



Eckhard Fahlbusch

Homo progressivus –
The determined resistance

Or: How we can liberate ourselves from an arbitrary system and Donald Trump's poor style, as well as from autocrats and right-wing populists

Eckhard Fahlbusch Verlag

A polemic
against the US President Donald Trump,
his political power and policies, as well as autocrats
and right-wing populists across the world

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Or: / How we can liberate ourselves from an arbitrary system and Donald Trump's poor style, as well as from autocrats and right-wing populists/

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Abraham Lincoln said:

“‘And this, too, shall pass away.’

How much it expresses!

How chastening in the hour of pride.

How consoling in the depths of affliction!

‘And this, too, shall pass away.’”

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A lost election and an ill-gotten victory

On May 31, 1969 Hillary Diane Rodham said:

“I find myself in a familiar position, that of reacting, something that our generation has been doing for quite a while now. We're not in the positions yet of leadership and power, but we do have that indispensable element of criticizing and constructive protest. (...) for too long our leaders have viewed politics as the art of the possible. And the challenge now is to practice politics as the art of making what appears to be impossible possible.”



The speech given by Hillary Diane Rodham on May 31, 1969 at the Wellesley College graduation ceremony spoke of integrity, respect and the mutual confidence among people. In 2016 Hillary Clinton faced her greatest political challenge. In order to defeat Donald Trump in the race for the American presidency in 2016, she had to undergo the **metamorphosis from *Homo sapiens*** that we all wanted. Going into the election she had to take with her and embody the desire to change society, improve relationships between people and scrutinize institutions that she carried with her on to the stage at Wellesley College 47 years ago. It was also because of this that Hillary Clinton lost the election; she underestimated the anti-establishment movement in Washington. In order to wipe out the establishment in Washington, many voters wanted to show that the power is in the people – even the power to mess things up, something that which helped Trump to victory. The election was decided by frustrated citizens in states away from the east and west coasts and in mainly rural areas. Areas where the USA is more racist, more violent and anti-progressive – like the new President and his entourage.

How did it come to pass that Donald Trump became the 45th President of the United States? The reasons in detail:

- Trump’s voters hid the truth and were taken in by the dumb slogans and obvious lies of a dangerous populist,
- Hillary Clinton’s weaknesses and errors that allowed voters to drift to the right. There was also a general trend that was more *against* Clinton than it was *for* Trump,
- The American electoral system which counts the votes of the Electoral College and not the individual votes of the electorate. Hillary Clinton received almost three million more votes than her opponent but lost the election anyway. The electoral system had already shunted George W. Bush into the White House in 2000 and not the Democrat Al Gore, who received half a million more votes than the Republican,
- Cyber attacks and *fake news*, which the cunning power of Donald Trump used to dangerously manipulate the American people, and
- Vladimir Putin, Donald Trump’s election campaigner. In a report published on January 6, 2017, the security services of the CIA, NSA and FBI proved that the Russian President Vladimir Putin had conducted an “influence campaign” through hacker attacks in order to leverage Trump to electoral success. This potentially scandalous accusation was intensified by the initial denial of contact between Moscow and the former National Security Advisor Michael Flynn and Attorney General Jeff Sessions – this was even before the US election. At the time, Sessions was still an election campaigner for Trump.



One day after his inauguration, millions of people around the world took to the streets to protest against Donald Trump. In Washington alone there were at least 500,000 people, which is more than attended the official inauguration the day before. The protests focused on misogyny, violence, racism, homophobia and religious intolerance, among other things.

American artists express their views and are called upon

During the George W. Bush era, Robert Redford said that he had never experienced such dark times in his entire life. Now times have become even darker for the USA and for the world. American artists are also being called upon more than ever to defend a crumbling democracy against the power of Donald Trump.



Some American artists who could shine a light on society!

More and more artists must now work together to mobilize society and even the frustrated citizens in the country's heartland. Once that finally happens, all Americans will have the chance to fathom the real reasons for their dissension.

In March 2017 Scarlett Johansson said:

“The majority of Americans, myself included, did not expect this election result. It was devastating. But now we have to look to the future. Our country has faced some dramatic challenges in the past. Although we now have a government with no political experience, perhaps it can bring different sections of our society together again. Maybe we have become complacent. Maybe, this is an opportunity for us to overcome our differences and work together, be it out of frustration or fear. Maybe the election will be a positive thing that reunites a nation. I won't say that the next four years will be easy. We will definitely have to face some tough challenges and a harsh winter. But if we engage with it wisely, we can use it as an opportunity for change. I believe that a person can make big changes in their surroundings. I can imagine becoming more involved in politics.”



Before the election, Bruce Springsteen said:

“Donald Trump is such a flagrant, toxic narcissist that he wants to take down the entire democratic system with him if he goes. He’s such an unreflective person. He simply has no sense of decency, no sense of responsibility about him. The words that he’s been using over the past several weeks really are an attack on the entire democratic process. He’s going to make as big a mess as he can.”

Before the inauguration, Barbra Streisand said:

“Clueless, Reckless, Graceless, Mindless and Heartless: Our President Elect. I cannot respect a racist, xenophobic sexist who puts us all at risk with his behavior. It is our right and our duty to defend our freedoms and to help our fellow citizens. The rest of us must remain vigilant. Write your representatives and senators. Make donations to groups that fight for equal rights, civil rights, freedom of the press, climate change measures, gun control regulation and healthcare mandates. Protest. Speak-up. Help others.”

After the inauguration, Bruce Springsteen said:

our hearts and spirits are with the hundreds of thousands of women and men that marched on the streets to protest against hate and division, and in support of tolerance, inclusion, reproductive rights, civil rights, racial justice, L.G.B.T.Q. rights, the environment, wage equality, gender equality, health care, and immigrant rights. We stand together with you. We are the new American resistance.”



Before the inauguration, Meryl Streep said:

“This instinct to humiliate, when it’s modeled by someone in the public platform, by someone powerful, it filters down into everybody’s life. And it kind of gives permission for other people to do the same thing. Disrespect invites disrespect. Violence incites violence. When the powerful use their position to bully others, we all lose. This brings me to the press: we need the principled press to hold power to account, to call them on the carpet for every outrage! That’s why our founders enshrined the press and its freedoms in our constitution.”

Before the inauguration, George Clooney said:

“I didn’t vote for him, I don’t support him, I don’t think he’s the right choice. At this moment in our lives we have to hope that he doesn’t destroy everything.”

After the inauguration, Meryl Streep said:

“If we live through this precarious moment, if his catastrophic instinct to retaliate doesn’t lead us to nuclear winter, we will have much to thank our President for. He will have woken us up to how fragile freedom is.”



Donald Trump – The great disaster

After Donald Trump's alarming maiden speech and first few months in the White House, the fear is that he will continue on his rampage as an uncontrollable, clumsy fool. The hope of a transformation to an appropriate presidential office quickly disappeared into thin air. And his closest advisors serve to fan the flames thanks to the unexpected abundance of power and their own lack of inhibitions, or they disqualify themselves through ignorance, inability and dishonesty. Any possible resistance from individual members of the government against the delusional, wannabe emperor can be nipped in the bud by simply replacing the secretaries and agency heads who are not loyal to the party line. The division of powers and freedom of the press set out in the Constitution have already come under fire from the White House, under whose roof chaos reigns.

Donald Trump conducts himself like a patriarch. He sees the USA as his company which he operates along with those whispering in his ear and his backers, and where he can rule as he pleases. Concepts such as logic, reason and the ability to compromise appear to be foreign to him. This man and the majority of the newly sworn in or confirmed government officials endanger the character of the Republican party in an existential way as well as democracy in the USA as a whole. These catastrophic effects will be intensified if the majority of the Republican representatives of Congress and in the Senate make an agreement or deal with Trump when adopting laws and regulations.



Stephen Bannon – The puppet-master

The best gamblers and cleverest card sharks always have a Joker in their pocket and an Ace up their sleeves. However, Stephen Bannon is neither an Ace nor a Joker, but rather an obsessive psychopath like the one embodied by the actor Heath Ledger.



But unfortunately Stephen Bannon is no comedy figure from a Batman movie, but rather a real-life, radical and dangerous soldier who either operates in the shadows or publicly spouts his poison. He likes it when others label him as the Prince of Darkness, it showcases his satanic traits.

Stephen Bannon said: *“Darkness is good! It only helps us when they get it wrong. When they are blind to who we are and what we are doing. That is real power”*. And the President listens to him very carefully. *“Nothing in the USA will remain as it is”*, said Bannon. He is waging war against the media. He attacks representatives, senators and judges who do not dance to his tune. Trump and Bannon fight the Washington elite shoulder to shoulder and declare the “Establishment” to be a common enemy. *“We are going to drain the swamp”*, declared Donald Trump in his inaugural speech.

Stephen Bannon is a right-wing militant, in his mind’s eye a broken subversive who wants to overthrow the state and bring down the political establishment. It is terrifying and deeply concerning that a President would make such a sinister person his Chief Strategist and even go so far as to give him a seat on the National Security Council. After the resignation of Michael Flynn, his National Security Advisor, Trump removed his watch dog from the Security Council on April 5, 2017. This means that Bannon can place his entire focus on wreaking havoc on US domestic policy. As the Chief Strategist he still has the ear of the US President.

Donald Trump and his chamber of horrors

This is what Donald Trump's statement to the political establishment looks like. The cabinet consists of billionaires, ex-Generals, climate skeptics and homophobes, all with little experience in politics. With this line-up and delusions of grandeur at the forefront in the minds of the Trump team, no-one can say later: *We didn't see it coming!*

Rex Tillerson, former CEO of Exxon Mobil, the world's largest energy firm, is the new Secretary of State. He has personal contacts to Vladimir Putin.

Rick Perry, Secretary of Energy. The former Governor of Texas is regarded as a supporter of the oil industry and thinks that climate change is a myth.

Scott Pruitt, former Chief Prosecutor for Oklahoma, is now the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) He promotes the use of fossil fuels and disputes that humans are responsible for climate change.

Ryan Zinke is responsible for the national parks in his role as Secretary of the Interior. He wants to relax environmental requirements, allow more oil drilling and promote coal mining.

Jeff Sessions, Attorney General, is opposed to same-sex marriage, a liberal abortion law and free trade agreements. When it comes to immigration policies, even the Republicans see him as radical.

James Mattis, Secretary of Defense, is opposed to a nuclear deal with Iran and was a General in the Iraq war. His nickname is "Mad Dog".

Steven Mnuchin, Secretary of the Treasury, worked for Goldman Sachs for 17 years. A critic of the banking regulations introduced after the financial crisis.

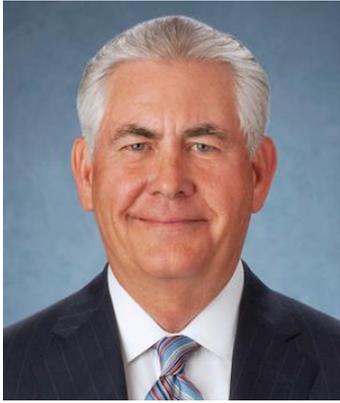
Wilbur Ross, Secretary of Commerce, invested in the coal and oil industries. A billionaire who takes over faltering companies so that he can sell them on at a profit.

John Kelly, Ex-General and new *Border Protection* Secretary, often described as a "border hawk". Most recently he was in charge of Guantanamo Bay.

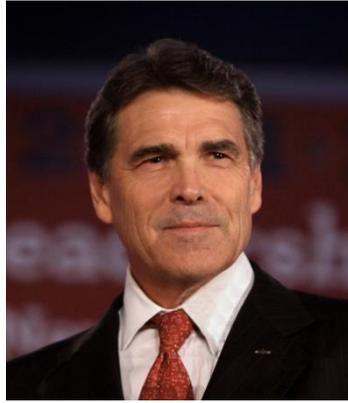
Tom Price, Secretary of Health and Human Services, is opposed to *Obamacare* and is against abortion. He said that the introduction of gay marriage was a "sad day for marriage".

Ben Carson, Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, compares homosexuality to child abuse and refers to the kidnapped slaves brought to the USA centuries ago as "immigrants".

Mike Pompeo, the new Director of the CIA, criticized the closing of illegal CIA prisons and is campaigning for the expansion of the US government's surveillance practices.



State - Rex Tillerson



Energy - Rick Perry



Environment - Scott Pruitt



Interior - Ryan Zinke



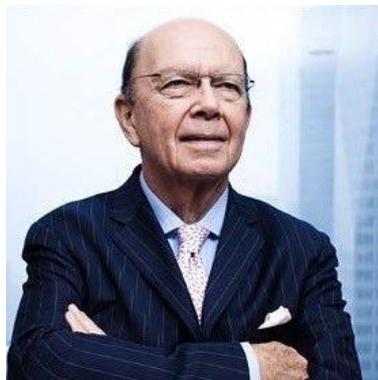
Attorney General - Jeff Sessions



Defense - James Mattis



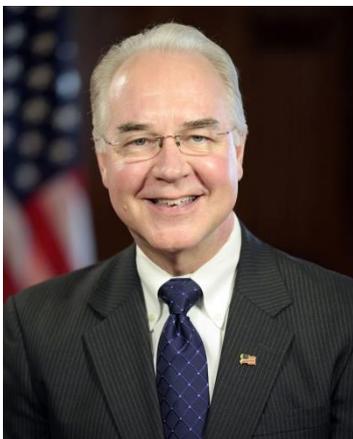
Treasury - Steven Mnuchin



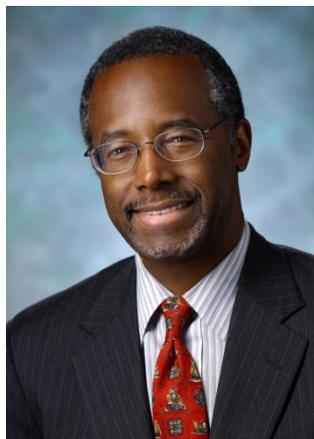
Commerce - Wilbur Ross



Homeland Security - John Kelly



Health - Tom Price



Housing - Ben Carson



CIA - Mike Pompeo

Bertolt Brecht wrote in “The Threepenny Opera”

“There are some who are in darkness

And the others are in light.

And you see the ones in brightness

Those in darkness drop from sight.”



In the future, the White House wants to keep its visitor book secret. This means that the public will no longer know which activists, lobbyists or political donors have direct access to the President or his staff. The White House communications director, Mike Dubke, told the New York Times and other media outlets on April 15, 2017 that the list is being withheld due to “the grave national security risks and privacy concerns of the hundreds of thousands of visitors annually”.

This is Donald Trump’s latest attempt at preventing further scrutiny into his activities. It also goes hand in hand with the US President’s continued refusal to publish his most recent tax returns, among other things. These attempts at a blackout are a dramatic departure from his predecessor Barack Obama. By Presidential Directive, the visitor logs should only be made public five years after he leaves office. In doing this, he has once again clearly rejected the principle of transparent politics in an open and democratic society. It’s a good thing that a group of civil rights organizations have already filed a suit against the new government regarding the disclosure of logs.

Salil Shetty said:

“The world in 2016 became a darker and more unstable place. On the political stage, perhaps the most prominent of many seismic events was the election of Donald Trump. During his election campaign, Trump has already pledged a large-scale roll back of established civil liberties. Trump’s poisonous campaign rhetoric exemplifies a global trend towards angrier and more divisive politics. This dangerous attack on human rights stems from politicians who pin the blame on ‘others’ for the grievances of the electorate. Hateful, divisive and dehumanizing rhetoric serves to unleash the darkest instincts of human nature. This clears the way for discrimination and hate crimes.”



The Trump system is frightening, with its totalitarian power demands, the labeling of the media stalwarts as “traitors” and enemies of the American people, and where unconditional loyalty counts for more than expertise and political foresight. But it’s not so frightening that we have to hide under the bed covers. The threats from this system are certainly great. But they are not so great that we stop resisting and stop living up to our responsibilities.

Back to square one: An appeal to reason and decency!

Everyone deserves a second chance. Even Donald Trump! But only if he is willing to change. However, Trump shouldn't see a second chance as an advance payment, instead it must be "earned" through changing his policies to reflect reason and decency. He must show that through his position in the most powerful office in the world, he can take on and carry the appropriate responsibility for everyone in the world. If he allows himself to be changed through the influences of the appropriate advisors and fellow party members, then the radical bully could turn into a solution-orientated and successful world politician!



Trump's Secretary of State already seems to be one step ahead of him in making the necessary changes. In April 2017 when visiting a memorial for Nazi crimes in Italy, Rex Tillerson said: *"We rededicate ourselves to holding to account any and all who commit crimes against the innocents anywhere in the world"*. So far so good. Now Donald Trump should follow suit. It would appear that the office and the forces of geopolitics could still have a positive influence on him, to a certain extent. His discovery that NATO is an important alliance, his changing relationship with Russia and Vladimir Putin, and a more prudent cooperation with China on trade issues are all indications of what might be possible.

Even during his first overseas visit that took him to the Middle East, the Vatican, NATO headquarters and the G7 summit showed that he is hopeless. Now he has withdrawn from the world Climate Agreement, we are left wondering if he has earned a second chance! **The following scenarios will present what has already happened, what could happen in the future and what should happen in order to prevent it from happening!**

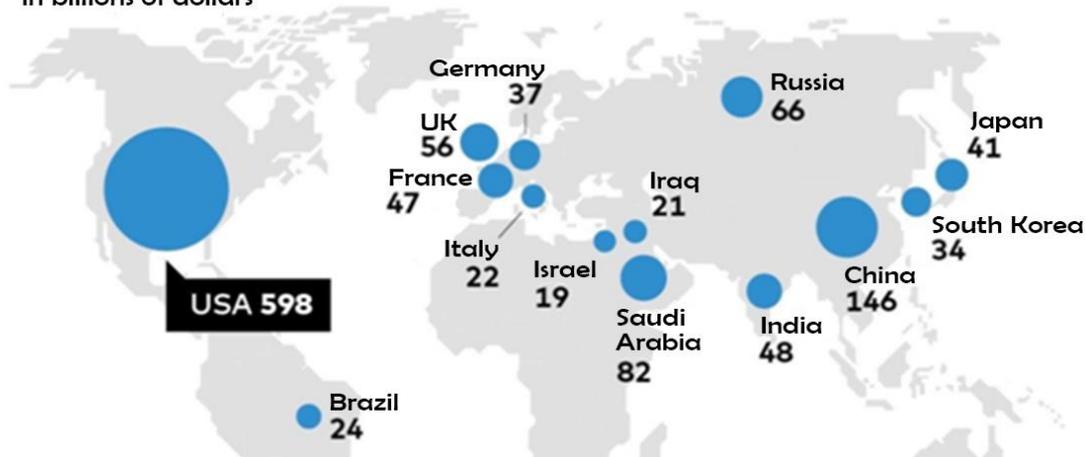
Is America in such a terrible state that it has to be saved by a psychopath?

President Trump deluded his compatriots into thinking that the state of the USA's power in the world was at rock bottom and only he could "make it great again" and bring it up to where it belongs: In first place. The facts tell a different story both in economic and military terms:

- In 2015, the USA's nominal gross domestic product (GDP) was around 18 trillion US dollars. The EU followed closely with over 17 trillion dollars. For the same year, China's GDP was a solid 11 trillion dollars and Russia's just 1.3 trillion. The unemployment rate in the USA was halved from ten percent to five percent during Barack Obama's term in office. The USA is still the world's largest economy.
- In 2017 American companies accounted for over 50% of all companies from around the world listed on the stock exchange.
- Military expenditure in the USA in 2015 was 598 billion dollars. The EU member states followed with a combined total of 280 billion dollars. In China military expenditure was 146 billion in the same year, and in Russia it was 66 billion.

State weapons budgets

in billions of dollars



Trump's target of protectionist isolation (if it really takes place) will only serve to shake not just the foundations of America's economy, but will also put the entire global trading system at risk. In particular through exclusive national initiatives and the introduction of mutual punitive tariffs.



There is also the global threat of the largest rearmament since the Cold War. It is no longer easy to distinguish where friends and enemies stand or flee. Instead of investing more and more funds into military equipment to build them up and threaten, the focus should return to crisis prevention and crisis management as well as development aid. The resources needed should be topped up as the primary security investments and then included in the defense budget calculations. Instead of bolstering the NATO military even further, Trump should increase his country's commitment and financial support for the United Nations so it becomes more influential and powerful.

But Trump does exactly the opposite: He puts the USA's membership of the United Nations in jeopardy and on February 27, 2017, in front of the assembled governors of the federal states at a White House ceremony, he said: *"We have to start winning wars again!"* and promised the largest military upgrade in American history. The new US President wants to increase the military budget by 54 billion US dollars in 2017. This is 18 billion dollars more than the entire 2016 defense budget for Germany, and 12 billion dollars less than Russia's entire military expenditure in 2015. It is the largest budget increase for the military in American history. The enormous increase in the US military budget should be financed through savings in other budget items: from development aid to environmental protection through to social services such as food vouchers for the poor. Even cuts to unemployment assistance, rental subsidies for poor families and the abolition of the *Obamacare* healthcare reform law are being considered. Trump's credo is: *"The government must learn to tighten*

its belt". Donald Trump wants to lead us into a world where the power of individuals is more important than social responsibility of the state. A world in which strengthening the military and spreading military violence are more important than implementing essential environmental and climate protection measures. This may be the world of Donald Trump. But we should not make it our own.



This kind of politics should expect to meet a strong headwind!

We cannot let ourselves be lulled into complacency by the presidential style exhibited by Donald Trump in his inaugural speech before the US Congress on February 28, 2017. It was actually a speech written by a ghost writer that was tailored to the audience in the Congress and read off a teleprompter. So as not to snub the American people and the members of Congress, Trump had no choice but to leave his usual posturing and insults at home on this occasion. He largely succeeded in adopting a tone that gave him a statesman-like appearance without the bickering. The content however remained tough and left the audience in no doubt that he will push through his program, no matter what the cost. Nancy Pelosi, the leader of the Democrats in the House of Representatives, summed up Trump's speech: *"The President's speech was utterly disconnected from the cruel reality of his conduct"*. Donald Trump and his strategists remain a stress test for the observance of international agreements and arms control treaties, the US system of "checks and balances" and the democratic DNA that is hopefully deeply rooted in American society.

Climate buddies: The great Trumputin team

The US government under the leadership of Barack Obama signed the Paris Climate Agreement in September 2016 along with China. At the beginning of June 2017 US President Trump withdrew from it with a bang. The nationalist hardliners of Steve Bannon and Scott Pruitt are prevailing against the rational faction of Rex Tillerson. Instead of working against climate change, more coal should be mined and new oil fields drilled. Donald Trump has also stated that he wants to subsidize oil production in the USA through fracking and bring the industry back to life.

According to Trump, the idea that climate change is caused by humans is a Chinese invention. His Executive Order from March 28, 2017 speaks volumes. This Executive Order and his withdrawal from the world Climate Agreement showed Trump's showcase politics once more and demonstrated how he is stuck in the coalfields and caught up in the past. While those on the coast have long been aware of how important renewable energies are, there those in between that still hang on to the coat tails that want to destroy climate protection. We can only hope that this Executive Order attracts legal action and will be repealed. And that the fossil that is the US president, the parties involved in protecting the climate as well as those who want to, will unite stronger and faster in order to compete against the coal, oil and gas barons.

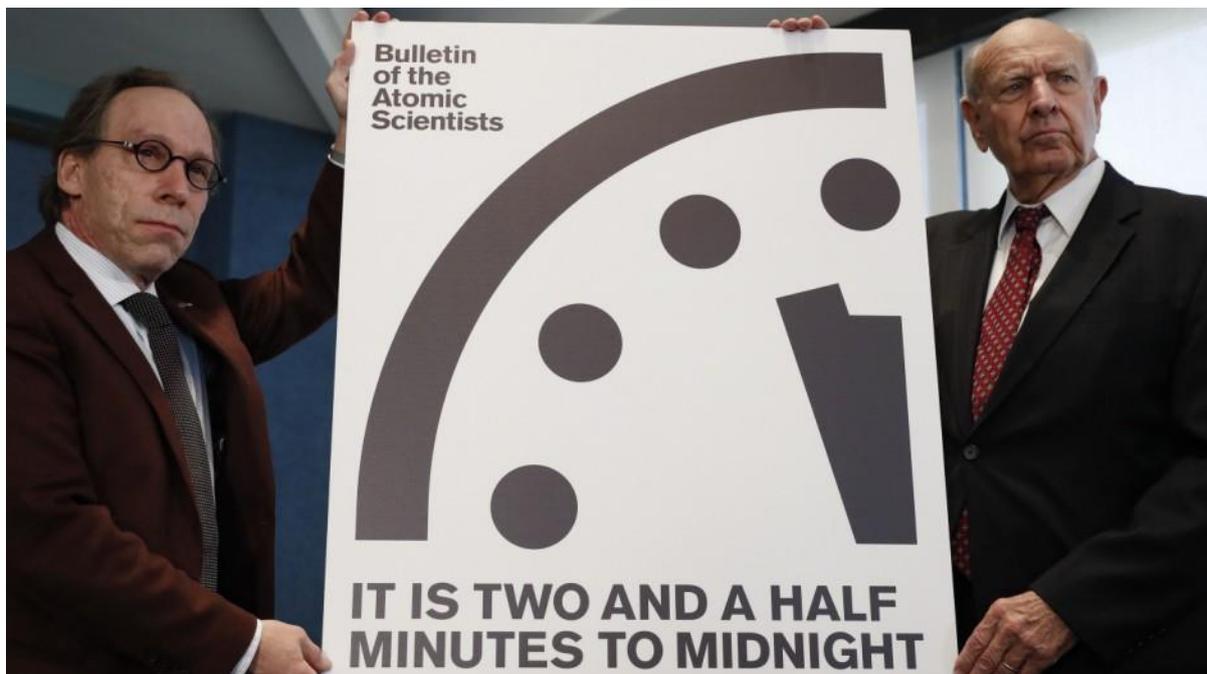
The development and implementation of renewable energies needs to be accelerated across the globe. Otherwise, Vladimir Putin will be gloating thanks to the rich abundance of raw materials in the permafrost in Siberia which will melt faster and release the natural resources within. That the future of *Homo sapiens* melts down to the release of billions and billions of cubic meters of methane, is only his secondary interest. As first and foremost, Putin is Russian. The same is true for him: **"Russia First"**.



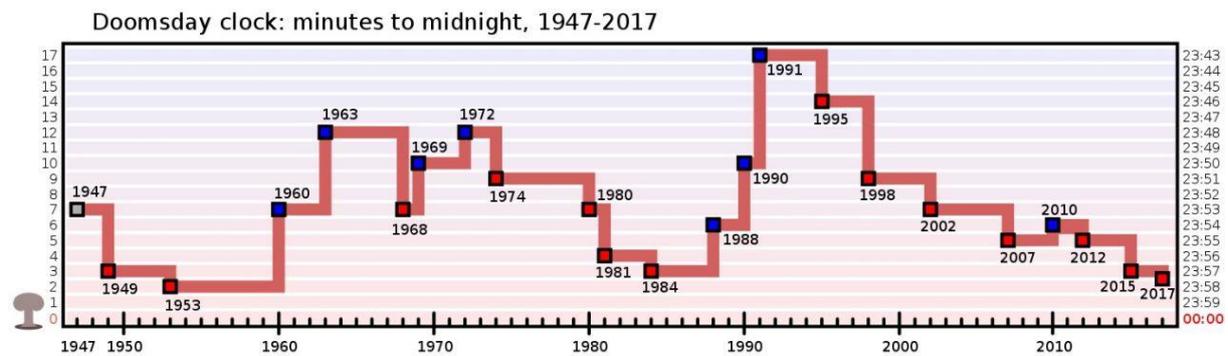
Siberia melts and the world drowns!

Counter the apocalypse with atomic energy and greenhouse gases

Since 1947, researchers have published a symbolic Doomsday Clock in the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*. The world-renowned scientists who move the hands of this clock back and forwards, see the end of World as closer than ever before. Since January 26, 2017 the hands of the clock have stood at two and a half minutes to twelve. The Doomsday Clock is supposed to illustrate how close humanity is to the end of the world. The reason for moving the clock forwards is the “rise in strident nationalism, a darkening global security landscape and a growing disregard for scientific expertise.” A special emphasis was placed on Donald Trump’s election as US President. During the election campaign and at his inauguration, Trump made alarming comments regarding the use and proliferation of nuclear weapons and questioned scientific findings on climate change.



In its entire seventy-year history, the clock has only stood so close to an apocalypse once before: In 1953 it stood at two minutes to twelve. The Soviet Union had detonated the first hydrogen bomb and triggered an arms race in the Cold War.



Donald Trump triumphed with what can at the very least be referred to as immoral election campaign methods, and on January 20, 2017 he took power. What he has done since then has kept us busy and shunted us from one state of helplessness to the next. Trump has brought the edge of the abyss even closer through his nuclear boost and energetic role reversal. Where will the hands of the clock stand if Trump implements his atomic plans and the Russians and Chinese follow suit?

Donald Trump fuels climate change and accelerates the nuclear arms race. He ignores scientists and continues to disregard their reasoning. His withdrawal from the world Climate Agreement without considering the losses the entire world must suffer as a result. Trump wields the ax of “America First” and his devil-may-care attitude and threatens our future and the continued existence of humanity.

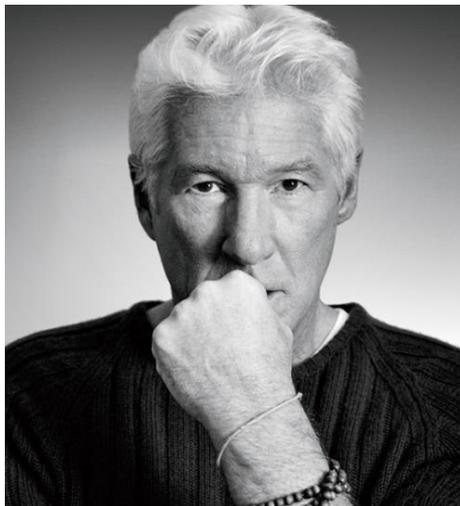
Donald tramples on the Constitution

If the entire judicial system strictly adheres to the Constitution, particularly when handling Trump’s entry ban for people from seven Muslim countries (Iraq, Iran, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen), it will show that just one week after his inauguration he was not publicly effective in the *Oval Office*. At the beginning of February 2017, after several federal judges and court of appeal declared the Executive Order as unconstitutional and suspended it, Trump drew up a new “softened” entry ban on March 6, 2017. This new ban excluded Iraq and should enter into force after 10 days (advance notice). This 2nd attempt failed after just

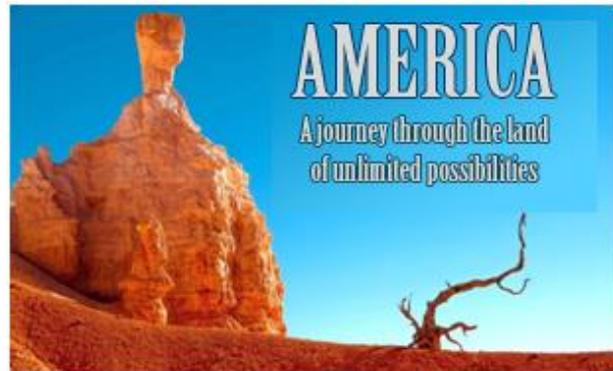
a few hours in force on March 16, 2017 thanks to the veto of US federal judge Derrick Watson from Hawaii. The dispute will now probably be heard at the highest US court (*Supreme Court*). Now that the US Senate confirmed Trump's preferred conservative candidate, Judge Neil Gorsuch, as a Supreme Court judge on April 7, 2017, the Supreme Court is now dominated by a Republican majority. On February 8, 2017, the Senate confirmed the ultra-conservative hard-liner and immigration opponent Jeff Sessions as Attorney General. And he was only too happy to attach himself to the discriminatory, sweeping judgments of his boss: *"We are letting potential terrorists into the country with refugees from Arab countries"*:

Richard Gere said:

"The most horrible thing Trump has done is conflate the terms refuge and terrorist. It means the same thing in the U.S. now. A refugee used to be someone who you had empathy for, who you wanted to help and give refuge to. Now we're afraid of them. The biggest crime of all is making these two terms one. The number of hate crimes in the USA went up enormously. Hate breeds fear. And that fear causes us to do really terrible things. We have to really understand what he and this conservative movement has done to the world."



The judicial system has a major influence on whether America limits its opportunities through xenophobic, anti-Islam, protectionist and anti-social trends, or if it remains the land of unlimited possibilities for everyone.



Someone intends to build a wall – with a boomerang effect

Donald Trump wants to build a 3144 km long, impenetrable wall along the border to Mexico, complete with watch towers and sensor fields. And absurdly the Mexicans should pay for it. It's like the former GDR giving the Federal Republic of Germany an invoice in 1961 for the building of the Berlin Wall. "Nobody has any intention of building a wall" said Head of State of the GDR, Walter Ulbricht, in 1961. Sometimes history repeats itself – this time hopefully it is an inverse repetition. It is a good thing that the majority of the Republican Party think that the wall cannot be financed, and that Mexico refuses to pay the costs. The budget of around a trillion dollars was passed by both chambers of the US Congress at the end of April 2017. It includes no funds for Trump's prestigious project. Postponed is not abandoned, hollers the tycoon.

Before the great climate change denier builds an insurmountable wall on the Mexican border according to his will, we suggest he watches the movie *The Day After Tomorrow*. The movie shows just how quickly fiction can become reality and how ruthless the irony of fate can be. In the movie the tragic consequences of climate change force the suffering US citizens to illegally cross the border into Mexico before it is opened up again by the Mexican government. Latin America, the promised land! In the movie we see the subtitle "American refugee camp in Mexico" and the actor Kenneth Welsh makes a TV address as the US President from the American Embassy in Mexico:

*“These past few weeks have left us all with a profound sense of humility in the face of nature’s destructive power. For years, we operated under the belief that we could continue consuming our planet’s natural resources without consequence. We were wrong. I was wrong. The fact that my first address to you comes from a consulate on foreign soil is a testament to our changed reality. Not only Americans but people all around the globe are now guests in the nations we once called The Third World. In our time of need, they have taken us in and sheltered us.
And I am deeply grateful for their hospitality.”*



On the health of Americans: Fight cancer with cough medicine

A draft law on “reforming” health insurance was driven through the House of Representatives on May 4, 2017 with 217 votes to 213. Although few representatives had read the “improved” draft, the “successful vote” on abolishing *Obamacare* was celebrated by US Republicans. Their Chief had to explain, or rather drill in to some representatives beforehand what would happen if there was a majority or if there failed to be a majority again. This is how you make a pact, do a deal and stay in the game with Donald Trump. A reform is usually an improvement – sometimes a large improvement, other times a small one. Healthcare à la Trump looks a little different: The current taxes on the wealthy and companies in the healthcare sector will be abolished. This currently funds insurance for the less well-off. In return, low-income tax vouchers should be continued. These can be used to pay at least part of the contributions. In particular, the various Medicaid programs that helped the poorest people and the disabled are to be abolished. Health insurance companies should be allowed to demand significantly higher contributions from older people and those with existing conditions again. The “reform” includes a fund of 8 billion dollars for people in need who experts declare to be low-income. The worry is that over the next ten years, more than 20 million Americans could lose their insurance cover. The resulting gaps in insurance cover are hardly addressed at all by the insurance system. The Chairman of the Democratic Caucus, Charles Schumer said: *“The law is like trying to cure cancer with cough medicine. It is a disgrace.”* There is still hope that the draft will fail at the US Senate in September 2017. The Republican two-vote majority in the Senate is wafer-thin.



Economic policy à la Trump: Should entrepreneurs be spoon fed or take action?

Donald Trump marches forward and the US economy dances to his tune: Separation, deportation, isolation. Many entrepreneurs submit and even allow themselves to be degraded to underlings on Twitter. The former song of praise to globalization is silent. Trump tells companies what's what: where they should go shopping, where they should hire workers, where to invest and what they shouldn't do. His economic policy clearly works against the free market. And the managers align themselves in such a way that they can still do business and that the quarterly figures are correct. Groups of companies, who as "entrepreneurs" have their eye on the long-term economic perspective, are hardly to be seen. Opportunistic attitudes are rife among the managers of corporate groups: Confrontation with Donald Trump is a losing strategy, both economically and politically.

The mentally unambitious – that is not to say that he lacks intelligence – and ordinary Trump has never done mobile-orientated business in his life. Up until now Trump has only done real estate deals. His entire being radiates immobility as if he suffers from an immobility syndrome. Companies and managers should bear this in mind, in particular those in the automotive industry.

Where are the entrepreneurs that operate with social responsibility and long-term objectives? Hopefully they can still be found in Silicon Valley, the valley that is home to creativity and where many good ideas have been developed which have triumphantly spread across the world.



As useful as a hole in the head: Trade and economic warfare

Donald Trump is not just about establishing new borders, but also overstepping existing boundaries. He also won't adhere to the rules of the World Trade Organization (WTO) when it suits him and his backers. Two aspects that are hugely important for all parties remain on the table while handling the reactionary deal maker that is Trump: Reliability and credibility. In January 2017, Trump gave us a preview when he issued an Executive Order withdrawing from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). The expectation is that the eleven remaining TPP countries (Australia, Brunei, Canada, China, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore and Vietnam) will find a suitable substitute for the USA. China is already champing at the bit. He also intends to take the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) between the European Union and the United States off the table. In place of the TPP and TTIP, Trump wants to impose punitive tariffs of up to 35 percent on imports into the USA. Instead of focusing on truly fair global free trade, in the end there will only be losers who fight it out in isolated markets on the battlefield of the world economy. If Trump conducts himself like he tweets, then we are under threat of a trade and economic war that can spread quickly across the world. Let us remember the times between the two world wars. A trade war in the 1920s and 1930s crashed the global economy. Few seem to be aware of the consequences this had. In their desperation and confusion at the time, people increasingly allowed themselves to be seduced by national socialist demagogues. Adolf Hitler and his henchmen didn't use the slogan "Germany First", instead they used "Sieg Heil". Megalomania and the resulting loss of reality, racism and lust for vengeance of an Austrian Private First Class plunged Germany and the world into an unparalleled misery.



The future of the USA: Division and debt

The cracks and trenches in American society have been widened and deepened by the wedges driven in by Trump. A reconciliation between those that follow him blindly and his furious opponents appears to be a long way off. It is therefore fitting that Barack Obama's achievement must first be dragged through the mud before they are abolished.

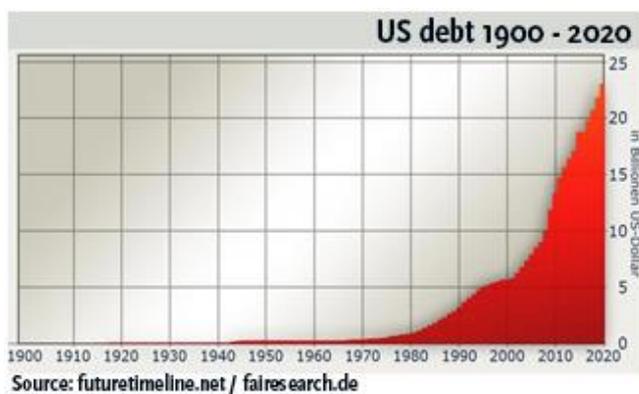


In particular, Trump wants to ingratiate himself with those who feel like they are the losers in society through his slogans like *"America First"* and *"I will make America great again"*. Messages that many Americans see as positive. He promises everything all at once: Reduce taxes, create more jobs, reflate the economy and reduce debt. Did this sudden brainwave come overnight, or is it a strategically laid flash in the pan?

The huge tax cuts for the economy and private tax payers announced by Trump prompted the US market indicator to climb to new record highs in February 2017. "Trump's economic nationalism" could work in the short-term. First and foremost, the planned stimulus package will ensure growth and create jobs. This could make those who voted for Trump happy first. Trump will try to combat national debt through a higher inflation rate. If the rate of inflation in the USA increases and the interest rates remain low, then it could help the US government to reduce debt. But this means that the money would decrease in value. And the losers would be the citizens, in particular those with low incomes. Trump's plan could also come undone right at the start. In the long-term, his plan is likely to hurt Americans, in particular those who elected him.

In the end, the isolationist policy, including the planned punitive import tariffs, will strengthen the dollar and as a consequence US exports will weaken and investors that have been unsettled by Trump's policies will seek refuge in the world's major currency: the US dollar.

Trump's economic policy will drive national debt even higher, with serious consequences. His tax cuts could increase debt by 7.2 trillion dollars over the next ten years. Added to this is the fact that the baby boomers will retire within the next few years, something that will place considerable strain on the social security system. The USA already has a mountain of debt amounting to 20 trillion dollars, and the top the list of countries with the highest amount of debt. In 2016 the national debt was above the GDP by 100 percent.



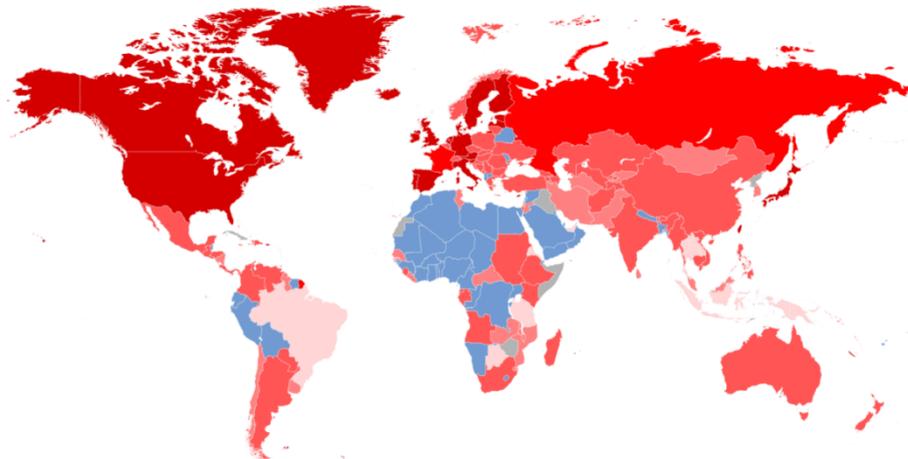
On the road to the next financial crisis

The dramatic consequences of the last financial crisis on the world economy and tax payers are well-known and are still being felt. But despite this, Trump wants to deregulate the banking sector and reopen the doors to speculation and manipulation beyond the real economy. The reason given by Trump: Companies wouldn't be able to get credit under the existing regulations. It was pushed through and should in fact free banks from the rightly applied shackles. Steven Mnuchin, the former manager of Goldman Sachs, and Wilbur Ross, a former investment banker on Wall Street, who now sit in the Government as Secretaries of the Treasury and Commerce welcomed these changes. And Lloyd Blankfein, the chairman of the investment bank Goldman Sachs, is more than satisfied. The fear is that a wave of deregulation in the USA could quickly spread across the world.

In 2008, the collapse of Lehman Brothers in the USA led to the loss of 16 trillion US collars on the global financial markets. Due to the financial crisis global debt has increased from 200 trillion dollars to 300 trillion dollars since 2008. This means that: Without strict regulation of the financial sector the boundaries will become blurred between the real world and the inscrutable shadow world where unscrupulous financial sharks peddle their dirty business with worthless derivatives and pyramid schemes.

In February 2017, i.e. before the proposed deregulation, the “value” of outstanding derivative contracts for banks across the world increased to over 700 trillion dollars. The US banks alone are juggling contracts to the tune of 280 trillion. For comparison: In 2016, the total GDP worldwide was 74 trillion dollars. Derivatives are "betting slips" in the financial sector and on stock exchanges. There are numerous derivative types and subtypes with which financial speculation is possible. Greedy brokers use these to ravage the market like locusts. This is a ticking time bomb.

Instead of investing in real values, the money is pumped into shares and real estate which scoop the money up from the bottom to the top – right up to the super-rich. Small savers are being left out thanks to the measly interest rates. Those that do not own their own home suffer under the elevated, or no longer affordable rental prices. And when the blister pops, those who are the least to blame are left out in the rain again. We can expect that deregulation will inevitably lead to a new global financial crisis and, therefore, lead to an even worse global economic crisis.



Extent of the crisis in 2007 – 2008

- The darker the red, the worse the crisis -

Instead of deregulation in the banking sector, we need adequately capitalized and regulated credit institutions which serve the real economy and slow down the speculative business of financial jugglers. This includes:

- Raising the equity ratio to 10 percent in order to boost investor's confidence in the survival of banks in financial difficulties,
- Complying with the proprietary trading ban and internationally agreed strict prudential regulations in order to protect savers and tax payers from high-risk businesses,
- Introducing a global financial transaction tax to stabilize the financial markets and make globalization fairer,
- Bringing into force a uniform worldwide transparency register where the real owners of shell companies are listed with the aim of combating and eradicating tax evasion,
- Introducing the use of public prosecutors (such as the new "European Public Prosecutor") around the world who work against corruption, money laundering and fraud in a powerful, coordinated and deterring manner, and
- Abolishing book money and bank money creation for private banks where the money does not physically exist but exists purely in electronic form.

Many banks have degenerated into casinos where high-risks are taken and there is speculation on a criminal level. It's no wonder that a large part of money that the central banks floods the market with, does not actually show up in the real economy. However, despite all of this we cannot lose our courage and hope. The shock wave caused by Donald Trump and his policies could also lead to a new system of values if we all resist together. In fiscal terms, now more than ever we need added value that ensures that the money is used for the common good.



PROJEKT
BANK FÜR
GEMEINWOHL

Donald Trump as a role model for populists and pashas

Even as the US President, Donald Trump has no respect for the separation of powers laid down in the US constitution, he has added grist to the mill of the ruling powers in Hungary, Poland and Turkey as well as the right-wing populist parties in France and Germany. Who would have bet that Donald Trump would become President of the USA? Or who would have expected that the British would vote for “Brexit”? It would seem that nothing is impossible, as the following examples in Turkey and France show:

In Turkey, the controversial reforms to introduce a presidential system were voted for on April 16, 2017. In a referendum, 51.4 percent of Turkish voters voted in favor of this system. Erdogan’s dream of a new Ottoman Empire with unrestricted power has now been realized. Before Kemal Atatürk, the Ottoman Empire was much larger and in the so-called "Golden Age" it included the Balkans as well as large parts of Arabia. Is it now “Back-to-the-Empire” on the Bosphorus? After the failed military coup in 2016, Erdogan has carried out his own coup against the freedom of the press, against the constitution and against democracy in Turkey. And anyone who opposes Erdogan is pursued as a terrorist. The constant comparisons with the Nazis that Erdogan fires at the Netherlands, Germany and the EU came to a head on March 21, 2017 with the following esoteric criticism: “This Europe is the same as it was before the Second World War, a racist, fascist and cruel Europe”. On April 2, 2017 Erdogan added fuel to the fire and called the EU an alliance of crusaders. The voters had the chance to derail this despot with his megalomania and totalitarian power demands. It was a vote in an “exceptional situation”.



TURKEY REFERENDUM
Sultan
Erdogan





Two floats at the Mainz Carnival in February 2017

Next to the “bull” in a china shop, Erdoğan sits on a grass cutter and mows down human rights, democracy and freedom of the press.

What will happen now? Immediately after the voting results were revealed, Erdoğan announced that the subject of the death penalty is on the agenda! It will be one of his first tasks. He added: “If such a law is presented to me, then I am ready to sign it”. The state news agency Anadolu announced that 63 percent of the votes cast in Germany were for Erdoğan. In Austria support for Erdoğan was more than 73 percent. During the election, voters both inside and outside of Turkey were under the influence of Erdoğan’s propaganda bombardment which clouded their judgment and drowned out and suffocated the arguments of the opposition parties. What did the Turks do on Easter Sunday? They elevated Recep Tayyip Erdoğan from street fighter to the new Sultan who increasingly exploits Islam in his new kingdom, until religion and the state become one ominous unit. We cannot envisage anything looking any better afterwards like the education system, for example, that hardly works thanks to the cleansing action after the failed military coup in 2017. The “Hayir” (“nay”) sayers had certainly hoped for a different outcome for the attempted coup. Now, they live in even greater fear or are in jail, and the hope of an EU membership is dying out. A word to this effect soon to be making the rounds is **“Turxit”**. Goodbye Europe! And someone else smirks: Donald Trump is delighted about “Brexit”, rubs his hands after “Turxit” and leers at France after “Frexit”.



The accession negotiations between Turkey and the EU are effectively on ice and a new Turkey-Russia alliance is unfolding. The partnership would further disclose the military interests and economic weaknesses in both countries. This will shuffle the cards well in the global game of power.

In France, the first round of the presidential election took place on April 23, 2017. Marine Le Pen remained in the game. She came in second place with 21.3 percent and was beaten only by Emmanuel Macron who received 24 percent of the votes. The final round took place in a runoff election on May 7. The race already looked to be over. Before the runoff, surveys indicated 63 percent of the vote for Macron and 37 percent for Le Pen. Where did the extra 13 percent of the votes for Le Pen come from if the losers of the first round, Francois Fillion and Benoît Hamon, had expressed their clear support for Macron? Caution was still needed: The question was how would the older conservative members of the electorate who didn't want to follow the young high-flyer vote? And, what would the response be from the voters from the socialist camp who were still annoyed that Macron left the Parti Socialiste in order to form his own movement? The Left Party candidate Jean-Luc Mélenchon, who with 19.6 percent of the vote was among the losers of the first round, advised his followers not to vote for the right-wing populist Marine Le Pen. However, he refused to recommend voting for Macron as Macron was not suitable to govern the country. It was almost like a call to boycott the election. It could have been dangerous however, if those who thought that Macron had already secured the election stayed at home or didn't bother to vote on May 7, 2017. This applied to young French people in particular. It was reminiscent of Brexit, which came to be because the older generations outvoted the younger generations on June 23, 2016. 73 percent of 18 to 24-year olds voted against Brexit. In the 25 to 34 age group, 62 percent voted for the EU and in 35 to 44-year old it was still 52 percent. Over 65s clearly

rejected the EU: 60 percent voted for Brexit. After the victors for the Brexit supporters, many young people are worried about their future: “The young people must suffer for what the old people chose”.

They only have themselves to blame for the result, especially as 64 percent of people between 18 and 25 did not vote. Turnout among the over 65s was 83 percent. This shows how important it was for young French people to vote on May 7, 2017 in order to stop Marine Le Pen from becoming the President of France because Le Pen would further the Trump Effect. Her election campaigning was astonishingly similar to Donald Trump’s politics. Le Pen described it as follows: “I didn’t choose Trump as a model; it is just that he has implemented what I have called for, for years”. As president, Le Pen would have worked towards a referendum on the withdrawal of France from the EU, “Frexit”. This would have been in line with Donald Trump, who thinks that Brexit is good and wants more of it. It fell to the French people to defend democracy in the runoff election on May 7, 2017. Even the friendship between former enemies France and Germany was at stake. Particularly in the wake of Brexit, this friendship is the glue that holds the EU together and maintains the hope of a common future of peace and freedom. Otherwise the outlook for France would have become darker and the already faltering EU and its 2012 Nobel peace prize would have perished in the wake of an extreme right-wing revolt.



There is a guest contribution at the end of this polemic that consists of an exchange of letters between the journalist and presenter Evelyn Seibert and her friend Antoinette Marti from April 2017. Antoinette Marti is a former elementary school teacher from Paris who is enjoying her retirement. In their captivating style they write about how their everyday lives have been positively affected by the Germany-France friendship under the umbrella of the European Union. The hope and preference was that it would be possible to carry on living

like this in the long-term in France, Germany and Europe even after May 7, 2017, and without the barbed wire and border walls that have so often kept people apart.

Thankfully this was case: Over 66 percent voted for Emanuel Macron and less than 34 percent for Marine Le Pen.



Vive la France, Vive les français, vive l'Europe, vive les européens!!!

The hope for the French in particular and for the Europeans is that Emanuel Macron will be successful in overcoming the deep division across the country and will bring together the differing trends in French society. The fact that Macron is not affiliated with a traditional party does not have to be a drawback, instead it can become an advantage. In order for this to be the case, the political forces must come together after the parliamentary elections in June and work together for the good of France and to build a strong government under the new president. It cannot just carry on as before. Because Marine Le Pen is simply waiting for the new hopeful to fail in office, just like his predecessors. She will rely on this negative development playing out in her favor before and during the next presidential election, since this time she managed to double her father's result from 2002. In order to leave Marine Le Pen out in the cold once and for all, Emanuel Macron must break up the left-right schema of French politics and form a broad alliance in the middle. It is extremely important that Macron achieves a majority for his reform agenda in the National Assembly in 2017. If he can achieve this then he can appoint a new government without any political opponents. Even the former director of Radio France, Jean-Luc Hees and the director of Deutschlandradio, Dr. Willi Stolz were concerned about the "insidious music" and "egotistical overtones" that poisoned the election campaign. After their moving exchange of letters included at the end of this polemic, the two friends would be very happy if this "darling of the surveys" became a successful president who could be safely entrusted with the keys to France.

In reminiscence of Charles de Gaulle, Georges Pompidou, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing and François Mitterrand and their strengths, the new president should succeed in strengthening the cohesion and sense of responsibility among the French people. It would mean liberation from a fundamental social and economic crisis. Then the idea that the strong neighbor to the West should beat an economic retreat if you want to successfully combat the weaknesses in your own country, no longer exists. "Made in France", "Made in Germany" and "Made in Europe" are trademarks of a value-added chain that can assert themselves in competition with the USA and China.

It is now up to the German Chancellor and the new French President to use the euphoric mood after the positive election results in the Netherlands, Austria (election of the Federal President) and in France in order to stem extremist populists in Europe. For Europe, it would show the way forward if European unity was at the forefront over the next few months and years, and not the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the EU that is to be negotiated and unraveled after Brexit.



After reason prevailed among the French voters, and it is used to vote in Germany on September 24, 2017 then this could come to pass...

Donald Trump as an opportunity for a more united Europe

If you want to find something positive in the blustering, fear-inducing arrival of Donald Trump, then perhaps this can be the realization that it is absolutely necessary to strengthen the European Union and that this must be intensified. In their book *Europa am Abgrund* (Europe on the brink) Brendan Simms and Benjamin Zeeb wrote that successful state unions are not created through gradual convergence processes under relatively favorable circumstances, but are instead created through breaks in extreme times of crisis or by a "big bang" (see subtext 2 in our primer *Homo progressivus – The energetic rebellion or: (Saving Earth from its most vexing virus)*). The new President of the United States of America could inadvertently become the person who leads to the birth of the "United States of Europe" who are committed to working together and join together to make a stand. The ability of the EU member states to reach reasonable compromises is crucial for the future of cohesion of the EU. Their inability to do this up until now, not only in the case of failing miserably to provide a solution to the refugee crisis, has given an initial boost to right-wing populists who have the disintegration of the EU in their sights.



Christian Ponceau, the French Foreign Minister

At the time of the signing of the Treaties of Rome on March 25, 1957 said:

“Our unity and our strength will instill respect in those who intend to disturb the peace. However, our dissent and our weaknesses will be a most dangerous temptation for them.”



On March 25, 1957 Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands signed the Treaties of Rome. This was the birth of the European Union. 60 years later, the EU is faced with enormous challenges. Europe feels the wind of opposition, but it is needed in order for it to surpass itself and others. “Brexit” welds it together and Trump acts as a catalyst. The “Declaration of Rome” that was signed by the heads of government of the 27 EU member States (except the United Kingdom) at the birthday celebrations on March 25, 2017 included the following key statement: *“We will act together, at different paces and intensity where necessary, while moving in the same direction, as we have done in the past”*. This is an indicative statement aimed at a European core. A united Europe at different speeds is still better than a failed Union that could not compete with defunct Pied Pipers and omnipotence addicts from all walks of life.

The “United States of Europe” does not have to include the 28 European member states. It is more important that the states progress, have common values and implement common goals in order to benefit their citizens in a peaceful and stable alliance of states.

Otherwise there is a risk of a relapse into nationalism and particularism. Global solutions for a sustainable world economy, population control and to combat human-induced climate change would be undermined or rendered impossible.

Since the Second World War, Europe has lived in increasingly democratic conditions that enrich the lives of EU member states and their citizens in particular, and that have bound them together in an amicable manner. Today, we see these achievements as a matter of course. But, we have to remember that European history has many dark sides and is defined by wars that sometimes lasted for decades. But that wasn't enough. Many wars were extended beyond Europe and across the world, many countries were colonized and brutally exploited. Now it is time to realize the great vision of the future: The "United States of Europe" (USE) will be the driving force for the much longed-for world peace.



Trampling Trump – The lonely bully

Donald Trump's first overseas trip began on May 20, 2017 in the Middle East. What happened in Cairo, Jerusalem and Bethlehem is detailed later in this polemic under the heading: **The Grand Master of “deals” in the minefields of diplomacy.**

On May, 24 2017, Donald Trump met Pope Francis for the first time in the Vatican. Both men have different views on central issues (building a wall with Mexico, refugee policy, the military, weapons, climate protection). The two leaders had a 30 minute meeting. At the end Pope Francis gave his opposite number a second encyclical, “Laudato si”, which deals with the environment and climate protection. “I’ll read it”, said Trump. **And then pulled the USA out of the Climate Agreement on June 1, 2017!** The Papal visit speaks volumes. He had definitely not banked on relying on the climate change denier.



On May, 24 2017, the US President met with the heads of government from the NATO member states in order to inaugurate the new headquarters of the military alliance. During his tour of the 75 million Euro building, Donald Trump showed (in the truest sense of the word) his elbows: Upset that he wasn't the focus of attention, he charged out of the second row and shoved the Prime Minister of Montenegro to the side. Dusko Markovic looked completely blindsided as Trump ruthlessly pulled him back by the shoulder like a kid in a schoolyard, just so that he could stand at the front.

For the umpteenth time, spectators from all over the world watched Trump's embarrassing performance with much head-shaking and incomprehension.



Once again Trump rubbed up the other 27 NATO member states. States that in his eyes lack the financial commitment on military expenditure. The highlight: The US President described the Germans as a “bad, very bad.” His reasoning was again the German foreign trade surplus and the German cars imported into the USA. A NATO summit has never been so miserable.

On May 26 and 27, 2017, the G7 states met in Taormina, Sicily. Even here it was clear that Donald Trump is playing a single-player game and is offside. His position, in particularly when it comes to climate change and the global climate policy, could not be more different. Trump announced that he had still not made a decision on whether or not he will withdraw the USA from the Paris Climate Agreement ratified by Barack Obama. In terms of climate protection and migration the G7 summit was a disaster.

Goodbye climate protection, that is what can be taken from the US withdrawal from the historically important world Climate Agreement. When withdrawing from the Paris

Agreement on June 1, 2017, Trump announced that there is nothing more important than the well-being of the American people.

The withdrawal of the USA from the global climate agreement is a fatal signal for the G20 summit in July 2017 in Hamburg. Angela Merkel is seeking solidarity from China after the G7 summit. When she met the Chinese Premier Li Keqiang on June 1, 2016, they didn't just discuss climate protection but also closer relations between the EU and China as a whole.



The relationship appears to be shattered after the G7 summit

From the point of view of the lonely bully and lone fighter, his first overseas trip was a complete success. He had a “really historic week” with important US allies behind him, said Trump in a speech at US military base Sigonella shortly after he had left the G7 summit in Taormina. He made “great progress” there, said the President.

Angela Merkel had a completely different assessment, particularly after the failed G7 summit. She quite clearly warned Trump against a path of isolation and said: “Those who have only a nationally blinkered view and do not look at the world around them are ultimately (...) playing offside.” “The times in which we could completely depend on others are, to a certain extent, over. I’ve experienced that in the last few days.” “We Europeans truly have to take our fate into our own hands.” “Europe must be a player that also intervenes on an international level.”

On May, 29 2017, the Federal Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel said: *“The challenges of migration will only increase thanks to the withdrawal of the United States from western political consensus. There are three main factors concerning migration: Climate change, war*

and political and religious persecution. These problems will only get worse thanks to the new US-American isolationism. Furthermore, arms exports increase the risk of war and ignoring climate change destroys the livelihoods of many nations. (...) The Trump Administration wants to withdraw from the Climate Agreement, arm crisis regions and ban people from certain religions from entering the country. If Europeans do not decide to counter this today then the flood of migration to Europe will increase. Anyone who does not oppose this kind of policy is guilty. (...) Anyone who accelerates climate change through less environmental protection, sells weapons to crisis areas and who doesn't want to politically solve religious conflicts puts peace in Europe in danger: The short-sighted policies of the American government are contrary to the interests of the European Union."



And what did the media think of US President Donald Trump's nine-day trip? We asked Christian Matz, *Allgemeine Zeitung Mainz* and Thomas Gutschker, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. Christian Matz gives a short and concise statement regarding his impressions below. And Thomas Gutschker brings this polemic to a close with the point: Europe cannot rely on this American President.

Christian Matz said the following about Trump, G7 and Europe:

"Now it's enough. The Europeans have been occupied for long enough with the question, how did this new guy even get into the White House? It is high time that the West and in particular the EU member states pressed the reset button and re-organized their relationships with one another and with the United States. The past few days have shown this clearly. Chancellor Merkel is absolutely right: Trump's America is no longer part of the political field and is no longer a reliable partner in trade issues. Trump's first foray onto the international stage has, in terms of content and behavior, confirmed what everyone feared

from his first few months in office. He courted the terrorist financiers in Saudi Arabia and offended his allies; he heaped dirt onto everything that, in his opinion, does not serve American interests. He didn't just offend his partners verbally but also faced them down physically. He does not appear to be able to intellectually fathom the importance of places like Yad Vashem, nor can he follow the other heads of state in terms of content. And he doesn't care. The description of a "political bully" plays down his ignorance. If, after the bullying at this summit, fists were to fly at the next one no-one would be surprised. But: The world now has to live with Trump and his political 'style'. What it no longer needs is further counsel from Europe on how the Americans have to deal with this President who was, after all, elected. An impeachment is still a long way off and if it ever comes to be, then it is preferable not to imagine what short-fused actions a Trump who is teetering on the edge might be capable of. No, Europeans must think about themselves and switch from a crisis management policy to a policy-design mode. This is a positive Trump effect and the chances of this happening have increased since his victory. This is because his terrifying example has mobilized those with common-sense against populists and the enemies of Europe. If it succeeds in settling the disputes along the Paris-Berlin meridian within the alliance, then neither Trump nor Brexit can damage the EU in the long-term. In this respect, the NATO and G7 summits hailed the end of the current partnership and gave Europe a reboot."



Freedom of the press and Western values – an obsolete model?

Donald Trump bets on total control and loyalty. He wants people to pay homage to him and cannot tolerate criticism. On February 24, 2017, Trump attacked the media head-on. In his opinion, media outlets that criticize him and his apparatus are spreading *fake news*, and are therefore what we would call “liars”: Spreaders of fake stories in order to mislead the people and incite them against him. On February 26, 2017, Donald Trump refused to attend the traditional press dinner that is usually a compulsory event for the US president. Before this, reporters from the New York Times, CNN and the BBC as well as other critical media outlets were banned from a briefing at the White House. In contrast, conservative reporters were allowed to attend. This included representatives of the radical right-wing Internet portal “Breitbart” which to all intents and purposes is controlled behind the scenes by Stephen Bannon.



Stephen Bannon and Kelly Anne Conway – with the “alternative facts”

If we look at the wider picture, we can see that Donald Trump does not just put the freedom of the press in the USA in jeopardy but also the entire system of values in the Western world. But the danger does not just come from him. In China, Xi Jinping has unrestricted power and is just as egotistic with the motto “**China First**”. Furthermore, China strives for a new international order where Vladimir Putin and totalitarian Russia are seen as a junior partner. This is also backed up by China’s new Silk Road “One Belt, One Road” where goods are ferried by train and boat to Europe. So far this has been a one-way street. In the USA,

Trump is changing the country with the goal of creating authoritarian state structures that will be controlled by his power apparatus and endorsed by mainstream journalism. The free and democratic constitution is under threat of destruction. If these sinister ideas become a reality then the future lives of the people will be determined not just by autocrats in China and Russia, but in the USA as well. In the end we will be made to believe that autocratic countries are better at social cohesion and are more successful than the previous liberal order of the Western world after the Second World War. It's got colder, particularly in the West.

The fear is that the already fragile unity in Europe cannot withstand the totalitarian bulwark of China, Russia and the USA and that it will break. The dream of a "United States of Europe" will crumble and the transatlantic alliance of the West will be a thing of the past. And the freedom of the people will drown in the world's divided states under global networked monitoring apparatus, compared to which George Orwell's "Big Brother" is the poor relation.

In our primer *Homo progressivus – The energetic rebellion or: Saving Earth from its most vexing virus*, the foreword contains ten scenarios that seriously question the survival of *Homo sapiens*. The penultimate scenario states: "Digitization is both a blessing and a curse. The Internet offers us knowledge, education and political information. At the same time data leeches are sabotaging our security in the network. A nightmare under conditions of fading democracy". At the end of the ten scenarios is the statement: **Wake up, everybody – it's not too late yet!**



Better a powerful protection force than a destructive loner!

After six years of war and with more than 400,000 people dead and 12 million homeless, one thing is clear: Any sense of proportion has been lost under the reign of terror of the ophthalmologist Bashar al-Assad in Syria. Assad has become the butcher of his own people. The merciless, power-hungry dictator has transformed from the person who the Syrian people pinned their hopes on after they were suppressed by his father, into a heinous war criminal. He must be brought before the International Court of Justice in the Hague. Before this can happen, he must be overthrown.



There is no other way: He must be forced out of the office, by force if necessary. The time has come, at the very least after the alleged poison gas attacks against his own defenseless people. The fact that the President of the most powerful country in the world in terms of economy and the military is spearheading this is fine. However experts disagree on whether Trump's gut instinct decision to launch a US rocket attack alone was correct. NATO and the Foreign ministers of the G7 countries lent him their support, whereas for Vladimir Putin it was a violation of international law. But now the task is to find a solution under the umbrella of the United Nations and implement it without any vetoes.

Trump's "yee-haw politics" shows we must put a stop to his impulsive decision-making and actions. What happens now? How will those countries react who have held the rules of action so dear over the last 12 months of the war in Syria? Russia, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Turkey were certainly surprised by the US rocket attack on a Syrian Air Force base in the night on April 7, 2017. Hopefully, there is still time for the diplomatic negotiators to work towards a humanitarian solution. The warlords cannot be allowed to have a knee-jerk reaction and take the lead and escalate the war in Syria to the next level through targeted attacks and counter attacks. With these arbitrary actions, Trump is holding a match to the fuse of the powder keg that is the Middle East and at the same time, is sending his marines towards North Korea. It will be interesting to see what sort of welcoming committee the Chinese will send, as they believe have sovereignty over the waters in this region.



And the United Nations, who has no real authority to intervene in Syria, stands idly by. The Syrian people are left in the lurch by all sides. The Russian president is to be taken at his word when he said in September 2015 that he wanted to build a broad alliance, in particular to fight against the terrorist militia of the Islamic State (IS) in Syria and Iraq. This anti-terror alliance should, at the request of the Russians, be given a mandate by the UN Security Council. The mission can still succeed if the five veto powers of the USA, Russia, China, the United Kingdom and France pull together and clear the way for the formation of an effective and powerful protection force. The United Nations was founded after the 2nd World War, in particular to prevent further genocide. It is time that they fulfilled their mission. It is up to the United Nations and its decision-making powers to decide whether the Syrian people will be sacrificed or saved.

In his 2017 Easter Sunday message, Pope Francis said:

“(...) The Risen Shepherd walks beside all those forced to leave their homelands as a result of armed conflicts, terrorist attacks, famine and oppressive regimes. Everywhere he helps these forced migrants to encounter brothers and sisters, with whom they can share bread and hope on their journey. In the complex and often dramatic situations of today’s world, may the Risen Lord guide the steps of all those who work for justice and peace. May he grant the leaders of nations the courage they need to prevent the spread of conflicts and to put a halt to the arms trade. Especially in these days, may he sustain the efforts of all those actively engaged in bringing comfort and relief to the civil population in Syria – the beloved and martyred Syria – prey to a war that continues to sow horror and death. (...)”



We hope that God has a daughter who he can send with a message in support of Jesus and Muhammad and the many other prophets. A message that we can understand and that can help us to help ourselves to live in peace and freedom with each other.

On April 11, 2017 Christian Matz said:

“Up until a few days ago Donald Trump was a stricken US President whose loud-mouthed announcements were matched only to great failures. With the attack in Syria and the posting of warships along the Korean coast, Trump is showing his drive and that we can expect anything from him, even complete u-turns. Instead of the isolationist ‘America First’ slogan, he is demonstrating resolve in the two crisis areas. He has maneuvered himself out of his defensive position in terms of domestic policy. Where this resolve will lead to and whether he actually has a strategy, is uncertain. In any case, a test of strength in East Asia between Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, is the last thing the world needs. We cannot expect North Korea to be impressed by a few US warships, instead their leader will take this as a warning like the attack on Syria and use it to forward his nuclear program. And then? Will Trump dare to make a pre-emptive attack and risk a nuclear confrontation? The only solution, like in Syria, is at the negotiating table, even if this is difficult to imagine for both sides. The only hope is that the other great powers in the game, China here and Russia in Syria, will use their influences to temper the dictators in question. Operations that have not been coordinated with Beijing and Moscow could be seen as a provocation, this, accompanied by the fact that Trump is extremely unpredictable, makes for a dangerous situation.”



The two trouble spots of Syria and North Korea are so dangerous that a partnership between the USA, Russia and China in particular is urgently necessary. Russia is still protecting the war criminal Assad and China is supporting the unscrupulous ruler in North Korea, Kim Jong-un. And Donald Trump thinks about how he can free North Korea from this tyrant after his operations in Syria. On April 12, 2017, the Chinese President Xi Jinping spoke to his American

counterpart by telephone and called on him to find a peaceful solution. Trump then proclaimed on Twitter that he would solve the problem of North Korea without China. After North Korea's failed missile launch on April 16, 2017 "all options are on the table, including military" claimed the Trump camp. The day before the missile test failed again on April 19, 2017, Trump warned of a "catastrophic consequences for North Korea". April 29 was Trump's 100th day in office. Kim Jong-un sees his nuclear weapons as a life insurance policy. After a US attack on North Korea, we cannot exclude the fact that, with his back against a wall, he would retaliate with atomic weapons so as not to lose face and his power in North Korea. He can reach targets in South Korea, Japan and possibly soon the USA with his booster rockets. If Pyongyang were to retaliate after the first strike then Washington and the entire world would be under threat. Even the use of "dirty bombs" that would lead to nuclear contamination on an immeasurable scale cannot be ruled out. The Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe warns against the deadly gas Sarin, which could be deployed at different locations, e.g. US bases in Japan, using North Korea's long range missiles. The Japanese government is considering making a constitutional amendment so that in an emergency they could carry out a pre-emptive strike against North Korea's nuclear weapons arsenals. Japan sees itself as an alliance partner to the USA in the case of a possible war against North Korea. Japan also wants to be on the side of the USA in the South China Sea in order to assert its territorial interests against China. This threatening conflict situation could offset the "balance of terror". Representatives of the *Homo progressivus* species should prevent this.



The Grand Master of “deals” in the minefields of diplomacy

Donald Trump’s first overseas trip took him to the Middle East which has always been a hotbed of tensions and armed conflict. His first stop was Saudi Arabia. On arriving in Riyadh on May 20, 2017, Trump spoke before representatives from 55 Islamic states and gave a message of “friendship, hope and love”. There was no representative from Iran. His second stop was Israel. When he arrived in Tel Aviv on May 22, 2017, Trump said: “We have before us a rare opportunity to bring security and stability and peace”.

Alongside these fine words, the USA and Saudi Arabia signed a huge weapons deal. Trump has agreed an arms deal with the Saudis worth around 110 billion US dollars. The US Press Secretary Sean Spicer spoke of the largest arms deal in US history. Over a ten-year period, Riyadh should buy around 350 billion dollars worth of weapons from the USA. Trump had previously divulged strictly confidential information from Israel about the IS held by Washington to the Russian Foreign Minister, Lavrov.

Instead of the violation of Israel’s trust and destabilization of military supremacy in the region thanks to the arms deal with the Saudis, he was expected to give a completely different gift to his hosts: among other things, Trump’s announcement prior to the trip that he would relocate the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem and give the US presidential approval to the Israeli Government’s resettlement program. Wrong on both counts.



An alternative program – Trump’s business plan for the Middle East

The massive rearmament in Saudi Arabia will most likely spawn new, unprecedented arms race in the Middle East. Iran will see Saudi Arabia and Israel as the enemy. In the meantime, Iran has committed to an alliance of purpose with Russia, not just for the fight against the US but also for protection from the Syrian ruler Bashar al-Assad. The two countries also work together at an economic level. Iran is strategically important for China's ascent to a world economic power. Cooperation between China and Iran has also been stepped up in military terms. It will be interesting to see how many and what kind of weapons Iran will order and receive from Moscow and Beijing.



Hassan Ruhani and Vladimir Putin



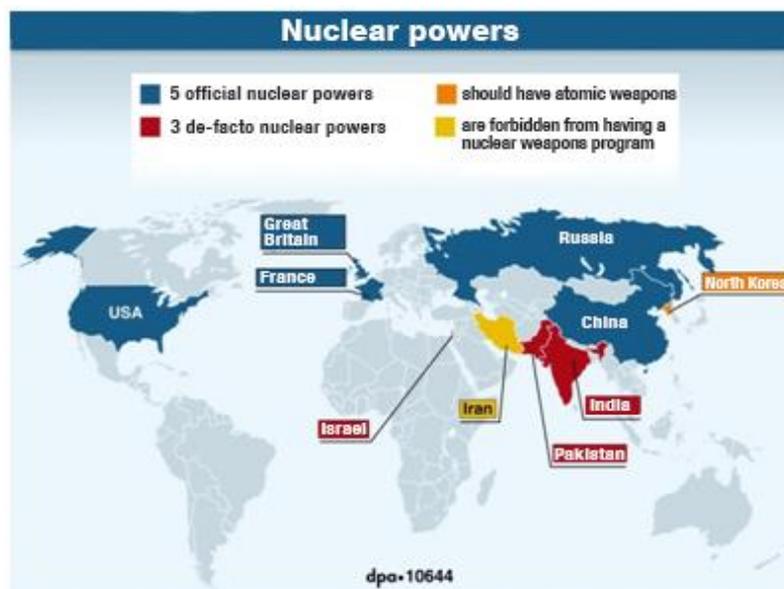
Xi Jinping and Hassan Ruhani

After his anti-Islamic slogans and Executive Orders at the beginning of his term of office, Trump gives the impression that he sees himself as on a holy mission. In his speech in Saudi Arabia he kept referring to God or Allah. He also visited the Jewish Wailing Wall and the Christian burial church in Jerusalem and included a trip to Bethlehem with Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas. This emphasis on religion highlights Trump's naivety and ignorance once more. In the Middle East, religion is not associated with heavenly peace but more with holy wars – even between the two largest Islamic denominations of the Shiites and the Sunnis. Trump's business plan for peace will further the escalation of the conflict and lead to a new outbreak of violence. At the end of Trump's visit to the Middle East there was a lot of tension blowing around the troubled region. The only deal to have an impact on the Middle East will be the end of the arms deal. There is no rapprochement between the Israelis and the Palestinians let alone a peace deal in Middle East in sight. And without the UN trump card, the Grand Master of "deals" is sinking in the minefield of diplomacy.

A nuclear winter is just around the corner

On February 23, 2017, Donald Trump said: *“If countries are going to have nukes, we’re going to be at the top of the pack. The USA has fallen behind on nuclear weapon capacity. ‘New START’ is another bad deal for the USA. We’re going to start making good deals in the new arms race”.*

The New START agreement signed by the USA and Russia in 2011 aims to decrease the number of strategic nuclear weapons to 1550 warheads by 2020. The number of carrier systems should be halved to a maximum of 800. In February 2017, Russia had 7000 nuclear warheads and the USA 6800. Donald Trump doesn't want to just accelerate the “modernization” of the USA’s nuclear weapons started by Barack Obama, but he also wants to expand their capacity even further. Barack Obama’s dream and that of many people for a “world without nuclear weapons” has already been swept aside.



Donald Trump and his aggressive administration seem to want to get in the way of China’s ambitions even more. The idea of Russia as an arch nemesis has been expanded and, with a GDP of just 1.3 trillion dollars, it is not taken seriously as an economic competitor. Compared to individual states, the Chinese and the Americans are both economically and militarily close on each other’s heels in terms of numbers. China is already in the fast lane and aiming for pole position with its enormous economic power, sustained economic growth and the hunger for prosperity of 1.3 billion people. Donald Trump wants to stop this using all

available means. Thanks to the increasing armament in the USA, China in particular (with just 260 warheads in 2016) will feel forced into making solid investments in nuclear weapons in order to be on the same level as the USA and Russia. This perfidious nuclear arms race will put our existence in increasing jeopardy. There has never been such a power-obsessed president with such violent political power in the history of the USA. In view of these nightmare scenarios and the emerging nuclear winter, even some Republican Senators believe that Donald Trump is an unacceptable security risk.

The hope is that Trump will either see sense or will remain a hollering tycoon that will quickly go down in history as a toothless tiger. The current defeats on the abolition of *Obamacare* and the Muslim entry ban show that a heavy-weighted real estate tycoon can be reduced to a shallow man who takes big risks and achieves little. Or is he already a *lame duck* seen as he can't even get the Republican majorities he needs? Trump's political programs looks set to collapse like a house of cards. Never before has a US President been so clearly sidelined and so early in the day. The "deal maker" is defeated. The idea of him being the most powerful man in the world broke down catastrophically after his first 100 days in office. The build-up of anger in Donald Trump and his Chief Strategist Stephen Bannon could become even more dangerous. The powers associated with the office are enormous. The lower the inhibitions, the greater the temptation to abuse these powers.



The World War Three specter

Will democratic society in the USA survive President Donald Trump and his populist, totalitarian and protectionist aims? Or must society rebel in order to save the longest functioning democracy in the world and prevent disastrous consequences for the entire world?

The mist of terror that has engulfed Washington and the White House threatens to send the world up in flames, including the USA.



The unpredictable despot, his dangerous backers and followers marching behind him close formation are the greatest danger to democracy and world peace since the Second World War. We cannot imagine a better outlook than a Third World War fought by weapons of mass destruction on all sides.

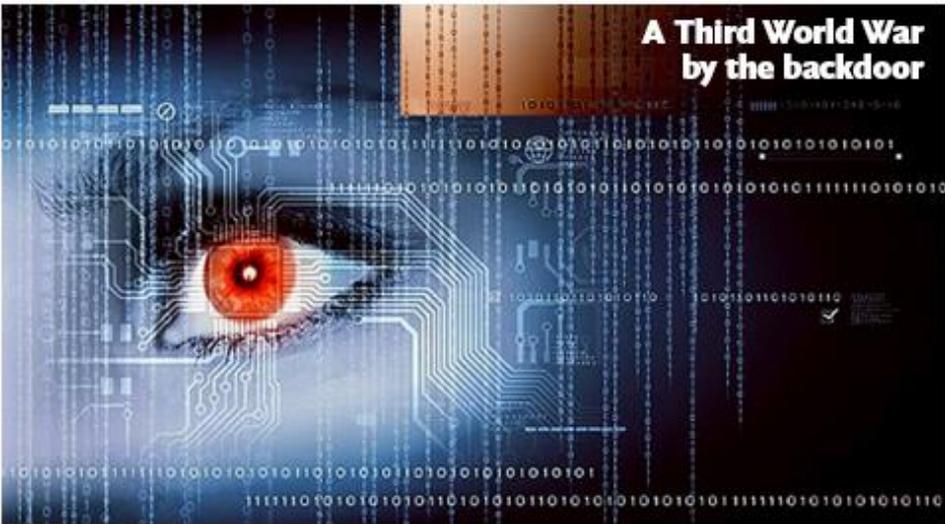
The facts and the potentials threats described here should be enough to initiate impeachment proceedings as soon as possible against the present intolerable US President. The fact that man of his nature has his finger on the trigger of nuclear weapons means that such steps are absolutely necessary. It does not just come down to the constitutional organs but also the overwhelming majority of American society who are supported by democratic movements worldwide. We firmly believe that the vast majority of Americans and people in the world are in favor of freedom, justice and democracy and not nationalism, authoritarian leadership and ruthlessness towards minorities.

We must succeed in drawing the Trump supporters away from the sidelines. We must succeed in ending the totalitarian fanning of the flames and put out the already blazing fires. This also applies to Turkey, Hungary, Poland, France and Germany. We must succeed in eradicating the nationalist right-wing radical nightmares from our planet.

We must understand that everything can happen, everything is possible, and that it is up to us to decide if it will be good or bad!

In our primer Dustin Hoffmann said that history sometimes repeats itself, making reference to the Vietnam War and the 2003 war in Iraq. The justifications for the two wars were based on manipulation and lies.

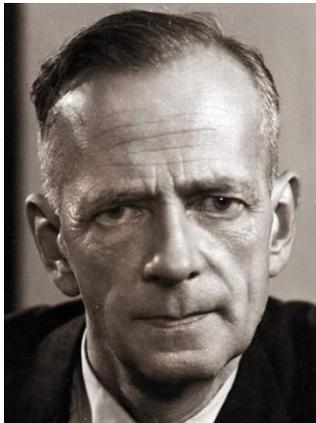
In today’s world the values of tolerance and cohesion, respect when dealing with others, the wider picture and last but not least, the appreciation of a strong democracy are disappearing more and more. If nationalist right-wing populists come into power across the world and govern with totalitarian instruments, then democracy is at the end of the road. The reciprocal monitoring of constitutional bodies loses its importance, the media will be brought to heel or silenced and the judicial system will be brought in to line. And in the end cyber attacks, “alternative facts” and *fake news* will cause World War Three.



Hitler had his diabolical objectives in sight and set about achieving them in a barbaric manner. In the beginning the future conqueror of Nazi Germany went by undetected as a looming hellfire and Nazi domination was not taken seriously. The following warning was either not heard, not understood or simply ignored in France, England and the USA.

On February 23, 1932, the SPD member of the Reichstag Kurt Schumacher gave a courageous speech in the German Reichstag where he said:

*“The entire national socialist agitation is
a permanent appeal to the inner weaknesses of men.”*



The warning went unheeded, the “thousand-year reign” of a megalomaniac lasted 12 years and threw the world into unspeakable suffering and was engulfed in rubble and ashes in 1945!

We agree with Bruce Springsteen, Donald Trump – in contrast to Hitler – acts completely without thinking and does not consider the consequences. But regardless of whether he knows or does not know how his policy threatens the USA and the world: **If he carries on like this**, then he must be stopped in his tracks as soon as possible.

On February 5, 2017, the author Louis Begley said: *“We should be ashamed of Donald J. Trump because in the long history of the Republic we have never had a President so limited in spirit and character, that has no understanding of philosophy, art and science and doesn't want to understand, and that has a enormous lack of friendliness and empathy. And now he hangs round our necks!”* **Hopefully not for too long!**

Put the evil genie back in his bottle!

On Saturday, April 29, 2017, Donald Trump said:

"I truly believe that the first 100 days of my Administration have been just about the most successful in our country's history."



An egomaniac and con man!

We interviewed the editor-in-chief of the Echo newspaper in Darmstadt, Lars Hennemann and the SPIEGEL ONLINE correspondent in New York, Marc Pitzke. In their guest contributions at the end of this polemic, they give Trump's bizarre ego a thorough shake and turn it on its head.

In the meantime, former FBI Director Robert Mueller was appointed as the Special Investigator in order to reveal purpose behind the hidden channels of information concerning the Russia affair. With regards to the investigation into the Russia affair and the dubious dismissal of FBI Chief James Comey, on May 18, 2017 Donald Trump tweeted: *"This is the single greatest witch hunt of a politician in American history"*:

The external Special Investigator was not appointed by Attorney General Jeff Sessions who belonged to Trump's election campaign team, instead he was appointed by the Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein which will ensure the independence and credibility of the investigation. In fact, the Deputy Attorney General stated that he had the utmost confidence in the independence and integrity of his investigator. He thought that an independent

special investigator is necessary “in order for the American people to have full confidence in the outcome”.



The witch hunters!



The hunted! With his election campaigner!?

James Comey’s predecessor at the FBI, Robert Mueller, should examine whether there were secret meetings between Trump’s election campaign team and the government in Moscow and whether Russia influenced the presidential elections in November 2016. His position has extensive powers and is protected from political interference.

The Special Investigator is valued by all sides and is not suspected of prioritizing political agendas over his investigation. As the Special Prosecutor, he should uncover potential criminal offenses and bring charges against suspects based on the evidence. It will be interesting to see whether he will make his findings public. The hope is that the responsible members of the Republican party will also aggressively pursue a conscientious investigation.

The Special Investigator Robert Mueller has received new information regarding the questionable links of Trump the business man from Johannes Hano, director of the ZDF studio in New York since 2014, and from Alexander Sarovic. In their film “Gefährliche Verbindungen” (Dangerous Connections) that was shown on ZDF on May 24, 2017, the two authors raised the question of whether US President Donald Trump was guilty of a criminal conspiracy when he was a business man, and whether his connections with Russia are closer than what he claims.



obs/ZDF/Daniel Strobel

“ZDFzoom” said the following about Trump and his business partner:

“Are US President Donald Trump's connections to Russia closer than he claims? For months a congressional committee has been examining the question of whether Russia influenced the US elections and whether there is a connection between it and Donald Trump and his election campaign team. What's more there is new information regarding the dubious connections of Trump the business man. ‘ZDFzoom: Gefährliche Verbindungen’ highlighted ‘Trump and his business partner’ on May 24, 2017 at 22:45. In the ‘ZDFzoom’ documentary, the authors Johannes Hano and Alexander Sarovic went on the hunt for information. They came across links between the major American and Russian mafia syndicates and Trump Tower. ‘There is a long list of senior figures in organized crime who live in Trump Tower. Not just American criminals but also gangsters from Russia, Kazakhstan and Ukraine who use Trump Tower as a center for criminal activities, including gambling, prostitution and drug trafficking’, explained Scott Horton, a worldwide renowned anti-corruption expert, to ZDF. During its research, ZDF stumbled upon Trump’s business relationship with the Bayrock company. The US President holds shares in at least one joint project, Trump Soho. One of his partners in the project was the exiled Russian Felix Sater, a convicted fraudster and criminal with the best contacts to Russia. But even when Trump found out about the dubious past and machinations of his partner, he continued with the business relationship. In doing so, Donald Trump has made himself guilty, said lawyer Fred Oberlander who is suing Bayrock. The FBI is becoming more

and more interested in the President's past and present questionable business relationships. Is this why FBI Director James Comey had to go? You can watch the film by Johannes Hano and Alexander Sarovic at ZDFzoom under the following link:

<https://www.zdf.de/dokumentation/zdfzoom/zdfzoom-gefaehrliche-verbindungen-100.html>“



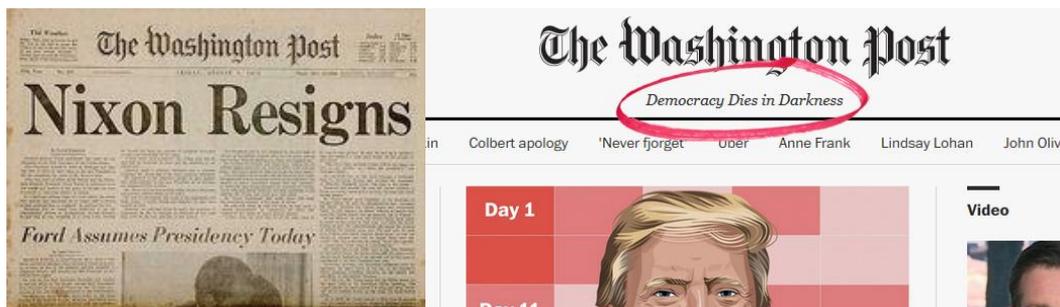
ZDF authors Alexander Sarovic and Johannes Hano in their New York office.

COPYRIGHT: ZDF/Daniel Strobel

On May 17, 2017, the *New York Times* led with the headline: “When the world is led by a child”. We would like to add here that Trump conducts himself like an uneducated child who cannot handle his sudden rise to power. The second chance that we offered this crazy big baby earlier in this polemic, has the title: **Back to square one with reason and decency! There has to be a good genie living at the White House who can put this evil genie of a confused child that is product of the imagination of frustrated US citizens back in its bottle. If not, there is only one thing to do!!!**

Trump's savior: Impeachment

The 37th President of the United States, Richard M. Nixon resigned on August 9, 1974. Up until now, he has been the only US President in the history of America who was forced to leave the White House before his term of office came to an end. After he resigned, Nixon was impeached. Richard Nixon's undoing was the Watergate scandal which was exposed by reporters from the Washington Post, Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein. The motto on the world renowned daily newspaper on February 22, 2017 was: *Democracy Dies in Darkness*.



Compared to “Watergate”, Trump’s actions are a much more important reason for impeachment. He seems to be under the impression that he already has his back to the wall. There is no other explanation for his Twitter attacks against Barack Obama on March 4, 2017. Trump still claims that Obama was listening to his conversations before his election. But he presents no evidence of this. The Twitter attacks culminated in the tweet: *“How low has President Obama gone to tap my phones during the very sacred election process. This is Nixon/Watergate. Bad (or sick) guy!”* Can Donald Trump hear the alarm bells, why would he let his watchdog off the leash again? Ultimately Trump referred to allegations made in an article in the radical right-wing online magazine “Breitbart” the day before. Trump’s White House Chief Strategist, Stephen Bannon, the former editor-in-chief at “Breitbart”, is attempting to monopolize the power for himself. But the more he incites Trump, the faster his time as US President comes to an end. And the watchdog will become a stray dog.

For the 2016 US Presidential Election, the turnout was 58.9 percent. This means that less than 30 percent of US citizens who were eligible to vote did so in favor of Donald Trump. Therefore, there is a good chance that the initiation of impeachment proceedings by the House of Representatives and a vote in favor of the impeachment by the Senate would be well tolerated by the large majority of the American population. The reasons for

impeachment are being provided by Donald Trump himself And despite the smoke and mirrors, the air is becoming increasingly thin. On March 20, 2017, FBI Director James Comey addressed the house intelligence committee in the House of Representatives regarding the allegations of wire tapping tweeted against Barack Obama: *“I have no information that supports those tweets.”* Donald Trump fired the FBI chief on May 9 due to investigations into the Russia affair and described him as a “real spinner” and “crazy” in a conversation with the Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov on May 10. Comey wants to testify at the beginning of June 2017 in a public session of the Senate Intelligence Committee. Trump’s downwards spiral seems to be unstoppable.

Donald Trump and his accomplices threaten both national security in the USA as well as international security. This will convince even the hardened members within the Republican Party to vote for an impeachment, before the ticking time bomb explodes. Thanks to his self-importance and his exaggerated opinion of himself, we cannot expect that Donald Trump will initiate the impeachment by resigning.

The scientists (including 17 Nobel prize winners) who measure the danger levels in the world and adjust the *Doomsday Clock* came to the following conclusion on January 26, 2017: *“The probability of global catastrophe is very high”*. Political leaders should act immediately *“to guide humanity away from the brink”*. ***Otherwise, the civil society must step forward and show the way.***



We cannot wait until Donald Trump turns off the lights!

Hans Küng said:

“Numberless women and men of all regions and religions strive to lead lives not determined by egoism but by commitment to their fellow humans and to the world around them. Nevertheless, all over the world we find endless lies, and deceit, swindling and hypocrisy, ideology and demagoguery. This includes politicians and business people who use lies as a means to success. In the great ancient religious and ethical traditions of humankind we find the directive: You shall not lie! Or in positive terms: Speak and act truthfully! Let us reflect anew on the consequences of this ancient directive: No woman or man, no institution, no state or church or religious community has the right to speak lies to other humans. This is especially true for the leaders of countries, politicians, and political parties, to whom we entrust our own freedoms. When they lie to the faces of their people, when they manipulate the truth, or when they are guilty of venality or ruthlessness in domestic or foreign affairs, they forsake their credibility and deserve to lose their offices and their voters. Conversely, public opinion should support those politicians who dare to speak the truth to the people at all times.”



Abraham Lincoln said:

“And this, too, shall pass away.’ How much it expresses! How chastening in the hour of pride. How consoling in the depths of affliction! ‘And this, too, shall pass away.’”



Abe, as his followers affectionately call him even to this day, will be proved correct as a *Homo progressivus*. And Donald Trump will fail without a metamorphosis – as a *Homo sapiens*!

Guest contribution by Udo van Kampen,
who reported from New York and Brussels as a correspondent
for ZDF from 1995 – 2015

Udo van Kampen said:

“The EU cannot lose its optimism. There has been too much talk of crises and too little about what has been achieved and the opportunities for a united Europe. The “divorce papers” served by Great Britain do not exactly make me happy. But the EU will continue to exist without the British. Austria’s choice of a Federal President from the Green Party and the outcome of the elections in the Netherlands have put a damper on the right-wing populists. At the moment all eyes are on France where it looks like Marine Le Pen will win the first round of voting against Macron. I know France well and sadly it is a very divided country. But I am cautious in my outlook given that I was so wrong about Trump and Brexit. Despite all this, the unification process must continue. I don't want to belong to the generation that threw away the great work done on unification. Our children and grandchildren would never forgive us. I can see no alternative to a united Europe that must work closer together in the future both politically and economically, including a European army under a common command. As long as Donald Trump is in power in the USA, then America cannot guarantee our safety. The President throws everything into question that has made the transatlantic relationship so successful over the decades. He has even brought NATO into question, common values do not count for anything with him. It would be a fatal mistake if we simply shrugged Trump off as a ‘dim-witted fool’. Before it happened I couldn't imagine such a ‘pompous windbag’ like him winning the election. But the US billionaire already announced that he wanted to run for President in a 1999 interview with me for ZDF. At the time when I left his office in Trump Tower, I smiled to myself and thought: what a megalomaniac. Then in 2016 it became a bitter reality.”



Guest contribution by Dr. Heribert Prantl,
who manages the home affairs section
of the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*

After the US election on November 9, 2016, Heribert Prantl said:

“Up until now the following sentence has also applied to populists: You have to know how far you can go. There are limits to expression, even for populists. Trump has blown up these limits – and has been successful in doing so. Trump has broken the US Constitution again and again with and during his election campaign. Before he even had chance to appoint a constitutional judge when he became President, he attacked the Constitution. His election campaign showed that it means nothing to him: He ridiculed the rights of minorities and ignored freedom of religion. He was scornful of women and threatened his political opponents. His electoral success made Trump a leading global figure in new aggressive populism. His racism, nationalism, xenophobia and contempt for the Constitution are provocative and infectious. Trump’s success has encourage nationalists and racists, even in Europe, to drop their restraint, break down the boundaries of decency and to sell the breaking of taboos as political policies. Trump has declared democracy a political enemy. This is a deadly poison. Trump has shown that the media and digital dance about his breaking of taboos, actually helps those wanting to break taboos because now he enjoys a permanent presence which surrounds him like a suit of armor. The European right-wing populists should not be put in the same basket as Trump. But they all share the same disregard and contempt for humanity. The great task is to show people who are unsettled by fears of globalization and social upheaval that poison will not make their situation any better, but will make it worse. In Germany we should not rely on the fact that Germans are less susceptible to populist simplicities than the Americans – even if political stability and political experience are more highly regarded than they are in the USA. It is a great, tremendous but bitter necessity that we must build up social democracy in order to diminish aggressive populism.”



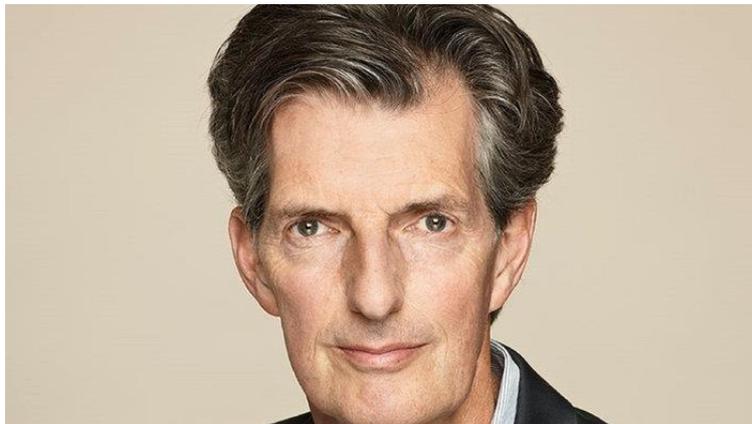
Guest contribution by Andreas Petzold,
publisher of *stern*

Andreas Petzold said:

“Trump. Trump is everywhere. In the media, at breakfast, in telephone calls with friends, on the subway screens, on smartphones and at birthday parties, on social networks. Thanks to the lies of the White House no-one knows anymore what the reality actually is. This is the way it should be, Donald Trump wants to decide for himself what is true and what is false. You feel mentally overwhelmed by the cyclic waves of indignation coming from the President of the United States (you have to force yourself to write that) and his unorganized gang in the Oval Office. They tot up so many atrocities on a daily basis that we can't keep up with sorting out their consequences every evening. Embarrassments, provocations, breakdowns, conspiracy theories, lies, insults, threats, harassment, discrimination. No-one is safe except for his own voters: the press, heads of government, friendly states, his own parts, judges, companies with hundreds of thousands of employees. Donald Trump is waging a war against reality. The killing field extends from the press room of the White House right down to the South China Sea. And the shrapnel flies around us from morning to evening. It's like a movie. But it's not Hollywood, it's Washington. The media outlets and the public are slowly getting tired and bored of the constant lies and rude contradictions. They should get used to the abrasive actions of this late Roman style of governance and accept that the government determines what is good and evil, and what is right and wrong. The White House as the Cathedral of Truth with a pathological narcissist at its heart, who juggles the fate of the most important nation in the world through his gut feelings, with a lack of empathy and greedy for self-affirmation. It cannot go well. But Trump can't do it any other way. He manages the America Store like a CEO who, at the age of 70 years old, won't let anything or anyone question his power. This can be determined just by looking at his personality because he constantly and unabashedly shows his inner self on the outside. Not just in his tweets but also in his many documented failures and quotations. Donald Trump clearly seems to be unaware that with his continuous tweets, he is managing to mutilate the power of his Administration himself. No controversy is insignificant for him. Through his inflationary comments, rebukes and announcements, he has managed to dull the sharpest weapon that the US President has – the spoken or written word!

This communicative behavior will not make the President's political and diplomatic business easier. Political interlocutors usually afford White House novices a great deal of trust. The

assumption is that confidential information remains confidential. In Donald Trump's case, it could be the opposite as foreign politicians in particular approach him with distrust. What is the use of a secure Oval Office when the person in office tweets his findings to the world the next morning? Unfortunately all we can do now is wait for Donald Trump and his minions to fail thanks to his arrogance. The chance of this happening is high. And the lesson to be learned from the Donald Trump Disaster is an old one: Men and women who are notorious for lying lose nothing in responsible political positions – not even in democracies. This is because they deny every society of the opportunity for reasonable discourse as they reinterpret falsehoods as indisputable facts. This is why in the end it is impossible to make a decision based on facts from opposing viewpoints or claims. This is where we are now. In Europe this year, the voters have had the opportunity to escape this dark world. 2017 will see elections in both France and Germany. If the 500 million citizens on the old continent are aware of their history, if they watch how their big brother on the other side of the Atlantic turns itself into a puppet then nationalist extremism should have no chance in Europe."



Guest contribution by Evelyn Seibert, Correspondent
Chief editor of Hörfunk / SWR ARD-Hauptstadtstudio

- Correspondence between Evelyn Seibert and her friend Antoinette Marti, a former elementary school teacher enjoying her retirement -



Evelyn Seibert wrote the following to her French friend Antoinette Marti in April 2017:

“My dear Antoinette,

When I think of Paris, I always think of you. Because you have shown me the spirit of your birth city and its inhabitants. How different we are – but how close we feel. You cooked every luxury restaurant cliché with me under the pseudonym of lentils with garlic and bacon – I have rarely eaten better. You took me to the most expensive deli on the market in the 19th Arrondissement, where things cost half the price – but life is buzzing. You introduced me to the Parisian’s obsession with pick nicks in the Parc de la Villette with a blanket and the concierge from the lodge and few neighbors. You went with me to the small 500 seat theater – with as many exhibitions. I learned that the French devour culture on a daily basis and as matter of course as a good meal. You completely dispelled the stereotype of the apparently arrogant Parisian. You talk to everyone – and everyone talks to you. Even about politics. I also learned from you how political the French are. Millions watch the big televised debates, wait for hours and then discuss them with the baker the next day. You have a cool and critical head hidden behind your Libération that you read in the café in Montmartre every morning. We have explained German and French politics to one another. Peculiarities, prejudices, correct and incorrect assumptions that we make about each other’s nations and population. We have learned how beautiful it is that we are different – and still feel like we completely understand the other. We laugh at the same things, we gossip to our heart’s content about the Germans and the French and get annoyed about the same issues. It doesn’t matter if you were born in France and I was born in Germany. Like you said: ‘It’s good you don’t eat dessert, or you’d get fat’ – that was the first time that I felt like a French person, you would only say something like that to really good French friends. Dear Antoinette, you have a big heart and I would find it terrible if politicians were to poison our noble European hearts.

Ne me quitte pas ...

Your friend, Evi.”

Antoinette Marti answered her German friend, Evelyn Seibert in April 2017:

“My dear friend,

Ne me quitte pas, do not forsake me, I have so many wonderful memories of our friendship. I can remember when we first met in Germany. You invited me, the stranger, round in Cologne. It was such a warm, spontaneous welcome from a German I didn't know. At the time you made sure that I was happy in Germany. I can remember how this German-French friendship began to grow. I can remember your practical, German outfits: Trousers, blouse, boots, rucksack. I can remember when you moved to Paris as a correspondent. You took your job so seriously and are so passionate about your work – you're curious about everything – and in spite of the tight time schedule you always found time for me. I can remember when we lived together in my home town of Paris, our many visits to exhibitions, walking tours, bike trips, travels on the Metro and we always talked the entire time. I can remember who we spoke at length about the politics in our countries. That Angela Merkel carries her own umbrella and lives a relatively normal life. Whilst our President has someone else carry his umbrella, works in a castle under gilded chandeliers and in luxury – and still thinks that he is normal. I can remember how appalled your son was when I crossed the street in Paris when the lights were on red – and of course how he did it himself after a while. I can remember how you changed your style in Paris. After a short while, you only wore skirts and dresses, no more trousers. I can remember how you became more spontaneous. Instead of planning everything thoroughly, you laughingly threw your schedule aside and spontaneously went with me to the theater in Paris. I can remember how you moved back to Germany and invited me to come to Berlin. I was so happy to see how the Berliner's validate their tickets even though there is no barrier like there is on the Paris Metro. I remember how no walls can ever threaten our German-French friendship. I remember thinking that in 20 years time we would still remember all the wonderful things we have in common. And that we should tell our grandchildren and great-grandchildren about our friendship so that they can carry it on. Let us stay together in Europe, ne me quitte pas, your friend Antoinette”

Guest contribution by Jean-Luc Hees,
the director of Radio France from 2009 to 2015 and Dr. Willi Stolz,
the director of Deutschlandradio since 2009

Jean-Luc Hees wrote the following to his German friend Willi Steul in May 2017:

“Cher Willi,

It was no coincidence that we became friends. I think that our ways of life and our countries’ destinies have turned us both into people that care about the common good. People who respect their neighbors and who are deeply grateful for those who keep the peace. In other words Willi: I am under the impression that we are both staunch Europeans. I am worried about the presidential elections in France. I hear quiet, malicious music playing dangerous ideas in the ears of the voters. Not just from the far-right camp who have always confused the differences between nation and country, sovereignty and freedom, the common good and introspection. No, this quiet, disturbing melody is playing from everywhere, as if we have become an old country, tired and backwards, a country that has seen everything, is worn-out, miserable and hostile to any attempts at making a fresh insight. My dear Willi, added to this we have the 11 candidates up for election who do not exactly inspire us to rush to cast our ballot. They have few ideas, if any. Personal attacks, ‘affairs’, lies – or as people say today: ‘post-facts’ are happily trolled out in politics today. The social Networks do their usual, unsupervised damage and the French press, which we freely admit, is not in peak performance. My colleagues are overloaded and overwhelmed by small and large events. I wish that the media would use their following, i.e. the voters, to convey the enthronement of a 6th Republic as a national disaster. I wish that they would describe to the French who have forgotten their history, the frustration of an impotent and corrupt regime that the parties would deliver. I wish that the media told the story of European unification differently, without constantly criticizing the bureaucracy in Brussels. I wish that we spoke of peace every single day. Like that between France and Germany. And the fact that peace is not a gift from the heavens but is the work of courageous and visionary politicians. The current darling of the surveys is Emmanuel Macron. It is not his concrete projects that are drawing the French to him, as his program outline is still very blurred. But he is young, looks good and clearly you would rather give him the key to France rather than entrust it to Marine Le Pen. Will it be enough to become President of the French Republic?

Does the position not need someone with a deeper understanding of the history of our country, our culture and what we call the fight of cultures? In fact, my dear Willi, I don't like guardians of virtues but I wish that this election campaign had a little more of real politics and fewer 'morals'.

Jean Luc Hees”

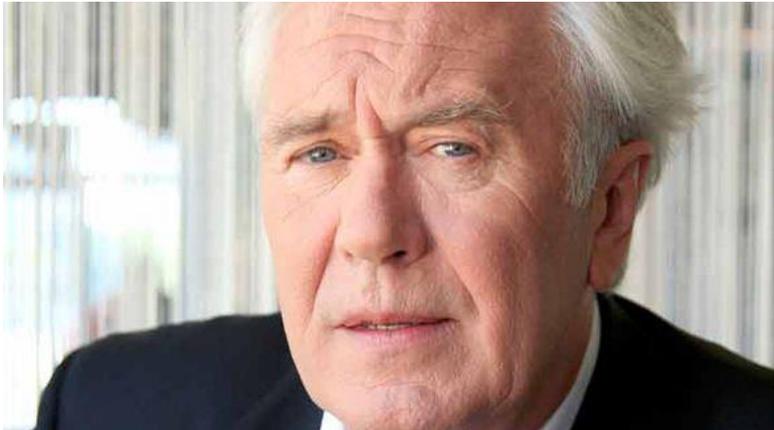
Willi Steul wrote the following to his French friend Jean-Luc Hees in May 2017:

“Mon cher Jean Luc,

You are right, it is no coincidence that we became friends. We were both born shortly after the war in 1951 and are very much aware that our fathers were enemies. Young Lieutenant Steul was even in Normandy for a while when your father was leading a group in the Resistance. It was an emotional moment for us both when “Uncle Herbert”, the 90-year old Resistance comrade of your deceased father, served me a large glass of Calvados with the words: ‘To you, mon petit, it is a great gift that I can drink with you today. The last Germans I saw, I shot at.’ My dear Jean Luc, we certainly also became friends because we both worked as correspondents and saw the world. And we realized the greatness of our European culture even in times of war and misery, but we also realized the terrifying introspection of our societies. I read your letter with a melancholy that divides me and I fight against. Yes, I can also hear this ‘small insidious music’ that you so wonderfully described, it has become a catchy tune among people. I can also hear it in Germany. The sound of selfishness that has grown out of diffuse fears. I see all too well that it diminishes the European gift of quick trips over the borders and cheap flights to Riga. Yes, I also occasionally despair at our own journalistic class who are losing sight of the grandiose vision and are stuck behind the cheap criticism of Brussels bureaucracy. You are quite right, the friendship between France and Germany did not come from the heavens but is the work of courageous politicians with vision. But they cannot do it alone, my friend, they need us journalists too, in fact all of us. And I see this clearly. On Sunday, I was in Berlin at the Gendarmenmarkt. Here, as well as in other places, every Sunday many people protest in favor of Europe. I am also not really worried about our beloved France. It is amazing how a political establishment can dismantle itself. Yes, we don't know

yet what the ‘darling of the surveys’ Emanuel Macron can really do. But he inspires hope. And your healthy, republican reflex will certainly put a stop to the disaster that is a 6th Republic under President Marine Le Pen. Cheer up my old friend.

Willi Steul”



Guest contribution by Professor Friedhelm Hufen, from the Johannes
Gutenberg University in Mainz and Professor Jean-Philippe Derosier,
from the University for Health and Law in Lille

- A lively exchange of letters between two professors
of public law and constitutional and administrative law -

Friedhelm Hufen wrote to his French colleague Jean Philippe Derosier:

“Cher collègue,

60 years ago, European integration began with the signing of the Treaties of Rome. As a young man, I stood on the market square in Bonn in September 1962 and listened enthralled to the cry by Charles de Gaulles: ‘Long live the German-French friendship!’ This idea became an integral part of my life. During my studies, I enjoyed the proximity of Freiburg to the Alsace. We always had to cross over the border and had to make sure that we had changed our German currency for French. European law and German-French comparative law were ‘fanciful’ subjects that were just coming into existence. What developments have been made since then thanks to European integration and the German-French friendship! Today, all Europeans enjoy freedom of movement and other fundamental freedoms within a huge region. Basic rights are guaranteed by the European Charter of Fundamental Rights and the European Convention of Human Rights. In the European Single Market, we enjoy not just a tremendous diversity of supply, but also ever increasing consumer protection. Today, European law is a comprehensive legal system that is not just a familiar tool for every student, but is constantly being developed further by European law experts like you. We use the same currency and don’t even notice when we cross national borders. 60 years ago this was beyond even our wildest dreams. It is hard to believe that when people speak of Europe today it is more in the context of a crisis than it is of success. Narrow minded nationalists and other demagogues want to return Europe to the 18th Century. Do they not know what is at stake? Europe is inconceivable without France. We cannot allow this to happen. It is the job of science, practicing lawyers and high school teachers to preserve these achievements and build on them. Not in the sense of rigid bureaucracy, but perhaps with more flexibility than in the past, closer to the people, emphasizing diversity not stamping it out. Together we are helping to ensure that schools and universities in Germany and France remain at the lively core of an ever developing European Union so that everything that has been achieved over the last 60 years is not under threat. Sincerely,

Friedhelm Hufen, April 2017”

Jean-Philippe Derosier's reply to his German colleague Friedhelm Hufen

"Dear Colleague,

Your letter brought up emotional memories of my family – in particular the conversations I used to have with my grandmother. Her life reflected the history of European integration. She was born in Hamburg in 1915, so during the First World War and was a young girl during the crisis of 1929 and when Hitler seized power. She lived in Berlin during the Second World War and bore two daughters in 1941 and 1942; the second daughter – my mother – was born in the middle of an air raid in an air raid shelter. Fearing the Red Army, she fled to Switzerland on foot in 1944 with the two children. Even though I didn't live through this era with her, it has always felt like it was my own memories since I was a child and I know what a high price humanity pays for war, xenophobia, human rights violations and the abandonment of a nation. I know that solidarity rather than division, cooperation instead of opposition, safeguarding instead of violating human rights are of fundamental importance for the preservation of peace and democratic order. The way you remember de Gaulle's state visit on September 4, 1962, I remember the evening of November 9, 1989. I remember watching our television set speechless but happy as the Berlin Wall fell. Today, Europe is not just an abstract concept but a real unit. Thanks to the European Union we can move freely across the region and work and study in all the different countries. Thanks to the European Court of Human Rights, our human rights are recognized and protected. The European Court of Justice ensures that the principles of the constitution and the rights of citizens are reinforced across Europe. None of this would be possible without the determined will of the French and Germans who have put their historical hostility behind them and opened up to a lasting friendship. From the Paris Treaties to the Élysée Treaty, the Treaties of Rome and the Maastricht and Lisbon Treaties, the cooperation between Germany and France has always been the driving force and cornerstone of Europe. Europe is part of our lives and the German-French relationship is part of life in Europe. Today it cannot be called into question without destroying it. The risk of bringing back the darkest hours of our history is too great. In contrast: In order to strengthen Europe, Germany and France must continue to walk hand in hand like Helmut Kohl and François Mitterand on September 22, 1984 because this Europe can still profit in terms of democracy, transparency and efficiency. Our

history has taught us what is at stake if there are cracks in the structure of Europe. It is now up to us as professors and researchers to teach the benefits of partnership, cooperation and friendship.

Sincerely,

Jean-Philippe Derosier, April 2017”



Guest contribution by Andreas Ross,
who has his finger on the pulse as editor of the
Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung in Washington, D.C.

In the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung* on March 5, 2017, Andreas Ross wrote:
“The world is currently haunted by some ‘despots with a heart’. Here we’ll check on what makes some of them tick: **Is there a policy hiding behind Trump’s gaudy facade?**
Donald Trump is not finished with his election campaign. Every morning he tweets a new dispute. If there are questions over connections with the Kremlin, the President dismisses them as ‘fakes news spread by the Democrats’. Or he asks a room full of reporters: ‘Does anyone really think that Hillary Clinton will treat Russia harsher than Donald Trump?’ When Trump was asked about anti-Semitic attacks in America whilst visiting the Israeli Prime Minister, he answered with rhetoric about his imaginary landslide victory over Clinton and described the ‘enormous enthusiasm out there’- for him, Donald Trump. At the beginning of the week, in front of the Republican and Democratic governors of the fifty states, he jokingly proposed that they should allow the health insurance market to simply collapse ‘because then we can all blame the Democrats and President Obama’.

The President is not just continuing the campaign he started over 20 months ago at full pelt, he is carrying on with his life. Decades ago Trump decided and declared that the only thing worse than bad press is no press. The Trump of today that rails against the allegedly imaginary wealth of ‘fake’ informants is the same that once called reporters using a false name to reveal lascivious details in order to expose his divorce drama even further. At the time, Trump boasted in ‘Playboy’: ‘The show is Trump and tickets are sold out everywhere. I’ve had fun doing it and will continue to have fun, and I think most people enjoy it.’ His vision only appears to extend to the next morning’s newspaper.

Facebook and Twitter have not taught him to think in the long-term. For Trump, there is only here and now. Every allegation that he contradicts what he has previously said just rolls off his back. The biographer Marc Fisher recently wrote the following in the ‘Washington Post’: ‘In The Trump Show, what happened yesterday, last week or 10 years ago is always crowded out by what the master of ceremonies is doing right now. He has been, and must remain, the sole focus of attention.’ Further perspectives expose the expectation that Trump could still adjust his manner to the dignity and importance of the office, as naive. He has never stopped working as the director of The Trump Show: Not at the height of happiness, nor the depths of his marriage crisis; neither in times of bankruptcy, nor in the primaries; not after the

establishment kowtowed to the Republican Party, nor in the transition phase between electoral triumph and taking office. And not at the White House.

The President probably still believes what he proclaims every day: that 'he feels obligated to the American people with every fiber' of his being, but he apparently only includes Trump voters in this. But he has not set himself the hard job of improving the career opportunities of every American who fears being left behind in light of technological advancements. The President is happy with the cheaper applause that he gets when he tramples over migrants, minorities and their advocates in the Washington 'swamp'.

Last year many people advised Trump to moderate himself. But he won on his own terms. The very essence of his life as a salesman for the 'Trump' brand is 'brashness sells'. This also seems to be confirmed by the surprisingly broad coalition of Republicans who were unsettled or even angry but who have closed in behind Trump for the time being. There is no longer a great deal of open resistance against the nationalism, protectionism and chauvinism that the President affirmed in Congress a few days ago. There, relief was written all over the faces of the Republican members of parliament and senators as they saw that Trump CAN deliver an emotional and eloquent speech without grotesque aberrations.

During the election campaign Hillary Clinton united the conservatives behind Trump. But because the Democrat is no longer a frightening presence, Trump has discarded her in favor of a new enemy: the media. For many members of Congress, Trump has gone too far in his 'war' against this 'opposition party'. But there is a certain amount of satisfaction at the insolence Trump shows to the predominantly left-liberal press when accusing them of 'fake news', nevertheless the right wingers use the media like putty in their hands. The President of America has successfully convinced the right-wing half that he has fulfilled his election promises while his predecessor only spoke of them.

The United States may actually stand on the edge of a transformation if the aspiring actors are able to harness Trump for their own purposes. But up until now it has been the fantasy of a compulsive self-marketer. The announcement that the budgets for environmental protection, development aid and other programs of more than 50 million dollars per year will

be used to upgrade the military, is more of a motto than a plan at the moment. Also, no-one know exactly what it meant when Iran was given an 'official warning' by the White House. Measuring the chest beating, Trump's first 40 days lack substance. He has canceled many of Obama's projects before they have become a reality. So there will be no Trans-Pacific Partnership within the meaning of TPP treaty which Trump's Chief Strategist Steve Bannon stated was the 'turning point in modern American history'. Water protection regulations will also not come in to force. Instead Trump opened the door for two controversial oil pipelines. Schools don't need to worry anymore if they refuse transgender students the freedom to choose which toilet they use. Trump has also stated that for each new regulation, two old ones must be removed. He has nominated a conservative judge for the empty seat in the Supreme Court but still does not know whether the Senate will confirm his choice. He has shamelessly taken credit for every investment announcement by companies in order to stylize himself as the savior of the labor market. Even in terms of immigration policy, the u-turn is less tangible than the fear that runs among the migrants. The number of deportations will increase significantly only when Congress approves the money for the tens of thousands of new police officers and deportation prisons. Even the border wall remains an abstract idea as long as the financing is not approved; the only real outrage in Mexico whose President is being punished for his willingness to negotiate. When trying to fake a 'Muslim blockade' through entry bans for refugees and the citizens of seven states in the Islamic world, Trump's team tripped over its own feet. Courts shot down the first chaotic Executive Order. The new draft still breathes the demon of discrimination but compared to the first one it is tamer. Trump even counts among his successes the obligatory job of his Secretary of Defense to check the strategy in the fight against the 'Islamic State': He then personally issued the order.

Donald Trump is the path, Donald Trump is the aim, but Donald Trump is no leader. The President complains about 'Obamacare' on an almost daily basis and promises American patients top quality healthcare. But he doesn't bother to make Congress uphold the reform to the reform. 'No-one could have known' complained Trump to the experienced governors, 'how complicated healthcare can be.' He also doesn't want to be drawn on global questions. He doesn't want to state the Israel and Palestine will only find peace as sovereign neighbors. One state, two states – 'I like what they like' proclaimed Trump. He is the same with the European Union. It is great but only when they see things the same as he does. 'If they are

happy, then I am in favor of it.' Trump remains stubborn in the view that 'torture works'. But because his Secretary of Defense said 'give me a pack of cigarettes and a couple of beers' to take into the cell, he is also right. Of course Trump is not always this flexible. Because the new National Security Advisor to the White House, H.R. McMaster, echoed Obama in saying that equating Islam and Jihadism was counterproductive, Trump was apparently inspired to declare a war on 'radical Islamic terror.'

Lieutenant General McMaster is the successor of Michael Flynn who was fired after just three weeks and three days in the job. He is also not the only one who is trying to figure out how he can pursue his own goals behind the scenes at The Trump Show. In addition to McMaster, two retired Generals, James Mattis and John Kelly are at the head of the Ministry of Defense and the Department of Homeland Security, and along with the Vice President Mike Pence they are trying to dampen the dust storm the Trump has whipped up in the international community. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson is widely seen as representative of a more traditional staunch Republican foreign policy. However, the oil executive has it worse than Mattis and Kelly. He can find no experienced leaders in the Trump-skeptical diplomats and is supposed to squeeze billions out of his budget to upgrade the 'Generals'. It is obvious to everyone in the foreign policy team that they have to keep putting out the fires that their Commander in Chief has lit. Pence, Mattis and Tillerson have become known as an alliance in Europe. Mattis contradicted Trump in Iraq and issued an assurance that nobody wants to take the country's oil. Kelly straightened out and praised Trump's comments to the President in Mexico, there will be no mass deportations, least of all military ones. Foreign policy makers can be comforted by the fact that unpredictability opens up room for maneuvering. In Moscow, President Putin mourns the era gone by as he foresaw Washington's reaction.

Any efforts to ensure continuity in foreign policy are thwarted by the advisor clique surrounding Steve Bannon. Even this former naval officer, Pentagon functionary, investment banker, Reagan admirer, Hollywood producer, Tea-Party propagandist, Wall Street traitor, enemy of Islam and Internet publicist has not gone through life for decades without a solid ideology. But in his most recent incarnation, Trump's excitable Chief Strategist is making sure that America renounces 'globalism'. According to him, at the 'innermost core' of the White House is the conviction that 'we are not just an economy in some borderless market place but a nation with a culture – and with the right to exist'. In the first few days, Bannon was given

a permanent seat on the Principals Committee of the National Security Council. There, he can say that Islam would jeopardize national security. Or that integration projects such as the EU damage the healthy vision of a world of sovereign nation states in which America the Superpower would always retain the upper hand. Allegedly Trump sometimes quips in the Oval Office that he still doesn't know if Bannon is left or right-wing.

But it doesn't matter to the President.

Bannon has set the domestic policy target of 'reducing the administrative state' – he might have more fun in Trump's cabinet with this policy than in foreign policy. Under the 'Freedom of Choice' banner, Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos leads a paradigm shift away from public schools to private education providers. However, the Federal states put up the lion's share of expenditure on education which is why billionaire DeVos cannot force this change to take place. Attorney General Jeff Sessions wants to leave states and municipalities alone. He doesn't want their police troops watching as closely as Washington when violence against African Americans or Latinos raises questions. And Scott Pruitt put himself forward for the position as Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency as when he was the Attorney General of the oil-rich state Oklahoma he fought against exceeding federal competence limits. He wants to do away with water protection and other policies and burn more fossil fuels, and he wants to reduce the Agency's budget.

Steven Mnuchin, a former banker for Goldman Sachs, is Secretary of the Treasury and will loosen the chains restricting policy in the financial sector after the 2008 crash as soon as possible.

Many of these things excite the Republicans (and investors on the stock exchange). Of the thousands of assembled opponents to the social state, weapons enthusiasts, evangelicals, Tea Party purists, climate change skeptics and full-blooded capitalists, not one contradicted Trump in February at the 'Conservative Political Action Conference' when he unceremoniously declared to the Trumpists: 'Finally you've got a President!' But the President also demands massive expenditure for infrastructure, blackmails groups of companies or meddles in company decisions. His skepticism about free trade divides Republicans. In addition local left-wing activists have been demonstrating through the country since January, showing how well they studied the Obama-hating Tea Party uprising. Dozens of Republicans

came face-to-face with angry citizens in their election districts. The nervousness on both sides will not go away when it starts to affect households and cuts are made in favor of the Pentagon losers.

Because whether Trump wants it or not: This is Congress' moment. This means that the leaders of Congress, Paul Ryan and Mitch McConnell are the most powerful men – if they aren't turned into powerless puppets any time soon by the new centrifugal forces in their parties. Both are fans of Trump but no-one holds it against them. They need the President's favor in order to finally implement a conservative agenda. After all there has been no Republican majority in Congress under a Republican President since 2007. At the moment there are big divisions between moderate and hard-liners. The more Trump gravitates towards Bannon's line, the more unrest among the representatives and senators. The tax reforms defended by Ryan as 'Speaker of the House' have already received hardly any votes in the Senate and have run into skepticism in the White House- Even the healthcare policy is limited to the common denominator of the Republican's aversion to 'Obamacare'. Fiscally conservative quarrels over the expensive plans for a wall and wavering before a Trump-sized stimulus package.

And, as if the issues are not difficult enough, the dispute over the possible Trump-Moscow contact is poisoning the atmosphere. Ryan and McConnell cannot miss the moment in which they must vigorously confront the President in order to defend the Constitution. Up until now they have demonstrably watched how Trump bends the rules with his allegations concerning alleged electoral fraud, traitors in the intelligence services, the media as the public enemy and undutiful judges.

Even Trump's authoritarianism comes without an ideological superstructure. He doesn't think any argument through, why should the American President have more power. In fact only days earlier he suggested the opposite as he assured people that the country would have been better off if George W. Bush and Barack Obama had conducted their terms in office from the beach. The division of powers seems to disturb him most of all, that sometimes there are people in power who are not Donald Trump. Anyone else who draws attention to themselves is fought off with tweets, interviews and demonstrations. According to the laws

of entertainment, the public's fascination will wear out at some point. But the show master in the White House can up the ante at anytime and compel the entire world to look. America is taking a journey into the unknown. Only Donald Trump has already arrived."

Source: Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung from March 5, 2017.

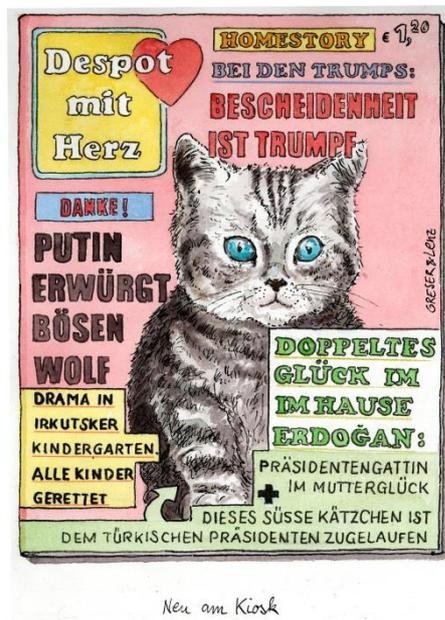
Article: "Is there a policy hiding behind Trump's gaudy facade?" Author: Andreas Ross.

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Neu am Kiosk

Guest contribution by Lars Hennemann,
Editor-in-chief of *Echo* newspapers in Darmstadt

On April 29, 2017 (Trump's 100th day in office) Lars Hennemann said:

Donald Trump's presidency has started just as we expected. You cannot rely on anything – except on the constant surprises and the fact that Trump considers the fact that he is President very important. He is happy for the work to be done by others sometimes, like when he working on his golf handicap for example. Because his team was also not continuously complete, a shadow falls over the first assessment, there is little light to be seen. Trump quickly got rid of his National Security Advisor, Flynn and the sinister Chief Ideologist Bannon has also been moved back and forth. The entry ban for Muslims is keeping the courts busy, Obamacare is still in existence after a disloyal show from his party who should really support him. In foreign policy the tour-de-force in Syria is still the (enforced?) u-turn against Russia, sudden pledges of allegiance to NATO and a violent rattling of sabers at North Korea. Everything is more of a show than a concept. And still his followers like him, and no semi-dictatorial conditions have arisen in the oldest democracy in the world. So far the government and the judicial system have kept the erratic executive in check. Of course to take from this the idea that everything is not that bad, would be fundamentally wrong. The USA is still working – despite Trump. But even with the best will in the world, it cannot be called business as usual. The world would be better served by an America that hadn't crippled itself with brutal ideological battles. But in order to change this, Donald Trump needs a political vision that consists of more than just his ego.



Guest contribution by Marc Pitzke,
who has his finger on the pulse as the editor of the *SPIEGEL ONLINE*
in New York

On April 29, 2017, Marc Pitzke said:

“Donald Trump will celebrate his 100th day in office where he feels most at home – in the arms of his ecstatic followers. In Harrisburg, the capital city of Pennsylvania where he won by a narrow margin in November: He wants to celebrate at a mass rally. His election campaign never ends. His election campaign was the same as his first three months in office: chaotic, confused, deafening – a daily whirlwind of ‘seriously?’ and ‘will be’. It is hard to balance it out. What counts, what doesn’t, what stays? A checklist helps to dampen the continuous shock with math. What has he achieved, which promises he has kept, where has he done a u-turn? Entry ban, healthcare and tax reform, Supreme Court, Mexico wall, Russia affair, Syrian war, North Korea. Some wrote ‘the worst President’. Some say ‘it could have been worse’. They are all correct and that’s the problem. ‘I can do everything on my own’ proclaimed Trump at his inauguration. 100 days later and he has done nothing, but he is everywhere. He dominated America’s cable news channels, social media and small talk like a grotesque reality TV drama. No day is without Trump: His word spaghetti served with Twitter tirades, absurd Executive Orders and curious PR appearances no longer annoys anyone. The reality TV star has moved the boundaries of what is acceptable and defined then anew as President. Absurdity has become part of everyday life. But behind the mask of the Quote Clown is a democracy-hating plutocrat who has stumbled into the most powerful office in the world – and is slowly learning how to use the power. ‘Who knew that healthcare could be so complicated?’ mused Trump – only significant because his first attempt that failed in Congress would have taken away the health insurance for millions. His second attempt, which is currently being worked on, should be more successful – and more brutal. The autocratic cold disguised as populism: Unfortunately Trump’s base electorate will only feel it once it’s too late. They still flock to him in stoic ignorance, obsessed with his military muscle games and the hope of an America that is so ‘great’, and monochrome, like never before. Others can see it already. Migrants, blacks, Muslims, gays: Trump, flanked by the southern Attorney General Jeff Sessions, is taking away their rights that they fought for over generations. Families are torn apart, minorities abused and the innocent imprisoned.”

Meanwhile, the number of anti-Semitic attacks has increased by 83 percent. The right-wing radical sidelines are merging into the mainstream – and even the White House is silent, but who knows for how long. The fear of others who fire up the extremists and were the pulse of the US election campaign also runs through Trump’s government business. He still conjures up the image of a nation under constant siege, threatened by foreigners, criminals, dark-skinned people. He does this to enforce his draconian laws which so far has failed, but for how long. His macho airs reveal what the historian Christopher Clark described as a ‘crisis of masculinity’ that drove Europe to World War One. This also explains the tear-resistant tape between the millionaire in the golden tower and the millions of unemployed in the provincial areas that haven’t just lost their jobs over the years, but have also lost their dignity. This is why up until now they have ignored his downsides. The intellectual indifference, uneducated simplicity, narcissism, lies, adolescent outbursts and lack of decency. Who else speaks of air offenses and the ‘most beautiful piece of chocolate cake’ that he ever saw, in the same sentence? Who else complains about his golfing predecessor and then spends more time on the golf course than any other President? Who else says that NATO is obsolete, then says it is ‘no longer obsolete’? Who else says that he has sent an armada to North Korea, and then denies it only to now threaten the nuclear power of Pyongyang with a ‘major, major conflict’? Careless warning shots that shock the world. They see him like his world view, anchored in his first state budget: Money for tanks, no money for the poor. Natural parks are released for mining activities, coasts for oil drilling and rivers for industrial exploitation – all to serve the drill-baby-drill ideology. This is not even his ideology, he has none as his constant flip-flopping proves. His only driving force is his ego, for everything else he lets himself be influenced by billionaires, lobbyists and family members who moved into the West Wing with him in order further themselves before it’s too late and to use him as a ‘blunt instrument’ as his advisor Steve Bannon put it. Consciously or unconsciously, Trump’s words and actions are a frontal attack against democratic institutions.

He has decimated the civil servants, discredited election procedures, prefers to circumvent Congress and 'dissolve' unpopular tribunals because they are the last layer of constitutional protection to defy him. He also hates the media, but he needs them in order to feed his need for self-representation. The system is still hanging in there. 100 days of Trump: Yes, it could have been worse. But there are still 1360 days until the next US presidential election."



Guest contribution by Thomas Gutschker,
foreign affairs and security issues editor
for the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*

In the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung* on May 28, 2017, Thomas Gutschker wrote:

TRUMP, THE ENEMY: *Europe cannot rely on this American President. Donald Trump traveled for nine days: Saudi Arabia, Israel, Europe. A very brief assessment in the President's Twitter jargon: great, amazing, bad. The Saudi were great, buying weapons galore and dancing with sabers. The Israelis were also wonderful, true friends and a great holocaust memorial. The Pope, yeah he was OK. Still, the palace was great, nice robes but everything was so stiff. But these European types were really annoying. Talking all day about world trade, climate protection and refugees, but without paying their bills. Naturally the Germans are in pole position – really bad. This is probably similar to how Trump rated his first overseas trip as President, where he was not allowed to play golf even once. He could at least feel like he was at home in Trump Tower in shimmering, golden, air-conditioned Saudi Arabia. His taste, his flair for business, his sense of family. And with his portrait on all the walls. No-one celebrated him in Europe. Instead he was faced with admonishments, worried faces, and endless work sessions. A foreign world. The only common ground: The others also think he's unique. At first, Trump's predecessor Obama was judged as having no idea about Europe and as being the first President of the United States in the Pacific. This was premature: Just because Obama was born in Hawaii and considered China a challenge, he didn't turn his back on the old world. He was respected there and was even celebrated initially, and he confessed to holding the same values. He reigned in America's claim to leadership, but after the Russian invasion of the Crimea and in east Ukraine he provided NATO partners with support in the form of tanks and soldiers. When Obama spoke at the German Protestant Kirchentag in Berlin this week, his words touched the hearts of many Europeans: wise, considered, cosmopolitan. How different compared to his successor! Trump sees every issue through minuscule American glasses, he doesn't represent the diversity of his great country, but instead the simplicity of a furious electorate. Global problems such as migration and climate change only interest him in terms of what they mean for American jobs. Common values - what do they cost? Has an American President ever been so inflated and yet so small? Add to this his rude behavior. It was no small act when he pushed the Prime Minister of Montenegro out of the way just because he wanted to stand in the front row. It is an expression of his disrespect for allies; Montenegro is the 29th member of the alliance.*

Trump's appearance at the new NATO headquarters was the political low point this week. The allies also built him a golden bridge – a memorial to the collapse of the World Trade Center made from a steel beam. The 9/11 memorial was also a turning point for NATO: For the first and only time in its history, it explained its case for the alliance. It was an act of solidarity which was underpinned by tens of thousands of soldiers in Afghanistan – 1100 Europeans lost their lives there. At this moment, it would have been easy for Trump to commit to the alliance and the mutual assistance clause.

But instead he continued what he began in the election campaign. Trump didn't speak of solidarity but of money instead. This time he invented stories of "enormous sums of money" which the allies allegedly still owe his country. He also patronizingly added that he wouldn't ask how much it had cost to build the headquarters. Over the past few months, Trump's ministers have committed themselves to collective defense. But up until now there has been no such public commitment. Vladimir Putin in Moscow must have enjoyed listening to the speech. If the leader of NATO talks like this, then Russia really has nothing to worry about. Yes, he might even feel bold enough to continue to destabilize NATO states - a quick look at the defense budget is enough.

Of course America has every right to demand that the other member states contribute more towards common security. Obama did this as well. The inflammatory speech delivered in 2011 by his first Secretary of Defense Gates when he left the alliance is still fresh in NATO's mind. At the time, the defense budget was in free fall and the German Defense Minister zu Guttenberg boasted about the record savings that German Armed Forces have yet to recover from. Gates warned that if it carried on as it had been then at some point some American politician would come into power who wouldn't be shaped by NATO and would think that the investments made in it were too expensive. Trump is exactly this person, even though at 70-years old he must have seen enough of the Cold War.

Except: It did not go as far as his generation feared. The NATO member states have stabilized their defense budgets, not all equally but enough so that the NATO Secretary General can speak of a trend reversal. Germany for example, does not look bad: Since 2014 the defense budget has increased by an impressive 13 percent. But because of the strong economic growth, the two percent NATO target is still in the distant future. The target is measured according to gross domestic product. On the other hand, Greece is a role model as it is one of

the five states that meets this target. But they spend 40 percent less on their military than in 2009 as a result of the economic slowdown. Not really a role model for the other states. The trend reversal in European defense expenditure is linked to the shock of the Crimea. Since then, Russia has returned to being the focus of the alliance. The member states at the eastern borders of the alliance feel that their sovereignty is being threatened, and this time it's not just paranoia. Members like Germany and France have already experienced what happens when Moscow put their cyber troops into action. For America of course, this is only right, but it is precisely this that is Trump's weak point. He himself, his son-in-law Jared Kushner and his closest employees in the election campaign are suspected of collaborating with the Kremlin. This takes away his moral high-ground for demanding more money. The optimists among the transatlantics had hoped that Trump would present himself differently to Europe: practical politics, pragmatic, obligatory. This was the hope after his dealings with China. Trump seems to have accepted China's President as a partner and in doing so has thrown away a central promise from his election campaign where he promised to declare China as a currency manipulator, impose punitive tariffs on them and, and, and. But this does not give us a deeper look into Trump's global rules, but instead shows only his unpredictability. He has only a low level of expertise and no political experience. His analytical capacity is limited. Trump lives in a world of short messages. Lines of thought that cannot be communicated in 140 characters appear to make him uneasy. Therefore, it comes down to who can simplify their relationship enough to catch the President's attention. Sometimes it's the hardcore nationalists like his Chief Strategist, Bannon, sometimes it's the realists like his National Security Advisor, McMaster.

When Trump complains about German trade surplus then it's the Bannon Sound from his election campaign. The President just ignores the fact that his economy is just as dependent on German machines as it is on direct German investments. The Chancellor has already explained this to him. She also told him how German companies can help to ensure better vocational training in his country. Last week his Secretary of Labor, Acosta, was in Germany where he enthused to the German-American Chamber of Commerce about how BMW is the largest exporter of cars in America. But Acosta is also far from Trump's ears. Angela Merkel is always closer when they meet. Apparently at the G7 summit she prevented Trump from declaring climate change as obsolete. He also wants to read the Pope's environment encyclical. Maybe by the time the G20 summit in Hamburg comes round, he

might have forced himself to accept at least half of the Paris Climate Agreement. But we shouldn't place too much hope on this. What Merkel thought of Trump's NATO appearance could be read on her face: nothing.

After this week, the Europeans should have a clearer idea of whether they must represent their values and interests without America. The European Union is already a world power when it comes to trade and doesn't have to let itself be dictated to by others. It could even profit from Trump's protectionist attitude. In the end, Brussels is negotiating free trade agreements with 20 states at the same time, including Japan, Australia and Mexico. The situation is much more difficult when it comes to climate change. But the large emerging countries have seen that they have to take action even out of just pure self-interest. Alliances without the United States are also possible here. And in terms of defense, Europe has a long road before it. But as always: This path is an opportunity to bring the continent together.



About the author

Eckhard Fahlbusch, environmental and energy consultant and writer

Born on January 7, 1957 in Bad Gandersheim. The mechanical engineer has given advice at an economical and political level regarding environmental protection for over 30 years. In 2003, he founded the consulting company EFA Batt Consulting and promotes an integrated, networked and public energy revolution based on the four pillars of renewable energy, energy storage, electric mobility and energy efficiency.

The author lives and works together with his wife in harmony with nature and technology in an idyllic atmosphere on a former vineyard. Since 2012, he has exemplified the energy revolution in restored buildings here.

For more information, visit www.efa-batt.de.



Author's declaration: The proceeds from the sale of this polemic will be donated in full to existing charitable foundations and organizations.

Author's comments

This polemic is the first in our *Homo progressivus* series of books. It is based on our primer "*Homo progressivus – The energetic Rebellion Or: Saving Earth from its most vexing virus*".

These pages contain 13 guest contributions that all reach the same conclusion, namely that we are on the wrong track with autocrats and extremist populists. At our main site mentioned above, we have 225 people and organizations that guide us on the right path. And we are always growing...

If we compress the 4.6 billion years of Earth's history into just one calendar year, then *Homo sapiens* first saw the light of day on New Year's eve after 23:00. Our world is both beautiful and frustrating at the same time, because *Homo sapiens* has only been on the evolutionary scale for about 30 minutes and is in danger of disappearing in a evolutionary cul-de-sac.

The vital organs of *Homo sapiens* are adjusting their functions. The human species is lying in the ICU along with other species that are caught in their wake. Our chances of survival are low – if we do not rise up and fight **together**.



Someone once told me that you can be what you want to be. I decided to become a *Homo progressivus*.

Works by the same author

Eckhard Fahlbusch and Silke Koglin: *Homo Progressivus – Der energische Aufstand*
Oder: Wie sich Planet Erde vom ärgsten Virus befreit, Horrweiler September 2016

Eckhard Fahlbusch and Silke Koglin: *Homo progressivus – Der energische Aufstand*
Oder: Wie sich Planet Erde vom ärgsten Virus befreit, E-Book, Horrweiler December 2016

Eckhard Fahlbusch and Silke Koglin: *Homo progressivus – The Energetic Rebellion*
or: Saving Earth from Its Most Vexing Virus, Horrweiler 2017

Eckhard Fahlbusch: *Homo progressivus – Une résistance acharnée*
Ou: comment se libérer d'une part du système arbitraire et de l'aberration politique
qu'incarne Donald Trump et d'autre part des autocrates et populistes de droite

Eckhard Fahlbusch (Hg): Ein Buch zur ganzheitlich vernetzten Energiewende:
Batterien als Energiespeicher: Beispiele, Strategien, Lösungen, Berlin 2015