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## California Takes On a New Responsibility in U.S. Politics: Enlightening the Rest of the Country

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The first maps that European explorers drew of California [showed it as an island](#). It was fully detached, separated by a wide gulf from the rest of the continental landmass, standing apart from the rest of the New World. This is both one of the most famous cartographic mistakes in history and one of the most telling. Later, ever since California became a state, residents have viewed their land and their politics as a world apart.

This was never more true than during the Trump era. When national politics lurched right, the state moved to isolate itself to protect its progressive policies. The day after Donald Trump's election, California's [legislative leaders wrote](#), "Today, we woke up feeling like strangers in a foreign land" but called their state "a refuge of justice and opportunity," vowing that "California will defend its people and our progress." California declared itself a sanctuary state to protect immigrants and enacted a ban on government-funded travel to states with anti-LGBTQ policies.