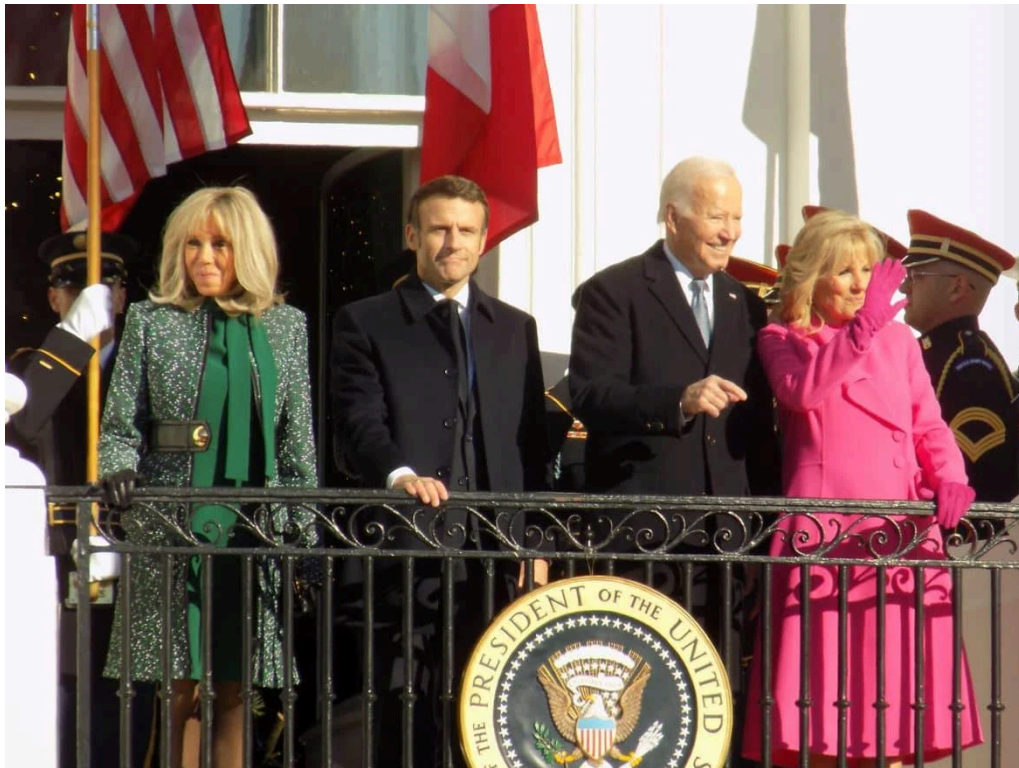


# Pomp, Circumstance and a Shared Vision of the Future Mark Macron Visit

December 1, 2022 **by Dan McCue**



Brigitte Macron, French President Emmanuel Macron, President Joe Biden and First Lady Jill Biden on the balcony of the White House.  
(Photo by Dan McCue)

WASHINGTON — Pomp and military flare were on vivid display on the South Lawn of the White House early Thursday morning as President Joe Biden formally welcomed his French counterpart, President Emmanuel Macron, to the executive mansion.

Though the two leaders have had many meetings at international gatherings, most recently at the G20 in Bali, Indonesia, Macron's visit to the United States, which in addition to Washington, will

include a stop in New Orleans, Louisiana, is the first time the two men will have spent such an extended time with one another.

Last night, the president and First Lady Dr. Biden dined with Macron and his wife Brigitte at Fiola Mare, an upscale Italian seafood restaurant on the Georgetown waterfront.

Among the gifts Macron brought along were vinyl and CD versions of the original soundtrack of Claude Lelouch's 1966 film "Un Homme et une Femme," the film the Bidens went to see on their first date, according to the Élysée Palace.

The Bidens presented Macron with a custom mirror made of fallen wood from the White House grounds and a custom vinyl record collection of great American musicians.

After a Thursday marked by a bilateral meeting in the Oval Office and a joint press conference — not to mention a lunch at the State Department — Macron's stay in the nation's capital will be capped by a **State Dinner** in a candle-lit pavilion on the South Lawn.

White House staffers said about 200 Maine lobsters have been flown in for the occasion.

The biggest news to emerge from the meeting of the two leaders on Thursday was Biden's pledge to make changes to the Inflation Reduction Act to assuage fears among European nations that it will boost U.S. businesses while harming their economies.

During a joint press conference in the East Room of the White House, Biden said the incentives designed to boost domestic production of computer chips and solar panels and the like, were never intended to exclude the nation's European allies from the U.S. market.

He

French President Emmanuel Macron (right), with (from left)  
Brigitte Macron and First Lady Jill Biden. (Photo by Dan McCue)

also said ambitious pieces of legislation often need fine-tuning once unintended consequences emerge.

“There are tweaks that we can make that can fundamentally make it easier for European countries to participate and/or be on their own,” Biden said.

For his part, Macron said, “France did not come here to ask for some kind of exception for its economy. We came to share how the consequences of this regulation impact us.”

Though Biden didn’t offer any specifics as to what the changes might be, he said, “We’re going to continue to create

manufacturing jobs in America but not at the expense of Europe.”

“We agreed to resynchronize our approaches,” Macron said. “In order to invest in critical emerging industries, like those involving semi-conductors, batteries and hydrogen.”

Both men vowed to continue to support Ukraine in the unprovoked war started by Russia last spring, and in a joint statement issued after their Oval Office meeting, Biden and Macron said they agree that Russia needs to be held to account “for widely documented atrocities and war crimes, committed both by its regular armed forces and by its proxies.”

At the press conference, Biden said he would be willing to talk to Russian President Vladimir Putin, but only if Putin is willing to end the ongoing invasion.

“I’m prepared, if he’s willing to talk, [to] find out what he’s willing to do,” Biden told the reporters in attendance.

But he went on to say he would only engage in such a dialogue after consultation with the United States’ North Atlantic Treaty Organization allies.

“I’m not going to do it on my own,” he said.

He and Macron also agreed at Thursday’s meeting to coordinate their response to “China’s challenge to the rules-based international order, including respect for human rights and to work together with China on important global issues like climate change.”

This is actually Macron’s second state visit to the United States, his first coming during the Trump administration. But that didn’t quell the excitement surrounding this visit.

A portion of the military arrival ceremony honoring French President Emmanuel Macron. (Photo by Dan McCue)

Invited spectators for the welcoming ceremony lined up before dawn on a 15th Street that was already decorated with American and French flags.

Large French and American flags also adorned the Old Executive Office building and the French flag flew over Blair House, across the street from the White House, where the Macrons are staying during their visit.

The actual arrival ceremony itself featured a military honor guard representing every branch of the service, a red-jacketed colonial band with the Fife and Drum Corps.

As their wives looked on, Biden and Macron stood at attention on the podium set up for welcoming remarks while the two nations' national anthems were played.

They then jointly walked the perimeter of the field in front of them, inspecting the troops that stood at attention before them.

"The temperature may be a little chilly on this December night — day, but our hearts are warm ... to welcome such close friends to the White House," Biden said at the beginning of his prepared remarks.

"President Macron and Brigitte, members of the French delegation, distinguished guests: It's an honor — a genuine honor — to host you for the first state visit of my administration and to celebrate the enduring strength and vitality of the great friendship between France and the United States of America," he said.

"From the spirit of the Marquis de Lafayette, who helped secure the success of our revolution, to the sacrifice of American GIs who stormed the beaches of Normandy, our history has been shaped by the courage of the women and men who crossed the Atlantic, carrying within their hearts the flame of liberty," the president continued. "Today, that flame burns more brightly than ever and the alliance between our two nations remains essential to our mutual defense.

"Stalwart friends in times of triumph and of trial, France and the United States will meet the future, just as we always have: confident in our shared capacity, sustained by the strength of our shared values, and undaunted by any challenge that lies ahead," Biden said. "And the connections that we are building today between our students, our businesses, our trailblazers will see

our

A military band salutes French President Emmanuel Macron.

(Photo by Dan McCue)

alliance continue to prosper and grow stronger for decades to come.”

Macron began by saying both nations “bear a duty” to the shared history Biden mentioned.

“As war returns to the European soil following Russia’s aggression against Ukraine and in light of the multiple crises our nations and our societies face, we need to become brothers in arms once more,” he said.

“This spirit of fraternity must enable us to build an agenda of ambition and hope, as our two countries share the same faith in freedom, in democratic values, in empowerment through

education and work, and in progress through science and knowledge,” Macron said.

“Our democracies on both sides of the ocean are being shaken by the same doubts as to our ability to be sufficiently strong and effective when it comes to the challenges we share — those of the climate, geopolitics and technology. They’re in doubt in the face of relativism, hate speech, false information and today’s fears.

“United today by the same determination and the same strength of mind, together we need to find a path to offer a possible future for our children — one of prosperity, justice and ecology,” he continued.

“Together, we need to work to rebuild the unity of our societies through respect and recognition — the only means to eradicate hate,” Macron said. “Together, we need to frame new world balances to bring peace and build a renewed, more equitable partnership with the global south.

“Our new frontiers are there, and it is our shared responsibility to respond to this. And to that effect, the United States and France — the strongest allies — are there, because our relationship is rooted in centuries,” the French president said.

“It is our shared destiny to respond to those challenges together — true to our history, clear-sighted of our world and determined to generate hope. Long live the friendship between the United States and France,” Macron said.

Military arrival ceremonies for visiting foreign dignitaries are as old, if not older, than the two republics celebrated on Thursday morning. Initially a protective service, over time the function of the military representatives became more and more ceremonial.



The pavilion on the South Lawn of the White House where the State Dinner will be held Thursday night. (Photo by Dan McCue)

During the Truman administration, heads of state would be met at Washington National Airport, where the president and his guest would deliver remarks of greeting before being driven to the White House in a motorcade accompanied by marching troops and bands.

President Eisenhower continued the tradition, though he moved the arrival ceremony to Andrews Air Force Base and the welcoming ceremony to the West Grounds of the Washington Monument.

It was President John F. Kennedy who brought the welcoming ceremony to the South Lawn of the White House, and it has been held there ever since.\*

\*Details on the traditions associated with welcoming foreign heads of state were taken from the official program for Thursday morning's event at the White House.

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