The Militarization of the European Union

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List of Abbreviations

A2/AD	Anti-Access/Area-Denial
ABM	Anti-Ballistic Missile
ACT	Allied Command Transformation
AFVG	Anglo-French variable geometry
ALBM	Air-launched ballistic missile
ASD	AeroSpace and Defence Industries Association of Europe
BDI	*Bundesverband der deutschen Industrie*
BDSV	Federation of German Security and Defence Industries
BEMIP	Baltic Energy Market Interconnection Plan
BMCC	Baltic Maritime Component Command
BND	*Bundesnachrichtendienst*
BRIC (S)	Brazil-Russia-India-China (South Africa)
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CARD	Coordinated Annual Review on Defence
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CISE	Common Information Sharing Environment
CJEF	Combined Joint Expeditionary Force
COE CSW	Centre of Excellence for Operations in Confined and Shallow Waters
COSME	Small and Medium-Sized Programme of the European Commission
CPD	Committee on the Present Danger
CSDP	Common Security and Defence Policy
DEU MARFOR	German Naval Force
DEU-POL SubOp Auth	German-Polish Submarine Operating Authority
DIA	Defense Intelligence Agency
DST	*Direction de la surveillance du territoire*
E2I	European Intervention Initiative
EC	European Community
ECSC	European Coal and Steel Community
EDA	European Defence Agency
EDAP	European Defence Action Plan
EDF	European Defence Fund
EDI	European Deterrence Initiative

EDIG	European Defence Industries Group
EDIDP	European Defence Industrial Development Programme
EDIG	European Defence Industries Group
EDSP	European Defence and Security Policy
EDTIB	European Defence and Technological Industrial Base
EEC	European Economic Community
EIB	European Investment Bank
EMS	European Monetary System
EMU	Economic and Monetary Union
ENAAT	European Network Against Arms Trade
ENDR	European Network of Defence-related Regions
EOS	European Organization for Security
EPP	European People's Party
EPURE	*Experimentations de Physique Utilisant la Radiographie Éclai*
ERT	European Round Table of Industrialists
ESS	European Security Strategy
EU	European Union
EUCAP	EU Capacity Building Mission
EUFOR-SC	EU Force South Caucasus ()
EUFOR-HOA	EU Horn of Africa Naval Force
EUGS	EU Global Strategy
eu-LISA	European Agency for Large-Scale IT Systems
EUNAVFOR MED	Mediterranean Operation Sophia
EUROSUR	European Border Surveillance System
EUTF	EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa
FC/ASW	Future cruise/anti-ship weapon
FCAS	Future Combat Air System
FDI	foreign direct investment
FLN	*Front de Libération Nationale*
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GoP	Group of Personalities
GOVSATCOM	Government Satellite Communications
IED	Improvised explosive device
IEPG	Independent European Programme Group
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INF	Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty
IPR	Intellectual property rights
ISC	International Chamber of Shipping
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant

ITER	International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor
LISA, *see* eu-LISA	
LNG	Liquefied Natural Gas
LoI	Letter of Intent
LSI	Large system integrator
MAD	Mutually Assured Destruction
MALE UAV	Medium-Altitude Long-Endurance Unmanned Air Vehicle
MALE RPAS	Medium Altitude Long Endurance Remotely Piloted Aircraft System
MEP	Member of European Parliament
MDA	Mutual Defence Agreement
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MOC	Maritime Operations Centre
MoD	Ministry of Defence
MRAV	Multi-Role Armoured Vehicle
NAC	North Atlantic Council
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGF	New Generation Fighter
NFZ	No-Fly Zone
NSA	National Security Agency
OAS	*Organisation de l'Armée Secrète*
OBOR	One Belt, One Road
OCCAR	Organization for Joint Armament Cooperation
OPEC	Organization of Petroleum-Exporting Countries
PADR	Preparatory Action for Defence Research
PESCO	Permanent Structured Cooperation [on Defence]
PSC	Private Security Company
R&D	Research and Development
R&T	Research and Technology
QE	Quantitative Easing
S&D	Socialists & Democrats
SAM	Surface to air missile
SDA	Security and Defence Agenda
SDECE	*Service de documentation extérieure et de contrre-espionage*
SDI	Strategic Defence Initiative
SEDE	Subcommittee on Security and Defence [EU Parliament]
SIVE	*Sistema Integrado de Vigilancia*
SLBM	Submarine-launched ballistic missile

SPD	*Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands*
SSA	Space Situational Awareness
SSI	Sky and Space Intergroup
SST	Space Surveillance and Tracking
SUCBAS	Sea Surveillance Cooperation Baltic Sea
TCGP	Trans-Caspian Gas Pipeline
TEN	Trans-European Networks
TGI	Turkey-Greece-Italy (pipeline)
TTIP	Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
UUV	Unmanned Undersea Vehicle
WEAG	Western European Armaments Group
WTO	World Trade Organization

INTRODUCTION: EU DEFENCE PLANS IN THE CRISIS

KEES VAN DER PIJL

On 27 August 2019, in a speech to the country's top diplomats assembled in Paris, French president Emmanuel Macron declared that the world was in the midst of "a major transformation, a geopolitical and strategic re-composition." This transformation, the president declared, amounted to nothing less than "the end of Western hegemony over the world." After this surprising assessment (for a Western leader that is), he continued:

> We were accustomed to an international order which, since the 18th century, rested on a Western hegemony… Things change. And they are now deeply shaken by the mistakes of Westerners in certain crises, by the choices that have been made by Americans for several years which did not start with this administration, but which lead to revisiting certain implications of the conflicts in the Near and Middle East and elsewhere, and to rethinking diplomatic and military strategy, and *sometimes elements of solidarity that we thought were immutable, eternal* ("*des intangibles pour l'éternité*", Macron 2019, emphasis added; cf. *The Saker* 2019).

Not long afterwards, an unknown corona virus outbreak was responded to according to a "worst case scenario" of the sort US strategists had been drawing up since the 1990s (Zylberman 2013; 2016). "Things change" indeed: by March 2020, large parts of the world were in some form of lockdown, ushering in a social paralysis and economic depression of historic proportions. Well might Josep Borrell Fontelles, the European Union's foreign policy chief, claim that the virus "will only increase the need for a stronger EU security and defence and for a stronger Europe in the world" (cited in Erlanger 2020), but with the bloc's financial situation fast deteriorating, this is not likely to be implemented any time soon. Via Quantitative Easing (QE), by which central banks buy up problematic government and commercial bonds so that investors have the means to continue purchasing financial assets, vast amounts of money are pumped into the financial sector. The European Central Bank alone raised the QE

ceiling to €1.35 trillion in June 2020. The QE costs in combination with government emergency spending have been compared to a "war debt" requiring several generations to pay off (*The Conversation* 2020).

It is not difficult to see that the election of Donald Trump to the American presidency in November 2016 served as the trigger for some of the leaders of "Old Europe" to question, as the president-elect himself had done to begin with, the usefulness of NATO. Trump was the first real outsider in the White House in modern times: not a single figure in his original foreign policy team was a participant in either the Bilderberg, Trilateral Commission, Atlantic Council, or comparable networks, central in the previous three administrations, both Republican and Democrat (De Graaff and Van Apeldoorn 2019: 19-20).

Soon after his own election in 2017, Macron identified one possible route out of the impasse: the European Union should end the exclusive security reliance on NATO and create an EU general staff to provide "strategic autonomy" (cited in Cabirol 2017). In the same year the European Union launched the "permanent structured cooperation on defence" (*PESCO*) to coordinate arms purchases and lend substance to the Lisbon Treaty's provisions for a common foreign and defence policy.

However, the group of four continental EU member states ready to commit to greater strategic autonomy on this issue (France, Germany, Spain and Italy) faced a bloc of smaller EU states led by The Netherlands, which lack major arms–industrial complexes of their own. Far from being united on the issue, then, the EU is divided on whether to achieve strategic autonomy or not, and whether developing a military-industrial complex of its own is worth it—or not. The Covid-19 paralysis has only intensified the dilemma. Yet as epidemics too are being increasingly interpreted in security terms, a matter of bolstering state power in times of crisis (Elbe 2009: 15), we should not conclude too quickly that European defence is off the agenda.

Four major geopolitical and related economic developments constitute the broader framework determining the EU's turn to militarization, and continue to do so:

1. The NATO advance into the post-Soviet space after 1991. As we can see today, the unwillingness on the part of the seemingly victorious Atlantic bloc to negotiate a comprehensive peace deal ending the Cold War cast a long shadow. Instead the West chose to dictate the path by which Soviet president and Communist Party leader Mikhail Gorbachev was to dismantle the Soviet command economy; it then encouraged Russian President Boris Yeltsin to declare the USSR's dissolution and apply a

neoliberal shock therapy (Klein 2007: 219; Lane 1996: 131). What ensued was a strategic drive to fill the vacuum that had opened up in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet border-lands. The promises made by Secretary of State James Baker and others to Gorbachev that eastern Germany would not become militarized if a united Germany joined NATO, and that once Russia pulled out its 24 divisions, the alliance would not advance *one inch* eastwards, were soon forgotten (Sarotte 2014; Itzkowitz Shifrinson 2016).

Right after the Soviet collapse, the *Defence Planning Guidance for 1994-1999*, commissioned by Paul Wolfowitz, the deputy of Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney, laid down that the United States, now the sole superpower, should maintain a structural military-technological advantage over any possible rival and maintain a defence spending level ensuring its unchallenged supremacy on a world scale (*DPG* 1992). Premised on the principle of full spectrum dominance and with the express commitment never to allow a rival to impose a nuclear stalemate on the US again, the Wolfowitz Doctrine inaugurated a process of upgrading the US nuclear arsenal. Eventually, this would entail the dismantling of the Cold War arms control treaty structure, beginning with the abrogation of the 1972 US-Soviet Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty in 2002 and more recently, followed by the unilateral US withdrawal from the INF Treaty.

2. The fact that the EU in its eastward advance was forced to abandon its civilian profile. With German reunification in 1991, France's policy of keeping the lid on its neighbour's political and economic aspirations had exhausted itself. Simultaneously, the axis of EU enlargement swung from the south to the east, following in NATO's footsteps (Holman 1996, 1998). This reorientation at first was primarily economic, aimed at exploiting the new opportunities as a lever for abrogating the post-war social contract with organised labour. Through the European Round Table of Industrialists (ERT), capital headquartered in the EU identified "inflexible labour markets" as hampering "competitiveness" and advocated reforms to shift to a neoliberal, financialized capitalism after the Anglo-American example (Van Apeldoorn 2002: 67-8).

During the collapse of Yugoslavia in the 1990s, NATO military intervention served to overcome the hesitations of key EU countries such as France and Italy to use force unauthorised by the United Nations. In 2003, Germany, France and Belgium joined the broad coalition with Russia, China and a UN majority against the Anglo-American invasion of Iraq. Yet this Atlantic fracture proved short-lived and the EU instead switched to joining the advance to the east again. Although its enlargement

was not entirely coincident with NATO's, the EU in the process did discard its self-image of a peacefully advancing economic giant (Cooper 2004: 59-61; Nazemroaya 2012: 51-3, 59). Besides locking in the principles of neoliberalism in the Lisbon Treaty of 2007 (by which the EU effectively enacted the "European Constitution" rejected in referendums in France and the Netherlands two years earlier), accession countries were also required to align their defence and security policies with those of NATO.

This was also the subtext of the invitation to a number of former Soviet republics to join an *Eastern Partnership* with an EU Association Agreement attached, in an obvious riposte to Russia's plans for a Eurasian Union. In 2008, there had already occurred a short war when post-Soviet Georgia, offered NATO membership earlier in the year by George W. Bush (but still vetoed by France and Germany), attacked Russian peacekeepers deployed in its breakaway province of South Ossetia (Van der Pijl 2018: 25-30). The Eastern Partnership, therefore, was a velvet glove with an iron fist underneath; it directly challenged Moscow's plans for Eurasian integration. With respect to Ukraine, the cradle of Russian civilization, the EU acted as a subcontractor to the NATO enlargement strategy. In the words of Richard Sakwa,

> The EU was launched on the path of geopolitical competition, something for which it was neither institutionally nor intellectually ready. Not only was the Association Agreement incompatible with Ukraine's existing free-trade agreements with Russia, but there was also the Lisbon [Treaty] requirement for Ukraine to align its defence and security policy with the EU. This was an extraordinary inversion: instead of overcoming the logic of conflict, *the EU became an instrument for its reproduction in new forms* (Sakwa 2015: 41, emphasis added).

3. The declaration of the "War on Terror" in response to the 9/11 attacks. The bombings of the Twin Towers and the Pentagon on 11 September 2001, the Patriot Act, and the US invasion of Afghanistan under NATO auspices, followed by a series of regime changes in the Middle East and North Africa, made "terror" an additional regulator of the political process.

The association of terror incidents with radical Islam had been one of the ideas floated in a series of high-level conferences between 1979 and 1984, organized by the Likud Party leadership in Israel, which had come to power in 1977. Heirs to the Revisionist Zionist movement which from the 1920s had rejected any accommodation with the Arabs or Islam, the Likud solicited American support, if need be by provocation, to compel the United States to fight Israel's wars with its neighbours under the

banner of a War on Terror. In 1982, a plan named after the Israeli strategist, Oded Yinon, replaced the original revisionist Greater Israel project by a strategy to cut up Arab and Muslim states into small ethnic or sectarian entities powerless against a regionally superior, nuclear-armed Israel (Bollyn 2017: 23-6; Sabrosky 2013). In 1984, another Likud conference in Washington drew together the two strands (Netanyahu 1986). Except for Britain, however, EU involvement in the development of this strategy was negligible.

Since the Israeli strategy was to inscribe their regional security concerns into the new Cold War launched by the Reagan administration, the collapse of the Soviet Union also undermined the War on Terror project, but not for long. In the timely assessment by veteran US strategist Samuel Huntington (1993), the post-Cold War era was defined in terms of a "Clash of Civilizations" pitting the liberal West against Slavic, Confucian, and Islamic contenders. As to the latter, Huntington predicted that given Islam's inherent tendency to violence, the bulge of unemployed young men in the Middle East was bound to become a source of terrorism (Huntington 1998: 116-20, 254-7).

4. The malfunctioning of neoliberal, finance-driven capitalism. In the wake of the Soviet collapse, Western military strategy was recast to include the defence of the unified global economy as well. As noted by Claude Serfati, writing at the dawn of the new millennium, "the defence of 'globalization' against those who would threaten it, [was] placed at the top of the security agenda" (Serfati 2001: 12). However, globalization as a project of Anglo-US-centred finance capital is running aground. It has not been able to offer a meaningful social contract anywhere, and repeated injections of QE money at zero interest have merely served to reactivate speculative, "money-dealing" capital—its responsibility for the financial collapse of 2008 notwithstanding (Rasmus 2016; Van der Pijl 2019a). Yet without real investment, social inequality continues to grow and social unrest will resurface.

After the onset of the corona crisis, a centripetal restructuring of class relations, away from finance-driven globalization, has become apparent. This is bound to affect security arrangements too. Much depends on whether the "Great Reset", envisaged as a way out of the crisis by the globalizing bloc of forces, will actually come off the ground (*World Economic Forum* n.d.; Schwab 2020). It is more likely that short of war, the US military juggernaut, expanded across the globe, is going to lose its purpose and NATO with it (Nazemroaya 2012). Yet the future of any "European" alternative is uncertain too. The EU role in the corona crisis

has been dismal; lockdowns and other presumed health measures have been highly unequal, not least because neoliberal policies have weakened health infrastructures across the Union and the West at large (Desai 2020; Magdin 2020).

In the process of the contested restructuring of both the Western ruling blocs and their defence arrangements, they are confronted by social formations which certainly have switched from state socialism to capitalism, but which have nevertheless retained a distinctive measure of state control of the economy and a foreign policy to match. In his speech to French diplomats, Macron mentioned Russia, China, and India: "They have a much stronger political inspiration than Europeans today. They think about our planet with a true logic, a true philosophy, an imagination that we have lost a little bit" (Macron 2019). The centre of gravity within this bloc is China. With its *One Belt, One Road* initiative (*OBOR*) it is reaching out to create an economic infrastructure that includes Europe (Engdahl 2016; Lane and Zhu 2018).

Therefore, from two different angles: the faltering of finance-driven globalization radiating from the West, and the part-privatization of state-led economies acting as contenders for power, the geopolitical economy is entering a new era of uncertainty. Whether the unifying trend, in which governments the world over seek to exploit the corona panic to discipline their populations, or else, centrifugal forces arising from rivalry and competition, will gain the upper hand, cannot be predicted. However, a European security structure is bound to become part of any new configuration of forces.

Chapter Outline

The collection is organised as follows. In chapter 1, Kees van der Pijl argues that an EU security structure is a fundamentally *political* project, motivated by the interest to maintain the established political and economic order. In a context of uncertainty about US and NATO guarantees in his respect, ideas about creating an integrated defence under EU command have arisen by default; at issue is the restoration of a monopoly of violence. Such a monopoly is the hallmark of a sovereign state and is also at stake in the current corona emergency. The one example of a European attempt to assert sovereignty in the face of both internal unrest and external interference was the De Gaulle episode in France from 1958 to 1969, which led to the country's withdrawal from NATO's military and intelligence structures. Whether the response to the

corona crisis is accelerating the decline of the US and the UK is also discussed in this chapter.

In chapter 2, Iraklis Oikonomou documents how European weapons manufacturers have moved into the forefront of the European integration process, in concert with the Commission in Brussels. From a relative outsider role in the past, the military-industrial complex has been upgraded to a "normal" sector benefiting from a wide range of policy instruments. Oikonomou analyses the ascent of the defence industry in the European integration process as a corollary of the internationalization of military-industrial capital, which made it necessary to enlist the EU as an additional support structure for arms manufacturers, a domain hitherto reserved for national states. Hence weapons producers have been introduced to European policies, programmes and funding tools previously reserved for civilian industries. Indeed, once we recognise the active role of the industry itself, these were "hijacked" by it. The civilian self-image of the European integration process has been altered accordingly.

Yet as Claude Serfati argues in chapter 3, at no point did defence industry consolidation in the EU cancel the national interests of the main players in Europe. France has seen its sphere of influence, notably in Africa, become destabilized by unrest and looks to European support to stem the tide. At the same time, the Macron proposals for strategic autonomy of 2017 are an attempt to exploit France's competitive advantage in the EU—its military industry and army. Its initiatives in favour of the European defence agenda after the 2008 financial collapse build on the country's existing military-industrial and research partnerships, notably with Germany and Great Britain. Addressing in particular the political economy of a European future fighter aircraft(s), which as a weapon system is by far the most important from an industrial and military perspective, Serfati demonstrates that it actually serves as an example of Europe's failure to collaborate.

In chapter 4 Hans-Jürgen Bieling poses the question to what extent German reunification in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet bloc has also implied a return to a new imperialism, both in Europe and beyond. His concern is to what extent this "imperialist turn" has retained the cosmopolitan and rule-of-law-based modes of state cooperation adhered to by the Federal Republic in the previous epoch. Developing the concept of *cooperative imperialism*, Bieling asks whether as a consequence of German unification, the European crisis and conflicts in the external environment have changed the self-perception of the German ruling bloc and the German role in the militarization of the EU; in particular, its response to French initiatives discussed in the previous chapter. Since

Germany suffered less from the corona crisis than hard-hit Italy, France, Spain, and Belgium, its pre-eminence in the EU will only be reinforced in the years to come.

Focusing on one particular axis of German power projection, the Baltic, Kees van der Pijl asks in chapter 5 how the EU's energy links with Russia may become part of the possible unravelling of the US/NATO monopoly of violence in Europe. In 2014 the South Stream gas pipeline projected across the Black Sea fell victim to the US-orchestrated, anti-Russian seizure of power in Ukraine in February and the subsequent secession of Crimea and the uprising in the Donbass. The Nord Stream 2 pipeline, planned to double the throughput of Russian gas across the Baltic, for the moment appears to be safe from such disruption—bar a late incident. Here too, establishing an effective monopoly of violence is the key. Germany's assumption of the command of NATO's Baltic naval infrastructure, making it available for EU and national German operations as well, appears a step in that direction and is well placed to serve its energy needs.

In chapter 6 Iraklis Oikonomou documents how the establishment of the European Defence Fund constitutes a key moment of militarization of the Union via the formal introduction of a funding line for military research and the development of weapons. He shows how the AeroSpace and Defence Industries Association of Europe (ASD, an outcome of EU defence industry consolidation) and the parallel Kangaroo Group have succeeded in setting the policy agenda in Brussels. By their interventions (with respect to the European Commission and the Parliament, respectively) and proposals for fostering security research, EU military-space policy, and related activities, these bodies have guided the ascent of the arms-industry bloc, making weapons producers an integral part of the historic bloc governing the Union. Thus Oikonomou develops his thesis of a "hijacking" of the European integration process posited in chapter 2 in greater detail.

Weapons fuel wars and contribute to refugee flows, which are bound to resume once the response to the current health crisis settles in a stable pattern. In chapter 7, Mark Akkerman gives an overview of the European companies that sell arms used in the wars raging in the Middle East and North Africa and other conflict zones. He demonstrates that they are largely identical with the providers of border security to keep the victims out, profiting from the EU's policy of militarizing its borders. *Frontex*, the European organization tasked with organizing this perverse defence, has developed a range of policies reciprocated by a security sector eager for their expansion. Through the externalisation of borders, third countries in

Africa, the Middle East and Eastern Europe, have turned into border outposts to try and keep refugees bottled up beyond the actual EU, expanding this market even further.

In chapter 8, Yury Gromyko draws a grim picture of the new arms race unleashed as a result of US and NATO policies. As the power of the globalized financial world is waning, the relatively more territorialized military-industrial complexes of the US and to some extent, the EU, are becoming more prominent, entailing a quest to master technologies associated with new generations of weaponry. Warfare is also broadened to include ideological offensives and regime changes aimed at destabilizing countries bordering on strategic antagonists such as Russia and China. Gromyko pleads for a civilian retooling of new technologies to dispel the spectre of a nuclear holocaust. EU defence, if it breaks with NATO, may contribute to rein in the aggressive impulses of the Anglo-Saxon core, but if not, will merely contribute to the rise of overall defence outlays and increase the likelihood of war.

In a concluding chapter 9, Claude Serfati wraps up the volume by assessing how the EU plans in their current form, and the forces driving them, will affect the existing NATO military and military-industrial integration. Arguing that NATO means different things to the main member-states, he maintains that the calls by Trump and Macron to raise defence expenditure and demonstrate transatlantic and European solidarity, respectively, are thinly veiled expressions of these different perspectives. For the US and to a lesser extent, Britain, NATO is part of a global projection of power; France wants to carve out a European pillar within the alliance to serve its aspirations in controlling the French sphere of influence in Africa. German aspirations to have a greater say in NATO, partly accommodated by the Framework Nation set-up, are of a different order still.

In the end, Serfati concludes, we are looking at a hybrid process of integration in which defence (and also the police), is ultimately resistant to full internationalization, unlike monetary integration as achieved in the Eurozone. The means of coercion embody the principle of state sovereignty and their integration will always be subject to reservations related to its monopoly of violence. This is different in the case of monetary-financial integration, where capital accumulation has become the determining factor.

* * *

The idea for this collection was conceived at the No-to-NATO conference in Brussels in May 2017. The editor was a plenary speaker at that event, which was attended by participants from the UK, Germany, France, Italy, Spain, and other countries. It coincided with a mass protest demonstration on the occasion of President Trump's visit to NATO headquarters.

At the conference the Dutch delegation was invited to organize a follow-up seminar on EU defence, which was held in April 2019 in Amsterdam. It was attended by participants notably from Germany, Ireland and the Netherlands.

For the present volume contributors were invited on account of their specific expertise and reputation in the field. All chapters have been written specifically for this collection. The editor gratefully acknowledges support for the project by Professor Radhika Desai, director of the Geopolitical Economy Research Centre (GERC) at the University of Manitoba, Canada, and Dr Alan Freeman of the website NewColdWar.org.

1. SOVEREIGNTY, DEMOCRACY, AND THE MONOPOLY OF VIOLENCE IN EUROPE

KEES VAN DER PIJL

Introduction

In 2016, serious fractures in the North Atlantic power structure became apparent with the election of Donald Trump to the United States presidency, whilst Great Britain was engaged in a tortuous exit from the European Union. Plans for an EU security structure at arms' length from Washington are one aspect of this disintegration. Trump declared NATO obsolete during his election campaign, but henceforth was effectively kept from taking any practical steps towards changing defence policy by the US war machine and its representatives in Congress and the media. Indeed the US ambassador to NATO, Kay Bailey Hutchison, warned the EU not to exclude American, British and other non-EU companies from its military procurement (*Euractiv.com* 2018; Besch 2016).

That it is France which has (again) taken the initiative for an EU military infrastructure, has a background in what Claude Serfati (this volume, chapter 3) calls its "competitive advantage" in arms-industrial matters. It may also be related to the fact that after Brexit, the country will be the one nuclear power and UN Security Council member-state in the EU, and it may well see a chance to recover from the one-sided neoliberal, finance-driven policies imposed by the London-Berlin tandem. With what is left of the public sector, disproportionately concentrated in military industry, the government in Paris aspires to profit from Germany's commitment to double its defence expenditure to two percent of GDP, a level attained by France already (Streeck 2019: 20).

Secondly, the appetite in the EU to remain hostage to Anglo-American policies is diminishing, and in this context, European defence industry has developed a strategy of steering the EU onto the path of militarization. Hence the PESCO undertaking and the attached European Defence Fund, meant as "a game-changer for the EU's strategic autonomy and the competitiveness of Europe's defence industry" (*European Commission*

2017a; Karampekios and Oikonomou 2015). Whether this is part of a general contraction from finance-led globalisation to rival military-industrial complexes, as suggested in the Introduction, will be addressed in subsequent chapters of this volume.

The third aspect of the EU's defence plans is the *domestic* class strategy, now that "a spectre is haunting Europe" in the form of serious popular discontent. Dead-end austerity policies, growing inequality, and a "post-truth" ideological atmosphere undermining public trust, are all feeding into this pervasive public mood. In France, the weekly demonstrations of the Yellow Vests movement, undaunted by ferocious police violence, as well as the pension reform revolt, were effectively suppressed by the Covid-19 lockdown. Yet they had structural origins that make it likely that these movements will resurface at some point (Paye 2019; Guilluy 2015, 2019), whilst the lockdowns across the EU (with the important exception of Sweden) have themselves triggered new protest movements. Well before the Covid-19 crisis, analysts noticed the prospect of a possible new "1848" and considered the securitization of health policy in light of rising popular discontent as a serious option (Zylberman 2016: 63). Indeed the Atlantic rifts may manifest themselves on the surface as a break-up of the historic heartland of liberal capitalism, but *the central fracture is social*, between the ruling classes and their respective populations. Guarantees between states, through alliances or vassalage, in the final instance have always served as insurance policies against popular revolt, and changes in security structures such as the proposed EU defence set-up must be viewed in this light as well.

In the remainder of this chapter I outline how NATO has time and again cut short the quest for a relatively independent security structure in Europe. This has also been done by covert means and I will address a few instances of these as well. There is an understandable reluctance to delve into matters related to undercover operations, given the often anecdotic and incomplete evidence for them and the threat of being accused of "conspiracy theory", which academics dependent on peer-reviewed publishing and research grant opportunities can ill afford. Yet if serious instances of political violence would be glossed over out of academic chastity, no in-depth discussion of security issues is possible, and the politics of EU defence is no exception.

My central argument will be that in the current EU defence plans two elements are coming back: bolstering Europe's military-industrial base, and restoring sovereignty. Since the economic aspects of the process will be discussed extensively in the remaining chapters of this volume, the sovereignty issue is what I concentrate on here. It necessarily includes

(steps towards) an effective monopoly of violence, and this in turn is mandatory to meet the challenge of a social rebellion bound to gather strength again after the Covid-19 paralysis. This in the final instance is what "defence" is about. I begin by placing this in historical perspective.

Limited Sovereignty for NATO Europe

Why European countries would want a defence policy of their own making, is an eminently *political* issue that cannot be reduced to support for their arms industry, although this provides the material basis for conducting an independent policy. Sovereignty historically evolved from rulers and states to (ideally) the people, but except in revolutionary situations, it never really arrived there. In the current epoch, it has mutated to a sovereignty of transnational capital, which recognizes no authority above itself. Hence the *monopoly of violence*, a hallmark of sovereignty that originally arose in tandem with democracy but simultaneously served to keep it in check, has gravitated to the transnational level too. After World War II the United States and the Anglophone liberal heartland it leads, imposed a limited sovereignty on Western Europe through NATO. The eastward enlargement of the Atlantic alliance after the demise of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact serves the same purpose, again with a material dimension in the additional weapons markets, mainly for the US military-industrial complex.

In the Orwellian calculus, war in the modern age is not only or even primarily waged against foreign enemies. It is also meant to keep the population in a state of submission, which turns war into "a purely internal affair… waged by each ruling group against its own subjects... [and] to keep the structure of society intact" (Orwell 1954: 160-61). This certainly plays out in the "War on Terror". Since every ruling class faces its own population first, actual war therefore has a centrifugal effect, also among supposed allies.

In the Introduction I already mentioned that in the case of the Anglo-American invasion of Iraq in 2003, France, Germany, and Belgium openly opposed it, joining Russia, China and a UN majority. However, within a year, France and Germany agreed to forgive Iraq's foreign debt. A further correction of French policy was heralded by a confidential visit of the Socialist politicians, François Hollande and Pierre Moscovici, to the US embassy in Paris in 2006, to express their disagreement with the Chirac government's opposition to the Iraq war (Halimi 2018: 1, citing *WikiLeaks*). Under Sarkozy, France played a leading role in the NATO regime change operation in Libya, but Germany still refused to take part (although it did

supply munitions, Harding 2011; Campbell 2013). Whether such reticence is one of the particularities of Germany's "cooperative imperialism" is discussed in chapter 4 by Hans-Jürgen Bieling.

From the above it will be clear that the question what would be "European" about a separate EU security structure, is not easily answered, as national interests are highly diverse.

Loss and Temporary Restoration of French Sovereignty

Among the Western European states emerging from World War II, only France was in a position to assert its state sovereignty vis-à-vis both the Anglophone Atlantic and the Soviet blocs, as was Yugoslavia in the east. An autonomous military and intelligence apparatus is a precondition to make such a claim effective. However, the initial post-war government of France under General De Gaulle, issued from the resistance, only lasted till 1946, after which a succession of centrist coalition cabinets, constantly regrouping to keep the powerful communist party PCF in check, governed the IVth Republic. The army was a hotbed of social reaction: fear of a resurgent People's Front had been a key factor in its surrender to the Nazi invaders. The top brass then supported the collaborationist Vichy regime, before betting on the United States again (Serfati 2017: 45; Lacroix-Riz 2016). After liberation, the army became embroiled in colonial wars it was destined to lose one after another. Hence France joined the Atlantic bloc, prepared during a year of secret negotiations between the UK, the US and Canada before it was announced publicly as the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation in April 1949 (Wiebes and Zeeman 1983).

NATO's primary aim, in the wake of the crisis in Czechoslovakia that had brought a communist government to power, was to consolidate *internal* security. To this end, a "Clandestine Committee" had been established by Western Union, the immediate precursor of NATO (and still nominally directed against Germany). In the new Atlantic set-up, this was enlarged by an Office of Security, whose director is the principal adviser to the NATO Secretary-General, and a Special Forces Section (Ganser 2005: 26-8). NATO, then, was "the outcome of Europe's desire to prevent a resurgent Germany from yet again disturbing the peace, to which the United States added its desire to strengthen Western Europe's ability to cope with internal revolt as well as to sustain a psychological mood of anti-Soviet tension" (Kolko and Kolko 1972: 499).

With Cold War tensions mounting, the Anglophone powers appeared keen to attach West-German economic might to the Atlantic bloc and even recruit the Federal Republic, given its proven anti-communist credentials,

into NATO (Simpson 1988; McGeehan 1971). In the circumstances, successive French governments envisioned "Europe" as the framework in which Paris would at least retain a voice in that process. The foundational Coal and Steel Community came out of a French proposal to create a consultative structure among the six contracting states once the limits on West-German steel production would be lifted; still in 1950, with the Korean War threatening to draw Europe into a larger conflagration, a comparable solution was proposed by Prime Minister René Pleven for "European defence". France strongly objected to the Anglo-American plan for the mobilization of West-German divisions into a NATO line-up, but in the end could not agree to the reworked Pleven Plan for a European alternative. In 1954-55 Paris had to settle for a half-baked control arrangement under the renamed Western Union, and accept NATO membership for the Federal Republic (Grosser 1978: 172-3; Van der Pijl 2006: 51-5).

Around that time, Paris also decided to move ahead with an independent nuclear force. After World War II, the country's rulers had set their sights on exploiting the domestic uranium supply and using French scientific expertise to make nuclear energy an asset for post-war reconstruction; General De Gaulle's national unity government set up an Atomic Energy Commissariat (CEA in French) even before nationalizing the remaining energy sector. Following the defeat at Dien Bien Phu in Vietnam and weakened in Europe after West-Germany's inclusion into NATO (which prompted the formation of the Warsaw Pact), one of the last prime ministers of the IVth Republic, the Socialist, Guy Mollet, took the decision to develop a *military* nuclear capacity too. Mollet also consented to supplying Israel with a nuclear reactor and blueprints for an enrichment facility (Serfati 2017: 56-7).

By then Egypt, under its charismatic Arab nationalist leader, Colonel Gamal Abdel Nasser, threatened to build a powerful coalition against Israel. He also supported the Algerian FLN in its armed struggle for independence from France. In November 1956, Paris jointly with Britain attacked Egypt when Nasser's nationalization of the Suez Canal offered the pretext. With Israel launching a parallel attack across the Sinai, the expedition ended in disaster for the two European countries when it turned out that the United States was in no mood to provoke the restive Third World (which the year before had constituted itself as such at the Non-Aligned summit in Bandung, Indonesia) against the West (Hargreaves 1988: 149, 156-62).

The humiliation of France at Suez only reinforced the conviction in ruling circles that the Western European Six should forge ahead with their

integration project, and Paris was keen to insert its nuclear energy infrastructure into it. Jean Monnet, the strategist behind the early French integration proposals, hence came up with Euratom as a framework for a joint energy scheme, to which West Germany, grown much stronger in the meantime, responded by making it conditional on a European Common Market for the Six (Monnet 1976: 489-90; cf. Van der Pijl 2006: 55-8).

In 1958 De Gaulle returned to power to deal with the threat of a military coup of disaffected military officers in Algeria. The re-establishment of French sovereignty by resurrecting a strong state under a new constitution was at the heart of his intervention; a "neo-Colbertist" economic policy, intended to relegate the large financial groups to a status secondary to the state, was the corollary (Jaffré 2016: 25-6). Right after his investiture as president of the Vth Republic, De Gaulle also sent a memorandum to US President Eisenhower and British Prime Minister Macmillan, in which he proposed to create, within NATO, a nuclear triumvirate. Several contemporary interlocutors (e.g., the Belgian Secretary-General of NATO, Paul-Henri Spaak, 1971: 323) interpreted this as a sign of De Gaulle's ambition to restore effective military sovereignty to France, also to safeguard its sphere of influence in the Third World. Obviously De Gaulle's commitment to the French *Force de Frappe* as an independent deterrent, if need be also against Western rivals ("*tous azimuts*"), as well as his intent to seek an understanding with the Soviet Union, angered Washington and the Atlanticists in Europe. What followed was the clearest example of *how the United States and NATO enjoy a monopoly of violence in Europe which European countries either must submit to, or contest openly at their own risk*.

Having come to power to prevent the French army in Algeria from staging a coup d'état in 1958, De Gaulle began secret negotiations with the FLN about a compromise decolonization under cover of appearing to hold on to a "French Algeria". Meant among other things to safeguard French access to Saharan oil, discovered two years earlier (and which De Gaulle suspected the US was also eyeing, Werth 1967: 15), the leaked plan caused bitter resentment among the top brass fighting the Algerian insurrection. They seized power in Algiers in April 1961, with support from the CIA. The head of the rebellion, General Challe, was a former NATO commander for Central Europe, and at a secret meeting in Madrid the conspirators had been promised US recognition of a putsch government (Ganser 2005: 95-6). At that juncture, concern about American undercover meddling in French politics was rife; the counter-espionage service, DST, had bugged the US embassy in Paris. De Gaulle's attempt to have former resistance associates clean up the foreign

intelligence service SDECE, judged too close to the CIA, on the other hand was being frustrated. Only in 1963 would its long-standing Washington station chief be forced to resign (Backmann, Giesbert and Todd 1978: 179-80; Alphand 1977: 347).

The Algiers coup only lasted four days. However, disaffected officers then formed a secret army, the OAS, to fight an underground war, with bomb attacks and assassinations in Algeria, France, and neighbouring countries. De Gaulle himself narrowly escaped death twice. Importantly, the West-German BND on occasion collaborated with OAS putschists, dispelling any idea of a common "European" aspiration to take back sovereignty. The 1965 mission to Washington of the German president of the European Commission, Walter Hallstein, to commit an envisaged common European foreign policy to NATO, was a clear sign of the opposite (Newhouse 1967: 86 & *passim*; Ganser 2005: 96).

De Gaulle's response came in early 1966, when he demanded that all NATO installations on French soil be placed under French command, including the clandestine planning bodies attached to NATO headquarters in Paris. These included the command structure of the underground "stay-behind" units that played a role in Far Right operations in several countries, including Greece, Turkey, and Italy (where it was later exposed as the "Gladio" network, Müller 1991; Ganser 2005). With no reply forthcoming, De Gaulle withdrew France from the military organization of NATO in March, forcing its headquarters to move to Brussels (Greece took the same step after it freed itself from a CIA-installed military dictatorship in 1974).

Other member-states besides France also found out the limits of sovereignty relative to Anglo-American political and economic interests. Thus the Italian state-owned oil company, ENI, under its maverick director, Enrico Mattei, successfully concluded direct agreements with state-controlled suppliers in Iran and the Soviet Union, whilst keeping the Anglo-American oil majors at bay. In 1962 Mattei perished when his plane crashed at Milan airport; the incident was traced to mafia operatives but the masterminds behind it remained in the dark (Yergin 1993: 503-5, 530). Two years later, following a series of bomb attacks on Christian Democrat party and newspaper offices blamed on the Left, Prime Minister Aldo Moro was told by his secret service chief De Lorenzo that either the newly admitted Socialists would have to be dismissed from the coalition government again, or a "sterner regime" would be installed. With large-scale NATO manoeuvres backing up the threat, Moro had no choice but to give in (Tunander 2009: 61-3). As we see below, this would not be the last time covert operations under NATO cover reminded Europe of its limited sovereignty.

US Military Supremacy in the New Cold War

The radicalisation of progressive forces across the globe and the revival of the political Left in the late 1960s prompted the ruling classes in the West to roll back the post-war class compromise, or "corporate liberalism". It would be replaced by a radical market economy project ("neoliberalism") under Thatcher and Reagan (Jessop and Overbeek 2019). Anglo-America also unleashed a new Cold War that would end with the capitulation of the Soviet Union and the projection of a global monopoly of violence by the US. In hindsight, writes Wolfgang Streeck, the course of the crisis that began in the late 1960s "appears as the gradual unfolding of the very old and very fundamental tension between capitalism and democracy—as the dissolution, step by step, of the forced marriage arranged between the two after the Second World War" (Streeck 2013: 27).

Neoliberalism was accompanied by political *neoconservatism*, the militant propagation of Western "market democracy" as the presumed end of history (Fukuyama 1989). It entailed the mutation of NATO's defensive posture against communism at home and abroad into an aggressive forward deployment. Initially, this "out-of-area" turn was directed against Yugoslavia and into the former Soviet bloc and the actual USSR, but due to the influence of Israel and the Zionist lobby in the United States and Britain, it also obtained a new focus on the Middle East.

Neoconservative Militarism in the United States

In the United States a new militarism took hold after the withdrawal from Vietnam and the removal of President Richard Nixon, in which the Pentagon joined forces with an ascendant bloc of transnational capital and the media (Colodny and Gettlin 1992). Nixon and Kissinger were considered "too paranoid and too interventionist with regard to left-wing movements on the geopolitical periphery, and too friendly with Leonid Brezhnev and the historical bastion of communist power" (Hodgson 1979: 292-3). To put matters right, Donald Rumsfeld, a Nixon holdover who had been on the transition team following the Watergate dénouement, and his then side-kick, Dick Cheney, as White House Chief of Staff, convinced Gerald Ford, the stand-in president, to appoint Rumsfeld as secretary of defence and George H.W. Bush as director of the CIA. Bush restored the Agency's covert action budget, which had stood at around 50 percent in the 1950s, but under director William Colby had declined to four percent (Woodward 1988: 54). He also used his short tenure as CIA director to