



It's on the NATO "corpse"...

que doit se bâtir une défense de l'Europe / Europe et Défense - Dossier G2S n° 24

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According to the GA (2S) Jean COT, which sees it as a federation of States united in their diversity. He calls for us to finally give ourselves the means of this defence, otherwise we are condemned to erase ourselves.

The defence of Europe, its territory and its peoples is the most obvious common good for the citizens of the European Union (EU). It should therefore have been one of the main themes of the campaign for the European elections in May 2019.

The problem is that it is not the EU as an institution that has responsibility for its own defence, but the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), in which the United States has a leading role. A bit of

history. Having emerged from the Second World War in a state of bloodshed, the countries of Western Europe had no choice but to place themselves under the protection of the United States in the face of the formidable Soviet threat. They did so through NATO, created in 1949. We should be grateful to the United States for having played a very important role in winning the Cold War without firing a cannon.

But

it is 2019. Seventy years after 1949, the risks and threats have become more diverse and globalized. The United States has drawn the consequences by withdrawing almost all its forces from European soil, giving strategic priority to Asia, its new challenge.

On the other hand, the EU has risen from its ruins. Its overall wealth - its GDP - is now equivalent to that of the United States. It is therefore unlikely that 500 million EU Europeans - I still include our British friends! - are still so dependent for their defence on 325 million Americans. Mr TRUMP says the same thing, brutally, the United States is giving too much for the defence of Europeans.

NATO is an obsolete organisation and so is Article 5 of its Charter which stipulates a reciprocal military commitment in the event of aggression.

It would be a serious mistake to think that after TRUMP everything will be back to normal. TRUMP is just saying out loud what many in the United States are thinking out loud. I could testify to that. I will take one from Mr. SHAPIRO and Mr. WITNEY, eminent members of an important American Think Tank, reported in Le Monde on November 5, 2009: Europeans have a childish and fetishistic relationship with the United States, nourished by illusions, including :

- . That the interests of Americans and Europeans are fundamentally the same,
- . That Europe's security still depends on American protection.

Do we Europeans have to be deaf and blind enough not to admit this truth and draw the consequences? It is true that, since the Maastricht Treaty of 1992, the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) has been slowly being built up, with not insignificant results:

- . European Security and Defence Strategy Document (ESDS) ;
- . European Defence Agency (EDA) ;
- . Military Staff Embryo for Civilian Crises and Force Generation ;
- . Permanent Structured Cooperation (PSC) ;
- . European Defence Fund (EDF) .

To confine myself to the essentials.

The problem - and it is crucial - is that this European defence in the making has nothing to do with the defence of Europe as defined above. It is limited to the so-called Petersberg tasks under the aegis of the UN:

- . Peacekeeping and peace enforcement ;
- . Evacuation of EU nationals ;
- . Humanitarian aid, disarmament, cooperation .

In summary, then, here is the incredible paradox:

- . NATO has exclusive responsibility for the defence of Europe, while the credibility of the United States, which dominates it head and shoulders, is increasingly uncertain.
- . The EU is confined to exotic Petersberg interventions without even having a permanent operational headquarters to conduct them.

This paradox does not seem to trouble the EU's political and military authorities, who have concealed it behind the convenient concept of complementarity and task-sharing between NATO and the EU. In reality, nobody is fooled: NATO is a good alibi for limiting their defence effort. Why should we pay more for our defence, even if, via NATO, we are dependent on the United States? This culture of subservience to the United States is unacceptable.

I have been saying and writing this for twenty-five years, and a little less alone today: NATO is the major obstacle to building an independent European defence. That is why NATO must be killed. The best thing would be for Mr TRUMP to decide this himself.

With NATO dead, the European powers will be forced to assume the first of their sovereign responsibilities, the defence of territory and populations, and to pay the price.

That could be my conclusion. I would like to add two observations:

1. I have read General de Villiers' book What is a leader? "From his words, I will retain two:
. "The merged European army is a dream. It could turn into a nightmare. I believe in national sovereignty, not European sovereignty. »

. "If the European army consists of juxtaposing forces, merging them, turning them into combat units under the orders of a hypothetical headquarters in Brussels, I say IMPOSSIBLE. "(The capital letters are his). These words are quite illustrative of the reticence that can remain even in our ranks. They call for some answers... What is NATO if not a headquarters - SHAPE -in Brussels, multinational corps headquarters, including a German-Polish corps, a German-Dutch corps, a German-Netherlands corps, a German-North American corps... European Corps in Strasbourg with four nationalities, a French Rapid Reaction Corps (CRR) in Lille which can accommodate half a dozen foreign contingents?

Would what is appropriate in NATO be unbearable in a European framework? The European army would be nothing more than NATO without the Americans, to begin with. Not that we no longer like them, but simply because we can no longer, we must no longer rely on them. They themselves say so. Need I remind you that we would have had a European army since 1954 if DE GAULLE, in the opposition, had not scuttled the project, carried by France? I was at Saint-CyrCoëtquidan at the time. I was very sad about it, as were many of my comrades. Finally, I will broaden the debate beyond the question of the defence of Europe. The choice to be made, as the recent European elections have reminded us, is between two irreconcilable visions of Europe in the middle of this century. Either the exclusive, sovereignist, nationalist vision, which is based on the sacred nation state: America First - Deutschland über alles - La France d'abord. Or an inclusive, open, humanist vision, which does not hold the nation-state as the ultimate grain of the political organization of Europe.

I believe I am a good patriot, but I am also an ardent European, a citizen of Europe. There is no contradiction in that! My Europe is that of its motto: "Unity in diversity". The United States of Europe is not a dirty word! It is the necessary condition for Europe to count tomorrow in the third tier of the world's great powers.

UNITE or FADE OUT - The United States of Europe or the Balkans of the world. No need for passion to subscribe to this. A little reason should be enough.

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