What’s the Matter With Norway?

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President Trump reportedly touted Norway last week, comparing it favorably with Haiti and other countries he described in scatological terms. Though there are surely wonderful Norwegians, the government in Oslo calls to mind the Barry Switzer line: “Some people are born on third base and go through life thinking they hit a triple.”

Norway is fabulously wealthy, thanks to North Sea oil. Its economic output per capita is 20% higher than America’s. Little Norway’s government pension fund is the world’s third largest, valued at around $1 trillion. Lucky geography has allowed the country to become a cradle-to-grave welfare state, with free university tuition and universal health care. Norwegians topped the global happiness rankings in 2017. Only 502 of them moved to the U.S. in 2016.

Last week Mr. Trump praised Norway as a “great ally.” Despite vast wealth and generous social spending, however, the Norwegians skimp when it comes to the common defense of the U.S. and Europe. Norway is a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, but it consistently fails to meet the NATO guideline of putting 2% of gross domestic product toward its military. Instead, Norway relies for protection on the U.S., which spent 3.3% of GDP on defense in 2016.

One might expect Norwegians to appreciate the imbalance in their favor. But at times Oslo acts toward the U.S. like some cartoon “limousine liberal” who sneers at the cops and the methods they use to protect his neighborhood. Norway’s government pension fund has singled out for divestment several U.S. defense contractors—including [Boeing](http://quotes.wsj.com/BA) , [Honeywell](http://quotes.wsj.com/HON) , [Lockheed Martin](http://quotes.wsj.com/LMT) and [Northrop Grumman](http://quotes.wsj.com/NOC) —“because they are involved in production of nuclear weapons.” But these companies help make such weapons only for the U.S. government, and NATO’s most recent strategic review declares America’s nuclear umbrella to be “the supreme guarantee” of the alliance’s security.

Norway’s pension fund divested from [Wal-Mart](http://quotes.wsj.com/WMT) for purported “serious violations of human rights.” Despite Norway’s reliance on oil, the fund has divested from some two dozen U.S. companies because they produce a different fossil fuel, coal.

In 2016 Norway’s government authorized its pension fund, controlled by the country’s finance ministry, to purchase Iranian government bonds. Thus, the fund boycotts U.S. defense companies, while allowing investments in the government of Iran, the leading state sponsor of terrorism and a patron of Bashar Assad’s atrocities in Syria. Norway is also quickly building academic, banking, energy and other ties with Tehran.

That’s a contrast with Oslo’s cool stance toward Israel. In May, Norway’s biggest trade union, which represents a quarter of the working-age population, voted for a complete boycott of Israel. Press reports in December suggested that Oslo would cut funding for nongovernmental groups that advocate boycotts of Israel. But on Jan. 2 the Norwegian mission in Palestine announced that no policy had changed and “as before, the Norwegian Government will not provide support to organizations that have stated boycott of Israel as their primary goa l” (emphasis added). At the United Nations last month, Norway voted to criticize America’s recognition of Jerusalem as Israel’s capital. Haiti abstained.

Rather than praise Norway, Mr. Trump should be holding it accountable for how it chooses to spend—or not spend—the vast fortune it received from geography’s lottery. As a NATO member whose defense is subsidized by the U.S., Norway should not be investing in enemy governments while undermining allies and American defense contractors. Worryingly, these actions are part of a growing pattern in Europe. Many governments are happy taking shelter under America’s defense umbrella while boycotting the companies that make it possible.

There is currently no U.S. government office that tracks or counters such boycotts, but there ought to be. An obvious place to start is the Commerce Department, which does have a small office focused on Arab government boycotts of Israel. That mission should first be expanded to include anti-Israel boycotts fostered by the U.N. and other international organizations. Then the Commerce Department unfortunately needs to start protecting American companies and workers from a broader range of boycotts, including Norway’s.