

# BRICS, the Trump Phenomenon, and the Future of Germany

## Harley Schlanger and Rainer Rothfuß, German Member of Parliament, in Dialogue

*The following is an edited transcript of the Nov. 13, 2024, dialogue between Harley Schlanger, a spokesman for the Schiller Institute, and Rainer Rothfuß, a member of the Bundestag, the German parliament, representing the Alternative for Germany (AfD) party. Subheads have been added.*



Website of Rainer Rothfuß  
Rainer Rothfuß

**Rainer Rothfuß:** Welcome dear guests. I'm here today in the Deutsche Bundestag, with my dear friend Harley Schlanger from the Schiller Institute in Potsdam, an institute which deals with Eurasian studies, I would say. And we want to discuss here, today, the United States election outcome, and also the implications that these results have for geopolitics in Europe and in the world. Thank you for having come here, dear Harley.

**Harley Schlanger:** Thank you, Rainer, for your invitation.

**Rothfuß:** Please tell us quickly, what are your most recent impressions from these elections? You were there in the U.S. until Sunday and have just returned to Germany.

**Schlanger:** Well, the most important thing is that the establishment underestimated the anger and the rebelliousness in the U.S. population—just as they did in 2016. What U.S. President-elect Donald Trump tapped into was a reaction of Americans to the arrogance of the U.S. establishment, that they could just insert a Democratic candidate for the presidency, Vice President Kamala Harris, spend more than a billion dollars, give her all the media focus they could, protect her so people don't really see who she is—and people saw through it.

**Rothfuß:** That's a very interesting point: the rebelliousness of the population. We are also watching the developments in Germany very closely, as the Alternative for Germany—because you need rebelliousness to thrust in a political force, or a presidential candidate, who is demonized by the media, over and over. What has created this rebelliousness? And is there a strategy maybe, which we can also use in Germany to foster this rebelliousness? And I would not only say rebelliousness, but this ability to think, act, decide for yourself, independently. How can we promote that? How did it work in the United States?

**Schlanger:** There's a hunger for answers. Why are we in this situation? Why are we in these wars that can't be won? Why are we spending taxpayers' dollars that end up in the pockets of the military-industrial complex and acting Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky's cronies?

**Rothfuß:** So, point one is, there is a problem which is deeply felt by taxpayers, by employees who fear for their jobs, etc., right?

**Schlanger:** And it came up again with the recent hurricane Helene, where we just voted \$8 billion for Zelensky, and there was no money for the Federal Emergency Management Agency, for people who were left stranded, without power, without homes in North Carolina. I was in North Carolina, and when I was there, you still couldn't get to some parts of the state because of the effects of the flooding. And people are angry about it! Because they're saying, how do we have so much money for these wars, and nothing for the needs of ordinary people?

**Rothfuß:** Did Trump address this anger directly in his campaign? Or was it something that developed on its own in the population? Because sometimes people criticize Alternative for Germany for calling out too directly what are the problems; to be too aggressive in our tone. How did Trump handle this situation, where he knew that people were angry?

**Schlanger:** He addressed it directly. But don't forget, he's been a prominent figure in the United States now, since 2016, and people recognize him as an opposition figure to the establishment. And so that, whether he addresses it or not, that's known; that's a factor for people. But when you have something like this, a crisis of this kind of proportion—like the shutting down of industry—when you have an absentee President like Joe Biden, and then the attempt to create Harris as a place-keeper for Biden, who can't talk about what needs to be done, because he has no solutions. And so, is the solution "I'm not Trump?" Trump was able to play on that, and basically said, they're running away from the reality that he succeeded, from 2016 to 2020, in keeping the United States out of war, in keeping the economy going.

And under Biden, with the Green transition—and this is something important, I think, for Germany—the Green transition is a fraudulent policy! It costs jobs, it increases the price of electricity, it makes electricity less reliable, and people know that! You don't have to go and stand in front of a microphone and say that. You look at what's happening with Volkswagen auto factories closing here, you look at what's happening with the electric vehicles, the attempt to shift away from perfectly fine, diesel and other combustion engines— For what reason? Ideology! And people are smart enough to see through that. And then, when they get lectured that they're not being "woke" enough, it gets people mad. And, furthermore, when they see Trump get arrested, that mug shot of Trump from his trial, that really resonated with African-Americans.

**Rothfuß:** That was brought up when he was being brought into the prison. That made him a hero.

### **Why Elitism Is a Failed Political Strategy**

**Schlanger:** And Trump is basically saying, "To hell with you. I know what this is all about." And that reso-

nates with other people who see themselves as victims of the establishment. So, here you have a guy, who's a billionaire, but who identifies with the average person. And I think this is one of the most important lessons for Germany: that when you have politicians who see themselves as better, as "elites"—as the establishment does, lecturing the population as to what they need to do, what they should know—as opposed to giving them guidance, that's one of the most important things that Trump can do.

**Rothfuß:** These lessons are so important for us to learn in Germany, because we also have a very important election ahead of us, [which will be] the 28th of September 2025, or the 8th of March 2025. The election is coming up now. And we need a strategy to resonate with the population, with people's needs. And this is a good side that Donald Trump showed, even being a billionaire and the President: he's one of them, he's one of us, seen from the eyes of the population. Right?

**Schlanger:** And seen as a fighter.

**Rothfuß:** As a fighter, yes.

**Schlanger:** The fact that he had his picture taken after he was brought into the Fulton County jail, in Georgia. Or, after all this comment about the island of garbage, Biden saying Trump supporters are "garbage"—what does Trump do?

**Rothfuß:** The "deplorables" comment of Hillary Clinton.

**Schlanger:** But he then went and drove in a garbage truck, wearing a garbage man's uniform.

**Rothfuß:** Kamala Harris refused to acknowledge that she had worked at a McDonald's restaurant when she was young.

**Schlanger:** Yeah! But there's a common touch that he has, which the Democrats don't have, which former President Barack Obama pretends to have, but Obama is now living in Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard, in Massachusetts. He's with the elite of the elite! That's who chose him!

**Rothfuß:** What should Alice Weidel do, should she become our official candidate for Germany? What could she learn from Donald Trump?

**Schlanger:** I think there are a couple of things. Get a message and stick with it. That message should be “No more wars; no more funding for these NATO wars.” The other is the fight for sovereignty. When Trump talks about “Make America Great Again,” he’s saying that the American people have a right to determine their own policies, as opposed to having them come down from, whether it’s the World Health Organization, or the United Nations, or some global institution—that it’s up to the people in a so-called “democracy.”

You know, you have the hypocrisy of U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, touring the world, talking about “democracy,” when the rules-based order has nothing to do with “democracy”; it’s “we tell you what to do, and you like it, or else.”

**Rothfuß:** When they never manage to fix—yeah, rigged elections.

**Schlanger:** You lecture, “the Russians are interfering,” and then, what has the CIA done in the last 50 years? What has the United States done all over the world?

**Rothfuß:** And there was never proof of Russia interfering—

**Schlanger:** It was proved that there was no interference in the 2016 U.S. presidential election! And one of the leading technical experts in the United States, Bill Binney, who was an NSA whistleblower, showed that there was no ability of the Russians to hack the Hillary Clinton campaign files, which was the center of Rus-siagate: the claim that Russian President Vladimir Putin had hacked the DNC and had all these documents. They never did!

So, sticking with the truth and making sure that people understand it, that’s the most important thing.

**Rothfuß:** And regarding personality— I mean, should Alice Weidel also try to get closer to the normal people in their lives, like Trump did when he drove the garbage truck, when he did the McDonald’s?

**Schlanger:** That worked because it was authentic. I don’t know Weidel enough to know if she has that common touch.

**Rothfuß:** Yeah, you need that.

**Schlanger:** And I think the other leader of the AfD, Tino Chrupalla, I think he has more of that.

**Rothfuß:** Because he comes from those layers.

**Schlanger:** Yeah. And that’s important, because we don’t need actors pretending that they’re just a common person. What Harris did, especially when she would speak to an African-American audience, she would “develop” an African-American accent, which was the same thing Obama did. People see through that. You don’t have to change who you are, if you’re an authentic person.

**Rothfuß:** This is taught to you as a politician from all the advisers; they say you have to look for the survey results, and if the topic is of high public interest, then go after it. If it’s neglected, then forget about it. But in the end, it seems that does not work forever. It can work for a while maybe—

### **Trump vs. the War Hawks**

**Schlanger:** If you have a gut instinct. Trump, on a couple of issues has that. On war: He is opposed to war. He’s not saying the United States shouldn’t use its power, but it should use it for things that are important for the future of the United States, whereas Biden and the Democrats—and the Republican war hawks, also— Trump’s going to have a problem with some of the Republicans, because they’re connected to the military-industrial complex; they’re committed to war.

And in 2016, Trump won because he destroyed the Bush machine. And former U.S. President George W. Bush tries to come across as a country bumpkin. But people know that the Bushes are not country bumpkins; they’re high-level oligarchs. And people can get a sense of that from the way Trump took on Jeb Bush in 2016. So, the authenticity of being yourself is important.

But then, what I see in Germany is the anger in the population at the sense that the government is under the control of NATO, and the directions for this government are coming from London, Washington, and

Brussels. And so, a person sitting in Thuringia has a sense that no one's listening, that you cannot reach Chancellor Scholz, you can't reach Foreign Minister Baerbock and Vice Chancellor Habeck.

**Rothfuß:** They tell you: "It doesn't matter what your people think, I am going to stick with Ukraine."

**Schlanger:** And that's where the question of democracy comes from, when Prime Minister Viktor Orbán won a decisive victory in Hungary, EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and others said, "This is bad, this isn't democracy." Well, the people voted! If you really believe in democracy, you don't attack the decision of the people. If you disagree with them, go out and organize and educate!

This is the other point: censorship, and the use of hybrid warfare. I see it against the AfD all the time: Create an aversive label and stick it on, like "neo-Nazi" or "fascist," to set up "right-wing" versus "left-wing." Most of these are arbitrary conceptions that come from political consultants, who are very highly paid to convince politicians that this is how to talk. If you are a German politician and you say, "We should be proud of our nation and do things good for our people," there's nothing wrong with that.

**Rothfuß:** No! That's democracy. You serve the people. The people are in power, they are the sovereign. But we, at the Alternative for Germany, have listened very carefully when Donald Trump said in a Tucker Carlson interview: "It was me who destroyed Nord Stream." Was he just boasting because he needed the support of the Russia-haters in the American society? Because, we made it clear now, that we will follow Trump, only as long as he is willing to make fair deals with Germany. And we as Alternative for Germany are not an enemy of the United States, or much less of the Trump-led United States. We had a reason to look critically at what the Biden, the Bill Clinton, Obama, etc. U.S. presidential administrations did, because they destroyed our neighborhood in Europe, and flooded us with migrants and with their wars. So, we had a reason to criticize it.

But we looked critically at Trump, when he said, it was he that destroyed Nord Stream. It was *our* pipeline! It was a Russian-German pipeline that was essential for *our* interests, for our industry! And Trump would have

protected, would have fought for this pipeline. Trump is German by descent, but now he's American, and he seems to follow the interests, at least on this topic, of the globalist, geopolitical mafia.

**Schlanger:** I'll say this about Trump: He sometimes speaks off the top of his head, and says things that may not be entirely accurate, or reliable. For example, sometimes he uses harsh rhetoric against China. He'll say at the same time, he admires Chinese President Xi Jinping, he admires what China has done lifting its population out of poverty, building the infrastructure. Sometimes he's talking for certain Republican Party audiences.

On the Nord Stream pipelines, I think the important thing is that investigative journalist Seymour Hersh is probably right. It was Biden and the U.S. who destroyed the pipelines, as Victoria Nuland and so many people in the U.S. Senate bragged! And the lesson for Germany is a sovereign chancellor wouldn't have stood there and said nothing, when Biden said in essence, "You're not going to get the Nord Stream through. We're going to shut it down."

Now, I think Trump was also speaking for this idea of "American energy independence." And if we could sell the LNG to Germany, why make Germany dependent on Russia? But that's a decision for the Germans to make. And that's where you see, again, the arrogance: When Brussels, and London and Washington say, "You're just giving in to Putin." Well, it's a business decision. If you can get gas plentifully and cheaply, and the Russians always abide by their contracts, why is that a problem? But it did come from the United States, and especially from the British.

So, I would say, some of the things Trump says are for domestic audiences; it's to show him as a tough, independent guy. I wouldn't take everything he says as gospel. But I think the important point is, his unpredictability is what scares the establishment. That's what scared them in his first term, when he pulled out of the Paris Climate Accords; that was extremely important.

### Why Didn't Trump 'Drain the Swamp'?

**Rothfuß:** Trump said he was going to "drain the swamp," and yet he brought in John Bolton, Mike Pompeo—he brought in people who were part of the swamp. Was that an attempt to survive, politically, because he was under pressure from parts of the Republican establishment that did not agree with his agen-

da: the war hawks needed their food, to play on with Trump, right?

**Schlanger:** Yeah, and see, I would say that was the weakness of the first term. But it was largely driven by the outside attacks on him. Remember—and I was there when some of this was going on; I was in touch with some of the key people in the Trump campaign in 2016. The people who won the election for him were Roger Stone and Paul Manafort. They were two of the first people brought down by Russiagate. They knocked them out—Lt. General (ret.) Michael Flynn was the third. Because Flynn had a key role in explaining to Trump the role of the U.S. intelligence services in supporting Islamic fundamentalist terrorism.

**Rothfuß:** Syria, Iraq, the creation of ISIS. He revealed it with the Defense Intelligence Agency.

**Schlanger:** Yes! And where did that come from? That came from the Brzezinski networks. Zbigniew Brzezinski was the promoter of the so-called “Islamic card” to attack Russia. Who are the Brzezinski networks, today? Blinken! And under Presidents Bill Clinton and Barack Obama, it was Madeleine Albright, Samantha Power, and Susan Rice. This is the “deep state” crowd.

**Rothfuß:** They’re all burned. They will not come back.

**Schlanger:** That’s right! But there are still others that are part of that, and I would argue that Pompeo and Steve Bannon are the two people that worry me, because they have their own, independent power base. Bannon has a very strong connection to the United Kingdom intelligence services, the City of London. But remember, Trump got rid of him, in his first term. And he brought Bannon back, because Bannon still has a following. But I would suggest to Trump: Stick with your instincts. His instincts are good. His intentions are good.

**Rothfuß:** His instinct also to bring in Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. now. He said it this morning, our time: “He will make America healthy again,” he said; I love that.

**Schlanger:** And Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., has two real, important credentials: One is the connection to the last time we had American leaders who understood that American power is not based on dictating terms to other

countries, but on helping; on being a partner. And President John F. Kennedy went from being a Cold Warrior to looking for a way to getting détente with the Soviet Union as did Robert F. Kennedy, Sr. also.

**Rothfuß:** And his mission also was to “drain the swamp.”

**Schlanger:** Yeah! He wanted to, I think he said, break the CIA into a thousand pieces.

**Rothfuß:** That was what killed him, finally.

**Schlanger:** Yeah. Now, Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. learned the lessons from that. And I think it’s extremely important that Trump is listening to him.

**Rothfuß:** He can reach out to the Democrats through Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.—to a part of them.

### **Beware of the British**

**Schlanger:** The Democrats tried to destroy Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., and so it’s important. But the Democratic Party has been under the control of this grouping of the Democratic National Committee, which is Wall Street lawyers; which is the Defense Department; people like Blinken; Avril Haines who’s the Director of National Intelligence; Susan Rice, very close to Obama. These are people who take their orders from the think tanks and defense companies, and also the British. Don’t underestimate the importance of the British special relationship. And I would watch very carefully what Boris Johnson does, because he is trying to become close to Trump, and say that he’s with Trump. These are people who have, as the British always say, “we don’t have permanent friends, just permanent interests.” And their permanent interests are the protection of the Empire.

**Rothfuß:** That worries me, Boris Johnson. When I hear that name, I remember that he was the guy who was sent to Kiev, to stop the peace agreement that was already worked out between Russia and Ukraine, in Istanbul. And Trump has promised, I would say, to end the war within 24 hours. OK, this is a little—very ambitious, I would say. But what do you expect? Can he find an agreement with Russia, at this very point that we are at this moment, in this war in Ukraine? Because this is a key issue for Germany—for Europe! Can he end this

war, or will he be isolated by the European actors in that war, and will the European Union as a leader, take over this proxy war against Russia?

**Schlanger:** Look at the problem Europe has. The economies are in terrible shape. The European Union approach to credit and economic policy is a disaster. You have a minority government in France under President Emmanuel Macron. You have the poll listed in Germany that support for the ruling coalition has completely evaporated. It's down below 15%, I think, for the coalition. So, they can say, we're going to have our own defense forces—and by the way, this is something about Merz also. Friedrich Merz, the leader of the Christian Democratic Union in Germany, is trying to position himself as a tough guy on the war. Now, all this could be undermined by Trump, if the United States stopped supporting the Zelensky government, and said to Zelensky, “Negotiate, get an agreement. Get the best agreement you can.” And what Trump is saying is, basically, what Putin was saying: There are legitimate security interests that Russia has, and that Ukraine has. That's the starting point for a settlement.

If the idea is you build Ukraine up into a military force, so it can stand up against Russia, that's going to drain the European treasuries!

**Rothfuß:** But you were referring to Friedrich Merz. I consider him a war hawk.

**Schlanger:** Yes, exactly.

**Rothfuß:** And he has very good relationships to Larry Fink, the head of BlackRock.

**Schlanger:** He worked for him!

**Rothfuß:** Yeah, of course. And Larry Fink said, “It doesn't matter who is the next President, we are in power.” So, are they also in power to just continue this war in Ukraine, because they need the profits from the war? Is Trump capable of having a say in that war?

## BRICS vs. Imperialism

**Schlanger:** It's not that simple that it's just about profits. It has to do with a certain belief about who makes the decisions in the world. And they'd be willing to give up profits in the short term, to keep control. The problem they have now is there's an alterna-

tive developing around BRICS. Sometimes it's called “de-dollarization.” But whatever you want to call it, it's against the weaponization of the dollar against other countries. And that goes back to the tradition of Brzezinski and Walter Wriston, the former head of Citibank, who wrote a book called *The Twilight of Sovereignty*. Their belief is you can take away the power of the national governments to act in the interests of their people, and instead, impose technocratic machines, as we see with the World Health Organization, the International Monetary Fund, and so on.

Now, that's what has to be fought. The idea is not just left/right, rich/poor—it really is, there's an imperial faction in the West which is centered in the City of London and Wall Street. That's what Fink represents.

**Rothfuß:** The globalist faction. They want to keep control.

**Schlanger:** The globalists, yeah. And in a sense, globalism has become a bad term, but the fact is, we do have a global economy. The question is, can it be cooperation for mutual benefit? Or is it the rules-based order, where the United States tells you what you're allowed to do, or not do? And the rebellion in the Global South is mirrored by the rebellion by the voters in Germany, in France, and in the United States: They have common interests!

Now, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov made a very interesting comment the other day. He said essentially, “We're not against the West. We're not trying to fight with you. We want you to cooperate.”

**Rothfuß:** Which is sane: They want to sell their gas to the West. And we need their gas!

**Schlanger:** That's right. And historically, Germany and Russia have had this relationship which has terrified the City of London and Wall Street.

**Rothfuß:** The Heartland theory.

**Schlanger:** Yeah, the [Heartland](#) theory: That's what the Eurasian question is. And what Putin has done is to establish a new alternative for Eurasia, which is not against the interests of the West. It's against the interests of the corporate cartels in the West. And so, we have to get people to distinguish between what benefits the billionaire class, as opposed to what benefits the

nation. And this is where we have a job to do: to educate people. And I think this is something that I would say for the AfD: Instead of falling back into the old profiles, you really have to show people in Germany, that the greatness in Germany in the past was based on Classical culture, science and engineering—and this is what the world needs.

**Rothfuß:** Also, the cultural development: music, literature.

**Schlanger:** Yeah! You think about Goethe, Schiller, Beethoven—the potential is there. And if you go to China, if you look at China, they have an incredible amount of Classical culture there—German culture! And there’s an appreciation for what Germany did after World War II. And this is the strength of Germany because it went back to the Bismarck tradition, the idea of industrial physical economy, industrial development: That that’s the way you increase the productivity of labor, increase the wealth of the country, and then you can do more! And instead, we have monetarism, we have financialization, speculation. And that’s why there’s dollarization, because the dollar is the instrument of the City of London and Wall Street.

### **Ending War: ‘The Most Ardent Issue’**

**Rothfuß:** I think we have to continue our conversation in the future. We are, of course, interested to see what the consequences of the Trump administration coming into power in the beginning of next year. But the most ardent question for us, for Germans, for Europeans, is this war in Ukraine, and also in Israel/Gaza/Lebanon. That’s why I would like to ask this final question:

What do you expect Trump can, may, will do to end the Ukraine conflict, the Ukraine war, and also the Israel/Gaza/Lebanon conflict war?

**Schlanger:** Well, the first thing he’ll do is something the West has been refusing to do, which is talk to Putin. You know, we vilify and demonize Putin. How do you then, have a relationship with Russia? Because Putin, whatever else he is—I don’t care if he was KGB 30, 40 years ago—he’s a Russian nationalist, whose commitment is to the Russian people, and the Russian nation. And instead of seeing that as a threat, talk to him! [He made some very legitimate appeals](#), before the special military operation, about mutual security and was ignored by the West, because the West, going back

to the Maidan coup in 2014, intended to use Ukraine as a sledgehammer to weaken Russia. That’s what U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said, when he began the Ramstein process.

Now, here’s something that I think people have to understand about the Middle East: Israel is the same to those globalists as Ukraine. It’s a tool. There’s a mythology that Israel, because of Jewish bankers, controls Western governments. No! Israel is used by Western governments to do the bidding of the geopolitical, imperial policy. Why was Israel created? There was no “Biblical” intent, the idea that the Bible is a real estate contract between the Jews and the land there. No! It was Lord Balfour, it was the Rothschilds, who used the situation of the Jews in Europe to create an artificial state to destabilize the whole region, as, in a sense, an agency of the Western governments.

Now, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is crazy: He’s totally committed to the idea of Greater Israel. The question is, will the people of Israel learn that sooner or later? And we’re seeing now, again, reaction against him.

But look, the key thing about that situation is October 7, 2023, one way or another, was allowed by the Netanyahu government. They have enough intelligence, enough surveillance, to have known something was coming. So, that was for the purpose of creating a war.

But if we’re ever going to end this conflict, we’ve got to learn diplomacy again. We’ve got to learn that there are common interests among all people, regardless of religion, regardless of where they grow up, and—

**Rothfuß:** I’d rather play in the field of soft power, in geopolitical terms, than in the field of hard power.

**Schlanger:** Even those terms, I think, the term of “soft power” implies that you’re manipulating a little bit.

The question is, do you recognize the common human interest of all people, that we’re all created in the image and likeness of God, if you look at the Bible, and therefore people do have—

**Rothfuß:** Create soft power, because soft power is also about trust. This is what Russia and China are basing their policies on, much more than the West. They create trust in the Global South, and they attract those countries. They look far more to what BRICS is now, and will be in the future, than towards the West, because

they don't want to be the new rulers of the world, but they want to be the *organizers* of the new rule set, which is more equal and more balanced.

**Schlanger:** Absolutely!

**Rothfuß:** And I think this is what the West lacks, and I hope that Donald Trump will get onboard of this way of soft-power-based rules negotiation.

### A Post-Colonial Era of Cooperation

**Schlanger:** His idea of negotiation is based on that: How do you find the common interest, so that you can reach a resolution? My organization, the Schiller Institute, is very active around the Trump circles, promoting the idea that the United States, if not join the BRICS, should cooperate. The Belt and Road Initiative is changing Africa! I do a lot of work with some African governments, and you look at the European Union policy: They go in and they say, "You need to go with solar power and sustainable energy." These are countries that have oil and gas, they've got

uranium. Why is it that only Europeans should have rights to this?

And so, you had a poor country like Niger: They had a coup, and they kicked the French out! That should be something that's celebrated by all of us! There's no reason to have a French imperial presence in Africa! It's a legacy of the 500-year tradition, and what people in the West have to realize is that we're in a new era. The Global South is finally emerging from what they tried to do in the 1950s and 1960s with the Non-Aligned Movement. We can work with them! And that's the future. If we want to try and impose our beliefs on them, the way we're trying to do with Russia, it's not going to work. And the difference in the world today is that Russia is a powerful military nation, and it's developing new technologies for weapons—even Iran, now, is doing that. So, if you go to war, it's self-destructive. And that's why diplomacy is so important.

On the question of Trump, I think Trump is a realist, and he recognizes that American power comes from doing what's right, not from imposing its will. You know, I refer to Blinken as a salesman, who's out there trying to sell the "rules-based order," going to lecture the South Africans on transgender rights! And the former South African Foreign Minister Naledi Pandor said to him: "Mr. Blinken, we're a sovereign nation. Don't come into our country and bully us! Talk to us."

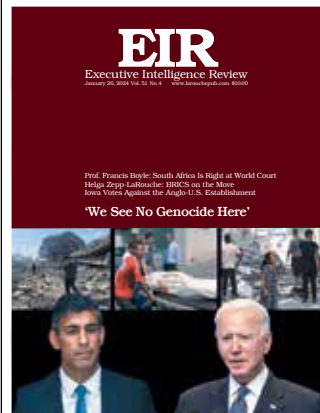
And that's the change! And the Russians and the Chinese know that now. They're doing that. Germany has a tremendous potential to help African nations develop big markets! But the European Union approach to this is a disaster.

**Rothfuß:** Yeah, and we as Germans, we, as Alternative for Germany, hope that Germany will be able to build a bridge between the BRICS countries and the collective West. I think it would be a very wise and good position for us in this world, in this new, upcoming structuring of the world, which is more or less a bipolar world.

And I thank you so much for these deeper insights. And I hope we can continue this talk and this analysis about the geopolitical developments that are ahead of us. I am really happy with developments in the United States: I congratulate President-elect Donald Trump, and the rebellious population in the United States. As you said: We need rebelliousness; we need self-thinkers, independent thinkers. This is what makes the people really sovereign.



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