Make the World White Again: Notes on Race, Religion, and Immigration Across the Atlantic

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ABSTRACT

This essay analyzes the Make America Great Again (MAGA) movement as a contemporary iteration of white reconstruction—a historically recurring logic of rearticulating and restoring white supremacy in response to perceived demographic and cultural decline. Drawing on decolonial frameworks, it argues that the domestic and foreign policies of the 47th president's administration represent not an aberration, but a coherent project to reorganize U.S. society around whiteness, Christian nationalism, and patriarchal hierarchy. Through an examination of immigration enforcement, education policy, and geopolitical realignments, the essay demonstrates how a racialized "whites first"-politics operates across multiple registers: deporting non-white populations while welcoming white South African refugees, weaponizing antisemitism discourse to suppress solidarity with Palestine, and tolerating the mass death of non-white populations globally. The essay further situates MAGA within a transatlantic context, arguing that far-right and centrist European responses to immigration reflect a shared civilizational anxiety rooted in the fear of Great Replacement.

We the people, supposed to be equal
But the men who wrote that, they was evil
Slave owners, who did not include us
They just used us and abused us
RZA, "The Birth," *Birth of a Prince*, 2003

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I. INTRODUCTION

"This world is white no longer, and it will never be white again,"[1] the Black American writer James Baldwin prophetically declared in his essay *Stranger in the Village* in 1953. For Baldwin, whiteness was "a metaphor for power [...],"[2] but certainly more than a metaphor in that it marks a "location of structural advantage,"[3] as Robin DiAngelo argues. As much as Baldwin seems right in his prophecy that white supremacy cannot endure forever, more than seventy-two years later, it is this seemingly inevitable and unstoppable change that has always prompted, and continues to prompt, attempts to rearticulate and restore the U.S.'s historical racial hierarchy.

In this essay, whiteness is understood as a socially constructed category, always fluid and in the making, serving structures of power that can also absorb nominally nonwhite people to serve those in power.

While a widespread narrative holds that America, as an ideal, is a constantly improving country shaking off its racist character and entering a post-racial era, something that became especially prominent after the election of Barack Obama, who became the first non-white president of the U.S., the reality is far more complicated.

Whereas the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 marked the official dismantling of Jim Crow and apartheid segregation, signaling the end of a racial-colonial order, the immediate aftermath of the civil rights movement was saturated with anti-Black violence seeking both to destroy and accommodate different forms of Black

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[1] James Baldwin, *Notes of a native son* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1955), 52.
[2] James Baldwin, Raoul Peck, *I am not your Negro* (New York: Penguin, 2017).
[3] Robin DiAngelo, *White fragility: Why it's so hard to talk to White people about racism* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2018), 27.

organizing.[4] While for some, the image of multiracial America is being crushed with Donald J. Trump's ascendance to power, others have been less optimistic about the past and present.

When Trump came to power, some observers suggested that whiteness was in "a crisis" [5] allowed Trump to win in the first place.[6] For others, this was the latest episode of many attempts in the last 150 years to reactivate and restore white supremacy, which has only increased since the 1980s and 1990s in the wake of increased immigration.[7] From this vantage point, Make America Great Again (MAGA) can be interpreted as a violent and overtly aggressive response to the fear of the decline of white privileges, an attempt to Make America *White* Again with Trump being "a conduit through which white America expresses its most vile desire for white purity."[8]

MAGA has been seen as an attempt to restore whiteness as white power and supremacy, characterizingpeople of color as a frightening threat,[9] an irreversible demographic shift of the "browning of

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[4] Manning Marable, *Race, Reform, and Rebellion: The Second Reconstruction and Beyond in Black America*. 1945–2006 (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2007 [1984]); Jodi Melamed, *Represent and Destroy: Rationalizing Violence in the New Racial Capitalism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), 4-7.

[5] Edoardo Campanella, "The U.S. Election and the Crisis of Whiteness," *Project Syndicate*, 24 Oct 2024, https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/trump-republican-party-white-voters-declining-share-of-population-by-edoardo-campanella-2024-10

[6] Amanda Taub, "Behind 2016's Turmoil, a Crisis of White Identity," *NYT* 1 Nov 2016, www.nytimes.com/2016/11/02/world/americas/brexit-donald-trump-whites.html

[7] Hahn, *Illiberal America*, 317.

[8] George Yancy, "The Black Anti-Fascist Tradition Recognized Fascism Didn't Begin in Europe," 21 Feb 2026, *Truthout*, https://truthout.org/articles/the-black-anti-fascist-tradition-recognized-fascism-didnt-begin-in-europe/

[9] Toni Morrison, "Make America White Again," *The New Yorker*, 14 Nov 2016, https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2016/11/21/toni-morrison-trump-election-making-america-white-again

America,"[10] a movement that is not unique to the U.S., but can also be seen in Europe.[11] What Trump achieved was to form "coalitions around privilege hierarchies"[12] of whiteness uniting blue-collar workers with white economic elites. If MAGA was understood as a racist slogan back in 2016, the administration's work starting in 2025 has certainly surpassed this assessment, not least because of the administration's well-preparedness as revealed by the conservative Heritage Foundation's ambitious Project 2025, a detailed "playbook for a blitzkrieg takeover of the government on Day One"[13] to create a "Christian, right-wing nation."[14]

I interpret MAGA as a moment of the crisis of the "modern, colonial, Westernized, Christian-centric, capitalist, patriarchal world-system"[15] that calls for "White Reconstruction." White Reconstruction, as Dylan Rodríguez has phrased it, does not name an "exceptional moment of white supremacist rejuvenations," but rather "a historically persistent, continuous, and periodically acute logic of reform, rearticulation, adaptation, and revitalization that shapes white social and ontological self-and-world-making within the aspirational, present-tense and violently future-oriented humanist projects of Civilization/Manifest Destiny/Progress, and so on."[16]

In this article, I am not concerned with questions regarding the microcosm of the current

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[10] Steve Phillips, "Trump Wants to Make America White Again," *New York Times*, 15 Feb 2018, https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/15/opinion/trump-wants-to-make-america-white-again.html

[11] Hans Kundnani, *Eurowhiteness: Culture, empire and race in the European project* (London: Hurst, 2023); Enzo Traverso, *The New Faces of Fascism. Populism and the Far Right* (London, New York: Verso, 2019).

[12] Rory McVeigh and Kevin Estep, *The Politics of Losing. Trump, the Klan, and the Mainstreaming of Resentment* (NY: Columbia University Press, 2020), 224.

[13] David A. Graham, *The Project. How Project 2025 is reshaping America* (NY: Random House, 2025), 5.

[14] Ibid., 4.

[15] Ramon Grosfoguel, "The Multiple Faces of Islamophobia," *Islamophobia Studies Journal* 1, no. 1 (2012): 9–33.

[16] Dylan Rodríguez, *White Reconstruction: Domestic Warfare and the Logics of Genocide* (NYC: Fordham University Press, 2021), 3.

administration. I recognize the diversity of viewpoints as well as increasing frictions within the MAGA brand, the existence of different factions—the New Right (with people like JD Vance), the alt-right (with people like Steve Bannon), (semi-)aristocratic techno-futurists (with people from Silicon Valley) and the populist wing represented first and foremost by the president himself—that shape the outcome of the America First politics of the MAGA leadership. However, I regard the administration of the 47th president as a project where different groups have coalesced around a central idea, which is reclaiming a hierarchical, white, and male-dominated society that existed before the 1960s.

The historian Steven Hahn described their "illiberalism" as not "at the margins of evolving American society, not as dark threads that occasionally surface, not as paranoid and backward-looking responses to disruptive change, but as central fields of political and cultural force."[17] Rodríguez described white reconstruction in his analysis of the 45th president as a "historically specific, relatively coherent coalescence of efforts to achieve a condition of hegemony"[18] in a time they feel they lost. My analysis centers the words and acts of those who have shaped this politics in the first eight months, at the time this article was written, updating a few important developments that have occurred when finalizing this paper in the spring of 2026.

Similarly, my argument in this essay is that rather than seeing many of the policies of the 47th president as unique to his personality, framing him as "reckless," "impulsive," "erratic" and "stunningly uninformed" and thus blaming everything on him as a person, we should understand this administration's politics as a reiteration of attempts of global white reconstruction. From a decolonial lens, I argue that ideas about race, religion, and the politics of immigration ——that are at the center of interest in this essay —bear on a widespread sentiment across the Global North including in Europe. Trump's idea to make America great again does not only draw on

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[17] Steven Hahn, *Illiberal America. A History* (NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 2024) 4.
[18] Rodríguez, *White Reconstruction*, 9.

similar sentiments from earlier periods in U.S. history.[19] It should be understood as an attempt to reestablish white supremacy understood as a "deeply historical, normalized relations of gendered anti-Blackness and racial-colonial violence, evisceration, and denigration that have characterized the emergence of Civilization and its coercive iterations of global modernity in the long post-conquest epoch."[20]

In this essay, following an interlude on the theatrically advertised detention of Mahmoud Khalil, I will turn my attention to discussing Make America Great Again as manifested in domestic politics, moving on to U.S. foreign policy and finally discussing the responses of European leaders.

II. INTERLUDE: "SHALOM, MAHMOUD."

> On March 10, 2025, the White House posted: "SHALOM, MAHMOUD. 'ICE proudly apprehended and detained Mahmoud Khalil, a Radical Foreign Pro-Hamas Student on the campus of @Columbia University. This is the first arrest of many to come.' —President Donald J. Trump"[21]

The post included two images, one showing Mahmoud Khalil with the accompanying text "Arrested by ICE on March 9, 2025" and "Led activities aligned to Hamas. A designated terrorist organization," showing a picture of Khalil and a screenshot of a post by Trump on the latter's social media app *Truth Social*, where he called Khalil a "Radical, Foreign, Pro-Hamas Student on the campus of Columbia University," vowing to detain more accusing him of "pro-terrorist, antisemitic, anti-American activity."[22] It was intentional to frame Khalil as a foreign policy security threat.

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[19] "Reagan: 'Making America great' the first time," *United States Studies Center*, 31 May 2019, https://www.ussc.edu.au/reagan-making-america-great-the-first-time

[20] Rodríguez, *White Reconstruction*, 7.

[21] White House, Post, *X*, 10 Mar 2025, https://x.com/whitehouse/status/1899151926777749618?s=46&t=IqMyJxNOZr_BLR7RWY8sNA

[22] Ibid.

When an immigration judge in Louisiana ordered the administration to provide evidence justifying the intended deportation of Khalil, Secretary of State Marco Rubio issued a memo, framing Khalil's participation in rallies for a ceasefire as "antisemitic protests," further arguing: "The public actions and continued presence of 'Blackened name' and Khalil in the United States undermine U.S. policy to combat anti-Semitism around the world and in the United States, in addition to efforts to protect Jewish students from harassment and violence in the United States."[23]

As Trump vowed, just the beginning of more to come, and media have covered multiple cases of apprehended students from various institutions, who were detained on the grounds of their pro-Palestinian stances, a policy that was clearly articulated in Trump's election platform as well as The Heritage Foundation's Project Esther, which represents a "culmination of the broader crackdown on Palestinian solidarity" that "conflates anti-Zionism and criticism of Israel with antisemitism, leveraging state power and private resources to dismantle the pro-Palestine solidarity movement in the U.S. through a systematic campaign of intimidation, defunding, and criminalization."[24] The short statements of both the White House and President Trump demonstrate the racialized imagination of the political enemy who must be deported "never to return again."[25]

Khalil is foreign and radical and like him—a Syrian of Palestinian origin—hundreds of other students of color have been detained. Columbia student Leqaa Kordia was detained for a whole year.[26] 1,200 international students across nearly 200

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[23] Marco Rubio, "Memorandum for the Secretary of Homeland Security," https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/25894225-dhs-documents-mahmoud-khalil/#document/p1

[24] Tariq Kenney-Shawa, "Project Esther: Suppressing Palestinian Solidarity in the U.S.," *Al-Shabaka —The Palestinian Policy Network*, April 2025, 6-7.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Amnesty International U.S.A, "Leqaa Kordia Must Be Freed," *Amnesty International*, February 12, 2026, https://www.amnestyusa.org/blog/leqaa-kordia-must-be-freed/

institutions had their visas temporarily revoked.[27] The message has been clear: There is no room for critical dissent against U.S. foreign policy. In the land of the First Amendment, the "dangerous idea" of free speech becomes again a privilege of wealthy white men.[28] Free speech, if contradicting the politics of the administration, will be criminalized, as the framing of ICE protestors as "domestic terrorists" by Stephen Miller and DHS Secretary Kristi Noem has shown.[29]

Shalom, the Hebrew greeting literally meaning peace, is used to cynically greet the detained student Khalil, who came to represent the encampment and protest movement for a ceasefire in Gaza following Israel's response to Operation Al-Aqsa Flood. But evidently, peace was not meant for Khalil and not for those Jews who protested the ongoing genocide in Gaza or called for a ceasefire. The real recipient of this message was more likely the state of Israel. But we will come to this later in the section on foreign policy.

III. MAKE AMERICA WHITE AGAIN

A. Immigration

The white supremacist connotation of MAGA manifested in several executive orders issued on day one. From "Protecting the Meaning and Value of American Citizenship" that attempts to revoke birthright citizenship to increasing deportation personnel, to executive orders such as: "Protecting the American People";, "Guaranteeing the States Protection Against Invasion"; "Securing our Border";, to "Designating Cartels and Other Organizations as

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[27] Janie Har and Kate Brunback, "ICE reverses termination of legal status for international students, lawyer says," *WBUR*, 25 Apr 2025, https://www.wbur.org/news/2025/04/25/ice-student-visas-deportation

[28] Fara Dabhoiwala, *What is free speech? The history of a dangerous idea* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2025).

[29] Shrai Popat, "Kristi Noem refuses to retract statement calling Minnesotans killed by federal agents 'domestic terrorists'," *The Guardian*, 3 Mar 2026, https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2026/mar/03/kristi-noem-senate-hearing-minnesota-ice-shootings

Foreign Terrorist Organizations,"[30] all these executive orders intended to increase mass deportation, fantasizing about the idea of so-called "self-deportation" as a tool to achieve this goal.

While the Trump administration has pushed anti-immigrant policies further, these have been widely bipartisan in many ways, from Clinton to Bush to Obama and Biden, framing immigrants as a threat to security and labor,[31] and drew on a long history of framing Chinese immigration as an unarmed invasion that must be halted going back to the 1890s.[32] Rather than an exception, it was an amplification of regularly recurring sentiments.The Trump administration tried to invoke fear: Emails were sent in April 2025 to a total of one million immigrants to self-deport.[33] Immigration and border security were not only Trump's primary issue he campaigned on. Project 2025 outlined a plan to exorbitantly increase the deportation of unauthorized immigrants, make life unpleasant for undocumented people in the country, punish states that don't cooperate, revoke legal status of some immigrants, and decrease the levels of immigrations.[34] Revoking legal status has been exemplified with students advocating for Palestine.

Revoking the status of hundreds of thousands of people to self-deport[35] was another measure to "cleanse" U.S. immigrants from the U.S. population.

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[30] "Trump's Immigration Executive Orders: Mass Deportation, Making Children Second Class Citizens and Ending Asylum," *Immigration Hub*, 22 Jan 2025, https://theimmigrationhub.org/article/fact-sheet-trumps-immigration-executive-orders-mass-deportation-making-children-second-class-citizens-and-ending-asylum/

[31] Daniel Denvir, *All-American nativism: How the bipartisan war on immigrants explains politics as we know it* (London: Verso Books, 2020).

[32] Chip Berlet and Matthew N. Lyons, *Right-wing populism in America: Too close for comfort* (NW: Guilford Publications, 2000).

[33] Brett Wilkins, "Trump Orders Nearly 1 Million Migrants Who Entered U.S. Legally to Leave Now," *Common Dreams*, 8 April 2025, https://www.commondreams.org/news/trump-administration-ends-cbp-one-border-app

[34] Graham, *Project 2025*, 71.

[35] Andrea Castillo, "'It is time for you to leave': DHS mistakenly sends notices to U.S. citizens," *LA Times*, 23 April 2025, https://www.latimes.com/politics/story/2025-04-23/homeland-security-immigration-termination-notices-deportation

The dream of a mass self-deportation was also intertwined with political messages. Among several citizens who received the deportation emails were immigration lawyers, recalling 1942, when Japanese internment during World War II also included the forced removal of citizens. The message was clear: Non-whites and their allies are at risk.

The administration's dream of mass deportation was legitimized by reasoning found in one of the authors of Project 2025, who called border crossings an "invasion,"[36] creating a legal ground to allow the president to invoke the Alien Enemies Act of 1798, a wartime law to be used outside of a military invasion. The Act, which was last used in World War II to detain 31,000 noncitizens of Japanese, German, and Italian descent without due process, could empower Trump to detain and deport foreign nationals with legal status and no criminal history.[37]

The administration's Department of Homeland Security requested an additional 20,000 national guards to help execute mass deportations[38] with the goal of deporting one million people a year which translates to an average of 3,000 a day. To achieve this, the Trump administration presented a $170 billion package that includes $45 billion for new detention facilities, $30 billion for ICE operations, including hiring thousands more officers and agents.[39] The administration would first go after people with parole, then after people with temporary protected

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[36] Graham, *Project 2025*, 77.

[37] Elizabeth Goitein and Katherine Yon Ebright "Trump's Doubly Flawed 'Invasion' Theory," *Brennan Center for Justice*, 19 Feb 2025, http://brennancenter.org/our-work/analysis-opinion/trumps-doubly-flawed-invasion-theory

[38] Nick Miroff, "Trump Loves ICE," *The Atlantic*, 10 July 2025, https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2025/07/trump-ice-morale-immigration/683477/

[39] DHS Requests 20,000 National Guard to Help Execute Mass Deportations, 16 May 2025, https://www.democracynow.org/2025/5/16/headlines/dhs_requests_20_000_national_guard_to_help_execute_mass_deportations

status, and finally after legal immigrants accused of committing a crime.[40]

In August 2025, the administration announced that it would review 55 million foreigners with U.S. visas.[41] Thirty-one deaths of detainees during ICE custody have been officially registered since Trump's inauguration until December 2025,[42] some of them officially ruled suicides.[43] While these deaths are silenced, the death of a man like Charlie Kirk, whose racist rhetoric is ignored,[44] has been elevated to a martyr. The "homeland," a notion usually used by *völkisch* nationalists that "belonged to the Old World, to the Europe Americans had left behind,"[45] was now reclaimed for the reconstruction of white America.

B. The Terrorism-Prison-Industrial Complex

While the administration's actions have been challenged to some extent, the Supreme Court rescinded a decision made by a lower court that halted the deportation of people from various countries to the East African country of Djibouti and the decision had required them to have enough time to connect with their lawyers to contest the deportation, giving the government a free pass to continue with its mass

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[40] Ashley Wu and Albert Sun, "How Trump Has Targeted New Groups for Deportation," *NYT*, 30 May 2025, https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2025/05/21/us/trump-immigration-policy.html

[41] Matthew Lee, "Trump administration is reviewing all 55 million foreigners with U.S. visas for any violations," *AP News*, 21 Aug 2025, https://apnews.com/article/trump-visas-deportations-068ad6cd5724e7248577f17592327ca4

[42] U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Detainee Death Reporting, 16 Feb 2026, https://www.ice.gov/detain/detainee-death-reporting

[43] Debbie Nathan, "Chinese ICE Detainee Dies by Suicide at Pennsylvania Detention Center," *The Intercept*, 7 Aug 2025, https://theintercept.com/2025/08/07/ice-detained-suicide-pennsylvania-geo-group/

[44] Ta-Nehisi Coates, "Charlie Kirk, Redeemed: A Political Class Finds Its Lost Cause," *Vanity Fair*, 16 Sep 2025, https://www.vanityfair.com/news/story/charlie-kirk-ezra-klein-tanehisi-coates

[45] Anne Norton, *On the Muslim Question* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), 71.

deportations.[46] In that, the administration worked with other authoritarian regimes like El Salvador, to deport South American immigrants to the Terrorism Confinement Center (CECOT), established in 2023,[47] or to Guantánamo Bay, which ha acquired notoriety beginning with the Global War on Terror.

Political prisoner Mumia Abu Jamal called this "the expansion to the rest of the world of a prison industrial complex not content to remain in our borders."[48] While news media report that 90 percent of the deported U.S. detainees or immigrants sent to CECOT have no criminal records aside from minor violations such as traffic,[49] the idea to deport hundreds of thousands of immigrants attempts to answer the MAGA campaign of "deporting violent criminals, rapists, terrorists, and drug dealers who came to America illegally…",[50] even though facts and fiction vastly diverge, with not criminals, but ordinary immigrants including those with legal status being deported.[51] In a way, the chicken came home to roost, as former Guantánamo prisoner Manssor Adayfi commented on the establishment of Alligator Alcatraz:

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[46] Nina Totenberg, "U.S. Supreme Court allows — for now — third-country deportations," *NPR*, 23 June 2025, https://www.npr.org/2025/06/23/g-s1-71529/supreme-court-south-sudan-deportation

[47] The Associated Press, "What to know about CECOT, El Salvador's mega-prison for gang members," *NPR*, 17 Mar 2025, http://npr.org/2025/03/17/g-s1-54206/el-salvador-mega-prison-cecot

[48] Dave Zirin, "Mumia Abu-Jamal on Trump's America: 'All Is Not Well in Babylon'," *Rolling Stone*, 17 June 2025, www.rollingstone.com/culture/culture-features/mumia-abu-jamal-trump-fascism-due-process-1235365746/

[49] Michelle Goldberg, "The Trump Victim I Can't Stop Thinking About," *NYT*, 24 Apr 2025, https://www.nytimes.com/2025/04/24/opinion/trump-el-salvador-makeup-artist.html

[50] The White House, "President Trump Delivers Justice to Terrorists, Security for Americans," *White House*, 17 Mar 2025, https://www.whitehouse.gov/articles/2025/03/president-trump-delivers-justice-for-terrorists-security-for-americans/

[51] Nick Miroff, "Trump Loves ICE. Its Workforce Has Never Been So Miserable," *The Atlantic*, 10 July 2025, https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2025/07/trump-ice-morale-immigration/683477/

"Guantánamo was never just a place; it was a blueprint.

A system of abuse, secrecy, and dehumanization was built on fear. And now, that blueprint has landed in Florida."[52] From January to July 2025, the administration expelled more than 8,100 people to at least 13 countries across the globe of whom 12 have significant human rights abuses according to the State Department. To expand the so-called offshore detention system, the administration has since been in talks with 64 third countries as of July 2025, 91 percent of them with documented human rights violations.[53]

Some of these agreements with third countries such as El Salvador, Costa Rica, and Panama, had existed prior. For decades, the U.S. already had agreements with other countries to intercept asylum seekers at sea so these seekers would not set foot on U.S. soil and resettle as refugees in other countries. Several countries including Australia, Nicaragua, Panama, Spain, and Venezuela agreed to do diplomatic favors.[54] When people were deported to Sudan and Djibouti, human rights experts warned of further creating a "legal black hole" as has been the case with Guantánamo.[55]

C. 'Race Suicide' and 'Replacement'

The idea of getting rid of primarily non-white people fits well into the fear of the Great Replacement,

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[52] Manssor Adayfi, "Post," *Instagram*, 2 July 2025, https://www.instagram.com/reel/DLmu2NUNgfJ/?igsh=a2ExNXlyNms4NW1o

[53] Nick Turse, "State Dept: Trump's "Third Countries" for Immigrants Have Awful Human Rights Records," *The Intercept*, 29 July 2025, https://theintercept.com/2025/07/29/trump-deport-immigrants-third-country-human-rights/

[54] David Scott Fitzgerald, "The Sordid History of Offshoring Migrants Trump Is Only the Latest to Embrace a Costly and Immoral Tactic," *Foreign Affairs*, 10 July 2025, https://www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/sordid-history-offshoring-migrants

[55] Shannon Heffernan, "How Trump Is Trying to Expand the Already Colossal U.S. Prison System," *The Marshall Project*, 15 Feb 2025, https://www.themarshallproject.org/2025/02/15/trump-ice-jail-prison-arizona

a far-right conspiracy that suggests that elites are working together against the white masses to populate Europe and North America with non-white people, primarily Latino people in the U.S. and Muslims in Europe, to secure the demographic strength of the Western world and alter European lifestyles. In the U.S. context, it draws on the idea of a "race suicide" that necessitates a defense against non-whites in the "race war," contemporarily enunciated as the "culture war."[56]

As vice president JD Vance diagnosed: "Every Western society… has significant demographic and cultural problems… While our elites tell us that diversity is our greatest strength, they destroy the very institutions that allow us to thrive and build a common sense of purpose and meaning as Americans."[57] 'Americanness' is white European settler identity.

Trump himself stated during a trip to Europe that European leaders should "stop this horrible invasion" and that "this immigration is killing Europe,"[58] making it a question of survival. He reiterated this idea in his speech at the UN General Assembly in 2025: "I look at London where you have a terrible [Muslim, FH] mayor… Now they want to go to Sharia law… Both the immigration and their suicidal energy ideas will be the death of Western Europe if something is not done immediately."[59]Several high-ranking politicians[60] including Stephen Miller were fear mongering after Zohran Mamdani won the first

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[56] Hahn, *Illiberal America*, 322-336.
[57] Ezra Klein, "Behind Trump and Vance Is This Man's Movement," *NYT*, 1 Aug 2025, https://www.nytimes.com/2025/08/01/opinion/ezra-klein-podcast-yoram-hazony.html
[58] AP Newsroom, "Trump arrives in Scotland and blasts Europe's wind energy and immigration policies," *AP*, 25 July 2025, https://newsroom.ap.org/editorial-photos-videos/detail?itemid=f7572aec2f0042f2ab7d1bfe60c7279f&mediatype=video
[59] Rev, "Trump speaks at UN," https://www.rev.com/transcripts/trump-speaks-at-un
[60] Sharon Zhang , "The Right Incites Blatant Islamophobia After Zohran Mamdani's Win," *Truthout*, 25 June 2025, https://truthout.org/articles/the-right-incites-blatant-islamophobia-after-zohran-mamdanis-win/

round of Democratic primaries,[61] hinting at the idea of Great Replacement, and the fear of non-white non-Christians taking over the country. Mamdani was portrayed as a "Muslim socialist," "supported by terrorists," "little Muhammad" and "antisemitic," as well as "communist" by leading voices of the Republican Party.[62]

Even a Department of Justice memo to denaturalize citizens[63] was discussed in the context of Mamdani's primary-election victory with one Republican congressman calling for his deportation.[64] This shows the merging of anti-leftist attitudes and anti-Muslim racism with deportation dreams in a longing for a conservative, white Christian future, something that we see reverberated in Trump- and Vance-billionaire-supporter Peter Thiel, who identified three main challenges for Europe, the "green (environmental justice movement), Shariah (Muslims) and the totalitarian communist state."[65] In line with reconstructing white, male supremacy, War Secretary Hegseth removed Black and female officers from promotion.[66]An interesting episode revealing the instability of whiteness was the feud between

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[61] Stephen Miller, Post, *X*, 25 Jun 2025, https://x.com/stephenm/status/1937861469431079401?s=51&t=IqMyJxNOZr_BLR7RWY8sNA

[62] Mobashra Tamazal, "When a Win Sparks Hate: Islamophobia After Mamdani's Victory," *The Bridge Initiative at Georgetown University*, 14 July 2025, http://bridge.georgetown.edu/research/when-a-win-sparks-hate-islamophobia-after-mamdanis-victory/

[63] U.S. Department of Justice, "Memorandum," *Office of the Assistant Attorney General*, 11 June 2025, https://www.justice.gov/civil/media/1404046/dl?inline

[64] Lawrence Hurley, "Calls to strip Zohran Mamdani's citizenship spark alarm about Trump weaponizing denaturalization," *NBC News*, 23 July 2025, https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/donald-trump/calls-strip-zohran-mamdanis-citizenship-trump-denaturalization-power-rcna216653

[65] Ross Douthat, "Peter Thiel and the Antichrist. The original tech right power player on A.I., Mars and immortality," *NYT*, 26 June 2025, https://www.nytimes.com/2025/06/26/opinion/peter-thiel-antichrist-ross-douthat.html

[66] Ellen Mitchell, "Hegseth removes 2 Black and 2 female officers from promotion list: Report," *The Hill*, 27 Mar 2026, https://thehill.com/policy/defense/5804541-pete-hegseth-pentagon-promotion-list/

billionaire Elon Musk and Trump. The latter's warning that he could investigate Musk's deportation due to the former's alleged illegal immigration history,[67] shows the instability of the notion of whiteness and who belongs to white America. It also demonstrates that power relations stand at the heart of whiteness, and further signals that everybody is vulnerable and nobody can escape the powerful, no matter how much (in this case economic) power one has. And finally, the message was to comply politically. Deportation thus becomes a theoretical threat for many.

D. Nurturing a New America in the Image of the White Christian Man

Another priority of the 47th president in the context of whitening, Christianizing, and straightening U.S. society is in the realm of the so-called culture-war issues. As Vance said in 2021: "We have to honestly and aggressively attack the universities in this country."[68] This threat was translated into an institutional program: On day one, executive order "Ending Radical And Wasteful Government DEI Programs And Preferencing" was issued to end "public waste and shameful discrimination,"[69] meaning of discrimination against heterosexual white people. Nine days later, U.S. federal agencies published a list of forbidden words to comply with this executive order.

The National Science Foundation, which is among the most important federal funders of research and education, was now forced to flag research proposals if they contained specific words including "activism," "advocacy," "black," "equity," "diversity," "ethnicity," "gender," "hate speech," "female," "indigenous," "LGBT," "political," "race,"

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[67] Rachel Scott, Fritz Farrow, Lalee Ibssa , and Ivan Pereira, "Trump says he'll 'look' at deporting Musk as feud reignites," *ABC News*, 1 July 2025, https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/trump-hell-deporting-musk-feud-reignites/story?id=123372908

[68] Donnelly and Chakrabarti, *JD Vance and the rise of the 'New Right.'*

[69] The White House, "Ending Radical And Wasteful Government DEI Programs And Preferencing," *White House*, 20 Jan 2025, http://whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/ending-radical-and-wasteful-government-dei-programs-and-preferencing/

"socioeconomic status," or "women."[70] Proposals containing these words would be flagged. As of February 2026, *The Chronicle of Higher Education* has listed changes in dismantling DEI programs at 439 college campuses in 48 states and the District of Columbia.[71] What is envisioned is a patriarchal, heterosexual, white norm as the default human in the MAGA world. The closure of gender studies programs is part of the strategy to strengthen patriarchal power that enables misogyny.[72]The administration's attack on museums like the Smithsonian Institution which criticized them for focusing too much on "how bad slavery was" is another iteration of changing the cultural landscape.[73] The administration is restoring the settler colonial names of mountains, reversing decisions to restore the indigenous place names, to create a white-settler colonial present and future.[74] A proposal to cut the Bureau of Indian Education's K-12 programs as well as the budget of 37 tribal colleges and universities from $183 million to $22 million, and the construction budget from $235 million to $48 million equates an almost elimination of indigenous knowledge production that is based on decades of laws

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[70] Matt Novak, "The List of Trump's Forbidden Words That Will Get Your Paper Flagged at NSF," *Gizmodo*, 5 Feb 2025, https://gizmodo.com/the-list-of-trumps-forbidden-words-that-will-get-your-paper-flagged-at-nsf-2000559661

[71] Erin Gretzinger, Maggie Hicks, Christa Dutton, Jasper Smith, Sonel Cutler, and Aisha Baiocchi, "Tracking Higher Ed's Dismantling of DEI," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 10 Feb 2026, https://www.chronicle.com/article/tracking-higher-eds-dismantling-of-dei

[72] Joan Wallach Scott, "Gender studies courses are shutting down across the U.S.. The Epstein files reveal why," *The Guardian*, 13 Feb 2026, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2026/feb/13/gender-studies-trump-epstein

[73] Zolan Kanno-Youngs, "In Trump's Ideal Picture of America, Diversity Is Taboo," *NYT*, 21 Aug 2025, www.nytimes.com/2025/08/21/us/politics/trump-diversity-black-americans.html

[74] Niiyokamigaabaw Deondre Smiles, (2025) "Settler colonialism in Donald Trump's America," *The Geographical Journal*, 3. Available from: https://doi.org/10.1111/geoj.70019

and treaties between the U.S. and the indigenous population.[75]

As the Black American author Nikole Hannah-Jones noted: "The astounding ambit of Trump's first months has made it possible to imagine a future that looks eerily like the past… An America where Black people may nearly disappear, first from textbooks, curriculum and museums, and then from predominantly white institutions and entire professions, such as law, medicine and science, where they are already severely underrepresented… the America Trump may be bringing about is an America that the vast majority of Black Americans alive today have never lived in — a second Nadir."[76]The envisioned future is not only white, but Christian nationalist. Christian identity is a central theme for leading Project 2025 author Russell Vought, who explicitly refers to his beliefs as "Christian nationalism."[77] After leaving the White House in the wake of Biden's election, Vought established the Center for Renewing America, saying "the first priority ever of our organization is to regain a notion in this country, a consensus that we're not a secular country, that we are a Christian nation as founded."[78] This Christian nationalism manifests clearly in Project 2025 when it comes to gender, race, education, health, and civil rights, dreaming of a country where abortion is illegal, sex is closely policed, schools are privatized, and Christian principles form the explicit basis for policy.[79] Religion as an identity marker manifests not only in symbolism but also in political action.

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[75] Alan Blinder, "Tribal Colleges Rely on Federal Funding. Their Leaders Fear the Trump Years.," *New York Times*, 15 Aug 2025, https://www.nytimes.com/2025/08/15/us/tribal-colleges-federal-funding-trump.html

[76] Nikole Hannah-Jones, "How Trump Upended 60 Years of Civil Rights in Two Months," *NYT*, 27 June 2025, https://www.nytimes.com/2025/06/27/magazine/trump-civil-rights-law-discrimination.html

[77] Graham, *Project 2025*, 23.

[78] Ibid., 22.

[79] Ibid., 45.

IV. MAKE AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY WHITE AGAIN

A. The Religious Other

On a symbolic level, the Secretary of War, Pete Hegseth's Christian-right tattoos symbolically represent the image of a white, masculine and God-fearing archetype.[80] The Arabic tattoo "Kafir" —a word found in the Qur'an and oftentimes translated as disbeliever, while literally meaning concealing the truth while knowing it —that was added in March of 2025 and which has long been weaponized in far-right Islamophobic circles to mock and vilify Muslims, is just the latest iteration of the Christian-right crusader symbolism in the highest ranks of the American leadership.[81] This is more than personal. Hegseth invited the white nationalist pastor Douglas Wilson, who wants to turn the U.S. into a Christian theocracy, to lead the Pentagon prayer service,[82] effectively reframing the United States as a Christian nation. Addressing Western nations, Hegseth said: "We share the same interests, and because of this, we face an essential test. Whether our nations will be—and remain—Western nations with distinct characteristics—Christian nations under God."[83]While the U.S. government has an Office for International Religious Freedom in the State Department monitoring religious freedom around the world, and

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[80] Jasper Craven, "Pete Hegseth's Crusade to Turn the Military into a Christian Weapon," *Politico*, 12 June 2025, https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2024/12/06/pete-hegseth-defense-religion-christian-00192117

[81] CAIR, "CAIR Calls Sec. Hegseth's 'Kafir' Tattoo a 'Sign of Both Anti-Muslim Hostility and Personal Insecurity'," *CAIR Press Release*, 27 Mar 2025, https://www.cair.com/press_releases/cair-calls-sec-hegseths-kafir-tattoo-a-sign-of-both-anti-muslim-hostility-and-personal-insecurity/ On Hegseth's history of Islamophobia, see: https://bridge.georgetown.edu/research/factsheet-pete-hegseth/

[82] Kaanita Iyer and Haley Britzky, "Hegseth invited pastor who calls for Christian theocracy to lead Pentagon prayer service," 20 Feb 2026, https://www.cnn.com/2026/02/19/politics/douglas-wilson-pastor-pentagon-service-christian-nationalism

[83] @DOWResponse, "Post," 5 mar 2026, https://x.com/dowresponse/status/2029582234689183749?s=51&t=IqMyJxNOZr_BLR7RWY8sNA

the Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division is assigned to combat religious discrimination and protecting religious freedom, the new administration established a Task Force within the Department of Justice to Eradicate Anti-Christian Bias, which it claimed had been violated by the Biden administration. According to the White House, the Biden Equal Employment Opportunity Commission "sought to force Christians to affirm radical transgender ideology against their faith" and "drive Christians who do not conform to certain beliefs on sexual orientation and gender identity out of the foster-care system."[84]

Thus, the administration declared that it would "'not tolerate' anti-Christian weaponization of government or unlawful conduct targeting Christians,"[85] while several Christian leaders spoke out against this weaponization of Christianity.[86] The creation of new institutions is accompanied by putting Christian nationalists in key government positions.[87] Meanwhile, other religious groups such as Muslims are investigated by the Department of Justice for a planned housing development including a mosque at its center,[88] clearly revealing that Christian communitarianism is embraced, while other religious groups are threatened in their existence. Also, cable

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[84] The White House, "Eradicating Anti-Christian Bias," *Presidential Actions*, 6 Feb 2025, https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/02/eradicating-anti-christian-bias/

[85] Ibid.

[86] Carl Gibson, "'Dangerous': Priest says Trump has 'co-opted' Christianity to 'secure his own power'," *AlterNet*, 5 May 2025, https://www.alternet.org/trump-coopted-christianity/: For a more comprehensive analysis of these policies during the first Trump term, see: Sam Hananel and Julia Cusick, "How the Trump Administration Has Harmed Faith Communities," https://www.americanprogress.org/article/trump-administration-harmed-faith-communities/

[87] Adam Gabbatt, "Trump has put Christian nationalists in key roles —say a prayer for free speech," *The Guardian*, 16 April 2025, https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/apr/16/christian-nationalists-trump-administration

[88] J. David Goodman, "Justice Department to Investigate Muslim Development in Texas, Cornyn Says," *NYT*, 9 May 2025, https://www.nytimes.com/2025/05/09/us/politics/muslim-development-texas-investigation.html

instructions for employees of the State Department asked employees to report co-workers for their alleged "anti-Christian bias,"[89] a sign of white-Christian reconstruction within the institution itself.

B. Squashing Dissent Against U.S. Foreign Policy

Circling back to the White House post that was mentioned in the interlude, Khalil was called "anti-Semitic" before even being called "anti-American." This precedence might be incidental or not. But there is hardly any doubt that the fight against antisemitism has been used as a cornerstone of the administration to silence opposition to the U.S.'s weapons support of Israel's genocide against Palestinians in Gaza. Officials were told to screen visa applicants' social media activity "antisemitic activity,"[90] aiming to keep out primarily immigrants of color, mostly college-educated. The wave of intimidation also hit domestically: The U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights sent letters to 60 universities informing them that they were under investigation for "antisemitic discrimination and harassment."[91]

Congress's Committee on Education and Workforce initiated hearings on antisemitism in higher education, inviting university leadership to question the congress people's questions,[92] which led to a school

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[89] Joseph Gedeon, "State department staff told to report colleagues for 'anti-Christian bias'," *The Guardian*, 11 Apr 2025, https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/apr/11/state-department-anti-christian-bias

[90] U.S.CIS, "DHS to Begin Screening Aliens' Social Media Activity for Antisemitism," 9 Apr 2025, https://www.uscis.gov/newsroom/news-releases/dhs-to-begin-screening-aliens-social-media-activity-for-antisemitism

[91] U.S. Department of Education, "U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights Sends Letters to 60 Universities Under Investigation for Antisemitic Discrimination and Harassment," 10 Mar 2025, https://www.ed.gov/about/news/press-release/us-department-of-educations-office-civil-rights-sends-letters-60-universities-under-investigation-antisemitic-discrimination-and-harassment

[92] Committee on Education and Workforce, "Antisemitism in Higher Education: Examining the Role of Faculty, Funding, and Ideology," *U.S. House of Representatives*, 15 July 2025, https://edworkforce.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=412535

like UC Berkeley sharing 160 names with the U.S. administration due to "alleged antisemitic incidents" in what has been criticized as a new "McCarthy-era" move.[93] A wave of authoritarian intimidation sweeps through the halls of higher learning in an attempt to cleanse the institution from dangerous knowledge production.Clearly, this was never about antisemitism. When white nationalists rallied on the streets, as happened with the Alt Right in Charlottesville, Virginia, chanting "Jews will not replace us" in 2017, the failure to denounce these slogans as obvious manifestations of antisemitism clearly showed that the accusation of antisemitism is only deployed when useful.[94] Elon Musk's Hitler salute is just another example of how symbols of white supremacy are being downplayed by leading figures in the current leadership.[95]

If the fight against antisemitism was never about defending Jewish life, then it was more about defending Israel. In the unconscious biases from white America, Israel represents the United States' ideals in that both are settler-colonial structures that follow a logic of elimination via replacement..[96] As a colonial outpost of Western imperialism, it serves to mobilize Jews who were historically driven out of Europe to continue colonization for the white man, themselves representing an unstable category of whiteness.[97]

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[93] Sam Levin, "UC Berkeley shares 160 names with Trump administration in 'McCarthy era' move," *The Guardian*, 12 Sep 2025, https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/sep/12/uc-berkeley-trump-administration-antisemitism

[94] On this, see the problem of the IHRA definition: https://www.newyorker.com/news/persons-of-interest/the-problem-with-defining-antisemitism; and the subsequent critique that led to an alternative working definition of antisemitism as seen in the Jerusalem Declaration: https://jerusalemdeclaration.org/

[95] Lisa Hagen, "They look like Nazi salutes. Here's why some people think they're a joke," *NPR*, 15 Mar 2025, https://www.npr.org/2025/03/15/nx-s1-5305259/musk-salute-humor-controversy

[96] Hatem Bazian, *Palestine… it's something colonial* (Amsterdam: Amrit, 2016).

[97] Houria Bouteldja, Whites, Jews, and Us: Toward a Politics of Revolutionary Love (South Pasadena: Semiotext(e): 2017).

C. Racial Immigration Politics

Whereas non-white immigrants were threatened on a wide scale and asylum was upended, there was one exception made: Afrikaners, the descendants of white colonists in South Africa, were welcomed. Drawing on a discourse in right-wing circles that alleged that white people were discriminated against in South Africa and that a genocide was committed against whites (a debunked conspiracy),[98] the Trump administration's Presidential Action named Addressing Egregious Actions of The Republic of South Africa accused the South African government "fueling disproportionate violence against racially disfavored (white, FH) landowners,"[99] which meant nothing other than reconstructing white economic dominance after apartheid. The redrafting of the State Department's annual human rights reports downplayed or denied altogether human rights abuses with strategic allies like Hungary, Israel or El Salvador.

In the case of South Africa, the country was criticized for its alleged discrimination against Afrikaners.[100] Based on this logic, Trump signaled that white Afrikaners would be granted asylum, which led to an initial interest of almost 70,000 South Africans to apply for asylum,[101] and welcoming the first cohort of Afrikaners by May in what can be called "a racialized immigration program masquerading as refugee

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[98] Andile Zulu, "Race, power, and the politics of distraction," *Africa is a* Country, n.d., https://africasacountry.com/2025/02/race-power-and-the-politics-of-distraction

[99] The White House, "Addressing Egregious Actions of The Republic of South Africa," *Presidential Actions*, 7 Feb 2025, https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/02/addressing-egregious-actions-of-the-republic-of-south-africa/

[100] Nick Turse, "The Incredible Disappearing Human Rights Reports," *The Intercept*, 14 Aug 2025, http://theintercept.com/2025/08/14/state-department-human-rights-reports/

[101] Mayeni Jones and Nobuhle Simelane, "Almost 70,000 South Africans interested in U.S. asylum," *BBC*, 19 Mar 2025, https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cjevg2vlwk4o

resettlement."[102] After the first arrival of white refugees from South Africa, the State Department proclaimed that it would welcome more of them in the coming months "to protect victims of racial discrimination."[103]

D. Dispensable (Non-White) Lives

While white Afrikaners are to be rescued, the deadly consequences of cutting global aid affecting non-whites is ignored. While many commentators have discussed the effects that closing U.S.AID has on global health in general and upending the soft power of the United States including its support of liberal democracy, the racial dimension is less frequently highlighted. According to estimates, halting funding for just one year could result in over 3 million preventable deaths—disproportionately affecting non-white populations, primarily due to AIDS-related deaths (65 million), halted vaccination programs (500,000 children), hunger (550,000), and malaria (290,000), and tuberculosis (310,000).[104]

In a global order of white supremacy, one might think, the lives of millions of non-white people appear expendable. Simultaneously, these policies and symbols do not represent an improvement for the lives of the white working poor, as they have been similarly hit by the cutting of U.S.AID, Medicaid, and other programs for the white working poor, while billionaires from the tech or surveillance industry, and contractors benefitting from increased militarization are the huge

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[102] Jennifer Hansler, "White South Africans granted refugee status by Trump administration arrive in U.S.," *CNN*, 12 May 2025, https://www.cnn.com/2025/05/12/politics/white-south-africans-refugee-status-arrive-us

[103] U.S. Department of State, "Welcoming Afrikaner Refugees Fleeing Discrimination," *Press Statement*, 12 May 2025, https://www.state.gov/releases/office-of-the-spokesperson/2025/05/welcoming-afrikaner-refugees-fleeing-discrimination/

[104] Nicholas Kristof, "Musk Said No One Has Died Since Aid Was Cut. That Isn't True," *NY Times*, 15 Mar 2025, https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2025/03/15/opinion/foreign-aid-cuts-impact.html

winners of the economic policies.[105] The killing, starvation, and genocide of the displaced indigenous Palestinian population in Gaza by the Israeli army, financially backed and weaponized by U.S. administrations since Biden, is but the latest and starkest example of lives deemed worthless.[106] The famine in Sudan is another example. While a U.S. ally, the United Arab Emirates, backs the Rapid Support Forces in its war on the government, this has contributed to the largest hunger crisis in recent history, with 1.7 million people facing famine.[107]

E. Neo-Colonialism

A striking move of the administration was direct territorial-colonization proclamations in a way unheard of since 1945 when the United States tried to position itself as an anti-imperial benign empire.[108] Annexing Canada, Greenland, and the Panama Canal for their wealth of natural resources, and strategic importance, would strengthen the U.S. superpower status, marking an "intrinsic connection between settler colonialism and capitalism."[109] Going against former Atlantic allies also shows the extent to which former European allies have realized that they are

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[105] Popular Democracy in Action, *Trump's Corporate Oligarchs: Billionaires Cash In While Working People Pay the Price*, 18 June 2025, http://populardemocracyinaction.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Trump-Corporate-Oligarchs.pdf On long-term implications, see also: Cavalcanti, Daniella Medeiros et al., "Evaluating the impact of two decades of U.S.AID interventions and projecting the effects of defunding on mortality up to 2030: a retrospective impact evaluation and forecasting analysis" *The Lancet* Vol. 406, Iss.10500, 283 —294.

[106] Arwa Damon, "Inside the Israeli government's starvation of Gaza, from an aid group trying to deliver food," *Atlantic Council*, 29 July 2025, https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/menasource/inside-the-israeli-governments-starvation-of-gaza-from-an-aid-group-trying-to-deliver-food/

[107] John Prendergast and Anthony Lake, "The UAE's Secret War in Sudan," *Foreign Affairs*, 31 July 2024 https://www.foreignaffairs.com/sudan/uaes-secret-war-sudan

[108] Daniel Immerwahr, *How to hide an Empire. A History of the Greater United States* (NY: Picador, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2019) 179.

[109] Smiles, *Settler colonialism*, 3.

becoming "slaves," abandoning their path of being a "happy vessel,"[110] as the Belgian prime minister called proclaimedduring the Davos 2026 meeting.

This also reveals the instability of whiteness as a category. Once no more of use, the formerly included white ally can easily lose the favor of the global hegemon. The establishment of the Board of Peace is a new "manifestation of colonial administration that preserves imperial dominance while paying lip service to humanitarian concerns."[111] The attack on Venezuela (and later Iran) to take control over the country's vast oil reserves is the latest episode of a capitalist-driven offensive predatory imperial policy.[112]Taken together, a whites first politics intends to reshape the demographics of the U.S.[113] by deporting non-whites, privileging the influx of whites, tolerating the death of millions of non-whites, and profiting on their backs, while expanding economic and political interests in overseas territories.

V. MAKE EUROPE WHITE AGAIN

Media coverage speaks of a growing rift between the U.S. and what are usually considered its European allies. While there are certainly growing tensions when it comes to the management of NATO, tariffs, and other policies, my focus here is on white supremacy. For example, the U.S. administration's call on European leaders to take more responsibility in

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[110] Sarah Davis, "Europe cannot be a 'miserable slave' to Trump: Belgian PM," *The Hill*, 20 Jan 2026, https://thehill.com/policy/international/5697194-belgian-pm-trump-pressure/

[111] "The Board of Peace: A Neo-Colonial Blueprint Disguised as Humanitarian Aid," *Policy Stability*, 18 Feb 2026, https://policystability.com/post/2026-02/the-board-of-peace-a-neo-colonial-blueprint-disguised-as-humanitarian-aid/

[112] Stephen M. Walt, "The Predatory Hegemon: How Trump Wields American Power," *Foreign Affairs*, 3 Feb 2026, https://www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/predatory-hegemon-walt

[113] Brittany Farr, "A Demographic Moral Panic: Fears of a Majority-Minority Future and the Depreciating Value of Whiteness," *The University of Chicago Law Review*, Online (2021), https://lawreview.uchicago.edu/online-archive/demographic-moral-panic-fears-majority-minority-future-and-depreciating-value

financing NATO is not new.[114] What has changed is that the empire has stripped away its benevolent character, the soft power means, and leaves behind its naked hard power; military force and demands something for protection.

In the case of Germany, one of the EU's most important countries, its centrist government vowed to increase its military expenditure by 28 percent to reach $88.5 billion, making it the biggest spender in Central and Western Europe,[115] thus agreeing to share the financial burden of expanded militarization under U.S. leadership.

A. Europe in MAGA's Image

What has indeed changed is a harsher tone alongside a direct interference in internal affairs such as the open U.S. support of far-right opposition parties like the Alternative for Germany during the German elections[116] and speaking out against its designation as extremist by Germany's domestic intelligence service.[117] When U.S. State Secretary defended the "popular AfD," which finished second in the 2025 election, he called "the establishment's deadly open border immigration policies that the AfD opposes" extremist, urging the political leadership to "reverse

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[114] Caroline De Gruyter, "This Is the Europe Dwight Eisenhower Wanted," *Foreign Policy*, 24 mar 2025, https://foreignpolicy.com/2025/03/24/europe-united-trump-dwight-eisenhower-america-wanted/

[115] Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, "Unprecedented rise in global military expenditure as European and Middle East spending surges," 28 Apr 2025, www.sipri.org/media/press-release/2025/unprecedented-rise-global-military-expenditure-european-and-middle-east-spending-surges

[116] Christopher F. Schuetze, "Musk Calls to Congratulate Leader of German Hard-Right Party," *NYT*, 24 Feb 2025, https://www.nytimes.com/2025/02/24/world/europe/musk-afd-weidel-call.html

[117] Nette Nöstlinger, "Trump team clashes with Berlin over AfD designation as right-wing extremist," *Politico*, 3 May 2025, https://www.politico.eu/article/donald-trump-team-clash-berlin-afd-designation-right-wing-extremist/

course," criticizing the intelligence service's designation of the AfD as "not democracy."[118]

Short-term head of DOGE, Elon Musk, spoke at the AfD's party congress.[119] While the GOP does not criticize the German intelligence community's surveillance and criminalization of non-white (especially Muslim) or leftist organizations such as the opposition party The Left (*Die Linke*), it defends the far-right. The Trump administration seems to be interested in reshaping Europe in its own image rather than fully abandoning it. They support those forces, who mirror MAGA, like the far-right faction in the European Parliament, Patriots for Europe, who borrowed their slogan chanting Make Europe Great Again.[120] Hungary's Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) perfectly epitomizes this rapprochement between members of the GOP and their nationalist counterparts in Europe[121] and beyond.[122]

Hence, the abandonment of soft power is not the end of U.S. hegemony.[123] Rather, it is the reimagination of how U.S. hegemony works on the globe by openly and outwardly embracing other nationalist parties and recalibrating power relations.

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[118] Marco Rubio, "Post," *X*, 2 May 2025, https://x.com/SecRubio/status/1918344238468649055

[119] Rachel Treisman, "Elon Musk faces criticism for encouraging Germans to move beyond 'past guilt'," *NPR*, 27 Jan 2025, https://www.npr.org/2025/01/27/nx-s1-5276084/elon-musk-german-far-right-afd-holocaust

[120] The Associated Press, "Europe's far-right leaders applaud Trump and downplay threat of possible U.S. tariffs," *NPR*, 9 Feb 2025, https://www.npr.org/2025/02/09/g-s1-47462/europe-far-right-leaders-meeting

[121] Leila Fadel, "CPAC chair plans more conservative gatherings around the world," *NPR*, 29 may 2025, https://www.npr.org/2025/05/29/nx-s1-5396889/cpac-matt-schlapp-conservatives

[122] Farid Hafez, "Shifting borders: Islamophobia as common ground for building pan-European right-wing unity," *Patterns of Prejudice* 48.5 (2014): 479-499.

[123] Michael Posner, "Trump Is Destroying a Core American Value. The World Will Notice.," *NYT*, 18 May 2025, https://www.nytimes.com/2025/05/18/opinion/trump-soft-power-state.html?smid=nytcore-ios-share&referringSource=articleShare

As the CPAC website says: "We were Trump before Trump after all."[124]

B. Far-Right Consensus Beyond the Nominal Far-Right

When Henry Kissinger argued shortly after the outbreak of the Gaza war that "it was a grave mistake to let in so many people of totally different culture and religion and concepts, because it creates a pressure group inside each country that does that,"[125] he was not echoing a far-right sentiment only. The "grave mistake" he argued German Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel committed when admitting refugees from Syria, has been widely shared by German centrist governments and successors of Merkel that have questioned the Schengen agreement by closing its borders and even intending to send refugees back to Afghanistan and Syria. On his way back from Israel in October 2023, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz from the Social Democrats said: "We have to finally deport (immigrants, FH) in a large scale."[126]

The closing of borders can be seen against the backdrop of a sentiment in power circles that sees itself similarly endangered by the changing demographics decreasing the number of native white people and increasing non-white populations.[127] The fear of a "Great Replacement" that has its origins in far-right literature, was not new to Europe's political elite as a sentiment. It can be traced back to the 1980s,

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[124] "CPAC will return to Hungary for the fifth time in 2026," www.cpachungary.com/en

[125] Politico, "Henry Kissinger on Hamas attacks fallout: Germany let in too many foreigners," *Politico*, 11 Oct 2023, https://www.politico.eu/article/henry-kissinger-germany-let-in-way-too-many-foreigners/

[126] Christoph Hickmann and Dirk Kurbjuweit, ""Wir müssen endlich im großen Stil abschieben"," *Der Spiegel* 43/2023, 20 Oct 2023, https://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/olaf-scholz-ueber-migration-es-kommen-zu-viele-a-2d86d2ac-e55a-4b8f-9766-c7060c2dc38a

[127] ECRE, "Germany: Far-Right 'Remigration' Meeting Provokes Anger in the Streets," *European Council on Refugees and Exiles*, 19 Jan 2024, https://ecre.org/germany-far-right-remigration-meeting-provokes-anger-in-the-streets-chancellor-attributes-decrease-in-irregular-border-crossings-to-stronger-controls-despite-concerns-over-schengen/

when hundreds of thousands of non-white working poor populations immigrated to Europe as temporary "guest workers." In our times, Europe's border regime sees thousands of people dying in silence in the Mediterranean Sea while trying to flee to Europe.[128]

Ideas about a "race suicide" and "great replacement" are even more explicit in Europe's far-right, but can also be found in the political center. Unlike in the U.S., where a selective integration of non-whites has been made possible since the 1960s, white reconstruction in Europe is less about lost power to be reconstituted, but about defending the status quo against the backdrop of a demographic shift that cries for equal representation. With "colonial amnesia" and "racism amnesia"[129] defining European societies, the struggle to maintain white superiority is less about white reconstruction than keeping the status quo in an overwhelmingly white space that does not concede dissenting voices, as the French political elite suggested in the wake of the Black Lives Matter movement that critical "American ideas—specifically on race, gender, post-colonialism—are undermining their society"[130] in the halls of higher education.

Investigative journalists revealed minutes of a far-right meeting discussing what has since become known as "remigration." The participants debated how to find legal means to indirectly force non-white Germans, even with citizenship, out of the country to rescue the original white German population from non-white overpopulation. This draws widely on the Great Replacement conspiracy theory that has its own European forerunners, from Renaud Camus to Jean Raspail.[131] The meeting was held with far-right leaders

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[128] International Committee of the Red Cross, "Counting the Dead: Update 2020-2021," Jan 2024, https://missingpersons.icrc.org/sites/default/files/2024-03/CountingTheDead%20Update%202020-2021_0.pdf

[129] Farid Hafez, *Governing Islam in Austria and Germany: From Colonial Times to the Present* (NY: Oxford University Press, 2026), xi.

[130] Norimitsu Orishi, "Will American Ideas Tear France Apart? Some of Its Leaders Think So," *NY Times*, 2 Sep 2021, https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/09/world/europe/france-threat-american-universities.html

[131] Hahn, *Illiberal America*, 335.

but also the former director of Germany's domestic intelligence service, who was given the task to expand on the ideas shared in the meeting.[132]

Before embracing more far-right ideas in public, he had been nominated by a center-right-led government and directed an institution that already made life for racialized populations such as organized Muslims miserable by criminalizing their institutions. While thousands took to the streets to protest this meeting, the idea to build a fortress Germany has become more accepted in the current "centrist" government.

In a post that Maaßen shared later on Facebook, he proudly noted that he "doesn't speak about remigration. I rather prefer the German word '*Rückführung*' (return), as I have already laid down in my book in 1997,"[133] posting an image of his then-published monograph. Maaßen is a prime example of how unnoticed but deep racial thinking runs in the centers of power. Politicians like the short-lived Israeli prime minister Naftali Bennett have reverberated this fear that "Europe is becoming Islamic."[134]

More outspoken far-right actors such as the British Katie Hopkins go much further in public, arguing that "the time of crusades will need to come again" as "demographically, we are already overrun,"[135] effectively calling for a civil war. Or as investigative reporters regularly reveal genocidal thinking from the inside of the far-right, such as one example in which a woman shared her dreams for a

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[132] Nicoletta Ionta, "'Remigration' conclave: Europe's far-right to plot mass deportations at Italian gathering," *Euractiv*, 12 May 2025, https://www.euractiv.com/section/politics/news/remigration-conclave-europes-far-right-to-plot-mass-deportations-at-italian-gathering/

[133] Hans-Georg Maaßen, "Post," *Facebook*, 17 June, https://www.facebook.com/HansGeorgMaassen/posts/pfbid0CTFWcFmtXkD6tFuyQm7pA7Ndnx4VCGvBgjQDGPqMGydNZQoygNqBEQNXSASorE7Ql

[134] Naftali Bennet, "Post," *X*, Aug 18, 2025, https://x.com/naftalibennett/status/1957318400109101487

[135] Budbromley, "This is not only about the UK," *Blog*, 7 Oct 2025, https://budbromley.blog/2025/10/06/this-is-not-only-about-the-uk/

Srebrenica 2.0 for Muslims in Germany.[136]Other European countries such as Spain have implemented immigration policies that prioritize immigrants from Latin America due to their fluency in Spanish and Catholic identity, allowing them to apply for citizenship after only two years.[137]

C. Immigration Politics

MAGA speaks to a much more widespread sentiment that relates to mainstream politics.In 2024, the European Union adopted more favorable Schengen visa rules for Indians. This shift can be understood against the backdrop of the Modi government's Hindutva ideology, which promotes an imagined anti-Muslim national identity. Within this ideal framework, Indians are increasingly cast as the ideal counterpart to Muslim immigrants: hard-working, highly skilled, and readily assimilable because of their presumed non-Muslim identity[138]

And finally, the political elite does not wish to accept them forever. Similarly, it is temporary immigration as it was with many European "guest workers" of the 1960s. At the same time, the European Union creates a violent frontier on its borders by externalizing its migration politics to contracted authoritarian regimes,[139] effectively trying to keep out African, Near Eastern, and Muslim populations in

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[136] "German right-wingers called for 'Srebrenica 2.0' to Exterminate Muslims in Germany," *Sarajevo Times*, 31 Aug 2024, https://sarajevotimes.com/german-right-wingers-called-for-srebrenica-2-0-to-exterminate-muslims-in-germany/

[137] Omar G. Encarnación, "Spain Is an Example to the World," *NYT*, 11 Aug 2025, https://www.nytimes.com/2025/08/11/opinion/spain-immigration-sanchez-amnesty.html.

[138] Delegation of the European Union to India and Bhuttan, "European Union adopts more favourable Schengen visa rules for Indians," *EEAS*, 22 April 2025, https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/india/european-union-adopts-more-favourable-schengen-visa-rules-indians_en?s=167

[139] Yasmine Zarhloule, "Migrants at the Gate: Europe Tries to Curb Undocumented Migration," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, 28 Feb 2025, https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2025/02/migrants-at-the-gate-europe-tries-to-curb-undocumented-migration?lang=en

similar brutal ways, but with less publicity compared to the Trump administration.

D. Where Is Europe vis-à-vis the U.S.?

European leaders had grown anxious of the U.S.'s imperial and transactional behavior, that does away with restrictive liberal internationalism.[140] In the latest iteration, European leaders including Ursula van der Leyen felt huge relieve after U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio's speech at the Munich Security Conference in February 2026, reminding the world audience that many European leaders share the white supremacist sentiments that were laid out when he praised "missionaries, its pilgrims, its soldiers, its explorers pouring out from its shores to cross oceans, settle new continents, build vast empires extending out across the globe" and lashing out against "anti-colonial uprisings" that terminated this era of Western expansion.[141]

Rubio received standing ovations after framing the United States and Europe as "part of one civilization —Western civilization… bound to one another by the deepest bonds that nations could share, forged by centuries of shared history, Christian faith, culture, heritage, language, ancestry, and the sacrifices our forefathers made together for the common civilization to which we have fallen heir."[142]

While many European leaders felt relieved, it was a reminder that a white-Christian identity construction built into a discourse of civilization was a common ground that European centrist leaders could also share. This sentiment demonstrated more uniting power than the threat they felt when their handling of the AfD was challenged by Vance a year ago.

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[140] Colin Flint, "Hegemonic retreat: Transactionalism as foreign policy," *The Geographical Journal*, 1 May 2025, https://doi.org/10.1111/geoj.70007

[141] "Secretary of State Marco Rubio at the Munich Security Conference. Remarks by Marco Rubio at the Hotel Bayerischer Hof Munich," 14 Feb 2026, https://www.state.gov/releases/office-of-the-spokesperson/2026/02/secretary-of-state-marco-rubio-at-the-munich-security-conference

[142] Ibid.

VI. CONCLUSION

MAGA draws on a long-standing, normalized system rooted in colonial and racist violence. White supremacy functions here to reorganize society by creating and sustaining hierarchies across all areas of life, from the environment to knowledge production, reviving a past that was built on racial and colonial domination as its foundational conditions. The Trump administration's immigration and cultural policies, shaped by Project 2025, focus on mass deportation, revoking legal statuses, and building an expansive detention and surveillance system both domestically and offshore framed by the rhetoric of "invasion" and driven by a vision of a male, white, Christian nationalist America.

MAGA translates into a militarization of American society as manifested in deploying the National Guard for domestic purposes and flooding the streets with ICE that can even result in the killing of white allies against white supremacy.[143] As an LA-based journalist said, on a domestic level, "Trump's message is clear… It's not only about illegal immigrants. It's about giving all non-white people in America a message, telling them who is the boss."[144] Policies targeting immigrants, pro-Palestinian activists, imperialism, and marginalized communities are accompanied with attempts to erase pluralism, effectively reshaping the U.S. into a society that prioritizes whiteness, Christian identity, and traditional hierarchies.

The Trump administration's fight against antisemitism has largely served as a tool to suppress pro-Palestinian voices and target immigrants of color, rather than genuinely protect Jewish communities—evident in selective enforcement and downplaying of actual white nationalist antisemitism. At the same

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[143] Harry Sekulich, "FBI won't co-operate on Alex Pretti investigation, state officials say," *BBC*, 16 Feb 2026, https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/crk8nxg1p4xo

[144] Klaus Stimeder, "Trump gegen die Straßen von Los Angeles: "Man glaubt fast, im Krieg zu sein"," *Der Standard*, 13 June 2025, https://www.derstandard.at/story/3000000273942/in-den-stra223en-von-la?ref=login_federated

time, its immigration and foreign policies reveal a racialized agenda: welcoming white South African refugees while dismantling U.S. AID and cutting life-saving aid to non-white populations globally. Together, these moves reflect a broader "whites-first" ideology aimed at reshaping U.S. demographics and reinforcing white dominance at home and abroad.

While many experts suggest a rift between the U.S. and Europe, the Trump administration's foreign policy reflects not a break but a shift from soft to hard power—backing far-right movements, reshaping allies in its own image, or reforming the old ally in the MAGA image. This includes further militarization of governments, a sharing of the economic burden of NATO, but also support for nationalist parties, and most importantly a shared agenda of racialized immigration control rooted in fears of demographic change.

The broader strategy reveals not a retreat from global hegemony but a rebranding of it through white racial alignments across the Global North. The MAGA movement's foreign and immigration policies reflect a "whites first" politics reflects a willingness to tolerate the mass suffering and death of primarily non-white populations at home and abroad, in stark contrast to the selective rescue of white people.

In essence, this policy orientation seeks to address a perceived crisis of whiteness, a longstanding racial anxiety rooted in fears of demographic decline, which has reemerged prominently in contemporary conservative and far-right discourses as manifested in political discourses that echo the angst of a "Great Replacement."

Whoever questions or opposes authoritarian policies from within the country, whether judges, public media, or political dissidents, is treated as a target to be crushed, as can be seen with the increasing attack on the judiciary, the $9 billion cut to public media, intending to ruin NPR and CBS,[145] the pressure on media entities to fire their critical

[145] Scott Neuman and Lexie Schapitl, "Congress rolls back $9 billion in public media funding and foreign aid," *NPR*, 18 July 2025, https://www.npr.org/2025/07/18/nx-s1-5469912/npr-congress-rescission-funding-trump

comedians who have criticized the president,[146] or the criminalization[147] of activists opposing government policies.[148] These forces of resistance, who fight against these measures on the streets and with the law, are defamed as being "lawless radicals" and "lunatics" or "homegrown terrorists." This finally shows the instability of the category of whiteness itself, a concept that is mobilized, but can never be assured, as the threats of Trump vis-à-vis Musk or the killing of white protesters in Minnesota have shown.

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[146] Billy Eichner, "Jimmy Kimmel's Suspension Is an Attack on Our Fundamental Rights," *Rolling Stones*, 21 Sep 2025, https://www.rollingstone.com/tv-movies/tv-movie-features/billy-eichner-jimmy-kimmel-suspension-trump-1235431969/

[147] Akela Lacy, "Feds Make It a Crime to Give PPE to ICE Protesters," *The Intercept*, 23 July 2025, https://theintercept.com/2025/07/23/feds-criminalize-protests-masked-ice/

[148] John A. Powell, "Show Them Who We Are," *Othering and Belonging Institute*, 13 June 2025, https://belonging.berkeley.edu/john-powell-show-them-who-we-are?emci=0c278dca-2043-f011-8f7c-6045bdfe8e9c&emdi=0bfff2e6-544c-f011-8f7c-6045bdfe8e9c&ceid=18692112