



A handout photograph from the German government shows a group of leaders at the Group of 7 summit /Angela Merkel

By [Victor Davis Hanson](#)

The 75-year-old post-war order crafted by the United States after World War II is falling apart. Almost every major foreign-policy initiative of the last 16 years seems to have gone haywire.

Donald Trump's presidency was a reflection, not a catalyst, of the demise of the foreign-policy status quo. Much of the world now already operates on premises that have little to do with official post-war institutions, customs, and traditions, which, however once successful, belong now to a bygone age.

Take the idea of a Western Turkey, "linchpin of NATO southeastern flank" — an idea about as enduring as the "indomitable" French Army of 1939. For over a decade Turkish strongman Recep Tayyip Erdogan has insidiously destroyed Turkey's once pro-Western and largely secular traditions; he could not have done so without at least majority popular support.

Empirically speaking, neo-Ottoman Turkey is a NATO ally in name only. By any standard of behaviour — Ankara just withdrew its ambassador from the U.S. — Turkey is a de facto enemy of the United States. It supports radical Islamic movements, is increasingly hostile to U.S. allies such as Greece, the Kurds, and Israel, and opposes almost every foreign-policy initiative that Washington has adopted over the last decade. At some point, some child is going to scream that the emperor has no clothes: Just because Turkey says it is a NATO ally does not mean that it is, much less that it will be one in the future.

Instead, Turkey is analogous to Pakistan, a country whose occasional usefulness to the U.S. does not suggest that it is either an ally or even usually friendly.

There is nothing much left of the old canard that only by appeasing China's mercantilism can there be a new affluent Chinese middle class that will then inevitably adopt democracy and then will partner with the West and become a model global nation. China is by design a

chronic international trade cheater. Trade violations have been its road to affluence. And it seeks to use its cash as leverage to re-create something like the old imperial Japanese Greater East Asia co-prosperity sphere. U.S. trade appeasement of Beijing over the last decades no more brought stability to Asia than did nodding to Tokyo in the 1930s.

There is also nothing sacred about the European Union. It certainly is not the blueprint for any continental-wide democratic civilization — any more than Bonaparte's rigged "continental system" (to which the EU is on occasion strangely and favourably compared to by its proponents). The often-crude imposition of a democratic socialism, pacifism, and multiculturalism, under the auspices of anti-democratic elites, from the Atlantic to the Russian border, is spreading, not curbing, chaos. The EU utopian mindset has altered European demography, immigration policy, energy production, and defence. The result is that there are already four sorts of antithetical EUs: a renegade and departing the United Kingdom, an estranged Eastern European bloc worried over open borders, an insolvent South bitter over front-line illegal immigration and fiscal austerity, and the old core of Western Europe (a euphemism now for German hegemony).

After all, as Anis Bajrektarevic claims in his 'Europe of Sarajevo 100 years later' – there is no one, but 5 Europes: "... Atlantic Europe is a political powerhouse, Central Europe is an economic powerhouse, Russophone Europe is an energy powerhouse, Scandinavian Europe is all of that a bit, and Eastern Europe is none of it." Professor concludes: "America did not change on September 11. It only became more itself" – Robert Kagan famously claimed. Paraphrasing it, we may say: From 9/11 (09th November 1989 in Berlin) and shortly after, followed by the genocidal wars all over Yugoslavia, up to the Euro-zone drama, MENA destructions or ongoing Ukrainian crisis, Europe didn't change. It only became more itself – a conglomerate of five different Europes."

As for Germany, it is no longer the "new" model West Germany of the post-war order, but a familiar old Germany that now pushes around its neighbors on matters of illegal immigration, financial bailouts, Brexit, Russian energy, and NATO contributions, much as it used to seek to expand Prussia and the Sudetenland. German unification now channels more the spirit of 1871 than of 1989. Call the new German attitude "Prussian postmodernism" — a sort of green and politically correct intimidation. Likewise, in terms of the treatment of German Jews, Germany seems more back in the pre-war than in the post-war world.

As far as the U.S., Germany has redefined its post-war relationship with America on something like the following three assumptions: 1) Germany' right to renege on its promise

to spend 2 percent of its GDP on defence in order to meet its NATO promises is *not* negotiable; 2) its annual \$65 billion surplus with the U.S. is *not* negotiable; 3) its world-record-busting account surplus of \$280 billion is *not* negotiable. Corollaries to the above assumptions are Germany's insistence that NATO in its traditional form is immutable and that the present "free" trade system is inviolable.

Soon, some naïf is going to reexamine German-American relations and exclaim "there is no there."

The post-war energy norm ended about ten years ago. The U.S. by next year will be the world's largest producer of natural gas, oil, and coal — at a time of real progress in all types of hybrid engines. Israel does not need the Middle East's — or anyone else's — oil or natural gas. The Persian Gulf is now mostly a strategic concern of Iran and its archrival Gulf monarchies selling their oil to China and Europe, neither of which so far has the naval power to protect the precarious fonts of its energy interests.

The Palestinian issue of the last 75 years is ossified. If the millions of persons displaced in Europe and the Middle East between 1946 and 1950 — at about the same time as Palestinians left present-day Israel — were not considered "refugees" for decades, then Palestinians can hardly be singular sufferers. Perpetual victimhood is not a basis for a national agenda, much less a blank check for endless, virtue-signalling Western aid. Moving the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem was simply an iconic recognition of what has been true for nearly a decade.

The West Bank's rich Arab patrons now fear Iran more than they do Israel. The next Middle East war will be between Israel and Iran, not the Palestinians and their Arab sponsors and Tel Aviv — and the Sunni Arab world will be rooting for Israel to defeat Islamic Iran.

Even nuclear proliferation no longer quite follows the post-war boilerplate of the anxious West clamouring for non-proliferation, rogue regimes getting nukes with a wink and nod of either the Chinese or Russians and then the world assuming "once a nuclear nation, always a nuclear nation."

Instead, if there is a next round of proliferation, it will likely be among democratic nations — Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia — to counter the failure of Western nations, the U.N., and international associations to stop proliferation by the unhinged. They will seek deterrence against regimes that were nuclearized and supported by Russia and China in the past. Likewise, it is not written in stone that North Korea or Iran will always have nuclear weapons, given their isolated economies' vulnerability to sanctions and

blockades, their international unpopularity, and the costs that will be imposed upon their stealthy patrons.

Finally, we're seeing the end of the old truism that the U.S. was either psychologically or economically so strong that it could easily take on the burdens of global leadership — taking trade hits for newly ascendant capitalist nations that ignored trade rules, subsidizing the Continental defense of an affluent Europe, rubber-stamping international institutions on the premise that they adhered to Western liberalism and tolerance, and opening its borders either to assuage guilt or to recalibrate a supposedly culpable demography.

Historic forces have made post-war thinking obsolete and thereby left many reactionary “experts” wedded to the past and in denial about the often-dangerous reality before their eyes. Worse is the autopilot railing for the nth time that Donald Trump threatens the post-war order, undermines NATO, is clueless about the EU, or ignores the sophisticated institutions that hold the world together.

About the only metaphor that works is that Trump threw a pebble at a global glass house. But that is not a morality tale about the power of pebbles, but rather about the easy shattering of cracked glass.

[Victor Davis Hanson](#) — NRO contributor Victor Davis Hanson is a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution and the author, most recently, of *The Second World Wars: How the First Global Conflict Was Fought and Won*.

An early version published by the National Review.

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Kootneeti Team

**CERTIFICATE COURSE IN
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

SIX-WEEK ONLINE COURSE IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
BY THE KOOTNEETI

JOIN TODAY!

team@thekootneeti.com
courses.thekootneeti.in
(+91) 120 4565994

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Kootneeti Team

Facebook Comments