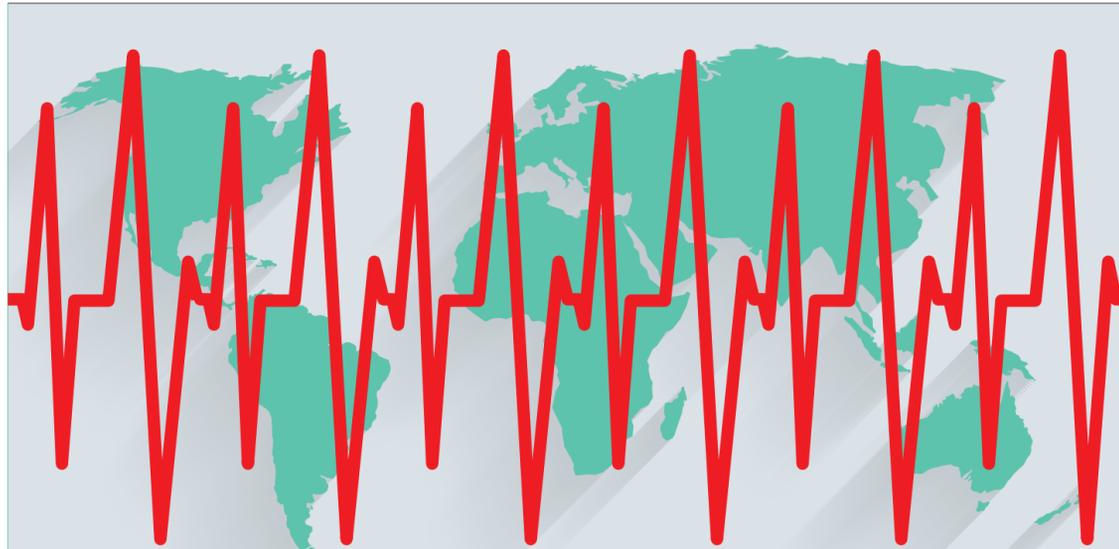


# The German Times

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## HYPER TENSION

Diagnosis: The US president and his “America first” policies are a shock to the international system. What treatments should be prescribed?

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## Extra time

The SPD has given the green light to the next grand coalition with Merkel’s Union

BY THEO SOMMER

Germany is back. Almost six months after the inconclusive federal elections last September, after tortuous negotiations between five of the seven parties in the Bundestag and after heart-wrenching soul-searching among the Social Democrats on whether to team up once more with the CDU and its Bavarian sister party CSU, another grand coalition has been given the green light. On March 14, Angela Merkel will be sworn in as chancellor of the Federal Republic for the fourth time.

It will be her last stint in office – and it is quite possible that she won’t even serve out the term. In many regards she is a diminished figure. The coalition agreement saw her make important concessions to the Social Democrats; according to some analysts, 70 percent of the government program betrays the handwriting of her junior partner.

In addition, she was constrained to relinquish six ministries to the SPD, chief among them the weighty foreign, finance and labor departments. As the CDU/CSU had garnered a third of the vote in the elections, and the SPD only 20.5 percent, this caused considerable uproar in the party.

Merkel had to placate her critics by rejuvenating the cabinet – by 15 years on average – and appointing Jens Spahn, her young, dynamic and ambitious challenger, to the health ministry. She will no longer be able to lay down the line unquestioned.

The agenda of the new grand coalition is contained in the 177-page agreement hammered out by the party negotiators – a document chock-full of good intentions, but also dreary detail. Managing immigration and the integration of the 1.2 million refugees who recently flocked to Germany is an urgent task. The country’s “welcome culture” is a thing of the past; some 200,000 newcomers a year will be its future limit.

Digitization – a field in which Germany is shamefully lagging – is another priority issue. So is job security and social justice in a world of rapid automation and robotization. The diesel

scandal revealed that the country is also far from meeting its goal of reducing toxic emissions. The future of work, education, pensions, healthcare and elderly care all require much attention. Rescuing the dilapidated public infrastructure – roads, bridges, schools and universities, railways and army barracks – from further decay, modernizing the tax system and boosting domestic security pose additional challenges.

Fortunately, Germany is buoyant. The rate of employment is at its highest ever, and unemployment at its lowest since reunification. Exports have reached a record high. The economy is running on a budget surplus of €36 billion. Yet lurking in the small print of the coalition agreement are lots of hidden costs that jeopardize the “black zero” principle of Germany’s budget policy. For this reason, strife and friction between the coalition partners can’t be ruled out.

Foreign policy is a different story. Irrespective of who will be the next foreign minister, Germany’s diplomacy

will be marked by continuity and consistency. Europe will again be the top priority. Her first trip abroad will take Chancellor Merkel to Paris. President Emmanuel Macron will finally get a German

response to his ambitious plans to push the EU project forward. While Paris and Berlin do not yet see eye to eye on a fair number of issues, they will leave no stone unturned in building a stronger, more efficient EU, revamping the eurozone and beefing up Europe’s defense configuration.

And there are other quickly evolving challenges they need to tackle: averting – or girding themselves to fight – a trade war with Donald Trump’s America; confronting an aggressive Russia and an ever more assertive China; handling the Brexit negotiations; coping with Italy’s malaise; containing the bleak illiberalism of Viktor Orban’s Hungary and Jaroslaw Kaczynski’s Poland; securing Europe’s Mediterranean borders; and removing the causes of migration in North Africa. There is plenty to do.

Germany is back in the game. The hard work can now begin.

## First defense

It’s time for a real European security initiative to bridge the gulf between rhetoric and reality

BY MARK LEONARD

This is the hour of Europe – a unique opportunity to unite a divided continent by showing that unity is the first line of defense in a dangerous world. But thus far there is a continent-sized gulf between the European government’s rhetoric on global disorder and the unambitious, technocratic initiatives it has launched. There is still much time remaining to close it.

A thought experiment: Imagine it was still 2007, and you were asked to identify the most extreme scenario that would lead Europeans to take seriously the idea of providing for their own security. You might have suggested that they would wake up if, say, Russia invaded two of its neighbors and annexed their territory; or if the European neighborhood was afflicted by a string of proxy wars, driving millions of people from their homes, including over a million refugees to Germany alone; or if many European countries would become victims of terrorist attacks; or if cyber war had traveled from science fiction novels to the front pages of newspapers. And if what foreign intelligence agencies were fighting information wars inside the EU, and even trying to hack our elections? And if

one of the EU’s two nuclear powers – the one with the highest share of the EU’s defense spending – chose to leave the EU? And then to top it all off the United States began retreating from many theaters and even questioning its commitment to NATO?

Most people in 2007 would have had to suspend their disbelief about any of these fantastic developments. Upon doing so, they might have predicted that European countries would be trying intently to tackle their vulnerabilities and launch a major new initiative to build strategic autonomy. And that is actually what happened – at least in speeches. When the horror scenarios unfolded, every one from Jean-Claude Juncker and Federica Mogherini to Emmanuel Macron and Angela Merkel have tried to awaken the “Sleeping Beauty of European Defense.” Unfortunately, the rhetoric does not yet match reality.

There are two dominant paradigms for pondering European defense: promoting integration and building capabilities. But by trying to pursue both goals within its first few steps, the EU risks achieving neither.

The launch of Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) triggered a big debate between the pro-integration and the pro-capability camps. PESCO now has 25 members, including some whose stated goal is to block EU integration (such as Hungary) and those whose principle goal is to obstruct cooperation with NATO (such as Cyprus). Maybe countries that fail to make progress will be expelled at some point – but that seems unlikely. As an analogy, imagine how much progress would have been made if member states had been allowed to join the euro before making reforms to meet the Maastricht convergence criteria. It is clear that the adopted model does not build capabilities.

But PESCO is equally unlikely to build unity. The development of real capabilities could have rebuilt solidarity in a union divided between north, south, east and west by showing how Europe can make a difference on the matters that most concern its citizens, from Russian aggression and uncontrolled borders to terrorism and cyber

attacks. But the “fake inclusivity” of PESCO means that these issues will be addressed by small-scale technical projects rather than by a political initiative that could capture imaginations. More significantly, putting unity above effectiveness forces countries that are serious about European defense to join coalitions outside EU structures, like France with its newly launched European Intervention Initiative.

How can EU leaders launch a real security initiative to turn things around? First, Europe must look more carefully at removing the barriers to investment in military capabilities. The EU should exclude investment in European defense capabilities from the Maastricht rules and include a defense component in the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF). EU money could be used to form a compensation fund for defense industrial losses caused by joint procurement as

## PESCO IS UNLIKELY TO BUILD UNITY

## THIS WILL BE MERKEL’S LAST STINT IN OFFICE

continued on page 6

## GERMANY IS GOOD FOR THE UN

EDITORIAL BY PUBLISHER DETLEF PRINZ

In summer 2018, the 72nd General Assembly of the United Nations in New York will decide on Germany’s application for a seat on the Security Council in 2019 and 2020. Germany’s application for one of the non-permanent seats was announced in June 2016 by then Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier.

As a German citizen, I like the idea that the Federal Republic has applied for one of the seats soon to be vacated; as the publisher of this newspaper, I would like to take this opportunity to give reasons why Germany would be a good choice for membership of the Security Council.

In the nearly 70 years since it was founded on May 23, 1949, the Federal Republic of Germany has become Europe’s largest economy, providing its now 82.5 million inhabitants with a life of freedom, peace, unity, security as well as material and cultural prosperity. For the stability of these five pillars of a successful life, the people in this country can thank two things: their own effort and the goodwill of their neighbors and friends.

We, the citizens and their government, are willing and able to repay this goodwill to other countries that could benefit from our positive experience as they continue working to erect those five pillars to enable their citizens to live successful lives.

Freedom: All is nothing without it. Peace: All is in doubt without it. Unity: There is no peaceful coexistence without it. Security: There is no peace without it. Prosperity: There is no dignity without it. But how does it all work? Tackle each goal separately, and then all of them as a whole? In facing this conundrum, Germany can apply and share its nearly 70 years of knowledge and experience. Our country’s membership of the United Nations Security Council would be a smart choice. It is precisely in unsettled times like these – and certainly in the next two years to come – that Germany would be perfectly suited to the UN Security Council.

RUSSIAN EVOLUTION	REFUGEES BETRAYED	LIGHTS OUT	BREAKING EVEN	COMING BACK
Putin is widening his footprint across the globe. Katja Gloger looks at the elections on March 18 and charts Russia’s path to superpowerdom. page 4	Summer of 1938. Delegations from 32 countries met in Evian to discuss how and by whom Jews fleeing the Nazis could be helped. The ten days at the spa town ended with a defeat for civilization. Looks a lot like today, thinks Peter H. Koepf. page 8	After the end of World War II, the Allies dismantled Berlin’s industrial facilities and large corporations fled the fault line of the brewing Cold War. The German capital has suffered the consequences of war and division ever since, writes Benjamin Walter. page 14	The Wall divided Berlin for more than 28 years – and now it’s been 28 years since it came down. Wearing the weight of the past and reveling in its present glory, the city is coming into its own, says Frank Hofmann. page 16	A steadily growing number of Israelis are moving to Berlin. Some are even opening up great new restaurants. Franziska Knupper checked out the dishes and the people preparing them. page 19

## POLITICS

## Making the business world cyber proof

The Munich Cyber Security Conference 2018 (MCSC), held in the run-up to this year's Munich Security Conference (MSC), convened decision-makers from the business and political world alike to discuss the role and responsibility of top management in dealing with cyber risks. With a solution on how to guarantee cyber safety in the age of digitization and the Internet of Things still lacking, numerous specialists discussed necessary and possible steps to ward off or better contain attacks such as WannaCry.

"With the threat of cyberattacks now widely acknowledged, and increasing in likelihood, no company can afford to fall behind in terms of cybersecurity," warned Robert Joyce, cybersecurity coordinator at the White House. In his analysis of the geopolitical landscape, he claimed that more than 100 countries now have digital units developing a cyber arsenal. He expressed his deep concern with the increasing fragmentation of the internet. "The exchange of data between countries must be continued and strengthened," said Joyce. "We are already experiencing a Balkanization of the internet, which could gravely endanger both the its safety and functionality."

In the light of emerging cyber risks and cyber crimes, European commissioner for security Union Sir Julian King urged that the industry rethink its digital profile and "become a provider of safety." According to King, producers should not view security as a cost factor, but instead recognize it as a competitive advantage and a standardized basis for their products. With 34 percent of EU citizens already having fallen victim to cyberattacks, the digital industry has a particular duty to fulfill: making security a central part of its business strategy.

Jeff Moss, founder and CEO of DEF CON, one of the world's largest hacker conferences, pointed out that no one can truly feel safe these days. Preventing hacking is near impossible. Therefore, it is not the defense against possible attackers that is crucial, but the securing of a company's operations after an attack. "If we can't keep the cyberattackers out, then we should think about how to clean up the mess they leave behind." Moss recommends that companies should reconsider which data systems are most important for their business after an attack and align their security strategy accordingly.

The debate in Munich highlighted the problem of the huge maturity gaps in terms of cybersecurity between states and businesses. As a result, more cooperation and better common global standards are crucial in providing more cybersecurity in the future. This topic alone will surely create enough room for debates at future Munich Cyber Security Conferences. OR

## WORDS OF NOTE

The Munich Security Conference in quotes



**Ursula von der Leyen**, German Minister of Defense (left): "We want to remain trans-Atlantic – while also becoming more European. We want to enable Europe to also carry more weight in terms of military power." (with her French counterpart **Florence Parly**)



**Sergey Lavrov**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia (center): "It is in Russia's interests to have a strong and predictable European Union for a neighbor, an EU that would be able to act as a responsible member of international life in the polycentric world that is becoming reality right before our very eyes." (with Turkish Foreign Minister **Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu**)



**Benjamin Netanyahu**, Prime Minister of Israel: "The nuclear agreement with Iran has begun the countdown to an Iranian nuclear arsenal in little more than a decade. And the sanction relief that the deal provided has not moderated Iran."



**Jean-Claude Juncker**, President of the EU Commission: "We can not rely on allies alone. We have to do something ourselves to protect our security interests, and we want to do that too."

Perhaps the most peculiar news from the Munich Security Conference (MSC) emerged just as proceedings were coming to a close: Iran's Minister of Foreign Affairs Mohammad Javad Zarif, a regular invitee, was almost unable to attend. The oil companies at the Munich airport had announced their reluctance to refuel Zarif's jet for fear of violating US sanctions against Iran. The Bundeswehr had to send a tank truck to resolve the issue. The chairman of the MSC, Wolfgang Ischinger, was rather critical: "Whatever one thinks of sanctions, here they almost led to a dangerous situation in which we could not even speak with each other."

Other than that, Europeans could be heard echoing one another that, in a world filled with crises, a range of players lusting to become major powers, and a quixotic US president, they wanted – and needed – to shoulder more responsibility. German Defense Minister Ursula von der Leyen teamed with her French counterpart, Florence Parly, to open this year's conference; last year her partner had been US Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis. The symbolism here could not be overlooked. "We want to remain trans-Atlantic," she explained, "while also becoming more European." Europe must also be able to throw more military weight onto the scale. Having more autonomy and more individual responsibility – in NATO as well: "This is our European task for the future."

German Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel called the trans-Atlantic cooperation between the US and Europe "the only promising way to preserve the architecture of freedom." Europe must "project its power in the world as a united entity" not based on military might alone. He stressed that the coalition agreement for the new government foresees "massive investments in foreign, security and development policy." Expenditure for crisis prevention, humanitarian aid and development cooperation will rise as well as that for defense.

President of the EU Commission Jean-Claude Juncker conceded that the EU is thus far "not geared towards global political capacity. For a long time we were not capable of world politics." Current circumstances – implying above all the new US policy – dictate "that we must strive for world political capability. And this is especially true in the defense sector." Europe wants to emancipate itself, but not in defiance of NATO or the US. The accusation that the EU risked becoming too independent in matters of defense and security policy he dismissed as preposterous.

Britain's Prime Minister Theresa May reminded her audience that her country was NATO's second largest defense spender and that not all EU states had reached the goal of investing 0.7 percent of gross national income on international development. "We will continue to meet these commitments," she added. Her country plans to leave the EU, but not Europe.

French Prime Minister Édouard Philippe promised that France would meet the 2-percent goal by 2025. "After all, the fact that Europe is not interested in war does not mean that war is not interested in Europe." PHK



**Theresa May**, British Prime Minister: "As we leave the EU and forge a new path for ourselves in the world, the UK is just as committed to Europe's security in the future as we have been in the past." (with MSC Chairman **Wolfgang Ischinger**)



**António Guterres**, UN Secretary General (right): "We are now facing a nuclear threat. (...) A development made in total contradiction to the will of the international community and in clear violation of several resolutions of the Security Council." (with his predecessor **Kofi Annan** and former Austrian Chancellor **Wolfgang Schüssel**)



**Mohammad Javad Zarif**, Iranian Minister of Foreign Affairs: "The US and its local clients in our region are suffering from the natural consequences of their own wrong choices. But they use this and other fora to revive the hysteria on Iran's foreign policy."



**Jens Stoltenberg**, NATO Secretary General: "NATO's goal is a world without nuclear weapons. (...) A world where Russia, China and North Korea have nuclear weapons, but NATO does not, is not a safer world."

## IMPRINT

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## "Don't just talk, act!"

In the International Press Lounge for the **The Security Times**, Boyko Borisov demanded that the European Union further engage with the countries of the Western Balkans. The Bulgarian prime minister and current EU Council president made another statement in February, on the eve of the Munich Security Conference: "It is the EU's task to invest in these countries, and not to leave this responsibility to other powers." Bulgaria wants to use its 6-month term to support the attempts by Yugoslavia successor states and Albania to join the EU, because "if the EU doesn't secure these countries, China,



Something to hold on to: **The Security Times**.

about what can be done to help the countries they were forced to flee." Ideally, the EU would invest in "eliminating the problems at their source. After all, it is impossible to solve the refugee crisis without first solving the problems plaguing the countries being fled."

Russia or Turkey will."

Borisov identified refugee and asylum policies as additional focal points of his work. According to him, the EU spends too much time discussing who should be deemed responsible for taking in the refugees rushing to Europe and too little time "talking



Friends: Boyko Borisov and EU Commissioner Günther Oettinger.



Press lounge: Boyko Borisov with Theo Sommer, Executive Editor of **The Security Times** and **The German Times** (left) and publisher Detlef Prinz (middle).

## POLITICS

# Just married (again)

Germany spent almost six months forging a new government. Angela Merkel remains chancellor, but the excitement has changed the nation's politics



Leading women: Angela Merkel is starting her fourth term as chancellor. SPD party head Andrea Nahles will be an ally and rival in their party's new grand coalition.

BY LUTZ LICHTENBERGER

The wait is over. The Bundestag is poised to form a new government. President Frank-Walter Steinmeier has formally proposed to the German parliament that Angela Merkel once again be elected federal chancellor in a vote scheduled for March 14, 2018.

In the six months since the federal election on Sept. 24, 2017, Germany has witnessed many exciting events, including a spectacularly ill-fated attempt to form a so-called “Jamaica” coalition, followed by prolonged and problematic negotiations between Merkel’s Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and its former and future coalition partner, the Social Democratic Party (SPD). The SPD was obliged to ask its members to vote on whether they should in fact form a new coalition government with the CDU, and those members responded with a subdued yet decisive “yes.” This paved the way for a new, not so “grand” coalition made up of the CDU – in concert with its sister party, the Bavarian Christian Social Union (CSU) – and the SPD. Together, the parties would occupy 399 of 709 seats in the Bundestag.

As compared with 2013, the new grand coalition has diminished in size. While five years ago the CDU/CSU and SPD boasted 504 of 631 votes, giving them a majority of more than two-thirds, they will now have only 53.4 percent of votes.

Yet these lean numbers do not reflect the entire spectrum of dramas – both big and small – that have played out on Germany’s main stage and behind the scenes in the past six months. It has been an extraordinary time for what is usually a rather orderly state of affairs in German politics. Indeed, the country experienced a series of nail-biting nights worthy of a storyline on *House of Cards*.

The first breathtaking moment came when Merkel failed – after several long and tense weeks in November 2017 – to form a new government with a “Jamaica” coalition. The Caribbean reference comes from the colors of parties that would have matched the black, yellow and green of Jamaica’s flag: the center-right CDU/CSU, the pro-business Free Democrats (FDP) and the left-leaning environmental party known as Alliance 90/The Greens. Prior to the breakdown of the Jamaica talks, all parties in the Bundestag

had simply assumed that the four parties involved would be able to agree on a government coalition. However, just before negotiations were set to end, the FDP announced it was backing out, complaining that Merkel had not paid them enough consideration, and retreated hastily in a collective sulk. They even posted an image on Facebook that had been prepared days before: “It is better not to govern than to govern badly,” it read.

This was followed by more weeks of preliminary and exploratory talks between the CDU/CSU – referred to as the “Union” parties – and the SPD. After experiencing a traumatically low score in the September election, the Social Democrats had been enthusiastic about becoming the official opposition. But now, suddenly, they were back in demand. In fact, a new grand coalition between the Union parties and the Social Democrats was the only conceivable option left on the table.

However, this was precisely the scenario the SPD did not want. A renewal of the forced marriage between itself and the powerful Chancellor Merkel – whom they blamed for their significant loss in voter confidence in the previous election – was seen as a great burden. With Martin Schulz as their candidate, the SPD had achieved a paltry 20.5 percent of the vote, a decline of more than 5 percentage points. This result had made the party’s desire to “come alive again” in the role of official opposition even greater.

After the surprise end to the Jamaica talks, the SPD found itself being courted by its erstwhile political opponent once again, this time with the Christian Democrats appealing to them to keep in mind their “responsibility” to the country. The SPD was by no means interested in carrying out this “service” to Germany, nor did they wish to enter into yet another loveless marriage with the CDU/CSU. It took some strong words and a strict reminder from President Frank-Walter Steinmeier – himself an SPD member and former foreign minister in a grand coalition until 2017 – to persuade them not to frivolously and categorically refuse the offer.

Steinmeier also let it be known that he would not be issuing the endorsement required to call a new federal election. For their part, the CDU and CSU ruled out the option of a minority government, arguing that Germany could not be an effective leader in Germany and

Europe without a stable government at home.

Steinmeier’s words had the desired effect on the SPD, which then began talking with the Union, but first and foremost with itself. Eventually, an SPD party congress came back with 56 percent in favor of coalition negotiations. The result of those negotiations came quite quickly in the form of a 179-page coalition agreement, a political document whose contents are not legally binding. The deal contains many soft phrases that express the parties’ “intent” and “plans” to carry out good and sensible policies, while at the same time deferring or simply disregarding other pressing issues.

In the realm of foreign relations, the agreement states that Germany’s security policy should become “more independent and capable of taking action”; that the defense budget should increase in

nationalism; however, it does not foresee a quick expansion of the EU.

In the realm of refugee policy – the most volatile political issue of the day – the coalition partners are in agreement on certain steps that appear to lead to a cautious restriction in the number of refugees. However, the agreement states that no changes be made in terms of the basic right to asylum. The document assumes that the total number of immigrants in the coming years will be around 180,000 to 220,000 individuals. These numbers are to include war refugees, those in temporary need of protection, family members coming to live with individuals already in Germany and relocated persons. The numbers would be reduced by those individuals forced to return to their home country, voluntary repatriations and migrant workers. The highly contentious term “upper

limit” does not appear anywhere in the deal. The coalition agreement sees asylum procedures as being carried out at so-called “anchor facilities” – arrival and return centers where all new immigrants would have to stay until their identity is established. According to the deal, the duration of their stay should not exceed 18 months, and in the case of families with children, a half-year at most. Refugees with good prospects of staying would then be able to leave the central facilities, although it is not yet clear exactly when. The deal also foresees making deportations more efficient and declaring Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia to be safe countries of origin. So far, so good – at least for business as usual.

Late that night in February, things finally got exciting when Merkel’s CDU, Horst Seehofer’s CSU and Schulz’ SPD began div-

vying up federal ministries. The SPD demanded three of the most prestigious posts, including foreign minister, finance minister and minister of labor and social affairs. The Union was unwilling to concede all three to the Social Democrats, at which point the entire endeavor began to teeter on the edge of collapse. The silence coming from both sides must have been deafening: “I had no idea people could be so quiet for so long,” Seehofer would later remark. After meetings that lasted well into the wee hours, the CDU/CSU ultimately gave in. To placate Seehofer, who had wanted one of the three large ministries for himself, the Interior Ministry was expanded to include the realms of building and Heimat (homeland).

The coveted position of minister of foreign affairs was reserved by Schulz for himself; this, however, would have catapulted Sigmar Gabriel – the SPD stalwart who currently holds the position – out of the game. Embarrassingly for Schulz, back in November, not only had he attempted to exclude the possibility of a new grand coalition by issuing a resolution in the party presidium; he had also said he would never join any cabinet under the leadership of Merkel. But now, after negotiating with the Union, Schulz was willing to give up his party presidency to Andrea Nahles in return for the position of foreign minister. However, he lacked support in his party on this issue and had already lost a significant amount of prestige and credibility in the space of only a couple of weeks, whereby he had had to revise one hasty statement after the other.

Nevertheless, Nahles and newly designated Finance Minister Olaf Scholz went along with the deal. Together, Nahles and Scholz constitute the new power center of the SPD, and the fact that their inner-party rival Gabriel would be out of a job suited them just fine. However, on the morning after the announcement of the ministerial shuffle, pressure from the regional associations of the SPD grew enormously; only two days later, an exasperated Schulz gave in and renounced any claim to a ministerial post. This most likely marked the end of his political career, less than a year after having been hailed as the savior of the SPD in March 2017.

Still, even this abdication – which was clearly anything but voluntary – did not help to pacify the party. The battle for the foreign office flared up again; Gabriel is well-

liked among Germans in general but valued less in his own party. Yet his popularity couldn’t prevent him from losing the office he had so visibly embraced since becoming foreign minister in January 2017.

In the meantime, Chancellor Merkel has managed to make a number of course-setting personnel decisions, thus placating many critics in her own party and simultaneously maneuvering the candidate she wishes to succeed her into a strategic position. Merkel designated Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer, until recently minister-president of Saarland, a small federal state in southwestern Germany, as the new general secretary of the CDU. (The position most closely resembles that of a national party chairman in the US; however, party organizations play a larger role in German politics, which means that the position is seen as much more prestigious.) Berlin’s political community has read Merkel’s decision as a clear indication that she wishes Kramp-Karrenbauer to be her successor.

Also interesting is the rather cautious manner in which a growing section of Merkel’s CDU has begun to push for her departure from the political stage. The chancellor has been in office since 2005, and her liberal approach to the refugee crisis and Europe’s various financial predicaments has long since ruffled the feathers of many in the conservative wing of her party. They blame Merkel for the rise of the far-right populist party known as Alternative for Germany, which received 12.6 percent of the vote in last September’s election.

One of the chancellor’s sharpest critics in the CDU is the ambitious 37-year-old Jens Spahn, who hails from the right wing of the party and has openly considered himself to be a potential candidate for chancellor. Merkel has now designated Spahn to become minister of health, not the most coveted post, in her new cabinet. It is highly likely that as soon as Merkel launches her fourth term in office, both Kramp-Karrenbauer and Spahn will have already started trying to outmaneuver one another into a position to succeed her. Merkel has stated her intention of carrying out her full term, so if things progress “naturally,” the date of succession would be as far off as 2021, the next elections. However, if there’s one thing we’ve learned over the past six months, it’s to let go of any notion of politics as usual in Germany.



Heiko Maas will be the new minister of foreign affairs in Merkel’s fourth cabinet. The 51-year-old Social Democrat previously served as justice minister. “He will do an excellent job,” said his predecessor Sigmar Gabriel after the announcement on March 9, 2018.

line with expenditures in development aid that the number of soldiers in Afghanistan should exceed the currently mandated limit of 980 soldiers; that the training of Kurdish fighters in northern Iraq should come to an end; and that future foreign policy there should be more focused on stabilizing the situation.

The deal also expresses the coalition partners’ openness to the euro reforms suggested by French President Emmanuel Macron, but fails to make any suggestions of its own. It states that the EU budget should be strengthened, but leaves open exactly how this should be accomplished. The deal also expresses a desire to make Europe more attractive as a business location, stating that all coalition partners are in favor of coordinating the taxation of companies in Europe. The deal contains a fundamental rejection of protectionism, isolationism and

## POLITICS

# PUTIN FOREVER?

Russia's perennial leader is bent on completing his country's return to superpower status and recasting the global order in its favor

BY KATJA GLOGER

In February 1990, a young KGB officer departed from his first – and last – foreign posting and returned to a country that was still called the Soviet Union. Vladimir Putin had spent five years in East Germany and bought a used car (a “Volga”) with his savings. His return luggage also included a used washing machine – a gift from his neighbors.

In Dresden, Vladimir Putin had experienced the fall of the Berlin Wall and learned to view civil rights activists as a threat. A similar implosion of state institutions took place in the Soviet Union. Like many Russians, Putin did not regard Mikhail Gorbachev's perestroika as a new beginning, but as a collapse, a humiliation and a dangerous sell-out to the West: a “paralysis of power,” as he would later say. He regarded the West's de facto victory in the Cold War as a kind of “Russian Versailles.”

Fortunately for him, the old networks – contacts mostly cultivated by intelligence agents and (former) party members – survived the upheaval. This old and new elite enabled his ascent to the inner circles of power. He was “steadfast in a military way,” as Russia's president at the time, Boris Yeltsin, described his successor in late 1999.

One of the most notable political careers in recent history had begun. Now in power for 18 years – longer than Angela Merkel – Vladimir Putin is one of the world's longest serving leaders. He is the overwhelming favorite to win the Russian presidential “election” for the fourth time when it is held in March of this year. There is no alternative.

Opposing candidates? Several were permitted to register, all belonging to the official opposition and therefore bit players who know their roles in a staged democracy. Putin's only serious rival in the long term, Alexei Navalny, is barred from running. The Kremlin's political strategists are reported to be aiming for a “70/70” outcome: 70 percent turnout, 70 percent for Putin.

The turnout, however, is a source of concern. Not voting could be seen as a sign of protest. Faced with growing repression and condemned to political passivity, younger people in particular are turning their backs on the cynical farce of Russian politics. Although participants numbered only in the low tens of thousands, nationwide youth protests of the past year were certainly a warning to the elites, as “Generation Putin” took to the streets against Russia's bleak authoritarianism. Young people protested against the false values of an alleged new “Russian world” that is strictly anti-Western and demands patriotic obedience – a world in which Russia resembles a besieged fortress. Thousands of demonstrators were arrested and harsh sentences imposed – authorities would not permit a repeat of the 2012 mass demonstrations that the Kremlin says were instigated by the West.

In Putin's brand of “sovereign democracy,” nothing can be left to chance. Accordingly, election day – March 18 – has its own significance as a historic date for the new Russia; it is the fourth anniversary of the “homecoming” of the Crimea, the peninsula's reintegration into the Russian Federation following an illegal annexation from Ukraine.

Unassailable and unassailable, Vladimir Putin can be voted for as an “independent” candidate, a ruler seemingly with his own, unique, czar-like power who is now cementing his place in history. With apparent tirelessness, the “nationalny lider,” as he is known in Russia, is working to fulfill his mission to complete Russia's resurrection and shape a new world order as the ruler of a sovereign superpower.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov postulated a “post-Western era” almost nonchalantly at the Munich Security Conference last year. Indeed, it can be assumed that a globally confrontational foreign policy will mask the essential social and economic structural reforms the Russian elite is unprepared for.

Unlike Russia, China, for example, has taken advantage of globalization, staking its claim to global leadership through gigantic economic projects such as the “New Silk Road.” Russia, meanwhile, remains a structurally weak country. Putin's new strength and the legitimacy of his power are manifested in his willingness to opportunistically use Russia's resurgent military strength, if necessary in hybrid form. The reality that the West, and especially Germany, must face is one of confrontation over cooperation, mistrust over trust, as well as conspiracy theories and deadlocked narratives on both sides. And there is no end in sight. “Our biggest mistake was to trust you too much,” Putin said in response to a question from a German participant at the 2017 Valdai Discussion Club, “and your mistake was to interpret and abuse this trust as weakness.”

At the beginning of March, Vladimir Putin presented himself to the Russian Federal Assembly as the invincible supreme commander of a well-fortified state prepared for any sacrifice. The event had been relocated to the technologically better equipped Moscow exhibition center, Manege, where Putin used gigantic video screens to showcase five new nuclear weapons systems in a saber-rattling session lasting a good 30 minutes: A new Sarmat intercontinental rocket soars to the heavens; and a new-fangled Kh-101 cruise missile hisses westward targeting Florida. Powered by nuclear propulsion, it can simply zip through the US strategic missile defense system undeterred. He also introduced a nimble underwater drone bearing a nuclear warhead, a nuclear torpedo and a hypersonic wonder rocket named Kinschal, the saber. These are lethal weapons Putin coolly deemed “fantastic”; weapons, Putin boasts no other country possessed: “invincible.”



Hail to the chief: Russian President Vladimir Putin at a campaign rally at Luzhniki Stadium in Moscow in March.

Although US experts are doubtful this arsenal can already be deployed, or if it even exists in full, Putin's warning to the US was clear: Russia is not impressed with Donald Trump's plans for nuclear proliferation and his expected decision in April to massively expand the US missile defense system now targeted against Russia. As he concluded: “We wanted to draw our partners into negotiations, but no one wanted to talk with us, or to listen to us. Listen to us now!”

In this respect, Vladimir Putin agrees with the majority of Russia's population, which follows a centuries-old reflex comprising a fateful mix of feelings of inferiority and self-deception; they believe that Russia is respected only when Russia is feared. “We are morally right,” said Sergei Karaganov, one of the Kremlin's better-known foreign policy advisers, and “we are smarter, stronger and more determined.”

In any case, in Moscow's view, the US-dominated “liberal order” is coming to an end – a view Donald Trump seems to confirm day after day. The “post-Cold War order” and its democratic declarations such as the 1990 Charter of Paris for a New Europe have had their day. Now, the new multipolar, post-Western world is returning to the principles of classical power politics – a balance,

Dmitry Medvedev was already talking about a zone of Russian “privileged interests,” which basically includes all post-Soviet states except the Baltic NATO members. Developments in the post-Soviet world could influence power structures in Russia itself. Frozen conflicts in places such as Georgia, Moldova and Nagorno-Karabakh are intended to safeguard Moscow's escalation dominance.

In Ukraine, the situation is much more complicated and dangerous. The Minsk Agreement is being undermined by Kiev as well as Moscow. In rebel-held Eastern Ukraine, the ongoing war, the people's disastrous living conditions and infighting among local warlords over money, weapons, coalmines and steel works are also causing problems for Moscow. The announced delivery of armor-piercing weapons by the US to Ukraine has increased the risk of further military escalation. But Russia's most important foreign policy goal in the post-Soviet space seems to have been reached: halting the eastward enlargement of NATO and the EU.

Ukraine will not become a member of NATO even in the long term, and full membership in the EU is likewise a distant goal. Moscow wants to play for time in Ukraine and work towards a new, perhaps more pro-Moscow government in Kiev. In doing so,

Second, Moscow sees a historic opportunity to end the era of US hegemony, which it regards as a “unipolar” aberration. The US is on the retreat strategically as it suffers under its inner contradictions. Although Moscow had initially placed its hopes on real political deals with Trump, he appeared to be the far better alternative to the despised Hillary Clinton.

But this optimism quickly vanished, and not just because of “Russiagate.” The apparent incompetence of the US president, his unpredictability and his rhetorical readiness to escalate, such as in the conflicts with North Korea and Iran, make Moscow uneasy, not to mention the almost hysterical proclivity in the US Congress for anti-Russian sanctions. Moscow's relationship with the US has never been so bad since the end of the Cold War.

But the foreign policy vacuum left by the US is being filled wherever the opportunity arises. Putin is a risk-taking tactician who views politics as a zero-sum game. Every day in Syria, Russian bombers and helicopters defied Angela Merkel's mantra that there could be “no military solution.” Putin wagered that neither the US nor Europe would intervene. His bet paid off. The Islamic State suffered defeat and Bashar al-Assad won the war. This is how Russia is establishing itself as a new global player, above all in the Middle East.

With two military bases in Syria, Russian presence in the Mediterranean seems secured for a long time to come. Deployment of the S-400 anti-aircraft missile system effectively grants Moscow sovereignty over the country. The potential reconstruction of the war-ravaged country with the help of international funds promises lucrative business for Russian companies. And with US Middle East policy in disarray, Moscow – as during the Soviet era – is proving itself a major diplomatic power in the region as it defines common security interests with Israel, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Iran. Putin maintains good relations with Egypt's President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, and not only regarding arms exports.

It has been an astonishing success. Russia, once a declining regional power, is establishing itself as an “indispensable” nation.

In dealing with this new Russia, Western capitals have been counting – rather helplessly – on dual strategies from the Cold War, as was spelled out long ago in 1967 by Belgian Foreign Minister Pierre Harmel: The West should advocate deterrence and containment while signaling desire for de-escalation. The implication here is an emphasis on dialogue, strategic patience and “principled pragmatism,” as it was called – all the while seeking to maintain strategic stability. But this approach too is under threat.

This is because the nuclear card is back on the table, in both the East and West. Critics even fear the complete collapse of nuclear arms control. The INF Treaty, which was concluded in late 1987 between Soviet General Secretary Gorbachev and US President Reagan and allowed the destruction of some 3,000 nuclear missiles stationed on land, is being undermined.

The first real ban on a category of weapons was both a military and political turning point in Europe; the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF) ended Western Europe's direct nuclear threat from Soviet SS-20 missiles while the withdrawal of American Pershing 2 missiles from Western Europe enhanced the security of the Soviet Union. The INF Treaty heralded the beginning of the end of the Cold War.

For years, the US has been suspecting Russia of violating the treaty. Beyond (permitted) development and testing, it is believed that new SS-C-8 (9M729) medium-range missiles have actually been deployed in at least two battalions of the Russian armed forces. The NATO partners were informed of these movements last November by the US, although hard evidence was apparently not submitted.

Russia could well have a strategic interest in breaking out of the INF Treaty, for example to better shield itself in the east against the unstoppable rise of China. At the same time, Moscow can use the INF crisis to test NATO's unity. Whereas one NATO member state – Poland – is debating the possible stationing of US nuclear weapons, another member – Germany – wants to avoid all discussion of an arms buildup.

The Russian leadership denies it is breaching the treaty. According to Putin, Russia can defend itself with ship-based medium-range missiles, like those used in Syria, for example. The Kremlin points to NATO's conventional superiority and the US anti-missile shield, currently based in Romania, whose launchers are similar to the ship-based Aegis Ashore anti-aircraft system. Aegis, Russia suspects, can also launch medium-range missiles.

Each side accuses the other of seeking pretexts for breaking out of the INF treaty. The looming security dilemma could lead to a new nuclear arms race, and of course that would be big business for arms companies on both sides. The US Congress approved initial funds for the development of new medium-range missiles.

Vladimir Putin is claiming his place in history as architect of Russia's survival against the West and subsequent resurgence. Monuments built to commemorate his rule are only a matter of time.

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## ALL OF RUSSIA'S ATTEMPTS TO FIND A LEGITIMATE ROLE IN EUROPE HAVE BEEN THWARTED IN THE PAST 25 YEARS

however unstable, among the major powers of Russia, the US and China.

In this sense, Putin's Russia is a revisionist power. Neither treaties nor laboriously negotiated compromises are what really matter, but rather the right of the strongest. It is no coincidence that in his speech to the UN three years ago, Vladimir Putin explicitly referred to the “order of Yalta,” the division of Europe into spheres of influence.

Russia's decoupling from the West has been going on for a good ten years. Clear warning signs were ignored. Putin's fiery Munich speech against US hegemony in 2007 was just the beginning. One year later, then-Russian (interim) President

Russia is also betting that European leaders will grow tired of backing Ukraine.

Targeted weakening of Europe's already troubled democracies is also safeguarding Russia's hegemony in the post-Soviet space. Moscow views the EU as nothing but an appendage of the US. Instead of negotiating energy deals with Brussels, Russia is seeking to clinch bilateral agreements with the EU's conservative, pro-Moscow and often populist “illiberal democracies.” In this way, Russia is working to establish itself as a kind of veto power at Europe's periphery. After all, in the past 25 years, as Russia sees it, all its attempts to find a legitimate place in Europe have been thwarted – and this point of view is not without merits.

POLITICS

# Rumors of real war

Russia and the US must agree on shared rules, set up common control centers and develop a system of cyber control

BY MICHAEL STÜRMER

The Cold War was by and large better than its reputation, especially in hindsight. It imposed, as never before, a kind of long nuclear peace upon the global powers and forced minor players to conform. French philosopher Raymond Aron described what he saw in telegram-style: “Guerre improbable, paix impossible.”

But the Cold War is over, for better or for worse, and a repeat performance does not seem near on the horizon. What this means for the United States will be decided to a large degree in Washington. What it will mean for Europe in general, and Germany in particular, is an open question. As far as the US is concerned, leadership has all but disappeared and been reduced to a catch-all phrase – “America first” – by Trumpists and a new nationalism.

The new US National Security Strategy sounds reassuring. But will it serve its purpose? For the time being, no firm ground is in sight, not for NATO, not for the EU and, by implication, not for the Federal Republic of Germany. “The time is out of joint” – Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, is often quoted these days, even in the most unlikely places. If taken seriously, this means that nothing less than a new security architecture is in order. In the face of an unreconciled Russia, NATO must be redesigned with a much more coherent European contribution, and Europe reinvented accordingly, Brexit or no Brexit,

Trump or no Trump. The mantle of leadership is there to be seized – but there are few takers willing and able to act while the world is in such turmoil. The Federal Republic of Germany? A reluctant leader at best, a wholly ineffective one at worst.

When the US refuses to carry the burden of the world, like Atlas in Greek mythology, leaving old friends to their own devices; when deterrence no longer rests on a credible strategy and new military and civilian technologies change every equation; when a US president daydreams about the use of nuclear weapons while discounting arms control and backchannel diplomacy; when the last of the superpowers renounces the liberal world order it more or less called into being after World War II – as these realities have combined to create the new normal, we find ourselves in a newly perilous world.

If the time is indeed visibly “out of joint”; if cyber warfare has no beginning and no end, so that terms like “offensive” and “defensive” lose their meaning and are replaced by a menacing factor of strategic ambiguity – in short, if the world refuses predictability while the strangely familiar logic of MAD becomes imponderable, what is there to do? Deny reality and close your eyes or panic and prepare for surrender? We are living in ever more interesting times, where everything depends on our ability to reconstruct trust and predictability and to put a new correlation of forces, unstable as it may be, into treaty language and verification practice. The world

after the Cold War will survive together or perish separately.

It is time for an agonizing reappraisal of NATO and the idea of international order that it represents, including its limitations and its achievements. And it is simultaneously time for a new Russia policy, one that avoids the somewhat dated concept of a distinctively German Ostpolitik. As Henry Kissinger tends to remind us, the demonization of the man in the Kremlin does not suffice as a long-term answer to the dangers of our era.

In this effort, Germany is not the lonely but inevitable mediator and moderator – this is better left to the five permanent members of the UN Security Council. But Germany has an existential interest in taming the new military technologies before they fall into the hands of inexperienced actors and light the world ablaze.

This time around, however, an exclusively nuclear approach will not be enough, nor will a bipolar approach suffice, given the Middle Kingdom’s inexorable rise. As they did after the Berlin and Cuba crises of the early 1960s, the powers must once again discover their ultimate dependence on each other’s reasonability as well as their vital interest in finding a formula to ensure long-term survival.

Once again, this will require the cultivation of strategic dialogue and, unavoidably, the abandonment of a number of preconditions. If the big nuclear powers are not on speaking terms with one another, confidence- and security-building measures of all kinds will have no chance.

To a certain degree, the situation reminds observers of the confrontation between the superpowers, a half a century ago. President John F. Kennedy demanded the “agonizing reappraisal” of America’s nuclear posture, including its long-established strategic wisdom. Through this radical, unorthodox approach, Kennedy prepared the way for strategic arms control. Arms control and a measure of disarmament ushered in an era of détente.

Today they offer ever less mutual trust and strategic equilibrium without which a reasonable measure of peace is not feasible. When the microphones are off, seasoned diplomats from both Russia and the US can be heard enunciating the pessimistic view that since Berlin and Cuba more than fifty years ago, the world has never been so close to war – real war – as it is today.

The foremost challenge is to find a way out of the confrontation over Crimea and Eastern Ukraine. All that has happened since early 2014 – the annexation of the strategic peninsula, hybrid warfare, half-hearted sanctions by both sides and US threats to supply defensive weaponry to the front – has not reversed Ukraine’s territorial losses while it has cost Russia space for political maneuvering, economic comfort and West-facilitated modernization. The Kremlin can ill afford this kind of posturing between half-war and half-peace. The longer critical oil prices remain where they have been for quite some time, the more Moscow stands to lose.



How to avert a nuclear confrontation? US President John F. Kennedy confers with Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara in the midst of the Cuban Missile Crisis in October 1961.

Given the rise in uncertainty, the question remains: Is it sensible to turn the Crimea Question into the shibboleth of East-West relations? Who stands to win in the end? Not Russia, not the US, not the West as a whole, but China. So what is wrong with circumventing the Ukrainian roadblock on the way to a safer world? The Cold War was also an exercise in strategic patience.

The White House assumption that economic sanctions will produce political regret has not seemed to work. “It’s the economy, stupid” is an American slogan, but not a means to force Mother Russia’s clumsy hand. Who will blink first? What has happened so far is unlikely to bring peace.

Putin’s promise to protect Russians wherever they can be found is more than ominous. “A question of war and peace,” he keeps repeating to himself. But even if a new steady state can be achieved within the Russian space, it will not be enough to recover trust and confidence on the world stage. We need CSBMs: confidence- and security-building measures. Reinvigorating OSCE and its rulebook could do the trick.

But even more important is the future of missile defense. When President George W. Bush cancelled US participation in the ABM system, he put paid to a well-balanced regime that had proved its worth. It is essential – and in the interest of both sides – to once again agree on shared rules, set up common control centers and develop a system of cyber control. Cold War management of the nuclear standoff through limitation and verification is not an unfeasible solution for dealing with new and largely untested technologies.

However, the Cold War experience is a stark reminder that an exclusively military-industrial approach will not suffice to revive trust and reliability. What is required is Russian self-restraint, a broad-based Western Ostpolitik, a thorough understanding of the relevant history and geopolitics as well as an appreciation of the new technologies and their disruptive potential. In other words, we need a combination of statecraft and bold diplomacy. Biding our time to see what comes next is the worst of all options: a leap into the dark with open eyes.

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# President for a half-year

The German 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

Continued from page 1  
**First defense**

well as for more generous support of states participating in EU and non-EU European military operations.

We have known for some time that the EU could achieve more capabilities for the same price by pooling and sharing its equipment. The diversity of EU weapons is six times higher than that of the US – for every model of US destroyer or frigate, the EU has seven. But most governments are more interested in the job-creation potential of procurement than in capability. Moreover, as long as governments or parliaments of member states retain veto power over deployment of their forces – which I support – a complete pooling and sharing will not increase capabilities, but rather paralyze Europe.

The famous “European army” is therefore out of the question for now. However, common investment and acquisition is much easier to push in terms of newer technologies such as cyber, drones and artificial intelligence (AI). As these technologies have not existed for long, there are fewer national idiosyncrasies to overcome.

The second component should be the development of a flexible European security force. Macron's proposal for a European Intervention Initiative is a promising start, but it is likely to fail if other member states perceive it simply as a vehicle to rally other nations to fight

France's post-colonial wars. This initiative should be widened into a broader European Security Initiative, designed explicitly to address other nations' security concerns.

Part of this could include the establishment of a combat-ready European military force made up of soldiers from different European member states who train together and use the same equipment. This force should eventually comprise up to 100,000 soldiers and include its own separate capability. States wanting to join this force should face ambitious entry requirements, including a minimum contribution of troops and minimum defense spending. These thresholds must move beyond the flaws of PESCO.

This could be established in parallel to a stabilization and civilian component – including police, border guards and other facilities.

This would not be a European army but rather a flexible force, and more importantly would leave fully functional national military forces intact. The gulf between the rhetoric of European autonomy and the reality of small-scale technical projects not only harms our security, but also threatens the legitimacy of the European project and the possibility of re-establishing solidarity through a union that protects. The EU must close this gulf now.

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 principles 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 over the entrance of the Bulgarian Parliament. Bulgaria will strive to be an honest broker in leading the discussions on the issues that connect us and unite us; we want to be part of all the integration processes of the Union – Schengen, the euro-zone, asylum policy, the new security and defense policy. Our country ranks second in terms of public confidence in European values; our citizens have been seeing for themselves the benefits of European solidarity – in 2017 we witnessed 4 percent economic growth, and the same rate is expected for this year as well; the unemployment rate is now at 6 percent; highways have been constructed; waste and water treatment plants as well as energy-efficiency projects for residential buildings have been implemented; in our ten years of membership we have seen a 16-percent growth in employment; incomes have been

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POLITICS

going up; per capita GDP based on disposable income went up from 27 percent to 40.8 percent compared to EU; and our economy has grown by 41 percent. People in Bulgaria have never lived better since the country joined the European Union. We aim to work on the issues that are on the European agenda in a way that the EU citizens will feel they are the focus of European policies. This will help strengthen European solidarity, including on topics where there is currently no consensus.

What are your thoughts on the efforts to establish a European defense union, or Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO)? The launch of PESCO is an important step for the fulfillment of the European integration project and the building of the European Defense Union. PESCO brings the EU closer to its goal of improving the cost-effectiveness of defense spending and becoming a serious partner in the field of international security. We support an adequate, ambitious and transparently functioning rule-based PESCO that will contribute to the security of the EU and the enhancement of the European pillar within NATO. PESCO's success will depend on the progress of concrete projects, which we expect to be officially adopted soon.

When you see active European policy cooperation between France and Germany, do you feel hope for new progress towards integration, or rather concern over German-French dominance within the EU?

Rather hope than concern. France and Germany are the motor of European integration. The movement ahead of the whole European structure depends on the proper functioning of this motor. Of course, the uniqueness of the

EU comes from the fact that each member state has its say and its voice is heard. The issues we have to solve require rapid solutions. Each member state carries responsibility for finding them and should make its contribution.

In 2015, Bulgaria also bore the brunt of a high number of refugees. Many now fear a new wave of refugees from Syria and Africa. What to do?

As I have said multiple times: First and foremost we should seek to address the root causes. And the activeness of European diplomacy in the process of solving the crises should increase. The EU should continue to support development and humanitarian policies. The solution is to help origin countries eliminate the causes for migration by overcoming poverty, investing in their economies and guaranteeing political

stability. Education programs are needed for young people, for it is frequently they who are encouraged to go to Western Europe just to be able to send 50 or 100 euros a week to their relatives in their home country. At the same time we should make no compromise with the smugglers who literally trade in human lives. How many people have died on their way to "salvation"? The entry to the EU is through the official border checkpoints, where asylum-seekers will receive adequate care. Bulgaria is a role model as the country that best guards the external EU border, despite not being admitted to Schengen. It is also necessary that we continue working with the states bordering the conflict countries, such as Turkey. Since the agreement with the EU has come into force, migration pressure from Turkey on our border has dropped 84 percent.

Continued from page 4  
**Putin forever?**

The remainder of his tenure will feature about as much democracy as it will profound economic or political modernization; an increase in any of these would mean the beginning of the end of the Putin system. Yet, as his oligarchs plunder the country in an unprecedented manner, it must also be noted that under Putin, many everyday Russian lives have improved for the first time in decades, at least temporarily. While the center of power increasingly resembles a czar's court, political stagnation at home is hailed as stability.

Perhaps he is grooming a successor from the group of newcomers who have arisen amid his extensive staffing reshuffling of recent years – quiet, efficient, smooth technocrats such as chief of staff Anton Vaino or the new Minister for Economic Development Maxim Oreshkin. They are all loyal followers who, like the younger Putin, seem "steadfast in a military way."

In 2024, at the end of his next term, Vladimir Putin would be 72 – not exceedingly old. But the country is hostage to Putin – just as he is a prisoner of the system he created. "As long as there is Putin, there is Russia," his deputy chief of staff once said of him. "Without Putin – no Russia."

Putin forever? People initially laughed at the thought. No one is laughing anymore.



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## POLITICS

# When the world betrayed the Jews

In July of 1938, delegations from 32 countries met in Evian to discuss how and by whom refugees fleeing the Nazis could be helped. The ten days at the spa town ended with a defeat for civilization

BY PETER H. KOEPF

It has been almost 80 years since a Swiss court first convicted a Swiss citizen for a humane, indeed heroic act. Adolf Studer, a mechanic from Basel, was arrested at the German border town of Weil am Rhein for using a counterfeit day visa to smuggle a stateless Jew named Leo Silberg from Vienna into Switzerland. Swiss authorities imposed a fine of 20 francs and five days in prison. The judgement was issued on July 7, 1938.

In the wake of the Anschluss, the Nazis were hurrying to “liberate” Austria of its 200,000 Jews, most of whom lived in Vienna. On April 16, 1938, for instance, in Pama and Kittsee, two towns in eastern Austria, they dragged Jews from their beds, transported them to the Czech border and interned them on a breakwater in the middle of the Danube. However, neither Czechoslovakia nor Hungary were willing to take in the 51 undesired and now stateless individuals. When the international press, including *The New York Times* and the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, reported on their fate, a Jewish relief organization took them in until a country agreed to allow them entry.

But no one wanted them. Swiss authorities feared a “Jewification” of their country, and they blamed the Nazi regime for the flood of refugees. The chief of the border and alien police, Heinrich Rothmund, objected “with all seriousness...to Jews being smuggled in...with the help of the Viennese police.” Switzerland – he made it known – needed Jews “just as little” as Germany did.

Since March 31, 1933, directives “addressing the immigration of Israelites” prevailed in Switzerland, yet some 5,000 Jewish Austrians succeeded in finding refuge there after the Anschluss. This was the result of a number of factors, such as empathetic officials; one of which was a police captain who allowed hundreds of refugees to cross the border, and, like Adolf Studer, was later tried and convicted for breach of duty and the falsification of documents.

In the meantime, the 51 Jews on the Danube tugboat were awaiting the outcome of a conference on refugees, which – one day before Studer’s conviction in Evian – promised to bring help to German and Austrian Jews. But let it be known: Not one of the participating delegations from 32 countries in Europe and the Americas as well as Australia and New Zealand assumed adequate responsibility for the crisis, and not one was able to fulfill the hopes of the 51 refugees on the ship nor the half million Jews in Austria and Germany. They failed this test of humanity and – just as disgracefully as they do today – sought to justify their inaction.

The Berlin-based journalist and historian Jochen Thies wrote a fact-filled book (*Evian 1938. When the world betrayed the Jews*) on the Evian conference that stretched from July 6 to July 15 in 1938. His account retraces the ten days during which the world betrayed the Jews; it is a story of falsehood, mendacity and the obfuscation of responsibility. The French-language conference report, which languished largely unnoticed in a Bavarian archive, led Thies to conclude that “had the conference taken a different course, it could have saved the lives of countless German Jews, and presumably European Jews as well.”

Could have. A half million Jews were living under the Nazis at that point; only 50,000 had fled since Hitler took power on Jan. 30, 1933. Pressure was mounting, and US President Franklin D. Roosevelt would seize the initiative. In a cabinet meeting on March 18, he asked: “America was a place of refuge for so many Germans during the revolution of 1848. Why can’t we offer them a home now?” However, Roosevelt did not seem to represent the majority of his people; a survey conducted in March 1938 revealed that three-quarters of those asked objected to granting entry to a greater number of Jewish refugees from Germany. Only 17 percent were in favor of the idea.

Nevertheless, Roosevelt’s initiative provided impetus for an international conference. But where could it take place? Three countries refused to host, including Switzerland, which feared its neighbors to the north and stressed its neutrality when faced with the prospect of accepting throngs of refugees. Hence the choice of Evian; the French spa town on the south shore of Lake Geneva ultimately welcomed delegations from 32 countries, 39 private organizations and 200 journalists.

in 27,370 people from Germany that year – men and women, rich and poor, from all races and faiths. The prepared speeches made it patently clear: The US would raise neither its immigration quotas nor its financial contributions to the cause. Any additional expenditures would have to come from private organizations.

The Belgian Robert de Foy also created a pretext for limited possibilities by emphasizing his country’s dense population and pressing unemployment, the latter of which was also bemoaned by Canada’s Hume Wrong, while the Brazilian Helio Lobo feigned a sense of responsibility in warning of what European Jews should expect to find in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro: unemployment. And Australia’s Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Walter White gave free reign to his cynicism and xenophobia in claiming that his country had never had a race problem, and did not want to acquire one.

*The New York Times* was quick to note which way the wind was blowing. Charles Streit wrote of a “none too trustful poker game.” The great nations sought to ward off immigration and offload the burden to others. An “atmosphere of inhospitableness” prevailed.

Golda Meir, who would later become prime minister of Israel, wrote in her memoirs: “Sitting there in that magnificent hall and listening to the delegates of 32 countries rise, each in turn, to explain how much they would have liked to take in substantial numbers of refugees and how unfortunate it was that they were not able to do so, was a terrible experience. [...] I wanted to get up and scream at them all, ‘Don’t you know that these “numbers” are human beings, people who may spend the rest of their lives in concentration camps, or wandering around like lepers, if you don’t let them in?’ I didn’t know then that not concentration but death camps awaited the refugees whom no one wanted.”

But with whom did the burden lie to grant asylum to Jews? Colombia’s Jesus Maria Yepes averred: “My esteemed French peers, my esteemed Dutch peers, you take precedent.” Today, the reasoning is that refugees should stay in their regions: Africans in Libya, Syrians and Iraqis in Jordan and Turkey. And autocratic heads of state in these regions are – rightly so – currently receiving funds from the EU for this purpose. Emmanuel Macron has plans to build reception camps in northern Africa, which can be seen

part of the world, and provided excuses that were at least as good as those aired by European states. But they showed some interest as well; the Central American countries – Costa Rica, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama – declared themselves ready to take in refugees if other participating states were also prepared to do so with numbers proportional to each country’s land area. They already had enough merchants and intellectuals, yet had no money to help new arrivals. Cuba’s delegate, Juan Escobar, refused to accept any refugees in excess of statutory quotas; however, tourists depositing a check worth at least \$5,000 would be welcome along with investors staking at least \$25,000, albeit only if such an investment did not economically disadvantage local populations.

But how were the Jewish refugees to procure so much money? Most were destitute, having been plundered by a German regime that forbade them to leave the Reich with significant amounts of money or valuables in tow.

Argentina, which announced its visa requirement on the seventh day of the conference – July 12, 1938 – joined with Ecuador and Uruguay to declare that they could only accept blue-collar

across 28 countries. It was a shameful, utter failure of the system of nation states.

The summary by the Evian committee, which comprised both aid organizations and stakeholders, read as follows: “The moving reports delivered to the subcommittee lay bare an enormous human tragedy requiring immediate measures to improve the situation, and a challenge to the conference to agree promptly on cooperative action.” But the resolution once again recited all the reasons to forgo a quota system. An aid program for refugees was necessary, but the countries of origin needed to be prepared to work together, to allow the prospective emigrants to bring assets and valuables with them and to organize an orderly departure. It was also decided to meet next in London and to form an intergovernmental committee that would begin its work in August. “From that day forward,” writes Thies, “all plans, having only been vaguely formulated, were further muddled.”

Ten months later, on Apr. 6, 1939, Edward Turnour, Lord Winterton, recognized the failure in an address in Britain’s lower house of parliament. The plan to save the Jews foundered under the reality “that not one of the thirty-two IGC Governments was prepared to admit neither any moral obligation to solve the refugee question nor financial liability for the transfer and upkeep (...) or for the permanent settlement of refugees.” Instead, “the unhappily pervasive (...) sub-current of anti-Semitism or anti-alienism” prohibited governments from doing more for refugees than they did for their own people. Instead, the German and Austrian Jews were shoved “every which way across the map.” “One moment they’re in Madagascar, the next it’s Alaska, and in the end they’re stuck behind lowered boom gates.” Evian became a “Jewish Munich.” Kristallnacht was but 117 days away.



Besmirching themselves: Hitler Youth forced Austrian Jews to scrub the streets after Austria’s Anschluss in March 1938. The crowd looked on.

Hitler would send jeers from Königsberg: “I can only hope and expect the other world, which feels such deep sympathy for these criminals, is at least generous enough to convert this sympathy into practical help. As far as I am concerned, we are prepared to place our luxury ships at the disposal of these countries for the transportation of these criminals.”

And thus began the defeat of civilization. Britain’s chief negotiator, Edward Turnour, declared on the first day: “Great Britain is not an immigration country.” Asylum would only be conceivable under “strict limits.” Denmark then announced the visa requirement for Austrian Jews it had implemented at the beginning of July. Turnour’s French counterpart, Henry Victor Bérenger, followed with his own pre-emptive defense by citing the number – 200,000 – of refugees already enjoying asylum in France as well as the number – more than three million – of foreign nationals living in his country at that time. He saw only “limited possibilities,” which echoed the perspective of Beucker Andraea, the director of legal affairs for the Dutch foreign ministry.

The US representative Myron C. Taylor, an industrialist, pointed out that his country had taken

Commentary in French newspapers, however, took on a defensive posture. The title page of the daily newspaper *Journal* featured historian Louis Madelin, a member of the Académie française, citing that the number of individuals driven from their own countries and living in France was growing, while “our low birth rate presents the danger that one day soon the French could lose their own country.” He openly feared what we now refer to as a “flood of asylum seekers.” The newspaper *La Croix* shared this concern, as its editorial board warned of “self-destruction at the alter of neighborly love,” and limited the scope of Christianity’s obligation of philanthropy and good samaritanism to include only fellow countrymen.

Evian saw much talk of humanity and brotherly love, but talk it remained. Members of the 24 participating non-governmental organizations (NGOs), including the Reich Association of Jews in Germany and the Aid Organization of German Jews (Austrian NGOs were prohibited from taking part) became quickly disillusioned. Each was allotted but one speaker who could address the conference for ten minutes, which was later limited to only five minutes.

as detention centers acting as a bulwark against a renewed “flood of asylum seekers.”

The Swiss delegate to the conference was Heinrich Rothmund, the man who had said his country needed Jews just as little as Germany did. In Evian he announced that, at best, his country could act as a transit country. Already, he calculated, each Swiss citizen was paying 40 francs for “the foreigners,” while countries of the former Danube Monarchy – Hungary and Czechoslovakia – had closed their borders. Switzerland had thus been forced to introduce visa requirements for Austrian passport holders. Naturally Switzerland wanted to help, he conceded, but that was dependent on the quotas that countries overseas were prepared to establish. According to Gösta Engzell, Sweden, too, wanted to look beyond Europe’s borders to find host countries for the refugees from Germany and Austria. His country was in favor of an institution taking care of the issue, and was prepared to take in a certain number of refugees with the qualifications Sweden required – even Jews who were not considered political refugees.

However, representatives from countries overseas resisted this deportation of Jews to their

laborers. At last, Peru’s representative, Garcia Calderon Rey, offered words with a humanistic ring to them: At the very least, a continent should provide no opportunity for hate. But he then continued with some conditions; he saw the “civil peace” as being endangered by minorities “who are not open to our traditions and aims.” In other words, those who do not subjugate themselves to the – to use a contemporary term – “dominant culture” are themselves responsible for the results.

Paraguay’s Gustavo A. Wiengreen conceded that his country needed the people in order to exploit its natural resources; those willing to work would be granted entry. Albeit, the government had decreed the previous March that only those that could contribute to Paraguayan agriculture would be welcome.

Jochen Thies was distraught to read the documents before him: “Only evasions, only excuses, procrastination ad infinitum.” At issue was the distribution of 500,000 refugees across the entire globe. This “less than utopian number” could possibly have been saved by a little good will. And 77 years later, 500 million Europeans could not manage to distribute 1 million refugees



Jochen Thies’ book *Evian 1938* was published by Klartext Essen in December 2017. 200 p., €18.95.

The scorn and derision of the *Völkischer Beobachter* reached the emissaries as they were still convening in Evian: “No one wants them,” read the Nazi party organ on July 13. Adolf Hitler took his time in delivering an evaluation of the conference. From a speech he gave in the Reichstag on Jan. 30, 1939: “It is a shameful spectacle to see how the whole democratic world is oozing sympathy for the poor tormented Jewish people, but remains hard-hearted and obdurate when it comes to helping them.”

Jochen Thies asks: “Has the world learned nothing from the non-event of 80 years ago? What has changed since 1938?” His answer is ultimately damning: “If one recalls the reasoning of the 32 states in Evian, very little. Even the parlance of then resembles that of now.”

BY MICHAEL RÜHLE

We are still living in the second nuclear age. Unlike the first nuclear age, which was shaped by the bipolar nuclear standoff between the United States and the Soviet Union, the second is far more complex. The spread of nuclear weapons has made deterrence a multiplayer game; Asia has emerged as the region with the greatest potential for nuclear conflict; and new nuclear aspirants can benefit from the technological progress made by others as well as from the emergence of semi-private nuclear supply networks.

Some developments indicate, however, that a third nuclear age may be approaching. Indications range from the rapid progress of North Korea's missile program to the treaty aimed at banning nuclear weapons. While these developments seem contradictory, they contribute to the emergence of a new nuclear age in which nuclear deterrence may become more important yet also more difficult to sustain. Six developments could lead to structural changes to the global nuclear order that may justifiably be termed a "third" nuclear age:

1. Nuclear use. In the summer of 2017, North Korea's foreign minister suggested that Pyongyang may detonate a nuclear device above the Pacific. After more than 70 years of non-use of nuclear weapons, the actual employment of a single nuclear weapon – even



# GAME CHANGERS

Six developments that could lead to structural changes to the global nuclear order

if it were intended only for political posturing and would not cause major casualties – would be a game changer of tremendous significance. For some, it would reinforce the conviction that nuclear deterrence remains essential for prevailing in a nuclearized world, while others would see the detonation as proof that nuclear weapons have failed as a means of inducing restraint in international relations.

2. A major accident in the nuclear military infrastructure of a nuclear weapons state. Whether through sabotage or simply through insufficiently trained staff, a major accident could foster the perception among the broader public that nuclear weapons are no longer a security provider but a security liability. Similarly, the temporary loss of control over nuclear weapons due a cyber attack against the nuclear weapons infrastructure of a state could

fundamentally change the perception of the military and political utility of nuclear weapons.

3. Nuclear terrorism. Building a nuclear weapon still requires elaborate state infrastructure. Should terrorists nonetheless manage a credible threat of nuclear use, or should a fundamentalist regime come to power in a nuclear weapons state, a new nuclear age will have arrived. With religious justifications for mass murder and the glorification of martyrdom entering the nuclear equation, the rules of the first and second nuclear age would become unhinged. Nuclear deterrence would remain an essential tool for managing interstate relations, yet its limits in the face of non-rational actors could severely reduce that concept's perceived value.

4. A nuclear tipping point. A new nuclear hegemon emerging

in a volatile region could compel several neighbors to exercise the "plutonium option," i.e. use their civilian light-water reactors to produce weapons-grade plutonium. As light-water reactors continue to spread, the number of states that acquire such a "break-out" capability will grow as well. Should a major change in their security environment compel them to declare themselves nuclear powers, it would trigger a "proliferation cascade" that would not only invalidate most of the non-proliferation efforts of the past 50 years, but also dramatically increase the risk of nuclear conflict.

5. The decline of extended deterrence. The degradation of the credibility of the US as a promulgator of extended deterrence could spell the end of the successful deal that provides American nuclear deterrence to allies in exchange for

their nuclear abstinence. Hence, should the US appear to waver on its extended deterrence commitments, or should a new major challenger emerge that the US cannot or will not counterbalance, some of its allies, particularly in Asia, may well conclude that the time has come to opt for national nuclear deterrence. This would deal a major blow to the global non-proliferation regime, which has always been far more dependent on US engagement than most observers dare to admit.

6. A major change in the legal framework for nuclear governance. A nuclear weapons ban treaty, which seeks to stigmatize nuclear weapons as illegal, is now a foregone conclusion. Since a treaty that they persistently oppose cannot bind the nuclear weapons states and their allies, it will not lead to global nuclear abolition. However,

the ban treaty could seriously undermine the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT), the only near-universal framework for regulating nuclear possession and non-possession. Already under strain by the structural changes of the second nuclear age, the legal stigmatization of nuclear weapons could damage the NPT to the point of obsolescence. Thus, the third nuclear age might well be one without any agreed nuclear governance.

The return of great power competition and the emergence of new nuclear weapons states such as North Korea point to the undiminished importance of nuclear deterrence as an integral part of Western defense. However, criticism of nuclear deterrence will also grow stronger. Any sound Western security policy must therefore explain the importance of nuclear deterrence without trivializing its risks. It must also remind Western publics that managing a complex nuclear reality requires more than merely claiming the moral high ground; if proposals such as the ban treaty would make major war more likely, they do not constitute a morally superior alternative. To prevent a third nuclear age, Western leaders have their work cut out for them.

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## REMAIN ALERT

Keeping Washington tethered to the international community will make it easier to repair Trump's wreckage

BY CHARLES A. KUPCHAN

One down, three to go. And judging by Trump's first year in office, the next three should be long and painful. As the US backs away from its traditional role as team captain, its "America First" foreign policy is setting the world on edge. Trump has already pulled out of the Trans-Pacific Partnership and the Paris Climate Agreement. Next on his chopping block may well be the Iran nuclear deal and US participation in NAFTA and the World Trade Organization.

America's deliberate undermining of the rules-based international order it worked so hard to establish after World War II has left America's partners understandably vexed, and wondering when it is time to give up on Trump. But even if justified, their approach is ill-vised.

Instead of turning their backs on Trump in anger and frustration, friends of the US should engage the president with hopes of curbing his destructive instincts. Trump will do more damage if he feels isolated, rejected and cut loose, while holding him close provides at least some leverage over his behavior and may impress upon him that partnership has its advantages. Moreover, the Trump presidency will not last forever. Trying to keep Washington tethered to the international community during his tenure will make it easier to repair the wreckage he leaves behind.

Learning to live with the Trump presidency means accepting the harsh reality that what you see is what you get. Indeed, his presidency is likely to get worse, not better, in the months ahead. The adults in the room – John Kelley, Rex Tillerson, H.R. McMaster, James Mattis – are unable to tame Trump, and some of them may well jump ship in the near future, eliminating whatever moderating influence they may exercise. Trump is also likely to ramp up his hard-edged populism as the midterm elections draw near. With the Democrats poised to do well in November, Trump will seek to rally his base by doubling down on his nationalist and populist agenda.

Having alienated the more centrist voters who helped him win the presidency, Trump is retreating to his faithful base, which at least for now has commandeered the Republican Party. The Republican establishment is running for cover in the face of a mobilized and angry base. Whether he likes it or not, Trump is beholden to an ascendant insurgency of populist nationalists; he has already lost much of the rest of the country.

Trump has gravitated to the far right by inclination as much as by necessity. Even as Steve Bannon, Sebastian Gorka and other fervent ideologues have been banished from the White House, Trump's racially tinged brand of nationalism has continued, if not deepened. His equivocation over

neo-Nazi protesters in Charlottesville, his insults toward Hispanic immigrants, his decision to send back Haitians, Salvadorans and others who came to the United States to escape conflict and natural disaster, his disparaging comments about Africa – this is the real Donald Trump, not a political concoction of his handlers.

Confronted with this sobering reality, how should the international community handle the remainder of Trump's tumultuous presidency?

First, America's partners should continue to try to connect with Trump, seeking to exercise whatever influence they may have over his behavior. Trump craves respect and acceptance; shunning and isolating him will only make matters worse. Moreover, engagement indeed has the potential to yield concrete payoffs. Even when Trump appears ready to start dismantling policies he does not like, he tends to offer an escape hatch.

Rather than simply dismantling the Iran deal, he handed it over to Congress to address his concerns. He announced the end of the program allowing Dreamers (residents who entered or remained in the country illegally as minors) to stay in the US, but then opened a dialogue with Democrats about preserving it. He declared he was rescinding health care subsidies needed to fund Obamacare, but soon thereafter entertained a bipartisan proposal to salvage the funding. Even though Trump has announced his intention to withdraw from the Paris climate agreement, the US cannot formally exit the accord until 2020, leaving room to maneuver.

It is difficult to know whether Trump's stop-and-go style is a sign of genetic inconstancy or part of a shrewd negotiating strategy. But it does mean that the door is open to negotiation, and concerned parties should walk through that door. In the end, Trump may or may not uphold the Iran deal, allow Dreamers to stay in the US, preserve the health insurance of Americans in need or return to the Paris Agreement. Nonetheless, it is certainly worth trying to bring him around. To walk away from Trump is to encourage his worst instincts.

Second, engaging Trump does not mean bending to his wishes; it means attempting to bring him around to sensible positions, and standing one's ground when that effort fails. On the Iran nuclear deal, America's partners must staunchly defend the pact, come what may; it is the only game in town. However, Europeans should engage Washington on the deal's sunset provisions and how best to counter Iran's missile program and its destabilizing regional behavior. Exploring side agreements or follow-on arrangements for addressing these issues may succeed in convincing Trump not to scuttle the deal. A good faith effort to address Trump's concerns – rather than dismissing them – may be just enough to keep him on board. It is worth a try.

In similar fashion, the international community should keep working on Trump regarding issues like climate change and trade. But in the meantime, the rest of the world is right to stand by the Paris climate agreement, even though Trump has renounced it. The same goes for the Trans-Pacific Partnership; its remaining members are doing the right thing by proceeding with a trade deal despite Trump's withdrawal from the pact. If Trump seeks to back away from the World Trade Organization, it will be up to other members to defend a rules-based trading order.

While engaging Trump, America's partners, and Europe in particular, must prevent him from dismantling the liberal norms and rules-based institutions that have long anchored the West. Europe should make sure that the next US president does not assume office in a Western world that has been reduced to rubble.

Third, America's friends must prevent popular opposition to Trump from transforming into anti-American sentiment. Even if anger toward Trump may be understandable, and even if politicians are tempted to cater to it, doing so risks setting democratic societies against the US. If leaders around the world are to remain committed to working with Trump whenever possible – as well as reaching out to the US bureaucracy, Congress, and state and local officials, all of which may be better partners than the White House – they must ensure that their own electorates have not come to write off the US.

Otherwise, a sense of sustaining the any of solidarity and community among the Atlantic democracies will prove illusory. Otherwise, the US president following Trump may preside over a country that has turned sharply inward and lost its internationalist calling.

The United States, long the anchor of republican ideals and multilateralism, is backing away from both under Trump's leadership. This turn in US politics is part of a broader surge in illiberalism and populist nationalism playing out in many quarters of the globe.

To help ensure that we are witnessing only a temporary setback – not a permanent reversal – in the fortunes of liberal politics, America's partners should keep reaching out to Trump and resist the temptation to distance themselves from the US. Engaging Trump will limit the damage he can do, and make it more likely that the Trump era represents a dark detour for Americans – and not the new normal.

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## STAY IN TOUCH

"America first" means America alone

BY CONSTANCE  
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 preventive 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 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 explains 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") rather than an economic and political fact. Furthermore, his more mainstream advisers have not managed to "normalize" the administration; at best, they have achieved less bad outcomes, such as kicking the responsibility of reviewing the Iran nuclear deal over to Congress rather than just tearing it up.

Under these circumstances, the publication of the Trump administration's first National Security Strategy in late December of 2017 was met with significantly more than the customary tepid specialist interest. But the document does not resolve the tension between the normalizers and the radicals – indeed, it enshrines it.

On the one hand, the NSS makes dozens of references to partners and allies. It also makes a point of restating the president's late and reluctant re-commitment to the mutual defense clause in Article 5 of the NATO Treaty. On the other hand, it emphatically reinforces the dictate delivered in a now-notorious op-ed written in May by National Security Advisor H.R. McMaster and Gary Cohn, president of the National Economic Council: the fundamental paradigm of American power in the age of Trump is one of zero-sum competition rather than cooperation. And the rationale made by the NSS for US support of its allies in Europe and elsewhere is self-interested in the narrowest possible terms: America's "allies and partners magnify US power and extend US influence."

The NSS also insists, rather remarkably, that the institutions of domestic democracy must be made resilient to political interference from abroad. This new emphasis on challenges to US dominance by other great powers – specifically, Russia and China – was amplified shortly

TICS

# TREATMENT CENTER

US President Donald Trump has infected trans-Atlantic relations with uncertainty, instability and anxiety. Three experts seek remedies for *The German Times*



after publication of the NSS by the new National Defense Strategy and its motto of “compete, deter, and win.” Written at the Pentagon under the aegis of Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis, this document is notable for its embrace of allies and partners, which it describes as “crucial” to American strategy. Given the increasingly aggressive global assertiveness of both Russia and China, this re-focusing of US strategy makes sense, and Europeans can and should engage with it.

If only the commander in chief agreed. President Trump has made it clear – in his speeches on the launch of the NSS, his Davos speech and his State of the Union address – that he does not share the strategic framework advocated by his advisors. Trump continues to argue for cooperation with Putin’s Russia, and sees China chiefly as a trade adversary; the top three threats he obsesses over are immigrants, terrorists and North Korea. He remains disdainful of the notion that has underpinned US strategy since World War II: American stewardship of a liberal international order is in the American interest.

Even more importantly, Trump appears to believe that the US should be able to use nuclear weapons, would win a trade war against China and could emerge victorious from a preventive “bloody nose” strike against North Korea. Should any of these come to pass, the world would become a different place. But even if they are avoided, the president’s inability or unwillingness to tone down his rhetoric, his overt disagreements with his advisors or his contempt for allies will lead America’s friends to hedge their bets. As for America’s adversaries, they will feel encouraged to fill the vacuum the super-power leaves behind.

**CONSTANCE STELZENMÜLLER** is the inaugural Robert Bosch Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution.

BY METIN HAKVERDI

As far as the world economy is concerned, it is interlinked,” deadpanned the famous German satirist Kurt Tucholsky in the early 1930s. Although uttered in the Weimar Republic, the remark applies today as much as ever. Indeed, while some observers see President Donald Trump’s words at this year’s World Economic Forum in Davos – “America first does not mean America alone” – as a gesture of conciliation, this would be an incorrect reading. American economic policy will be part of a new global public policy that has a tangible impact on Germany as well. After Davos, there can be no doubt about this.

And yet, as unpleasant and protectionist as Trump’s “America first” slogan may sound, it is nothing we haven’t heard before. While his term – or terms – in office will be sure to drag on, his administration will not usher in the “demise of the West.” Although Trump is indeed fostering a sense of alienation among trans-Atlantic partners, he is far from legitimizing the reasons for doing so.

The debate launched by the recent “In Spite of It All, America” manifesto examining the future of the trans-Atlantic relationship is on the right path, but it is too monothematic in parts. Although my intention is by no means to question or deny the importance of foreign and security policy, an approach that reduces the debate to this topic alone gets me thinking. After all, this approach neglects the fact that globalization, automation and digitization have long since caused domestic and foreign policy to move closer together while blurring the lines distin-

guishing one policy field from the other.

Unlike any president before him, Trump has been able to convince people who were not profiting from our new world order that he understood their woes. In fact, these were the very people who put him in office. Indeed, the 2016 election has been referred to as the “can you hear me now?” election. Today, these “losers of modernization” are exerting their influence on the future of the Western world order. That being said, we cannot forget that this development is not entirely new; and it’s not just taking place in the US.

Has the trans-Atlantic relationship been shattered by the efforts of one person? Certainly not. At this point, our approach should be to take advantage of Trump’s political egoism, his contempt for national and international institutions, his rejection of multilateralism and his utter disdain for the idea of a united Europe as an opportunity to revitalize and redefine the trans-Atlantic relationship. Indeed, it is up to us to do our homework now so we can enjoy the fruits of our labor while Trump is still president and, more importantly, when he is no longer in office.

The US and Germany share a common horizon of experience that began – however inauspiciously – during World War II. With this in mind, it is important to note that one reason for today’s rising alienation is a generational shift in the political sphere, one that has nothing to do with the current US administration. Over the past several years, a number of political figures whose yearning for the West had been fed by the direct experience of WWII and the post-war years have retired

from politics. As more and more eyewitnesses of that era – those with vivid recollections of the liberation of Germany – fade into the background, the more difficult it becomes for the younger generation to bridge this emotional gap.

This is why we need new narratives that can revitalize our trans-Atlantic relationship. These stories can no longer revolve around military liberation; instead, they must focus on what makes liberal democracies such as the US and Germany so successful. This involves shared liberal democratic values, equality before the law and an open, tolerant society. In fact, in order to be a part of this community, our countries need not even share interests – which, indeed, they often do not.

First of all, it would suffice to have open and fair elections. Indeed, for all of us who doubt the strength of democracy under Trump, we need only look at the latest elections for governor in New Jersey and Virginia as well as the Senate special election in Alabama. The results show that the liberal tradition not only alive, but vibrant – and that we would behoove us to put aside our typical German pessimism in this case. The confident and professional media so despised by Trump is serving its purpose by fulfilling its journalistic mandate. In other words, there will be a time after Trump – and we should be prepared for it.

What can we do in the meantime to revitalize and redefine the trans-Atlantic relationship? While Trump is in office, it is urgent and necessary to identify and reach out to the president’s antagonists, especially those working in the complicated US system of checks and balances. These include elected members of Congress, scientists, academ-

ics, local politicians and all those who see multilateralism as self-evident and desirable. For example, in the realm of climate protection, California is currently showing that it is possible for reasonable environmental policies to succeed even without adherence to the Paris Climate Agreement.

In fact, there are plenty of areas in which we can work now to refine our shared values. For example, it is urgent that we explore the impact of digitization on the economy and the workplace in both our countries. Our response to the challenges of the fourth industrial revolution will have to reflect our liberal tradition and thus be differ greatly from the solutions offered by authoritarian regimes such as Russia and China. But how exactly can this work in a globalized market?

In our era of growing populism within liberal democracies, the “future of work” is perhaps the most important trans-Atlantic theme on which to focus. How can we achieve a fair tax and trade policy? What should be the nature of internet regulation? In order to answer these and other questions, it is imperative that we engage in an intensive trans-Atlantic dialogue.

I am optimistic that we will succeed in this endeavor. On my travels throughout the US, which have often taken me deep into rural areas, I have experienced an American society steeped in the tradition of Woodrow Wilson; that is, not only do people want a better America, they also want a better world. At its core, the community of values in the West has always been shaped by an image of man as a bearer of freedom and dignity.

Anyone who travels through the industrial wastelands of the Ohio Valley and then visits Ger-

many’s Ruhr Valley – both of which have been hit hard by the structural changes of recent decades – will immediately recognize that liberal and Western democracies will have to work together to provide political solutions to address the anger and hopelessness felt by those referred to in German as Rationalisierungsverlierer, or “rationalisierungslöser.” This is where domestic and foreign policy intersect; indeed, without the anger and hopelessness felt by former coalminers in the Rust Belt, Trump’s electoral success would have been inconceivable – and there would have been no resulting shift in policy alliances in the West.

Politicians of my generation are now obliged to use the coming years to establish reliable and sustainable contacts as well as to address the key challenges of our time – both in and outside of the political sphere. The self-absorption of Trump’s presidency provides us with a living reminder that we must explore, nurture and develop our shared values on both sides of the Atlantic time and again. After all, the more we know about each other, the less Trump will be able to spread his (mis-) interpretation of the situation. We must never forget that the trans-Atlantic relationship does not belong to the president in Washington; it belongs to the people who fill it with life.

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## BUSINESS

# DOWN THE WRONG PIPE

The construction of the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline is highly contentious. Is Europe becoming dependent on Russia? Or on the US? Two German experts present their differing views for *The German Times*

BY FRIEDBERT PFLÜGER

As polarized as the discussion surrounding Nord Stream 2 may be, each side posits legitimate arguments deserving of careful consideration. It is thus essential to discard doomsday scenarios, return to reason and soberly substantiate the debate. Four main issues are at stake:

Detractors of Nord Stream 2 argue that European energy security is already impaired by an over-dependency on Russian gas. As was the case with previous energy cooperation projects, such as the German-Russian gas-for-pipes deal of the 1970s (“Röhrenembargo”), it is first and foremost Washington that is in opposition, ostensibly in the belief that Russia covers the vast majority of European gas demand. However, this share, often exaggerated in the US, has been fluctuating over the past decade between roughly one-quarter and one-third.

But more importantly, after the Ukrainian gas crises in 2006 and 2009 – which in some Central and Eastern European countries led to serious supply shortages and justified concerns – the EU took decisive action to drastically diversify supply sources and improve energy security. What emerged is a functional and highly flexible European gas market, lacking confining destination clauses and boasting new interconnectors, storage facilities, reverse flow capabilities and over 30 European LNG import terminals (sufficient to cover more than half of EU demand). While just a decade ago the EU might still have been susceptible to blackmail, we are now witnessing a much-improved energy landscape where gas can scarcely be weaponized.

Prospective European gas demand is a similar point of contention. Will not the triumphant advance of renewables and efficiency measures make additional gas import capacity superfluous? In a recent speech, EU Climate Action and Energy Commissioner Miguel Arias Cañete made abundantly clear that this is not the case: “Gas has an important role to play in our decarbonization efforts [and] will shift towards a role where it will complement various renewables and replace more polluting fuels.”

In the short and medium term, Europe will continue to require large volumes of low-carbon fuels for heating, transportation and shipping, as well as for the substitution of coal in electricity generation. Even if consumption levels remain stable, import necessity will expand due to dwindling availability of domestic gas resources; in the Netherlands, for instance, production dropped from 81 bcm in 2013 to 47 bcm in 2016 due to concerns over seismic activity.

Opponents of Nord Stream 2 also challenge the business sense behind the pipeline. But Russia is far from alone in recognizing the opportunities on the European gas market. Other present and prospective contenders include Norway,

Qatar, Iran, Azerbaijan, Russia and, not least, the United States with its shale gas industry. Most recently, Israel, Cyprus, Greece and Italy signed a memorandum for the construction of the world’s longest underwater pipeline to supply Europe over 2,000 kilometers with up to 16 billion cubic meters of gas per year. The industry seems far from suffering a lack of demand.

This is good news for Europe. The continent’s emerging and diverse portfolio of gas imports contributes to the overall security of supply, to competition and thus to affordable gas prices for households and industry. For better or for worse, the advanced integration of the European gas market and the need for redundant, parallel infrastructure – as the new Nord Stream strands would provide – were demonstrated at the end of last year by an unfortunate explosion at a major gas hub in Baumgarten, Austria, affect-

ing Gazprom with additional market access? If so, this should be clearly stated in order to prevent the erosion of European rule of law, not veiled in economic or legal pretext.

Moreover, a crackdown on Nord Stream 2 would not help Ukraine. In a study for the European Centre for Energy and Resource Security (EUCERS) at King’s College London, Andreas Goldthau argues that while the country would indeed miss out on transit fees should the majority of gas flows to Western Europe circumvent its network, it also stands to gain from new Western import options boosting its standing in price negotiations with its eastern neighbor and lowering its gas bill. And this would not be a first; the completion of the Lithuania’s floating Klaipėda LNG terminal in 2014 brought an immediate 20-percent price reduction for Russian gas imports, even before any significant volumes

BY RALF FÜCKS

If we listen to those groups advocating on behalf of Nord Stream 2 – the second double pipeline designed to move Russian natural gas through the Baltic Sea – we might come to think the new project is a highly energy-efficient project and politically quite harmless. According to them, Nord Stream 2 will increase European energy security – after all, the Soviet Union was a reliable provider – and remain a purely commercial project. They argue that the European Commission would do well to stay out of the matter, and should refrain from interfering in Germany’s energy sovereignty. Objection, your Honor!

The “European Energy Security Strategy” adopted by the EU Commission in 2014 contains three explicit objectives: an increase in primary energy

of the project are based on the estimate of a long-term increase in natural gas consumption in the EU. For today’s needs, this pipeline is simply superfluous. In 2015, Nord Stream 1 operated at a capacity of only 71 percent. There are also the reserve capacities contained in the continental pipeline system as well as increasing capacities available at liquefied natural gas terminals geared to meet future demand. In other words, there is no shortage in natural gas import capacity today, nor will there be a shortage in the future. For Nord Stream 2 to be used at full capacity, it would require either an enormous increase in EU gas consumption or a squeezing-out of other suppliers and transport routes. Neither of these scenarios would be in the interest of Europe. They would, however, be in the interest of Gazprom & Co.

A sustained increase in the level of natural gas consumption is incompatible with the

an industrial scale.

The new double pipeline also crosses several highly sensitive ecological areas. Indeed, building this pipeline involves massive interventions in the maritime biosphere. Environmental protection organizations criticize both the route and the superficial environmental impact assessment.

The claim that Nord Stream 2 is a purely commercial project is naive. It would be severely negligent to overlook the fact that this pipeline is part of a geopolitical game played by the Kremlin. The goal of this game is to eliminate Ukraine and Poland as transit countries, to cement European dependence on energy imports from Russia and to drive a wedge between EU countries. While Europe continues to lack a common strategic energy policy, the Russian side continues to expand its energy empire. Part of this game also involves the strategically placed construction of nuclear power plants designed to export electricity to the EU, such as the 2400-megawatt complex on the Belarusian-Lithuanian border and an equally large facility in Kaliningrad.

Gazprom is not your average corporation. Together with the oil giant Rosneft, it forms the economic basis of the authoritarian regime in Moscow. Oil and gas are the most important sources of income for the Russian state and the richest source of systemic corruption. At the same time, Gazprom and Rosneft are at the center of the Kremlin’s economic networks in Europe. Indeed, it will be interesting to see how German ex-Chancellor Gerhard Schröder navigates these waters in his role as a leading Gazprom and Rosneft lobbyist.

There is a much less expensive alternative to a second Baltic Sea pipeline: the modernization of the continental transport network. This would comprise a multilateral project that would benefit everyone. If Ukraine and Poland were to be eliminated as intermediaries for Russian gas exports to Western Europe, they would lose billions of euros in annual transit fees. In addition, the Kremlin would be able to turn off the gas at any time without jeopardizing its export business. Ukraine would then become even more vulnerable to Russian policies of intimidation. This, too, is part of the political dimension of Nord Stream 2.

If Germany’s goal is to achieve a cooperative European energy system, then we should not support the policy pursued by the Kremlin. Our Central and Eastern European neighbors will no doubt express a critical yet understandable sensitivity if their interests and concerns are ignored in another grand bargain between Germany and Russia. Nord Stream 2 is a test of how serious Germany’s commitment to “more Europe” truly is. ■



ing markets all the way from Italy to the UK. The incident promptly triggered an order for a short-term LNG delivery. Incidentally, this order came from Gazprom’s Russian competitor, Novatel, which had inaugurated its Yamal liquefaction facility just days earlier.

The issue of subsidies has been raised, including whether they can be justified on the highly developed European gas market. But as long as investors bear the cost and risk of a new infrastructure project themselves – as is the case with Nord Stream 2 – and do not pass it on to governments or taxpayers, consumers should welcome the prospect of every additional gas molecule reaching our shores, irrespective of its origin.

However, even if Nord Stream 2 possesses a business rationale and poses no threat to European energy security, some argue it may still be objectionable from a geopolitical perspective. Is it not in our best interest to play tough and oppose Nord Stream 2 in order to offer an unambiguous response to Russian transgressions in Ukraine and elsewhere, instead of reward-

of liquefied gas had reached Baltic state.

Political leaders in Europe and the US should think twice before doing precisely what they accuse the Russians of doing: using energy as a political tool. Pipelines such as Nord Stream 2 do not represent subservience to Moscow – they create stabilizing interdependence. This is as true now as it was during even the most precarious periods of the Cold War, when energy remained the only significant area of continued cooperation between East and West. Europe and the US would be well advised to bring calm and composure back into this debate. ■

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generation, the diversification of supplier countries and delivery routes, and a joint approach of EU states with regard to third countries. Nord Stream 2 clashes with all three of these objectives. First, the project speculates that natural gas imports to the EU will rise. Second, it increases dependency on Russia, which – already the largest gas supplier by far – accounts for roughly 30 percent of gas delivered to Europe. Finally, Nord Stream 2 has also become a divisive element for the EU, which is internally at odds over the project.

A coalition comprising the SPD, the Federal Government and the German Committee on Eastern European Economic Relations is driving this project forward against resistance from the EU Commission. In the eyes of Poland, the Baltic republics and Scandinavian countries, Nord Stream 2 is yet another example of Germany pursuing its narrow national interest without any coordination with its European neighbors.

A pipeline with a transport volume of 55 billion cubic meters per year and investment costs of up to €10 billion will be built to last for decades. The economics

climate policy goals of the EU. What we need is an extensive decarbonization of the energy sector by mid-century. Instead of creating path dependencies in fossil energy imports over decades, our goal should be to remain flexible in terms of supply sources and transport routes. In the short term, demand for natural gas may pick up as a result of the gradual phasing-out of coal and a further reduction in oil consumption. Over the long term, however, consumption of natural gas will also experience a decline. One key factor in this process is the continuing improvement of energy efficiency in the building sector and heavy industry. Another factor is the substitution of natural gas by means of synthetic gas (hydrogen and methane) derived from excess renewable electricity. Also, the greater the share of wind and solar energy in Europe’s mix of electricity, the more urgent becomes the issue of converting excess amounts of electricity. Any fixation on the import of natural gas would only serve to delay the development of alternative state-of-the-art technologies on

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Busy hall: a workforce assembly at a Berlin turbine factory in 1940.

BY BENJAMIN WALTER

If nothing else, the French military governor of Greater Berlin, Jean Ganeval, was thorough. Shortly after World War II, all Nazi armament facilities were marked for removal – a policy the Allies had agreed upon at Yalta. Included, of course, were the Borsig Works, which Ganeval's command had “marked for liquidation.” In a desperate letter on Mar. 1, 1947, employee representative Lübcke and plant manager Fröhlich openly opposed the orders of the former resistance fighter and Buchenwald internee. The factory had already been “fully dismantled” by the Red Army in the May and June of 1945, they wrote; 2,000 machines with a combined weight of some 11,000 tons and a value of 25 million Reichsmark had been disassembled and carted off by the Soviets. The current factory comprised repaired machines and equipment salvaged from the rubble of Allied bombs; these had been patched together at considerable costs, in part with public funds. Over the last half-century, they argued, Borsig

had painstakingly constructed an assembly line exclusively for peacetime products: steam engines, compressors, pumps, cooling systems, chemical installations, boilers and steam turbines. But all their pleading and begging came to naught. The Borsig Works, residing in the former West Berlin district of Wedding, would remain idle until 1950.

Before the war, Berlin was Germany's largest industrial base and the focus of its most modern technology. Economic historian Johannes Bähr has dubbed the city “Elektropolis” for its leading role in electrotechnology and its claim of 41 percent of Germany's electronics industry work force. Berlin was particularly strong in machine, steel and automobile manufacturing, the iron, steel and metal-ware industries and in construction, as well as highly specialized facilities for processing anything from consumer goods to textiles. Pre-war Berlin had an industrial work force almost equaling that of Bavaria or Saxony. The services sector also produced above-average revenue, as could be expected from a bustling capital city. Berlin was also Germany's transportation and

commercial hub as well as its largest banking center and the seat of its largest stock exchange.

Berlin's labor force participation rate of 54.3 percent outshone the 51.3 average for the Reich, while the city's per capita productivity was one-third higher. In 1995, Frank Zschaler, now a professor of economic and social history in Eichstätt, Bavaria, published the study of a historical commission on Berlin, which showed that the city allowed other regions in Germany to share in its wealth: Only one-fifth of tax revenue collected in the city was spent there. “The largest portion by far served the financial administration of the Reich, which thus fed national interests in what may be referred to as a form of revenue sharing.”

However, post-war Berlin was the largest field of rubble in the world. In comparison to 1936, the city had lost three-quarters of its industrial capacity, but Allied bombing was not to blame; it was the systematic dismantling of the city's industrial capacity that weakened Berlin.

The Allies had agreed in Yalta to regulate and divide reparations through a joint commission. To be carried out in the two years following capitulation, the plan

comprised the disassembly of services and transportation facilities – with the aim of destroying Germany's potential to wage war – the seizure of foreign assets and the exploitation of ongoing production facilities as well as the German work force in general.

Stalin's soldiers were the first to reach the German capital. His squadrons were eager to carry out the plan before the other Allies could make it to Berlin – first in the west of the city, then the east, and finally throughout the Soviet zone of occupation. They proceeded to confiscate company accounts and plunder the city's industry. By the time they were finished, they had seized 60 percent of the industrial capacity Berlin was able to muster by the end of the war. Most intensely felt was the city's loss of mechanical and electrical engineering capabilities.

When the Western Allies took over the west of Berlin on July 4, 1945, they soon realized – to their horror – the extent of the dismantling by the Soviets; Edwin W. Pauley, the US representative of the Allied Reparations Commission, prophesied the “complete destruction of employment opportunities.” What lay before

him he deemed “organized vandalism directed not alone against Germany, but against the US forces of occupation.”

In May 1946, US General Lucius Clay suspended all American sector dismantlements destined for the Soviet Union. Americans and Britons proceeded with their disassembly regardless. Although they dropped 858 companies from their reparations list in 1947, 682 businesses remained. Bremen's Senator of Commerce Gustav Wilhelm Harmsen, who had been a board member for the navy supplier Atlas Elektronik until 1942, noted in 1951 that the victorious powers had dismantled a total of 460 Berlin companies, in most cases down to every last inventoried finished and semi-finished good. Machinebuilding lost 90 percent of its capacity; 20 percent through war damages and 70 percent through disassembly. In the 12 leading sectors of Berlin's machine tools industry (including the Soviet sector), only 8 of the former 25,000 machine tools remained after the dismantling. In the electrical industry, losses were so great that Harmsen attested to a “complete dismantling.” “Berlin's current economic difficulties are first and foremost due to the

deconstruction and loss of capacity suffered by Berlin industry after the end of the war,” wrote Harmsen. “This factor is the true cause of the economic crisis.”

During the blockade from June 1948 to May 1949, Berlin was forced to realize that its location, deep in the east of Germany, was a further disadvantage. Berlin recognized that it now lacked a nearby market and thus would accrue high transportation costs. Suffering more than most were the machine builders, who had lost a significant market share to the West German companies that didn't need to transport their goods long distances to find consumers. Although Rosinenbomber, or Candy Bombers, were employed by Siemens & Halske to fly raw materials to the city and then 6,000 tons of finished products back out, this was a significant expense.

As a result, within a few years at least 900 companies migrated to the American, British and French occupation zones while hundreds relocated individual business units out of the former capital, and numerous West German companies shuttered their Berlin branches. The electrical industry and engineering sector headed



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BUSINESS

After the end of World War II, the Allied Powers dismantled Berlin's industrial facilities and large corporations fled the fault line of the brewing Cold War. The German capital has suffered the consequences of war and division ever since

primarily to southern Germany, according to Bähr. This procession to the west dealt a long-term blow to Berlin's industry as well as to local tax proceeds.

"This is irreparable," says Bähr today. "Siemens will always remain in Munich, and Deutsche Bank in Frankfurt am Main, while their suppliers and subcontractors also settled elsewhere as a consequence." As companies fled Berlin, so did individual Germans, especially those most qualified for various professions. "Those hoping to make a career for themselves headed west. That was Berlin's single greatest loss: human capital."

Senator for Economics Paul Hertz (SPD) stated in 1957 that in years after the war, even those in government circles doubted "whether it made any sense at all to consider reinvigorating Berlin's economy and creating the potential for the city to again stand on its own two feet. Of course no one wanted to abandon Berlin to its own fate. But sometimes people seemed more willing to pay for Berliners' permanent support than to use loans to risk financing the reconstruction of the city's economic framework – an endeavor many considered to be hopeless."

This doubt had already manifested itself in December 1949, when the European Recovery Program man-

dated the influx of 4.5 billion deutschmark to Berlin through 1961 – money that several federal politicians would rather have invested in West Germany.

Khrushchev's ultimatum and the construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961, which initially caught the West off-guard, created renewed insecurity and led to a new flight of capital. "The relocation of savings accounts, the establishment of West German operational facilities and the outflow of profits are simple facts," wrote Doris Cornelsen. Not even the financial assistance by the federal government could drive the expansion of economic capacities and performance; Berlin remained a risky investment.

No other German city sank so low after World War II; no other had such difficulty getting back on its feet. While the West German economy progressed after the currency reforms of 1948, Berlin was not only left behind, but further regressed. If one were to assign 1936 a production index of 100, 1950 West Germany would have already exceeded it with 109, while Berlin stagnated at 32. In the Bizone – the US and British zones taken as one – electrical industry production had already reached 1936 levels by August 1948, and increased by 64 percent and 48 percent in 1948 and 1949 respectively.

"Germany's southern federal states of Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg benefitted more than any other from Berlin's loss of primacy," argues Bähr, while providing some convincing figures: South Germany's share of the work force was 16.4 percent in 1939; in 1955 it was 42.3 percent. Chief beneficiaries of companies' exodus from Berlin included the areas around Munich (Siemens & Halske), Nuremberg/Erlangen (Siemens-Schuckert), Stuttgart (SEG/Lorenz) and Frankfurt (AEG as well as banks). Moreover, countless large corporations set up branches in structurally weak regions of West Germany, particularly in Bavaria.

The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 seemed to bring an end to the historic situation that had caused the city's overwhelming need for subsidies. The federal government quickly scaled back its assistance to Berlin – with disastrous consequences: more migration out of the city and further business closures. The companies in East Berlin also lost a significant portion of the markets they had recently enjoyed.

The final analysis renders unequivocal results: Berlin – West and East – suffered the repercussions of the Germany's division like no other city in the republic, and it bears this burden still.



Empty hall: a production site in an electronics factory in post-war Berlin after dismantlement.



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# Breaking even

The Wall divided Berlin for more than 28 years. Now 28 years have passed since it came down. Bearing the weight of the past and reveling in its present glory, the city has come into its own

BY FRANK HOFMANN

It was a day just like any other. Feb. 5, 2018, however, had tremendous meaning to the once-divided city of almost 4 million inhabitants. This date tells a special story, one of growing together, of hope, but also of a younger generation who no longer cares exactly where the Wall once stood and whether they're in the former West or East Berlin. On Feb. 5, 2018, Berlin had seen as many days – 10,315 to be precise – without the Wall as it had with the dreary eyesore.

era in which the East German regime tried to live out its dream of socialist modernism in those pre-fab apartment buildings – “Plattenbauten” – found near the TV Tower on Alexanderplatz and all the way to Lichtenberg and Marzahn. It was a life lived according to the party member book of the SED; indeed, no other city in East Germany had as many Plattenbauten in such a small area.

Erich Honecker was the SED Central Committee Secretary responsible for security matters at the time and thus for “Operation Rose,” that is, the construction of the Wall. Hon-

the increasingly permeable Wall. The GDR was a pressure cooker waiting to explode.

These and many other historical aspects are on display today along Bernauer Straße and in the Tränenpalast Museum at S-Bahnhof Friedrichstraße, where the focus is on the past. On Friedrichstraße, for example, visitors can walk through the former passport check-in counters where all West Germans visiting East Berlin experienced late 20th-century German totalitarianism in the form of rough treatment by a GDR border guard before having to exchange their deutschmarks for ostmarks.

larly attracts around 800,000 visitors each year. The former Wehrmacht soldier Rainer Hildebrandt founded the museum on Oct. 19, 1962, right after the Wall was built, partially as a way of making personal amends, but mostly as a protest against the concrete border. This was where international guests had to make their way to “their” border crossing at Checkpoint Charlie if they wanted to get through the very Wall that East Berliners found so prohibitive that they would go to tremendous lengths to overcome it. At the Wall Museum, visitors can see small cars with secret hiding places, special ladders and even flying devices people used in trying to make it over the border. Today, a section of the Wall stands in the corner; visitors can walk right up to it and touch it here, at the memorial on Bernauer Straße. In other words, the once mighty Berlin Wall, which inspired fear and anguish in so many people, is now no more than a museum piece.

And yet, the events in Europe that led to the erection of the wall – perhaps the most famous manifestation of the Cold War – are on the agenda once again. Indeed, 28 years after the fall of the Wall – and 56 years after the Wall was built – the jingoism that led to the Holocaust and two catastrophic world wars in the 20th century has reared its ugly head again.

In 1992, Francis Fukuyama cheerfully announced in his book *The End of History*, that the fall of the Iron Curtain signaled the achievement of the moment described by the great German philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel as the final synthesis. He argued that the end of the conflict between East and West meant that all would be right with the world again. Many disagreed with him at the time. And today, in a world that must grapple with a right-wing populist in the White House, dangerous and illiberal leaders in Warsaw and Budapest, the frustrations that led to Brexit, liberal Europe is once again forced to address issues many believed to have been long settled. This comes as a surprise to a lot of people in the West.

Indeed, nationalism presents a challenge to the project of European integration and to the dream that the continent would finally be unified in peace under the rule of law after years of division symbolized by the Wall. It is suddenly clear that EU governments have come up short in the more than two post-Wall decades. Indeed, they are guilty of having under-integrated the continent and missing a great opportunity to further unify Europe. “We have to want this new Europe,” says Lech Walesa, former leader of the Solidarność movement in Poland, which emerged as the Wall was beginning its downward crumble. But why hasn't the joy at seeing the Berlin Wall fall led to the creation of an order able to prevent a re-emergence of nationalism? How could it come to this?

After the Wall came down, Karl Popper's notion of an open society became popular in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe; these were the principles guiding the transformation of Poland and Hungary from socialism to a market economy. In this era, Berlin became the cultural symbol of this transformation into a continent divided no more. In the space of only a few months in 1990, the eastern part of the city saw roughly 120 mostly empty homes become occupied.

Artists and existentialists joined hobby philosophers from all over the world and young West Berliners who didn't want to pay any rent – and they all began experimenting with new ways of living.

The Tacheles art center on Oranienburger Straße became an icon of this development. One night, in a cloak-and-dagger operation, Russian artists rammed two Mig jets into the ground of the inner courtyard, without thinking about whether they were allowed to. In Berlin, art was able to do anything it wanted; here, “everything goes” was a lived credo.

Only a couple of years later, when officials began arguing that the jets were in violation of the War Weapons Control Act, the artists soon had to pack up their bags. At the time, the state often resorted to obscure laws when confronted with such unique and overwhelming challenges. Indeed, who wants to have to call out people illegally drawing electricity in a city where every second household had had to resort to such methods in the wake of a collapsed GDR economy? Instead of that, it was much more important that someone had one of those beloved pump showers that could

At the same time, Auguststraße in Berlin-Mitte began attracting a flush of artists thanks to a unique policy set up by the district of Mitte's Public Housing Association – one for which other cities envy Berlin to this day. Acknowledging that it would take years for courts to process the re-transfer claims of previous homeowners – which included many Jewish families across the globe – policymakers offered artists one-year rental contracts and required them to pay electricity and heating costs only. The advantage to this was that the homes were prevented from deteriorating any further. Gallery owners soon moved in and made exhibition spaces out of the studios. By the time US President Bill Clinton visited the city to give a speech that many hoped would top John F. Kennedy's famous “Ich bin ein Berliner,” anything was possible in Berlin.

Addressing Berliners gathered at the Brandenburg Gate in July 1994, Clinton said: “We stand together where Europe's heart was cut in half and we celebrate unity.” This is speech writing at its best. “We stand where crude walls of concrete separated mother from child, and

## PARENTS SHOW THEIR CHILDREN WHAT IT WAS LIKE WHEN THE CITY WAS DIVIDED

– at least briefly – warm you up in those old, cold and coal-heated apartments.

Back then, every day felt like the weekend, especially in Berlin-Mitte, where DJs dropped their beats for free in any number of run-down candlelit buildings. Contrary to what you might have heard, people at the time were playing more than just electronic music; it was rock, pop, techno, house and basically anything a couple of speakers could amplify. In addition to Tacheles, another hotspot of Berlin's alternative culture was the “Eimer” in a building at Rosenthaler Straße 68. You could also enjoy music and a beer in basements on Steinstraße and Tucholskystraße. By that time, Dimitri Hegemann had already founded Tresor, the world's most famous club, on Leipziger Straße. The Love Parade was growing larger every year and Berlin was constantly abuzz. It was as if the city were trying to forget the gravity of its own former division by dancing it off as quickly as possible.

In the Berlin Senate, Urban Development Director Hans Stimmann worked for six years starting in 1991 at erasing Berlin's division architecturally. Building cranes and jackhammers soon greeted the club-goers emerging from Tresor in the wee hours of the morning and spilling out on to Potsdamer Platz next door. After the Wall came down, the city also had twice as many theaters and operas as any major city would need; and yet it was precisely this situation that gave Berlin the opportunity to assert its cultural hegemony in the German-speaking world.

We meet as one family. We stand where those who sought a new life instead found death. And we rejoice in renewal.” Clinton soothed Berlin's wounded soul, especially in the West. “Berliners, you have won your long struggle. You have proved that no wall can forever contain the mighty power of freedom.”

Back then, this sounded a bit ridiculous to those fresh young Berliners who'd turned jetfighters into art and those DJs who were starting to make well-paid jobs out of their hobby. “Berlin is free” was Clinton's cliffhanger sentence, but young people in the city had figured that out years before.

And yet, more than two decades later, this speech rings out like a challenge, especially in light of the right-wing populists who are giving 19th-century answers to 21st-century questions. Today, Berlin has lived without the Wall for 28 years. The city has caught up to the other great European capitals and is mentioned in the same breath as London and Paris. Isn't it time we took on the political challenges of our day? What city is better positioned to most effectively oppose authoritarianism than Berlin, a city that suffered for years under a dictatorship of concrete? Berlin prides itself on all the new Berliners who live there today because they loathe the Orbáns, Kaczynskis and Trumps of the world. Let's show them what we've learned in the 28 years we've lived without the barrier referred to by Willy Brandt as the “Schandmauer” or “Wall of Shame.”



Summer in the unified city: Berlin's Mauerpark, where the Wall once stood, became a hotspot for all ages.

It had been erected by Socialist Unity Party (SED) leader Walter Ulbricht, Erich Honecker and others who sought to cut off West Berlin but instead ended up building a prison wall around their GDR co-citizens. From the day construction began on Aug. 13th, 1961, it took 10,215 days to reach that happy night of Nov. 13th, 1989, on which the divided city was reunited. And on February 5th, 2018, the Wall had been gone for exactly 10,315 days.

Every day, hundreds of tourists and school groups visit the one-kilometer open-air Berlin Wall museum and memorial on Bernauer Straße to reflect on the horrors of the former border. Parents show their children what it was like when the city was divided by this brick-and-cement monster with its armored barriers and firing orders that ripped friends and families apart for almost three decades. It was an

ecker would go on to become General Secretary of the SED Central Committee and head of the GDR in 1971, at which point he continued to tend to his concrete wall. After that, a new generation was born and the Wall started to take on its characteristic gray appearance. However, in the late 1980s, there were simply no funds available to complete the necessary renovations. Indeed, the GDR was at its end both economically and morally; the aged leadership of the East German workers' and peasants' state proved ineffective in responding to the reforms underway in the Soviet Union.

Mikhail Gorbachev's policies of Perestroika and Glasnost were ushering in changes that extended all the way to free speech. The idea was to engage in discussions that would help save socialism and reduce the ever-growing number of GDR citizens applying to leave across

Visitors to Berlin are still fascinated by the city's history. Today, however, there is no need for fear. These days, the only negative vibes along the former Wall arise when the popular lookout platform at the Bernauer Straße memorial has to be closed again for staircase renovations. But no worries, visitors just have to cross the street to see the old East German border tower and a few remaining sections of the Wall to have an eerie experience. The open-air Wall memorial remains one of the city's most popular spots: Just about one million people visited in 2017.

The Wall memorial regularly comes in at number two on the list of most-visited contemporary museums in the city, with the Topography of Terror on the former Gestapo site on Niederkirchnerstraße at number one. Also on that list is the privately run Wall Museum at Checkpoint Charlie, which regu-

1990 1991 1992 1993 1994 1995 1996 1997 1998 1999 2000 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018

LIFE

BY TONG-JIN SMITH

# SQUARE ONE

Berlin's Alexanderplatz is ever in the making

Alexanderplatz, the famous and infamous central square in Berlin-Mitte was named for Czar Alexander after his visit to Berlin in 1805. It was used for military parades and farmers' markets until the end of the 19th century. Almost one hundred years later, it was the site of peaceful demonstrations during the downfall of the East German regime. Today, the "Alex" – as Berliners call it – is a landmark and commercial center lined with shops and eateries, train and tram stations, the TV tower and the Park Inn hotel. It's a meeting point, a stage for street artists and musicians, a tourist attraction and traffic junction – and some might say an eyesore.

People do not generally come here to spend their lunch break or enjoy an afternoon stroll with the kids. Quite to the contrary, for Berliners Alexanderplatz is a throughway, a hub to change from train to subway or to rush from a department store to the Alexa mall on the other side of Grunerstraße. In a sense, the Alex of today is an evolution of the place Alfred Döblin describes in his 1928 novel Berlin Alexanderplatz, where his protagonist Franz Biberkopf encounters hustle and bustle, clamor and chaos, prostitution and crime. Commerce now reigns supreme and has replaced the once rough yet charming sociality of the pre-war years and the GDR.

And critics fear that things will not improve once the international developers, who purchased properties along the edges of the square, bring to life what was laid out in a master plan in 1993. Identifying Alexanderplatz as a high-rise location in a city otherwise dominated by buildings with a maximum height of 22 meters, the master plan has been an object of heated

political debate and still waits to be realized. But with Berlin's massive population growth and soaring property prices, developers are seizing the moment.

The American real estate investment firm, Hines, is set to build Alexanderplatz Residential on the northeast corner of the square. Designed by star architect Frank Gehry, plans for Berlin's first residential skyscraper were introduced to the public in 2013. The structure's sculptural design made headlines, prompting Regula Lüscher, Berlin's chief building director, to say: "On the one hand, Gehry's design has an expressive form and an unusual, eccentric, new shape for this location. And yet, its façade emits a pleasant sense of calm. In addition, the design fits well into its surroundings and conveys well the aspect of Metropolitan living." However, realization of this 150-meter tower has been halted by concerns regarding possible damages to the subway tunnel below. With preparations now completed, construction is scheduled to begin soon to meet the planned 2019 deadline.

In the race for Berlin's first residential skyscraper, competition is welling across the street on the corner of Grunerstraße and Alexanderstraße, where Russian developer MonArch plans to erect another 150-meter high-rise designed by Berlin-based architects Ortner & Ortner. According to its marketer, Bewocon, Alexander Tower will sport a three-story shopping mall – in direct competition to neighboring Alexa – and an in-house private movie theatre and

fitness club topped by 32 floors of luxury apartments. Prices are expected to start at about 5,000 euros per square meter and apartment sizes will be upwards of 30 square meters, with penthouses offering a breathtaking view of the Berlin skyline.

On the other side of Alexa, Dutch investor Dekor Vastgoed has begun building yet another residential high-rise. Not quite as high, but no less expensive than its neighbors, Grandaire will be 20 stories of condominiums starting at 4,800 euros per square meter. Connected to the tower will be a 12-story apartment building with about 100 rental units – something the city needs more than luxury condos for the international jet set. The architecture is less eccentric and more in tune with the Bauhaus idea that "form follows function"; it is a building Berliners can relate to with more ease.

But the question remains as to how Alexanderplatz can become a more welcoming urban space, a place Berliners and visitors alike will enjoy and where one might consider taking an after-dinner walk. "One key aspect will undoubtedly be how we decide to regulate traffic in the future," says Carola Bluhm, chairwoman of the parliamentary group Die Linke in the Berlin city parliament. "Alexanderplatz itself may one day become less commercial and offer more sojourn quality, but we need to talk about the multi-lane streets surrounding it." Making the plaza more accessible and walkable is one of ten principles established for the further

development of Alexanderplatz and its surroundings in a yearlong public dialogue process with more than 10,000 citizen participants.

Among the postulated guidelines are also the need to create a connection to the history of the city center, opening the space in front of City Hall south of the TV tower for democratic political debate, and ensuring that Berlin's center is firmly established as a place for art and culture. "We have the unique situation here that nearly all of the current residential buildings and many of the commercial spaces surrounding Alexanderplatz, reaching all the way down to the old town center in Nikolaiviertel, belong to the city's public housing society WBM," explains Manfred Kühne, director for urban development in Berlin's Senate Department for Urban Development and Housing. "This opens the opportunity to give more cultural and social institutions affordable spaces instead of focusing on achieving the highest possible rent by giving preference to fast-food restaurants and other highly commercial chains."

This idea was echoed by a civil society initiative formed to rescue and develop the ruins of Haus der Statistik, one of several buildings constructed in the 1970s by the GDR. Contrary to its sisters – Haus des Lehrers, Haus des Reisens, Haus der Elektroindustrie, Haus des Berliner Verlags and Kongresshaus – the large building complex along Otto-Braun-Straße north of Alexanderplatz was abandoned in 2008, prior to which it had been used by federal govern-

ment agencies for almost a decade. The other former GDR showpieces lining the streets around Alexanderplatz were converted into modern office spaces and partially declared heritage sites, protecting them from alteration and demolition. However, Haus der Statistik, which has remained federal property, has been more or less abandoned, and is now crumbling – a fact that has infuriated Berliners and provoked public debate, especially in the wake of a growing housing shortage and the refugee crisis of 2015.

But change is in sight. In an agreement between Berlin and the federal government, the city purchased Haus der Statistik in 2017 at market value and planning for the building's future has moved forward rather quickly.

The coalition agreement envisions a mixed usage for the 40,000 square meters, providing space for administrative, cultural, social and educational purposes as well as apartments for people from all walks of life, including newcomers to the city. The public is participating in the planning and development. "It is a matter of deciding how much space we

want to allot to which type of usage and who will develop the old or build new structures in place of the ruins we see today," says Ephraim Gothe, the deputy district mayor responsible for urban development in Mitte. "Our hope is to set an example that will radiate beyond Haus der Statistik itself," adds Manfred Kühne, referring to the democratic planning process and its outcome. "Our ambition is to make this the nucleus of a new development for Mitte and to increase the quality of Alexanderplatz by curtailing its current, radically capitalistic agenda." This should include rethinking the entire program that is the Alex – attracting countless visitors all throughout the year, and then rejecting them.

Up in the air: Far beneath the planned building, safety concerns regarding a subway line are currently holding up construction.



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## LIFE



1 Zillestraße 98-100, inner courtyard. Artist: Gert Neuhaus, 1979 | 2 Frobenstraße/Schwerinstraße. Artist: Shepard Fairey, 2017 | 3 Oranienstraße/Manteuffelstraße. Artist: ROA, 2011 | 4 Neheimer Straße 2-6. Artists: Collin van der Sluijs and Super A, 2016 | 5 Bernauer Straße/Strelitzer Straße. Artist: Marcus Haas, installed by XI-Design (Die Dixons), Size Two and Mario Mankey, 2016 | 6 Skalitzer Straße/Oranienstraße 195. Artist: Victor Ash, 2007 | 7 Falckensteinstraße 41. Artist: BLU, 2007 | 8 Prinzenallee/Badstraße. Artist: Artistgruppe Graco, 2013 | \*\*Book: Norbert and Melanie Martins: Hauswände statt Leinwände – Berliner Wandbilder (Walls not Canvases – Berlin Murals), c. 300 color photos, hardcover, 29.90 euros.

# GROWN ON CONCRETE

Large murals inhabit exposed façades left behind by World War II bombs

BY JOHANNA TRAPP  
AND ANDREAS SCHOELZEL\*

\*PHOTOS

This image is more than a mural," says Norbert Martins, "it's a monument." The work of art he's referring to is located in the multicultural, working-class district of Wedding and portrays three brothers next to the words "gewachsen auf Beton" (grown on concrete). Two of the men, Jérôme and Kevin-Prince Boateng, play soccer in the world's biggest stadiums and are venerated by the youth of Berlin. No one would think of removing this monument, even though it violates public law; indeed, the mural also happens to be an advertisement for a sports shoe company and has yet to receive official approval

from the district, probably because no such application has been submitted. In other words, if the rules were taken seriously, the three Boateng brothers would have to go.

Norbert Martins knows the story behind these images like no other. He has published a book on Berlin's street-art jungle and takes tourists on regular guided tours. Roughly 750 such murals have been created since 1975 and he has photographed them all. Sometimes he was even there when they were made.

Gert Neuhaus' Zipper was created in 1979 on an exposed brick wall zipping up a fin de siècle façade. As Martins explains, Neuhaus would have liked to have shown more fin de siècle and less exposed brick; in fact, the original idea was to have the brick visible only

above the zipper, with the rest of the wall in a beautiful turn-of-the-century look. But that would have cost three times as much and was simply too expensive for the client.

At the time, a mural like Zipper would have cost 20,000 deutschmarks and the paint would have been applied by brush. Today, artists earn less and can work much faster with spray cans.

Kosmonaut/Astronaut by Victor Ash was created in 2007 and also harbors a secret you can only discover in the dark. While visiting the site at night, the artist noticed that a nearby spotlight casts the shadow of a flagpole onto the wall. These days, at night, the hand of the astronaut stretches in the direction of the shadow as if trying to grab hold of it.

Murals were first painted in Mexico. Frida Kahlo's husband, Diego Rivera, became famous in 1929 when he painted the interior walls of the National Palace in Mexico City. In 1933 he was invited to create a mural in Rockefeller Center in New York City, but a scandal ensued when people noticed that his Man at the Crossroads contained portraits of Lenin, Marx, Engels and Trotsky.

Germany discovered street art in the 1970s. In 1971 the city of Bremen commissioned destitute artists to paint public buildings and civilian bunkers. In 1975 the movement reached the "frontier town" of West Berlin, where there were still countless vacant lots destroyed by WWII bombs; the exposed walls overlooking these spaces offered naked, bare and ugly canvases. Across from

the Tiergarten S-Bahn station, Ben Wagin and three colleagues painted the city's first mural, Weltbaum – Grün ist Leben (World Tree – Green is Life), a clarion call for environmental preservation. Wagin thereby also helped protect the house from a scheduled demolition. Today, however, it looks like the Weltbaum's time has come, as there are current plans to build offices and a hotel on the site. The building contractor can even point to the fact that back in the 1970s Wagin admitted the painting was not a work of art, and thus it is not protected.

The Berlin Senate then sponsored competitions for "Kunst am Bau" (Art on Buildings) and "Farbe im Stadtbild" (Color in the Urban Landscape). House squatters also made use of façades for illegal protest images

and slogans. As the empty lots began disappearing, so did many of these murals. But new paintings are still being created today. Indeed, local housing associations recently discovered that homes with attractive murals are easier to rent out.

Last year, a new work at the Wall Memorial along Bernauer Straße caused many heads to turn. Martins was one of the people who was not crazy about the image of a raw piece of meat being sliced by a knife: "When I first saw it, I was shocked," he says. "How can you paint something like that?" But when he looked closer, he saw the dates 1961–1989 and the outline of Berlin's districts. Now a fan of the piece, Martins says: "Only here, at this site, is it possible to paint such a provocative and disturbing image."

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ELLA'S  
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Photograph: © 2018 Anantara Al Jabal Al Akhdar Resort

LIFE



A hands-on experience: Yafo is drawing Berliners to its tables with feasts for the eyes, ears and stomach.

BY FRANZISKA KNUPPER

Were it not for the war, Berlin would never have happened.” She delivers this sentence almost casually, followed by a smile outlined by red lipstick. “My cousin was killed, my brother was drafted and I was certain we would all die. I was constantly drunk for three straight months and just totally out of it. I couldn’t wait to get out of there somehow.” It was summer 2014 when Shani packed her bags in Tel Aviv and moved to Germany to live with her then boyfriend Felix. In her home country on the Mediterranean, Operation Protective Edge was wreaking havoc between Israel and Gaza. In Berlin, Shani waited with trepidation for the verdict from the municipal authorities on whether her application for a restaurant license would be approved.

Three years later. The boyfriend is no more, but the restaurant – Yafo, in Berlin-Mitte – is jam-packed. “Yafo” is Hebrew for “beauty” and also the name of the Arab quarter of Tel Aviv separated from the Jewish center of town by cliffs and a strip of coastline. The language spoke at Yafo in Berlin is a mixture of English and Hebrew. But it’s more shouted than spoken, more hustled than strolled. Suddenly, the sound of cheering and clinking glasses. One of the bartenders is celebrating their birthday and arak – the Israeli variant of ouzo – is being handed around. Shani is in constant motion, passing on orders and seating

tables while persistently nipping at her glass of red wine. Now and again she eyes the plates in the hands of the waiters. “It’s important for me that the food is well presented. It has to look nice enough for me to want to eat it.”

Baked eggplant, cauliflower in lemon juice and sesame sauce with garlic seems to appeal to Berliners; indeed Israeli food is ascendant in the German capital. Mugrabi in Kreuzberg, Gordon in Neukölln and Kanaan in Prenzlauer Berg – the arrival of Israelis in Berlin was accompanied by chickpeas and balls of falafel. Benedict Berlin on Uhlandstraße has an all-day Israeli breakfast and Hummus & Friends in Mitte is 100 percent kosher. Berlin is popular among the youngest adult generation in the Holy Land and around 12,000 to 20,000 Israelis currently reside here. The exact number is not known, as most of the expats possess a European if not German passport. The reasons for the migration of young Israelis cover a broad spectrum; like Shani, several were fleeing conflict in their native land. Others

# The proof is in the pudding

How the price of a chocolate dessert is fueling an influx of young Israeli restaurateurs who now feed locals’ appetite for hummus

come for economic reasons. The cost of living in Israel has risen sharply over the past decade. During a three-month-long tent protest in 2011, younger generations denounced the exorbitant rental prices in Israel’s largest cities. And three years ago, a Facebook post by a young Israeli from Berlin made quite a stir. “Chocolate pudding, 19 cents. See you in Berlin!” wrote the 25-year-old. The entry quickly gained almost one million hits. “Olim L’Berlin” (Hebrew for “Let us ascend to Berlin”), as the sudden mass migration came to be known, would culminate in the Israeli Finance Minister Yair Lapid labeling the initiator of the chocolate-pudding scandal “anti-Zionist.”

For Doron Eisenberg and Nir Ivenizki, the reason for moving to Berlin was neither economic nor political. “We came here for the music,” explains Doron. Their Gordon Café is thus a bistro as well as a record store, a result of the duo’s interest in melding personal passion with cultural identity. The sound of a drill blasts from behind Nir. “We’re renovating at the

moment. We’re making the café into a restaurant serving modern, Middle Eastern cuisine.”

If you think about it, what actually is Israeli food? This question is indeed a difficult one to answer. The national meals have their roots in Morocco, Lebanon, Spain, Poland, Russia and Romania. Nir’s mother comes from Yemen. “I often call her to ask about meals we had when we were kids. And then I cook them here.” Israel has long been a country of immigration, in the culinary sense as well. Falafel from Egypt, gefilte fish from Poland and shakshouka – eggs poached in tomato sauce – from North Africa. But it’s the question of chickpea supremacy that has caused the most culinary strife between Israelis and their Arab neighbors over the past several decades. Who invented hummus?

Who was first to cook the legume in its own stock to make msabbaha? Did the Israelis literally assimilate a central element of Arab cuisine?

Shani would like to liberate Middle Eastern cuisine from cultural and geographical borders.

“The main thing is good olive oil, lots of vegetables, the right spices. Everything has to be fresh. For me, that is Israeli cuisine.” She still can’t believe she has to teach Germans to eat with their hands, she says, laughing, her black curls bobbing up and down. Hanging on the wall is a portrait of her grandmother – a smiling face wrapped in a white headscarf. Her head is tilting, as is her smile. Shani also has roots in Yemen. “You can really tell. She’s so caring, and always loud.” It’s a close-knit group; Berlin’s Israeli community is

tightly networked, and not just in terms of food. As luck would have it, Shani lives right across from Gordon Café. In her black leather jacket and sunglasses she leaves her building and waves across the street. “Guten Morgen!” answers Doron, in German. Most newcomers over the last five years have settled in Neukölln. Suddenly, within a radius of four kilometers from Sonnenallee to Kottbuser Tor, Hebrew can again be heard on the streets of Berlin. The *Shruna*, or neighborhood, is critical, says Doron. It’s a safety net that softens the arrival in a foreign country and helps lessen the anonymity of a large city. Shani agrees: “In Germany, the independence and freedom of the individual are primary. I respect that. But in Israel you experience more of a community feeling. And I miss that here.”

Tel Aviv natives Nir Ivenizki (l) and Doron Eisenberg (r) in their café-meets-record store “Gordon” in Berlin-Neukölln.



## ANSWERING THE TRANS-ATLANTIC CALL



Executive Editor Theo Sommer (left) and publisher Detlef Prinz (middle) present the very first Atlantic Times together with then US Senator Richard G. Lugar (right) on Oct. 6, 2004 at the ambassador residency in Washington D.C.

Over eleven years ago, the first issue of **The German Times** was published. It was the first German newspaper written in English to serve as a platform for European dialogue. The new publication appeared in all 27 member states of the EU and reached an audience of both national and EU politicians, the business community and countless others. Altogether, around 50,000 decision-makers in Europe received it. On Jan. 17, 2007, the first issue was presented to German Chancellor Angela Merkel at the EU Parliament in Strasbourg. A grand inaugural event in London followed that same evening. Soon after, the paper was introduced at other locations, including Brussels, the seat of the European Commission.

Seventy-four editions of **The German Times** have been released thus far. Its sister-paper, **The Atlantic Times**, was first published in October 2004 as a bridge between Europe and the US, and ran exactly 100 editions. Beginning with this edition, we are merging both publications to bring you a unique newspaper addressing both Europe and the US with an original and nuanced approach. **The German Times** aims to be both a platform for a German perspective on the world as well as a forum for voices from both sides of the Atlantic, with the hope of finding solutions to the problems we face together and further promoting the idea of a new trans-Atlantic era for Europe, the US and the world.



Executive Editor Theo Sommer (right) hands Chancellor Angela Merkel and then European Parliament President Hans-Gert Pöttering the first edition of **The German Times**.

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