



laetus in praesens

Alternative view of segmented documents via Kairos

13 July 2018 | Draft

New World Order of Walk-away Wheeling and Dealing

Creating strategic dependency and vulnerability through confidence tricks

-- / --

Introducing the new reality

Options for increasing European defence expenditure to 4% GDP or more?

Strategic dependencies and vulnerabilities

Sealing the deal in the New World Order -- and the "diplomatic clause"

Agreements between "progressives" in a period of eroding confidence?

Produced on the occasion of the [NATO Summit](#) (Brussels, 11-12 July 2018)

Introducing the new reality

History will presumably appreciate the radical role of President Donald Trump in making apparent the new global reality on which future human survival is now dependent. Rather than a dysfunctional global order based on the essentially static pattern of international agreements and nation states, the USA is now enabling a transition to a dynamic pattern of shifting temporary allegiances and walk-away deals. Essential to this shift is a more radical approach to changing levels of confidence between partners in this dynamic. Binding agreements are now simply indicative of nostalgic yearning for an obsolete Old World Order. Other than promises via the media, there are no guarantees of continuing fulfillment of an agreement -- and only the most unreliable processes for ensuring such fulfillment.

Promotion of a threat: The art of the deal in this context is, by any means, to **cultivate fear of an unquestionable potential threat in order to seal any deal creating strategic dependency**. Use of fear in this way to frame an indisputable need has a long history.

"Terrorists" or "Muslims" in current declarations can be readily replaced by "barbarians", "heretics" (witches), "native savages", "unbelievers", "communists", "fascists", "socialists", "capitalists", and the like -- just as those terms can be replaced by "terrorists" in arguments and declarations of the past. Other threats which may serve this purpose in the future include epidemics, Earth-crossing asteroids and extraterrestrials. What cannot now be reframed as a source of fear -- justifying any measure to safeguard security and health?

Walking away from any deal: Once dependency has been ensured for the transfer of goods and services, the scope of the deal can then be called into question at any time by increasing the price or withholding transfers -- with the possibility of walking away from the deal whenever it is useful to frame it as unsatisfactory or fundamentally flawed. It is no longer appropriate to deprecate this as blackmail. As realpolitik, it is the nature of any deal in the New World Order of wheeling and dealing.

The new pattern became widely evident through the leadership offered by the USA in walking away from the [Paris Agreement](#) within the [United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change](#), and calling into question the [NAFTA](#) arrangement, the [Trans-Pacific Partnership](#) (TPP), and the [Iran nuclear deal](#). In the same spirit the USA has [withdrawn from membership of UNESCO](#) and has [withdrawn from membership of the UN Human Rights Council](#). **From which international agreements, if any, could the USA now be considered realistically as being reluctant to withdraw?**

The pattern has become all the more dramatic in the case of NATO from which the USA has now effectively framed itself as free to walk away at any moment. Especially indicative in the latter case is the primary argument of the USA to Germany (and Europe) that use of Russian gas is unacceptable if the USA is expected to defend Germany (and Europe) against Russia -- framed as a common enemy. The proposed deal is that Europe should match USA defence expenditure, with the implication that European military hardware (and gas) should be purchased from the USA ([Trump claims victory at Nato summit after fresh row over defence spending](#), *The Guardian*, 12 July 2018; [A NATO summit in Donald Trump's parallel universe](#), *Deutsche Welle*, 11 July 2018; [What Trump's Critics Are Missing About the NATO Summit](#), *The Nation*, 11 July 2018).

This is a smart move in the new context because it locks in European strategic dependency on the USA, notably for vital energy supplies and for spare parts to maintain sophisticated hardware. At the same time the USA is free to walk away from the deal as soon as it is

considered unsatisfactory. An intermediary step is for the USA simply to increase the cost of the weaponry, the spare parts, or the gas, whenever convenient -- as illustrated by recent decisions on tariffs against European goods (and those of China). Other sanctions and travel restrictions can be implemented at any time.

Rejecting arbitration processes: Essential to this shift away from the static arrangements of the past is the manner in which legal arrangements between states, based on multilateral agreements, are simply set aside -- whether temporarily or permanently. The USA has been notable in distancing itself from any dependency on rulings of intergovernmental bodies or constraints these might impose. That pattern has long been institutionalized as a precedent in the veto procedure of the UN Security Council.

The USA is **not party to the International Criminal Court (ICC)**; it has an **uneasy relationship with the International Court of Justice (ICJ)** which arbitrates legal disputes among UN member recognizing its jurisdiction. The USA has **withdrawn from some protocols of the ICJ**. A similar process will presumably become evident with respect to the arbitration procedures of the **World Trade Organization** following claims recently made to it by China as a result of imposition of tariffs by the USA (*Back to the Jungle: WTO Faces Existential Threat in Times of Trump*, *Spiegel Online*, 30 June 2018).

The process has been strikingly evident in the manner in which electronic surveillance of allies and enemies has become a tolerated norm, irrespective of provisions of the various conventions (**Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations**, 1961; **Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties**, 1969; **Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties between States and International Organizations or between International Organizations**, 1986). This pattern became notably evident in wiretapping of UN offices in New York (*Alleged Breach of UN Treaty Obligations by US*, 2010).

It is readily to be anticipated that interference in the elections of other countries via lobbies and other means will also become a norm -- in the interests of national security -- rather than being framed as fundamentally unacceptable when undertaken by one country, as is currently the pretence (*Foreign electoral intervention*, *Wikipedia*). **Which governments and lobbies with the capacity to do so avoid interference in the elections of another country** -- however that is framed?

This posture in relation to international agreements then frames the challenge of what any party is then able to do about an unsatisfactory arrangement which cannot be resolved through any court of appeal. To date it has become apparent that this encourages retaliation in whatever manner proves viable, whether imposing sanctions, reducing diplomatic representation, travel restrictions, or freezing funds -- to name only the most obvious. Recourse to military action may of course be overtly or covertly threatened (*Bomb them Back to the Stone Age: An Etymology*, *History News Network*, 10 May 2006). This option may of course be preceded by a pattern of military encroachment by air, sea or land.

Confidence in any proposed future deal? Especially curious with respect to this new reality is how any claim can be righteously made that a deal can be reached by the USA with North Korea, since it is now evident to all that **no deal is worth the paper it is written on, irrespective of the authorities signing it**.

Both parties can walk away from it at any time, reinterpreting it as they please, whenever any element can be framed as unacceptable. This is presumably the case with any effort to renegotiate a deal with Iran -- or to resolve any other international conflict for any period.

Especially questionable is how the USA, as exemplar of the new strategic approach, could present itself as a viable partner in the controversial major multilateral agreements in process of negotiation: **Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP)** and the **Trade in Services Agreement (TiSA)** -- especially in the light of its problematic relationship to the complementary **Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP)**. It would seem that all such agreements are vulnerable to the new "walk-away" option -- perhaps now to be recognized through a generalization of the so-called **"diplomatic clause"** in a rental agreement.

What guarantees according to the conventions of the Old World Order are to be assumed to be meaningful in the New World Order? How credible are those who make such assumptions -- or endeavour to present them as credible?

Especially significant on the occasion of the NATO Summit (July 2018) was the stress on mutual commitment and burden sharing -- despite the ambiguity expressed by President Trump prior to the event and on that occasion with regard to the commitment of the USA to NATO. The ambiguity extended to hints that he might instigate withdrawal. A question asked of the NATO Secretary-General in a closing briefing, but not answered, was on what grounds should European countries trust the commitment of the USA to defend Europe in the light of its treaty obligations and the understanding of European countries. What meaning is to be attached to "trust" in the New World Order -- beyond its value for public relations purposes?

Reframing facts in a "post-truth" era: Significant to both engendering fear to seal a deal, and to disputing claims of infringement of signed agreements, is the new pattern of manipulating facts and massaging data to create whatever reality is convenient whenever it is convenient to do so -- and for whatever period is deemed necessary.

This is compounded by the use of simple denial of the relevance of any claims made, when other processes of dissuasion have proved inadequate. Governments are increasingly free, as demonstrated by the USA, to call into question the agreements made by the previous government in power -- readily held to be irresponsible. There is no longer any basis for enduring agreements at any level of society -- other than claims to that effect for temporary presentations through the media.

Authorities, including governments, are now in the awkward position of having the power to lie with little possibility of effective challenge -- and to ensure the suppression of contrary arguments. The awkwardness lies in the fact that as a consequence they no longer have the capacity to prove the veracity and credibility of any authoritative declaration they may choose to make.

It is questionable in a context of "walk-away dealing" why governments might choose to respect any international agreement or to honour their membership responsibilities in intergovernmental organizations. There is clearly a case for many to withdraw from such frameworks -- other than for public relations purposes and the personal convenience of delegates.

Whether or not governments choose to continue their membership, other than for purely tokenistic reasons, there is an even stronger case for moving the UN HQ from New York -- to which travel and budgetary restrictions may apply to an ever increasing degree (*Why UN should move headquarters out of New York*, *The Mercury News*, 2 February 2018; *Moving the UN in the light of a US perspective*, 2017; *Arguments for movement to other locations*, 2017). The case is all the stronger since President Trump has explicitly expressed his lack of belief in multilateral arrangements. Financing the continued presence of the UN HQ in New York is therefore as much a contradiction as his recent claim with regard to European use of gas from Russia.

Options for increasing European defence expenditure to 4% GDP or more?

The NATO Summit gave overriding importance to discussion of increased defence spending by European countries to 2% of GDP -- and preferably up to 4% of GDP. Ironically there would seem to be a relatively easy approach to achieving this given the long-standing tendency of European governments to massage official statistics in support of political requirements (employment, health, etc) -- to the degree that the [European Court of Auditors](#) has been unable to provide a *Declaration of Assurance* on accounts. Given that the boundary between defence and non-defence expenditure is typically a matter of debate, there would seem to be every opportunity to recategorize some existing exp endsures in other sectors as defence expenditure.

Expenditure in many sectors can be readily understood as vital to defence, including for example: strategic infrastructure (roads, rail links, and airports, water supplies, and essential foodstuffs). The approach is notably used in justifying further expenditure on satellites by stressing their vital importance for health research and environmental monitoring -- irrespective of their primary purpose in support of national security. What national expenditures cannot be claimed to be contributing to national security and defence -- especially under conditions of threat?

In this respect there is the opportunity for reframing any commitments to internal security as contributing to the defence budget -- including the police force, the intelligence services, and facilities supportive of civil defence. The renewed commitment of the French government to [compulsory military service](#) can be interpreted in this way, as can any costs in responding to the migrant "invasion". Expenditure on nature conservation in the extensive wilderness areas used for military training and weapons testing offer another example.

There is a strong case for reviewing precedents created by the Pentagon with regard to the "defence budget" of the USA. This typically includes a wide range of university research funded as defence contracts, as well as a variety of tie-ins with the entertainment industry (movies, video games, troop recreation, etc). Especially interesting is how military action anywhere can be partially justified in terms of troop training and weapons development.

More specific are the issues raised within the USA regarding use of defence funds ("tax dollars"), as summarized by [William D. Hartung](#) (*The Scandal Of Pentagon Spending*, *Huffington Post*, 11 October 2017):

The answer couldn't be more straightforward: it goes directly to private corporations and much of it is then wasted on useless overhead, fat executive salaries, and startling (yet commonplace) cost overruns on weapons systems and other military hardware that, in the end, won't even perform as promised. Too often the result is weapons that aren't needed at prices we can't afford. If anyone truly wanted to help the troops, loosening the corporate grip on the Pentagon budget would be an excellent place to start.... And remember: the Pentagon buys more than just weapons.

Citing massive contracts with health care and pharmaceutical corporations, among others, Hartung asks:

The real question is: How much of this money actually promotes the defense of the country and how much is essentially a subsidy to weapons makers and other corporations more focused on their bottom lines than giving the taxpayers value for their money?

With the data indicated by Hartung, the key question is **not** whether European countries can boost their defence spending to 2% GDP or more. The question is whether the tax dollars supposedly budgeted for "defence" in the USA are really spent on defence, or are misappropriated in some way (Jonathan Bydlak, *Bloated Defense Budgets Put America's Troops At Risk*, *Forbes*, 2 March 2017; John J. Duncan, Jr., *There is Nothing Patriotic or Conservative About Our Bloated Defense Budget*, *Ron Paul Institute for Peace and Prosperity*, 16 November 2017; Daniel Larison, *Expanding the Military Budget Is Wasteful and Unnecessary*, *The American Conservative*, 16 February 2018).

Expressed otherwise, **are the funds appropriated for effective defence in the USA less than 2% GDP -- let alone in process of being increased to 4% ?** Clearly this is a question that few NATO members would dare to ask -- even though their own defence funds may be more appropriately targeted.

Given this precedent of budgetary inflation ("bloating"?), and analogous tendencies in European countries, there would appear to be every opportunity for such countries to "increase their defence spending" to 4% of GDP (or more) by creatively "integrating" such expenditure with other public spending commitments. Other opportunities, with many examples, are made apparent in an earlier article by Hartung (*Only the Pentagon Could Spend \$640 on a Toilet Seat*, *The Nation*, 11 April 2016). In that spirit, minor items could even be purchased at great cost to increase the defence budget -- an accounting operation effectively reallocating existing commitment to subsidies in other sectors. Catapults, spears and crossbows?

Curiously this "budgetary redecoration" recalls the notorious example of [Potemkin Villages](#) to satisfy the needs of [Empress Catherine the Great of Russia](#) (*Globalization within a Global Potemkin Society*, 2000).

Strategic dependencies and vulnerabilities

There is a strong case for recognizing the dependencies of one country, region or continent on another -- especially since these may determine strategies leading to conflict in times of shortage. Efforts are currently made to predict shortages but typically these do not extend to clarifying dependencies systematically. The authoritative prediction of shortages, however manipulated, may of course be used as a means of engendering fear in support of particular agendas. Shortages may of course be artificially engendered as a means of persuasion difficult to resist.

Examples of dependencies which can be used in any bargaining process include:

- **energy:** exemplified by much-debated issues relating to oil, nuclear power and renewable sources
- **food and agriculture:**
 - basic foodstuffs: many countries are now dependent on importation of foodstuffs -- or the seeds from which crops can be generated. It is to be expected that this dependency will be used as part of any bargaining process to ensure deals favourable to countries capable of supplying those products
 - water: some countries are now absolutely dependent on importation of freshwater from their neighbours. Such access maybe restricted through use of dams and channelling of water within the country
 - agricultural chemicals: the capacity of many countries to grow food crops to sustain their growing populations is increasingly dependent on importation of fertilizers and pesticides
- **medical supplies:** the capacity of many countries to respond to the health needs of their populations is increasingly dependent on importation of pharmaceutical products and specialized equipment. Access to these may be readily restricted by increasing prices/tariffs or justified by improper use, infringement of copyright, etc
- **information-related:**
 - computer hardware: many countries are dependent on importation of computer products and parts required for their maintenance. Their availability can be restricted at any time with few substitutes readily available. This is especially significant in the case of major main frames on which institutions and production facilities may be dependent
 - computer software: as is evident in the case of the major operating systems requiring frequent upgrades in response to vulnerabilities. Any online updating process can be readily restricted with little warning. There are indications that many such applications have invisible "backdoors" enabling usage to be restricted or denied in some way.
 - information systems (search engine facilities, root servers): considerable dependency has been created on major information systems and the associated search engines. Access to them can be readily restricted with little warning.
 - information storage: considerable dependency has been created on use of vital storage and backup facilities "in the cloud" -- controlled in ways which permit easy restriction of access to them
 - communication infrastructure (satellite, undersea cables): the global knowledge-based society of the Old World Order has become dependent on communication infrastructure subject to highly restrictive control
- **military and security-related:**
 - military hardware: as noted above, many countries are now obliged to import sophisticated weaponry -- deemed essential for their security -- from a limited number of countries. Such supplies can be readily restricted. There are indications that use of some such hardware may be remotely restricted by the supplier, if desired.
 - military supplies (ammunition, spare parts): there is an obvious need for a dependable supply of ammunition for weaponry. The tendency for weaponry to fail, clearly requires a dependable supply of spare parts. All such supplies can be readily restricted.
 - security information: much has been made of agreements to exchange of (secret) security information between countries, whether in relation to criminal activity or to threats to security. The process is already variously restricted (Five Eyes), regionally, and bilaterally -- especially with respect to extradition arrangements. Such restrictions can of course be increased at any time.
- **waste disposal and emissions:** where there is a dependence between countries for processing and disposal of waste. Such agreements can be readily set aside, creating immediately obvious difficulties for those seeking assistance with large quantities of waste

Cutting across such sectors are issues of:

- **territorial claims:** variously subject to deliberate denial and infringement through encroachment. Striking examples are currently offered in the China Sea and in the careful reframing of any controversial comparison between annexation of Crimea by Russia, of Occupied Territories of Palestine by Israel, of Northern Cyprus by Turkey, and of Tibet by China. All arenas for resolving such differences are now considered irrelevant -- despite claims to the contrary. Violent resolution is therefore always a possibility. NATO maintains a very strong position with regard to the return of Crimea by Russia ([Chairman's statement on NATO-Ukraine following the meeting of the North Atlantic Council with Georgia and Ukraine at the Brussels Summit, NATO, 12 July 2018](#)). NATO has not successfully endeavoured to resolve the territorial dispute between a NATO member and a non-member ([Cyprus and the NATO-EU Divide, Brookings, 2010](#)). NATO has not suggested that Israel should return the occupied territories to Palestine ([NATO, Israel and peace in the Middle East, NATO Review](#))

- **intellectual property:** in the case of texts, images, or patents -- all variously subject to accusations of infringement, counterfeiting, and plagiarism, whether overtly or covertly. Claims to any such abuse are readily used to inhibit dissemination of vital knowledge, whether through pricing or other restrictions
- **planned obsolescence:** readily used as a means of exacerbating and accelerating the processes described above
- **lock-in:** agreements aside, there is clearly every advantage of **vendor lock-in** to ensure customer dependence on particular products, services and standards -- most obvious in the case of military hardware and information technology
- **surrogates, substitutes and proxies:** the creation of strategic vulnerabilities and dependencies may be achieved indirectly -- rather than directly as indicated in many examples above. A notable example is provided by the European migration crisis where it could be argued that this has been engendered and exacerbated by a very particular strategic focus on conflicts in the Middle East, the supply of weaponry to those arenas -- leading to the surprising consequence of a flood of refugees, as argued separately (*Evaluating the Grossness of Gross Domestic Product: Refugees Per Kiloton (RPK) as a missing indicator?* 2016). Europe has effectively "bombed itself" with refugees -- scoring an "own goal".

Sealing the deal in the New World Order -- and the "diplomatic clause"

With the evaporation of trust -- other than for public relations presentations and image management -- a central challenge for the New World Order is how any deal is to be appropriately sealed. In the light of the challenges to trust signalled by the worldwide scandal of sexual abuse by clergy, the issue has been usefully discussed from a Catholic perspective (John Horvat II, *Dealing with a Walk-Away World*, *Crisis Magazine*, 22 March 2018).

Clearly there is no difficulty in arranging formal signing ceremonies with exchange of copies, as with the traditions of the past. The difficulty is that the value of such "paper" in both a legal and a financial sense is highly debatable. It is open to challenge at any time as being "unacceptable" and "poorly framed" -- whether or not this is upheld as justifying renegotiation. The honorable implications of any **handshake agreement** are no more than quaint rituals from a past era.

Where there has been total lack of mutual confidence in the past, reliance has been placed on what amounts to barter arrangements and exchanges. These involve presentation of the goods in immediate exchange for the agreed remuneration, or otherwise. The process has been frequently rehearsed in movie depictions of the dramatic exchanges of people at **Checkpoint Charlie**, and the illegal purchase of arms shipments or drugs.

The difficulty, as noted above, is with regard to strategic dependency on continuity of supply. With respect to NATO, this applies most specifically to munitions and spare parts, although this also relates to the controversial possibility of replacing Russian gas with gas from the USA. How is continuity then to be guaranteed in a "walk-away" era? Clearly both a gas pipeline and gas tankers are vulnerable to air strikes and sabotage -- whether overt or covert, and possibly as a **false flag operation** (as may have been the case with the **Novichok poisoning scandal**).

With respect to any guarantee, it is curious that the term "collateral" has taken on other connotations. Guarantees are now themselves vulnerable to **"collateral damage"** of some relevance to this argument. With regard to denuclearization of North Korea or Iran, how is the "tangible" dimension of the deal (in the shorter term) then to be matched against agreement for aid and removal of sanctions (for the longer term) -- when the latter can be reinstated at any time (as evident in the case of Iran)?

In the case of NATO however, one aspect of any deal is far less ambiguous, namely the deployment of military personnel and the establishment of military bases. This installation of tangibles is very clear -- a "seal" in its own right -- whatever the provisions for financial compensation. Ironically however it is the reverse process that is far more ambiguous. Once it is agreed that a European NATO member country should enable the establishment of a US military base, it is far from evident how their removal can be achieved -- if that is desired by the country in question.

Curiously the situation is highlighted with the model of rental accommodation, noted with respect to the above-mentioned "diplomatic clause". This is typically restricted to longer-term rental of accommodation by diplomats who may have cause to leave at any time. In the NATO case, President Trump implied that the USA could withdraw at any time -- although the implication for US bases was not clarified. Whether included in such withdrawal or not -- under a more general understanding of a "diplomatic clause" -- more intriguing is the case if the "proprietor" desired that the "tenant" should cease to occupy the property. Rights of "landlords" versus rights of "tenants"?

Even more intriguing is a hypothetical situation in which the USA (as "tenant") reframed the "landlord" as a threat to US national security (in the event of requiring such withdrawal) -- effectively hostile action by an enemy, as recently (*Donald Trump Calls the European Union a 'Foe' of the U.S.*, *Fortune*, 15 July 2018; *President Trump Calls the European Union a 'Foe' of the U.S.*, *Time*, 15 July 2018). With the recommendation by Trump that the UK should sue the EU, could a German "landlord" review the possibility of suing the US as the unwelcome "tenant" of a military base (*Theresa May Says Trump Told Her to 'Sue the E.U.' in Brexit Talks*, *The New York Times*, 15 July 2018).

The analogous situation is of course played out worldwide with respect to rental property through national arbitration procedures, as ironically highlighted by a current court case involving relatives of President Trump (*Kushners Sought to Oust Rent-Regulated Tenants*, *Suit Says*, *The New York Times*, 16 July 2018). No such procedures exist with respect to enclaves effectively occupied by a foreign government as "tenant". An exceptionally controversial case is provided by **Diego Garcia** -- an island group from which the population has been removed by the UK to enable the establishment of a US military base.

Agreements between "progressives" in a period of eroding confidence?

The world is currently witness to chaotic decision-making processes within intergovernmental institutions and between nation states. As variously noted by observers, this is exemplified at this time by the dynamics within the NATO Summit and in summits of the European Union in relation to migration. There is little prospect that any agreements would "hold" for any length of time. The contradictory assessments of the "agreement" achieved at the NATO Summit by Donald Trump and by European presidents serve only to emphasize this point (*Trump Nato spending claims in dispute*, BBC News, 12 July 2018; *Trump claims NATO victory but details in dispute*, CNN, 12 July 2018).

This situation is however echoed at the national level where relations between opposing political parties are readily described as "poisonous" -- as in the USA.

Progressive dynamics: More intriguing however are the dynamics among self-acclaimed "progressives" -- typically unconstrained by the exigencies of national or regional political responsibility. It is within that context that alternative models are developed, implemented and promoted. As experiments, their particular advantage lies in their multiplicity -- a psychosocial analogue to the acclaimed merits of biodiversity. The difficulty is that the dynamics of the psychosocial "ecosystem" have yet to be fully comprehended and validated (by whom?), and justified (to whom?), in relation to the particular models variously advocated.

As might be expected in any ecosystem, the level of mutual appreciation between constituencies promoting particular models is questionable and problematic -- if not violently so. On the one hand such models may be collectively upheld as "progressive", but on the other hand each naturally perceives itself to be especially right and appropriate in contrast with others. Other than mutual encouragement and inspiration, it is unclear that interaction between progressives exhibits a degree of operational coherence appropriate to an ecosystem as a whole -- in contrast to the competitive (and other) dynamics typical of distinctive species in an ecosystem.

Prefiguring Trump? Many movements perceiving themselves to be progressive also see themselves as key to a New World Order -- alternatively understood. Many dispute the claims of others in that regard -- as would be typical of an ecosystem. Curiously the ambitions of some can be fruitfully compared with the strategies of **Full-Spectrum Dominance** and "America First" -- as currently cultivated by the USA and widely deprecated by progressives (*America First: A Budget Blueprint to Make America Great Again*, 2018).

As with the USA, such a comparison is especially relevant in the case of many religions claiming to be progressive. Unfortunately this equivalence, as in the case of the USA, tends to include the desirability of eradicating alternative progressives -- or rendering them subservient (*Eradication as the Strategic Final Solution of the 21st Century?* 2014).

Viable global strategy? Seemingly missing is any initiative by progressives to articulate a more fruitful understanding of the dynamics of the psychosocial ecosystem in which they are collectively embedded. In that respect they fail to engender viable models which might inspire the dynamics between nation states. A significant degree of consensus is cultivated and achieved between progressive groups in the USA (and elsewhere) under the banner "Dump Trump" as a collective strategy. Whilst the achievement of any consensus may be welcomed, "Dump Trump" is not a long-term strategy. This presumably calls for greater subtlety and complexity. With respect to what might be sustainable, any such consensus may indeed be an illusion (*The Consensus Delusion*, 2011).

Little advantage is taken of the explosion of innovations with respect to information technology to explore and simulate any such ecosystem -- as can be argued with respect to NATO itself (*Envisaging NATO Otherwise -- in 3D and 4D? Potentially hidden faces of global strategy highlighted through polyhedra*, 2017). This inadequacy extends to the conference environments in which dynamics between competing models might be explored (*Visualization Enabling Integrative Conference Comprehension: global articulation of future-oriented 3D technology*, 2018).

Fundamental to such inadequacy at this time is that any proposal is suspect for some and alienating for others -- whatever the enthusiasm it may arouse for the relatively few.

Paradox? Missing is the capacity to address the paradox of this inadequacy and the relatively low level of mutual confidence. The condition anticipated in the Biblical metaphor (**variously misquoted** regarding the lion and the lamb) is far from prevailing at this time, as some would like to assume:

The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together; and a little child shall lead them. (Isaiah 11:6)

Given the demonstrable viability of natural ecosystems, the question is then how to enable a viable environment for competing progressive initiatives -- with wolves, lambs, leopards and goats -- readily characterized by potentially fatal disagreement. Possibilities can be envisaged (*Using Disagreements for Superordinate Frame Configuration*, 1992; *Configuring Globally and Contending Locally: shaping the global network of local bargains by decoding and mapping Earth Summit inter-sectoral issues*, 1992)

Flocking behaviour? Curiously the dynamics in the title of "walk-away wheeling and dealing" are remarkably echoed by a much studied feature of the natural environment, namely **flocking behaviour** (or **swarming behaviour**) -- often appreciated for its elegance. Such behaviour can be readily compared to the dynamics of **trending movements of opinion** on social media --- whether "progressive" or otherwise (*Flocking behaviour and the dynamics of gated conceptual communities*, 2004).

Flocking behaviour has been used to enable understanding of **collective intelligence** and **swarm intelligence** -- although possibly deprecated in terms of **groupthink** or **hive mind**. Such non-linear dynamics have been variously simulated, as indicated by the resources assembled by **Craig Reynolds** (*Boids Background and Update*, 2007).

Symbolic insight? However, although remarkably elegant in nature, such dynamics are primarily characteristic of the feeding habits of

certain species. In the case of [locusts](#), their capacity to "wheel" elegantly into crop lands has the most devastating consequences -- before they "walk away". As the eighth plague described in the Bible:

They covered the surface of the soil till the ground was black with them. They devoured all the greenstuff in the land and all the fruit of the trees that the hail had left. No green was left on any tree or plant in the fields throughout the land of Egypt ([Exodus 10:15](#))

The current incidence of this disastrous phenomenon is variously described (Boria Sax, *A Plague of Locusts*, *The Huffington Post*, 6 December 2017; *How can we control locust swarms?* *World Economic Forum*, 11 November 2015). The challenge for the New World Order of walk-away wheeling and dealing is clearly how to encompass such dynamics -- especially if "eradication" is not a viable option.

Given the global role currently played by Donald Trump in framing the dynamics of the New World Order, rather than seeking inspiration from Biblical metaphors or from the Greek deity (Narcissus), with whom psychological professionals tend unfruitfully to associate his behaviour, there is another option. Potentially more instructive is the framing offered by the Norse trickster demigod -- [Loki](#). Fundamental to the high drama of Wagner's *Ring of the Nibelung* as Loge, it is this [trickster dynamic](#) which results in the final destruction of the realm of the Gods -- the Old World Order -- celebrated by Wagner in the *Twilight of the Gods*. Has President Trump given a whole new meaning to the strategic skill of being able to "turn on a dime"?

Nostalgic yearning for the Gods of the Old World Order

-- intangible "values" which served the few more significantly than the many ?

That unmistakable consequence is that Mr Trump's America can no longer be regarded with certainty as a reliable ally for European nations committed to the defence of liberal democracy. That is an epochal change for Britain and for Europe. (Editorial, *The Guardian view on Donald Trump in Britain: this was the visit from hell*, *The Guardian*, 13 July 2018)

He is unique in his egotistical disrespect for international order and agreement, his overt malice towards long-term allies and institutions, his shameless disregard for truth, and his clear willingness to make trouble and do direct harm to European nations like ours. (Editorial, *The Guardian view on the Trump visit: not welcome in Britain*, *The Guardian*, 12 July 2018)

What does all this achieve? No doubt just what Trump intends: the collapse of the liberal international order, both in its animating commitment to open societies as well as its defining international institutions -- the G-7, NATO, the European Union, the World Trade Organization. Seen in this light, the president's wretched behavior isn't -- or isn't merely -- the product of a defective personality. It's the result of a willful ideology. (Bret Stephens, *America First, America Hated, America Alone*, *The New York Times*, 13 July 2018)



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License](#).

For further updates on this site, [subscribe here](#)