

# JD Vance's Message to European Leaders: Listen to Your People, Don't Go Hard Left

By Victor Davis Hanson

There has been a maelstrom of controversy about [Vice President JD Vance](#). Last week he spoke at the Munich Security Conference but he chose not to speak just necessarily about security issues—i.e., NATO contributions—but rather the larger problem with Europe itself.

And that controversy still continues today. Basically, what JD Vance said was:

*We have to get along—Europe and the United States—we are twins of the Western tradition. But, my God, it's getting hard for you. You go after and persecute people who object to abortion. You take American tech companies and try to censor them, even when they conduct interviews in the United States.*

*When Elon Musk talked to [President Donald Trump](#) on X, you wanted to—you being the collective of Europeans—censor it. When an election didn't go the way that the Left wanted in Romania, they wanted to stop it. In fact, others have said within Germany that the *Alternativ für Deutschland*—if they were to be a majority party in the next election—they might cancel it.*

So, he said, “This is not behoving of us.”

They went crazy. Oh my gosh, the defense secretary, the

minister said, "This is stable, this is unacceptable." But nobody said it was untrue. It was absolutely true.



The so-called libertine, free-loving, open society of Europe is very closed. It's a one-party system, in the sense that they only allow left-wing views. It's to the left of the radical American Democratic Party.

[Germany](#) should be very careful, and also should Europe, because the subtext of that speech wasn't explicitly voiced but it was there.

And his critics said, "Oh, he's just talking to the MAGA people at home." He wasn't. He wasn't talking to the French ministers. He wasn't talking to the MAGA people at home or the American people in general. He was talking to the people of Europe and they support him because we are going to see possible radical changes in the German government, some Eastern European governments, but especially, the French government, and maybe the British government the next time. And they're going to be national populists.

And he was telling them, "You have a right to stand up." And do what? His criticism was multifaceted: Close your borders. Legal-only immigration. Up your defense budget. Allow for [free speech](#). We've gone through the Biden nightmare at home. We know what it was like to go hard left. Don't go that way. Deregulate. Cut taxes. Free up the economy.

And they got very angry about that. It was almost as if they knew that was true but they could not admit it.

But here's the subtext I'm talking about. Germany and Europe better be very careful. Germany's fertility rate is 1.45. Europe's, in aggregate, is only about 1.5. We're at least 1.6.

We said years ago in 2014, "NATO, pay 2% of gross domestic product and hold your own and pull your own weight." And now it's 10 years, 11 years later and we still have nine NATO countries that will not do it, especially Germany. They only spend 1.5%. Their energy is four times ours. And BMW and Audi and Mercedes cannot compete.

Why? Because they've gone full Green New Deal, so to speak, and shut down coal, nuclear, natural gas plants. They have 16% of the population was not born in Germany. France is almost as bad. And they do not assimilate, intermarry, and integrate like we do. They are looking at this huge Russian-Ukrainian war on their borders where maybe 1.5 million people have been killed or wounded or missing.

And they're critical of the United States that pays the greatest proportion of the NATO budget and who puts [Europe](#) under its nuclear shield. And they are damning us.

They run a \$240 billion surplus with trade. And how do they do it? Because we're lazy and unproductive? No, we are more productive and we have cheaper power rates and a more open economy than they do but they have asymmetrical tariffs. Add it all up and Germany is in a very dependent place. So is Europe.

JD Vance was trying to speak truth to power, so to speak. And they didn't want to hear it. And what's going to happen in the next year, people in Europe are going to rise up—these populist movements. And I think what he's telling all of them, this could be another start of a wonderful relationship because these fossilized, ossified governments do not reflect

the people of Europe.

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