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Dangerous Conditions for a Crossing

French politicians have become increasingly erratic and confrontational in recent months. We count outright threats of energy and goods blockades by fisheries minister Annick Girardin, Macron's accusations of treachery over the AUKUS pact, and recently foreign minister Yves Le-Drian's claim that Boris Johnson is a 'populist uses all the elements at his disposal to blame others for problems he faces internally'.

This last, needless to say, is more typical of his own government's conduct. In response to a reasonable and moderate letter by Johnson which the UK published via Twitter, France disinvited Home Secretary Priti Patel from multilateral talks about the current migrant problem.

France may be feeling emboldened by a show of support from the European Commission, which has asked Britain to resolve the problems around the licensing of new boats by December 10th. With this political background understood, France's conduct in effectively using migration enforcement as a bargaining chip becomes more understandable – though not more justifiable.



Giving a Green Light to Ever-Closer Union

Elsewhere in Europe, the new 'traffic light' coalition deal announced between Germany's Social Democrats, Greens and Liberals makes a far more sweeping commitment to Euro-federalism than Angela Merkel ever countenanced. This in turn will further inflame building tensions over the role of the

European Court of Justice. Germany's new coalition has also endorsed further EU military integration – but falls short of committing to NATO's target of 2% spending on defence.

This change in tack from Europe's most populous country and largest economy will have substantial repercussions. It underscores that the UK was lucky to leave before the steady ratchet of integration made doing so effectively impossible.