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Thierry de Montbrial

Maintenant, je vais passer la parole à un vieux complice, Karl Kaiser. Je dis « vieux complice », en fait en anglais c'est un *friend of long standing*. Cela évite de parler de « vieux complice », mais il est quand même un vieux complice, un ami, car nous nous connaissons depuis le milieu des années 70 et nous avons travaillé de longues années ensemble, quand il était le patron de la Deutsche Gesellschaft für Auswärtige Politik à Bonn, puis à Berlin, et qui depuis un certain nombre d'années vit aux Etats-Unis, à Harvard. Mon cher Karl, je te passe la parole avec joie.

Karl Kaiser

Thank you, Thierry for these kind words and, indeed, we have had a long and wonderful relationship. I can only congratulate on what you have created because you started out to create IFRI and then to create this conference and both have made a major success.

I was inspired by the conference to share some thoughts on the geopolitical long-term and the world of tomorrow. That world will be one of a new G2: two big powers dominating the international structure, namely the United States and China in a relationship of rivalry, comparable to the bipolar world we had during the Cold War.

In good French tradition, I have three points. Who is actually destroying the order that was created after World War II? It is in the first place the US under Trump, i.e. the very country that built it up, for example by leaving the JCPOA, therefore undermining the continuation of non-proliferation, the policy that was built up after the war. You could say the same about American policy on North Korea, leaving the Paris accord, leaving the TPP, which was an attempt to organise the Pacific-Asian world, so that China does not define the rules of the game. Destroying the World Trade Organisation, imposing tariffs on France and allies, withdrawing from the most successful part of American foreign policy, the support of European integration, questioning the alliances and using the dollar if not abusing the dollar to impose foreign policy goals on the rest of the world. It is an attempt that had some success, which we discussed it in a very good session here.

However, there is the great challenger China, rising, which poses as the defender of multilateralism, international law and international institutions. However, I would argue that this is an intermediate position. If you look at the Belt and Road initiative, and we heard it from Kevin Rudd, it creates a wide system of bilateral dependencies of states that are friendly, if not compliant including activities in Latin America and Africa with the same purpose. Let me remind you that the country that professes that international organisation, international law and multilateralism should guide the world of the future, decided to totally neglect the decision of the international court in the Hague on demilitarisation of the islands of the South China Sea. I thought it was summed-up very well in one remark in the Hong Kong debate made by Eric Li, when he said, and this is almost verbatim, that we have to replace the hegemonic universalism in defining the rules of globalisation by one country (the United States are meant) and have to replace it by a system where everybody defines the rules of globalisation by themselves (with China leading).

Second, we now have to look at how some global trends affect this emerging G2 world. I would like to mention three that I think are underestimated in their impact. All three have been discussed here and I hope that the World Policy Conference will continue to discuss them in the coming years. First, there is cyberwar. In this respect we have entered a new era. I think Jean-Louis Gergorin was right to say that it is – so-to-speak a “Clauzewitzian innovation”. It is the continuation of politics by other means, i.e. cyberwar, not the old kind of war. Indeed, one can now through cyberactivity affect the politics of another country without having armies to march. You could argue, as I did in the debate, that Putin succeeded in getting his man into the White House by cyber activity, at the cost of less than a fighter jet. Quite a success! That is the new era we are entering. Some of you were there when I argued with John Sawyers who said it was a problem for authoritarian countries in particular because they are very shaky, because the democracies have the system of checks and balances. I would argue that it is true that we have the system of checks and balances, however democracies have particular weaknesses because they are open, the social media are open and basically uncontrolled by the government. We believe in freedom of speech, so that cyberwar attacks can be conducted much more easily in democracies. As those of you who follow American politics know, it is the majority leader of the Senate who blocks legislation to protect America in the 2020 election against further cyber activities that could affect the outcome of the election.

The second trend affecting the international system is climate change. Have we really thought through what climate change will do to international politics? Here is a task for the future. Imagine that global warmth goes up by 2 or to 3 degrees, - possibilities Laurent Fabius mentioned. Already now the United States has lost an entire town in California and there will be more towns to be lost. Coastal cities will have to be evacuated. In other words, the reallocation of resources in already struggling economies will be substantial. What will it mean for the need to have land as the land disappears?

Finally, let me mention migration. Migration profoundly affected and changed domestic politics in Europe and the United States, and it will be much more of a problem to Europe because America is surrounded by oceans. As Africa grows - two and a half billion by 2050, four to five billion by the end of the century - there will be enormous pressure from the South and unless there is a fundamental change of policy to help people stay where they are, they will go North. This requires a paradigm change in Europe’s policy toward Africa.

The third point relates to the US-European relationship in this G2 world. Let us remember first, that the US and Europe are the cores of the West, of Western democracy, of human rights and peaceful relations among states. That has been their function and will remain their function. Second, they have the highest degree of economic integration of any two large areas. 50% of all Transatlantic trade are internal company trade. Europe and America are highly integrated in their economies and societal interchange. Europe has reacted to Trump with the strategy of sticking to the old rules, upholding the established institutions, and of circumventing Trump’s policy wherever possible. For example, Japan and the European Union do so by concluding a trade agreement, or by EU trade agreement with Canada and Mercosur. You will have listened to the debate here describing how America has changed and to what extent there is continuity in American thinking and that Trump really continues pre-existing policies. Keep in mind that this is not the opinion of the American public. There is another America besides Trump. Polled by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs 87 % of Americans believe in international trade, 70% support the NATO commitment. In fact, these figures have gone up since Trump was elected. In addition Congress has a very different point of view compared with those of Trump on many foreign policy issues. Let us not assume that what Trump is now pursuing is necessarily the future policy of America.

The European Union is pulling together under this pressure. Europe is divided in many ways, but it is also becoming much more aware of the necessity to act on its own. That might be done by “principle nations”, a concept that the European institutes including ifri developed jointly quite a few years ago. An example was provided yesterday when France and Germany issued a joint statement on Turkey. There will be other principle nations in the European Union. Even after Brexit Britain will still be in the European group. There is now a talk of majority voting in foreign policy and it will probably happen one day.

Let me say in conclusion that in the G2 world of US-China rivalry, the US will continue to need Europe in this competition. The US cannot allow China to dominate the western rim of Eurasia. That is a geopolitical given. Europe also needs the United States in order to survive in this kind of rivalry. Finally, for the same reason, Europe will not fail



to engage Russia anew, because in this world of the future a Russia that becomes a permanent satellite of China is not in the interest of either Europe or the United States.

Thierry de Montbrial

Thank you very much, Karl. Karl Kaiser alluded to this concept of principle nations that we indeed elaborated together with the American Council on Foreign Relations and Chatham House in 1979, the year of the creation of IFRI. That was a common report called, *Sharing International Responsibility* and I think if we reread that 40-year old report we will probably find all the major concepts that could be useful today. Nevertheless, I find you a little bit WASP because of your Harvard life. I am not sure that everyone would agree with your optimism about the US and NATO, but perhaps we will discuss that later if we have time.