

Stitching it back together

With America-at-Large in retreat, look to America's states for leadership

BY GOVERNOR PHIL MURPHY

To say we are living in uncertain times would be a gross understatement.

The structure that had provided generations of global stability and betterment are being upended by a new wave of populism, fed largely by the far-right strains that somehow claim "we" are being hurt by an amorphous "them." After years of nation-building and economic growth created by international cooperation, some governments are once again embracing insular, self-centered policies and politics.

The United States, long the defender of stability and order in the world, is proving it is not immune to this inclination. And we proved it with lightning speed. It has only been five years since I left Berlin after a four-year tenure as United States Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany for President Obama. Our embassy in Berlin was not an American fortress, but rather a gathering place for the promotion of shared democratic values and freedom. My ambassadorship was steeped in this fundamental understanding of America's important role in the world, and our deep and abiding ties to countries like Germany.

Now, we have a president who speaks proudly of his desires for legal and physical walls that will close our nation to peoples based on religion and nationality. He speaks of an "America first" policy that blindly ignores both history and the fundamental truth that our economic and diplomatic leadership has grown out of our great diversity. He breeds division in both his rhetoric and policies, embracing "us versus them" as easily as he embraces authoritarian regimes.

This is not to say that national policies – whether in the US, Germany or elsewhere – shouldn't be focused, first and foremost, on the betterment of our individual citizens. Indeed, the oaths we take in our home countries often begin with a promise to protect our national interests.



"The US is weakening its standing in the world," said Phil Murphy during his campaign for governor in October 2017.

But when policies are put in place that close the doors of opportunity, economic or otherwise, for "them," we weaken our standing in the world. And, at a time when it appears that the global order is beginning to tear at its seams, there needs to be one nation willing to step forward with the needle and thread to stitch it back together.

Since 1945, that tailor has been the United States. But, with a president unwilling to mend the tearing global fabric, it will turn to individual American states to take the lead in his absence. There are many of us in positions of political leadership – governors and mayors – who do not buy into the president's rhetoric and thinking. And we are willing to put the weight of our abilities behind ensuring continued American leadership on the global stage.

As the governor of New Jersey, I happen to lead one of these

states. We are our nation's fourth-smallest state but one of its largest economies – a state one-twentieth the size of Sweden yet with a larger GDP. One of the key drivers of our

While the president continues economy has been and will continue to be foreign direct investment.

We are committed to a principle that economic wellbeing and social advancement are not mutually exclusive, but go hand-

to rail against global trade, New Jersey is actively pursuing global economic partnerships. Our unparalleled location and workforce give us distinct advantages to continue to attract foreign investment.

THE US IS WEAKENING ITS STANDING IN THE WORLD

We are next door to New York, with growing cities, and home to both one of the largest seaports and one of the busiest airport hubs. Our workforce is highly educated, with the largest concentration of scientists and engineers in the world.

Further, when New Jersey partners with other states, we can grow our footprint immeasurably. Take, for example, the president's declaration that pulled the US out of the Paris Agreement on global climate change. For our state and others – California and New York among them – this decision made absolutely no sense. We know our economic and environmental future relies upon moving the world away from fossil fuels as our primary source of energy.

New Jersey and 16 other states, led by both Republicans and Democrats, are now connected through the U.S. Climate Alliance, a coalition of states committed to upholding the goals of the Paris Agreement, even if our president will not do so at the federal level. This Alliance represents more than 40 percent of the total American population, and nearly half of our nation's GDP. Our efforts in the fight against climate change will help lead the US government back onto the right path, whether the current president wants this or not.

Indeed, even individual states can make a difference – this is why New Jersey is actively pursuing the growth of offshore wind energy to drive the transformation of our state's energy dependence towards renewables. As ambassador, I saw the German Energiewende firsthand. Germany's transition to a low-carbon, environmentally friendly and reliable energy supply is an example I wish to bring to New Jersey, where we can also open the eyes of other American states – even those which support the president's policies – to the possibilities of a clean-energy future.

The rise of nativist rhetoric and far-right populism is nothing new in history. We also know from history that those pushing this closed worldview will ultimately fail. Insular, self-centered politics may make some feel better in the face of change, but it will not stop change.

Moreover, it offers us a chance to prove that the wisdom of past generations, which looked outside their own borders for partners to move forward in an ever-changing world, is still the wisdom for us to follow today. New Jersey, along with many of our fellow states, is ready to lead this effort to re-engage our global partners, even if some in Washington are not.

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BY JULIANE SCHÄUBLE

She had to get accustomed to Twitter long before she took up her post in the capital of Twitter king Donald Trump's empire. Emily Haber shakes her head. The 62-year-old began using the online news and social networking service as a state secretary back in Berlin. But somehow in Washington she must have caught the Twitter bug: the new German ambassador in Washington, who is more impartial to – and persistently recommends – reading literary works comprising more than 140 characters, is finding growing pleasure in tweeting. And the number of people following the official embassy account has skyrocketed since their first tweet on June 22.

In the White House on June 22nd, Emily Haber handed over her credentials, as tradition dictates, to US President Donald Trump himself, the man whom – according to a survey in the summer of 2018 – Germans fear more than anything else, including terrorism.

But it takes more to intimidate Emily Haber. And the historian, who wrote her dissertation on German foreign policy before World War I, is known to argue calmly and analytically, has no desire to compete for who

is the most afraid of Trump. On the contrary: It irks her tremendously that everything is becoming increasingly personal. "Our countries have so much in common. Economic relationships are close, but so are people's personal relationships," she says. "And if we disagree, we have to ask ourselves why and seek solutions to remedy the cause."

Emily Haber is well aware of the many problems: the trade disputes, the wrangling over NATO's defense budget, differing views on Iran and the nuclear deal, not to mention the peculiarities of the incumbent president. But she wants to be optimistic about her job. And respectful. "We are not here to lecture the Americans," says the daughter of a diplomat with her soft voice, which betrays not an iota of hesitation. She draws attention to other surveys, which are evidence for the Americans' enduring positive view of Germany. She also reminds us that the trans-Atlantic relationship has already survived other crises, as

The German Ambassador to Washington, Emily Haber, seeks to cultivate the collective

"I don't want to lecture the US"



Building trans-Atlantic ties: Emily Haber, ambassador to Germany in the US, at the press conference for the Deutschlandjahr USA in Berlin, August 25th.

in 2003, when President George W. Bush attacked Iraq and the Germans refused to join in. "The poll numbers were catastrophic."

She was greatly looking forward to her new assignment in Washington, where she used to live as a child. And now, about three months after her arrival: "It's great." When asked if this was her dream job, she doesn't

have to think twice: "Yes." At the beginning of the last legislature, she was already a candidate for the ambassadorship in Washington, they say. But in 2014 she transferred from the Foreign Office, which Frank-Walter Steinmeier (SPD) took over for the second time, to the Ministry of the Interior, as a state secretary for Thomas de Maizière (CDU).

Four years later, she arrived in the US holding arguably the most prestigious post the Foreign Office can award abroad. It is her first ambassadorship. Her previous posts brought her as far as Moscow and Ankara, which is why she appreciates the trans-Atlantic relationship so deeply. "We need America," she is convinced, especially considering what is happening in other countries, particularly in China. She wants to promote the importance of the US, but not without highlighting how important Germany and Europe are, in turn, for the US. And how similar they are. "Deutschlandjahr USA," which was planned under her predecessor Peter Wittig, should help. "It's a great opportunity to get in touch with lots of people across the country." She will travel a lot, if not quite as much as she would like to. She will have enough to keep her busy in Washington.

Unlike the past 12 years, she will have her husband by her side, with whom she has two

adult sons. Hansjörg Haber himself was an ambassador until his retirement at the end of August. He was most recently stationed in Yemen, which is so dangerous that the German representatives moved to Jordan. At that time Emily Haber was in Berlin. Now they finally live in the same city again – without one of their career's becoming collateral damage.

Thirty-six years ago, Emily Haber entered the foreign service, which at that time was still male-dominated. "Three women, thirty men, as a woman you stood out in the crowd," she says, laughing. In 2009 she was the first woman to become political director in the Foreign Office, and in 2011 she made history as the first female state secretary, both under mentorship of Guido Westerwelle (FDP). She herself is not a member of a political party, but she is known to have close ties to the CDU and to be a confidante of Chancellor Angela Merkel. Her strong ties to Berlin are particularly important in this prominent position. She will be facing enough headwind from the White House.

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