

DEBAT

Jim BITTERMANN

Before this conversation gets anymore heated, I did not pack my bulletproof vest, so I am not prepared for this, I sense the audience is restive.

Stuart EIZENSTAT

I want to speak to just how many Americans vote. I have been in four administrations and senior positions and in every Presidential election since 1964. A couple of quick points and perhaps you can react to them. Number one, foreign policy will not be an issue at all in the election, notwithstanding the fact that he has destroyed our alliance, notwithstanding the fact that he is the only President who has backed away from at least four, and now with Open Skies, perhaps five agreements reached by his predecessors. It will not be an issue. Second, we have a Goldilocks economy, as you said. The lowest employment, we will have a growth slowdown not a recession and yet, his approval rating is 43% and it has been between 40% and 43% for three years, Mueller, no Mueller, good economic report, no economic report, his disapproval is 55%. There is vulnerability there even with the best economy that we have had. Three, nobody has mentioned impeachment. He will not effectively be convicted but remarkably, just within three weeks, 57% of the public, including a quarter of Republicans, support an impeachment enquiry and 51%, even this early, his removal from office. That will not happen, but it indicates a vulnerability. Four, he got elected because he appealed to a base that wanted disruption. They were anti-globalisation; they were anti-elite and they were anti-immigrant and that base is a very loyal base and it will remain loyal. However, it is a base of 40% and not more. Last, having said that, as Jean-Claude said, elections are binary and with all of these disabilities, with impeachment which will probably be voted by the house but not agreed to by the Senate, elections are binary, he has pushed the Democratic party to the far left, as he has pushed the Republican part to the right. If that is the choice, he has a good chance of winning even with all of this.

Jean-Claude GRUFFAT

I agree with you 100%. I do not have anything to add, I agree with you 100%.

Andrés ROZENTAL

I wanted to fundamentally add to what all of you have said with regard to our perspective as the neighbour to the South. From the time Trump came down the escalators in Trump Tower to announce his Presidency up until the day before yesterday, we have gone through constant bashing of Mexico on the immigration issue, drug trafficking, the wall, on almost everything. At the end of the day, we now have a President in Mexico, who like Mr. Macron has decided he wants to have a peaceful relationship with Mr. Trump. He is from the left and it is quite unusual for someone from the left to not use the relationship with the United States to his own advantage, but so far, he has not. Really, the question I would ask any of you, is how long can that go on? How long can it go on with Mr. Macron, especially if Trump is re-elected and how long can it go on with Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador for the remaining five years of his Presidency? People in Mexico are offended by Trump, they are constantly offended, yet there has not been any public outcry yet against him.

Jean-Claude GRUFFAT

If I may, one word on this one. As you know, your President wrote to Nancy Pelosi to ask her to put the USMCA on the agenda of the House of Representatives. She does not do it for obvious reasons, one of them being that the unions are against it. I know Richard Trumka, because I happen to be on the Board of United Way and Richard Trumka is the head of the AFL-CIO and he is against USMCA. Again, this is one reason why the Transpacific Agreement was not approved, because unions want some more gold plating.

Jim BITTERMANN

Renaud, how long can this love affair with Macron and Trump go on?

Renaud GIRARD

Je ne pense pas du tout que ce soit – I don't think it's a love affair at all, I think that Macron is pragmatic. As General de Gaulle said: « Vous devez prendre les réalités telles qu'elles sont », that's what de Gaulle said in January 1964, when he decided to recognize China. And de Gaulle didn't like the cultural revolution or the Great Leap Forward, he didn't like it at all. I think that Macron – il faut prendre les réalités telles qu'elles sont – je pense que la France, en ce qui la concerne, a tout à fait compris qu'elle ne pouvait plus compter sur les États-Unis comme allié, que ce n'était pas un allié fiable. Elle a tout à fait compris, elle avait déjà compris, c'est pour cela que Charles de Gaulle avait fait la force de frappe indépendante, parce que Charles de Gaulle se souvenait qu'en 1940 le Président Paul Reynaud avait demandé l'aide des États-Unis dans la guerre que nous avons déclarée au nazisme, et que les Américains nous ont répondu à ce moment-là : « *Manage* ». Mais là évidemment, nous sommes allés dans des expéditions extérieures avec les Américains, notamment en Bosnie. Là on ne va plus avoir confiance en eux, on va avoir confiance aux Anglais, aux Britanniques, on va garder le format des accords de Saint-Malo et des accords de Lancaster House, c'est très important. Et d'ailleurs en Bosnie, ce sont les Anglais et les Français qui sont intervenus en juin 1995, et quand ça a marché, les Américains ont dit ok, on vient avec notre aviation. Mais c'est quand sur terre, une brigade franco-britannique a commencé à taper les Serbes extrêmement sérieusement autour de Sarajevo, que les Américains ont dit ok, on vient avec vous. Je pense que c'est ce qu'il va se passer, mais je pense que le Président mexicain a tout à fait la bonne politique, d'autant plus que l'Amérique est quand même un pays où il y a des *checks and balances*. Et ça c'est très important. Les relations entre le Mexique et l'Amérique sont très importantes, elles dépendent aussi du Congrès, elles dépendent des sociétés américaines, elles dépendent de beaucoup de choses, de la presse, des universités etc. Et je pense qu'aujourd'hui vous avez un accord commercial, et je n'ai aucune raison de penser qu'au cours des cinq prochaines années, les relations entre le Mexique et les États-Unis vont empirer. Je n'ai aucune raison sérieuse de le penser.

John SAWERS

I want to make two comments. First of all, I much admire what Macron is trying to do but the reality is that Macron has not had any significant influence on Trump's decisions. It is a shame, but it is the truth. The only people who have had influence on Trump are people like President Erdogan, Mohammed Bin Salman in Saudi Arabia, Xi Jinping has had a lot of influence on Trump and Kim Jong Un. He is influenced by dictators; not by democrats. That is the first point I want to make. By all means Macron carry on, he is carrying a worthy flag, but let us be realistic, he has not achieved anything.

The second thing I would say in response to Stuart's point about American politics and he has more experience on this than me, but when I look back at Democratic candidates, when Democrats choose an aged well-known insider like Hillary Clinton, John Kerry, Al Gore or Walter Mondale, they lose. When they chose a fresh-faced young outsider not scarred by Washington experience, whether it is John F Kennedy, Jimmy Carter, Bill Clinton or Barack Obama, they win. I think that the Democrats have a whole sea of new fresh-faced outsiders, if one of them manages to come through I think they will stand a very good chance. If they stick with the old and boring, like Biden or Warren, they will lose.

Jim BITTERMANN

We will count that as a vote for Buttigieg.

John SAWERS

No, there is a whole raft of them, not for one person. There is a whole raft of attractive Democratic candidates.

Qiao YIDE

From the Chinese perspective it is a well-known that the Chinese are historically patient and flexible. We are used to dealing with what happens and what is changing, with or without Trump. Honestly, one year ago when the trade war started it was a kind of shock for the average Chinese people who did not know what was going on. Now, one year later we are used to that because we understand. We feel tired of that. Increased tariffs, increased delays so many times, so people say, whatever you want, you do it.

Jim BITTERMANN

That is exactly what Americans domestically are doing, there is a kind of accommodation being made for all the outrageous behaviour, they sort of say, that is Trump being Trump.

Laurent COHEN-TANUGI

Thank you, Stuart Eizenstat made some of the points I wanted to make so I will re-focus on the title of the panel, 'The consequences of Trump'. I agree with some of the things that have been said, some of the damage is so big it had some chain reaction. When you sow protectionism, you get protectionism and when you sow conflict, you get conflict. Some of the things are structural trends and there is some continuity and some other things, a very few, are considered good like certainly pushing-back China, etc. However, I also think that any other President, except perhaps Mike Pence, will be able to reverse some of this damage, certainly to the instruments of international state, the international agreements and the multilateral order. More importantly and nothing has been said here, is that what is happening now within America is extremely important for all democracies in the world, for liberal democracy. The struggle that is going on right now in the courts with impeachment proceedings is extremely important and if Trump is defeated, whether in the polls or through impeachment, otherwise or resigns, that will have a tremendous effect for democracy around the world. I am always uncomfortable when people talk about style, it is not about style it is about substance. Some of the things and what you call style is a violation of American values, sometimes American or democratic standards generally. I do not think that has been covered or stated enough in this panel.

Jim BITTERMANN

We have not talked about that and that is one of the more important aspects of the Trump era, this whole idea of what he represents for the image of America and what the image of America has always promoted around the world. Over the weekend in *The New York Times*, Michelle Goldberg wrote a very interesting piece called, 'The beacon has gone out' with the sub-head, 'Once upon a time we spread ideals of democracy and rules of law, now we send Rudi'. Let us take about three questions because we are out of time and then let us see if any of the panel members want to answer them.

Mohamed LAICHOUBI

Merci, Laichoubi, ancien ministre algérien. Il semblerait que l'humour ne soit pas interdit, donc je voudrais poser deux questions. La première : est-ce que la relation internationale se résumerait éventuellement à une question d'ameublement – table ronde, table rectangulaire, une chaise en plus donc pour la Chine, et cela serait le grand débat, ou est-ce que derrière ce débat-là, il n'y en a pas un plus important, qui est un problème de grande recomposition des tendances qui viennent ? On a parlé de l'Inde, on a parlé de l'Iran, on a parlé de la Turquie, on a parlé du Brésil. Au lendemain de la Première et de la Seconde Guerre mondiale, l'Europe s'est totalement refaçonée et il y a eu une nouvelle Europe. Est-ce qu'il n'y a pas de nouveaux mondes qui viennent, est-ce que le débat sur la recomposition n'est pas d'ores et déjà là ?

Jim BITTERMAN

Good point.

Mohamed LAICHOUBI

La seconde question, très souvent un scénariste qui fait des films est préoccupé d'avoir des Oscars pour son acteur principal, mais en même temps il n'aimerait pas qu'il focalise toute l'attention et qu'il étouffe le scénario du film, donc il essaye de répartir entre le personnage et le film. Est-ce qu'on n'abuse pas trop de l'analyse sur les états d'âme du Président Trump ? Est-ce qu'en fait il n'est pas révélateur de recompositions qui viennent, à l'intérieur des États-Unis, à l'intérieur de l'espace des alliances puisque, bon là ce n'est pas le cas du panel, le panel l'a un peu évoqué – est-ce qu'il n'y a pas une grande recomposition qui est demandée ? Comment les États-Unis évaluent-ils avec leurs alliés la relation en Afghanistan, en Irak, les questions économiques, la globalisation ? Et donc est-ce que le maître mot de ces deux questions n'est pas le débat de la recomposition, et est-ce qu'on peut nous éclairer sur les recompositions qui viennent ? Parce que la crainte c'est que l'on multiplie le débat sur l'œillère ou le costume de Trump, alors que derrière lui il y a une réelle demande, il y a un électorat, il y a une vision, on l'a vu, pour le démantèlement et les instruments. Je vous remercie.

Jim BITTERMAN

Good question. Won't you pass the mic right there? That's perfect.

Joseph MAÏLA

Merci beaucoup à tous les panélistes pour cette discussion extrêmement riche. Je voudrais rebondir sur l'intervention de Renaud Girard, parce qu'elle me semble, en dépit de tous les apports qui ont été apportés par tout le monde et grâce à eux, la plus prospective. Thierry de Montbrial nous a mis sur une douzième édition qui est sur la *global governance*. Ma question c'est : dans le cas où Monsieur Trump est élu, qu'est-ce qu'on peut envisager comme ligne tendancielle, grande ligne, sur l'évolution du monde ? Si on a compris que Trump – je ne veux pas le ramener à ce phénomène-là –, le phénomène Trump est au fond un succédané de politique électoraliste où la politique étrangère joue un rôle secondaire, ce qui est important c'est Lexington, Kentucky, ce n'est pas Beijing, *China*. Donc on vise un public interne. Alors comment on peut envisager quatre autres années de Monsieur Trump dans le cas où il est réélu ? Moi je vois une régionalisation accélérée du monde, où chacune des régions serait laissée à son sort, avec des hégémonies partielles, où se referait la recomposition des intérêts. Un deuxième temps serait le plus grave, celui du délitement des communs, c'est-à-dire est-ce que les droits de l'Homme tiennent encore, est-ce que l'OMC tient encore ? Ce sera la fin du système multilatéral tel que nous l'avons connu depuis 1945 ? Et troisième grande question, on le voit un peu avec l'incursion, comme dirait Volker, des troupes turques en Syrie, quid de la gestion de crise ? Quid de, si le conseil de sécurité ne fonctionne pas, est-ce que la violence internationale laissée à elle-même ne pourrait pas conduire à des dérapages majeurs ? Donc qu'est-ce qu'il peut se passer en termes de gouvernance globale dans le cas d'une réélection du Président américain ? La question aurait pu aussi être intéressante de savoir si dans le cas d'un nouveau candidat qui aurait réussi et qui ne serait pas Monsieur Trump, qu'est-ce qu'il adviendrait aussi de la possibilité de revenir sur une politique américaine ? Laquelle ? Merci.

Jim BITTERMAN

We should have a workshop on what kind of world we want to design. Yes, there is a question back here.

Hervé MARITON

Yes, to keep on Renaud's remark, I may ask our Japanese, German and British friends: what does being allies entail, after these years with the Trump administration? We are supposed to be allied, what does it mean actually for each of your countries on your analysis? And actually how does NATO stand now? Would Renaud say NATO still exists, or not? And the others? What is it being an ally with Trump administration?

Jim BITTERMAN

Ok, let's start there, and answer any of the questions you've just heard, any of you, but Renaud why don't we start with you because that was the last question.

Renaud GIRARD

Je pense que c'est tout à fait évident qu'il y ait une recomposition, alors quelle est-elle ? Eh bien, il y a un affaiblissement grave de tout le système multilatéral, qui avait évidemment des défauts mais qui avait quand même beaucoup de qualités, construit par les Américains en 1945 – Laurent Cohen-Tanugi en a dit un mot. Et même quand ce système multilatéral peut servir à Trump, il ne l'utilise pas. Il ne l'a pas fait pour le TPP, et ça c'est tout à fait étonnant. Même quand cela peut lui servir dans sa lutte contre la Chine, il ne l'utilise pas. Donc il y a une haine ou, plus qu'une haine, une incompréhension du multilatéral chez Trump, sans doute d'ailleurs parce que dans le *real estate* à New-York, le multilatéral, ça n'existe pas. Mais, Monsieur le Ministre, il y a d'autres recompositions qui ont lieu déjà, il y a quand même une sorte d'alliance stratégique qui se poursuit, qui est importante entre la Russie et la Chine. La Russie a annoncé il y a trois jours qu'elle allait aider les Chinois à mettre au point des missiles anti-aériens plus performants. Il y a aussi un axe dont on n'a pas parlé, qui est en train de se construire : l'axe Washington-Delhi, avec vous avez vu la réception et le discours qu'a faits Trump lorsque Modi est venu au Texas. La question nous a été posée : est-ce que l'on peut avoir de grands dérapages ? Est-ce que cela conduit à de grandes guerres ? Je ne pense pas. Je pense que cette mise en cause du système international du FMI, de l'OMC, etc. est dommageable, c'est évident. Mais je ne pense pas qu'elle soit suffisante pour provoquer de grandes guerres, et je vous rappelle quand même que le système international qui fonctionnait extrêmement bien, même avec des idéalistes comme John Kennedy – John Sawers a cité John Kennedy – qui, au même moment où il était très idéaliste et où il disait « je combats pour la liberté etc. », a quand même provoqué une catastrophe qui est la guerre américaine au Vietnam qui a mis un chaos dans toute l'Indochine pour très longtemps. Donc en fait ce n'est pas parce que vous avez un système onusien – le système onusien ancien n'a pas empêché les Soviétiques d'envahir l'Afghanistan en 1980, et n'a pas empêché les Américains d'envahir l'Irak en 2003. Donc recomposition oui, dommages de tout ce que nous avons construit sur la gouvernance internationale oui, grands conflits à venir, non. Je n'ai pas d'éléments pour dire que l'on va vers de grandes guerres, et même je pense que les histoires en mer de Chine méridionale où en fait les Américains ont perdu la guerre – les Chinois ont déjà gagné – je ne pense pas que l'on ira vers la guerre, et je ne pense pas non plus qu'on ira vers une guerre entre le Japon et la Chine. Si évidemment Xi Jinping avait la folie de vouloir reprendre Taiwan pour des raisons intérieures, là on aurait une très grande guerre, parce que les Taïwanais ne vont pas se laisser faire, et ensuite évidemment les Américains interviendraient dans la guerre, mais aujourd'hui je pense que Xi Jinping est suffisamment sage pour ne pas vouloir reprendre par la force Taïwan.

Jim BITTERMANN

You can see why Renaud is such a frequent guest at Radio France International; you fill the airtime as we say on CNN. Any last thoughts because we really are out of time, on the evolution of the world. Is it going to be evolving as a multilateral, a unilateral, as liberal democracies or autocracies?

Jean-Claude GRUFFAT

What worries me more than anything else is the polarization of American politics. A lot of questions have been asked about what is necessary to fix problems and to do that you have to have a consensus. Historically there was a consensus on basic foreign policy. There was a consensus on fiscal discipline. There was a consensus on certain policy of immigration. There was a consensus on certain free trade. We do not have that anymore. The only way to achieve that is probably to forget about this next election, which is not going to solve anything and hope that there is a majority of people in the United States I believe who are I would say fiscally conservative and socially liberal. What I mean by that is that there are probably a majority that is pro-choice and not pro-life and as you know, Trump has used the pro-life movement extensively to get elected. Somebody mentioned Vice President Pence, and, in that sense, Pence would be worse than Trump, which is something you have to keep in mind. That is one example.

My point is that there is a hope, but the fiscal discipline is the most important thing. The debt is 23 trillion and the deficit, we have a situation that is untenable. Entitlement, Medicare/Medicaid is 64% in 2040 it will be more than 100% of GDP.

Jim BITTERMANN

Right there is a consequence of Mr. Trump that is going to go on beyond his Presidency. Josef, we have to get you in here.

Josef JOFFE

We have described how Trump is demolishing the global order. This should have been the hour of Europe because we have made a living off the liberal global order for 70 years – free trade openness, capital movements, that the United States built and preserved. Europe should step up in its own interest, but Europe's disarray as is striking. Take just the three major powers, Britain is Brexit Land, out of the game. Macron, for all his international activism, is beset by his anti-reform enemies at home while at odds with the other half of the Franco-German "couple.". Once, Germany's Angela Merkel was feted as uncrowned empress of Europe. She is in her twilight now, having almost disappeared from the international stage.

Italy? A founding member of the E.U., it is caught in endless financial crisis. Europe as a whole is split between the neo-authoritarian East and the liberal-minded West. We have spent so much time talking about Trump and too little about Europe's failure to rise to the challenge.

Jim BITTERMANN

It was the subject of the panel.

Josef JOFFE

Yes, but you cannot talk about Trump without talking about that 70-year old alliance which kept the two of them together. Europe may no longer be able to count on the U.S. as guarantor of security and the liberal international order.

John SAWERS

I would just say a couple of concluding remarks. First of all, I fully agree that the American election will be determined by American voters reflecting on American domestic interests. For the last 70 years, the global system has been run by the elite, the elite in America, the elite in Europe and the elite in other countries. We have managed that global system. We now have in the White House somebody who is straight out of propping up the bar in the local pub with views that are commensurate with someone who is not only not part of the elite but he is anti-elite. That is why I welcome your optimism that a future leader will be able to get back to normal. I am not sure about that and I am certainly not sure about it if Trump wins a second term.

I also share the concern about this violent oscillation in politics. If America is presented with a choice between the equivalents of Marine Le Pen and Jean-Luc Mélenchon as their next leader, where will normal people go? Where will they go in France? I think we should remain optimistic. Everybody here is part of the global elite, we need to do what we can to preserve the system whilst we have a bar room bully in the White House. However, we should be very careful to be cautious about thinking that this is just a passing storm and it will all get back to normal again when the man goes. He is doing serious damage to the international system.

Jim BITTERMANN

There is evidence of that everywhere around the world when you look at the sort of mini-Trumps.

Qiao YIDE

Let me first go back to the question you asked with or without Trump, if anything would change in terms of foreign relations between China and the US. I do not think there will be substantial change without Trump. As many people have said in the past two days there is a fundamental difference between these two countries. The only thing that may change may be the focus from trade to maybe human rights, or the style might change. I guess that the substantial tension will persist for a long, long time. That is what I think.

On the Chinese side I do not think they are very interested in the internal politics of the United States because that is nothing to do with us. Of course, it does not mean that they do not look at it closely.

Jim BITTERMANN

I know you are all hungry for our brilliant knowledge, but you are probably also hungry. That concludes the panel and thank you very much for attending.