

A 'Post West' Future

by Pepe Escobar via judd - Asia Times *Monday, Feb 20 2017, 7:03am*

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Go 'post-West,' young man

The 2017 Munich Security Conference arguably gave the game away right at the outset, via its annual “[conversation starter](#)” for the three-day event, a report titled Post-Truth, Post-West, Post-Order?

“Post-truth” is the new normal, as this is The Age of Spin. “Post-order” would in fact mean a remixed, neo-Westphalian order embracing multipolarity, which the unipolar establishment will fight to the death. And “post-West” is meaningless, because there is no crisis of the West. The real problem is a Made in the West confluence of neoliberalism and “humanitarian” imperialism.

It would be fruitless to expect Western political elites to abandon their carefully cultivated denial about the multiple ravages perpetrated all across the developing world in the name of neoliberalism posing as “liberal democracy.”

And it would be fruitless to expect Western political elites to admit the post-9/11 world - configured as a Pentagon-denominated Long War - morphed into a regime change drive in the Middle East that then liberated the gift-that-keeps-on-giving Pandora’s box of Salafi-jihadism.

The best Western political elites could come up with at their huddle that ended February 19 is this pearl of self-pity: “Donald Trump’s comments about Nato being ‘obsolete’ have caused great uncertainty among America’s allies, especially in Central and Eastern Europe. The European Union is under pressure, too, as it has to deal with Brexit, a populist surge, the refugee crisis, a potential return of the euro crisis, jihadist attacks, and a revisionist Russia.”

Let no facts interfere with Western toil in this valley of tears. Forget about depicting Nato for what it is - a military axis featuring an all-powerful leader and a bunch of vassals configured as a global Robocop.

And forget about admitting that the only unifying factor capable of explaining the predicament of Western elites must always be the Ultimate Bogeyman: “revisionist” Russia.

New order birth pangs

So what really happened in Munich?

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov [re-explained](#) the obvious: we are in the birth pangs (remember Condi Rice?) of a new multipolar order that is under no Western hegemony, but configured instead by sovereign states following international law while respecting their own national interests.

That implies, on the bilateral US-Russia front, “pragmatic relations, mutual respect, understanding our special responsibility for global stability.” Trump had called Nato “obsolete.” Lavrov unwrapped the concept, stressing Nato “remained a Cold War institution.” Lavrov himself delivered the

clinger: "If you want, you can call it a 'post-West' world order."

Now that's absolute anathema for Western political elites. Hence Nato Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg's [non-denial denial](#): "Our aim is not to isolate Russia. We don't want a new Cold War, we don't want a new arms race, what we do is measured and defensive." So those puny troops deployed to the Baltics and Poland are just a deterrence against "a more assertive Russia."

Running parallel to all this was the Mattis & Pence European Ally Appeasement Tour.

James Mattis and Michael Pence enthusiastically saluted the "transatlantic bond." Mattis described Nato as the "bedrock" of transatlantic security. But no matter what they said, at the heart of the matter is cold hard cash: the deadline is just one year away for America's European allies to lift military spending from an average EU level of 1.4% to 2.0% of GDP. That translates into a whopping US\$100 billion more a year for a bunch of austerity-ravaged European nations.

Mattis channeled undiluted Pentagon doctrine when he [evoked](#) an "arc of instability on Nato's periphery." And while pledging the proverbial "unwavering commitment" to Nato, Pence forcefully stressed Washington would "hold Russia accountable" for wars in Ukraine and Syria. These were Mattis and Pence's coded messages to the Beltway.

Crucial in all this: not a single word on the EU. It was all about Nato. One wonders whether Chancellor Angela Merkel had Bob Dylan's Desolation Row blasting in her head at ear-splitting levels, as she fears the Trump presidency's undisguised preference for populist, ultra-nationalist European parties.

And no wonder European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker [insisted](#) the EU must not cave in to American demands. He knows how supporters of the so-called Populist International of European far-right groups are already rubbing their hands in glee.

Putin saw it coming

Then we had some comic relief - although it's unlikely this will become US talk show fodder: Adel al-Jubeir, foreign minister of a Saudi Arabia that is the ideological matrix of all strands of Salafi-jihadism, describing Iran as "the single main sponsor of terrorism in the world."

The House of Saud is clamoring for Tehran to be punished. The international community needs to impose clear "red lines," as in more banking, travel and trade sanctions. Capitol Hill heartily agrees. Britain and France will dismiss the "red lines" while indulging in more lucrative weapons sales to Riyadh.

Note the (absent) giant panda in the Munich room - China. While Munich could be easily dismissed as an illiberal neoliberal talk fest, Beijing was turbo-charging an advance in Europe that's all about trade and investment. The EU will soon recognize China as a market economy, as confirmed by German Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel, while Beijing and London are partnering to advance "global free trade mechanisms."

Translation: for the EU as well as Brexitland, as much as for China, economic protectionism cannot be a "win-win."

Ten years ago, Vladimir Putin delivered a startling [speech](#) in Munich on the dangers of unipolar international relations - an "almost uncontained hyper use of force, military force" - and the

correlation between this unbalance and rising global inequality.

Western elites, predictably, didn't listen. In fact German corporate media instantly branded the speech as "the new Cold War," when it was really a call to end the Cold War for good.

This time, it was up to Lavrov to be the voice of reason, as he told the US and Europe they must ditch the counterproductive West-versus-the-Rest worldview for good.

Once again, predictably, the Western elites won't listen. And then they'll wonder why so many are eagerly embracing a "post-West" world.

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[Indeed, however, the West would ensure that there is no 'post West' world, they would wage nuclear war before they see reason and the inevitable. Notice, not a hint of the word PEACE at the conference. The West is allergic to peace, after all, what would America do with its global hegemony via 'perpetual war' ideology? "Security Conference," my arse, it should be named appropriately, 'Continuing Chaos Conference!']

<http://www.atimes.com/article/go-post-west-young-man/>

Jungle Drum Prose/Poetry. <http://jungledrum.lingama.net/news/story-2544.html>