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FRIEDRICH MERZ CHALLENGES URSULA VON DER LEYEN FOR EUROPE'S CROWN

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By NICHOLAS VINO CUR and RASMUS BUCHSTEINER

Ursula von der Leyen was Angela Merkel's protégé. Friedrich Merz was her rival. Who will lead Europe?

Ursula von der Leyen is about to face the most serious challenge to her leadership since she became European Commission president six years ago.

And it won't come from Hungary's Viktor Orbán. It will come from her own supposed party ally, Germany's expected chancellor-to-be, Friedrich Merz.

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