Democrats, Wall Street Journal and European ministers demand escalation against Russia and China as Trump meets Xi and Putin

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Dominant sections of the US and European political establishment called this week for an escalation of the war against Russia and the economic war against China, as US President Donald Trump arrived in Shenzhen, China, to meet Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin.

These factions, represented by the Democratic Party and broad sections of the Republicans, oppose any discussion with Moscow or Beijing, however temporary or limited. Trump's critics in both parties and in Europe demanded more weapons for Ukraine and tighter controls on trade with China from an administration that bombed Iran again on Tuesday.

Throughout the first and second Trump administrations, the White House has made repeated gestures toward Russia and China, including deals and agreements, but these agreements have always been in the context of a continued arming of Ukraine and the trade war against China. Under conditions of deepening global crisis, dominant factions of the US and European political establishment are declaring that even token agreements with Russia and China, the targets of the imperialist war drive, are totally unacceptable.

Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer of New York attacked Trump from the right on the Senate floor Tuesday. "Rather than spending this trip catering to Xi and Putin and overlooking our allies, Trump ought to toughen up," Schumer said. "Toughen up, Donald."

On Monday, Schumer condemned Trump for what he called his insufficiently aggressive trade war measures against China, declaring: "Congress needs to stop Trump from taking our country in this dangerous direction. We must pass our bipartisan export control bills."

Nine Democrats on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, including Jeanne Shaheen of New Hampshire, its senior Democrat, told MS NOW in a statement published Wednesday: "Xi and Putin cannot be allowed to use this meeting as a forum to advance their interests at the expense of the United States."

Trump reached Shenzhen on Wednesday and will meet Xi and Putin together on Thursday, in the first meeting of the three heads of state.

The *Wall Street Journal*, in an editorial posted Tuesday under the headline "Trump Meets With the Anti-U.S. Axis," wrote: "It's a sign of Mr. Trump's mercurial foreign policy that the parley is creating more anxiety among allies than adversaries."

The editorial continued: "The sad irony is that if Mr. Trump really wanted to build leverage on Messrs. Xi and Putin, he'd be in Washington this week and not Shenzhen. The President has mere weeks left to move his $1.5 trillion defense budget through a defeated GOP Congress."

Trump requested $1.5 trillion in military spending for fiscal 2027, a 42 percent increase over this year, according to White House figures. The Republican Party lost both houses of Congress in the November 3 election, and the term of the outgoing Congress will end on January 3.

The *Journal* complained that Trump "hasn't built up his leverage ... with a U.S. rearmament and strategic missile deployments as Ronald Reagan did in the 1980s."

On Taiwan, the editorial stated that "defending Taiwan may require the U.S. military. Mr. Trump has to at least make Mr. Xi think that America might intervene in a blockade or assault."

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"The best outcome of the trilateral summit would be nothing—handshakes, perhaps a chat about extending the trade truce with Beijing beyond January," the *Journal* wrote.

Trudy Rubin, a columnist for the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, wrote Wednesday of Trump's dealings with Xi and Putin: "Call it stupidity, call it cupidity; I prefer to call it treason."

The summit will follow Ukrainian attacks on the Kerch bridge between Russia and Crimea on Monday and again on Tuesday, which destroyed a section of its roadway. Ukraine killed two people in a drone strike near the bridge, according to Sergey Aksyonov, the Russian-installed head of Crimea.

The *Wall Street Journal* reported Wednesday that the weapons used against the bridge included Dutch Ruta missiles. Destinus, the company headquartered in the Netherlands that makes the missiles, said seven of them struck the bridge on Tuesday and brought down one of its spans.

French Deputy Defense Minister Alice Rufo told the radio station RMC on Wednesday that soldiers and engineers assigned to the French embassy's defense mission were maintaining Mirage jets and Caesar howitzers in Ukraine and training Ukrainian troops, the Russian state news agency TASS reported.

The German and British defense ministers on Tuesday defended Ukrainian attacks deep inside Russia that a senior Pentagon official said included strikes on civilian infrastructure.

Elbridge Colby, the Pentagon's under secretary for policy, criticized the attacks at NATO headquarters in Brussels, at a meeting of the Ukraine Defense Contact Group, the roughly 50 countries that arm Ukraine. "Our assessment is that such strikes have not been effective in driving an end to the war nor do they contribute to blunting Russia's advances on the front line," Colby said.

Colby continued: "Moreover, such strikes, especially those that target civilian infrastructure, such as Wildberries, have actually probably hardened the Russian public's resolve and the Kremlin's own willingness to escalate." Wildberries is Russia's largest online retailer. Ukraine claimed that the Wildberries warehouses supplied Russian forces with drone parts, which the company and the Kremlin denied.

German Defense Minister Boris Pistorius told a news conference the same day: "[Criticizing] strikes like that in Russia to destroy strategic military and military-use targets is quite a stupid thing, I think." Pistorius called the attacks "legal and legitimate."

British Defense Secretary Wes Streeting, the meeting's co-chairman with Pistorius, defended the attacks on Russian civilian targets, declaring that Ukraine's deep strikes had "helped to degrade Putin's war machine, buying time and saving lives."

NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte, asked before the meeting about Ukraine's attack on the Kerch bridge, said: "I think it is important that Ukraine defends itself and that means also hitting out at logistical nodes. That's unavoidable that they do that."

The First Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions states: "Civilian objects shall not be the object of attack or of reprisals." Colby told the governments that arm Ukraine that the Ukrainian military was attacking civilian infrastructure in Russia. Streeting answered that how Ukraine fought the war was Ukraine's affair.

At the Brussels meeting, Ukrainian Defense Minister Yevhenii Khmara said Ukraine planned to more than triple its capacity for strikes deep inside Russia next year, the US military newspaper *Stars and Stripes* reported Wednesday.

European governments rejected Russia's demand that a settlement in Ukraine include limits on NATO's forces in Eastern Europe. Norwegian Foreign Minister Espen Barth Eide told Politico Europe in remarks published Wednesday: "NATO deployment in NATO countries, for instance, is not the question to discuss with Russia."

The European Commission proposed on Wednesday to lend Ukraine €45 billion in 2027, 25 billion of it for the military. German Chancellor Friedrich Merz will convene nearly 40 delegations in Berlin on Thursday, the day of the Shenzhen meeting, to coordinate aid and security guarantees for Ukraine.

All factions of the American and European ruling class support the war against Russia and the preparations for war against China. The factions attacking Trump demand that both be accelerated.



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