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FILLING THE

44 pages on the new world order*

VOID



*or lack thereof

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Power boost

The EU must win the conflicts of the future

BY SIGMAR GABRIEL

Since the beginning of the 21st century, Europe has rarely been associated with power. Complaints about Europe's weakness are the rule, especially among those Europeans who too often favor depressive self-reflection over strategic observation, Germany included. Only one hundred years ago, just before World War I, European powers were at their imperial peak – and the US was beginning its rise. Many countries that are now our equal partners were, at that time, targets of European might. More than a century later, a very different Europe must still find its place in a rapidly changing world. If Europe wants to remain a major pole in the evolving world order, it needs power.

First of all, we should not underestimate the power we have; Europe is a powerful magnet in the eyes of the millions of refugees and migrants who choose Europe as their destiny. Its soft power may frighten some leaders in the EU neighborhood when their own people wave blue flags with twelve golden stars in public squares. Europe is sometimes a safe haven for journalists, politicians and citizens, when they appeal to the European Court of Human Rights.

The European Union also exerts economic hard power when the European Commission, representing more than 510 million people in a common market with a GDP of \$17 trillion, takes a tough stance in negotiations on trade agreements. Moreover, Europe matters when the European Union, aligned with other European partners, imposes economic sanctions in reaction to the illegal annexation of Crimea or against the regime in North Korea. Finally, the EU and its member states are also a humanitarian power. They are the biggest donors of humanitarian aid and development assistance, and major financial contributors when it comes to mitigating climate change and funding adaptation projects to support developing countries.

Europe in this sense is a pole of its own in a multipolar world – with real but limited power projection capabilities. Yet it is not equidistant from the other poles. It is by far closest to the United States as the source and defender of the liberal world order – even when the United States seems to disassociate itself from that role. Common history

and values – as well as the role the US played in Europe in two World Wars, during the Cold War and in the 1990s – have formed robust bonds. NATO is the most successful alliance in history, and remains strong to this very day. Germany is committed to doing its part in our common efforts, in the Baltics, in Kosovo, in Afghanistan and in NATO's headquarters and command chain. Germany has always acknowledged that the aim of combining European soft and hard power to create real "smart power" has an important military component.

How do we make Europe militarily strong and efficient? How can Europe gain a significant capability for military power projection that will enable us to uphold the rules and norms of the UN Charter? First, we all know that nothing comes from nothing; a sound and strong economy is the basis for any investment. In democracies, having a growing economy is the best way to avoid budgetary battles in which the armed

HOW DO WE MAKE EUROPE MILITARILY STRONG AND EFFICIENT?

forces suffer. Therefore, supporting the economic recovery of our European allies, especially in the south, is not only a question of European solidarity; it is also in Germany's security interests. If we were to lose the support of the people of Europe for the European cause, we would only weaken Europe. This is why it is sensible to reach out to President Emmanuel Macron to discuss his ideas on the future of Europe.

At the same time we must not repeat the mistakes of the past and base our political planning on the wrong assumptions. World history provides no set path towards perpetual peace, in Immanuel Kant's sense. If Europe ever wants to be a strategic power, we must look beyond our horizons and plan for the world we do not yet know. It is therefore neither reckless nor anti-American to imagine a Europe without the United States. Anyone who has ever had a nightmare knows that the thoughts we have are not always the thoughts we wish to have. If a time traveler from 2050 were to assure us today that the US presence in Europe would endure, we would be able to relax. Yet now, in 2018, we cannot. We must strive to keep the US as close as possible,

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Power outage

"America first" means America alone

BY CONSTANZE STELZENMÜLLER

In past decades – a time we may yet come to refer to wistfully as "the good old days" – America's national security elites have tended to be somewhat blasé about the National Security Strategy (NSS). In 1986, a Congress alarmed by US policy failures in Vietnam, Iran and Grenada had decreed that this document should be produced at the outset of each new administration to explain the principles and goals of the president's grand strategy.

On occasion these exercises proclaimed a genuine strategic shift that would make headlines worldwide. This was the case in 2002, when President George W. Bush issued a NSS declaring that the US might undertake preemptive strikes against adversaries armed with weapons of mass destruction. After appalled reactions from the international community, this never-implemented threat was retracted in the subsequent document.

Far more often they produced a stew of strategic platitudes rendered in boilerplate language, a testament to the tortuous "interagency process" by which the American federal executive explains its thinking to itself. Sometimes a paper was no sooner published than it was obviated by events. Survivors of the process were prone to intimate in a strangled whisper that they would rather be waterboarded than have to go through it all again.

Germany's "Iron Chancellor" Otto von Bismarck famously said that two things should never be exposed to public view: the making of sausage and the making of laws. Were he alive today, he would likely include the writing of national strategy papers.

Nevertheless, even the most jaded critics will admit that producing a NSS has its merits. On the domestic front, it helps remind the executive of the principle of separation and balance of powers; Congress will keep a watchful eye on the shaping of foreign and security policy by a president and his advisers, and it intends to use the strategy paper as a benchmark against which to measure their actions. Within the executive, it helps the national security adviser and his or her staff align other agencies with the administration's political preferences. For the national security staff itself, it can be a useful

tool for building consensus and exerting message discipline.

Last and probably least, it lends gravitas to signals the US government sends to the rest of the globe. Thus, back when things were "normal," the publication of a new NSS meant that analysts, journalists and diplomats the world over would heave a sigh, pour themselves some extra-strong coffee and inspect the text with a fine-toothed comb to extract any available insights into the superpower's latest strategic intentions.

But the Trump era is anything but business as usual. Never has an American president so recklessly dispensed with the formalities of international relations, or so liberally threatened allies and adversaries alike, from calling NATO "obsolete" to threatening Europe with trade wars and North Korea with nuclear obliteration.

Of course, unilateralism, skepticism of "foreign entanglements" (George Washington) and protectionism are

THE TRUMP ERA IS ANYTHING BUT BUSINESS AS USUAL

American traditions as old as the republic itself. Presidents Clinton, Bush and Obama oversaw NATO (and EU) enlargement after the fall of the Berlin Wall, yet all made serious efforts to retrench the US military and diplomatic engagement in Europe.

One faction of Trump explainers in Washington – let's call them the "nothing to see here" faction – suggests ignoring presidential language and looking instead at events, or rather everything that has not happened; NATO is still standing, they say; and what wars has he started? They also point out – fairly – that this uniquely disruptive president is surrounded by a multitude of political appointees, civil servants and military officers, all of whom are attempting to hold the administration to standards and processes that will make it more stable and predictable.

Others have a different take: none of this is a return to normalcy. Trumpism is not the latest iteration of an American retrenchment following a period of (over-)extension. It is rather a massive and radical discontinuity. Trump is the first president to question the validity of an international order based on norms and cooperation, and the first to decry globalization as a nefarious ideology ("the false song of globalism")

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Power boost

yet be prepared for alternative scenarios.

The EU has made significant progress over the past two years. The EU and its member states have become ever more active in their crisis management, especially with regard to Africa, where European smart power can really make a difference. Our humanitarian assistance, civilian crisis prevention and our capacity building for security forces in five Sahel countries and for the Libyan coastguard are cases in point. With the Permanent Structured Co-Operation (PESCO) in European Security and Defense, the Coordinated Annual Review on Defense (CARD) and the European Defense Fund, we have created additional instruments to harmonize our defense efforts. In a truly comprehensive approach we have also improved the EU's abilities in civilian and military crisis management, in cyber defense and with respect to hybrid threats.

Over the course of this process, it has become ever more obvious that it often lies with France and Germany to boost European power, and that they should also play the key role in meeting the technological and innovation challenges presented by the US, China and others. We must take care that Europe remains at the forefront of technological innovation, especially with regard to cyber and Industry 4.0 – including the military domain. A European Union capable of winning only the conflicts of the past, but not those of the future, would become vulnerable to political blackmail; it would be powerless.

After Brexit, France and Germany will carry the major responsibility for ensuring that this does not happen. Together they will spend more on defense than the other 24 countries participating in the European Security and Defense Policy of the EU combined. It is thus necessary

that France and Germany cooperate closely and successfully despite disparate strategic cultures and sometimes even divergent political and geographic priorities and preferences. Our common benchmark is always to make Europe more capable, whether with regard to expeditionary operations or to collective defense and the development of military capability. Our cooperation is therefore never exclusive. Indeed, we are eager to create plenty of opportunities for our European partners to join our ambitions – for the benefit of the EU and NATO. I am confident that Great Britain, too, will find its new European role.

After all, being a strong power is not a goal in itself – and does not solve all our problems. Engaging in a foolish arms race would not automatically result in more security. It could have precisely the opposite effect for Europe. Confidence building measures and the strengthening our nuclear and conventional arms control architecture are thus also atop Germany's and Europe's agenda, especially with regard to intermediate-range nuclear forces.

Europe has power. But it is the responsibility of European leaders to ensure that this power will remain sufficient to protect the European people, their freedom and ideas, their welfare and prosperity. Only if Europe is and continues to be powerful will it be able to meet its full responsibilities towards an international world order now under stress.

SIGMAR GABRIEL

was head of the Social Democratic Party from 2009 to March 2017. He was minister of economy and energy from 2013 to January 2017, when he became foreign minister. Since the election in September he has served as acting foreign minister.

SECURITY STRATEGY

President for a half-year

The Security Times spoke with Boyko Borisov, prime minister of Bulgaria and the current president of the European Council, about the country's role in and for Europe

The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists has advanced the big hand of its Doomsday Clock, which forecasts the destruction of the world through nuclear war; the time is now two minutes before midnight. The Bulletin's justification was the war threats levied between the US and North Korea – which have aggravated tensions between America and its rivals in China, Iran and Russia – as well as the expansion of existing atomic arsenals and the complete and utter lack of arms control talks. In Asia, China is seeking to dominate its neighbors, while North Korea has risen to become yet another country in the atomic weapons club. And in Eastern Europe, former member states of the Warsaw Pact are cowering before Russia. Is the world again becoming a place to fear?

What dangers do you see in Europe?

There is a general international trend of growing insecurity. We have a crisis in Ukraine; Crimea is occupied; the eastern Mediterranean is unstable; and then there's

Syria and Iraq. These are all processes that reflect the general security situation. Radicalization and terrorism also generate threats. Migration is becoming an ever-deeper problem for democratic societies in transit and host countries. This has led to the rise and development of nationalist and radical political entities in Europe, which carrying with them risks for these democratic societies.

How does Bulgaria assess the new threat posed by Russian policy in Ukraine, the Crimea and Transnistria?

The events in Ukraine changed the security environment in Europe and NATO-Russia relations. The military build-up in Crimea poses additional challenges. Breaching the principles of international law is unacceptable. The integrity of borders is inviolable, and this is especially important in today's democratic Europe. We do not need new military conflicts. We need peace, cooperation, prosperity and respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty. Any actions that contradict these established prin-

ciples should be deemed threats. Such actions we cannot and will not accept.

NATO is pursuing a two-pronged approach in terms of Russia: While readying its defenses and focusing on deterrence, it is also reaching out to seek common understanding through direct dialogue. What are the most pressing topics for discussion?

The two-pronged approach has its logic. The deterrence activities are entirely defense-oriented and in accordance with international law. However, dialogue is absolutely necessary for two reasons: first, through dialogue we can present our arguments; and second, it is the only way we can narrow the gaps between opposing positions and find a way out of the ongoing conflict burdening international relations. Instead of an escalation of tensions, we need cooperation towards resolving conflicts and fighting terrorism. I believe we can achieve a sustainable resolution of the Ukraine crisis within the Normandy Quartet, which would also allow for the normalization of NATO-Russia relations.

How would you evaluate developments in neighboring Turkey?

Turkey is one of the most important partners of the EU. The Bulgarian president will be hosting an EU-Turkey Summit, because there needs to be direct dialogue with Turkish leadership, dialogue not funneled through the media. Yes, there are problems, with human rights protection, for example, but the right approach is to talk things through in an open and frank way. We have many topics of common interest – combatting terrorism, migration. Renewing dialogue will benefit both the EU and Turkey.

For six months now Bulgaria is going to chair the Council of the European Union. The UK is saying goodbye to the EU, while many Eastern European countries are at least partially governed by nationalist, right-wing populist or Eurosceptic parties. What are Bulgaria's plans for using its council presidency to advance European solidarity?

The motto of the Bulgarian presidency is "United We Stand Strong." This motto also hangs



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