

Trump understands West must end Ukraine war to pull Russia from China

By Conrad Black

Fortunately, the Western European governments, less than two weeks after the American election, are starting to come to their senses and recognize that the incoming administration will do a much more consistent, well-reasoned, and ultimately successful job of leading the Western Alliance toward its shared objectives than the outgoing senescent and discordant Gong Show of a Biden-Harris administration. Wailing and hand-wringing about the United States abruptly ending aid to



President Putin and President Xi, looking comfortably Chinese together (Photo by Kim Kyung-Hoon - Pool/Getty Images)

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er to the Kremlin out of the returning American president's supposed affinity for dictators has already vanished into the ether of nonsensical fantasies. Trump sometimes prefers dealing with dictators than wobbly and irresolute democrats because it is ultimately more possible to reach an agreement with them, just as Mao Tse-Tung preferred to deal with

Republicans such as Eisenhower (who threatened to use nuclear weapons to end the Korean War if the People's Republic of China did not begin to negotiate seriously), and Nixon and Kissinger with whom he made a number of arrangements that are still viable. He found Truman, Kennedy and Johnson unpredictable. Of course, American presidents are all democratic leaders generally acting within the confines of the US Constitution, where the difference between a flustered and overcautious Angela Merkel, who could have been Bismarck in drag but essentially dithered for 16 years, and a Putin is much more stark, and the fact that Putin might be less challenging to deal with certainly never implied that Trump preferred him politically.

The Biden policy in Ukraine of "whatever and as long as it takes", was just a policy of supplying arms until the last available Ukrainian had been sacrificed in a war of attrition Ukraine could not win against a country almost four times as populous and a state that can effectively ignore public opinion. Trump's promise to end the war quickly is based on his faith in his ability to tell Putin that if he does not conduct a partial rollback from where he is in Ukraine and accept that as the only victory he can achieve, and guarantee Ukraine in its revised borders, Trump will arm Ukraine with weapons that bring this war home to the entire European population of Russia, and Putin can do unmentionable things with his threats of recourse to nuclear war. Trump made it clear in his debate with Biden which ended Biden's political career that he would not accept Putin's present peace terms. Trump is an astute trader as he demonstrated in his first term with foreign leaders in Europe, the Middle and Far East, and the Americas, and under no circumstances will he give back or even tolerate the neutralisation of the largest single piece of the immense and bloodless strategic victory the West gained at the end of the Cold War. Nor will he accept that anyone except NATO will decide who is admitted to NATO, and he is unlikely to have much patience with the long-standing shaky-

legged waffling of Germany on that subject either.

Trump appears to be the only significant Western leader who fully grasps that the West's other and almost coequal objective in this war, after the preservation of Ukraine with modified borders but absolute ironclad guarantees from Russia and NATO, is that the West must absolutely do all that it can, consistent with its integrity, to present a post-Ukraine War Russia with a competitive policy for the Kremlin to its continued, ultimately suffocating embrace with China. (The guarantees Ukraine receives must not be just the frivolous assurances instantly forgotten by the major powers when Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan demobilised the nuclear weapons they had inherited from the Soviet Union.) The Ukraine war must end honourably for the West, but once over we must make the effort to remind Russia that it is a Western and not an oriental country, that has generally prospered when it has been allied with the majority of the Great Western Powers (against Napoleon and Hitler), and has not done well when it was opposed to them (Crimea and the Cold War). The exception was World War I, but the reason was Russia's own completely incompetent government.

The idea that China is about to try to strangle or conquer Taiwan is utter nonsense, but a greater nightmare scenario and a more plausible one, would be that eventually Moscow and Beijing would agree on the movement of 40 or 50 million surplus Chinese into Siberia to exploit its resources and pay a royalty to the Kremlin; that would create a much more formidable China than the present overpopulated and resource-poor People's Republic. If the Ukraine war could be satisfactorily ended, there would be no reason not to conclude a mutually respectful nonaggression pact between NATO and Russia. Nor need we be so preoccupied with some of the other states that seceded from the USSR, such as Belarus.

The anxious meeting of the major Western European countries a couple of weeks ago to discuss how to continue supplying

Ukraine if the Americans ceased to do so (never a serious prospect since 95 per cent of American assistance is the donation of weapons and munitions from American factories, so almost all the expense remains in-country), was almost as absurd as the President of the European Council Jacques Poos' declaration on the disintegration of Yugoslavia in the 1990's that, "This is the hour of Europe, we don't need the United States." Less than a month later, all of European NATO was calling for President Clinton to help them. Trump is a clever man though that is not always obvious to Europeans, but his victory should demonstrate that fact even to the most vocal doubters. And Western Europe and the US and Canada are natural and necessary allies for each other, even if that is not the subject of constant gratitude on either side of the Atlantic. NATO is the most successful alliance in history and it must rescue Ukraine from the Russians and the Russians from the embrace of the Chinese.

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