

STRATEGIKA

Conflicts Of The Past As Lessons For The Present

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THE STATUS OF THE EU

IN THIS ISSUE

RALPH PETERS • JAKUB GRYGIEL • ANDREW ROBERTS

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ABOUT THE POSTERS IN THIS ISSUE

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The State of This Union Is (Remarkably) Strong

By Ralph Peters

For years, I was a guest commentator on a business-news show whose host was surprisingly literate. We covered global affairs and shared useful exchanges. But this well-schooled, worldly man had a massive blind spot he shared with a significant number of conservatives: He detested the European Union (EU) obsessively and leapt on every shred of negative data from Brussels as proof that the EU was, finally, this time, at last, truly and belatedly doomed.

In the early days of Brexit, the host declared that the EU would never survive the United Kingdom's departure since other member states would soon follow suit. When I countered that, whatever the ultimate outcome for Britain, the EU would outlive us both, he put on an I-know-better mask and changed the topic.

Now the EU is behaving better during a pandemic than the United States, with the former's member states conducting themselves more responsibly and their societies more dutifully.

There are many reasons why the EU will survive and, generally, thrive. First, it does more good than harm for its populations and, populist grumping aside, EU citizens know it. Argument and ingratitude are part of the human condition, but so is clinging to attained advantage. Besides, no beast is harder to slay than an entrenched bureaucracy, and the EU is a bureaucracy so sprawling it has become a continent-wide constituency of its own. Pre-Brexit, that bureaucracy had, indeed, become overweening, and Britain's departure, however inept, inspired a soul-searching of the soulless in Brussels. The EU apparatus remembered that it had to please national capitals more often than it annoyed them. And unity mattered. Thus, in the pandemic's depths, we have seen more cooperation and breakthrough fiscal compromises within the EU than would have been achievable pre-Brexit. The Brexit bogeyman rescued, at least for the moment, the sick-unto-death economies of southern Europe.

London's limping departure also functioned as a deterrent to other states, rather than becoming an inspiration. If the American dream mythologizes freedom, the European vision worships stability (and with good historical reasons).

Certainly, myriad points of contention remain within the EU. No multinational organization of such scope and ambition will ever be problem free. National gripes are as inevitable as they are, often, petty, but the benefits of EU membership are such that, not only has there been no rush to the exit doors, additional states seek to join the greatest economic union in history, an organization of 27 diverse member states with a total population of almost 450 million whose leaders overturned millennia of precedent to join together to enrich, advance, and pacify the continent that has generated—and often exported—more violence and destruction than any other.

From its origins seven decades ago amid postwar devastation as the six-member European Coal and Steel Community, the EU has proven not only successful and enduring, but, in tandem with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), has been an unprecedented force for peace and prosperity. Within the Schengen



Image credit: Poster Collection, CN 311A, Hoover Institution Archives.

sub-zone, there has been free passage across borders once drawn in blood. In the Euro currency sub-zone, trade has grown even more vigorous (although problems with the Euro remain unresolved in the EU's southern tier).

The COVID-19 emergency has interrupted trade and travel, but has not seriously threatened EU unity: After a bit of requisite squabbling over an economic rescue package, German chancellor Angela Merkel, traditionally a pinch-penny Prussian, prevailed over tight-fisted northern tier governments to provide almost a trillion Euros in broadly backed soft-term loans and outright grants for the EU member states hardest hit by COVID-19.

Witnessing this, Americans should be cheering. The EU isn't an enemy, it's a customer and, in normal times, a premier ally. And sending the occasional U.S. delegation to Brussels to quibble about Camembert beats another landing on Omaha Beach.

American critics obsess on individual points of contention between us, whether subsidies to Europe's aviation industry or attempts to bridle U.S. tech giants, but the irrefutable fact is that the "Western world" collectively has grown incredibly wealthy with remarkable speed because of relatively free trade and cooperation between North America and the EU—while sustaining the longest period of peace in Europe's history. Yes, some industries have suffered and shenanigans abound on both sides, but we routinely (if sometimes perfunctorily) exalt competition for its creative force. It's hypocritical to do so only when it profits us. Besides, it's the tech-powerhouse U.S. that stands to dominate trade in the next decades. We should focus on sales not snits.

It's politically incorrect to say it, but the U.S. and the EU are family, joined by elevated values and the shared heritage of Western civilization—humanity's unchallenged apogee (even if we now must pretend that tribal masks are the equal of Michelangelo's sculptures). We must not let family squabbles open the back door to would-be assassins.

The pandemic recovery challenge

Of course, the EU faces serious economic and unanticipated ideological challenges. European economies will contract painfully this year, with an average decline approaching 10 percent, a stunning blow. Despite the slovenly and suicidal American response to the pandemic, the U.S. is far better positioned for a rebound, due to its pioneering economy. Every nation around the globe will feel pain and face a degree of hardship, but the American lead in information technology (of which the EU is impotently envious) and offshoot services, plus greater U.S. structural flexibility, position the U.S. for a dynamic, though not instantaneous, recovery.

Europe's lag in information technology (expect more legal monkey business from Brussels on that front) is only the most-salient manifestation of the EU's inability to foster a culture of entrepreneurship, perhaps its greatest failing in the twenty-first century. This is where over-regulation truly wounds, compounding cultural inhibitions against risk. Add in baroque and stifling labor laws, and even EU-based tech companies that achieve limited success ultimately falter.

The problem is particularly difficult for Germany's economy, the engine that drives the EU. Germany remains in helpless thrall to "bending metal," to manufacturing superb machines for yesteryear's needs. This is true not only of automotive products but, especially, of the precision tools-to-make-tools that are the core offerings of the German *Mittelstand*, the mid-sized, family-controlled enterprises that comprised the heart of the country's fabled economic boom. The German economy relies on exports of expensive physical goods, many of which might be replicated elsewhere (as China seeks to do). Meanwhile, German exports travel at the speed of a container ship. America's prime exports move at the speed of a keystroke.

Nor have government efforts, as in France, to decree a culture of entrepreneurship succeeded (apart from providing a distinctly Gallic *non sequitur*). In the postmodern environment, those who are more terrified of failure than lured by the chance of success cannot compete.

Other challenges for EU convalescence post-pandemic will include national debts that were problematic even before the advent of COVID-19. Now debts are soaring in the southern tier and beyond. Even with EU grants and loans, Italy's debt threatens to reach an unsustainable 165% of GDP. Southern Europe's heavy reliance on tourism revenues adds to the deficit—especially, since economically desirable American tourists remain excluded from the market (Germans bring their own sandwiches; Americans bring platinum credit cards).

As for suffocating labor laws, if the pandemic cannot spark the political courage to sponsor reform on a broad scale, recovery will stumble along, at best. The conundrum is that Europeans *will* take to the streets—notably in France—to ensure that the young remain jobless to protect the benefits of their fading elders (Europe's new lost generations lack the romance of Hemingway and Gertrude Stein).

Add on political misbehavior in Hungary and Poland, where rule-of-law, democracy, and “European values” are eroding, and it can appear that the EU is nearly hopeless.

But on the worst days, member states and their populations recognize that the benefits of membership vastly outweigh the bossiness, frustrations, and slights. Even would-be strong men, such as Viktor Orban in Hungary, are careful not to transgress to the point that would endanger EU membership and its benefits. Local nationalist demagogues across Europe find the EU a convenient villain to rally their base supporters, but other than the ever-anomalous Brits, no one has made a serious move to give up their subsidies, protections, continent-wide markets, and collective strength. The paradox is that all of the EU's labyrinthine regulations and palliative programs thrive because of greed, not altruism.

Which makes a hash of the bizarre conviction among some U.S. conservatives that the EU is a Socialist Trojan Horse. The EU member states that had a four-decade taste of “real existing Socialism” courtesy of the eleven-time-zone vodka dispenser aren't clamoring for a return to dreary poverty. As for the un-killable myth that the Scandinavian countries (EU members and not) are “Socialist,” it's always been nonsense. Ikea is hardly an example of the state controlling the means of production. While generous social programs were initially fashionable up north—along with sourpuss tax rates—the free-stuff ambitions have long been restrained and taxes reduced in the interests of competition. Four of the richest individuals in Scandinavia, members of the crime-against-humanity pop group Abba, sang about “Money, Money, Money,” not the leading role of the proletariat.

So what if the various societies that compose the EU prefer universal health care, free higher education, and structural stagnation? Have we no confidence in our own system's superiority? Or are we just grumpy elders upset that the kids have chosen to live their own lives?

Malevolent China steps in . . .

China is the common enemy of the U.S. and the EU, and the threat is immediate and merciless. A common front is essential, but vital years have been lost after the current U.S. administration chose to attack the EU while postponing coherent action against China. Beijing menaces the U.S. through intellectual property theft on a massive scale and through industrial dependence, while menacing the EU with intellectual property theft, as well, but, more perniciously still, with economic occupation. Holding the U.S. at bay with relative ease, China is buying its way into Europe—and COVID-19 creates fire-sale conditions in Italy, Spain, Greece, and even France.

The Europeans are aware of the danger, but translating awareness into action is another matter entirely. Intra-EU meetings discuss blocking Chinese investment in strategic industries, but little is done. Southern Europe will need massive investment to recover, while northern Europe fears a pinch in its lifestyle from a trade spat.

Angela Merkel, the greatest European leader since Margaret Thatcher and Germany's greatest chancellor since Konrad Adenauer, long has championed the oppressed, standing against dictators and leading the Western

response to Russian aggression after the current U.S. administration embraced Vladimir Putin. Yet, when it comes to China's atrocious treatment of millions of Uighurs and its treaty-busting clamp-down on Hong Kong or imperialism in the South China Sea, Merkel has been largely silent . . . unwilling even to address the security threat posed by Huawei's looming dominance of Germany's 5G infrastructure. High-ranking German officials have spoken out—sometimes fiercely—but not "*Mutti*."

Merkel dreads Chinese revenge on the German economy. While exports to China are only 8 percent of Germany's total shipments, they support key industries. And German businesses are broadly present on the ground in China, with great, if naïve, hopes for future gains. Merkel understands (as do all Europeans) that Beijing bears great and grave responsibility for the pandemic spread of COVID-19 and the savaging of EU economies. Yet, neither Merkel nor any other top EU leader forcefully castigates the Chinese Communist leadership in public.

That should worry us far more than EU tantrums over Facebook. It tells us how powerful China already has become in European affairs and presages an even broader strategic role for Beijing in the future.

Italy, for example, will desperately need foreign investment for years to come. Rome knows full well how Chinese masking of COVID-19 early on enabled the devastating spread of the plague in *il bel paese*. Nor did ostentatious Chinese airlifts of non-functioning ventilators and defective masks win hearts and minds between the Brenner Pass and Lampedusa. But with its economy crushed, Italy will have to take financial assistance where it can find it—and China will strive to be apparent benefactor number one.

In China itself, economic conditions are fraught, statistics are fudged, and there's not just lipstick but layers of cracking greasepaint on the pig. Foreign corporations are newly wary and offshore investors are pulling back: The gold rush is over. No longer the world's low-wage darling, China is overbuilt and yet underdeveloped. Abroad, President Xi's globally ambitious Belt and Road Initiative has struck one obstacle after another, not least as "partner" countries found themselves trapped in usurious loans that paid for ill-conceived, wretchedly built projects. And its mishandling of COVID-19 has put China in the doghouse.

But that dog is savage and potentially rabid. Despite some bluster, no one has been bold enough to try to put a leash on it.

China, which gave the world COVID-19, will sacrifice at home to profit amid the pandemic's aftermath abroad.

China is the number one strategic threat to the EU. And Europeans feel their hands are tied.

EU-U.S. reconciliation?

If the current U.S. administration is returned to office and does not seek a reconciliation with the EU (and renew our support for NATO), China will be able to play us off against one another, exploiting fissures, creating rivalries, buying presence, and accelerating its bid for strategic preeminence. We will have let Europe go from being our steadfast ally when it counted, to being subverted economically—and thus politically—by China. A *de facto* Chinese veto in consensus-bound Brussels would mark a strategic shift crippling for European autonomy and confining for U.S. power and interests. In the strategic arena, wantonly making foes of vital friends (while chumming with mortal enemies) is a folly of immeasurable dimensions.

If, however, a foreign-policy-traditionalist administration comes to power next January, we will see a rapid, humbled U.S. initiative to rebuild ties with allies, particularly with the EU and NATO. Ironically, current U.S. policies have had the collateral effect of chastening Europe by revealing its weakness in the absence of U.S. leadership and support. In the wake of a change in administrations in Washington, the U.S. would find more-than-willing partners eager to repair the recent damage to the most important strategic relationship in modern history. In old Broadway terms, the United States would go, overnight, from "Damn Yankees" to "Hello Dolly!"

Even so, the risks to the EU, and thus to us, will remain grave. We cannot sacrifice our populations; China can and will. The EU is going to be the battleground for a new struggle for hegemony. Beijing's Belt and Road Initiative has aimed at girdling the West with client states in deep thrall to China. Now, in the wake of a pandemic Beijing fostered, China sees the opportunity to leap directly into the West's heartland—and President Xi is willing to pay dearly to establish an unassailable presence in key EU states: These are the new Opium Wars, with the role of aggressor reversed.

We must not lose.



RALPH PETERS is the author of thirty-four books, including works on strategy and security affairs, as well as best-selling, prize-winning novels. He has published more than a thousand columns, articles, and essays here and abroad. As a U.S. Army enlisted man and career officer, he served in Infantry and military intelligence units before becoming a foreign area officer for the dying Soviet Union and the new Russia. As a soldier, journalist, and researcher, he has experience in more than seventy countries, covering various wars and trouble spots. His historical fiction won the American Library Association's Boyd Award for Literary Excellence an unprecedented three times and also received the Herodotus Award and the Hammett Prize. Additionally, he was the 2015 recipient of the Goodpaster Award, presented each year to a distinguished American soldier-scholar. In 2017, he was selected for the U.S. Army's Officer Candidate School Hall of Fame.

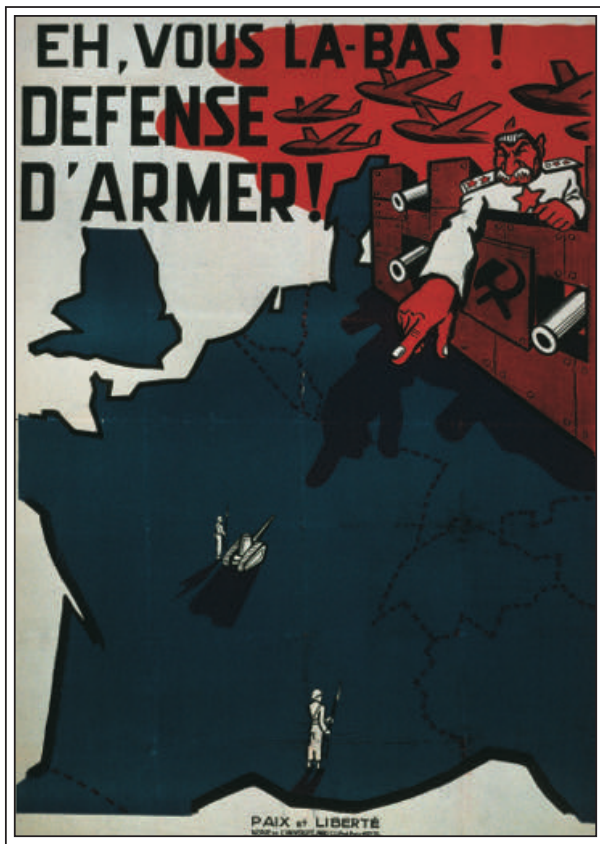


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The Status of the EU: A Frustrated Empire Built on the Wrong Assumption

By Jakub Grygiel

As the Preamble to the 1957 Treaty of Rome stated, the purpose of the then European Economic Community was to “lay the foundations of an ever-closer union” among Europeans. This phrase became interpreted as a call for a progressively tighter political merger of the member states, with the European Union as the latest embodiment of this purpose. The problem with this progressive vision, however, is twofold: first, it is never fully achieved as the final objective remains always on the horizon and, second, it is grounded in the belief that a common market can create a unified polity. As a result, the EU is always in trouble because it is a perennially unfinished product built on weak foundations. It is a frustrated empire.

The various crises of recent months—Brexit, continued Chinese economic predation, and the surprising pandemic—only exacerbated these fundamental problems of the EU. Brexit, driven in part by the British unwillingness to continue toward a misty “ever-closer union,” has shaken the faith of European elites in the historical inevitability of this European project. Moreover, it has altered the balance of power inside the EU, removing a key ballast in the delicate dynamics of European politics: Germany is much more difficult to check now. At the same time, many European countries, fiscally constrained by the rules of the eurozone, have grown more dependent on Chinese investment, while across the continent China has become one of the top economic partners (for Germany it is the number one trading partner). Finally, the pandemic has devastated most economies, with a particularly dramatic effect in those states, such as Italy, that had never recovered from the 2008 economic crisis and are at risk of defaulting on their debt. The collapse of the Italian economy, which is ten times larger than that of Greece, would most likely result in an “Italexit” and end the European Union.

These challenges are compounded by the continued presence of external threats (Russia in the east and the south, the migration crisis from North Africa) and domestic tensions (high unemployment in the Mediterranean countries, social tensions with immigrants). There are no easy solutions to these problems, of course. But the European political elites adopt the same strategy for all of them: more union and more economic centralization. That is, they use every crisis to take another step toward that “ever-closer union” built on monetary and, increasingly, fiscal unity.

The boldest move was in response to the economic mess caused by the pandemic. EU leaders agreed to a relatively modest relief package backed by bonds guaranteed, for the first time, by the Union as a whole rather than individual countries. This allows countries like Italy to get funds at a considerably lower rate, and diminishes the risk of their default. The relief package is more relevant, therefore, for how it is financed than for its size—another sign that EU leaders use economic tools for their political goal of creating a supra-national EU. It’s all about politics, not economics: the package will do little to help the beleaguered economy of

Italy but it will advance surreptitiously the establishment of a central EU authority in control of not just the monetary but also fiscal policies of states.

Membership in the eurozone means already that states, such as Italy, have no control over monetary policies (e.g., they cannot print money and devalue their currencies in time of massive economic downturns) and are constrained in their fiscal behavior (e.g., they are not supposed to exceed certain deficit-to-GDP ratios). But the goal has always been to remove completely fiscal decisions from the national governments and allow a central EU body to make these decisions. Bonds guaranteed by the EU as a whole will lead naturally to the next step: an EU-wide tax of some sort and a growing fiscal power of the Bruxelles to the detriment of individual capitals. National parliaments and leaders, so the belief goes, cannot be trusted with fiscal policies for their own countries, and it is safer to let experts at the EU level make these decisions for the good of the Union as a whole. So much for national democracies.

Beyond the disregard for democratic legitimacy, such a vision is grounded in a mistaken set of assumptions suggesting that economic unity will create a unified demos. But the same way that a joint checking account does not create a marriage, a centralized fiscal and monetary apparatus will establish no European nation and polity. The line of causation behind the EU project is simply wrong. Political cohesion arises out of national solidarity and a common sense of purpose, not out of sharing the same coin or having a centralized tax authority.

None of the recent crises, therefore, has altered the EU political elites' progressive vision or their faith in the transformative power of a Europe-wide monetary and fiscal authority. The solution to the current challenges creates conditions that guarantee internal crises down the line. The EU is thus a frustrated empire: under pressure from within and from without, governed by political leaders insouciant about the democratic illegitimacy of their decisions, unable to secure their own borders and stabilize their immediate neighborhood, and in constant search of greater control over their member states. The outcome is that there will be growing tensions between the EU apparatus and its member states (or at least some national leaders eager to preserve political legitimacy and national freedom). The euro will not collapse anytime soon and the EU will continue to muddle through, but its underlying problems remain unaddressed. The frustrations of the EU are structural, stemming out of the very nature of this political entity, and are not just passing tribulations tied to the geopolitical ups and downs of Eurasia.



JAKUB GRYGIEL is an associate professor at the Catholic University of America (Washington, DC). In 2017–2018 he was a senior adviser in the Office of Policy Planning at the Department of State. Previously, he was a senior fellow at the Center for European Policy Analysis and on the faculty of SAIS-Johns Hopkins University in Washington, DC. He is the author of *Return of the Barbarians* (Cambridge University Press, 2018), *Great Powers and Geopolitical Change* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), and co-author with Wess Mitchell of *The Unquiet Frontier* (Princeton University Press, 2016). His writings have appeared in *Foreign Affairs*, *The American Interest*, *Security Studies*, *Journal of Strategic Studies*, *The National Interest*, *Claremont Review of Books*, *Orbis*, *Commentary*, and *Parameters*, as well as several U.S. and foreign newspapers. He earned a PhD, MA, and an MPA from Princeton University, and a BSFS *Summa Cum Laude* from Georgetown University.



By Andrew Roberts

Its proponents argue that it still has the task of finding a way between what it has always seen as the twin evils of America's free market, free enterprise Capitalism, and its mirror-image, which was once the state capitalism of the Soviet Union and is now the version of crony capitalism presided over by the Communist Party of China. Yet is that true any longer, even if it ever was?

Yet when it comes to standing up to China, the EU puts out brave joint communiques about how much it deplores the extinguishing of democracy in Hong Kong, and then fails to do anything about the larger countries, such as Germany, entirely undermining that stance. Only last month Germany removed the flag of Taiwan from its foreign ministry's website, in the latest example of that country's craven kow-towing to Beijing:

As with the refugee immigration crisis earlier, Brussels tried to involve itself, finger-wagging against middle-European countries who did not want to admit mass, largely Muslim, groups of immigrants, but was ultimately powerless to impose its will. Similarly, when the EU's twenty-seven ambassadors wrote an opinion piece which had one clause—not even a whole sentence—implying that the virus had started in China, the EU's Beijing office permitted it to be edited out.

Internally, the EU has been in severe constitutional crisis since the German Constitutional Court, sitting in Karlsruhe, recently challenged a legal decision originally made in 2018 by the European Court of Justice (ECJ) to legitimise the European Central Bank's bond-buying program. This is a direct threat to the independence of

the ECB, and the new president of the Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, has raised the possibility of taking infringement proceedings against Germany. This would mean that that country would be forced by the ECJ to override its own Constitutional Court, which is independent of the German Government, over an issue for which it was not responsible. No one can envisage Angela Merkel doing any such thing anytime soon, yet if the ECJ is not sovereign over EU law, the entire European project is grounded.

In the present negotiations over the €750 billion post-Covid bailout, the so-called “Frugal Four” countries—Sweden, the Netherlands, Denmark, and Austria—want the fund to be smaller and more of the cash to be handed out as loans rather than grants, with strings attached to ensure that countries like Italy and Spain account for it properly. Although there will be a compromise, as there always is in the EU after enough negotiation and horse-dealing, the Four (who would have been a Frugal Five if Britain had not left) have a completely different attitude towards further economic integration than the other twenty-three countries.

Although Brussels will attempt to bully Britain into giving up its rights over fishing in British waters and protecting British industries now that she has left the EU, rather than taking the more sensible route in these recessionary times of giving Britain a free-trade deal, Boris Johnson has made it clear that we will trade on World Trade Organization terms instead, and look to America for a free-trade deal. With the EU moribund, if not on life-support, the United States has never had a better opportunity to move decisively in support of her historic ally and against her historic, albeit covert, antagonist.

POLL: How have Brexit, the China challenge, COVID-19, and the global lockdown affected the European Union?

- ☐ The EU showed unity and cooperation, and is stronger than ever.
- ☐ The EU has at least weathered these crises far better than has the U.S.
- ☐ These challenges call into question the very ability of the EU to continue in its present form.
- ☐ The EU is now de facto a German union.
- ☐ The EU will dissolve in the next few years.



ANDREW ROBERTS read Modern History at Caius College, Cambridge, from where he is a PhD. He has written *Salisbury: Victorian Titan* (which won the Wolfson Prize), *Masters and Commanders* (International Churchill Society Book Award), *The Storm of War: A New History of the Second World War* (British Army Military Book of the Year Award), *Napoleon the Great* (Grand

Prix of the Fondation Napoléon and *The Los Angeles Times* Biography Prize), *Churchill: Walking with Destiny* (Council on Foreign Relations Arthur Ross Prize), and *Leadership in War: Essential Lessons from Those Who Made History*. He is the Roger & Martha Mertz Visiting Research Fellow at the Hoover Institution at Stanford, the Lehrman Institute Distinguished Lecturer at the New York Historical Society, a Visiting Professor at the Department of War Studies at King's College London, and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature and the Royal Historical Society. He lives in London.

Discussion Questions

1. What will the EU do, if anything, about China's role in the pandemic and its current mercantile policies?
2. Have the pandemic and China challenge helped to strengthen U.S./EU ties or weakened them?
3. Why do so many EU/NATO countries object to meeting their military spending promises?
4. How might EU evolve in the next few years?

Suggestions for Further Reading

- “Assessing the Impact of the UK’s Withdrawal from the EU on Regions and Cities in EU27,” European Committee of the Regions, 2018. <https://cor.europa.eu/Documents/Migrated/news/impact-brexit.pdf>
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IN THE NEXT ISSUE

American Troop Deployments in Europe

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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