
II. The Battle for Europe

‘Die Gedanken sind frei . . .’ Thoughts Are Free But We Have To Think for Ourselves!

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Sept. 29—Admittedly, it is not a simple matter for people in Germany—and not only there—to face the future with optimism, given the volume of bad news circulated daily by the mainstream media, and the recent weeks’ unworthy spectacle offered by the politicians of the so-called *GroKo* (Grand Coalition)—which has now become more of a “little coalition.” However, it is quite possible to grasp the complex strategic reality—provided that you yourself try to develop an independent understanding of the most important issues of our time. And that requires mental work.

Or is everything already totally clear in your mind: Trump, Putin, Xi Jinping and Kim Jong-un are all dictators—no need to know more about their intentions, that’s already settled. And the women in America who suddenly created the #MeToo movement are all heroic, suddenly-liberated Barbie dolls who are finally rising up against decades of sexual oppression; and, of course, Africans are poor because they do not want to develop. One could add many more prejudices to this list of unquestioned axioms.

A German reader, even if he reads ten daily newspapers from *Bild* to *FAZ* and watches the news programs *Tagesschau* and *Heute*, would have no chance of understanding the extremely exciting events at this year’s UN General Assembly. The only thing that was reported about President Trump’s UN speech was the laughter with which part of the assembly responded to his comment on the success of his term up to now. In reality, the most interesting thing about Trump’s speech was the combination of his conscious rejection of “old dogmas, discredited ideologies, and so-called experts who have been proven wrong over the years, time and time again,” with his vision of a better humanity, bound together by

its shared history and its work for a common future.

With this speech, Trump made clear to public opinion why the trans-Atlantic establishment has reacted so hysterically to his arrival in the White House: here is an American president who rejects the “rules of the club” of the ruling class, who thinks “outside of the box.” And indeed, putting aside minor differences, Trump’s vision of the patriots’ love for their respective nations and the common future of humanity, is not so far removed from President Xi Jinping’s “Chinese Dream” and his “Community of Common Destiny for the One Humanity.”

However, when one considers Trump’s UN speech in connection with the many complex diplomatic activities connected with his bilateral meetings on the sidelines, they belie the vicious image of him that his political opponents propagate.

Trump met, among others, with Korean President Moon Jae-in, who credited him with the lion’s share of the success in the progress of relations with North Korea and the process of denuclearization. Moon underscored the intense cooperation he had maintained with Trump during these negotiations, during which Trump had become “more than a friend” to him, and in whom he had developed “total trust.” Moon further expressed the hope that the process of reconciliation with North Korea could be crowned this year with a peace treaty and the reunification of the two Koreas.

For his part, Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov added that Russia would do everything in its power to guarantee the economic success of North Korea in a reunified Korea. Japanese Prime Minister Abe stressed in his UN speech that he hopes to conclude a peace agreement between Japan and Russia before the end of this year, which would greatly improve the conditions for peace

and stability throughout East Asia.

Reunification of Korea and a peace agreement between Japan and Russia by the end of the year? Trump “more than a friend” for President Moon? Did you know that, and does that fit into your image of Trump and your understanding of how the New Silk Road spirit has already changed relations between nations in Asia? If not, then complain to *Tagesschau* and Co.

However, Trump’s incrimination of Iran as the main sponsor of terrorism in the world, is an outrageous statement, given the war of annihilation waged against Yemen by Saudi Arabia, and the decades of involvement by the U.S. with terrorist organizations ever since Zbigniew Brzezinski launched the “Islamic card” in Afghanistan in the 1980s against the Soviet Union. But on the other hand, Trump in effect supported the compromise negotiated by Putin and Erdogan in Sochi to create a buffer zone in Idlib, Syria, and thus to put a damper on the impending escalation between the armed forces of five nations, namely Turkey, Syria, Russia, the USA, and Israel—the latter three of which are nuclear powers. Trump expressly thanked the heads of state who had promoted the Astana process for Syria—including Iran.

For months, there has been talk of an overall peace plan for Southwest Asia, whose elaboration Trump has initiated. This is a mammoth task, given the complexity of the region and its character as a battlefield for imperial scenarios of the “Great Game” of the British Empire. But here, too, a facet of Trump’s diplomacy is visible, although completely ignored in the black-and-white painting of the mainstream media: the Italian newspaper *La Verità* reported in this context on the possibility that Italy could play a mediating role in the current negotiations between the U.S. and Iran. Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte, who met with Trump on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly for a bilateral meeting, represents the only major Western country that has built a very good relationship with Trump and at the same time established excellent ties to China, which, of course, significantly influences the dynamics around Iran.

As you can see here too, gray and pastel shades are more appropriate when considering Trump’s policy than the shrill neon colors used by the media.

Both the spokesperson for the Russian Foreign Ministry, Maria Zakharova, and China, welcomed Trump’s emphasis on the sovereignty of all nations, emphatically stressing that this right must apply not only to the

U.S., but to all. In fact, this claim to sovereignty is diametrically opposed to the policy of interventionist encroachment, with which the U.S. administration often believes that U.S. law can be enforced extraterritorially anywhere in the world. That holds for example for the secondary sanctions that the United States imposes on foreign companies that are unwilling to submit to U.S. sanctions against Russia, China and Iran. The Chinese pro-government *Global Times* newspaper emphasized that both the principle of sovereignty and the equality of nations emerged from the process of the Peace of Westphalia, and that it is urgent to return to this principle in international relations.

The most problematic aspect of Trump’s speech is the fact that he based his claims for the success for his economic policies mainly on the rise of stock market indices—a “success” that could be swept away at any moment with the outbreak of a new financial crisis, worse than that of 2008. And the U.S. trade deficit with China is not primarily attributable to China’s accession to the WTO, but goes back to the policy of the New York Council of Foreign Relations and the Trilateral Commission in the 1970s, when they initiated the so-called “1980s Project” to elaborate and explicitly implement the “controlled disintegration of the global economy.” Linked to this was the utopia of a “post-industrial society,” and the outsourcing of production to low-wage countries, as China was then. Whole regions in the U.S., in and beyond the so-called “rust belt” of the Midwest, bear witness to the consequences of this fundamentally oligarchic, neoliberal policy.

Incidentally, the state of North Rhine-Westphalia, the former industrial center of Germany, is another sad expression of this policy of willful deindustrialization.

It is extremely important for us in Germany, given the devastation of the “Little Coalition,” and the complete lack of any clear perspective for the future coming from Merkel’s chancellorship, to attain a differentiated and independent picture of Trump, Russia, China and other important issues. It should be obvious to every thinking person that world peace depends on, above all, the USA, Russia, China, and then other important nations, such as India, Japan, etc., being able to establish a positive basis for cooperation. And that’s why we should replace the clichés produced by the mainstream media on behalf of the geopolitical establishment’s interests, with our own independent judgment. As I said: “Thoughts are free . . .”—but only if we ourselves think.

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