

The future of global power

CE Noticias Financieras English

May 29, 2020 Friday

Copyright 2020 Content Engine, LLC.

All Rights Reserved

Copyright 2020 CE Noticias Financieras All Rights Reserved

Length: 980 words

Body

China is already too big, too successful, and too important to ignore. Reality demands cooperation. Berlin. The Covid-19 pandemic is arguably the first truly global crisis of the 21st century. The only modern historical parallels with the economic disruption that a microscopic pathogen unleashed are the world wars of the century.

The start of World War I in August 1914 not only ended a long period of peace, but also suspended a first era of economic integration and globalization. The adoption of new protectionist government programs around the world led to a widespread drop in economic growth. A generation later, another world war followed, after which the Cold War immediately began.

Between the beginning and the end of this period of constant and political conflict of power from 1914 to 1989, the world and international politics had been completely transformed. Before World War I, the British Empire was the dominant economic and military power. After World War II, the United States took its place, whose hegemonic position was further strengthened after the fall of the Soviet Union.

The question, then, is how will the distribution of global power change as a result of the Covid?19 crisis. Whether the impact of the pandemic is comparable to that of either world war remains to be seen. It is clear that a global economic crisis of this scale will cause major geopolitical shocks. While it is not impossible for the United States, the established superpower, to hold on to its position at the top of the international hierarchy, most indications suggest that China, the emerging superpower, will prevail and inaugurate the Eastern Asian century.

Long before the covid?19 crisis, Sino-American rivalry was shaping up as the defining hegemonic conflict of the 21st century. But the pandemic, to which the election-year policy in the United States joins, seems to amplify and accelerate confrontation. US President Donald Trump has everything at stake in the November election. After his mismanagement of the pandemic and the emergence in his mandate of an unprecedented domestic economic crisis, he needs a scapegoat, and China is the obvious choice.

Although Trump's policies generally divided American society, his stance on China is a major exception. In an offensive against China, there can be broad bipartisan support. Even among the most liberal Democrats, the American attitude toward China has worsened considerably in recent years.

American questions are, in many cases, difficult to overlook. In practice, the People's Republic is an authoritarian (and even totalitarian) state under the exclusive control of a Leninist party. It exercises large-scale economic and technological espionage against the United States, uses unfair trade practices, and maintains an aggressive territorial claims policy against India, Taiwan, and the South China Sea. The persecution of ethnic and religious minorities in Xinjiang, the recent attempt to consolidate control of Hong Kong, and the initial misreprefence of the Covid?19 outbreak in Wuhan are some examples of how little China's government has done to inspire confidence.

But the Trump administration's insistence on trying to give up U.S. global leadership raises a fundamental question about its strategy: what does the United States want with Trump? Lead without taking responsibility?

The future of global power

Mal can work something like that. While THE US remains stuck in short-term thinking, China asserts itself as an alternative source of global leadership and investment, with a long-term patient strategy to exploit the geopolitical vacuum created by America's isolationist turn.

In any case, it will be difficult for the United States to remedy the damage to its international image, especially after the Trump administration's disastrous failure to covid?19. The pandemic reinforces the overall impression that the United States is a decadent superpower, which is soon to be supplanted by a strategically skilled and economically dynamic China. The old story of the rise and fall of the great powers is repeated, now written by a virus. I hope this chapter unfolds peacefully.

In the context of the Chinese-American confrontation, Europe is in the awkward position of being caught between two opposing geopolitical forces, and receives no indication of America's true intentions towards China. Does the United States want declared contention or confrontation (including military conflict) to hinder or even reverse China's rise? The second strategy, a repetition of the one used by the West with China in the late 19th century, would be at best extremely dangerous.

The alternative for the West is to appeal to long-term contention on the basis of strategic rivalry. It is the option that best suits Europe. In a world order led by China, Europe (located at the western end of the Eurasian supercontinent) would be the loser.

As a totalitarian one-party state, China can never be a genuine partner of Europe in regulatory terms. Even after Trump's three years, Europe's relationship with the United States remains much closer than anyone who can aspire to achieve China.

But China is already too big, too successful, and too important to ignore. Reality demands cooperation. The key is to distinguish between a strategic relationship with China and submission. And for it to be possible to maintain this crucial distinction, Europe must not become dependent on the West's rival, economically or technologically.

The author

Joschka Fischer was German Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor from 1998 to 2005, a period marked by Germany's strong support for NATO's intervention in Kosovo in 1999, followed by his opposition to the war in Iraq. Fischer entered electoral politics after participating in protests against the establishment of the 1960s and 1970s, and played a key role in founding Germany's Green Party, which he led for nearly two decades.

Load-Date: May 30, 2020