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COMMENTARY

Discussion on the US National Security Strategy

AUTHOR
Andrius Vyšniauskas

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- The National Security Strategy is an official document of the US administration with a mandate for implementation; therefore, it needs to be evaluated literally and seriously.
- The document differs significantly from the strategy of Donald Trump's first term: most importantly for Lithuania, it lacks a clear designation of Russia as a threat and an emphasis on the importance of the NATO alliance. This is a qualitative difference in this strategy compared to US national security strategies published in recent decades.
- On one hand, US foreign and security policy is being turned towards limiting directions of action – and this is not mere rhetoric, but a new US national security code. This stems not only from ideology but also from a rational assessment that the US no longer has the capabilities to ensure stability in two theaters (Europe and the Indo-Pacific region).
- A return to the logic of the Monroe Doctrine is visible in the strategy: the primary vital US interest is the stability of the Western Hemisphere, which they will defend at any cost.
- The US is sending a signal to other major powers (Russia, China) that the boundaries of interests can be revised depending on the distribution of power.
- A new and particularly important element of the US strategy is pure business interests. Business and personal interests within the US elite make the implementation of the strategy difficult to predict.

US and Europe

- US priorities are no longer in Europe. A broad consensus prevails in Washington that Europe must defend itself.
- The strategy emphasizes non-interference in the governance of other states, yet simultaneously declares the direction of EU governance unacceptable. The US clearly identifies support for so-called "patriotic forces" within the EU, which, although the strategy does not state this, seek EU disintegration. This coincides with the strategy's visible aim to weaken EU unity and its ability to make unified, effective decisions.
- A strong, autonomous Europe is viewed as a risk factor that could become a counterweight to the US.
- US strategy is based on the logic that Europe has sufficient resources but lacks the political will to implement significant change, for example, in the development of defense capabilities.
- The belief that the strategic approach to Europe will fundamentally change with a change in US administration is naive.

US and Lithuania

- The primary premise of Lithuania's foreign policy should be to acknowledge that the US national security strategy marks a significant shift in how the US thinks about and structures action in international politics. It would be a mistake to assume that the strategy is merely a change in

the nuances of US foreign policy rather than its essence.

- For long decades, Lithuania has based its foreign and defense policy on the synergy of transatlantic relations, investing attention in parallel to both Washington and Brussels. The skepticism coming from the US regarding the European Union is dangerous to Lithuania's national interests.
- Lithuanian diplomacy, more than ever before, needs to act actively within the US scope of attention, speaking about the importance of transatlantic relations for ensuring international peace and stability.
- Lithuania must show by its own example how to comprehensively develop the country's defense capabilities. Lithuania's defense policy and strategy must be formulated such that the country is prepared to defend itself alone for some time until allies arrive.

Prepared based on the discussion of the US National Security Strategy held at the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania on January 5, 2026, with the TS-LKD political group.

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