



## Can Europe liberate itself from US dominance?

### Description

The biggest opportunity of 2023 is for Europe to take control of its own security, liberating itself from US dominance. There are two aspects. One is the opportunity. The other is the willingness.

There's no doubt that Europe has an opportunity to break free of the US. We are at a moment where the US is now confronted with the fact that if it is going to confront Russia in a post-Ukraine environment, it will have to radically change the nature of its engagement in Europe. When the Cold War ended, the US had over 200,000 troops in Europe. Today, the number has dropped considerably. The infrastructure has also dropped. That means the capability for the US to project meaningful military power into Europe has diminished considerably from what it was.

Right now, people talk about US' sending of 7,000 more troops, 5,000 troops. But any military professional knows that these numbers are not impressive. You can't win a conflict with such small numbers. You need hundreds of thousands. In order to get back into Europe in a meaningful way, the US will have to spend hundreds of billions of dollars. Europe will also have to spend hundreds of billions of dollars to rebuild the infrastructure and capacity that existed in the Cold War. But Europe is in no position to do this. They lack the economic means and the political will to do this. So this is the opportunity.

When I want to buy a car, I may dream of a Porsche, or a Mercedes. The opportunity is to have a car. I have to readjust to my reality.

To buy the car, I can afford the car that does me the best thing, the best service. Europe now is looking at the American Porsche, the American Mercedes, or if we use American term, the Cadillac, but they can't afford it. The Cadillac doesn't do them any good. It will bankrupt them. They'll never be able to drive the Cadillac. Europe needs to buy a Fiat. It needs to buy a small car, one that serves it.

Europe needs to break away from the American dream of American dominance and security in Europe to the reality that Europe must look out for itself, must look out for its own interest. Any European who reflects on what has happened the past year must realize that the US has destroyed them.

The US called for sanctions against Russia, and then reaped the benefits, making billions of dollars in

gross profits off the sale of liquid natural gas after Europe was unable to buy unlimited quantities of Russian gas. The US is taking jobs away from Europe, because European companies can no longer afford to stay in business due to high energy prices.

Several Western countries led by the US are sending battle tanks to Ukraine. The decision to provide Western main battle tanks to Ukraine is the last gasp of a dying policy promulgated by the US to sacrifice Europe to the cause of a proxy war with Russia. Europe will emerge from this experience weaker, and more firm in the knowledge that the US only cares about itself. The US is not Europe's friend, it is Europe's enemy.

So, the opportunity exists for Europe to break free of this and create a new reality where it will be able to negotiate with Russia and others for what is best for Europe, not a Cadillac, but a small European car that meets their requirements.

Now the question is: Can Europe do this? The existing political and economic elites that currently dominate European politics will not allow this to happen because they came into power because of the US. If they seek to do something new, the US won't support them.

This winter, fortunately, for the people of Europe, has been mild. The energy shock, which is considerable, didn't turn into a catastrophe. A catastrophe, I believe, would have led to revolutions in Europe, where people took to the streets to push out the government, as well as the ruling political and economic elites.

They survived this winter because of cheap Russian gas. Before they cut off the supply, they were able to build up their reserves using cheap Russian gas. Next year, there won't be any Russian gas for them to buy. They'll have to buy expensive liquid natural gas. They aren't going to be able to build up their reserves. Next winter will be a catastrophe.

At that time, the key question for Europe is, will they go back to being little more than colonial servants of the US empire? Or will they liberate themselves and seek only the best for Europe? I can't answer that question. The opportunity is there. What Europe seeks to do with that opportunity is up to Europe.

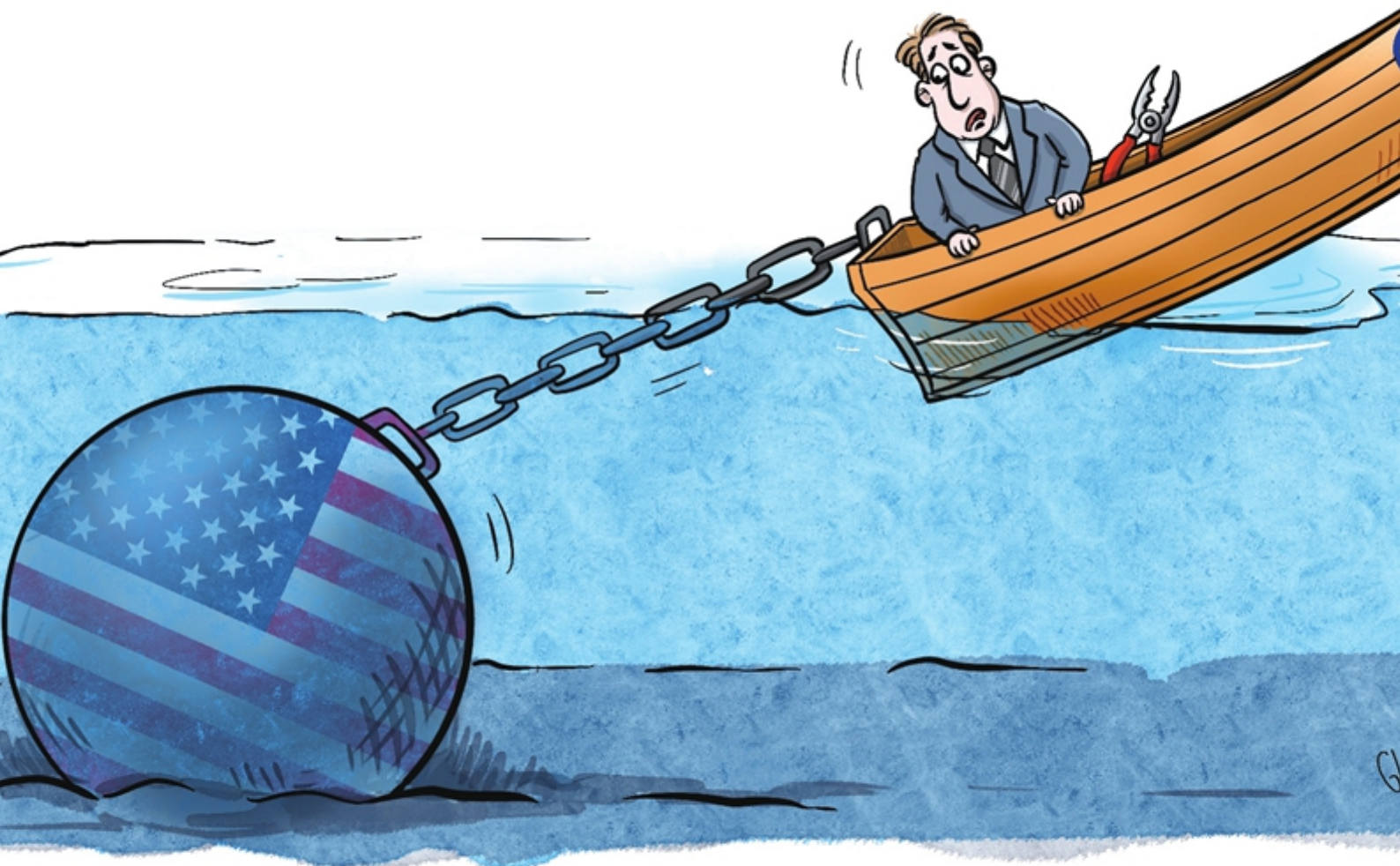


Illustration: Liu Xidan/Global Times

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**Date Created**

02/05/2023