

Two far-right conferences in Europe capitalise on Trump presidency

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When US Vice President JD Vance gave his Munich Security Conference speech, accusing delegates of ignoring voters and trampling on free speech, he was not just snubbing his nose at the European governments. He was making a direct appeal to far-right political parties which are gaining strength across the continent and which the White House hopes to help to power.

These parties have reacted with glee to Donald Trump's election as US president, recognising that they now have an extremely powerful ally across the Atlantic with whom they can press a reactionary agenda already substantially adopted by European governments. They are working to combine their efforts to shift the political agenda on the continent further to the right.

On February 7-8, the Patriots for Europe group within the European Parliament—representing 16 national parties—met in a 2,000-strong “Patriots Summit” hosted by the Spanish Vox Party in Madrid, admirers of fascist dictator Francisco Franco. It was held under the slogan “Make Europe Great Again,” in reference to Trump's MAGA slogan.

The tone was euphoric. Vox leader Santiago Abascal described the US president as a “comrade-in-arms in the battle for good, for truth, common sense and freedom.” For Hungarian prime minister Viktor Orbán, “The Trump tornado has changed the world in two weeks ... People thought we represented the past; today, everyone sees that we are the future.”

Marine Le Pen, leader of the National Rally in France, told delegates, “At some point, you have to look at what's happening in the world today: Milei, Trump, Orbán, Meloni, our Austrian allied party is in the lead, we're in the lead, our Flemish friends are in the lead ... I think we're witnessing a kind of renaissance.”

In other comments, Le Pen was blunter about the “renaissance” they have in mind, calling for a new “Reconquista” of Europe, referring to the medieval campaigns waged by Christian monarchs against Muslim kingdoms in Spain.

Multiple speakers made the same reference. Geert Wilders,

the leader of the Netherlands Party for Freedom, praised the “valiant Spanish knights” who “were the first to roll back Islam.” Abascal called them “Europe's wall against the advance of Islamism. We're ready to be that again.”

Orbán demanded that “all state powers must defend Christian culture.” André Ventura, leader of the Chega party in Portugal, declared, “We have to do what Trump has told us: fight, fight, fight. We have to reconquer a Europe that is ours and that belongs to us. A Christian Europe.”

The summons to violence is obvious. This is an endorsement of the fascist Great Replacement conspiracy theory, which alleges white Europeans are being deliberately replaced by non-white people, mainly Muslims. In its filthiest versions, this is coupled with claims that the replacement is being orchestrated by the Jews. It should be noted in that context that one of the most horrific acts of the Reconquista was the expulsion of hundreds of thousands of Jews from Spain.

The main policy focusses were opposition to migration and also the right's other bugbear, climate action. Le Pen declared, “Migration policy is out of control and the bottomless pit of immigration is emptying our coffers and filling our prisons.” Orbán spoke of the “illegal migrants” who were “overrunning” Europe and Wilders repeatedly drew unsubstantiated connections between migrants, “legal” or not, and crime.

Le Pen also denounced “this Green Deal nonsense, this furious madness of the Green Deal.” Czechia's Andrej Babis declared, “The Green Deal is dead. It can neither be reformed nor improved.”

The same themes were taken up at a conference of the Alliance for Responsible Citizenship—founded by Canadian quack academic and right-wing influencer Jordan Peterson—in London this week. The event was backed by multi-hundred millionaire hedge fund manager and *GB News* co-owner Paul Marshall, and Legatum, a private investment firm headquartered in Dubai.

Kemi Badenoch, leader of the UK's opposition Conservative Party, and Nigel Farage, leader of Reform UK,

which is challenging the Tories in the polls, both made appearances—Badenoch delivering a speech and Farage speaking with Peterson.

Badenoch claimed that “Western civilisation is in crisis” and faces “existential threats,” which she identified as “the real poison of Left-wing progressivism” and a naivety “on issues from net zero to immigration, weakening ourselves and strengthening our competitors.”

Farage bemoaned how, “We’ve kind of forgotten that what underpins everything is our Judeo-Christian culture, and that’s where we need to start,” attacking alleged “mass immigration on a scale hitherto never even dreamt of” and arguing “we need higher birthrates.” Prompted by a series of provocatively ignorant comments by Peterson, he added a condemnation of “net zero” and “the carbon dioxide hysteria.”

In power in some countries and serious challengers for power in others, these organisations have been strengthened by the decades of betrayals of the working class carried out by the trade unions and “social democratic” parties. They have struck an anti-establishment pose, addressing the many socio-economic grievances of workers and young people ignored for decades, but framing them in non-class, right-wing terms.

The programme they put forward in each country is a local version of “America First,” which claims to benefit native-born populations by denying resources to and attacking outsiders and international commitments. This nationalist populist pitch is used to smuggle in an even more anti-working-class economic programme than is currently in place.

In the same speech, Badenoch declared, “Immigration is far too high. We cannot support all those who wish to come to our country. The British people must come first. We cannot keep racking up debt for our children. We need smaller government and smarter spending. The world owes no one a living. Millions of people cannot just sit on welfare and expect to be paid to do so.”

An attack on migrants is everywhere and always an attack on the working class and its social rights. What is said today against “foreigners” will be said tomorrow against native-born “scroungers” and the day after against the whole “undeserving” poor. All to distract from the fact that the real drain on resources is the super-rich multi-millionaires and billionaires, reaping dividends, rents and bonuses paid for by the exploitation of *all* workers.

Abascal, downplaying Trump’s tariffs against the European Union, told the Madrid conference, “The great tariff is the Green Deal and the confiscatory taxes of Brussels and socialist governments across Europe,” making clear that attacks on climate action have the same anti-

working-class logic.

Just as the far-right is fuelled by the anti-migrant policies of the official parties, so to do they benefit from the evident hypocrisy of liberal climate policy, which subordinates any concern for the ecological stability of human society to the demands of the super-rich while making the working class bear the cost of what largely tokenistic action is taken.

The alternative presented by the far-right is to open the spigots, supercharging the profits of the fossil fuel lobby and its financial backers, as well as the pollution and extreme weather whose consequences fall hardest on the poorest at home and abroad.

The attack on migrants is in part motivated by the need to demonise and exclude the increasing numbers globally uprooted by these disasters.

In today’s globalised and interconnected world—confronting crises of planetary scale—the programme of nationalism is more than ever a weapon in the hands of the capitalists against the working class. It seeks to cut workers off from the source of their strength as members of an international class; a policy of divide and conquer subordinating workers’ interests to those of “the nation”—a euphemism for the super-rich.

Providing all workers with a safe and secure livelihood is entirely possible with the resources available to society. The problem is the monopoly on these resources held by a tiny oligarchy of billionaires and multi-millionaires, who employ them in the ever more corrosive competition for private profit—destroying workers’ lives and the planet’s ability to support them.

This wrenching inequality can only be ended by a global revolutionary movement aimed not at securing “sovereign” nation states, but world socialism: an international federation run democratically to fulfil human needs.



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