of the White House that want to leave Paris," said John Coequyt, the Sierra Club's global climate policy director.

Mr. Coequyt produced a recently leaked memo based on the organization's attorneys' conclusions in which he said the Paris Agreement would never be

viewed as binding in a domestic court. That conclusion is based on a 2008 Supreme Court decision, *Medellin v. Texas*, in which Ted Cruz, then Texas solicitor general, argued successfully that international treaties and commitments are not legally binding in U.S. courts.

Mr. Cruz, now a U.S. senator, regularly attacks the Paris Agreement as an economic burden on American families and vowed during his own presidential campaign last year to pull out of the accord.

"The most important thing we have to do is disabuse the White House of the idea that the Paris Agreement does not legally allow them to change their target," said a former senior climate change official in former President Barack Obama's administration. "The Paris Agreement does allow a party to change their target. And even if there was a difference of opinion on that, it doesn't matter because the targets are not binding. There is no provision to the Paris Agreement that would force any kind of compliance."

Write to Eli Stokols at [eli.stokols@wsj.com](mailto:eli.stokols@wsj.com)

Appeared in the May. 09, 2017, print edition as "Trump Considers Steps to Take On Climate Change."



## In Closed-Door Climate Showdown, It's Jared and Ivanka vs. Bannon and Pruitt

Paul McLeary | 1 hour ago

9-11 minutes

As President Donald Trump weighs a pivotal decision on whether to keep the United States in a global climate agreement, a fierce debate is playing out in the White House over the issue. But the debate has almost nothing to do with climate change.

With Trump due to take a decision as soon as Tuesday, former officials, policy experts, and congressional aides familiar with the White House deliberations describe a haphazard process dominated by political and ideological considerations. Trump excoriated climate change on the campaign trail as "an expensive hoax," and some senior aides and supporters want to see the president make good on his promise to dump the 2015 Paris deal.

"The words 'climate change' were hardly even uttered," a former

senior official familiar with the discussions told Foreign Policy. "I really just wanted there to be a rational policy process but ... there was no policy process at all."

Under former President Barack Obama, the United States helped craft the Paris climate conference, a landmark international accord designed to curb carbon emissions that are the main cause of climate change. But as a candidate, Trump threatened to withdraw the United States from what he has called a "bad deal," arguing the accord would kill off jobs through its voluntary goals for curbing greenhouse gas emissions.

It's unclear how Trump will come down on the issue, but for his inner circle, the battle lines are drawn. On one side are Trump's daughter Ivanka, his son-in-law, Jared Kushner, and Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, who are lobbying the president to keep the United States in the deal, several sources tell FP. On the other side of the argument: White House Chief Strategist

Stephen Bannon and Environmental Protection Agency chief Scott Pruitt, both of whom reject climate change science.

For the United States, pulling out of the Paris agreement could have broad diplomatic repercussions, after years of difficult negotiations in which the U.S. pressed for concessions from allies and partners.

Until a couple of weeks ago, supporters of the climate agreement were cautiously optimistic the administration would opt to stay in the accord, particularly given Tillerson's comments suggesting Washington would be better off staying in and shaping the global agenda on climate. But on April 27, Trump's inner circle met to debate whether or not to withdraw the United States from the Paris deal, and opponents of the deal presented a new argument to ditch the accord.

The White House general counsel asserted that the United States

could be vulnerable to legal challenges in court if it stayed in the accord while scaling back the emission pledges it made in the negotiations. If accepted, the legal interpretation would almost certainly force Trump's hand and prompt a U.S. exit from the deal.

Ivanka and others at the meeting argued for more time to consider the issue and the new legal interpretation. Experts outside the government are deeply skeptical that the United States could be successfully sued in court over an agreement that is nonbinding and allows each country to set its own voluntary emissions-reduction goals. When the Obama administration negotiated the deal, government lawyers did not warn of any serious risk of legal challenges.

The discussion at last month's meeting centered on the unconventional legal reading of the accord and the possible political impact of withdrawing, not the pros and cons of the agreement itself, sources said. The meeting was

"utterly content-free," the former official said.

The absence of substance and expertise in the discussions has left some civil servants discouraged and despondent, several sources briefed on the meeting said.

Some key experts and senior officials inside the government have not been at the table for the discussions, and some have not been consulted for their view. Neither Defense Secretary James Mattis nor National Security Advisor Lt. Gen. H.R. McMaster were part of the White House principals meeting on the issue. Mattis has spoken of the dangers posed by global warming, and in written testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee in January, the retired Marine general said the U.S. military had to bear in mind the security challenges posed by the melting Arctic and droughts and famines in global hot spots.

Some White House aides, including Bannon, view a U.S. withdrawal from the agreement as a campaign promise to be fulfilled and an explicit rejection of an accord championed by Obama.

Three dozen conservative and climate change-skeptic groups penned a letter Monday urging Trump to withdraw, arguing failing to do so "exposes key parts of [his] deregulatory energy agenda to unnecessary legal risk."

Announcing a U.S. withdrawal from the Paris deal close to the 100-day mark for the new administration would represent a symbolic political win for the president's core supporters, even though opinion polls show a majority of Americans support the accord. (Public concern about climate change is at record-high levels, according to Gallup.)

**The  
New York  
Times**

Halstead

5-7 minutes

President Trump faces a choice that will echo across his presidency and beyond: whether to remain in the Paris climate agreement. Although most Americans, his own secretaries of state and energy, and heads of state from around the globe are urging the president to stay, he remains undecided. Let us hope that a newly invigorated pro-Paris campaign by many of America's top C.E.O.s will sway him.

However, there is no formal, binding deadline that requires a decision. And even if Trump opts for an American exit, the withdrawal will not go into effect for about four years under the Paris agreement's guidelines.

But an upcoming G-7 summit of world leaders later this month is concentrating minds at the White House, as U.S. allies are expecting Washington to clarify its stance.

"That's a political deadline," said Alden Meyer of the Union of Concerned Scientists. "The other countries will be quite annoyed if the U.S. comes to that meeting and says it's still under review."

One scenario could see Trump seeking to use the Paris deal as leverage, promising to stay in the agreement in return for possible trade concessions with European or Asian governments, experts said.

Amid signs in recent months the administration would choose to keep the United States in the accord, Democrats in Congress and environmental organizations had sought to keep a low-profile on the issue, fearful that given the president's unpredictable and impulsive nature, any comment could be interpreted as an affront and influence his decision on the issue.

"Our silence was very deliberate," said one senior Democratic congressional aide. "It was a conscious decision."

But that calculation has changed in recent days. With the U.S. position on the Paris deal hanging in the balance, foreign leaders, industry executives and even GOP lawmakers are making a last-ditch attempt to convince the president to stay in.

In a recent barrage of public letters and full-page ads, Fortune 100 companies are voicing strong support for remaining in the Paris accord. The breadth of this coalition is remarkable: industries from oil and gas to retail, mining, utilities, agriculture, chemicals, information and automotive. This is as close as big business gets to a consensus position.

American business leaders understand that remaining in the agreement would spur new investment, strengthen American competitiveness, create jobs, ensure American access to global markets and help reduce future business risks associated with the changing climate. Leaving Paris would yield the opposite.

One of the president's staunch supporters, Rep. Kevin Cramer (R.-N.D.), wrote in the *Wall Street Journal* on Monday that he had changed his mind about remaining in the agreement and urged the president not to withdraw.

Cramer said he and several other Republican lawmakers believe "the smart strategy is to try to work out a more beneficial deal for the U.S. under the Paris agreement rather than walk away." Under the accord, the United States committed to lowering emissions by at least 26 percent below 2005 levels by 2025.

On Monday, a group of over 200 global investors with \$15 trillion in assets published a letter to G-7 heads of state urging them to adhere to the deal ahead of their summit in Italy this month. "We believe that the mitigation of climate change is essential for the safeguarding of our investments," the letter said.

Even some large coal companies have made the case to the administration that remaining in the Paris framework would help their industry safeguard its access to global markets and shape rules for lower-emission coal-fired power plants.

A U.S. withdrawal could damage the strength and legitimacy of the accord, which scientists say could be the last best chance to rescue the planet from the ravages of global warming. If America bowed out, experts warn it could encourage other governments to ease back on their Paris agreement pledges. As the world's most powerful economy and the second-largest emitter of heat-trapping carbon emissions, Washington's stance on climate carries significant global weight.

Our companies are best served by a stable and predictable international framework that commits all nations to climate-change mitigation. The Paris agreement overcame one of the longest-standing hurdles to international climate negotiations: getting the developing world, including China and India, onboard. If America backs away now, decades of diplomatic progress could be jeopardized.

Global statecraft relies on trust, reputation and credibility, which can be all too easily squandered. The United States is far better off maintaining a seat at the head of the table rather than standing outside. If America fails to honor a global agreement that it helped

For years, the United States urged other big emitters, especially China, to work to curb carbon emissions. After failing to get China to cooperate on climate change at a big summit in 2009, the Obama administration finally succeeded in convincing Beijing to join the Paris accord.

Now, a U.S. withdrawal would likely anger allies and partners who spent years negotiating the first comprehensive, global climate agreement.

When the Bush administration pulled out of another climate agreement 16 years ago, the Kyoto treaty, White House officials at the time were taken aback at the angry response it provoked in foreign capitals.

"The U.S. needs only to look back to the world's reaction when we dropped out of the Kyoto Protocol in 2001 to understand the consequences of shunning our responsibilities in addressing a global challenge," said Christy Goldfuss, a former managing director of the White House Council on Environmental Quality.

For veterans of the climate change issue, there's an added layer of irony to the debate: The key elements of the Paris deal reflect what Republicans had demanded after the Kyoto treaty.

The new nonbinding agreement lets each country set its own emissions targets and relies on "peer pressure" to succeed. It also includes nearly every country in the world — developing and industrialized states alike — a provision conservatives long pushed for in past agreements.

Photo credit: Mario Tama/Getty Images

## Shultz and Halstead : The Business Case for the Paris Climate Accord

George P. Shultz  
and Ted

In a recent barrage of public letters and full-page ads, Fortune 100 companies are voicing strong support for remaining in the Paris accord. The breadth of this coalition is remarkable: industries from oil and gas to retail, mining, utilities, agriculture, chemicals, information and automotive. This is as close as big business gets to a consensus position.

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Global statecraft relies on trust, reputation and credibility, which can be all too easily squandered. The United States is far better off maintaining a seat at the head of the table rather than standing outside. If America fails to honor a global agreement that it helped

forge, the repercussions will undercut our diplomatic priorities across the globe, not to mention the country's global standing and the market access of our firms.

Demonstrators in front of the White House during the Climate March in Washington last month. Joshua Roberts/Reuters

Staying in Paris in no way binds the president to Obama-era climate regulations. Indeed, the only risk Mr. Trump faces from altering or weakening domestic climate policy under Paris is in the court of public opinion, not in federal courts. Seventy-one percent of Americans favor remaining in the Paris agreement, according to a survey by the Chicago Council on Global

Affairs, and an even larger number favor clean energy.

What's more, there's nothing in the Paris agreement to prevent the administration from adopting more cost-effective, market-based and business-friendly climate policies. For all their good intent, the Obama administration's climate regulations — most prominently the Clean Power Plan to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from power plants — saddle industry with cumbersome requirements, inhibit business investment and have proved highly divisive. President Trump's recent executive order to withdraw or rewrite these regulations is but the beginning of a multiyear legal battle that leaves American industry facing significant

regulatory and pricing uncertainty, the worst of all worlds.

The only quick and sure path to undo these regulations is through legislation. This offers the president a potent negotiating strategy: Propose a meaningful price on carbon in exchange for a rollback of Obama-era climate rules. This could pave the way for a bipartisan climate solution, and a major victory for Mr. Trump. For example, a revenue-neutral carbon tax starting at \$40 per ton would meet the high end of America's commitment under Paris, justifying the elimination of all previous carbon regulations, as we and our co-authors argued in a recent study, "The Conservative Case for Carbon Dividends."

The president's Paris verdict will ultimately be about more than climate. It also carries major implications for America's place in the geoeconomic order. Staying in Paris would advance the president's priorities not only by creating jobs, but also by leveling the playing field in trade. American companies are well positioned to benefit from growing global markets in clean technologies, generating domestic jobs and growth.

By contrast, pulling out of the agreement could subject the United States to retaliatory trade measures, enabling other countries to leapfrog American industry.

If the president wants to strengthen America's competitive position, he should combine a price on carbon

with border tariffs or rebates based on carbon content. United States exports to countries without comparable carbon pricing systems would receive rebates, while imports from such countries would face tariffs on the carbon content of their products. Not only would this encourage other nations to adopt comparable carbon pricing, but it also would end today's implicit subsidy for dirty producers overseas, which puts American businesses at a disadvantage.

Businesses supporting the Paris accord are the president's natural allies. They can help him fashion a conservative climate solution that upholds our commitments and enhances America's greatness.

**THE WALL  
STREET  
JOURNAL.**  
Stephanie  
Armour and  
Kristina Peterson

## Republicans Confront Health-Bill Backlash

5-7 minutes

WASHINGTON—House Republicans may have won the battle to pass a health-care overhaul, but the fight over public messaging that is now ramping up could be critical to the shape of the bill that emerges from the Senate and to any final compromise.

GOP leaders and the Trump administration are urgently trying to tamp down a backlash from Democrats and some Republicans who say the House legislation rolling back and replacing much of the Affordable Care Act would imperil coverage for millions of Americans.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R., Ky.) largely sidestepped details of the House bill Monday, focusing instead on the problems plaguing the current health-care system that he said were prodding his chamber to act.

"For years, the American people have suffered under this failed law. ... Now, they're watching as Obamacare collapses all around them," Mr. McConnell said on the Senate floor. He also sought to temper expectations that the Senate would move swiftly as it writes its own health-care legislation. "This process will not be quick or simple or easy, but it must be done," Mr. McConnell said.

Democrats dispute that the ACA is failing. To the extent that it has some struggles, they say, many of

them are attributable to Republican attacks.

Republicans are facing criticism that a working group of GOP senators led by Mr. McConnell to write the Senate's version of a health-care overhaul is composed of 13 men and no women. Several provisions in the House repeal bill directly affect women, including a one-year federal defunding of Planned Parenthood Federation of America.

Critics had similar complaints when the House Freedom Caucus, currently a group of roughly three dozen conservative lawmakers, met to plot strategy in the House. And a widely distributed photo of top Republicans celebrating at the White House after last week's vote shows mostly men.

Some operatives who work with Republicans are concerned about the message that could send. "Images are powerful, and seeing a lineup of 13 white men in the Senate, and a Rose Garden full of white men from the House celebrating passage of health-care legislation that could take away coverage or protections or access to reproductive care is obviously bad symbolism for Republicans," said Christine Matthews, president of Bellwether Research, a polling firm that has worked with Republicans.

Still, she said, "ultimately, the public is going to judge health-care policy by what it means to their lives, not who crafted it."

That isn't stopping critics from hammering on the issue. "Raise your hand if you're sick of a small group of men determining your

healthcare," NARAL Pro-Choice America, an abortion-rights group, tweeted on Monday.

Democrats are also criticizing the Senate working group for discussing changes without public input. Democratic senators sent a letter Monday to GOP Sens. Lamar Alexander of Tennessee and Orrin Hatch of Utah, who lead health-related committees, asking for hearings.

The battle is being fought on other fronts, as well. Sen. Bill Cassidy (R., La.) said he would appear Monday night on the late-night talk show hosted by Jimmy Kimmel, whose emotional comments about his son's heart condition last week went viral. Mr. Cassidy has said the Senate health-care bill must pass the "Kimmel test."

Other top Republicans are also taking to the airwaves. Health and Human Services Secretary Tom Price on Sunday said it is "absolutely not" true that people would lose Medicaid coverage because of spending cuts. House Speaker Paul Ryan (R., Wis.) defended a provision in the law that would let insurers impose higher costs on people with pre-existing conditions who let their coverage lapse.

Medicaid is a particularly sensitive area for some Republicans, since President Donald Trump in 2015 promised not to make cuts to the program for the low-income and disabled. The House bill would reduce federal spending on Medicaid by \$880 billion between 2017 and 2026, according to an

estimate by the Congressional Budget Office.

The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, which coordinates Democratic House campaigns, is launching ads on Facebook and Instagram criticizing the bill in 30 Republican-held districts. They are zeroing in on lawmakers such as Martha McSally of Arizona and Darrell Issa of California, who hold swing seats.

The DCCC's counterpart, the National Republican Congressional Committee, has released a web video praising House Republicans for keeping their promise to repeal the ACA.

One challenge facing Republicans is that some members of their own party, including senators and governors, are expressing discomfort with the House bill and the turbulent process that produced it. That puts pressure on the Senate to produce something with broader support, an effort that will almost certainly be shaped by the public-relations battle now under way.

"Now that the bill is in the Senate's hands, we hope the Republican majority will pursue a bipartisan approach," Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D., N.Y.) said on the Senate floor.

**Write to** Stephanie Armour at [stephanie.armour@wsj.com](mailto:stephanie.armour@wsj.com) and Kristina Peterson at [kristina.peterson@wsj.com](mailto:kristina.peterson@wsj.com)

Appeared in the May. 09, 2017, print edition as 'GOP Tries to Quell Health-Bill Backlash.'

## Divided Senate Republicans Turn to Health Care With a Rough Road Ahead (UNE)

Robert Pear

7-9 minutes

WASHINGTON — The top Republican in the Senate, Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, has a reputation as a shrewd tactician and a wily strategist — far more than his younger counterpart in the House, Speaker Paul D. Ryan.

So the Senate majority leader's decision to create a 13-man working group on health care, including staunch conservatives and ardent foes of the Affordable Care Act — but no women — has been widely seen on Capitol Hill as a move to placate the right as Congress decides the fate of President Barack Obama's signature domestic achievement.

But Mr. McConnell, with only two votes to spare, could find that the Senate's more moderate voices will not be as easily assuaged as the House's when a repeal bill finally reaches a vote. Republican senators like Susan Collins of Maine, Lisa Murkowski of Alaska and Bill Cassidy of Louisiana may prove less amenable to appeals for party unity and legislative success when the lives and health of their constituents are on the line.

And certain issues, like efforts to reverse the expansion of Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act, are sure to receive more attention in the Senate than they got in the House. The prospect of higher premiums for older Americans living in rural areas will also loom larger in a chamber where Republicans from sparsely populated states hold outsize power.

"This process will not be quick or simple or easy," Mr. McConnell said Monday.

Senator Mike Rounds, Republican of South Dakota, suggested that the Senate would spend at least two months working on the legislation.

The Senate Republican working group on health care includes the party's top leaders, as well as three committee chairmen and two of the most conservative senators, Ted Cruz of Texas and Mike Lee of Utah.

Mr. McConnell's decision to include himself and his top three lieutenants — but not Ms. Collins, Ms. Murkowski or more junior women Republicans like Deb Fischer of Nebraska and Shelley Moore Capito of West Virginia — speaks volumes

about his direction and has raised eyebrows.

"The leaders have the right to choose whomever they wish," Ms. Collins said Monday. "It doesn't mean that I'm not going to work on health care.

"I've worked on health care for many years," she continued. "I spent five years in state government overseeing the Bureau of Insurance many years ago, and I think I can bring some experience to the debate that will be helpful."

By excluding Ms. Collins and Mr. Cassidy, perhaps viewed as potential troublemakers for the bill, Senate leaders may have inadvertently created a dangerous alliance. The two senators now have no obligation to fall in line behind the working group's final product and will almost surely continue to work on their own ideas. Together, they and their allies could hold near-veto power.

Senator Lisa Murkowski of Alaska was also excluded from the health care working group. Al Drago/The New York Times

Beyond neglecting Republican women, Senate Republican leaders overlooked Senator Tim Scott of South Carolina, the only black member of their conference. Before his congressional career, Mr. Scott sold insurance and owned one of the most successful Allstate insurance branches in South Carolina.

Mr. McConnell also left out of the group the only two Republican senators clearly in the Democrats' cross hairs for 2018 — Dean Heller of Nevada and Jeff Flake of Arizona. With re-election campaigns looming, they will have their own political calculus to make. Both states have expanded Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act, providing coverage to hundreds of thousands of people.

Republicans, holding 52 seats in the Senate, can afford to lose only two members of their party on a vote to undo the health care law they have assailed for seven years. They will not receive any support from Democratic senators or the Senate's two independents, but they can count on support from Vice President Mike Pence to break a tie, if needed.

Reince Priebus, the White House chief of staff, has said he expects the Senate to make improvements in the repeal bill that the House

passed last week by a vote of 217 to 213. But senators have gone much further: The Senate is starting from scratch.

"Let's face it," Senator Orrin G. Hatch of Utah, chairman of the Finance Committee, said Monday. "The House bill isn't going to pass over here."

Hospital executives, among the most outspoken critics of the House bill, are in town for the annual meeting of the American Hospital Association and will lobby the Senate this week. Thomas P. Nickels, an executive vice president of the association, predicted that the Senate would produce an "utterly different version" of the legislation.

Mr. McConnell is likely to find the same tricky dynamic that Speaker Ryan confronted in the House: Any bill that satisfies conservatives like Mr. Cruz and Mr. Lee risks alienating moderates like Ms. Collins and Ms. Murkowski.

Medicaid will also vex Republican leaders in the Senate in ways it did not in the House. Senators in both parties from states that have expanded the health care program for low-income people have expressed deep misgivings about the House bill, which essentially unravels the expansion.

Democrats said the Republicans' failure to include women in the working group showed that they were politically clueless.

Senator Kamala Harris, Democrat of California, wrote on Twitter: "The G.O.P. is crafting policy on an issue that directly impacts women without including a single woman in the process. It's wrong."

The House bill would cut off federal funds for Planned Parenthood for a year and prohibit the use of federal tax credits to buy insurance that includes coverage of abortion. It would also allow states to seek waivers of provisions of the Affordable Care Act that require insurers to cover maternity care.

David Popp, a spokesman for Mr. McConnell, said on Monday that many Republicans were involved in devising a replacement for Mr. Obama's health care law.

"Senators from throughout the conference have been working on solutions," Mr. Popp said. "Those meetings and efforts continue."

The Republicans' working group includes Mr. McConnell and three other members of the Republican

leadership: John Cornyn of Texas, the majority whip; John Thune of South Dakota, the chairman of the Senate Republican Conference; and John Barrasso of Wyoming, the chairman of the Senate Republican Policy Committee, who has been a point man for the party on health care.

The group also includes three committee chairmen: Mr. Hatch; Senator Lamar Alexander of Tennessee, chairman of the Senate health committee; and Senator Michael B. Enzi of Wyoming, the head of the Budget Committee.

The other senators in the Republican working group are from states that have expanded Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act: Tom Cotton of Arkansas, Cory Gardner of Colorado, Rob Portman of Ohio and Patrick J. Toomey of Pennsylvania.

The House bill would roll back the expansion of Medicaid, which has provided coverage to about 11 million people. The Congressional Budget Office said the bill's Medicaid changes would save more than \$800 billion over 10 years.

Savings would shrink if Congress allowed states to keep some or all of the Medicaid expansion.

For several weeks, senators have been working on possible changes to the tax credits offered in the House bill to help people buy insurance. Mr. Thune, for example, is drafting a proposal that would make the tax credits more progressive.

To people who do not have coverage at work or under a government program, the House bill would offer tax credits ranging from \$2,000 to \$4,000 a year, depending on age. A family could receive up to \$14,000 a year in credits. The credits would be reduced for individuals making over \$75,000 a year and families over \$150,000.

Mr. Thune, not wanting to create a new middle-class entitlement, would like to provide more financial assistance to lower-income people and less to higher-income people.

Senators are also focusing on the difficulty of administering the tax credits in the House bill, which could be used either inside or outside the public insurance marketplaces, or exchanges.

Under the Affordable Care Act, the exchanges perform a vital role, determining whether consumers are eligible for premium tax credits,

which, in most cases, are paid directly by the Treasury to insurance companies on their behalf. Under the House bill,

consumers could get the tax credits without going through an exchange.

The Internal Revenue Service has expressed concern. The House bill, it said, “appears to greatly expand I.R.S.’s current responsibilities” and

“could impose significant costs and administrative burden” on the agency.



## Editorial : Republicans serve up dishonest claims to defend their health-care bill

<https://www.facebook.com/washingtonpostopinions>

4-5 minutes

The Post's View

Opinion

**Opinion** A column or article in the Opinions section (in print, this is known as the Editorial Pages).

By Editorial Board

The Post's View

Opinion

**Opinion** A column or article in the Opinions section (in print, this is known as the Editorial Pages).

May 8 at 7:16 PM

SEN. SUSAN COLLINS (R-Maine) was asked Sunday whether the health-care bill the House of Representatives passed last week would, as its GOP boosters insist, improve coverage and preserve patient protections. “I think that’s unlikely,” she responded. “Unlikely” was a kind way of putting it. Ms. Collins’s comments came on the same morning that Trump administration

officials and House Speaker Paul D. Ryan (R-Wis.) made several indefensible claims about the bill they championed, despite widespread condemnation from experts, wariness from industry and concern from more sensible members of their own party.

Health and Human Services Secretary Tom Price, for example, was confronted with the fact that the House bill would slash over 10 years more than \$800 billion from Medicaid, the health program for the poor and near-poor, even though President Trump campaigned on not cutting that program. Mr. Price claimed that the bill contains “no cuts to the Medicaid program” because Medicaid spending would rise every year. In fact, The Post’s Fact Checker found, spending would not rise every year, but drop significantly in absolute terms in 2020 and take years to recover. Besides, the more pertinent number is how Medicaid spending would change relative to what it would be without the bill: That adds up to a 25 percent cut over a decade. In a related dishonest claim, Mr. Price also insisted that the bill would “absolutely not” cause millions of people to lose Medicaid coverage,

even though it would phase out the Obamacare Medicaid expansion, causing people to lose eligibility over time.

Mr. Ryan, meanwhile, argued that the cuts would not hurt anyone because there would be no more “micromanagement of Medicaid by the federal government.” Unsurprisingly, the Congressional Budget Office disagrees with Mr. Price and Mr. Ryan’s prediction of no harm, finding that 14 million fewer people would have Medicaid coverage by 2024, contributing to the massive 24-million-person coverage loss the CBO projected for an earlier version of the bill.

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Confronted with the CBO’s damning estimates, Mr. Ryan insisted that the loss of insurance would be by choice, not a matter of necessity. On preexisting conditions, meanwhile, the speaker claimed that, under the House bill, “you cannot be denied coverage if you have a preexisting condition.” Perhaps, but insurers could potentially raise sick people’s

premiums so high that it would amount to a denial. They would be left to the mercy of whatever system their states would design to catch those who fell through the bill’s wide cracks. Experts, along with Ohio Gov. John Kasich (R), warn that the bill would drastically underfund state high-risk-pool programs for vulnerable people — even if states tried to set them up according to strong standards.

Then, of course, there is the mistruth that undergirds the whole repeal-and-replace crusade: that Obamacare is facing inevitable collapse. Any collapse would be a result of willful Republican negligence. If Mr. Trump and Congress had made clear they would manage the current system responsibly, rather than leaving even basic policy matters in doubt, insurers would have been more likely to stay in the system. If Republicans had promoted bills that addressed the system’s real problem — insufficient incentives to obtain insurance coverage — companies might even have been enthusiastic. They did neither.



## Robinson : Republicans are accidentally paving the way for single-payer health care

<https://www.facebook.com/eugenerobinson.columnist>

6-7 minutes

Sooner or later, we will have universal, single-payer health care in this country — sooner if Republicans succeed in destroying the Affordable Care Act, later if they fail.

The repeal-and-replace bill passed by the House last week is nothing short of an abomination. It is so bad that Republicans can defend it only by blowing smoke and telling lies. “You cannot be denied coverage if you have a preexisting condition,” House Speaker Paul D. Ryan (R-Wis.) said — true in the narrowest, most technical sense but totally false in the real world, since insurance companies could charge those people astronomically high premiums, pricing them out of the market if, as often happens, they let

their coverage lapse. “There are no cuts to the Medicaid program,” Health and Human Services Secretary Tom Price said — a bald-faced lie, given that Republicans want to cut \$880 billion from Medicaid in order to offset a big tax cut for the rich.

The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office predicted that an earlier version of the American Health Care Act, as Trumpcare is officially called, would result in 24 million Americans losing health insurance over the next decade, with 14 million of those unfortunates losing coverage within the first year. Republicans rushed to vote Thursday on the final bill before the CBO had a chance to score it, doubtless fearing the projected decimation could be worse.

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I can’t think of a more effective way to drive the nation toward a single-payer system. In their foolish haste to get rid of Obamacare, Republican ideologues are paving the way for something they will like much less.

The country will ultimately be much better off, though. Every other rich industrialized nation has found that truly universal health coverage is like what Churchill said about democracy: It’s the worst system except for all the others that have been tried.

When President Barack Obama decided to tackle health care, he chose a framework that had been developed at the right-leaning Heritage Foundation. The ACA is based on what began as Republican ideas: maintain the basic system of employer-based health insurance provided by private-sector companies; set up exchanges to service the individual market; provide subsidies to help the working poor afford insurance;

expand the reach of Medicaid; guarantee reasonably priced coverage to those with preexisting conditions; and impose an individual mandate to ensure that younger, healthier people either buy insurance or pay a fine.

It’s a complicated scheme but it can work, as Republican Mitt Romney proved when he enacted a similar plan as governor of Massachusetts. And because the ACA maintained the basic private-sector structure of our health-care system, Obama reasoned that surely it would win some GOP support in Congress.

He was wrong. Only Democrats voted for the ACA, and Republicans turned its repeal into a partisan crusade — leading, eventually, to Thursday’s vote.

I have always believed, however, that Obama was prescient in seeing that the ACA would have a larger impact that would be difficult if not impossible to erase, no matter what

Republicans did to the law itself: It established the principle that health care, as Obama said in accepting the Profile in Courage Award at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum on Sunday, is "not a privilege but a right for all Americans."

Ryan and other House Republicans obviously disagree, but polling suggests they are increasingly out of step with the nation. In Gallup's most recent survey, the ACA had an approval rating of 55 percent, its highest to date. Perhaps more significantly, 52 percent of those polled a few months ago

agreed with the statement that "it is the responsibility of the federal government to make sure all Americans have health care coverage," vs. 45 percent who disagreed — a sharp turnaround in the past couple of years.

Those majorities may seem less than overwhelming, but the trend lines are clear. If tens of millions of Americans lose their insurance coverage and the most popular provisions of Obamacare are nullified, how do you think opinion will evolve?

If nervous Senate Republicans refuse to walk the plank,

Obamacare will remain in place. But President Trump and the GOP majorities in Congress now own the health-care issue, and if they don't stop trying to sabotage the ACA and instead try to make it work, voters will be angry. And if the Senate does go along with the House, I believe many Democrats will run in the 2018 midterms — and win — on Sen. Bernie Sanders's pledge of "Medicare for all."

As President Trump and Republicans celebrate the passage of the GOP health-care bill in the House, The Post's Jonathan Capehart offers this piece of advice: Enjoy it while you can. The Post's

Jonathan Capehart offers this piece of advice to Republicans: Enjoy your health-care victory while you can. (Video: Adriana Usero, Bastien Inzaurrealde/Photo: Jabin Botsford/The Washington Post)

(Adriana Usero, Bastien Inzaurrealde/The Washington Post)

With their anti-Obamacare fanaticism, Republicans are putting single-payer on the table. Thanks, GOP.



6-7 minutes

PostPartisan

Opinion

**Opinion** A column or article in the Opinions section (in print, this is known as the Editorial Pages).

By Ed Rogers

PostPartisan

Opinion

**Opinion** A column or article in the Opinions section (in print, this is known as the Editorial Pages).

May 8 at 12:58 PM

House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) and House Minority Whip Steny H. Hoyer (D-Md.) on May 4 scolded House Republicans for passing a health-care bill aiming to revise the Affordable Care Act. House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) and House Minority Whip Steny H. Hoyer (D-Md.) scold House Republicans over the GOP health-care bill's passage. (Reuters)

House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) and House Minority Whip Steny H. Hoyer (D-Md.) on May 4 scolded House Republicans for passing a health-care bill aiming to revise the Affordable Care Act. (Reuters)

The Democrats and their allies in the media want you to believe two conflicting "certainties" about the recently passed House Republican health-care bill. First, they want you to think that this bill doesn't amount to anything —

that it's not a victory for Trump, will never become law, and has been completely disregarded by the Senate. Second, they want you to think that Republicans' repeal-and-replace bill is a catastrophic development for the GOP and the nation — that it will cost Republicans their majority, is certainly political suicide for the party as a whole, and is already adversely affecting the health of many Americans. But the health-care bill simply cannot amount to nothing on the one hand and deal a fatal blow to the entire Republican Party and be a plague on the population on the other.

In listening to House and Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) and Senate Minority Leader Charles E. Schumer (D-N.Y.), one is led to believe that the pain and suffering caused by the Republican health-care bill will be unbearable, that widows and orphans will be dropping like flies. Even former president Barack Obama took a break from his jet-setting, yacht-sailing life to prevail upon Congress the need to exercise "political courage" in not repealing Obamacare. The Democrats' comments are just partisan spin meant to distract from the real story — that liberals' beloved Obamacare is falling apart.

Since the House's successful repeal-and-replace vote, the liberal media has relentlessly supported Democrats' most extreme pronouncements. Politico embraced the warped narrative about the bill's campaign consequences, publishing a story Saturday with the headline "Obamacare repeal vote upends 2018 House landscape."

## Rogers : The Democrats aren't being honest about health care

By Ed Rogers

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But buried deep in that story are wise words from veteran GOP strategist Curt Anderson, who appropriately noted, "Those who think Republicans will be defeated ... because of this vote ... are either in a parallel universe, or have been asleep for the past seven years. The notion that Obamacare is suddenly popular and will be missed is a mirage that seems real during the fog of war, but will disappear as you get closer to it."

He's right. Obamacare is not popular now, and it definitely was not popular in 2014 when Republicans took control over the House and Senate for the first time in eight years. Just look at Monday's CNBC report indicating that 60 percent of small-business owners support a repeal of Obamacare. They are the engine of job creation in the United States, they understand how harmful Obamacare has been to business. Still, leave it to CNN's always predictable Don Lemon to argue that Obamacare is "collapsing" only because President Trump is "causing uncertainty among insurers." Give me a break.

But the left's deceptive outrage does not end with Democratic congressional leaders or Don Lemon. The award for the most pretentious, sappy and over-the-top production goes to Rep. Joe Kennedy (D-Mass.), whose speech on the House floor was edited by a liberal organization to include a solemn violin soundtrack. I'm

serious. Striking a made-for-bad-TV pose, Kennedy argued that the repeal of Obamacare "rejects ... common humanity and continues the administration's calculated attempt to divide up our nation." And the New York Times' Charles Blow similarly weighed in with the wild overstatement that "[w]hatever eventually comes of the bill, the *death threat* it poses for many Americans may well be a *death wish* Republicans have just issued for their own careers."

It's all a tad too much.

When Republicans voted to repeal and replace Obamacare last week, they fulfilled a major campaign promise, advanced the president's agenda, and demonstrated the party's commitment to addressing the concerns of struggling Americans and taking the foot of Obamacare off the neck of small businesses, even as the Democrats refused to come to the table.

I can't help but question whether Democrats really think people are buying the argument that Republicans don't just want take away your health care, but want you dead, too. Does the left really believe people are so gullible, so naive? Maybe they just don't have anything affirmative to say.

I think the left is dreading the prospect of seeing a strong Republican Party get its act together and keep its promise to repeal and replace Obamacare. And, if this is the debate they really want to have, the Democrats' drama and faux anguish only serve to damage their credibility.

## POLITICO White House visitor logs

Andrew

Restuccia

14-18 minutes

The people who have met with Donald Trump since he became president tend to have a lot in

common, according to a database POLITICO compiled from public documents, media accounts and its

own reporting: They're mostly male, largely Republican and often rich.

Of the more than 1,200 people who have had direct access to the



president as of Monday night, the majority — about 80 percent — are white. And almost 63 percent are white men.

Trump has huddled with at least 270 business executives and nearly 350 politicians — mainly Republicans but also dozens of Democrats. And he's met in person or spoken by phone with 47 world leaders, most often the leaders of Japan and Germany, plus a vast grab bag of other figures, from pro golfers to rocker Ted Nugent to Matt Drudge.

Aside from Democrats in Congress, Trump has met with relatively few ideological opponents, according to the data. But there have been a number of exceptions: Zeke Emanuel, a doctor who served in the Obama administration and helped design Obamacare, took part in an Oval Office discussion in March, and the president has spoken with several CEOs who had previously donated to Democratic politicians.

This database is inevitably incomplete, partly because the White House — unlike the Obama administration — refuses to release a public log of its visitors. (Barack Obama's version was not a full record of all his meetings either, of course.) Official White House media advisories about Trump's activities have also left out information at times, failing to mention his encounters with Drudge or former Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin.

But POLITICO has compiled its own log, drawn from sources including White House schedules, news stories and pool reports filed by reporters who follow the president's travels. The dataset is the most comprehensive public list available of the people who have had access to the president since Jan. 20, either in the White House, on the phone or in locations such as Mar-a-Lago.

Information about who meets with the president would be valuable to understanding any administration, offering a window into the range of interest groups and personalities that have an opportunity to shape the White House's deliberations. That may be doubly true for Trump, who has been known to make decisions on the fly based on even brief conversations — for example, the 10-minute exchange with Chinese President Xi Jinping that he says changed his thinking about China's influence on North Korea.

People who have met with Trump say he has a surprisingly informal and improvisational style, sometimes scheduling last-minute meetings after seeing people on cable television. The president is

said to make frequent calls at night to his friends and trusted outside advisers, and he often holds court with Mar-a-Lago members during his trips to the club in Palm Beach, Florida.

The White House did not respond to repeated requests for comment on this story.

POLITICO will continue to update its records based on feedback from readers and sources inside and outside the administration. For now, here's a breakdown of what it has found:

#### **Business executives**

Trump has talked to or appeared at events with at least 270 business executives, from JPMorgan Chase chief Jamie Dimon to PepsiCo's Indra Nooyi and United Airlines' Oscar Munoz.

About 75 percent of the executives who have gotten time with Trump are white men, according to POLITICO's analysis. That lack of diversity also reflects the reality at many large companies: According to Forbes, women made up just 4.2 percent of the CEOs last year at the 500 largest U.S. companies. And a recent study found that women and minorities make up just 31 percent of the 500 largest U.S. companies' boards.

Executives representing the finance, manufacturing, auto and energy industries met with Trump most frequently, according to POLITICO's analysis.

#### **Who is President Trump meeting with?**

79% Male

80% White

Although all presidents have met with business leaders, Trump, a career businessman, seems particularly comfortable with them. These meetings also foster the public view Trump cultivated while sitting in the biggest chair in the boardroom on his TV series *Celebrity Apprentice*.

Meg Jacobs, a research scholar at Princeton University who has studied business-government relations, said the meetings with executives project the image "that he can get deals done, he's a negotiator, a wheeler-dealer and he's loved and effective."

And this comfort with CEOs comes across in their meetings. Corporate heads who have met with Trump describe him as curious about which regulations hurt their bottom lines.

"He's not, from the normal characterization of him, or even

from his own tweets sometimes, what you would expect," said Robert Murray, an outspoken Trump supporter who heads the coal company Murray Energy.

During the campaign, Trump spoke out against Wall Street and Big Business, running as a populist who would "drain the swamp" of Washington influence. For any executive who may have found that rhetoric unnerving, publicly meeting with CEOs sends a reassuring message that Trump will follow the classic Republican playbook of tax cuts and deregulation. Getty

"Not a single member of the Obama administration made anyone from the coal industry welcome, nor would they give us any meetings," said Murray, who has appeared with Trump twice since he took office. "We have a government now that's wanting to hear on behalf of the electric power grid and the coal miners."

Business executives' priorities often align closely with Trump's policy agenda. Murray, for example, said the administration has already tackled the first four agenda items on a list of policy recommendations he provided to Trump and Vice President Mike Pence.

Watchdog groups expressed concern over Trump's heavy interaction with executives.

"There's a risk of crony capitalism. Individual business leaders are very good at advocating for their individual company's situation," said Nick Schwellenbach, director of investigations at the Project on Government Oversight. "That does not necessarily translate to being better for the economy as a whole."

#### **Foreign leaders**

Trump has spoken to or met with at least 47 world leaders since his inauguration. He has most frequently been in contact with German Chancellor Angela Merkel, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, British Prime Minister Theresa May and China's Xi, based on POLITICO's analysis.

Abe and Merkel are tied in the data for the most publicly announced interactions with the president, with the records showing that each leader has met with or talked to Trump seven times. Those include their visits to the United States, where Merkel huddled with Trump at the White House and Abe visited Mar-a-Lago.

#### **Who is President Trump meeting with? 47**

Foreign leaders

Trump's meetings reflect his foreign policy objectives, including concerns about North Korea's aggression — Trump has spoken with South Korea's acting president, Hwang Kyo-ahn, at least three times — and his ongoing deliberation about how to interact with the European Union.

The president has also made frequent contact with Middle Eastern and North African leaders, including Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi (two phone calls and one in-person meeting), Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi (two phone calls and one in-person meeting) and Tunisian President Beji Caid Essebsi (three phone calls), as well as top officials from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates.

#### **Politicians**

Trump has wooed nearly 350 politicians of both parties since taking office. And according to POLITICO's data, congressional Republican leaders Mitch McConnell, Paul Ryan, Kevin McCarthy and Steve Scalise have been his most regular guests as he pursued priorities including his push for health care legislation.

But Trump has also met with Democrats, including critics like Maryland Rep. Elijah Cummings, who later said he had told the president his rhetoric has been "hurtful" to African-Americans. Democratic House leaders Nancy Pelosi and Steny Hoyer also got time with Trump.

Still, his meetings have had a decidedly partisan tilt: He's met with at least 250 Republican politicians and 92 Democrats, according to POLITICO's records.

#### **Who is President Trump meeting with? 250**

Republican politicians 92  
Democratic politicians

One of Trump's home-state senators and frequent sparring partners, Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.), has visited the White House at least five times. Trump has also seemingly taken a liking to Democratic Sen. Joe Manchin, the moderate West Virginian who faces a contentious reelection fight in 2018 in a state Trump won handily. Trump and Manchin have met at least four times, more than any other Democratic senator except Schumer.

He's also mingled with his former rivals on the campaign trail more than other Republican senators, based on the data. Trump has met with Florida Sen. Marco Rubio at least five times, and with Ted Cruz of Texas and Rand Paul of

Kentucky at least four times apiece, including a golf outing with Paul.

Alaska's Republican senators, Dan Sullivan and Lisa Murkowski, have both had above-average face time with the president, with at least five interactions for Sullivan and four for Murkowski.

One early Trump supporter, Georgia Republican Sen. David Perdue, has been rewarded for his loyalty, with at least five interactions with the president. The first-term senator is said to be close to members of Trump's inner circle.

Florida Gov. Rick Scott has been Trump's most frequent gubernatorial guest, with at least four interactions. He's also met at least three times with New Jersey's Chris Christie, a former presidential rival who briefly headed his transition, and is said to speak with Christie more frequently.

#### Cabinet secretaries

Secretary of State Rex Tillerson spent Trump's earliest weeks enduring a reputation as a social outcast in the administration. But his stock has risen as he's taken a leading role on Syria, Russia, North Korea and China — and the records show he has had more publicly disclosed direct contact with Trump than anyone else in the Cabinet.

Tillerson has met with the president at least 22 times, according to the analysis.

Treasury	Secretary	Steven
Mnuchin,	Homeland	Security

Secretary John Kelly, national security adviser H.R. McMaster and Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao also have had frequent interactions with Trump.

Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross has also emerged as one of Trump's go-to Cabinet officials, having joined the president repeatedly at Mar-a-Lago.

Others appear to have spent little time with Trump. POLITICO could document only four instances in which Housing and Urban Development Secretary Ben Carson has met with the president since he's taken office, and just three for Energy Secretary Rick Perry.

#### The rest

Trump has met with a wide range of other figures. Trump welcomed Palin, Nugent and musician Kid Rock in April to the White House, where they posed mockingly underneath a portrait of Hillary Clinton.

An avid golfer, Trump played rounds with Rory McIlroy and Ernie Els on one of his Florida golf courses in February, which led to online blowback from some of the golfers' fans. Former Yankees closer Mariano Rivera also sat down with Trump as part of a meeting on the opioid epidemic.

Trump reunited with friends Robert Kraft and Bill Belichick when they visited the White House with their Super Bowl champion New England Patriots in April. Some Patriots skipped the event to protest

Trump's policies, though Trump friend Tom Brady was absent as well. Team owner Kraft, a frequent guest at Mar-a-Lago, has enjoyed unprecedented access to the president, even sitting in on his dinner at the Palm Beach resort with the Japanese prime minister. Getty

Trump has held more traditional meetings and photo opportunities, ranging from the presidents of historically black colleges and universities to Medal of Honor recipients. He's also met with female small-business leaders and America's national and state teachers of the year.

The president has also engaged conservative leaders during his first 100 days, meeting with them to discuss health care, abortion and other topics of interest. Former campaign manager Corey Lewandowski has been spotted at the White House, as has conservative radio firebrand Laura Ingraham. Fox News mogul Rupert Murdoch reportedly speaks with Trump weekly, and Fox anchor and Trump defender Sean Hannity also advises the president.

Trump has also granted at least 33 interviews with at least 22 news outlets since taking office, not counting off-the-record meetings. While Fox has been Trump's outlet of choice, The New York Times places second in access to the president, with Times political correspondent Maggie Haberman

interviewing him at least three times.

#### Methodology

This analysis includes publicly available information, media reports and POLITICO reporting regarding meetings President Donald Trump has held since his inauguration. This includes executive order signings, White House meetings, public appearances, phone calls and interactions at Mar-a-Lago. Some events, such as the White House Easter egg roll, inauguration and others were not included because interactions with the president were superficial.

The analysis does not include Trump's meetings with White House aides or meetings held by Vice President Mike Pence or other administration officials. Trump family members are also not included. It is limited by access to full guest lists as well as knowledge about whom Trump speaks with daily.

Individuals' races were determined according to definitions used by the U.S. Census Bureau, except in the case of Hispanics, who were treated as a separate racial group for the purposes of this database.

Jon McClure contributed to this report. Illustrations by Eben McCue. Designed by Lily Mihalik.



## Kushner Family Stands to Gain From Visa Rules in Trump's First Major Law (UNE)

Eric Lipton and Jesse Drucker

6-8 minutes

WASHINGTON — It was the first major piece of legislation that President Trump signed into law, and buried on Page 734 was one sentence that brought a potential benefit to the president's extended family: renewal of a program offering permanent residence in the United States to affluent foreigners investing money in real estate projects here.

Just hours after the appropriations measure was signed on Friday, the company run until January by Mr. Trump's son-in-law and top adviser, Jared Kushner, was urging wealthy Chinese in Beijing to consider investing \$500,000 each in a pair of Jersey City luxury apartment towers the family-owned Kushner Companies plans to build. Mr. Kushner was even cited at a

marketing presentation by his sister Nicole Meyer, who was on her way to China even before the bill was signed. The project "means a lot to me and my entire family," she told the prospective investors.

The sequence of events offers one of the most explicit examples to date of the peril of the Trump and Kushner families maintaining close ties to their business interests and creates an impression they stand to profit off Mr. Trump's presence in the White House. It also illustrates the problems of the so-called EB-5 visa program that prominent Republican and Democratic members of Congress want changed.

"It is just one more dilemma that a family with vast commercial interest has when relatives are in the federal government, particularly the White House," said Michael H. Cardozo, who served as a deputy White House counsel in the Carter

administration, which struggled with its own controversies related to the president's brother, Billy Carter, and his work on behalf of an American company seeking to get into the oil industry in Libya. "The actions of relatives can come back and bite those serving those in the government."

Bipartisan critics in Washington say they want to revamp the visa program because it is often abused. It supports high-end luxury projects, like the Kushner family deal, instead of promoting job creation in rural America or distressed urban areas, as it was intended. It has also been criticized by federal regulators for insufficient safeguards against illicit money coming into the United States; in the case of one applicant, they found potential financial ties to a string of Chinese brothels.

There is no assertion that Mr. Kushner broke any conflict-of-interest rule; but the law does not

prevent his relatives from attempting to exploit those ties to benefit the family business.

Mr. Kushner's portfolio includes a central role on China policy. That role has heightened the Kushner family name in a nation accounting for more than 80 percent of the EB-5 visas issued. Wealthy Chinese see the program as an easy way to legally move to the United States.

In fact, Kushner Companies — when Mr. Kushner was still at the helm — had received \$50 million in EB-5 financing for a separate New Jersey project, a Trump-branded luxury high-rise tower in Jersey City that opened late last year.

On Monday, Senator Dianne Feinstein, Democrat of California, called the visa program "a stark conflict of interest for the Trump White House." Meanwhile, the ethics watchdog group Democracy 21 called for Mr. Kushner to recuse himself from all policy dealing with

China. The group had previously called for Mr. Kushner to make public a full list of his family firm's overseas business partners and lenders as well as a full divestiture of his business assets into a blind trust.

After a surge in attention to the topic over the weekend, a spokesman for Mr. Trump said on Monday that the president also endorses changes to the visa program, including perhaps increasing the price foreigners must pay to get the special immigration status. A White House statement said the administration "is evaluating wholesale reform of the EB-5 program to ensure that the program is used as intended and that investment is being spread to all areas of the country."

The statement also said that Mr. Kushner, who is married to Ivanka Trump, has recused himself from EB-5 related matters: "Jared takes the ethics rules very seriously and would never compromise himself or the administration." In a statement from Kushner Companies, Mr. Kushner's sister said it was not her intent to mention her brother as a way to lure investors.

Other family members of presidents have created stir in past decades — including Neil M. Bush, President George Bush's son — as they have engaged in outside business ventures that intersected with the federal government. Hillary Clinton's brother Anthony Rodham was once

cited for inappropriate appeals to government officials about a grant through this very same visa program.

But the matters involving Mr. Kushner, the White House and Kushner Companies are different. None of those previous presidential relatives took jobs in the White House while simultaneously benefiting from a multibillion-dollar business with international partners, who also stand to benefit from federal programs.

Although Mr. Kushner has shed stakes in some of the company's investments, he has retained most of his interest, as the main beneficiary of a series of trusts invested in the firm's various projects. His stake, along with some other investments, is worth as much as \$600 million, and possibly much more, according to a government ethics disclosure form made public by Mr. Kushner in March. But Kushner Companies has declined to make public a list of its partners.

The firm has received investments or loans from around the world, including Goldman Sachs, the Blackstone Group, Deutsche Bank and Israel's Bank Hapoalim, the subject of a United States Justice Department tax investigation. Last month, The New York Times reported that the Kushners had partnered with at least one member of Israel's wealthy Steinmetz family. The family's most well-known

member, Beny Steinmetz, is the subject of a Justice Department investigation into alleged bribes.

And in March, Mr. Kushner's firm said it ended talks with Anbang Insurance Group, a Chinese company with ties to ruling members of the country's Communist Party. Those talks began around the time President Trump secured the Republican nomination and also raised questions because of the potentially favorable terms for Kushner Companies.

When it was created in 1990, the EB-5 visa program was intended to provide a new source of financing for projects in underserved areas, defined as places with high unemployment. But there are no federal standards for defining such neighborhoods. And developers often provide gerrymandered maps to qualify under the program.

The Kushner project in Jersey City "is a textbook example of the abuses we have seen in the last six or seven years," said Shae Armstrong, a Dallas lawyer who has joined with members of Congress, including Senators Charles E. Grassley, Republican of Iowa, and Ms. Feinstein, to call for changes in the program.

That part of Jersey City, less than three miles from Manhattan, is hardly an economically depressed area, and a luxury apartment

building is going to create few permanent jobs. "And it is why other towns in rural America are not getting EB-5 money," Mr. Armstrong said.

Indeed, in the Beijing presentation delivered by Mr. Kushner's sister, the firm cited the high household income of the majority of the residents — between \$100,000 and \$200,000 — in the Trump-branded building that has already received EB-5 financing.

The \$1 billion Kushner project at the center of the current controversy is a set of high-rise towers — including 1,730 apartments and 89,000 square feet of retail space. The company is seeking \$150 million through the EB-5 program.

Traditional lenders can charge interest of 12 to 18 percent, said Gary Friedland, a professor at New York University who has written extensively about the program. But EB-5 loans can wind up costing developers as little as 4 percent, he said.

"The immigrant investor's primary purpose is to secure a visa, so they accept minimal interest, as low as half a percent," Mr. Friedland said.

For developers, said Steve Yale-Loehr, an immigration law professor at Cornell University, the appeal of EB-5 can be summed up in two words: "Cheap money."



## Editorial : The Kushners and Their Golden Visas

The Editorial Board

4-5 minutes

Lorenzo Gritti

The Kushner family has been caught in a shameless act of name-dropping. It has been highlighting its White House connections to entice wealthy Chinese investors and promising them green cards in return under a special government visa program. That's pretty bad. But it's also a scandal that Congress allows real estate developers to use the American immigration system to pad their profits.

Jared Kushner, President Trump's son-in-law and special adviser, is officially no longer managing his family's businesses, but he still benefits from many of them. His sister Nicole Meyer was in Beijing and Shanghai this past weekend seeking investors for a luxury apartment project her family is developing in Jersey City, a short train ride from downtown Manhattan. Her sales pitch cited her

brother and laid out how a \$500,000 investment could provide a coveted path to American citizenship. The Kushner Companies later offered a mealy-mouthed apology "if that mention of her brother was in any way interpreted as an attempt to lure investors."

Ms. Meyer's disturbing investor pitch was made possible by the EB-5 investor visa, which opens an express lane into the United States for those who can afford to invest nearly 10 times what the median American household earns in a year. The program, which covers business investments as well as real estate, was created in 1990 and took off in the past 10 years as developers figured out how to turn it into a cheap source of capital. Investors are willing to settle for low returns if it means they gain permanent residence status in the United States. Affluent Chinese families seeking a foothold in a stable democracy snap up most of the visas, which are capped at 10,000 a year.

The EB-5 program has been a scandal magnet. The Government

Accountability Office and the inspector general of the Department of Homeland Security say that immigration officials do not properly vet applications for fraud and illicit sources of money. The real estate industry also games the system by using the dark arts of gerrymandering. Under the program, investors have to put at least \$1 million, and it has to lead to creation or preservation of at least 10 permanent, full-time jobs. But the minimum investment drops to \$500,000 if applicants invest in rural areas or places with elevated unemployment. Developers working in, say, Midtown Manhattan or Beverly Hills can say that nearby depressed neighborhoods are included in the area when they apply for the program.

Defenders of EB-5 say it fosters investment and creates jobs. But many real estate projects funded through the program, including the Kushner Companies' One Journal Square development in Jersey City, would almost surely have happened anyway. Without access to wealthy Chinese families, builders would

raise more money from banks, pension funds and other investors by agreeing to pay higher interest rates, which would reduce their profits somewhat.

Senator Dianne Feinstein, Democrat of California, and Senator Charles Grassley, Republican of Iowa, introduced a bill in January that would eliminate the EB-5 program. Before Mr. Trump took office, the Department of Homeland Security proposed raising the minimum investments for the program, which could be a first step toward reforming it. But it is not clear whether the Trump administration or Congress will make substantial changes since influential real estate groups, including the Kushner and Trump families, benefit from it. Mr. Trump signed a spending bill last week that extended the EB-5 program without any changes through the end of September.

Mr. Trump made restricting immigration, including for refugees fleeing violence, a central plank of his campaign. Yet, he seems O.K. with letting real estate moguls take

advantage of a program that sells green cards. In this administration, the interests of the first family and

its rich and powerful friends come first.

The  
Washington  
Post

## Editorial : The Trump administration has a chance to end a corruption-prone visa program

<https://www.facebook.com/washingtonpostopinions>

3-4 minutes

The Post's View

Opinion

**Opinion** A column or article in the Opinions section (in print, this is known as the Editorial Pages).

By Editorial Board

The Post's View

Opinion

**Opinion** A column or article in the Opinions section (in print, this is known as the Editorial Pages).

May 8 at 7:12 PM

THE FIRST thing to be said about the weekend's visa-peddling conference by the Kushner Companies in China is: The administration should take it as an opportunity for a forthright policy stance.

Jared Kushner, President Trump's son-in-law and a chief White House adviser, has no stake in the project promoted over the weekend and has recused himself from the family business. The company, which included mention of Mr. Kushner and a large photo of his father-in-law at the event, has apologized for any impression of influence trading that might have been created by its presentation. The firm has long raised money for its real estate ventures from the EB-5 program, which awards legal residency in the United States to foreign investors.

Three months ago, we urged Mr. Trump to join the movement against this program; in the meantime, it has been reauthorized in the omnibus appropriations bill that Mr. Trump just signed — though, in fairness, he affixed his signature not to save the visa program but to keep the government open. With the clock ticking until the program's new expiration date, Sept. 30, the president has a chance to get behind efforts to end the hopelessly

inefficient and corruption-prone EB-5 program before it causes more embarrassment.

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For a man who made it into the Oval Office on a promise to close the immigration door to low-priority entrants, and to reduce immigration-related threats to national security, ending EB-5 should be a no-brainer. It began a quarter-century ago as a well-intentioned plan to attract international capital to the United States by awarding permanent residency to 10,000 foreigners per year who agreed to invest at least \$500,000 into a U.S. business, creating at least 10 jobs directly or indirectly. In September 2015, the Bipartisan Policy Center estimated that 44,000 people, a third of them foreign investors and the rest family members, had qualified since 1992. A disproportionate number of recent entrants come from China; their political and financial antecedents

are difficult to vet, let alone to vet "extremely." The yield has been 77,150 full-time jobs and approximately \$4.2 billion in investment — trivial in relation to the giant U.S. economy. Lobbyists have manipulated the program's rules so that it now favors big-city hotel, office and apartment developers, rather than depressed rural and urban zones as Congress originally intended. There has been a string of highly publicized scandals involving fraud.

Sens. Charles E. Grassley (R-Iowa) and Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) have a bill to end the EB-5 program once and for all. This is not a government visa-selling program. It is a government visa-giveaway program; the private-sector businesses, in effect, sell them, in return for low-cost financing of projects they would probably do anyway. Ending EB-5 would be an easy step on the path to rational immigration reform.

THE WALL  
STREET  
JOURNAL

## Appellate Judges Review Travel Ban

Brent Kendall

6-7 minutes

travelers from Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen. The order was suspended by lower courts and isn't currently in effect.

A majority of judges on the liberal-leaning appeals court voiced concerns about Mr. Trump's approach and his motivations for the travel restrictions.

Judge James Wynn, an appointee of former President Barack Obama, a Democrat, cited an array of comments by Mr. Trump that he said provided reason to question whether the president acted with anti-Muslim animus.

"Don't we get to consider what was actually said here?" the judge asked.

Judge Wynn said that even after courts blocked Mr. Trump's first order on travel restrictions from January and he implemented newer ones that were less far-reaching, "there was sort of a wink and nod" that he was fulfilling his campaign promise on banning Muslim entry to the U.S.

During the campaign, Mr. Trump called for a "total and complete shutdown of Muslims" entering the U.S.

Mr. Trump "has never repudiated what he said about the Muslim ban," added Judge King, an appointee of former President Bill Clinton, also a Democrat.

Jeffrey Wall, a lawyer for the Justice Department who defended the administration's travel restrictions, said the appeals court should focus on the text of the executive order, as well as what he described as the White House's legitimate concerns about terrorism, not on what Mr. Trump has said before and after taking office.

It is not clear when the court might rule, though in the past judges have issued quick decisions because of time sensitivities in the case.

Mr. Trump sought to pause travel from the six countries for 90 days because he "wanted a brief opportunity" to consider whether U.S. screening procedures were good enough, Mr. Wall said.

Conservative judges, who are outnumbered on the court, fired question after question at an American Civil Liberties Union lawyer who was arguing that Mr. Trump's travel ban unlawfully targeted Muslims.

Judge Paul Niemeyer, an appointee of President George H.W. Bush, a Republican, said the countries identified by Mr. Trump's order were "havens for terrorism."

"You say that's irrational and inconsistent?" he asked.

ACLU lawyer Omar Jadwat said courts owe deference to the president's powers to police the U.S. border, but that power doesn't mean he can "enact a policy that violates the Establishment Clause," the constitutional provision that bars the government from favoring or disfavoring particular religions.

Several judges asked Mr. Jadwat for his best arguments against the executive order if he weren't allowed to use any of Mr. Trump's statements to support his case. The ACLU attorney appeared to struggle with the answer, though he said the president's approach wasn't a logical way to address terrorism concerns.

Civil-rights and immigrant-rights groups, as well as some states, have challenged Mr. Trump's travel restrictions in the courts. Mr. Trump's order also sought to suspend the admission of refugees to the U.S.

Updated May 8, 2017 10:28 p.m. ET

RICHMOND, Va.—Federal appeals court judges weighed Monday whether they should consider President Donald Trump's previous statements supporting a complete ban on Muslims entering the country when ruling on his revised order to suspend travel from six Muslim-majority countries.

"That's the most important issue in the case," said Judge Robert King of the Fourth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, referring to the president's previous statements during a two-hour hearing.

The Richmond-based appeals court, with 13 judges participating, is considering whether Mr. Trump's executive order on visas and refugees, which the GOP president has said is necessary to help fight terrorism, should remain on hold because of concerns about religious discrimination.

Mr. Trump's March 6 order sought to temporarily bar U.S. entry to

Federal trial judges in Hawaii and Maryland issued rulings in March, within hours of one another, that preliminarily blocked implementation of the revised executive order. Those judges said legal challengers were likely to prevail on their claims that the president had unlawfully targeted Muslims for disfavored treatment.

This is the second chapter of litigation on Mr. Trump's efforts to close U.S. borders to some travelers, setting up an escalating clash between the White House and the courts. The president has been unusually blunt in criticizing the

judges who have ruled against him so far.

In January, Mr. Trump ordered broader travel restrictions, just a week into his presidency. Those initial rules took effect briefly, causing chaos for some overseas travelers and U.S. residents, before courts blocked them on due-process grounds, faulting the president for not providing advance notice to the public or an opportunity for people to challenge the denial of travel.

Mr. Trump revoked his original executive order and replaced it with the March 6 version, which softened

several aspects of his approach to address the due-process concerns.

But allegations of religious discrimination have remained, and that issue is the focus of the current legal battle.

The showdown could have broad implications for presidential power and the authority of courts to look beyond the text of an executive order to delve into a president's intentions.

The Fourth Circuit hearing Monday reviewed the decision against Mr. Trump's administration issued by U.S. District Judge Theodore

Chuang in Maryland. If Mr. Trump loses, his next and final legal option would be the Supreme Court.

A three-judge panel on the San Francisco-based Ninth Circuit is scheduled to hold its own hearing on May 15 on the president's revised executive order, reviewing the decision of a Hawaii judge who blocked the administration from moving forward. That panel leans in a liberal direction, with all three judges considering the case appointed by Democratic presidents.

Appeared in the May. 09, 2017, print edition.

**THE WALL  
STREET  
JOURNAL.**

## Despite Setbacks, Trump's Trade Warrior Peter Navarro Is Fighting On

Bob Davis and William Mauldin

6-7 minutes

Updated May 8, 2017 7:51 p.m. ET

WASHINGTON—The White House's most hawkish trade adviser, Peter Navarro, says the administration is still pushing to win concessions from trading partners even though the president has notably softened his positions on China and Mexico.

President Donald Trump no longer talks of imposing steep tariffs on Chinese imports, as he did during the campaign, and he dropped his pledge to name Beijing a currency manipulator. He also recently discarded a proposal that Mr. Navarro helped shape to pull the U.S. out of the North American Free Trade Agreement.

Mr. Trump's decision last month to kill the National Trade Council, created shortly after the election and led by Mr. Navarro, raised questions about how much influence economic "nationalists" still had over policies. Mr. Navarro's views have clashed with those of Gary Cohn, the former Goldman Sachs Inc. president who is director of the National Economic Council. Mr. Cohn, of the administration's "globalist" contingent, has been a moderating force on trade issues, White House staffers and lobbyists say.

"I don't worry about getting outmaneuvered," Mr. Navarro said in an interview. "I just worry about getting things done."

Lindsay Walters, White House deputy press secretary, said all members of Mr. Trump's team are "working first and foremost for hardworking Americans by pursuing

policies that will create jobs, boost wages, and grow our economy."

At the start of the administration, Mr. Navarro loomed large in economic policy making. The University of California, Irvine, economist had helped shape the Trump campaign's trade threats. The NTC was initially viewed as being on a par with the White House's powerful National Security Council and NEC. In January, *The Economist* magazine said he was about to become "one of the world's most powerful economists."

Mr. Cohn quickly staffed up the NEC, hiring two trade experts, and won the portfolio for infrastructure spending.

Mr. Trump replaced the NTC on April 29 with the Office of Trade and Manufacturing Policy, which continues to be housed in Mr. Navarro's spartan office across an alley from the White House and has two staffers—Mr. Navarro and his deputy. Its agenda includes helping companies handle trade disputes, figuring out "Buy American" provisions and making sure the military has a strong industrial base. This is a more limited role than the NTC was expected to play.

"Navarro has been marginalized," said University of Maryland economist Peter Morici, who has long pushed for a more aggressive trade policy. The White House reshuffling "acknowledges that the NEC has won" the fight over the trade agenda, resulting in a less confrontational approach.

Mr. Navarro disputes Mr. Morici's conclusion, saying his clout is intact. Mr. Navarro, 67 years old, said he has started to meet one-on-one with Mr. Trump once a week for about 15 minutes. He said he advises Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross and will also counsel Robert

Lighthizer if Mr. Lighthizer is confirmed, as expected, as U.S. Trade Representative.

"I know my role in the process, which is to help them behind the scenes wherever and whenever I can," he said.

A spokeswoman for the USTR declined to comment. A Commerce spokesman said: "Many members of the White House senior staff have been giving us input on trade topics."

President Trump took Mr. Navarro with him on a trip to Harrisburg, Penn., to mark the 100th day of his administration. There, he called Mr. Navarro "one of the greats trying to protect our jobs" and gave Mr. Navarro a pen he used to sign the order creating the new trade office. Scott Paul, president of the Alliance for American Manufacturing, a steel-industry group, said Mr. Trump's actions indicate Mr. Navarro won't be bumped out of the White House, as some administration officials and trade lobbyists speculated.

The administration has launched a number of studies focusing on trade barriers, the trade deficit and excess capacity in the aluminum and steel industries, Mr. Navarro said. Trade analysts say the studies could be used to lay the groundwork to impose protective tariffs.

"While we have big trade deficits with many countries, each country requires a different strategy to reduce that deficit," Mr. Navarro said.

But the administration has also backed off more extreme measures, cheering business officials who worried that Mr. Trump, aided by Mr. Navarro, would ignite a trade war. The shift in stance has disappointed trade hawks who want

the U.S. to put trade objectives ahead of foreign-policy goals.

"There is an ongoing tension within the administration between the campaign rhetoric and the reality of a very deeply interconnected global economy," said Josh Bolten, currently president of the Business Roundtable and a former White House chief of staff under President George W. Bush. "It's an open question as to which of those will prevail."

Mr. Navarro came to prominence by urging confrontational policies toward China in books such as "Death by China."

These days, he counsels patience. It would be counterproductive to call out a "prideful China" publicly during negotiations, he said.

"The best time to judge this administration's China policy is going to be a year or two from now to see what has actually happened," Mr. Navarro said.

As to Mr. Trump's threat to leave Nafta, which was withdrawn the same day it became public, Mr. Navarro said he is satisfied by how it was received by Mexico and Canada.

"It is now well understood that the president is serious about either getting a new and fair deal or getting out of Nafta," which is helping to move along negotiations on a revised trade pact, Mr. Navarro said.

**Write to** Bob Davis at bob.davis@wsj.com and William Mauldin at william.mauldin@wsj.com

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## Democratic lawmakers such as Amy Klobuchar start making 2020 moves — and the base starts making demands

<https://www.facebook.com/daveweigel?fref=ts>

8-11 minutes

DES MOINES — Like others who spoke at a Democratic Party fundraiser here, Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.) said that so much has changed nationwide since President Trump took office.

“Back in January, on that inaugural stage, I was officially displaced as the most famous Slovenian American by Melania Trump,” she joked. “That was hard on me.”

“Every time I look at her,” Klobuchar deadpanned, “it’s like looking in the mirror.”

The crowd burst into laughter, but then Klobuchar — known as one of the funnier members of Congress — turned serious, criticizing the president for his late-night tweets, and his attacks on immigrants, Muslim refugees, federal judges and the news media.

“Donald Trump kind of likes it when we talk about him, right? But here in Iowa, you pride yourself on being first. First in corn production, first in hogs — first in caucuses,” she said. “Let’s be the first Democratic Party dinner where the rest of the night we don’t even mention his name.”

That line earned strong applause from about 300 Democrats and independents who showed up Sunday night to hear a little-known senator from a neighboring state who may one day compete in their presidential caucuses. The party’s base, intently focused on winning back statehouses and seats in Congress in 2018, is already being courted and prodded by potential 2020 candidates.

*[Democrats’ two biggest opponents ahead of 2018 may be time and themselves]*

“It’s never too early, unfortunately,” said Tom Vilsack, a Democratic former Iowa governor and agriculture secretary. He advised that a smart presidential candidate will spend less time in Des Moines and more time in smaller, rural areas getting to know the state’s legislative and gubernatorial candidates.

That’s what Klobuchar did, traveling Sunday to a Democratic fundraiser in Linn County before heading to Iowa’s biggest city, where local Democrats raised \$20,000, a big uptick from last year’s dinner, a

potluck. In Des Moines, she name-checked a former congressman, mentioned stops at a Waterloo popcorn shop and an ethanol plant in Mason City — and reminded the crowd that she has visited their state several times.

Before the speech, Klobuchar said that Democrats have done a good job this year “sussing out what kinds of things [Trump] is really going to do. But I think it’s time now to start moving forward with an economic agenda and start putting it out there for people.”

That agenda is being shaped by the bustling “resistance” and an increasingly active left. For much of Barack Obama’s presidency, Democratic activists expected Hillary Clinton to run as his successor. They worked, with some success, to move her to the left on issues including health care, wages and criminal justice reform; they found more success when Sen. Bernie Sanders (Vt.) waged a stronger primary challenge than anyone had expected.

*[Democrats turn up the pressure on Republicans for health-care vote]*

Sanders, who will turn 79 in 2020, has deflected questions about a second run. But his influence on the party, and candidates’ view of where the party has moved, is unmistakable. In the Senate, his “College for All Act” has been co-sponsored by Sens. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-N.Y.), Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) and Kamala D. Harris (D-Calif.) — all considered potential candidates.

His bill to raise the minimum wage to \$15 by 2024 has been co-sponsored by that trio, plus Sens. Cory Booker (D-N.J.), Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio) and Al Franken (D-Minn.) — also mentioned as possible presidential contenders. His bill to expand Social Security has one co-sponsor: Gillibrand. And outside the Senate, New York Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo (D), viewed with contempt by the left as he plots a 2020 campaign, brought Sanders to New York to help announce a college tuition plan.

Klobuchar mentioned Sunday night that she co-sponsored legislation with Sanders to import cheaper prescription drugs from Canada and that she backed Obama’s ideas to shore up community colleges. She touted plans to bolster apprenticeship programs, jobs programs for military veterans and to lessen the burden of student loans on young people.

“If billionaires can refinance their second homes and private planes, I think our students should be able to do the same,” she said.

That’s the kind of rhetoric that excites groups such as the Congressional Progressive Caucus, which represents a larger-than-ever slice of the House Democrats. The group rolled out its own budget with the expectation that future candidates would crib from it.

“Job creation, child care, our version of tax reform,” said Rep. Raul Grijalva (D-Ariz.), the co-chairman of the caucus. “Those would be our rallying points both in terms of candidates and in pressuring the major candidates to adopt them. If we do well in 2018, we have a lot of momentum to insist that these are the issues to run on.”

For years, Klobuchar and her team have made no secret that she sees herself as a future presidential contender. With an approval rating of 72 percent in a poll published by the Minneapolis Star Tribune over the weekend, she — like Gillibrand and Warren — appears to be coasting toward reelection next year.

The last time she came to Iowa was as a Clinton campaign surrogate last fall. She likes to remind reporters that she has campaigned for fellow Democrats in more than 30 states during her 12 years in the Senate. Now, she’s willing to share gentle criticism of what she thinks went wrong — starting with the former secretary of state’s campaign slogan.

“The phrase ‘Stronger Together’ — as much as it was positive, optimistic words — for a lot of the people in my state — iron ore miners who are out of work — it didn’t feel to them like they were into that. It felt like it was a response to Donald Trump,” she said in an interview before her visit.

Klobuchar, 56, didn’t provide an alternative to “Stronger Together” — “I always liked ‘Putting people first,’ but that’s outdated” — but suggested that it’s time for Democrats to move on.

Her argument is at the crux of the identity crisis now roiling the Democratic Party. Should it try to reclaim its previous foothold or at least attempt to close the gap in the Midwest and the South, where Republicans dominate? Or should it focus on bigger blue states and suburban congressional districts that are home to millennials, single

women and minorities, who demographers say will play a greater role in future elections?

Klobuchar made clear that she expects the party’s future to cut through the Midwest.

“We are the people in the middle of the country,” she said in her speech. “There are many of this room who are in the middle class, middle income, even a few who could be described as middle aged. And yes, from time to time, in the middle politically.”

In future elections, “we will not be forgotten,” she added. “We have a voice and people should listen.”

What role Midwestern states such as Iowa might play in future Democratic contests is an open question. The Democratic National Committee’s “unity commission” — created to mollify supporters of Sanders at the end of the Democratic presidential primary — has begun an eight-month process of reforming the presidential selection rules ahead of 2020. In 2016, when Democrats expected Clinton to be elected — delaying the next primaries until 2024 — they preliminarily agreed to weaken the power of independent “superdelegates,” to prevent another early rush to one candidate.

At the first meeting over the weekend, Sanders-appointed committee members also argued for the party to disincentivize early primaries and ensure there were early contests where grass-roots support could overwhelm money.

“We are likely to have a much broader field that is more likely to include someone less funded, less well known, but may in fact be the stronger candidate in a general election, have the opportunity to get known,” Jeff Weaver, who managed Sanders’s campaign, said during the commission’s Friday session.

Klobuchar spoke for 38 minutes, and some people sneaked out as she shared detailed thoughts on the party’s potential economic message. Many more left quickly when she concluded.

Politics newsletter

The big stories and commentary shaping the day.

Jess McCord, 35, from Urbandale, Iowa, is a member of a local chapter of Indivisible — a liberal group that has been organizing progressives nationwide.

"That is absolutely more of what I want to see," he said of the senator. "Talk about jobs, talk about putting

people back on track. Basically, a progressive economic policy."

McCord is mostly concerned about winning back state legislative seats in 2018. In 2020, "we'll see what else is offered up here," he said. "I

think it's going to be a crowded field."

Weigel reported from Washington.

The  
Washington  
Post

## Cohen : The real reason Hillary Clinton lost

<http://www.facebook.com/RichardCohenColumn>

5-6 minutes

I once wrote a column in praise of competence. The object of my admiration was Walter Mondale, then running for president against Ronald Reagan. The president's message was that it was "morning again in America." Mondale's message was that he was competent. He lost 49 states. He was Hillary Clinton even before she was.

The comparison is apt — and sad. It came jumping out at me as I read "Shattered," Jonathan Allen and Amie Parnes's new account of how Clinton managed to lose to Donald Trump, a man for whom the word "competent" is about as fitting as "humble." She did it, the two tell us, by assembling a huge and unwieldy campaign apparatus, by fixating on data and not, unfortunately, on retail politics, and by not being able to adequately explain her use of a private email server, a historically trivial matter that came to symbolize her failings as a politician. She seemed inaccessible.

But Clinton's great failing, the book — not to mention the election itself — makes clear, was her inability to fashion a message. She knew why she was running

for president: It was her turn. But she could not say that. She could not merely say that she was prepared, a walking briefing book. Policies coursed through her body like blood cells. She knew everything. She was, in the famous formulation of Isaiah Berlin, a fox. Trump was a hedgehog. He knew just one thing: why he wanted to be president.

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The best conversations on The Washington Post

"Shattered" is a cliché-clogged slog in itself. The authors made a deal with sources within Clinton's campaign not to write anything until after the election and to treat what they learned as "on background" — meaning the sources would not be named. This leads to a heavy drizzle of the words "source" and "sources" and, after a while, a certain resistance on the part of the reader: Who are these people? Even banalities are privileged: "It was a very hard 10 days," a source says about some very hard days.

The other word that keeps coming at you is "message." Clinton did not have one, and the search for a message preoccupied her staff. Oddly, and fatally, Clinton left it up to them to articulate why she was running. As a mental exercise, I tried to come up with a message myself: "Hillary Clinton — because

she's not Trump" is the best I could do. As it turned out, she could do no better.

(Peter Stevenson/The Washington Post)

Former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton didn't hold back in her critique of President Trump and the 2016 election she lost to him, while speaking at Women for Women International event on May 2. 'If he wants to tweet about me, I'm happy to be the diversion': Clinton reflects on Trump's election win (Peter Stevenson/The Washington Post)

Bernie Sanders, in contrast, knew why he was running, and his supporters knew it, too. He was something of a biblical figure. He wanted to smite the big banks and put some Wall Street heads on the end of a pike. It was, in his own way, a position paper.

As for Trump, he was going to make America great again — never mind that he did not have a clue as to how. He had the unassailable confidence of the ignorant, unburdened by knowledge and complexity. He was successful, but let's not make too much of it. He drew three inside straights in Wisconsin, Michigan and Pennsylvania and won them all by margin-of-error numbers. As he was at birth, he was lucky.

When I wrote about Mondale, I felt sorry for the guy. I liked him. He's

THE WALL  
STREET  
JOURNAL

## Editorial : Here Come the Trump Judges

May 8, 2017 7:30 p.m. ET 41 COMMENTS

3 minutes

With Neil Gorsuch safely on the Supreme Court, the White House is turning its attention to the lower federal courts. President Trump took a major step Monday, naming five new nominees to the federal appellate courts and five to the district courts.

The five appellate nominees are Joan Larsen of the Michigan Supreme Court and John Bush of Kentucky to the Sixth Circuit, Kevin Newsom of

Alabama to the 11th Circuit, David Stras of Minnesota to the Eighth Circuit and Amy Barrett of Indiana to the Seventh Circuit.

Judges Larsen and Stras were on Mr. Trump's original list of 21 judges he said he'd consider for the Supreme Court, and the group has sterling credentials. Ms. Barrett is a law professor at Notre Dame who clerked for federal Judge Laurence Silberman, a giant of the appellate circuits, as well as the late Justice Antonin Scalia. Mr. Newsom is a former clerk to Justice David Souter and has argued multiple cases before the Supreme Court. Mr. Bush is a highly regarded lawyer in

private practice who represented President Reagan during the Iran-Contra investigations.

It's likely the left will pressure Democratic Senators like Al Franken (Minnesota) and Joe Donnelly (Indiana) to withhold their endorsements of the home state judges, known as "blue slips." But White House Counsel Donald McGahn has put together impressive nominees who will be hard to obstruct for reasons beyond raw partisanship.

Prompt Senate action on the nominations is important—not least because the number of vacancies on the federal bench is around 129.

After these latest nominees, that includes 14 on the appellate circuits. President Obama made 331 judicial appointments, and his nominees to the federal appeals courts now represent about a third of the judges.

According to the Brookings Institution, as of September 2016 there were 92 liberal appellate judges and 75 conservatives. It's time to redress the balance in the 115th Congress while Republicans have a Senate majority.

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THE WALL  
STREET  
JOURNAL

## Editorial : Apple's Case for Tax Reform

May 8, 2017 7:48 p.m. ET 81

COMMENTS

5-6 minutes

Apple reported last week that it has amassed \$256 billion in cash on its balance sheet with more than 90%

parked overseas—that is, outside the grasp of U.S. tax authorities. While our friends on the left howl

about corporate tax avoidance, Apple offers a case study for tax reform.

Apple's cash hoard is five times greater than the market value of General Motors and exceeds the combined foreign-currency reserves of the U.K. and Canada. In the last three months of 2016, the iPhone developer accumulated cash at an approximate rate of \$3.6 million per hour, and on Monday its market capitalization briefly exceeded \$800 billion.

Sales of the iPhone make up about two-thirds of Apple's revenue, and a substantial share of its income is earned overseas. Apple pays corporate taxes on foreign income in the country where it's earned but is penalized if it brings cash home.

Last year the European Commission accused Apple with routing income tied to intellectual property through Irish-based subsidiaries to reduce its tax bill in the European Union. CEO Tim Cook disputed that it is illegally avoiding taxation, noting that Apple pays taxes to the U.S. Treasury when it repatriates overseas profits. Fair enough, though the company legally defers paying U.S. corporate taxes by keeping cash overseas.

As Mr. Cook explained to the Washington Post last August, "when we bring [cash] back, we will pay 35 percent federal tax and then a weighted average across the states that we're in, which is about 5 percent, so think of it as 40 percent. We've said at 40 percent, we're not going to bring it back until there's a fair rate. There's no debate about it." Hence its \$256 billion in cash reserves.

The U.S. has the highest statutory corporate tax rate (39% including the average state rate) in the developed world. Other countries including Canada (to 26% from 43% in 2000) and the U.K. (to 20% from 30% since 2008) have been reducing theirs to become more competitive. Ireland boasts a corporate rate of 12.5% and a mere 6.25% for profits from research and development. France's newly elected President Emmanuel Macron has proposed cutting his country's to 25% from 33.3%.

Even the average effective U.S. corporate rate—29% after deductions and credits—is higher than most countries' statutory rates. Canada's effective rate is 16.2%, and the U.K.'s is 10.1%. Mr. Cook has estimated that Apple's effective rate in the U.S. is more than 30%. Adding injury to insult, the U.S.

taxes companies on their worldwide profits. Most countries maintain territorial systems in which companies pay taxes only where the income is earned.

By some estimates, corporations have \$2.5 trillion sitting overseas. The sum has swelled in recent years as corporate profits have grown. Some corporations like Burger King (Canada) and Medtronic (Ireland) have sought to avoid this tax penalty by inverting—i.e., merging with a foreign business and relocating their headquarters to a lower-tax jurisdiction.

Other companies are borrowing billions to fund shareholder dividends and buybacks. Given today's low interest rates, it may be cheaper to borrow than bring cash back from overseas. Interest payments are also tax deductible. According to the Journal, Apple has borrowed \$88 billion to fund shareholder payouts since 2012. Last week Apple announced that it will increase its dividend by 10.5% and return \$300 billion to shareholders through March 2019. This may be a bet on Congress passing a tax reform that makes it more attractive to repatriate cash held overseas.

The key point is that any tax reform worth the political capital needs to encourage U.S. companies to move foreign income back home. President Trump has floated a one-time tax hit of 10% on previously earned overseas income that is repatriated, with a territorial tax system and a 15% rate on future income. House Republicans prefer 8.75% and 20%, but either is a big improvement on the status quo. Businesses might use that returning capital to lift investment, boost wages, or return cash to shareholders that could be reinvested.

The Treasury would also benefit from a better corporate tax code. According to the Tax Foundation, Canada's corporate tax revenues as a share of GDP increased after its rate fell in 2000. Canada's corporate tax revenues have averaged 3.3% of GDP since 2000 compared to 2.9% from 1988 to 2000 (when the rate was 43%) and 2.3% currently in the U.S.

Republicans and Mr. Trump will need to sell the American people on the benefits of corporate tax reform. They could do worse than cite Apple as Exhibit A.

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## A TV company warned its viewers about the media's 'fake news.' Now it's about to take over some of the nation's biggest stations. (UNE)

Frankel

8-10 minutes

By Todd C.

station owners also push "must-runs," typically station promotions, Sinclair appears unique among broadcasters for what some analysts see as a political slant to its programming — from news coverage and must-runs sent by headquarters critical of Democrats to last month's hiring of Boris Epshteyn, a former Trump White House official, as Sinclair's chief political analyst.

In Seattle, where Sinclair owns KOMO-TV, some newsroom staffers complained to their union that the must-run spot interfered with their jobs as journalists.

"The must-runs look like they are part of the news," David Twedell, business manager of a local camera workers' union in Seattle, said. "And they're clearly not."

Now, Sinclair's approach could be tested as it expands to where Tribune operates: some of the most valuable and largest markets in the country, including New York, Los Angeles and Chicago. Sinclair historically has dominated small and mid-size markets, such as Nashville and Oklahoma City.

Buying Tribune would grow Sinclair from 173 TV stations to 215 stations nationwide, giving it unprecedented exposure to the nation's TV viewers and raising the possibility that federal regulators will force Sinclair to sell some stations to avoid violating long-standing rules intended to prevent a single company from running too many stations.

Sinclair, family controlled and based in Hunt Valley, Md., north of Baltimore, beat out 21st Century Fox to acquire Tribune, the Chicago-based broadcasting company that also owns stakes in the Food Network and CareerBuilder. The deal calls for Sinclair to acquire 100 percent of the company for \$43.50 a share, plus the assumption of about \$2.7 billion in Tribune debt, according to the companies.

The deal also has energized long-running speculation that the quiet company has ambitions to be the broadcast world's Fox News. For some journalists at KOMO in Seattle, that is not something they want to be associated with, Twedell said. That "must-run" on fake news was just the latest in a series of such requests.

"That's what bothers us the most," he said.

While partisan coverage is a familiar staple of cable networks — Fox News on the right, MSNBC on the left — it remains mostly unheard of in broadcast TV, where it has generally been accepted that public airwaves should be used in the difficult-to-define public interest.

Local TV stations rank high in public trust, and that is partly because they avoid delving into divisive topics such as national politics, said Harry A. Jessell, editor of TVNewsCheck, a TV broadcasters trade publication.

Sinclair executives such as Livingston see it differently, Jessell said. They believe they are pushing back against what they see as a liberal bias in most news programming.

Livingston "sees himself like an old-fashioned newspaper publisher, one with a point of view," Jessell said.

In recent years, Sinclair-run stations have earned a reputation for conservative-leaning content. Industry experts say that contrasts with local Fox affiliates, which share part of a name and a corporate owner with Fox News but have not

Two months before Monday's announcement that Sinclair Broadcast Group would pay \$3.9 billion for Tribune Media and add to its dominance as the nation's largest owner of local TV stations, a top executive at Sinclair beamed a short commentary piece to many of the company's 173 stations.

In the segment, which looks like it belongs in a newscast, Sinclair vice president for news Scott Livingston stands before a wall of video monitors and warns that "some members of the national media are using their platforms to push their own personal bias and agenda to control exactly what people think." He accuses the national media of publishing "fake news stories" — a direct echo of President Trump's frequent complaint — and then asks viewers to visit the station's website to share "content concerns."

The piece was a "must-run," meaning news directors and station managers from Baltimore to Seattle had to find room for it. While other



strayed toward one side of the political spectrum.

"You don't see the same kind of top-down news philosophy that we see at Sinclair," said Matt Wood, policy director at Fair Press, a nonpartisan advocacy group that opposes media consolidation.

In 2004, when John F. Kerry was running for president, a public backlash that hit Sinclair's stock price forced the company to back off plans to have its stations air a documentary called "Stolen Honor: Wounds that Never Heal," which carried a strident anti-Kerry tone. Instead, Sinclair stations aired an excerpt.

In 2012, Sinclair stations in several battleground states aired a half-hour news segment that faulted President Barack Obama for his handling of the economy and the terrorist attack in Benghazi, Libya. Democrats criticized that decision.

Last fall, Sinclair was accused by Democrats of providing Trump, then a candidate, with in-depth interviews and friendly coverage that it did not give Trump's challenger, Hillary Clinton.

Sinclair responded that it offered Clinton's campaign the same opportunities and did not hear back.

Jared Kushner, Trump's son-in-law and now a White House adviser, told supporters that Sinclair and Trump's campaign had struck a deal for favorable coverage, a claim denied by other Trump officials, according to Politico.

Sinclair's current roster of 173 stations are concentrated in smaller markets such as Green Bay, Wis., Scranton, Penn., and Cincinnati. While absent from some of the nation's biggest cities, Sinclair's broadcasts reach people who are influential when it comes to presidential politics.

"It's almost as if they were built for this, what happens every four years, with this natural expansion of theirs into battleground states such as Wisconsin, Michigan, Ohio," Wood said.

Sinclair did not respond to a request for comment.

Some of the changes that come with Sinclair ownership became apparent in Washington in 2014, when WJLA-TV was bought by Sinclair, part of an eight-station deal with Allbritton Communications for \$985 million.

The new owners added commentaries from Mark Hyman, a Sinclair executive and conservative pundit. It started regular public-

affairs programs produced from Washington and hosted by conservatives Sharyl Attkisson and Armstrong Williams, who served as Ben Carson's business manager during Carson's presidential campaign.

Aside from concerns about Sinclair's leanings, critics of the Sinclair-Tribune deal also worry about the effects from the increasing consolidation of broadcast station owners.

Federal Communications Commission rules limit any single station owner to reaching 39 percent of the national TV audience and prohibits ownership of more than two stations in most TV markets.

But the FCC offers exceptions and waivers to those rules — including a 50 percent discount in the viewership reach of UHF channels.

The UHF rule dates back to 1985, when the broadcast dial was split between VHF (Channel 13 and below) and the weaker-signal UHF (Channel 14 and higher). That difference was mostly eliminated with the switch to digital broadcast TV.

FCC Chairman Ajit Pai, a Republican elevated to his post by Trump earlier this year, has stated

repeatedly that he favors loosening the ownership standards, especially in light of increased competition.

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A Sinclair-Tribune combination would boost the company from just under 39 percent of the nation's TV audience to nearly 45 percent, according to Free Press. Remove the UHF discount, and an expanded Sinclair would have stations reaching 70 percent of the nation.

Mark Fratrick, chief economist at advisory firm BIA/Kelsey, said the FCC's move toward relaxing strict ownership rules reflects a media landscape where broadcast TV no longer dominates. He pointed to the FCC's ban on owning both a daily newspaper and TV station in the same city, which has been in place since the 1970s. That makes less sense today.

"Deregulation benefits the entire TV industry and makes it more competitive with all these new options," Fratrick said.

Paul Farhi contributed to this story.