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MACRON DOES BELGIUM ...

YOUR 60-SECOND GUIDE: Emmanuel Macron yesterday gave a speech at the College of Europe in Bruges, met with Trade Commissioner Cecilia Malmström, joined me and Pierre Briand for an hour-long, onstage interview, and then headed to woo the European Parliament in a packed day trip to Brussels, after a weekend of British media interviews.

TOP MACRON QUOTE: “Why are we in this situation like this one with Front National? Why? Because the two classical political parties failed in proposing something convincing to people ... I am not the one who created such a situation.”

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FULL INTERVIEW — PODCAST HERE: <http://bit.ly/1Vf4UHU>

12 THINGS WE NOW KNOW ABOUT EMMANUEL MACRON ...

1. **He “felt excluded,”** as a non-politician, from France’s administrative elite and will lay out an “inclusive” political manifesto for his new movement by the end of 2016 at latest.
2. **A crowd-sourced political census is coming,** conducted by volunteers to Macron’s En Marche movement, to be used as the basis for the manifesto.
3. **The new French class system:** Macron agreed with Playbook that the current French welfare state and economic rules, the “post-World War II structure,” blocks mobility as the U.K. class system previously blocked Britons.
4. **The current political offer is insufficient** for France to meet its needs, and the Front National “clan” succeeds only because of the “mediocrity of the debate.”
5. **He will not commit to supporting François Hollande** for president (but won’t commit to running himself, either). “I am very close to him,” Macron says, but puts his responsibility to his new movement first.
6. **He believes 2017 is a unique opportunity** for Germany and France to debate their politics differently, and after the elections, do two things: agree to EU treaty change and agree on more elements of a transfer union to make the EU work more efficiently.
7. **Democracy is built on the middle classes:** Lose them and lose democracy.
8. **He can’t remember the last time he assembled IKEA furniture.** But swears he has assembled it at some point.
9. **EU too slow to survive domestic political standards:** Macron thinks European Commission procedures and pace would not survive domestic political scrutiny — for example taking “nine months instead of two” to take action against cheap Chinese steel imports.
10. **But the EU is framed positively:** “There can be no success without Europe.”
11. **TTIP is not dead,** but he won’t agree a poor compromise just to fit into the U.S. presidential cycle: “We have to be extremely demanding.”
12. **Rejects the idea that one can’t lead at age 38.** “The argument that I am 38 is not an argument ... Are you better qualified to understand the current world at 70? ... I am much more a risk-taker.” <http://politi.co/22JBDUM>

REACTIONS TO MACRON'S CROSS-BORDER MEDIA TOUR ...

Le Monde asks if Macron is the new Tony Blair: <http://bit.ly/1VeP403>

The College of Europe rector introduced Macron as “Monsieur le President.” Oops!
<http://bit.ly/1SVUBSN>

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