

# Daily Journal

*“Be just and fear not.”*

## **Reagan: Isolationism will never be acceptable**

Bill Crawford

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On June 6, 1944, Operation Overlord commenced, the U.S. led invasion at Normandy that would ultimately doom Hitler and free Europe. Since that time the U.S. has played a major role in sustaining Europe’s defense and freedom. This role was formalized on April 4, 1949, when the North Atlantic Treaty was signed.

The resulting North Atlantic Treaty Organization had three purposes: (1) deterring Soviet expansionism; (2) forbidding the revival of nationalist militarism in Europe through a strong North American presence on the continent; and (3) encouraging European political integration.

Mission accomplished ... so far. A great stroke for freedom and peaceful Europe.

The NATO alliance held strong until one Donald J. Trump was elected president and became Commander-in-Chief of the United States’ military. Almost immediately, Trump began to pull away from NATO as he warmed up to Russian President Vladimir Putin. National security adviser John Bolton said he had to talk Trump out of exiting NATO in 2018. At a Heritage Foundation leadership conference in April the former president admitted he had threatened to not defend NATO allies from Russian aggression. That followed his praise in February for Putin’s

strategy to take over part of the Ukraine, calling the move “genius.” Trump has also encouraged his acolytes in the House and Senate to oppose supplying Ukraine funding and arms.

There should be little doubt Putin would have taken over Ukraine by now and begun to move on other former Soviet satellites had Trump remained president. Instead, the United States has worked with our European allies to not only arm and support Ukraine but also to strengthen NATO.

Yet, Trump forces would readily move in the opposite direction. They see any international cooperation as harmful entanglements. [Axios.com](https://www.axios.com) reported that Sen. Rand Paul, who led Senate opposition to helping Ukraine, “huddled” in his office with key influencers to plot isolationist strategy. “They included representatives from the Koch political network, Cato Institute, populist-oriented group American Moment and the American Conservative magazine.”

So far Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell and his leadership team have held off Paul and his allies. But with Republican nominees in several states poised to help Republicans take back the Senate and House in this year’s elections, the cadre of isolationist senators and representatives is expected to grow.

How they see us holding back the expansion of Russia and China without strong international alliances is hard to fathom. Putin’s intentions in Europe have been clear since he invaded Crimea in 2014. China makes no secret of its long term intentions to take over Taiwan and control sea routes vital to international commerce.

President Ronald Reagan exposed the truth when he said, “We in America have learned bitter lessons from two world wars: It is better to be ... ready to protect the peace, than to take blind shelter across the sea, rushing to respond only after freedom is lost. We've learned that

isolationism never was and never will be an acceptable response to tyrannical governments with an expansionist intent.”

Remember that on June 6 as we honor the lives spent for freedom on D-Day.