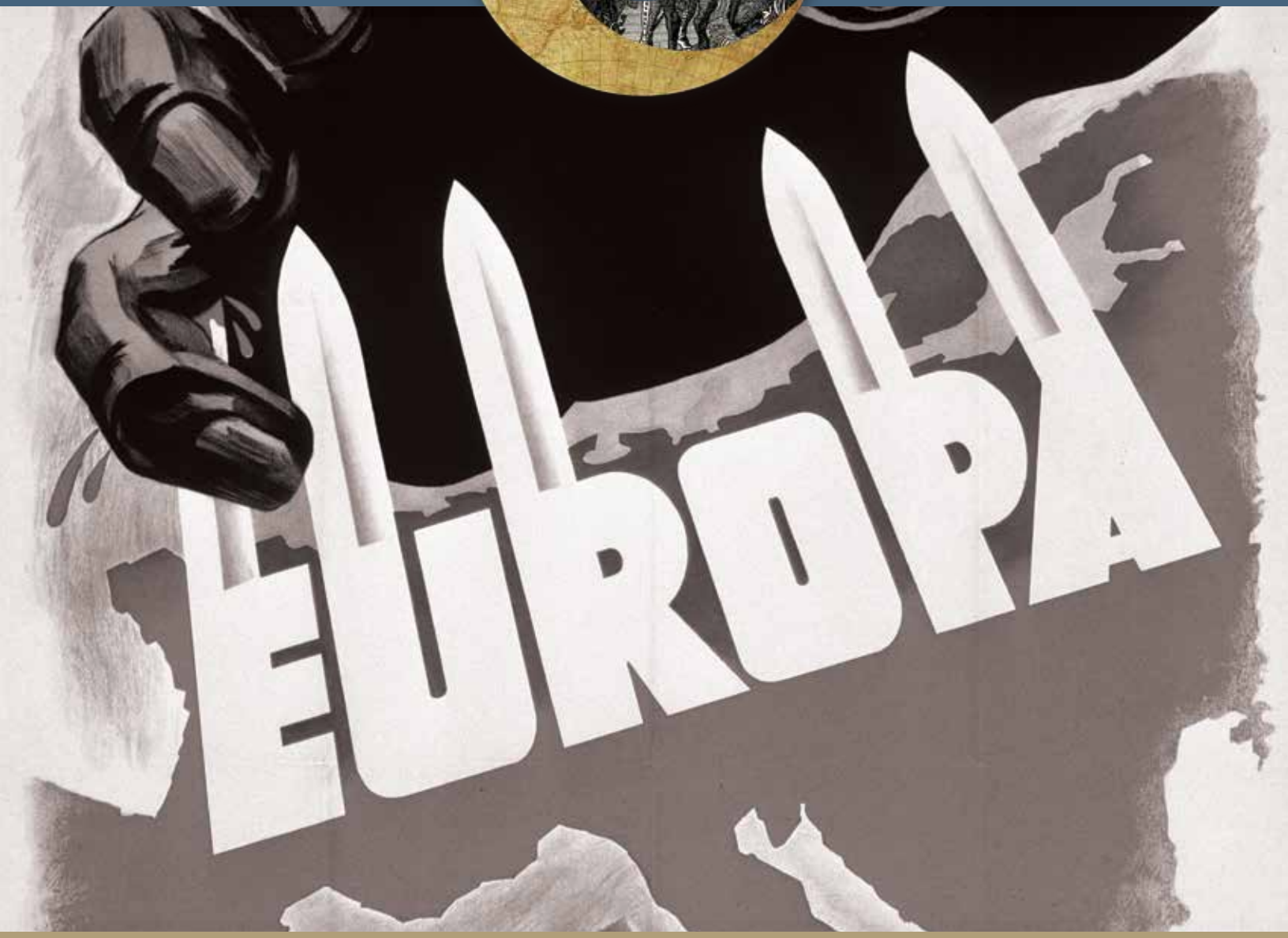
ISSUE 42

STRATEGIKA

Conflicts Of The Past As Lessons For The Present

JUNE 2017



EUROPE: DEATH OR RENEWAL

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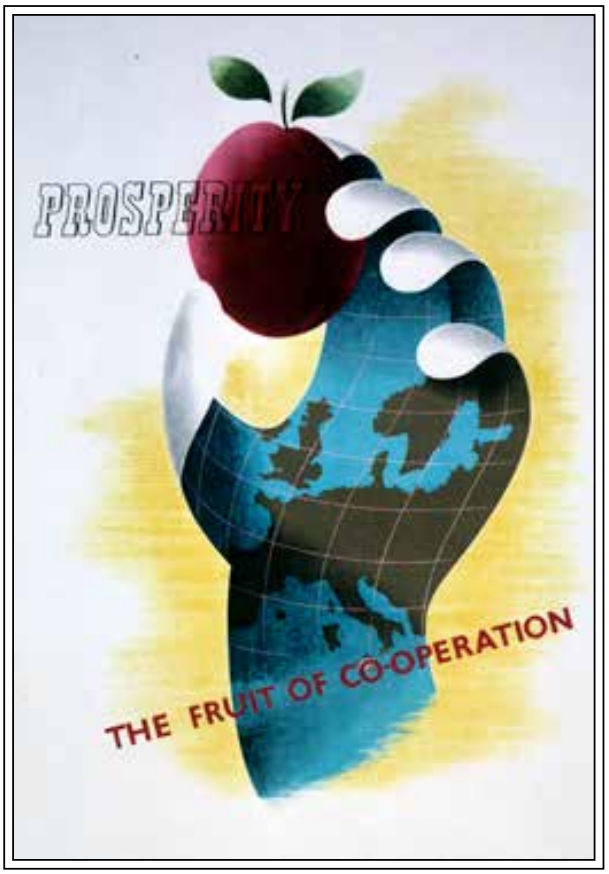
ABOUT THE POSTERS IN THIS ISSUE

Documenting the wartime viewpoints and diverse political sentiments of the twentieth century, the Hoover Institution Library & Archives Poster Collection has more than one hundred thousand posters from around the world and continues to grow. Thirty-three thousand are available online. Posters from the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, Russia/Soviet Union, and France predominate, though posters from more than eighty countries are included.

US Foreign Policy and the Transatlantic Relationship

By Erik Jones



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As candidate, Donald Trump made a number of comments about the utility of the North Atlantic Alliance and about the virtues of European integration that left many in the establishment scratching their heads. When he was elected President of the United States, Trump did very little to soften his tone. On the contrary, the Trump White House floated the names of potential ambassadorial appointments who talked about the transatlantic relationship and the European Union in even more disparaging tones. Of course, this could all be marked down as campaign bluster and the hiccups that come with any transition into office. Other more seasoned politicians and diplomats have challenged Europe to do more for NATO, and many have expressed exasperation with the transatlantic partnership. Former Defense Secretary Robert Gates and Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs Victoria Nuland are two obvious examples, but the list is a long one. Nevertheless, the positions taken by Trump with respect to Europe both as candidate and as President are unusual enough to warrant putting them into context.

Most scholars who look at the transatlantic relationship from the US perspective start with two commitments:

- The transatlantic partnership benefits the United States; and,
- A united Europe offers greater advantages for the United States than a divided or fractious Europe does.

The arguments to support the benefits of transatlantic partnership touch on economics, diplomacy, and security.

- The European Economic Area is the world's largest marketplace; US multinationals have a huge and very profitable presence in that market; and European multinationals invest heavily in the United States (and so create significant US employment).
- In diplomatic terms, European societies are at roughly the same level of development as the United States; Europeans and Americans hold similar values and priorities; and European diplomats are available to support a wide range of US initiatives or even to take the lead where a high-profile US diplomatic presence would be counterproductive.
- Finally, European countries have significant potential to contribute to joint interventions and peacekeeping operations; they have infrastructure and airspace close to areas where the United States has vital security interests; and they are actively involved in areas of the world

> where the United States would not want to play the leading role in security provision and where it would be against US interests for the security environment to deteriorate.

Even the most exasperated members of the US foreign policy establishment were likely to buy into these arguments no matter what their political party affiliation. Moreover, the consensus held both inside and outside of elected office. Indeed, you can find these claims repeated in the national security strategies of both the Bush and Obama administrations. Similar arguments have been used by successive administrations going all the way back to Truman.

The arguments in favor of European unity often focus less on the complicated project of creating a European Union than on the alternative of returning to a collection of states, each focusing on the narrow pursuit of its own national interests.

A divided Europe is less innovative and prosperous; divided markets are more costly to penetrate; and smaller, less competitive European firms have less to invest in the United States. Hence, there is substantial economic analysis to show that US multinationals benefited disproportionately from the completion of Europe's internal market.

A divided Europe offers too many opportunities for US rivals to recruit allies within Europe to work against or at cross-purposes with American interests. This argument goes back to the Truman Doctrine and the Cold War, but it continues to find echoes in debates about Russian destabilization running from the Baltics to the Balkans and Chinese efforts to enlist support among the countries of Central and Eastern Europe for their One Belt, One Road initiative.

A divided Europe offers fewer security resources because of the inefficiencies and distractions that emerge when European countries fail to cooperate with one another. Here the problem is not just the redundancies that arise from a failure to pool assets, but also the resources that get pinned down when tensions emerge between European countries—like Greece and Turkey in the 1990s.

Like the commitment to good relations across the Atlantic, this concern about a divided Europe is part of a broad consensus that stretches across partisan divides and holds both inside and outside of office. Indeed, these two commitments—to the benefits of transatlantic partnership and to the advantages of having a unified Europe—are structural and so do not change much over time. Transatlantic partnership and European unity were good for the United States in the 1950s; they remain cornerstones for the pursuit of US national interest today.

Frequently, however, the dynamics of relations across the Atlantic or within Europe overshadow fundamental structural commitments. Trade disputes, exchange rate movements, macroeconomic policy conflicts, antitrust cases, and tax rulings can all add friction in the transatlantic partnership. So can diplomatic disagreements. So can debates about burden-sharing within the NATO alliance. This is why so many prominent (paid-up) members of the US foreign policy establishment can be found on record saying critical, dismissive, or disparaging remarks about Europe from time to time.

The situation is even more complicated when "Europe" speaks with multiple voices. Trade disputes are harder to resolve, exchange rate movements create different winners and losers, macroeconomic policies diverge in counterproductive ways, and even very large US multinationals can get caught up in intra-European power struggles. Here you might think about the recent European Commission efforts to force Ireland to claw back taxes from Apple (despite the Irish government's protests that no such taxes are owed). The point to note, however, is that the United States is not the only party that feels injured in the relationship. When the US Treasury levies fines on European banks, governments in Europe feel aggrieved as well.

Such moments of discord do not challenge the foundations of the transatlantic relationship because they do not call the two fundamental assumptions about the benefits to the United States and about the virtues of European integration into question. By contrast, the most damaging moments arise when US administrations try to pursue transatlantic interests at the expense of European unity. Then Secretary of Defense Donald

Rumsfeld's comments during the run-up to the Iraq War about "New Europe" and "Old Europe" fell into that category; so did President George W. Bush's allusions to the special relationship with Tony Blair's Britain. The United States can have special relationships with different European countries, but if it pursues those relationships at the expense of "Europe" as a collective entity, then it will sacrifice many if not most of the advantages that the transatlantic relationship has to offer. The market access, the diplomatic support, and the security contribution that Europe can offer the United States all diminish as divisions within Europe and among European countries increase. Hence, the second George W. Bush administration put relations with Europe at the forefront and invested heavily in repairing ties both with national governments and with European institutions.

There is a psychological dimension to this argument. The post–Second World War political order in Europe was founded on two promises. One was that Europeans could live every bit as freely and as prosperously as Americans, and that the United States would treat Europe as equal in that sense; the second was that "Europe" could recapture its greatness in the eyes of the rest of the world after the liberation and independence of European colonies. The formula for European greatness would be peaceful reconciliation. Transatlantic partnership supports freedom and prosperity in Europe; European integration promotes peaceful reconciliation; and the two projects—forming an Atlantic community and a European community—are overlapping and reinforcing.

The deep admiration many Europeans hold for the United States rests on that postwar settlement. When US administrations fail to treat Europeans as equals and fail to acknowledge European accomplishments in terms of promoting both freedom and prosperity, these Europeans feel a sense of abandonment. When US administrations either ignore or deny what Europeans have accomplished in terms of peaceful reconciliation and political unity, these Europeans feel a sense of betrayal.

This is where the rhetoric and policies of the Trump administration become important. There is always space for disagreement in relations across the Atlantic, but those relationships cannot be taken for granted. Transatlantic partnership and European integration need constant investment. There was a long period when even the most frustrated foreign policy experts recognized that maintaining these two projects was worth the effort. That is no longer self-evident with the Trump administration. As a consequence, and whether intentionally or inadvertently, there is a danger that the United States will sacrifice a pro-American and pro-transatlantic constituency in Europe that was many decades in the making. That will not necessarily mean future US administrations will struggle to find European allies; what it will mean is that they will not be able to count on a solid core of pro-American support. The transatlantic relationship will be more transactional than structural, and the complexity of managing that relationship will increase even as the advantages for the United States of engagement with Europe diminish.

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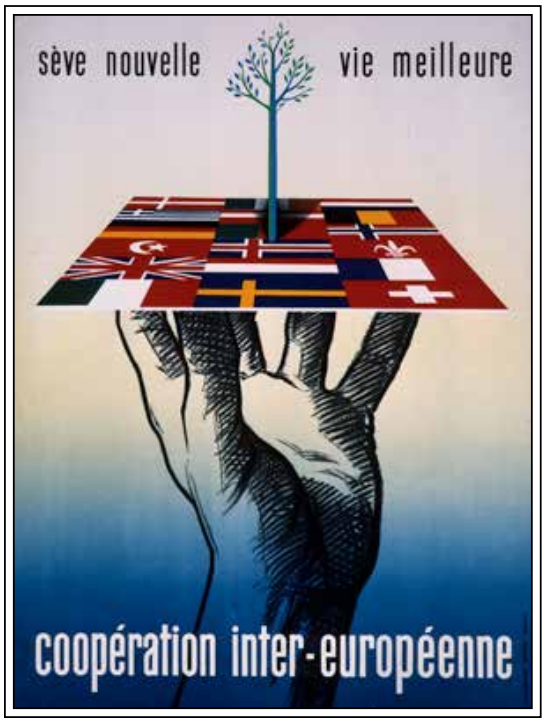

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State of the European Union: God Bless the Bureaucrats

By Ralph Peters

In the immediate wake of the Brexit vote, a normally astute talk-show host declared, gleefully, that "the European Union is dead."

One begged, and begs still, to differ. The EU is a bureaucratic monster that interferes absurdly with "the structures of everyday life." Its grand rhetoric masks expensive inefficiencies and military powerlessness: In global affairs, it's a chatroom. On the economic side, its attempt to establish a common currency, the Euro, was folly, unleashing some economies but debilitating others. It's unable, without NATO, to defend its borders, and its non-response to mass immigration has been cowardly, immoral, and self-destructive.

And for all that, the EU remains a miracle to cherish, an experiment that has changed world history for the better. It's the guarantor of peace among yesteryear's masters of destruction, and it has provided far-better lives for hundreds of millions within its boundaries. The EU's failures make headlines, while its breathtaking long-term triumph goes unappreciated.

While gains in Europe's prosperity have been remarkable (if cyclical), the greatest contribution of the EU has been to make war all but impossible between constituent populations who slaughtered each other for centuries over minor border adjustments, dynastic spats, ethnic delusions, greed, and, of course, God. Nations that within the lifetimes of men and women still living among us enthusiastically engaged in the greatest wartime butchery in history now squabble, disarmed, about farm subsidies, fishing rights, and bail-outs. Countless minor resentments remain, but as the recent landslide win of a pro-EU French presidential candidate underscored, even malcontents vote to keep the EU payments coming.

The EU has been the most successful bribery operation in history: Allotments replaced armaments; consumption replaced conquest. (In an unintentional irony, this peaceable behemoth chose Charlemagne, the sword-in-hand unifier of post–Classical Europe, as its symbolic figurehead—ignoring the awkward fact that, during the 46-year reign of that semiliterate conqueror, Europe only saw peace for a single year.)

The EU we think we know today was born in 1951 as the European Coal and Steel Community, a European initiative to enmesh a recovering Germany in a western-European economic net of six key countries. This quickly evolved into the European Economic Community, a more ambitious effort at integration. From that we saw the rise of a political and regulatory bureaucracy, today's EU, codified by the 1993 Maastricht Treaty.

At every step, there were naysayers, and at every step they were wrong. Today, the EU has 28 member states (with the United Kingdom emotionally divorced but still living in the house). And it has abundant problems. Yet, given the profound cultural, historical, and economic differences between its members, the sturdiness and appeal of the EU remain remarkable.

If any strategic mistake has been made, it's been the creation of a common currency, the Euro, adopted by 19 of the EU states. A great convenience for tourists, the Euro has been devastating for southern-tier economies—

it was folly to imagine that a single monetary policy could be made to fit Germany and Greece, the Netherlands and Italy. Yet, despite the economic crises in Europe's south in recent years, the hullaballoo about states such as Greece, Spain, or even Italy leaving has come to nothing. The only state that moved to secede has been the UK, with its resolute eccentricity and powerful financial services sector (thanks, not least, to EU membership). And even in the UK, recent elections revealed quitter's remorse on the part of voters.

As for Brexit, it did not herald a collapse of the entire EU, but served as a useful stimulus to reform. The Brussels bureaucracy had grown even more swiftly in power and size than had the EU overall. And the bureaucrats, constantly seeking self-justification, had overreached to extremes of regulatory silliness. Brexit has forced the EU to sober up, not break up.

The EU may, indeed, lose some peripheral members over the years. Despite its position as the second most powerful reserve currency (behind the US dollar), the Euro ill serves Europe's south—making northern European exports more competitive, while driving up internal and export costs south of the Alps and Pyrenees (on top of which European Central Bank regulations punish Italians, Greeks, and Spaniards for not being Germans).

Yet, the EU will be with us for decades—many decades, one hopes—to come. Expensive, addled, intrusive, self-righteous, and often unfair, it's nonetheless the unexpectedly pacific, even noble, outcome of centuries of political evolution that, until 1945, had drenched the continent with blood.

To truly grasp the value of the EU, as well as to identify its parentage, we have to reach back at least to the late 18th century, when the rationality-extolling Enlightenment collapsed into the inchoate passions of the Romantic era and the decaying monarchical system excited revolution and unleashed the newborn demon of nationalism.

We forget that, as Bonaparte plunged into Italy in 1796, not all French citoyens thought they were French. Italy was a hodgepodge of senile kingdoms, stagnant dukedoms, one false republic, and the Papal States. Germany was even more of a patchwork than the Italian peninsula and its dependent isles. Ruled from Vienna, the polyglot Habsburg Empire was glued together by internal force and external fears, and the Balkans remained largely possessions of the degenerate and brutal Ottoman Empire (today, the EU states that fiercely resist accepting "their share" of Muslim immigrants are those whose national memory recalls centuries of Ottoman occupation).

The explosion—sometimes quite literal—of nationalist sentiment between the Napoleonic era and the formal unifications of Italy (1870) and Germany (1871) changed the European landscape profoundly. Populations accustomed to local allegiances and who expressed themselves in exclusive regional dialects (in 1870, fewer than 10 percent of "Italians" made common use of Italian as we know it) discovered, or imagined, bonds of blood, history, culture, and language. From the novels of Manzoni to the operas of Wagner, poets, pamphleteers, politicians, artists, and even musicians romanticized an often-mythic national past. And virile, virulent nation-states coalesced in the wake of wars and revolutions. (Artists and philosophers made Hitler inevitable, but that's another tale for Leftists to ponder.)

Those exuberant nation-states, along with peculiar, self-immolating Russia, then embarked on the horrific wars that stretched from 1914 to 1945, gutting the continent and leaving its eastern half enslaved by a perverse German ideology, Marxism, further debased by its maturation in Moscow.

The year 1945 marked the crash (though not the complete disappearance, of course) of nationalism, which has been followed by a paradox: "Blood and iron" nationalism has been discredited, and cobbled-together statehood questioned. Within states, the trend is toward the devolution of power, even secession, as Flemings and Walloons debate the worth of a unified Belgium; Lombards and other northern Italians ask why they should bear the fiscal burden of the Mezzogiorno; Basques and Catalans wish to shrug off the rest of Spain; and—as an object lesson—Yugoslavia (which was not part of the EU) broke apart amid massacres in the 1990s, as Orthodox Christians, Roman Catholics, and Muslims remembered that they hated each other.

Yet, neither Catalans nor Basques, Lombards or Walloons, want to leave the EU. Indeed, defeated Scottish nationalists view Brexit as a lifeline for their cause—many Scots, if not a majority, would prefer to remain in Europe.

So . . . we have a crumbling of the weaker national identities, but a general allegiance to the overarching EU superstate, for all its practical faults. Although it does not do to exaggerate its strength, there is a European identity now that never before existed, not even when Christendom was most imperiled by Muslim invasions that reached central France or Vienna.

In yet another irony, the Islamist terrorists plaguing Europe and the flood of Muslim immigrants further foster a European identity, a shared sense of us-against-them. Europeans disagree profoundly about how best to address Islamist terror or invasive migrations, but there is a growing sense of European-ness, a concept that, until recently, appealed only to elites.

Where are we? Against historical odds, the EU has not only survived but thrived. With 510 million inhabitants, the EU boasts a larger population than the USA and Russia combined. Its GDP of $16.5 trillion (2016) is second only to that of the USA's $18.5 trillion and five trillion greater than that of the People's Republic of China.

Fumbling attempts to create a viable EU military force have resulted only in flaccid peacekeeping missions, but, given the continent's history, is the military weakness of traditional aggressors and transgressors much to be lamented? Meanwhile, the EU's development aid eclipses that of any other state, alliance, or institution.

Will further states quit the EU? Perhaps. Will the Euro fail? No, but economically disadvantaged states may withdraw from the currency (without any thought of quitting the EU). Will the EU regulate itself to death? No. That tide has already turned.

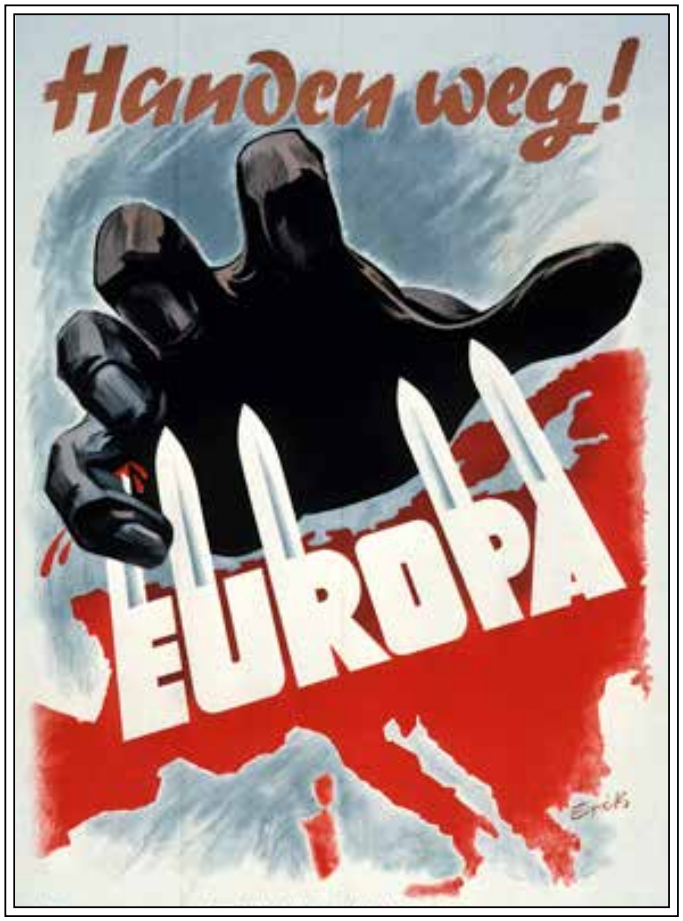
American conservatives have a tradition of criticizing the EU as "socialist," as a welfare state writ large—a view that is historically myopic. Are peace and prosperity so undesirable? One detects a whiff of resentment at the EU's success, as though no other child should have a bicycle as fine as ours.

Trade deals come and go. Economies go through cycles. Administrations and governments change. (And democracies ultimately self-correct.) But we have seen, in the EU, one of the most profound shifts in collective behavior that the historical record has to offer. Just as NATO has proven an alliance without precedent and of inestimable value, so, too, has the EU been overwhelmingly positive for its citizens—and for us. Peace is cheaper than war. And fat men don't fight.

Those war-weary Europeans, some idealistic, others cynical, some both, who came to that "common market" agreement six decades ago started a process whose remarkable consequences none would have dared imagine: enduring peace and startling wealth on a continent that had almost destroyed itself.

As for our trade deficit, build better cars.

Ralph Peters is the author of twenty-nine books, including works on strategy and military affairs, as well as best-selling, prize-winning novels. He has published more than a thousand essays, articles, and columns. As a US Army enlisted man and officer, he served in infantry and military Intelligence units before becoming a foreign area officer and global scout. After retiring in 1998, he covered wars and trouble spots in the Middle East and Africa. He now concentrates on writing books but remains Fox News's strategic analyst. His latest novel, *Hell or Richmond*, a gritty portrayal of Grant's 1864 Overland Campaign, follows his recent *New York Times* best seller*, Cain at Gettysburg,* for which he received the 2013 Boyd Award for Literary Excellence in Military Fiction from the American Library Association.



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Europe Is Still Ailing

By Bruce Thornton

Recent elections in France, the Netherlands, and Austria, in which Eurosceptic populist and patriotic parties did poorly in national elections, suggest to some that the EU is still strong despite Britain's vote to leave the union. Yet the problems bedeviling the EU ever since its beginnings in 1992 have not been solved. Nor are they likely to be with just some institutional tweaks and adjustments. "More Europe," that is, greater centralization of power in Brussels at the expense of the national sovereignty of member states, is not the answer. The flaws in the whole EU project flow from its questionable foundational assumptions.

Those problems have been identified and analyzed for decades. EU economic growth and per capita GDP consistently lag behind those of the United States, in part because of overregulated dirigiste economies, overgenerous social welfare transfers, expensive retirement benefits, restrictive employment laws, and higher taxes. Some countries have addressed these problems, most importantly Germany. But Germany's economic success has exacerbated the stark contrast with the poorer performing Mediterranean countries. They are still struggling with debt and deficits, and suffering double-digit unemployment rates, particularly among the young, which range from 15 to 25 percent. Germany's current dominance makes the EU look less like a union of sovereign states and more like a German economic empire.

Particularly ominous is the case of France, the second largest economy in the EU. France is facing cumulative national debt—government, household, and business—that totals 250 percent of its GDP, up 66 percent since 2007. This total does not include unfunded pension and health-care obligations. New president Emmanuel Macron has pledged neoliberal reforms to begin correcting this unsustainable drag on growth, yet previous attempts at even minor changes by French presidents have been met with street demonstrations comprising millions of protestors. It remains questionable whether there is the will among the citizens and their political leaders to face the harsh cuts and painful adjustments necessary to right France's fiscal ship. Given the size of France's economy, a fiscal crisis similar to that still troubling Greece will severely stress and further fracture the EU.

Europe's economic woes are entwined with a serious sociocultural problem: Europeans are not having children. Birth rates are at 1.58 child per woman, well below the replacement rate of 2.1. Since human minds and entrepreneurial creativity are modern capitalism's most valuable resource, a shrinking and aging population—by 2030, one in four Europeans will be 65 years or older—bodes ill for future economic growth, leading to fewer and fewer workers paying taxes to support more and more of the aged drawing benefits. Pragmatic considerations aside, the failure to have children is also a failure to invest in the future or even concern oneself with the fate of one's country beyond this life. Such attitudes promote an Après nous, le déluge mentality, and turn la dolce vita into the highest good.

Such a mentality is dangerous in a world in which expansionary powers like Russia and modern Islamic jihadism are on the march. In regard to the latter, for decades the EU's feckless immigration policies that have let in millions of immigrants, the majority from Muslim nations, without any effort to enforce assimilation to, or acceptance in, the host countries. The result is growing enclaves of unassimilated Muslims overrepresented on welfare rolls and

in prisons. Since 9/11 and the global expansion of jihadist terror, these already dysfunctional internal colonies have become recruiting pools for jihadist outfits like al-Qaeda and ISIS.

In 2015, German Chancellor Angela Merkel's open-door policy, which invited in a million, scarcely vetted immigrants, half from the jihadist abattoirs of Syria, worsened the problem and created a rift with those EU countries like Hungary that are on the geographical front lines of the influx, and disinclined to risk their national safety and identity. Unsurprisingly, terrorist attacks have increased over the last few years, with over 300 Europeans killed in France, Germany, England, and Stockholm just since January 2016. Besides these attacks, in many EU countries assaults, rapes, honor killings, and murders are becoming more and more frequent—sex crimes by migrants in Germany have doubled in one year. Despite the carnage, the EU has done little to address the failure of assimilation, the growth of separatism, and appeasement of radical Islamic proselytizing that have nourished European jihadism.

These problems, however, reflect the deeper malaise behind the EU project. Quite simply, what comprises the unifying beliefs and values that can attract the loyalty and affection of Europeans not part of the cognitive and economic elites who have benefitted from unification? What unifying idea can weld together 28 different nations comprising diverse cultures, languages, political norms, traditions, mores, folkways, religions, and histories? What can inspire a loyalty to "Europe" as passionate as the patriotism that a people feels for its particular way of life and national identity?

The Christianity that helped create the idea of Europe in the first place is today moribund, particularly in Western Europe. An acknowledgement of this heritage was not even allowed in the preamble to the European Constitution, unsurprising given that the rate of regular church attendance is in single digits. As for culturally centripetal national loyalties, the EU was born in the rejection and demonization of nationalism, which was blamed for fascism and Nazism, a questionable claim that confuses liberal nationalism with ethno-nationalism, and leaves the average Frenchman or German or Italian adrift in a globalized virtual "community." As French philosopher Alain Finkielkraut has written, "It is inhuman to define man by blood and soil but no less inhuman to leave him stumbling through life with the terrestrial foundations of his existence taken out from under him."

A "European" identity is an abstraction, one that ignores the particular, local cultural and linguistic coordinates of most peoples' existence. These persistent national identities are the fault lines running below the EU superstructure of supranational institutions and regulations. They may lie quiet for a time, but as we saw in 2008 during the economic crisis, and as we see today with the challenge of jihadist terror and careless immigration policies, in times of stress and uncertainty they may return and unleash destructive passions. The "return of the repressed" is seldom a peaceful affair.

The challenge facing Europe today is not just reforming its economies or crafting saner immigration policies. It is whether the EU leadership can allow a greater recognition of and respect for the member nations' distinct identities and sovereignty, rather than scorning them as proto-fascist throwbacks to a more savage time, to be subordinated to a technocratic supranational elite. On that depends the cure for what ails the EU today.

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The E.U. Experiment Has Failed

By Bruce Thornton via *Defining Ideas*

The slow-motion crisis of the European Union is the big story that rarely gets the attention it deserves. Even an event like the recent terrorist attack in France that left 17 dead is often isolated from the larger political, economic, and social problems that have long plagued the project of unifying the countries of Europe in order to harness its collective economic power, and to avoid the bloody internecine strife that stains its history.

On the economic front, the E.U.'s dismal economic performance over the last six years was summed up in a December headline in Business Insider: "Europe Stinks." The 2008 Great Recession exposed the incoherence of the E.U.'s economic structure, particularly its single currency, which is held hostage by the diverse economic policies of sovereign nations. The data tell the tale. The E.U.'s GDP grew 1 percent in 2013, anemic compared to the United States' 2.2 percent. In December 2014, unemployment in the E.U. averaged 11.4 percent, while in the United States it was 5.6 percent. We are troubled by our labor force participation rate of 62.7 percent, a 36-year low. But in the E.U., it was 57.5 percent in 2013. Our recovery from the recession may be slow by our historical standards, but it is blazing compared to the E.U.'s.

The E.U.'s economic woes have many causes, but intrusively regulated economies and outsized government spending on generous social welfare transfers are two of the most important. Despite the rebuke of such policies delivered by the recession, government spending as a percentage of GDP has actually increased in the E.U., from 45.5 percent in 2007 to 49 percent in 2013, even as many Europeans decry the harsh "austerity" measures called for by countries like Germany. Greece, the E.U member increasingly in danger of being forced to exit the monetary union and thus risk its unraveling, has nonetheless raised its government spending from 46.8 percent in 2007 to 59 percent in 2013.

As Josef Joffe of Germany's *Die Zeit* newspaper summarized in January, "These ailments are deeply embedded in economies that lag behind on investment, innovation and competitiveness . . . Europe as a whole is beginning to look like Greece writ large. But the long-term data whisper to Europe as well as to Greece: Reform or decline."

Socially, the E.U. is troubled by two trends: demographic decline and the presence of concentrated populations of unassimilated and disaffected Muslim immigrants. Europe is an aging people; by 2030, one in four Europeans will be 65 years or older, reflecting the Europeans' failure to reproduce. Not since the 1970s have European women averaged 2.1 children, the number necessary to replace a population. The rate in 2014 was 1.6. In countries with low retirement ages and generous benefits, an aging population means more and more money taken from the productive young and investment in the economy, further reducing competiveness, innovation, and growth.

And it means fewer workers, a factor in the influx of immigrants into the E.U. over the last several decades. As Ingo Kramer, head of the Confederation of German Employers' Associations, put it, "We need immigration for our labor market and to allow our social system to function." Large numbers of these immigrants have come from Muslim countries, bringing with them a religion and social mores radically different from Europe's. Yet European countries have done a poor job of demanding assimilation of immigrants into the cultures of their new homes.

The result has been large concentrations of immigrants segregated in neighborhoods like the banlieues of Paris or the satellite "dish-cities" of Amsterdam. Shut out from labor markets, plied with generous social welfare payments, and allowed to cultivate beliefs and cultural practices inimical to liberal democracy, many of these immigrants despise their new homes and find the religious commitment and certainty of radical Islam an attractive alternative. And like the two French-Algerian brothers who attacked the offices of the satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo,* some turn to terrorism.

Such violence, along with cultural practices like honor killings, forced marriages, and polygamy, remind Europeans of just how alien many immigrants are. They are stoking a political backlash against Muslims, the political consequences of which will be disruptive, if not dangerous. Populist parties, for example, opposed to unfettered immigration, angry at sluggish economies, and chafing against E.U. regulatory encroachments on national sovereignty, are growing across Europe. And there are signs that there is a constituency for these parties.

In France, which has 5 million Muslims, the largest Muslim population in Europe, a recent bestseller is Éric Zemmour's *Le suicide Français,* about the erosion of French national identity and sovereignty. After the attacks in Paris, novelist Michel Houellebecq's new novel *Soumission,* which imagines a France ruled by the Muslim Brotherhood, became an instant bestseller. These literary successes make sense given that according to a 2013 poll in the French newsweekly *L'Express,* 74 percent of the French said that Islam "is not compatible with French society."

Similar sentiments and political reactions can be found across Europe. The United Kingdom Independence party in England, the National Front in France, and the "Patriotic Europeans against the Islamization of the Occident" (PEGIDA) in Germany are united in their Euroskepticism. They are all calling for renewed pride in Western civilization and their national identities, and demand that immigration be limited and Muslim immigrants compelled to assimilate. If these parties continue to strengthen their membership, they will be able to join coalition governments. At that point, they will be able to affect policy in ways—like restricting immigration—that will lead to greater political conflict and perhaps civil violence.

All these economic, social, and political problems are no secret. But the proposed solutions to them usually focus on policy changes or technical adjustments to the structure and functioning of the E.U. Yet this begs the fundamental question that has troubled European unification ever since it began with the Treaty of Rome in 1957: What comprises the collective beliefs and values that can form the foundations of a genuine European-wide community? What is it that all Europeans believe?

Europe and its nations were forged in the matrix of ideas, ideals, and beliefs of Christianity, which gave divine sanction to notions like human rights, the sanctity of the individual, political freedom, and equality. Today, across Europe Christian belief is a shadow of its former self. Fewer and fewer Europeans regularly go to church, with weekly attendance in most European countries in the low double digits. Churches are being shuttered across the continent; the Church of England closes about 20 churches a year and the German Catholic Church closed 515 in the past decade, according to the *Wall Street Journal.* It is common for many European cathedrals to have more tourists during a service than parishioners. This process of secularization—already well advanced in 1887 when Nietzsche famously said, "God is no more than a faded word today, not even a concept"—is nearly complete today, leaving Europeans without it historical principle of unity.

Nor over the last century have the various substitutes for Christianity managed to fill the void. Political religions like communism and fascism failed bloodily, leaving behind mountains of corpses. Nor has secular social democracy, with its utopian ideals, provided people with a transcendent principle that justifies sacrifice for the greater good, or even gives people a reason to reproduce. A shared commitment to leisure, a short workweek, and a generous social safety net is nothing worth killing or dying for. Neither is the vague idea of a transnational E.U. ruled by unaccountable Eurocrats in Brussels and Strasbourg.

More importantly, from its beginning, the idea of the E.U. depended on the denigration of patriotism and national pride, for these were seen as the road to the exclusionary, blood-and-soil nationalism that fed Nazism and fascism. Yet all peoples are the product of a particular culture, language, mores, histories, traditions, and landscapes. The "postmodern" abstract E.U. ideal of transcending such parochial identities was destined to collide with the real cultural differences between European nations. These differences have become obvious during the economic crisis of the last decade, when hard-working, thrifty Germans have been loath to subsidize what they see as indolent, improvident Greeks, suggesting that there is more that

separates than unites those two peoples. That sense of belonging to a community defined by a shared identity cannot be created by a single currency.

National pride and amour propre were not eliminated by the E.U. and the ideology of its bureaucratic elites, only driven underground for a while. With Christianity moribund, and patriotism stigmatized as neo-fascist, it is unsurprising that Europe has failed to find a unifying principle beyond mere material comfort, resulting in the continent-wide malaise that manifests itself in the various failed policies threatening the E.U. project today, what Pope Francis last November called "a general impression of weariness and aging, of a Europe which is now a 'grandmother,' no longer fertile and vibrant"—a culture "weary with disorientation."

We American should not indulge the schadenfreude aroused by watching our sometimes-condescending older cousins slip farther and farther behind us in global importance and power. Europe is still collectively the world's largest economy, and its travails will impact the whole globe. More importantly, many of the trends weakening Europe today are active in our own country. The scorning of national pride and American exceptionalism, the decline of Christianity in the public square, multiculturalism and its ethnic separatism and divisive identity politics, and the preference of many Americans for greater social welfare spending, redistribution of wealth, and dirigiste economic policies all point us to a fate like Europe's.

Self-doubt about the goodness of one's way of life and living just for today's pleasures are luxuries a great power cannot afford. In a world of violent ideologies and aggressive autocrats, a free people must have something beyond this world that they believe is worth killing and dying for. Europe seemingly has lost those ideals and beliefs that made it the nurse of freedom, democracy, and human rights. America has taken on that global role, but if we go the way of Europe, if we too no longer know what we believe, who will take our place?

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Discussion Questions

1. Why do formerly Soviet Eastern bloc European nations seem more pro-American than their Western European counterparts?
2. Why does Europe seem more vulnerable to jihadist threats than the United States?
3. Which European Union nation, if any, is next most likely to withdraw from the EU?
4. Is there still a "German problem," and if so, what can be done about it?
5. Are the problems of NATO similar to those of the EU?

POLL: What presently is the greatest challenge to the unity of the European Union?

- ☐ Unchecked Islamic immigration from the war-torn Middle East
- ☐ The inability of poorer southern nations to pay back massive debt to wealthier northern countries
- ☐ The fallout from Brexit and the likelihood of more withdrawals from the EU
- ☐ The increasing dictatorial and anti-democratic nature of a governing EU elite
- ☐ The inability of both EU and European NATO states to defend themselves from external threats

Suggestions for Further Reading

Recent works on Europe:

- Erik Jones and Matthias Matthijs, eds., "Democracy without Solidarity: Political Dysfunction in Hard Times" *Government and Opposition* 52:2 (April 2017), https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/government-and-opposition/article/div-classtitledemocracy-without-solidarity-political-dysfunction-in-hard-times-introduction-to-special-issuediv/53C6AC8F45567452C8DF63BF5A425ACE
- Cas Mudde, *On Extremism and Democracy in Europe* (Routledge, 2016), https://www.routledge.com/On-Extremism-and-Democracy-in-Europe/Mudde/p/book/9781138651449
- Philipp Ther, *Europe Since 1989: A History* [Charlotte Hughes-Kreutzmüller, trans.] (Princeton University Press, 2016), http://press.princeton.edu/titles/10812.html

On the transatlantic relationship:

- Dana H. Allin and Erik Jones, *Weary Policeman: American Power in an Age of Austerity* (Routledge for IISS, 2012), https://www.iiss.org/en/publications/adelphi/by%20year/2012-e76b/weary-policeman--american-power-in-an-age-of-austerity-2c35



IN THE NEXT ISSUE:

The Middle East: Terrorism Forever?

Military History in Contemporary Conflict

As the very name of Hoover Institution attests, military history lies at the very core of our dedication to the study of "War, Revolution, and Peace." Indeed, the precise mission statement of the Hoover Institution includes the following promise: "The overall mission of this Institution is, from its records, to recall the voice of experience against the making of war, and by the study of these records and their publication, to recall man's endeavors to make and preserve peace, and to sustain for America the safeguards of the American way of life." From its origins as a library and archive, the Hoover Institution has evolved into one of the foremost research centers in the world for policy formation and pragmatic analysis. It is with this tradition in mind, that the "Working Group on the Role of Military History in Contemporary Conflict" has set its agenda—reaffirming the Hoover Institution's dedication to historical research in light of contemporary challenges, and in particular, reinvigorating the national study of military history as an asset to foster and enhance our national security. By bringing together a diverse group of distinguished military historians, security analysts, and military veterans and practitioners, the working group seeks to examine the conflicts of the past as critical lessons for the present.

Working Group on the Role of Military History in Contemporary Conflict

The Working Group on the Role of Military History in Contemporary Conflict examines how knowledge of past military operations can influence contemporary public policy decisions concerning current conflicts. The careful study of military history offers a way of analyzing modern war and peace that is often underappreciated in this age of technological determinism. Yet the result leads to a more in-depth and dispassionate understanding of contemporary wars, one that explains how particular military successes and failures of the past can be often germane, sometimes misunderstood, or occasionally irrelevant in the context of the present.

Strategika

Strategika is a journal that analyzes ongoing issues of national security in light of conflicts of the past—the efforts of the Military History Working Group of historians, analysts, and military personnel focusing on military history and contemporary conflict. Our board of scholars shares no ideological consensus other than a general acknowledgment that human nature is largely unchanging. Consequently, the study of past wars can offer us tragic guidance about present conflicts—a preferable approach to the more popular therapeutic assumption that contemporary efforts to ensure the perfectibility of mankind eventually will lead to eternal peace. New technologies, methodologies, and protocols come and go; the larger tactical and strategic assumptions that guide them remain mostly the same—a fact discernable only through the study of history.

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