

and China, go for an immediate ceasefire and diplomatic solution in Ukraine, and start the process of reconstruction of the world economy. The way out of both the war danger and the financial collapse is a new security and development architecture which takes the interest of every country on the planet into account; that of Russia, China, the United States, European nations, and emphatically that of the developing countries. Given the present policies of the “democracies,” this seems impossible, but it is not.

In the coming weeks and months, the utter failure of the neoliberal model will become so absolutely clear to everyone, that neither “freezing for freedom” as the German Economic Minister Habeck suggests, who wants to decree how cold it has to be in the apartments, nor “starving for democracy,” will have much appeal.

What we need now is a movement of state citizens, of ordinary people from all walks of life, who become leaders when they see that their country has been hijacked by a policy establishment that doesn’t care about them; that only thinks about how to protect their positions and privileges, and whose policies have created a class of millionaires and billionaires, and the majority of people whose life savings are eaten up by hyperinflation.

In each nation, we need a movement of citizens who have the courage to act to correct what they know to be wrong, who refuse to submit to the presently unbearable “opinion dictatorship” which allows only the official NATO narrative to be repeated, and which accuses anybody who tries to shed some light on why we are in

this crisis, to be a Putin agent or in the service of the Communist Party of China.

Why not invite commentators from Russia, China, India, Mexico, Afghanistan, Ghana, Syria, or Pakistan into our talk shows, instead of the ever-same clique of synchronized pundits who try to make us believe the Earth is flat, and that the snow is black? Yes, for the sake of the wonderful democracy and human rights, let us discuss the case of Julian Assange, and what crime he committed. Let us reject what is rotten in our culture: the perversion and banality of the entertainment industry, which is designed to make us stupid and passive.

To win Mission Impossible, we have to revive the best cultural tradition in every country in Europe and in the United States; the Asians are already doing it. The Germans have to become again a people of poets and philosophers. The Italians, great artists of the Renaissance; the French, scientists of the École Polytechnique. The Americans should turn their country again into a temple of liberty and a beacon of hope. Only if we are willing to change ourselves in this way and become better human beings who don’t go around like beast-men or beast-women for that matter, who want to “ruin” other countries, but who want them to develop in the best possible way, who want them to blossom and have all the talents of their people unfold, will we have a beautiful future for ourselves.

And then, we have the courage to get up and pull the brake of that terrible train we are sitting in and stop the dash into Armageddon. Thank you.

Andrey Kortunov

Russia and the Indivisible Security of All Nations

Prof. Andrey Kortunov is Director General of the Russian International Affairs Council (RIAC). His presentation followed Helga Zepp-LaRouche’s keynote on the Schiller Institute’s panel, “A Decoupling of the Two Systems or a New Paradigm for Humanity?” on June 18, 2022.

First of all, I would like to express my deep gratitude for having a chance to be a participant to this



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very important and very timely event. I hope that we will have a candid and intellectually gratifying discussion on the current international trends, and what they might mean for people like us, and for our respective countries and societies.

I would like to focus in my brief presentation on the trend, which I would label as the current consolidation of the West. I think that one of the most explicit manifestations of this trend can be

seen in the consolidated reaction of major West powers to the conflict between Russia and Ukraine. We've seen very fast, very well-coordinated response to the Russian military operation, an unprecedented level of anti-Russian sanctions, and also unprecedented level of military, economic, political and intelligence support for Ukraine. We've seen a lot of coordinated pressure on Russia in many international organizations, multilateral institutions, and also coordinated pressure on many countries of the Global South, in order to convince them to take the right position in this crisis.

'Decentralization of the West' Reversed

However, I think it's fair to say that the Western reaction to the Russian military operation in Ukraine is not the only manifestation of the current trend towards a more consolidated West. If we look at the events of last year, we will see many other indicators, which clearly deserve our attention. For instance, a new military-political alliance, the so-called AUKUS, emerged in the Pacific. The United States tried, and they were quite successful in institutionalizing the quadrilateral dialogue on security issues, the so-called Quad, with India, Japan, and Australia participating. The Biden Administration has conducted a large-scale Summit for Democracies at the end of last year. We can indicate very consistent attempts to activate NATO; to increase the military spendings of European countries, allies of the United States; we've seen Finland and Sweden make an important decision to join NATO; we've seen new activism within the group of G7. So, there are many manifestations that suggest that the West is entering a phase of relative consolidation.

If we will look back into history, I think that the previous cycle, the cycle of decentralization and disintegration of the West arguably started back in 2003 when the United States had very serious problems to convince some of its closest partners to support the U.S. military operation in Iraq. And though the split between the United States and the United Kingdom on the one hand, and continental European powers on the other, was not a strategic division, but definitely it signaled that the centrifugal trends started to dominate in the Western alliance.

These trends were accelerated by the Obama Administration when the White House announced the so-called Pivot to Asia. This pivot was met with a lot of

suspicion in Europe, because it was interpreted as an attempt of the United States to move away from Europe, and to replace Europe as the top strategic priority with U.S. strategic alliances in the Asian Pacific region. Of course, four years of the Trump Administration also contributed to this disintegration, and so did the British Brexit from the European Union.

So, for at least a decade, maybe more than a decade, the West was moving toward more disunity. And today we see a reverse trend and the question of course is how long this trend will last for, and how it will manifest itself in coming years. I think that it is fair to say that the Western countries will enhance their cooperation in the military technical area, and NATO is likely to go global. I think that we'll see some indicators of this trend already at the next NATO summit which will take place in Madrid in just a couple of days from now. I think we will see an attempt to globalize the area of responsibility of the NATO alliance, though some NATO members might still be reluctant to extend their responsibilities beyond the European continent.

I think that we will also see more coordination of political strategy of major Western powers, and though it would not be easy to convince some European nations to take a stronger position on China, the United States will definitely try to move Europe in this direction.

Western 'Consolidation' Shows Economic Weaknesses

I think that we might also observe some success stories in attempts to overcome the current economic disagreements and contradictions between the two sides of the Atlantic: For instance, the Biden Administration has already decided to lift some of the tariffs on European steel and aluminum. I think some kind of arrangement between Boeing and Airbus might be reached before too long. I think there are chances that other symbolic trade agreements might be reached between the United States and Europe. I also believe that the two sides will do their best to coordinate the policies in high tech; and we're likely to see transcontinental consortia of major high-tech industries, in areas like IT and biotechnologies, and new sources of energy, and that would create a technological change of a new generation.

I think it's also important that the West will try to dominate the global commons agenda. Western countries—mostly the European Union, but also the

United States—will try to define the rules of engagement in areas like the energy transition and information management and climate change, trans-border migration management, biodiversity, and other areas like that. It is definitely an important factor of the Western consolidation; and though I foresee complications on this road, still, I think that in the immediate future some kind of coordination in these areas is possible.

And definitely this coordination reflects the weakening of Western positions, and concerns about geopolitical rivals and adversaries of the West, mainly China, but also other emerging economies and emerging political powers.

So, the question is how long this consolidation might last for, and at what particular juncture the trend might be reversed? I think that we can expect this trend to continue for a couple of years, but in the end of the day, a new deconstruction of the consolidated West is almost unavoidable.

There are many reasons for that: First of all, I think that it would be very difficult to maintain the current level of unity, given divergent economic interests between the United States and Europe. For instance, I do not see how the United States might get the European Union to open its agricultural markets for U.S. products. I don't see how the United States will easily accept German cars and spare parts to German cars imported to the United States. So economic disagreements will be there to stay. The United States will try to continue exploiting its privileged position in the global economy, and its privileged position in the world financial system. It would be increasingly difficult to maintain the dollar as the main reserve currency of the world, and I think the importance of the dollar will, gradually, slowly but steadily, go down; and that would create additional problems between the United States and its allies.

Prospect of 'New Coalitions' of Nations

I think there are also disagreements on long-term economic and political interests toward other parts of the world. For instance, for Europe, it would be more problematic to break with China; and I think the European Union will be reluctant to start an economic war, a trade war with China, even if the United States pushes this issue really hard.

It is probably impossible to synchronize political development cycles of the Western world. Most European countries are moving in the direction of left political coalitions, or left-centrist political coalitions, while in the United States the coming mid-term is likely to favor neo-cons in the Republican Party. The two models—the Anglo-Saxon model of social and economic development is not really converging with the continental European model—and this is likely to remain one of the problems and one of the limitations in the way of a more consolidated West.

I think that we should also keep in mind that China will continue to be a divisive factor in the relations between the United States and Europe, and not only China, but many of the other countries that belong to the Global South are likely to be a bone of contention between America and Europe, because the United States and the European Union have many different approaches to the Global South, and to the transfer of resources from the Global North to the Global South.

Finally, we should not forget that in relative terms, the collective West is getting weaker, and there are many unresolved problems that have to be addressed by Western countries. Many of these countries have divided societies. We see a lot of polarization within Europe, in countries like France, for example—and this polarization was reflected in the results of the recent elections, both presidential elections and elections to the National Assembly. We will see polarization in the United States, with the reformist wing of the Democratic Party moving further left, and the Republican Party moving further right. We see major infrastructural problems in the United States and in Europe, which remain unattended. So these are problems likely to reduce the influence of the West in the world, and to promote disintegration trends within the global West.

In the end of the day, I think geography will matter less than it matters right now. And the odds are that the notions of the East and the West, or the notions of the North and the South, are likely to gradually lose their relative importance, and will be replaced by new concepts of situational *ad hoc* coalitions that might unite diverse countries from all corners of the world. Thank you.