

What Is It With the Fickle Europeans?

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Hello, this is [Victor Davis Hanson](#) for The Daily Signal.

What is it with the [fickle Europeans](#)? I know that they have different interests than ours, but we're both Western entities. You'd think that we'd be more collaborative on the effort to disarm and denuclearize Iran. But a lot of strange things are happening.

The traditional use of the Diego Garcia critical airbase in the Indian Ocean, run by the British, but often leased to us and allowed us to have a very valuable base for our long-range bombers. The British initially refused to allow us to use it. And then, only under conditions that it would be used for defensive purposes.

I don't know what that means. But I think they forgot the 1982 Falklands War. They were in big trouble going all the way across the world to attack a country in the Western Hemisphere.

We were trying to be on friendly relationships so that [Argentina] wouldn't join the other communist nations. And of course, we offered them 2 million gallons of gasoline. We offered them the use of a carrier if they needed it. We gave them sophisticated intelligence. Without the United States' help, they would've had a very hard time retaking it. So, what's happened?

And then Spain has said that we can't use at all the NATO base there in Spain. [President Emmanuel] Macron in France and [Chancellor Friedrich] Merz in Germany have also said they've expressed reservations.

President Donald Trump is now trying to say, you know, we're using all of our assets to disarm this common threat to the West. Could you just send a few ships to help us, you know, patrol the [Strait of Hormuz](#)? And they're reluctant.

This gets back to the United States, who pays an inordinate amount of the NATO budget. And it keeps having to, you know, to harangue and hammer. "Please, please defend yourself. We are here to help you, but we're across the ocean, 3,000 miles away. And this is in your interest. You know, this is the third time Vladimir Putin invaded Ukraine."

So, don't they have a fear of Iran? I mean, there was a joint missile defense project. Obama canceled it, in that infamous quid pro quo hot mic conversation where he made a deal with the Russians to give him space so he could get reelected. He would dismantle the Czech and Polish project to have missile defense. That was primarily for the protection of Europe. The United States was going to pay a great deal of it. Protection from Iran.

So, what's going on? What explains this European schizophrenia? That they want to be an ally, but they don't want to be an ally. They're scared to death of a nuclear Iran, but they don't want to do anything about it. They want the United States to handle it, but they want the United States to handle it and keep them out of it.

But most of their oil comes from the [Middle East](#) or North Africa. So, they are adamant that they want the supplies, reliable. They want the Strait of Hormuz open. They want the United States to ensure that. They want the United States to clear the Red Sea of Houthi attacks. We know all that, but they're not there when we need them at all. And a very, you know, a very reasonable request. And so why is this? Well, I think there's a lot of reasons. I think they've made some disastrous, internal and external choices in their policies. First of all, Germany has 16% of its population are immigrants that weren't born in Germany. The vast majority of them are unassimilated, unacculturated, unintegrated Muslims.

Many of them, or most, under Angela Merkel policy. She was the German version of Alejandro Mayorkas, who opened the border and pretty much enacted this destructive policy. In other countries at 6% to 10% to 12%.

But the key is there's a force multiplier of these open-border illegal immigration policies. And that is the Muslim communities that immigrate are more radical often than the countries they left that were radical enough.

They don't want to be part of the West. They feel that their birth rate and their increased immigration will soon swamp these European governments. And the European governments are terrified of them.

So, on key issues of concern to the West, to emasculate Iran, they're afraid to say anything. And they're afraid to express support for Israel because these internal populations within the continent will turn on them, or they [won't get their votes](#).

The second disastrous policy was [green energy](#). Germany and other countries, with the exception of France, have either put on hold or dismantled their coal plants. In the case of Germany, they had to restart them because they disarmed or displaced their nuclear facilities.

They don't want to tap the huge natural gas deposits that are thought to be in continental Europe. They are not looking for new sources of offshore oil. They don't want any fossil fuels. No natural gas unless we import it.

They don't want to develop themselves. And the result is their energy is two or three times more expensive than their economic competitors. And they're captives of the Middle East and Russia for energy. So that has affected their political independence.

Third, they thought they were at the end of history after the fall of the Cold War and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact. So, they thought they were in some type of disarmament utopia. So, they, more or less, disarmed.

So, here we are with tiny little Israel with 11 million, 10 million people, and they have 300 front-line aircraft fighters, jets that are flying every day with some of the best pilots in the world. And they have more fighters than our key trio of NATO partners. More than Germany. More than France. More than Great Britain.

Of course, we know about European fertility. Ours is bad enough at 1.65. Theirs is down to 1.3 and 1.4 in some countries, and 1.1. There's been a new credo in Europe that you're not going to have children. The good life is too precious. Why waste it raising children? And of course, socialism is not sustainable.

They have this huge socialist safety net, which is exacerbated by millions of impoverished Middle East people coming in illegally who demand entitlements and, sort of, threaten their hosts. And they're not very gracious immigrants. And you put it all together, and you get European schizophrenia.

And what is that schizophrenia? It's quietly whispering to the United States, "Help us. Help us. You've got to make sure that Russia doesn't go further west in Ukraine. What are you going to do?"

"All seven presidents before you, Mr. Trump, they've all worried about the Iranian nuclear ballistic missile crisis. We're closer than you are. We can't keep appeasing

them. They hate us as much as they hate you. Who is going to do something? Please, Mr. President.”

And then publicly, “Oh, we’re very disturbed. This is very disturbing. This is very dangerous. I don’t think that we really want to be actively a participant.”

And, the final irony, Europe’s got a bigger population than we do. 450 million people. And its GDP is about the size of China’s. So, it’s got huge resources and potential, even under its socialist and green energy policies. Even with its open borders. Even with its low fertility. With all of those crises that are self-inflicted, it still could arm itself and be a full partner. And yet, it will not do it.

And therefore, it knows it should do it. And it knows there’s things that must be done. And it wants them done, but it wants the United States to do it. So, at the same time, it can criticize them and triangulate against its own savior.

It’s a tragic and really, to be honest, pathetic situation.