

# Europe and Canada pursue realignment with new security architecture amid escalating inter-imperialist rivalries

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In her State of the European Union (EU) speech Wednesday, EU Commission President Ursula Von der Leyen called for the establishment of a European security council outside of NATO structures. The body would consist of EU member states, incorporate “partners like Canada, Norway, Ukraine, the United Kingdom and others,” and have a security provision akin to NATO’s Article 4, which allows member states to convoke a meeting of the alliance’s leadership to decide on action if they are attacked.

Two cornerstones of this new security architecture are the escalation of the war on Russia and cooperation in expanding their respective military capacities, independent of US-controlled technologies and weapons systems.

The European imperialist powers and Canadian imperialism have systematically escalated the war on Russia in Ukraine over the past 18 months, risking the outbreak of a direct war between nuclear-armed powers, as Trump has sought to carve out a *modus vivendi* with Russian President Vladimir Putin to secure American imperialist interests over the heads of the Europeans and Canadians. The war on Russia is used in the European capitals and Ottawa to justify massive investments in rearmament, and an onslaught on the living conditions, and democratic and social rights of the working class in order to pay for war.

The danger that repeated provocations against Russia encouraged by the European powers and Canada, including almost daily drone and missile strikes by Ukraine on civilian infrastructure, and now Von der Leyen’s inclusion of Ukraine in a new security framework, could lead to all-out war was stressed by Putin on Monday. He remarked on plans by the Western powers to send troops to Ukraine, saying, “This would mean war with Russia.” Former President Dmitry Medvedev warned that Moscow’s threat to use nuclear weapons “is not a scare tactic—it’s reality.”

Von der Leyen’s speech was delivered in the presence of Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney and included a sweeping agenda to secure “European sovereignty.” Von der

Leyen outlined plans for closer economic and military collaboration with Ottawa on critical minerals, trade, the production of military equipment and in the Arctic.

Speaking one day later to the European Parliament, Carney, who hailed the Europe-Canada partnership as an “alliance for the future,” declared, “Sovereignty goes beyond being able to feed, fuel and defend ourselves. It now requires secure access to AI, semiconductors, critical minerals, payment systems, clean energy technologies, vaccines and space-based communications.” Rival states, he asserted, and supposedly “global” companies that “prove national in the breach” could not be relied upon.

The realignment of the European powers and Canada marks a major shift in inter-imperialist geopolitics. While neither Von der Leyen nor Carney directly addressed the United States or its fascist-minded President Donald Trump during their addresses, it was clear from what they said that the targets of their new “alliance” include not only Moscow and Beijing, but also Washington. Up until the past few years, Canada and the US had arguably enjoyed the closest military-strategic partnership between any two imperialist powers for over eight decades.

The post-war dominance of American imperialism, both economically and militarily, was the foundation of the “rules-based order” that enabled the European bourgeoisie to get back on its feet after their complicity in the crimes of fascism and the Stalinists’ strangling of the post-war revolutionary struggles of the working class. Notwithstanding periodic disputes, the so-called transatlantic alliance remained irreplaceable for most of the European imperialist military and strategic establishment well into the 21st century.

Discussions on the need for an independent European security architecture outside of NATO have been ongoing for almost three decades, but they have always floundered on Britain’s refusal to weaken its “special relationship” with Washington, as well as internal EU divisions, especially

between France and Germany.

The shift now underway sets the stage for far more unrestrained conflicts. It parallels Trump's "America first" agenda, based on Washington's dominance of the American continent, including the threats to annex Canada as the 51st state, take control of Greenland, seize the Panama Canal, conquer Mexico and bring about "regime change" in Cuba, to lay the foundation for a global war to preserve American imperialist hegemony. But Trump is merely the symptom of the deepening crisis of American capitalism, which has proven incapable with over 35 years of wars of aggression to offset its accelerating relative economic decline through the use of military force.

The logic of the proposed security architecture and deepening economic partnership between Europe and Canada leads directly towards a dramatic intensification of the violent redivision of the world between the major powers. As the *World Socialist Web Site* has repeatedly emphasised, World War III is not a future prospect, but a process that is well underway on a global scale. American imperialism and its European and Canadian rivals are determined to lay hold of natural resources, cheap labour, new markets and spheres of strategic influence.

The European and Canadian imperialists' push for military independence and "sovereignty" from the United States inevitably demands a challenge to Washington in all of the fields where it is presently aggressively asserting its own "sovereignty." Carney's definition of "sovereignty" calls for access to new technologies, critical minerals, production networks and payment systems. These are the very same spheres Trump is trying to violently consolidate under the control of American imperialism with the global trade war, the US/Israeli war against Iran, and the invasion and abduction of Venezuela's president to seize that country's oil.

The minerals, trade routes, infrastructure and know-how upon which the essentials of modern social life depend are viewed by the competing imperialist powers as objects for ruthless exploitation that, as Trotsky remarked so memorably with reference to World War I, "must be obtained from one and the same source: the earth." Trump, who continues to threaten to take control of Greenland by force from EU member Denmark, summed up this reality in his own ignorant way, responding to Europe and Canada's stepped up collaboration by saying: "Canada's been a terrible trade partner ... if I think it's at all a hostile act, I will put very serious tariffs or stop trading with Europe on many things."

The conflicts arising from this struggle pitting each against all are rooted in the two basic contradictions of the capitalist system: between global economy and the nation-state; and

the social character of production and the concentration of the productive forces in the hands of a few oligarchs. These contradictions become ever sharper as the capitalist crisis deepens, expressed in the sudden shifts in competing imperialist blocs as they strive for world domination, and the ratcheting up of brutal exploitation for the working class as the ruling elites in every country seek to concentrate society's resources in the hands of the super-rich. These contradictions explain how it is possible for Carney to announce an "alliance for the future" with Europe, while at the same time holding out the hope of a revival of ties with the US, which remains the destination for three-quarters of Canadian exports.

Von der Leyen's appeal in her speech for the strengthening of European "competitiveness" underscores how—from the standpoint of the bourgeoisie in Germany, France and the continent's other powers—the savage assault on social spending to fund more than €1 trillion in combined military spending increases is merely a down payment. What they require is rolling back all of the concessions made to the working class in the course of bitter class battles following the last world war.

This task necessitates the bringing to power of fascist regimes, which is why far-right parties are systematically being promoted and groomed by the ruling class for power in all of the major European imperialist countries. Von der Leyen and European imperialism's "rules-based order" as an alternative to the US would require the evisceration of workers' democratic and social rights by the political descendants of the Nazis and other fascist governments whose drive for world power left the continent in ruins after the Second World War.

The deepening of the transatlantic rift and sharpening of the US-Canada conflict expressed in the realignment by the EU and Canada unveiled this week in Strasbourg provides yet another confirmation of the character of the epoch as one of wars and revolutions. In opposition to trade war, imperialist rivalries and the escalating third world war, the urgent task is the mobilisation of the international working class on a socialist programme to put an end to imperialist war and the capitalist system that gives rise to it.



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