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MAGAZINE



THE BATTLE FOR EUROPE

WHO WILL WIN THE STRUGGLE FOR
THE CONTINENT'S SOUL AND FUTURE?



The battle for Europe

As Europeans debate the core essence of Europeanism, Israel is becoming a surprising battleground. For some, the Jewish state is the most perfect manifestation of European liberal democracy



PEOPLE ATTEND a protest against Brexit at the border crossing between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland on March 30. (Reuters)

• GOL KALEV

Unlike in the United States and in Israel, where the choice for liberal democracy was organic and rooted in the founding ideology, modern Europe's arrival at democracy was reactionary.

The French Revolution and subsequent Napoleonic wars attempted to spread the revolution's values to the rest of Europe. Yet upon France's defeat, old monarchies were restored in most of the continent. Even in France itself, there were fierce debates throughout the 19th century about the proper form of government and monarchy was restored on a number of occasions. The debate ended artificially and without resolution with the unexpected outbreak of World War I.

The winners of the war, led by US president Woodrow Wilson, forced democracy upon Europe. This did not go well; soon thereafter, it was reversed in much of Europe and war resumed. After World War II, democracy was restored in Western Europe and in subsequent decades, in reaction to the horror of wars, Europe developed a new twist to its long quest for the ideal form of government: post-nationalist pan-Europeanism.

While there are various variations to such an approach, at its core lies a view that wars erupt due to nationalism, religion, particularity and ideology. Therefore, if one can fulfill the dream of a post-nationalist integrated Europe, along the line of the John Lennon song "Imagine," peace would prevail. A new entity was created – the European Union – which has been amassing more and more power previously held by its nation-state members. It now seeks to garner even greater control of foreign and domestic policies and pivot toward a more federalized Europe.

A growing number of Europeans feel that such a post-nationalist ethos is outright inconsistent with European values. Many Europeans who were previously happy with features of the European project such as free movement and common market, are now asking, "Why should Brussels dictate the laws of my own country? Why should the way I farm my land in Wales be determined by unelected bureaucrats of the European Commission who have never been to Wales?" Indeed, Wales, just as all of England with the exception of London, voted to exit the European Union.

THE BATTLE for Europe goes well beyond a debate about law and jurisdiction – it goes to the core of what it means to be a European. Mischael Modrikamen, president of the Belgium People's Party and executive director of The Movement, an organization that promotes right-wing populist parties, argues that the concept of Europe as a political entity is artificial.

"Nobody really prepares to be first a European; to be in love with European flag or a European anthem," he states.

Yet one can argue that the same was true in France, Italy and Germany during the 19th century. In France, according to Prof. John Merriman of Yale University, half of the people did not even speak French at the beginning of that century.

"In the north they spoke Dutch, in Alsace they spoke German, in the south they spoke Basque," he explains. Yet the French were able to unite under the Paris-dominated government, love their flag and sing "*La Marseillaise*." Similar unions occurred in Germany and Italy. Is the current prospect of European federalization simply the next logical step to the 19th-century federalization of its various sections? Even if one advocates the nation-state model, why could that nation-state not be Europe?

According to Steve Bannon, US President Donald Trump's adviser who joined Modrikamen in The

Movement, this is already happening. Speaking in Oxford University, he claimed, "[French President Emmanuel] Macron is a nationalist, but the capital of his nation is not in Paris, it is in Brussels." Indeed, the European Commission, the prototype European nation's government, is comprised of commissioners that pledge to pursue the interests of Europe and not that of their own origin nation.

Most Eurosceptics do not advocate abolishment of the EU, but rather reform and de-federalization. Yet the practical political process, such as in a yes/no referendum, pushes the debate into a perceived exaggerated choice: United States of Europe vs sovereign nation states.

Many Europeans who were previously happy with features of the European project such as free movement and common market are now asking, 'Why should Brussels dictate the laws of my own country?'

WHAT IS often missed by some Eurosceptics is that European integration provided stability in Europe in the last 70 years. For one, it shored the national aspirations of minorities within European countries under the European rug. For example, German-speaking Tyroleans are okay living under Italian control (or occupation, per some narratives), as long as they feel European. Europe provides a sense of identity and reduces the requirement for a Tyrolean to artificially feel "Italian" (there is only limited integration between the German-speaking indigenous and Sicilian settlers brought to Tyrol by Mussolini). If the EU weakens, or outright abolishes, the risk of Italian disintegration rises. The situation is similar in various other countries where minorities have national aspirations or feel suppressed, including in Sweden, France and Spain.

There is much more that is swept under the EU rug: From border disputes through Austrian-German competition (Austria was the flag-carrier of German culture and identity through history and some say, still should be), to outright intra-European animosities.

The European fabric provided serenity, but such serenity was recently shaken. The battle for Europe was ignited by an exogenous event: immigration. The vast influx of migrants from the Middle East and Africa, mostly Muslim, was followed by an increase in crime, terrorism and a growing fear among some Europeans of "replacement." Integrationists dismiss such fears as Islamophobia, yet one thing is clear: European demography has changed forever and likely so is its character.

Europeans blame this on the EU and its lead proponents – Macron and German Chancellor Angela Merkel – who adapted a seemingly delusional belief that immigrants will integrate and embrace European values and lifestyle. After all, who does not want to be Europeanized?

Indeed, when the Europeans first invaded the Middle East 2,300 years ago, they brought European values and technologies to the locals, liberating them from their primitive ways of life (except the Jews who refused to be Hellenized). Europe did the same during the colonialist era and today, once again, Europe invests massive amounts of money to enlighten the new arrivals. Yet still, shockingly, many European Muslims follow the precedent of the Jews and refuse to be Eu-



'PARTIES THAT are both Eurosceptic and anti-immigration made strong inroads and are expected to do well in the May 19 elections for the European Parliament (pictured).' (Wikimedia Commons)

ropeanized. Indeed, just like the Jews since their earliest history, European Muslims chose to maintain their language, dress and names.

Those two topics of debate – immigration and European integration – have been packaged together in a series of recent elections in European countries. Parties that are both Eurosceptic and anti-immigration made strong inroads and are expected to do well in the May 19 elections for the European Parliament. Some of those anti-immigration parties house Islamophobic and antisemitic elements. This allows integrationists to paint Eurosceptics as xenophobic and haters.

The EU's criticism of Israel has turned into an infatuation that is hard to explain through rational reasoning.

The European divide has clear social-economic demarcations. For example, Europhiles are associated with Europe's large metropolis, banking sector and academia, while Eurosceptics are linked with rural Europe. This leads to a clash of interests, as was on display during France's ongoing yellow-vest political demonstrations for economic justice, sparked by high fuel taxes. France and the EU were perceived to "penalize" rural Europe for the use of such an environmentally unfriendly resource, and indirectly discourage the primitive habit of driving, as opposed to using public transportation. The EU and France, like Marie Antoinette, were perceived to send the message that if you do not have a Metro in your village, use the RER.

But Euroscepticism does not just reside with the anti-immigration Right; it is also prevalent in Europe's Left. In Italy, Eurosceptic populist parties on the Right and Left have joined forces to form a government. This is a demonstration that the battle for the nature of Europeanism is front and center and trumps other issues such as socialism vs. capitalism. Such coalitions could be a template in coming European elections.

AS THE challenge from Euroscepticism strengthens, some feel that the European Union found a classic answer: unite the people against a rival – the United States of America. After all, in the last century, Europe was shocked not only by wars, but also by the humiliating fall from grace. Its colonies were taken away and global power and influence abruptly shifted to the United States.

The Europe-US feud goes well beyond policy issues such as Iran and the environment. It is anchored in core philosophical differences: Europe's universalism,

post-nationalism, zealous secularism vs. America's particularity, ideology and faith – one nation under God. Every century has its defining global philosophical divide. In the 19th century, it was monarchy vs. republicanism. In the 20th century it was communism vs. capitalism. It seems that this era's divide is Europeanism vs. Americanism.

In counter-Americanism, Europe seemingly found a flag to unite its people under and an anthem to spread its gospel to the outside world. Yet more and more Eurosceptics believe that Europe is on the wrong side of this 21st century divide. Just like with previous partitions, there are those in the United States who want America to be more like Europe and those in Europe who want the continent to adapt a more American approach.

To escalate Europe's counter-American stance, its leaders now stunningly call for the establishment of a European army, as Macron said, "to defend itself, including against the United States." Some Eurosceptics view this as outright thanklessness: The United States saved Europe in World War I, World War II, the Cold War and continues to do so today in the war on terrorism.

Another expression of Europe's counter-Americanism is through Jerusalem, the Achilles heel of European secular fundamentalism as it represents religion. Europe's official policy is derived from a 1949 United Nations resolution that calls for Jerusalem and Bethlehem to be taken away from Israelis and Palestinians alike and be turned into an international

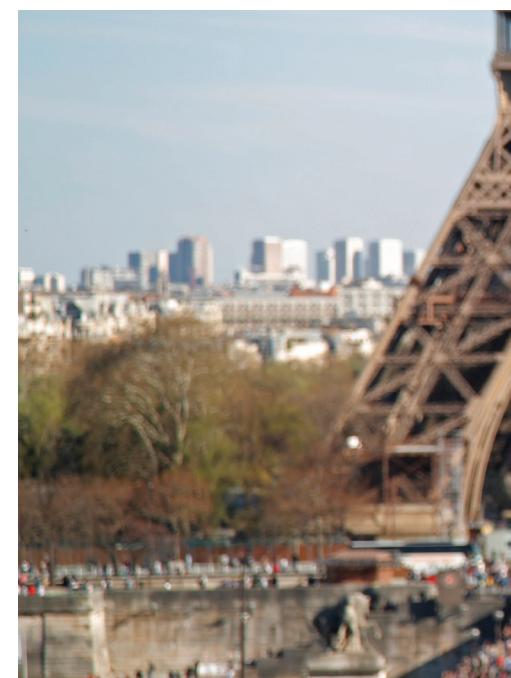
Corpus Separatum (a code name for a European colony). That was supposedly the legal basis for Europe's passionate and angry reaction to America's decision to move its embassy to Jerusalem.

Europeans on the other side of the battle for Europe, many of which are still religious Christians, are emotionally hurt by Europe's recurring opposition to Jerusalem, which includes European countries' support or abstention on ludicrous UNESCO resolutions implying that Christian and Jews have no historic connections to Jerusalem.

The EU has been exerting intense pressure on its member states not to move their embassies to Jerusalem, but those on the other side of battle for Europe are beginning to rebel: the prime ministers of Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic defied the European Union and announced last month the opening of diplomatic offices in Jerusalem. Last week, Romania went even further and to the great dismay of the EU, announced that it will follow the US lead and move its embassy to Jerusalem as well.

Similarly, while denouncing nationalism at home, the EU has been aggressively promoting Palestinian nationalism abroad, leading to the de facto EU policy of PNEP: Post-Nationalists except Palestine.

Europe's obsessive intervention in Israeli-Palestinian affairs has indeed been debilitating to the prospects to peace and damaging to Palestinians, such as through Europe's relentless efforts to sabotage Palestinian employment in Jewish-owned businesses. The EU has been sanctioning such businesses and reg-





FLAGS WAVE in front of the European Commission building in Brussels.
(Wikimedia Commons)

ulating unprecedented special labels as a condition for sales in Europe. This, the EU claims, is done to “help Palestinians.” Yet denying Palestinians employment, livelihood, mentorship opportunities and professional growth is no help – it is a profound expression of European supremacism and colonialism. On the other hand, members of 11 Eurosceptic parties have established the Friends of Judea and Samaria in the European Parliament to counter the EU boycott.

WHILE THE European Union and Israel are allies and partners on a variety of economic and security matters, the EU’s criticism of Israel has turned into an infatuation that is hard to explain through rational reasoning.

Indeed, European opposition to Israel is not just about the conflict or “punishment” for the Jewish state’s steadfast alliance with the United States – an unshakable bond maintained by successive US presidents and Israeli governments. Modrikamen explains that Israel stands in the way of the EU’s narrative that prosperity and peace will only be achieved through post-nationalism: “Israel is affirming exactly the opposite – that you can be a nation-state, that you can unite around common values and cohabit perfectly in a democracy.” According to such views, the EU does not only have strong disagreements with Israeli policies, such as on settlements, but has a fundamental philosophical problem with the actual existence of Israel as the homeland of the Jewish nation. The only way to reconcile this is to de-Is-

raelize Israel: to Europeanize it!

This, of course, is done in order to help Israel. Some 2,300 years ago, the Jews ungraciously rejected the European invader’s generous effort to enlighten them, sparking 2,300 years of the European-Israeli conflict – history’s longest-running feud. Would Israelis finally accept European dictations of “imagine” and for their own good, abandon ideas such as particularity, ideology, faith in God and nationalism?

Back-then it was the Europeans that eventually accepted the Jewish monotheistic narrative, in the form of Christianity – a stunning case where an invading occupying power succumbed to the narrative of the occupied. Rather than Europeanize the Israelites, Europe was Israelized.

Modrikamen stresses that contemporary efforts to Europeanize Israel do not represent the views of most Europeans.

“There are those in Europe who look at Israel as an aberration, but there are also those who look at Israel as a model. Israel is the example for Europe because it is a nation-state concept that fights for its values and concentrates on the future. It affirms exactly what we are and where we are heading.”

Other Eurosceptic leaders echo similar messages. For example, Beatrix von Storch, leader of Germany’s Alternative for Deutschland, told the *Magazine* that Israel is a role model for Germany, as well as for Europe as a whole.

While one camp in Europe wants to Europeanize Israel, other Europeans seem to want to Israelize

Europe. To some, Israel represents a scion of true European liberalism.

Indeed, when Theodor Herzl was crafting his vision for the Jewish state in the late 19th century, he viewed it as the most exact application of European liberalism. He spent years in Palais Bourbon carefully observing French democracy; he analyzed Bismarck’s audacious state-building efforts during German reunification and noted the challenges of Austria’s pluralism. Herzl studied political philosophers, internalized the imperfections of European liberalism and planted the seeds for a more perfect Europe in Israel.

Herzl envisioned a Jewish state that will serve humanity. Indeed, Israel has been blessed with a string of astonishing successes. Nations in Asia, Latin America, Africa and the Middle East are now seeking to share this blessing and partner with the Jewish state. This is even the case among a growing number of Palestinians – some of whom are sick and tired of the European-sponsored dictation of conflict perpetuation.

As the battle for Europe shapes up, more and more Europeans on both sides of the European divide are now calling for Europe to join the world’s nations, and rather than oppose the Jewish state, view Israel once again as a light to Europeans. ■

The writer analyzes trends in Zionism, Europe and global affairs, focusing on long-term shifts and applying historical perspectives. His articles are featured on Europe-andjerusalem.com



THANKLESSNESS? THE US Coast Guard-manned ‘USS Samuel Chase’ disembarks Company E troops on Omaha Beach, during World War II’s Allied Invasion of Normandy on June 6, 1944. During the initial landing, two-thirds of Company E became casualties.
(Wikimedia Commons)

PROTESTERS FROM the ‘yellow vests’ movement stand in front of the Eiffel Tower during the Act XX (the 20th consecutive national demonstration), in Paris on March 30. (Reuters)



EUROPE UNBALANCED

*EU politics now
resembles a scramble
of interlocking
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fractured alliances
with no winning
coalition in sight*

• DR. AMICHAI MAGEN

It was supposed to be an ever closer union in which Europe “whole and free” would stand alongside the United States in leading a liberal international order.

This would involve exporting modernization to Africa and the Middle East and socializing Russia, Iran and China into rule-based multilateralism – serving as a shining model of successful post-national cosmopolitanism for the whole world to admire and emulate.

After completing its “Big Bang” round of membership expansion to Central and Eastern Europe in 2007 and admitting Croatia into the club in 2013, the European Union of 28 states – democratic, prosperous and at peace – took its internal unity more or less for granted and thought of itself as a rising “normative power” in a largely benign global environment.

Yet within a frighteningly short period of time, the European dream has morphed into a nightmare. The once ebullient Metrosexual Superpower is now entangled in a sticky web of internal fractures, too divided to generate a coherent vision of a shared European future and too fragile to determine its own geopolitical fate.

Whether Brexit eventually happens or not, the old equilibrium that held the EU together for decades – one built around the Berlin-London-Paris triangle and embedded within the transatlantic community – is now irrevocably shattered. The Brits, always somewhat suspect in the eyes of committed integrationists, will never be trusted again to be reliable partners in the construction of the European Project.

No new European equilibrium has emerged or is likely to be found in the foreseeable future. The loss of London has come just at a time when the continent is caught in a maelstrom of centrifugal forces and lacks a cohesive organizing idea that could restore a modicum of balance to an EU battered by migration, terrorism and economic crises.

At the heart of Europe’s troubles lies a growing disconnect among European cultural and political elites, and between most of those elites and populations inside European societies. These chasms have insidiously eroded public trust in the basic efficacy of European political systems at the national and EU levels. It is a divide European elites are unlikely to be able to begin to repair any time soon since they themselves possess sharply diverging conceptions about what Europe is (and ought to be) and because none of them is strong enough to impose their vision on the rest.

EU politics now resembles a scramble of interlocking conflicts and fractured alliances with no winning coalition in sight. The European Commission is fighting Hungary and Poland. Italy and Poland are conniving to form an anti-EU league in the run

‘THE LOSS of London has come just at a time when the continent is caught in a maelstrom of centrifugal forces.’
(Photos: Wikimedia Commons)



SICK MAN of Europe: Political cartoon by JM Staniforth, 1898. National representations of the Great Powers of Europe ‘healing’ a subdued Crete, dressed in Turkish garb – the ruling power on the island at the time – in the aftermath of the Cretan Uprising in 1898.

up to the May 2019 European Parliament elections. Germany, Austria, Finland and the Netherlands are increasingly unwilling to subsidize the poorer, more profligate southern Europeans, and everyone is resisting France’s beleaguered President Emmanuel Macron’s grandiose ideas for deeper European integration.

For the time being, the EU is unlikely to unravel. Barring a major catastrophe – a full-blown Eurozone meltdown triggered by debt-laden Italy or a new tsunami of refugees escaping a failing Algeria or Nigeria, for example – Europe will sputter along in fits and starts, as aging empires have done throughout the ages. Like the Romans in the 5th, the Holy Roman Empire in the 18th and the Ottomans in the 19th century, the EU is more likely to gradually slouch toward paralysis and decay than to experience any form of dramatic collapse.

The EU is now the sick man of Europe. Unless it is able to generate a convincing new equilibrium, built around an energizing and unifying centrist vision, we should not expect a lot of bangs from Europe, but perhaps quite a bit of whimpering. ■

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A brief history of EU-Israel relations

• EMANUELE GIAUFRET

The relationship between the EU and Israel is very close and deep-rooted. Israel was one of the first countries to establish relations with the EU (then the European Economic Community) back in the 1950s. And in 1976 we had our first trade agreement. Just think of how trade between Israel and the EU has gone from €2 billion to €36b. since then.

The European Union is Israel's largest trading partner. Bilateral cooperation is extensive in many areas, such as in transport, industry and agriculture, but also in justice and home affairs. Cooperation on security issues, antiterrorism and antisemitism is growing, and we have proposed negotiations allowing for Israel's exchange of information with Europol.

The depth of historic, political, economic, social and cultural connections between Israel and the EU is often overlooked or neglected in the discourse. Our common future is also sometimes disregarded, even as Israel and the EU continue moving toward each other.

- Israeli exports to the EU in 2017 increased by around 20%. Thus the EU's share in total Israel exports reached the historical high of 34%. Almost 40% of all Israeli imports are from the EU. This is not limited to hi-tech sector but applies also to Israeli agricultural exports, 50% of which are to the EU.

- The EU is by far the biggest target for Israeli investment, accounting for 40% of outgoing investment.

- Thanks to the Open Skies Agreement ratified in June 2013, passenger traffic since then between the EU and Israel has grown from 7.6 million to 11.9 million, making the EU the prime destination for Israeli tourists. There are now over 90 EU destinations to fly to from Ben-Gurion Airport, and Israelis benefit from visa waiver travel.

- Half of Israeli higher education institutions have participated in Erasmus programs, while in 2018, for the first time, more Israeli postgraduate students chose to study in the EU than in the US, and Israel is looking at more closely aligning its qualifications system to the EU, offering greater future opportunities for young Israelis.

- The EU has been fundamental in supporting the expansion of Israel's research and innovation sector for over 20 years. In the Horizon 2020 program, over 1,245 projects received funding to the tune of €713 million.

- As part of our Union for the Mediterranean, Israel sits with its neighboring countries at ministerial and governmental levels to promote cooperation and improve our shared Euro-Mediterranean region through concrete projects.

IN SHORT, Israel and the EU are getting closer, and we feel there is still more to offer.

A key example is the development of gas fields in the eastern Mediterranean, which places the EU-Israel relationship at a crossroads and is about to add a whole new strategic dimension to our cooperation. As recently expressed by Energy Minister Steinitz himself, Europe is the natural market for eastern Mediterranean gas. And the EU and Israel understand that our challenges are increasingly common, whether on climate change,



contributing to economic growth and development in Africa, or managing global migration flows.

We, of course, also have disagreements with the Israeli government, and we engage on those both privately and publicly. But the EU is united when it comes to Israel and its security. We all share a desire to keep Israel close to us, we are deeply engaged in efforts to stabilize the region, and at the same time we need to see an end to the conflict and the occupation, which put at risk Israel's long-term interests.

We are already engaging with both the Arab world and Israel to promote practical cooperation on issues of common interest, ranging from regional security to civil protection to climate change adaptation. We are ready to accompany both parties every step in the direction of a more cooperative regional dynamic.

Yet we are also aware that full normalization of relations between Arab states and Israel requires addressing the conflict, and the two-state solution is the only viable option. Peace with the Palestinians would allow relations with the EU to naturally flourish even further, and the region to develop its unexploited potential.

We don't want to underplay the importance of our differences, but we cannot allow them to overshadow our entire relations, and we also need to clearly communicate the many positive aspects of our relations, which the overwhelming majority of Israelis would not want to abandon.

For seven decades now, Europe and Israel have been good friends, partners and neighbors. We have joint interests, joint history and a joint future. As we always say, and I think that facts speak for themselves, these are disagreements between friends. Sometimes the older the friendship, the more you allow yourself to voice your differences. ■

The writer is the European Union's ambassador to Israel.

EU AMBASSADOR to Israel Emanuele Giaufret. (Courtesy)

Much ado about nothing

• ALFRED TOVIAS

The move toward more globalization is unstoppable, basically for technological reasons. For instance, constant improvements in transport and communication technologies lead to increasing direct contact between different individuals, families, tribes, cities and states. In a matter of 10 to 20 years, civilian supersonic travel will be back. This is not to speak of the indirect contact with other people and cultures by trade in goods.

By and large, most young people look forward to it. They are not scared by change brought about by globalization; they are not even fatigued by constant change. Apart from age, the reason for this fearless attitude is that they are increasingly educated and acquiring a very important tool, namely knowledge of the English language. They are better equipped than previous generations to cope with globalization. As a matter of fact, many adults, including old ones who are naturally inclined to resist change, are also becoming computer literate. Research shows that people of the baby boom generation, including this author, are or at least feel younger mentally and physically than their parents when they were the same age.

Globalization has not only technological reasons, but also political will to eliminate artificial man-made barriers to movement of goods, services, people and capital across national borders. The European Union is at the forefront of globalization. It has been an open trading block, largely thanks to elimination of man-made barriers to movement of goods and services through intensive participation in multilateral trade negotiations first in the GATT and then the WTO. But when that road was unavailable or did not go far enough, the EU did not hesitate to negotiate free-trade areas, including with Israel; or even negotiate inclusion of countries such as Norway in its single market.

The degree of freedom of movement was always many steps ahead inside the EU. Since 1968, citizens of the member states can move across the entire EU territory to look for permanent work; for a place to retire long-term; to study in another EU member country for an unlimited time; and this list is not exhaustive. Almost all Israelis that by law are allowed by one of the EU member states to become citizens are slowly and discreetly availing themselves of this possibility, Zionism or not.

GIVEN THE opportunity, most people prefer to be citizens of a supranational



'THE EU has been and is at the avant-garde of globalization. It has been an open trading block largely thanks to elimination of man-made barriers to movement of goods and services...' (Pictured: World's Fair Grounds; Wikimedia Commons)

state than a purely national one. Those forecasting the unsustainability of the EU in the long run (Eurosceptics) as compared to the durability of the nation state have constantly had to revise their dire predictions. The eurozone is alive and kicking. Nobody questions the usefulness for the citizen of having an international currency that can be used in practice at least in the European continent (including Switzerland, Hungary, Montenegro and so on).

Those UK citizens that voted for Brexit expecting the EU to collapse afterward must recognize now that this was not only fantasy, but that Brexit has energized the other 27 to integrate further. Some keen observers of what Britain will do after leaving the EU think that the former will ask again for EU membership in less than a decade.

Who would have predicted several decades ago that the largest producer of civil aircraft in the world, Airbus, would be a consortium of different European firms working in harmony with Brussels eyes monitoring its development? Who would have said that a mega-national producer of aircraft like the American Boeing, with Washington behind it, would incur huge losses because of rushing the development of a new model, the Boeing 737Max, to catch up with Airbus and then having to ground the whole new fleet until the safety of the new aircraft is duly established?

The advantages that educated young people in Europe see in economies of scale are self-evident. For instance, a much higher percentage of young British citizens favor the UK remaining in the EU than the rest of the population. Young European citizens love the EU because it opens to them 28 different labor markets; they benefit extensively

from the successful introduction of EU educational programs such as Erasmus for education, training and sport. Low-cost airlines such as Easy Jet and Ryan Air have become European trademarks for vast amounts of young people that never dreamed two decades ago of visiting other European countries as they do know – and they like that.

One of the taboos firmly engrained in European societies is being bypassed increasingly, namely mixed intra-European marriages. Traditional barriers such as language and religion are left aside. Children issued of these marriages are going to become the real Europeans. Quite ironically, among the first generations of real Europeans are, relatively speaking, many Jews. Not surprisingly, we don't find many European Jews that are Eurosceptic.

THE TRIUMPH of neoliberalism as an economic doctrine both at the supra-national level (the EU becoming an engine of globalization) and at the member-state level (creating EU single markets for goods, services, capital and labor) has had secondary effects that must now be reckoned with. They became glaring a decade ago with the onset of the Great Recession. Increasing income inequality and regional disparities, both at the domestic level and at the EU level are well documented.

The political backlash is the emergence of Europopulism and the rise of extreme parties – both right- and left-wing. A common feature to all is hostility to neoliberal and cosmopolitan elites. This translates frequently into classic nationalism, protectionism, hostility to migrants and foreigners in general, but also to well-integrated minorities, such as European Jews.



A PROTESTER in Brussels during the European Council, 1987. (Wikimedia Commons)

However, things must be put in perspective. The explosion of social media exaggerates the real impact of people with extreme, frequently badly informed, views. Let's not overreact. If most Europeans think that globalization should continue and that on the whole it is a satisfying feature of their lives, then the right things to do is to hear the qualms of those left behind and try to bring them up to average as much as possible. This is what is expected to happen in a modern democracy.

"As much as possible" will be a function of the place of the state in the political economy (from almost zero in the UK to quite a lot in France). In that task, the nation-state will play a central role for some time (for practical reasons, in most instances), but if it appears to most Europeans that some services can be provided more efficiently at the supra-national rather than at the national level, they will eventually go for it. The European University in Florence is a good advanced example of graduate teaching toward obtaining a PhD without renouncing to excellence.

Paraphrasing Mark Twain, the news that the EU is cranking and moribund is premature. Europopulism can be addressed by adopting policy measures that can correct the worst side effects of openness and globalization, something that President Emmanuel Macron of France seems to have understood. In historical perspective, this period we are living now will be remembered probably as "much ado about nothing." ■

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A more assertive EU in a volatile world

• HELGA SCHMID

The predictions made last year with regard to the growing importance of great power rivalries still ring in our ears.

What is more, our strategic environment grows ever more unpredictable. Major powers openly challenge the rules-based international order and seek to promote alternative visions of a world divided into spheres of influence. Geopolitical rivalry stokes tensions and raises the alarm bell of a new “proliferation age” that risks escalating into inadvertent military confrontation. Climate change is becoming an existential threat while cyberspace and disinformation campaigns are the new weapons of the 21st century.

For the European Union, these challenges can be tackled only through a multilateral approach. We have the tools and the political weight to shape the future global

order if we stay united. This is why instead of retreating from international cooperation and global partnerships, the EU is stepping up its commitment to address global challenges together with its partners. This is true for the Paris agreement on climate change, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) on non-proliferation, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the EU’s strategy for connectivity between Asia and Europe or the reform of the WTO.

While these agreements are – in essence – hard to reach, we are convinced they are the best way to ensure a more peaceful, prosperous and secure world environment. Even more so when it is clear that no single country can address these challenges alone. I am convinced this approach is the right one and the fact that demand for European action from our partners has never been so high speaks for itself.

At every given opportunity, the need to define common answers to common problems is not only highlighted but translated into action. The European Union is therefore investing in broader international cooperation and partnerships above all with NATO, the UN and regional organizations, such as the Africa Union and ASEAN. Our trilateral EU-AU-UN cooperation on common challenges such as migration illustrates how multilateral solutions can contribute to greater safety, stability and prosperity.

For instance, as the UN IPCC Special Report on Global Warming warned us recently, there is an urgent need to act on climate change. This is the logic for the EU’s tireless efforts to reach a successful outcome at COP 24 in Katowice. The EU will lead by example by turning its own ambitious commitments for 2030 into concrete action. This was made clear at the high-level event on climate and security hosted by the EU last June.

In the security sector, the EU continues to assert its role as a security provider. Not only is it working internally to intensify joint efforts to effectively fight terrorism, hatred and violent extremism, it is engaged on the ground with 16 crisis management missions with nearly 4,000 men and women. From building capacities in Mali, Niger and Central African Republic, to supporting security sector reform in Iraq, fighting piracy off the coast of Somalia or preventing a resurgence of violence in Georgia, the EU continues to strengthen international security in its neighborhood and beyond. This is complemented by continued engagement in more than 40 mediation activities across the world, from Colombia to Yemen and the Philippines, and underpinned by financial assistance, as the EU remains the lead donor for development and humanitarian aid.

As Europe is taking more responsibility for its own security, the debate on European strategic autonomy has moved to the fore – and not without controversy. However, at its heart is a simple reasoning: when needed, Europeans need to be able to protect and defend European interests and values and have the capacity to act. We want to be able to cooperate with third countries on our own terms.

In this respect, we stepped up the development of joint military capabilities.



PLACARDS ARE pictured during the ‘Rise for Climate’ demonstration in Brussels on March 31. (Reuters)



HELGA SCHMID, secretary-general of the European External Action Service. (Courtesy)

Through our Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), we will increase joint investments through the European Defense Fund. We are streamlining military command structures (MPCC) and we agreed on

a compact to strengthen our civilian crisis management. These initiatives also contribute to strengthen NATO’s European pillar and contribution to collective defense.

Greater responsibility also includes beefing up our own resilience and capacity in energy, space, infrastructure and other critical sectors. We Europeans cannot accept interference and destabilization through hybrid and cyberattacks, hence our ongoing focus on reinforcing cybersecurity capacities, improving the protection of data and containing disinformation through the recently adopted Action Plan on Disinformation.

We also need to be extra vigilant to preserve achievements on non-proliferation, such as the INF treaty or the nuclear deal with Iran, as the stakes for our own security are simply too high. The starting point cannot be to dismantle the current architecture and start from scratch. We Europeans are working at all levels to promote the universalization and implementation of existing agreements, such as the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty or the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation. We are also pushing for the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty to come into force, which could play an important role as we work toward a complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea.

Taking greater responsibility does not stop at defense issues. Security is also about economic security. This includes the strategic importance of the Euro and the need to ensure that the single currency can play its full role on the international scene. Promoting the Euro’s international role is part of Europe’s commitment to an open, multilateral rules-based global economy. The extra-territorial effects of sanctions also challenge the EU’s capacity to follow through on our own political commitments. In this context, we are developing mechanisms that will assist, protect and reassure economic actors to pursue legitimate business abroad.

As Europeans, we cannot afford to waste time or to be less innovative than others. We need to modernize our approaches and engage more actively with new actors at the intersection of technology and foreign and security policy. This is why the High Representative launched the Global Tech panel with the CEOs of major tech companies, in order to help ensure that international ethics and rules can keep pace with human ingenuity. To harness these opportunities, we also must take the security implications seriously, hence the recent European Commission Communication on Artificial Intelligence.

Supporting rules-based multilateralism and greater European strategic autonomy are not contradictory objectives. If we strengthen our resilience in the face of new risks, the European Union will play its part in reinvigorating the multilateral order and be reckoned as an assertive actor in a volatile world. ■

This article originally appeared in ‘The Security Times,’ a publication of the Munich Security Conference. The writer is secretary-general of the European External Action Service.

European Jewry: A perfect storm of challenges

• STUART E. EIZENSTAT

Across Europe, antisemitism is rising – and sentiment against Israel with it. The sources are a dangerous combination of a radical minority of the increasingly large Muslim population on the Continent, and the far Left and far Right of the political spectrum.

The traditional threats to Israel's security from the Arab world have significantly abated since US president Jimmy Carter negotiated the Camp David Accords and the Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty, which I recount in my new book *President Carter: The White House Years*, and which just celebrated 40 years of unbroken compliance. We also broke the back of the Arabs' commercial cordon of Israel when Carter championed the 1977 law that prohibited American companies from joining the boycott. Israel today is one of the strongest economic and military forces in the world, and the only democracy in the region. Now Israel faces new challenges, and must recognize that its own policies in the West Bank and internal political developments aggravate its ability to overcome these challenges, with major implications for Diaspora Jews everywhere.

Since 2015, a tide of more than a million Muslim refugees has emigrated to western European nations, from Sweden to Germany, as a direct result of the catastrophic civil war in Syria and the violence in Iraq, augmenting the continent's already large Muslim population. Most of the Muslims in Europe want good jobs, a good education for their children and a secure environment that includes tolerance of their religion. But some of the new Muslim refugees, and others who came earlier, brought with them what they had been taught – a virulent hatred of Jews and Israel that did not distinguish between the Israeli government's policies and the Jewish communities they encountered in Europe for the first time.

Between 1993 and 1996, I traveled widely throughout Europe from my base in Brussels as US ambassador to the European Union. I could always tell where the synagogues and Jewish schools were located because they were protected by concrete barriers and heavily armed police. In Germany, the recipient of by far the largest group of these new refugees, some Jews are now afraid to wear kippot for fear of attack. The children of close friends in Brussels have moved to Florida because of persistent Muslim harassment of their children. A carnival float in a Belgian parade of a local club carried larger-than-life images of stereotypes of hook-nosed Jews. It caused an outcry, but the club insisted it was permissible satire. In Malmö, Sweden, home to a large Muslim population, a series of attacks culminated in the 2013 bombing of the Jewish community center there.

There are many factors behind a resurgence of Europe's far-right neo-Nazi parties – the stresses of globalism, economic trauma from the past decade's financial crisis, and especially the new wave of Muslim immigrants since 2015. Greece has its Golden Dawn Party; Hungary its ruling Fidesz Party; Italy its Northern League, now in the government; Austria its

Freedom Party, with neo-Nazi roots, now a partner in the government; and the Alternative for Germany Party is now the main opposition party, with particular strength in the depressed areas of the former East Germany. One of the AfD's leaders recently declared that the Holocaust was a "mere speck" on Germany's 1,000-year history.

Resentment on the European far Right against Jews is partly connected to what they consider disruptive globalization. Nationalist parties that dominate or hold the balance of power in central and East European nations have threatened the democratic values of tolerance, the rule of law, a free press, and an independent judiciary – all of which are critical to the safety of Jews in Europe.

IRONICALLY, SOME on the far Right combine antisemitism at home with support for Israel, a country they view as a symbol of nationalism. The Israeli government has made common cause with many of those governments and their leaders, most notably Prime Minister Viktor Orbán of Hungary, who fans the flames of antisemitism at home, yet tries to improve his reputation by being photographed at Yad Vashem with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. While it is necessary to deal with conservative governments as a matter of state, the Israeli government should use its influence with these governments to urge them to confront antisemitism in their countries.

No longer is racial and religious violence a matter of some isolated lone madman. Internet-linked white-power advocates and neo-Nazis communicate with each other worldwide to murder Muslims in New Zealand, young Social Democrats in Norway, black worshipers at prayer in South Carolina, or Jews in a Pittsburgh synagogue – anyone who in their eyes fits Martin Buber's classic definition of "The Other."

This resurgence is not simply a phenomenon arising from a radical Muslim fringe or Europe's ultra-Right. The far Left has joined in to idolize the Palestinians as victims of what they call Israeli "colonialism." At both these extremes, the falsehood resonates that Jews control the financial strings of the world. Some cheered the September 11, 2011, attacks in New York as an attack on the center of Jewish power and globalization. Jeremy Corbyn, the leader of Britain's Labour Party, regards as friends Hamas and Hezbollah, whose goal is the destruction of the Jewish state. A handful of Labour members of parliament have deserted their party, and Jonathan Sacks, Britain's former chief rabbi, has called Corbyn an "existential threat" to British Jews. British universities have imposed a virtual boycott on exchanges with Israeli professors who have almost no connection with the West Bank.

All this has taken a toll on European Jewry. In the largest survey of European Jews ever undertaken in 12 countries of the European Union last December, about a third said they avoid public events and venues in fear of their safety. And a similar percentage said they have considered emigrating in the past five years for the same reason.

France is the crucible of this lethal combination as the home to half a million Jews, the largest such community in Europe, as well as about five million Muslims, many of them refugees from the Algerian war for independence, and many never successfully integrated into French life or were accepted by the French leadership.

Some on the far Right combine antisemitism at home with support for Israel, a country they view as a symbol of nationalism

In 1980, in the first attack on Jews in France since World War II, the synagogue on Paris' Rue Copernic was bombed, killing four people, including – in the obtuse words of Prime Minister Raymond Barre – some "innocent Frenchmen," a phrase for which he was roundly mocked in a criticism that he blamed on the "Jewish lobby" to his dying day. Anti-Jewish terrorism intensified in the next decade, and in 2012, a Muslim attack against a Jewish day school in Toulouse killed a rabbi and three school children.

In 2014, some 800 antisemitic incidents were reported in France, an average of two a day. The following year, a deadly attack on the Paris editorial offices of the satirical newspaper *Charlie Hebdo* – for a disrespectful portrayal of the Prophet Muhammad – and simultaneously on the Hypercacher kosher supermarket brought antisemitic violence to a new height. In 2014 and 2015, a total of about 13,000 French Jews made aliyah. During one march, banners were hoisted saying "Jews, France is not yours."

In 2018, the volume of antisemitic incidents in France increased dramatically, prompting Prime Minister Edouard Philippe to declare them "a daily occurrence." For years, the authorities denied the problem, but now emigration has dropped significantly as the French police have begun to target antisemitic incidents.

THERE ARE now some 15 million Muslims in Europe, and only one million Jews, and the gap is certain to widen in the years ahead. European politicians can count, and are likely to take more anti-Israel positions to court the growing Muslim population. French President Emmanuel Macron has refused to visit Israel because negotiations with the Palestinians have stalled, thereby discounting Palestinian obduracy and placing the blame largely on Israel.

The BDS movement has particular resonance in Europe; it is grounded in public opinion. A BBC survey of 17 EU member states in 2013 found Israel's impact on the world "mainly negative," and standing fourth to last, just ahead of the pariah states of North Korea and Iran. Last December, a CNN poll of citizens in eight nations across Europe found that while only



BUDAPEST'S GREAT Synagogue: In Europe, 'I could always tell where the synagogues and Jewish schools were located because they were protected by concrete barriers and heavily armed police.' (Lennart Tange/Flickr)

10% viewed Jews unfavorably, roughly a third believed traditional antisemitic stereotypes that Jews have too much influence in government and finance; that Israel uses the Holocaust to justify its rule over the Palestinians, and accusations of antisemitism to block criticism of its policies. However, more than two-thirds of those surveyed supported commemoration of the Holocaust to help ensure genocide was not repeated.

Buffeted by these political crosscurrents, the EU and many of its member states have taken critical positions on major issues of importance to Israel, ranging from relations with Iran to labeling requirements for imports from the West Bank into Europe. The bloc also restricts research and development grants to Israeli universities and institutions that have no contact with the West Bank. Meanwhile, the conservative Israeli government has moved increasingly close to the Trump administration on such policies as pulling out of the nuclear agreement with Iran that is still supported by its European signatories. It has also made a political alliance with the Jewish Power Party, a successor to Rabbi Meir Kahane's virulently racist Kach Party, creating further tensions between Israel and Europe.

All is not bleak in Europe. Europe is Israel's major trading partner. Most Western European countries have an annual Holocaust Memorial Day. The European Union has gotten serious about combating antisemitism. The European Parliament has established a working group on antisemitism, formally condemned it, and outlawed Holocaust denial and antisemitic hate speech. The European Commission encouraged its 28 member states to combat antisemitism through its educational

programs and established a code of conduct.

This year, European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker spoke out forcefully and movingly against antisemitism: "I did not think in my lifetime I would see again that Jewish citizens are afraid to express their support for their religion." And this February, there was a huge rally in Paris against antisemitism.

In the Clinton and Obama administrations, and as special negotiator for the Jewish Claims Conference, I have negotiated billions of dollars of Holocaust-related compensation agreements with the Swiss, French, Germans, Austrians, with European insurance companies, and negotiated the Washington Principles on Nazi-Confiscated Art.

We cannot give up on Europe and European Jews. They deserve more support from American Jews and from Israel, which gives them almost no attention except as potential recruits for aliyah. The EU stands for respect for all religions, even when trends toward intolerance and worse are troubling and must be fought at every turn. ■

The writer served under various US presidents including Lyndon B. Johnson, Jimmy Carter, Bill Clinton and Barack Obama. Most recently, he was the Obama administration's special adviser to secretaries of state Hillary Clinton and John Kerry on Holocaust-era issues. The author of several books including Imperfect Justice, Future of the Jews and President Carter: The White House Years, he is the recipient of nine honorary degrees and awards from the governments of France (Legion of Honor), Germany, Austria, Belgium, the US and Israel. seizenstat@cov.com.



SUPPORTERS OF Greece's far-Right Golden Dawn party hold a banner during a protest against Turkey, in Athens on March 5. (Reuters)