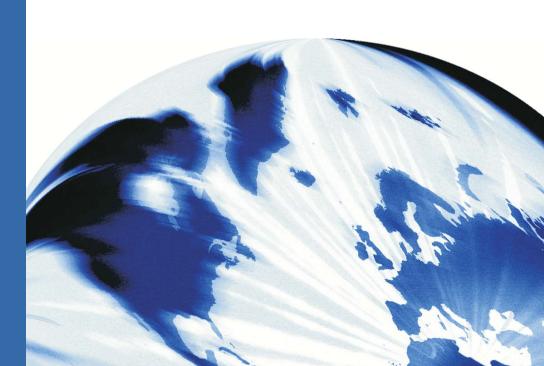# Shift or Rift

## Assessing US-EU relations after Iraq

**Nicole Gnesotto, Stanley Hoffmann, Antonio Missiroli, David Gompert, Jean-Yves Haine, Ivo Daalder, James Lindsay, Martin Ortega, Patrick Clawson, Dimitrios Triantaphyllou, Daniel Serwer, Gustav Lindstrom, Brian Jenkins**

## Edited by Gustav Lindstrom

In January 2002 the **Institute for Security Studies (ISS)** became an autonomous Paris-based agency of the European Union. Following an EU Council Joint Action of 20 July 2001, it is now an integral part of the new structures that will support the further development of the CFSP/ESDP. The Institute's core mission is to provide analyses and recommendations that can be of use and relevance to the formulation of the European security and defence policy. In carrying out that mission, it also acts as an interface between European experts and decision-makers at all levels.

# Shift or rift

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## The future of the United States

## CASE STUDY 1: US and EU priorities in the Middle East

# *Preface* **Nicole Gnesotto**

*2003 will be remembered as an* annus horribilis *par excellence for international relations as a whole but particularly transatlantic relations. Disagreements between individual countries over the questions of whether Iraq really posed a threat and the legitimacy of military intervention have been, and remain, massive, and divisions between Europe and America have fuelled similar differences within the European Union itself. The gulf between the people of Europe and their governments has been no less marked, a clear majority of the public, either through opinion polls or in street demonstrations, having expressed their hostility to US policy on Iraq. Since the beginning of the autumn, out of weariness, resignation or pragmatism, an apparent reconciliation – what Kofi Annan has referred to as a semblance of consensus – seems to be emerging on both sides, without any illusions and without any noticeable effect on either the reality of the situation in Iraq or the strength of the Euro-American relationship.*

*A multitude of questions arise from this. How is it that we have arrived at such a situation? Why is it that American neo-conservatives think they can take liberties with international law that they would refuse to allow even their closest ally to take? How, and how far, will it be possible to reduce the world's extreme political complexity to simply an opposition of good and evil? Why should the Europeans accept that relations of authority become a rule in transatlantic affairs, with the unintended risk that it undermines the basic democratic value of their alliance with America? Future generations will have the difficult task of judging the responsibility of each actor in bringing us to what, no matter which way one looks at it, appears to be a watershed in the contemporary history of democracies.*

*The aim of this book is more modest: to explore, through various American and European viewpoints, the extent to which a convergence of values and truly common interests could, leaving aside all ideology, make it possible to rebuild a transatlantic relationship that is dignified and respectful, but above all of benefit to the security of all.*

*I am most thankful to Gustav Lindstrom, who is responsible for the Institute's transatlantic programme, for having taken the lead in this project.*

*Paris, October 2003*

# Introduction

Shift or rift
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relations after Iraq

**Gustav Lindstrom**

The idea behind this transatlantic book predates the intense transatlantic exchanges that took place prior to the war in Iraq in early 2003. The run-up to the passage of UN Resolution 1441 in November 2002 provided clear indications that Euro-American relations were about to enter previously uncharted territory.

Given these developments, the Institute decided to produce an extensive study analysing the state of transatlantic relations. For each topic, two authors – one American and one European – were commissioned to provide their thoughts and insights. The result is twelve distinct chapters covering six diverse topics. The book provides both a general overview of US-European relations and investigates specific issue areas through case studies. The diversity on the American side is particularly great, with five different institutions represented among the authors. On the European side, contributions come from the multinational research team at the EU Institute for Security Studies. It should be noted that the views expressed in these chapters are the authors' alone, and do not necessarily reflect those of their institutes. They were written between the spring and summer of 2003.

The first two chapters cover US and EU visions of the world. They set the stage by analysing American and European foreign policy objectives and how these have diverged over the past few years. The American contribution – by **Stanley Hoffmann** – revisits the transatlantic crisis that reached its climax during the war in Iraq. According to Hoffmann, America's concept of international relations and foreign policy have changed profoundly – much more than people in Europe tend to realise. American attention has shifted to the Middle East and West Asia, undermining the Atlantic community. The 2002 National Security Strategy has similarly served to 'create a rift between the United States and its allies'. Yet in spite of these and other shifts analysed in the chapter, the present crisis is not likely to last forever.

Nicole Gnesotto analyses American and European visions of the world, together with their changing perceptions of each other since 'the war on terror' was adopted as the mantra of the Bush administration. The main differences lie not so much in their specific threat assessments but rather in the relative importance they attach to sovereign military power or deference to international law in dealing with the new international context. As this broad Euro-American rift has led to new kinds of divisions within the European Union itself, she also analyses why America, having been the unifying power in Europe for the last half-century, has now become the main divisive issue between the twenty-five members of the EU.

Chapters 3 and 4 contemplate the future of Europe. The American contribution by David Gompert provides an overview of how Americans would like to see Europe develop in the next decade. In Gompert's words, '[t]he United States would rather have a united Europe as a strong partner than a disunited, weak, and dependent Europe; however, it would prefer European disunity, weakness and dependence to a strong and united Europe committed to countering the United States globally.'

In his contribution, Antonio Missiroli concentrates on how the EU can resolve the tasks at hand to ensure an efficient and capable Union in the years to come. Among the challenges that need to be tackled are the efficient use of dwindling European defence budgets, ensuring a smooth enlargement process and carrying out successful internal reform through the draft constitutional treaty presently being debated by the EU intergovernmental Conference. The impacts of these developments are analysed in detail.

Chapters 5 and 6 focus on the future of the United States. In his analysis, Jean-Yves Haine considers how recent US decision-making – particularly in Iraq – will affect future US courses of action and decision-making. Likewise, ample space is devoted to examining the implications of superpower status and unrivalled power, ending with a discussion of what options are available to US policy-makers.

On the American side, the contribution by Ivo Daalder and James Lindsay provides a different view of how the United States should transform its unrivalled power into influence. The authors posit that the current debate in the United States is between hegemonists, who stress that the United States uses its predominant

power to get its way, and globalists who argue that globalisation both limits and transforms America's capacity to use its power to influence events overseas. In their view, the answer lies somewhere in between, and '[w]hile America is powerful, it is not omnipotent – some problems simply defy unilateral solutions'.

Chapters 7 and 8 are devoted to US and EU priorities in the Middle East. As the first of three case studies, it provides specific insights into the issue. In his contribution, **Patrick Clawson** explains how most American officials interpret the objective of 'pursuing the peace process' and how this differs from the European viewpoint. According to Clawson, Americans see the process as a means to establish an enabling environment in which Israelis and Arabs can use negotiation to resolve their differences. By contrast, Europeans see the process as a means for resolving the conflict. If negotiations falter, it is up to the international community to dictate solutions. Such differences complicate an already complex process – endangering common goals for the region.

The European contribution, by **Martin Ortega**, similarly highlights the importance of a successful resolution of the Middle East process. Besides its immediate effect in the greater Middle East area, an unsuccessful policy could become the Achilles heel of transatlantic relations. The chapter details American and European involvement in the region, as well as potential scenarios that may develop. According to Ortega, '[t]ransatlantic divergence over Middle East issues will increase in the coming months and years, because different political and cultural views of the region underlie policy-making on both sides of the Atlantic.' While offering basic principles for an EU policy on the Middle East, it is acknowledged that a transatlantic agreement would represent the most beneficial approach to resolving the crisis.

A second case study (chapters 9 and 10) is devoted to US and EU priorities in the Balkans. The European contribution by **Dimitrios Triantaphyllou** takes a closer look at the evolution of European and American relations in the Balkans. While transatlantic collaboration in the region has been effective in defining objectives, goals and actions after an initial period of disarray in the early 1990s, there are important sources of instability that remain. Among key issues remaining are economic development, refugee repatriation, apprehending war criminals still at large and resolving the future status of Kosovo.

The contribution by **Daniel Serwer** frames the analysis by looking at American and European interests in the Balkan region. These are used to gauge the international intervention that has taken place there over the last ten years as well as the prospects for a European leadership transition. Serwer provides several recommendations on current policy issues. According to him, the issue of credibility is not only one of resources and vision – underscoring the need for a common purpose and unity of command and control.

The final case study – concerning US and European perspectives on terrorism – is covered in chapters 11 and 12. The American contribution, by **Brian Jenkins**, traces the evolution of the terrorist threat over the past thirty-five years, identifying key terrorist events and the policy issues they raised. According to Jenkins, the 9/11 attacks fundamentally altered American defence thinking. While there are differences between American and European approaches to counter-terrorism as well as differences among Europeans themselves, even closer coordination of international efforts is desirable and can be achieved.

In his chapter, **Gustav Lindstrom** analyses European contributions to the fight against terrorism. Three commonly perceived myths about European attitudes on terrorism are set straight through the use of opinion poll data and a review of concrete measures taken by Europeans in the last few years. According to Lindstrom, the fight against terrorism requires strong international cooperation. Such collaboration is essential if terrorists are to be denied the advantages offered by globalisation and their loose organisational structure.

This book should be of interest to analysts in academia and research institutes concerned with transatlantic relations. It offers numerous viewpoints on the state of transatlantic relations, aiming to contribute to the overall debate presently taking place across the Atlantic.

# The crisis in transatlantic relations

**Stanley Hoffmann**

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## – I –

2002 and early 2003 was an exceptionally bad time for transatlantic relations. The war in Iraq revealed in the clearest manner imaginable both what had changed in them and what remained constant.

The elements of continuity have been striking: an America that dominates the international system, especially in the military sphere but also through its economic power, which has survived the many predictions of relative decline in the face of a Europe that forms a comparatively coherent economic and monetary bloc but is divided and hesitant on the world diplomatic-strategic scene. That was true during the Cold War and things have not changed fundamentally. Something else that has not changed is Britain's attempt to act as a link between an America with which it wishes to keep up a 'special relationship' and a European Union that it wants to keep from the temptation of becoming too autonomous.

But what has changed profoundly – much more than people in Europe tend to realise – is America's concept of international relations and foreign policy. I shall not deal with the question of economic relations, something that others are much more qualified to do, but will restrict myself to the diplomatic and strategic domain. The following are the main points regarding the 'Atlantic community'.

1.  The priority on transatlantic matters that characterised American foreign policy even when, with the end of the Cold War, it had become obvious that there were other trouble spots in the world, in particular the Middle East and West Asia, no longer exists. Looking back on the ten years that preceded the (questionable) election of George W. Bush: under George Bush Snr, what counted above all (and it was on this subject that Condoleezza Rice served her apprenticeship) was to bring about the unification of Germany and Europe in conditions that caused as little humiliation as possible to the Soviet Union, a huge

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undertaking in which America's French and German allies played an important role, something not always recognised in the United States. Then came the Gulf War, in which NATO played a minor but non-negligible role, and the involvement of forces from various European countries, Britain and France in particular. Under Clinton, the desire on the part of all members of the Atlantic Alliance to establish good relations with the new Russia, if only to try to reduce its holdings of nuclear weapons and limit the risk of their proliferation, led to a policy, which while not common was at least parallel, of good relations with Yeltsin and – with much effort – it was possible to launch a policy, this time common, of NATO enlargement without creating serious tensions with Moscow. When Madeleine Albright became Secretary of State, maintaining transatlantic links and good relations with Moscow were among her main priorities; often impatient (but less so than Richard Holbrooke) with the divisions and hesitation of the Europeans, she was nevertheless a valuable link between the two continents. And, from 1992 to the war in Kosovo, the bloody disintegration of Yugoslavia was a major topic of transatlantic negotiations, which were most disappointing from 1992 to 1995 but subsequently better coordinated – including on the use of force.

This priority on transatlantic relations has been one of the most visible differences between the foreign policy of Bush Snr and that of Bush Jr. Extremely vague on his future foreign policy during the summer 2000 election campaign, except when it came to his scorn for 'nation-building' operations (of the Bosnia and Kosovo type) and his intention to pursue a 'humble' foreign policy, he was – like all Americans – deeply shocked by the 11 September attacks. Yet whereas most of his compatriots were disorientated by that drama, Bush discovered his sense of direction in it. From now on he was to make the war on terror the target of his foreign and defence policy, and exhort the rest of the world to join him. As Europe was not the hottest spot (although not negligible) in that war, the attention of the President (whose knowledge of Europe was moreover very small, not initially knowing, for instance, that it was the Europeans who were providing most of the forces in Kosovo) concentrated on taking revenge on al-Qaeda and its protectors the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. When, in accordance with Article 5 of

the North Atlantic Treaty, NATO's Council offered its services, the Defence Secretary spurned it publicly.

2. America's new strategic doctrine, unveiled in September 2002 (and put together rather randomly) contained innovations that were bound to create a rift between the United States and its allies. It was a matter of 'pre-emptive' war, not only against 'private', non-state terrorist groups (there was nothing outrageous about that), but also against states suspected of harbouring, financing, arming or helping them. The emphasis that had since 1947 been put on deterrence as a central element of strategic policy had thus shifted considerably.

3. All of George W. Bush's foreign policy unfolded as the triumph of unilateralism. The very casual attitude towards the Kyoto Protocol on climate change, the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, the draft treaty on illicit traffic in 'small' conventional weapons, the declaration of war against the treaty on the International Criminal Court (accompanied by threats of sanctions against allies who ratified it), the rejection of the measures that the Clinton team had been on the point of agreeing with North Korea, the clear new American policy of non-involvement in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the very tone of the new strategic doctrine – all of that, which had begun when the Republicans obtained a majority in the House of Representatives in 1994, represented a major break with the policy that had been followed since 1947.

4. It was the preparation and then the prosecution of the war against Iraq that sparked things off within the Alliance. The operation was planned without the cooperation of NATO bodies and with the participation of just Britain, and as a remarkably well-kept secret. I shall not recount here the fairly astonishing events of those few months that (with impetus added by Tony Blair and Secretary of State Colin Powell) led to debates in the UN from September 2002 to March 2003 and a particularly lively confrontation with Germany and then France. Events saw American officials, who had sought NATO's support but had come up against these two countries (and a few others), sidelining an organisation that had become unmanageable, then playing on the divisions between Europeans, by exploiting the profound divergence between those who supported America's policy of opposing Saddam Hussein (8 EU member

states plus the ten candidates to join the 25-country Union) and what Mr Rumsfeld called 'old Europe' (France, Germany and Belgium in the first instance). The most important thing about this great game was the use made of bilateral agreements between the United States and European countries prepared to follow it, to the detriment of established institutions like NATO and the European Union. The idea was to form ad hoc coalitions of the willing as required, to the detriment of organisations created or supported by the United States itself since the beginning of the Cold War. This corresponded to a hardline concept of the national interest that set little value on taking others' interests into account – as if, with its overwhelming military and technological superiority, Washington no longer needed to show consideration for anyone: those who did not want to follow would be punished one way or another or (like the UN in March 2003) bypassed, and all of this even though no proof existed of collusion between Saddam and al-Qaeda.

– **II** –

Complaints about Europe from the neo-conservatives who influence their country's foreign policy or help form it – at the Pentagon, the Vice-President's office, the National Security Council and certain parts of the State Department – are based on undeniable realities. France has for long been suspected of either unbridled anti-Americanism or 'Gaullism' in its search for topics of confrontation with the United States and, somewhat unrealistically, independence for the European Union. Even when President Chirac tried to reintegrate France into NATO in 1995-96, his request for a reallocation of commands was considered, especially in the Pentagon, to be absurd, and the attempt failed. Germany's reluctance to increase its defence budget or to send forces abroad (although some are now playing an important role in the Balkans and Afghanistan) and the 'pacifism' shown by Chancellor Schröder during his re-election campaign in autumn 2002 irritated American strategists for whom, more so than their predecessors, force is what counts above all. The former neutral countries that have joined the European Union, and even Belgium, Holland and Portugal, do not exhibit any great desire or ambition for Europe to become a 'complete power', and consider that the Alliance or American protection

should preserve it from age-old temptations and quarrels. Italy and Spain, while aspiring to great-power status, seem more dissatisfied with the Franco-German axis in governance of the Union than anxious to make it into a sort of diplomatic-military federal power. The new EU candidates, who were for long under the Soviet yoke or incorporated into the USSR, have unhappy memories of a Western Europe that was too accommodating towards the USSR and the division of the Continent, and look on the Americans in friendly gratitude. The conclusion drawn in Washington is that these people are not to be taken seriously: to quote, inevitably, Robert Kagan, Americans are from Mars and Europeans from Venus. There remains of course Britain, but that country seems to have backed down from its St-Malo aspirations, and even they were fairly modest. A European defence capability will not come about without London, and London will see to it that it is inseparable from NATO.

Hence an American view of a Europe in which paradoxes abound. Europe is seen as incapable of mounting a major military operation, or of establishing a constitution comparable to America's. It has become too hedonistic – with its huge expenditure on social security, long holidays with pay, trade union corporatism, its preference for well-being over 'the power and the glory' – and as a result, protected as it still is by American power and dependent on the good health of the US economy, it can allow itself an illusion of confidence in a world where it is the United Nations and international institutions that guarantee legitimate world governance, and in which the United States is both necessary and dangerous. Europe prefers agreements with less wealthy, less developed countries, to the detriment of the attention it should be devoting to war zones and threats like terrorism and weapons of mass destruction – provided that these agreements do not put an end to its agricultural protectionism (which infuriates the United States). It is a typical free-rider, living very well, even too well, as a parasite on the United States. When Europeans defend themselves by citing their actions in Macedonia, Rwanda or Sierra Leone, American neo-conservatives merely shrug their shoulders.

And yet things are more complex than that. There is for instance wide disagreement, going back at least thirty years, over the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Europeans have continuously wanted to use their good offices but the Americans have always opposed that, arguing that they are the only ones on good terms

with all the parties involved and quick to smell in any criticism of Israel a whiff of atavistic anti-Semitism (the 'Christian right' and neo-conservatives are at one on this, and France in particular is suspected, a view dating back to the Vichy regime and collaboration). The 2003 'road map', although signed by Russia, the European Union and the United Nations, is in reality an American text. Again, during the period of change from the dangerous Cold War to Cold War-cum-détente, when France, Germany and Britain each in its own way took initiatives to improve relations with the USSR, American officials were at first suspicious and hostile and then, under Kissinger, jumped on the bandwagon and took over the controls. And yet again, when the Europeans show any sign of wanting to strengthen their common foreign and defence policy, as at St-Malo, Washington makes it clear, firstly, that they will not manage given the weakness of their common institutions and their divergences over priorities, and that it will at best be a waste of money since the United States is so far ahead and more efficient in these areas; and secondly, that if in addition they endeavour to pursue an autonomous 'Grosspolitik' rather than simply perform better within NATO, this will be seen as un unacceptable sign of hostility. In this sphere Washington prefers them to be divided, and these divisions are used as an excuse not to complicate American operations by having to consult divergent Europeans, as happened over Kosovo.

In the economic field, things are a little different. Whereas many Americans were initially sceptical over the ability of the EEC and then the EU to carry through common economic policies, establish a single market and introduce a European currency, once the progress made by the Europeans had to be acknowledged, in particular the success of the euro, some, like Martin Feldstein, former economic adviser to President Reagan, sounded the alarm and viewed this new economic bloc with great suspicion. They denounced the EC subsidies given to certain industries (such as Airbus) and of course the common agricultural policy, and attempted to use conferences and organisations dealing with international trade as a battering ram to break down protectionist barriers and ensure the victory of global free trade, at least in sectors where the United States has an advantage (and therefore not steel or textiles).

The result has been an accumulation of grievances that are often ancient but given a fresh lease of life by the spirit of a new foreign policy in which some see neo-imperialism (which claims to be driven by the hope of universal democracy). This list of grievances has given some of the Bush administration's policy-makers and advisers the idea that it is possibly time, at the very least, to let the European Union know in no uncertain terms what limits it must not overstep and, even better, to exploit the numerous divisions among Europeans to halt any further integration, any enlargement that goes against Washington's interests and possibly, something that is often talked of these days, to 'disaggregate' the Union. This would be a further spectacular reversal of a policy of encouraging European unification that dates back to the beginning of the Cold War.

– III –

A few final remarks. The first concerns the role played by Britain. In his determination to give wholehearted support to the United States over Iraq – even going so far as to help the Bush team's campaign against Saddam Hussein by supplying sometimes dubious 'data' provided by British security services and then blaming France for the fiasco over the second UN resolution authorising war that Blair wanted to obtain from the Security Council to legitimise the war – Blair scuppered his own St-Malo initiative. And by scarcely mentioning the European Union during the months before and during the war, he helped in the attempt to divide the Union (he was in fact behind the pro-American letter signed by eight member states and initiated by Spanish Prime Minister José Maria Aznar) and contributed to the current difficulty in putting the pieces together again and the postponement of any British decision on joining the single currency. He has done all that was needed to prove that General de Gaulle was right when he pointed out the perils of allowing Britain to join the Common Market.

Second, serious criticism of Europe's anti-Americanism is surely in order. It contains outmoded elements that – in addition to irritating even Americans who are well-intentioned towards Europe – are wide of the mark. It is quite unjustifiably hard on far-

reaching American capitalism, a globalisation that is seen as synonymous with Americanisation and the influence of oil, Jewish, etc. lobbies. Yes, lobbies count, but they only dictate foreign policy in certain circumstances: when they can count on the backing of a major part of the population (which is the case for the Jewish lobby, especially since 11 September). The oil lobby admittedly has its word to say when it comes to energy and environment policies, but was not the main driving force in the Iraq war. What clear-headed critics of today's America should concentrate on is its wish for power and domination without the former constraints, fuelled by fear and exploitation of the fear of terrorism, and by an ancient Messianism that mistakes America's ideals for those of the rest of the world. We are in the world of Thucydides much more than that of Marx.

Third, the present crisis will not last forever. The exorbitant cost of this Iraq equivalent of the disastrous Greek expedition against Sicily in the fifth century BC – which is only gradually becoming apparent and is worrying the Congress – the difficult choices that continuing insecurity and acts of war in Iraq pose for an Administration that is still reluctant to face the reality on the ground, the fact that deep down the American people are neither vehemently imperialist, nor anti-European, nor anti-French, all gives cause for hope that good sense will again one day prevail. A fair division of responsibilities in Iraq between the 'coalition' and the UN is no longer out of the question. But NATO and the European Union will doubtless not come back into favour until, in both institutions, the Europeans have regained their composure and reconciled their differences, and Britain has mended its fences with Paris and Berlin. We are still far from that situation.

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# EU, US: visions of the world, visions of the other

**Nicole Gnesotto**

Three paradoxes characterise the Union's attitude to the rest of the world. The first is typical of post-Cold War realities: with very few exceptions, it is now much easier for the Europeans to agree a view on external crises than on American policy. In other words, world issues bring them together, while America is divisive. Terrorism provides a classic example of this. After 11 September the Fifteen had to adapt simultaneously and as rapidly as possible to the new terrorist threat and the new America that was recovering from the shock of the attacks. The threat of terrorism produced a leap forward in European integration in a number of fields, including the introduction of a common arrest warrant, financial and police cooperation, the Commission's early warning system and consensus within the European Convention on inclusion in the future treaty of a clause on mutual assistance in the event of terrorist attack against any member state. Conversely, once the initial reflex of solidarity with the victims of the 11 September attacks had passed, the requirement to adapt to the new US strategic priorities – the axis of evil, pre-emption and US exceptionalism – greatly perturbed, and in the end divided, the Europeans, culminating in the Iraq crisis and the division of Europeans into two camps quickly branded 'war' and 'peace'.

The second paradox is more traditional: while the Europeans find it fairly easy to agree a more or less common view of the world, they are divided on the Union's role in managing the world's crises. Since that role is broadly a function of the type of relationship that each member country wants to build with America, bilateral or within NATO, the Europeans have never managed to agree on the actual purpose of their diplomatic and military cooperation. The recurring debates on the virtues or vices of multipolarity or unipolarity, like the discussions on the possible degree of European autonomy on defence matters, are the most caricatural illustration of this latent division among Europeans on the Union's role and its relationship with the remaining superpower.

The third paradox is possibly a permanent one: agreed, American policy is divisive, but each time there is a risk of a crisis or even separation from America, the Europeans manage to reconcile differences on new bases. Before Iraq, raising the question of a European strategic concept amounted to either heresy or utopianism: among the Fifteen a combination of indifference, deference towards the United States and national preference jeopardised the very idea of the EU having its own security concept. Since Iraq, all members of the enlarged Union of 25 are enthusiastically involved in drawing up a common vision of the world and also an agreed strategy on the Union's actions in it. To bring about this spectacular slide from an inexistent Union to one with a strategic vision it needed the shock and anguish caused by the possibility of a radical split between Europe and America, and among the Europeans themselves. The Iraq crisis showed that it could have taken very little for this scenario to become an inevitable outcome.

These paradoxes indicate quite clearly the conditions under which an EU foreign policy and, a fortiori, European strategy might be created. Designing the latter as a joint action against a particular threat would be very simplistic. European foreign policy can only exist on the basis of consensus on three things: states must agree on a crisis, US policy towards that crisis and action to be taken by Europe itself. Not that agreement on those three things would be impossible. Kosovo, for example, produced consensus in Europe on the unacceptability of genocide, the need for American intervention, the Union's obligation to support Washington and above all the necessity to correct Europe's lack of military capability. More recently, the crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo was met with the same consensus: a refusal to accept interethnic massacres, recognition that America would not intervene and the need for the Union to help the UN in peacekeeping there. On the other hand, the Iraq crisis blew the CFSP apart, because there was no consensus on any of these aspects. There was great disagreement on all three dimensions – perception of the threat itself, US military intervention and the Union's role. In other words, it is American policy developments just as much as events in the world that determine the degree of unity or divergence in European common policy. The converse, for the United States, is obviously not the case, since America does not take its relationship with the Europeans into account when determining its own strategic vision. Moreover, it is the tension that results

from having to adapt to both the new threats and to post-11 September America that today determines the strategic direction of the 25-member Union.

## Visions of the world

Underlying the US and EU world-views, one habitually finds the two elements that make up any strategic concept, whether national or drawn up collectively in a European framework. The first concerns the level of the threat and the second the means with which to counter the threat. In the specific context of post-11 September, these take the form of the following questions: is the world more dangerous now than it was before the emergence of international terrorism? What relationship between the use of force and legality is best suited to this new situation? Here, two things seem evident: convergence of European and American views is fairly close when it comes to identifying the threats, even if there may be differences over their relative danger or their origins: the Americans think that the world is more dangerous, whereas the Europeans stress its greater complexity. On the other hand, when it comes to the legal use of force the differences are more pronounced – both between America and the Union and within the Union itself – even if some rapprochement does seem to have been emerging recently, in particular in the light of developments in the Iraq crisis.

### More dangerous or more complex?

Following the attacks of 11 September, George W. Bush's administration developed a three-part strategy that now dominates the international agenda. Terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and 'rogue-state' dictatorships are in his view the three priority threats which, combined, could deal a mortal blow to the international system and the Western democracies' security. President Bush himself, speaking in Warsaw, was to define '[the] new enemy, a lethal combination of terrorist groups, outlaw states seeking weapons of mass destruction, and an ideology of power and domination that targets the innocent and justifies any crime.'[1] The way the Iraq crisis was handled is a classic example of this new strategy: each of the three elements – proliferation of WMD, dictatorships and terrorism – was used indiscriminately to justify

1. George W. Bush, remarks to the people of Poland, Cracow, 31 May 2003.

military intervention against Saddam Hussein's regime, the latter two gaining in importance as the coalition encountered difficulties in its search for weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.

Given democracies' new vulnerability to this potentially devastating paradigm, the United States, as a nation and as the leader of the free world (the 'leader of conscience'[2]), made a radical overhaul of its strategy, defence system and alliances policy. America is now at war, an indefinite war against terrorism in an all-round defence of democracy. Two concepts have been embraced as the basis for this American strategic revolution: 'pre-emptive strikes' and 'regime change', resulting in the United States radically changing its practice of external intervention, which is no longer based on the concept of zero casualties but on zero risk to America's security. Maximal military power (the defence budget has been increased by 9.7 per cent since 2001[3]) at the service of a radical democratic Messianism might be the best way of summing up the strategy being pursued by the Bush administration.

On the European side, no one disputes that international terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and possibly a combination of the two, pose threats to the security of Europe's citizens and interests. Over 80 per cent of people polled in 2002 gave international terrorism as their primary concern, a figure that has remained at 70 to 80 per cent, depending on the survey, during 2003.[4] 'A secure Europe in a better world', the paper presented by Javier Solana to the European Council in Thessaloniki in June 2003, is equally explicit in this regard: 'International terrorism is a strategic threat . . . Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction is the single most important threat to peace and security among nations . . . The most frightening scenario is one in which terrorist groups acquire weapons of mass destruction.'[5] Under the Greek presidency, the fight against nuclear proliferation has now become a priority for the European Council.[6]

This coincidence of European and American analyses of the threat is nevertheless subject to several caveats. Leaving aside the specific sensibilities of any particular member state, Europe's assessment is different on a number of points. First, as far as the Union is concerned, international terrorism and the risk of nuclear proliferation do not cancel out the more traditional risks of regional instability or humanitarian disaster such as those that made former Yugoslavia its first priority in 1999. These also have to be considered, as do organised crime, pandemics and the grow-

2. Ibid.

3. The National Defense Budget Authority for 2001 was $335 billion, and the figure forecast for 2004 is $399 billion, not counting two extensions granted by Congress in April 2003 ($79 billion) and requested in September ($87 billion). Source: Office of Management and Budget.

4. Eurobarometer poll no. 58, October/November 2002; *Transatlantic Trends 2003* survey, published by the German Marshall Fund, 4 September 2003.

5. Javier Solana, 'A secure Europe in a better world', document presented to the European Council, Thessaloniki, 20 June 2003.

6. At the European Council in Thessaloniki, on 19 and 20 June 2003, heads of state and government adopted a 'Declaration on Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction', following the Council decision on 16 June to adopt 'Basic Principles' and an 'Action Plan' to fight proliferation.

ing number of failing states, all of which make the strategic background against which the Union is evolving possibly more dangerous, and certainly more complex and less capable of resolution by purely military means. In the European view, the awful consequences of badly regulated globalisation present challenges just as direct military threats do: '45 million continue to die every year out of hunger and malnutrition . . . Three great global infectious diseases . . . killed over 6 million people in 2002, the vast majority of them in Africa . . . Since 1990, almost 4 million people have died in wars, 90% of them civilians.'[7] Moreover, the European view makes no distinction between terrorism and proliferation and their politico-economic roots, nor the regional conflicts that provide their *raison d'être* and permit them to flourish: the growing gap between rich and poor, the persistence of conflicts and low prospect of political solutions, especially in the Middle East, and bad governance in most countries to the south of Europe, are all pernicious factors that the Europeans see as requiring urgent attention. Lastly, while the Europeans may identify the same types of threats as the United States, they are as a whole much less ideological in their perception of this new strategic situation. The notion of 'rogue states' is quite simply missing from European thinking, which is much more focused on the risks presented by 'failing states' and bad governance. And again, there is no consensus on the idea of an axis of evil or terrorism defined as one unique phenomenon that is identical everywhere in the world: on the contrary, European security strategy supposes that a distinction has to be made between the new al-Qaeda phenomenon and traditional terrorism.[8] On a more philosophical level, the Europeans do not share this feeling of being openly and totally at war with an enemy that represents the greatest evil in history. The Europeans' memory tends to situate evil in the past: 'Europe has never been so prosperous, so secure nor so free. The violence of the first half of the 20th Century has given way to a period of peace and stability unprecedented in European history.'[9]

The 25 European countries are admittedly divided, having sometimes different viewpoints, notably on the definition of international terrorism or the relative importance of the new threats compared with the traditional risks that could emerge on the European Union's periphery. The positions presented in this chapter correspond to the middle-of-the-road European stance as presented in Javier Solana's paper. However, these Euro-American

7. Op. cit. in note 5, p. 3.

8. The paper 'A secure Europe in a better world' makes a number of references to 'new terrorism', pointing out on p. 4 that 'the idea of obtaining weapons of mass destruction is attractive to them as it is not for traditional terrorist groups.'

9. Ibid., p. 1.

differences are not an obstacle to agreement on current threats to the international system: the al-Qaeda network, North Korea and Iran's position on proliferation are all sources of concern on both sides of the Atlantic. This community of views is on the other hand much less obvious concerning possible responses to international crises and the legal framework for their optimal management. In this respect Iraq was extremely revealing.

### Might is right, or force of law?

Not since Pearl Harbor has America been attacked in its homeland, and it is defending itself. After 11 September, no one questions its right of self-defence as provided for in Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations: the immediate offer of support by NATO under Article 5 of the Washington Treaty was an obvious illustration of this. Similarly, the attack on the Taliban regime was unanimously supported by the international community (Resolutions 1373 and 1378), which enabled the UN to include in the notion of self-defence responses to acts by states directly colluding in terrorist attacks.

Divergences only arise from the moment that the legitimate self-defence invoked by the United States ceases to be a right with regard to a particular event and becomes a permanent right, a sort of moral imperative for America in the name of the collective defence of democracy, de facto setting the United States above international law. Well beyond the restricted circles of the Administration, the United States considers itself to be in a permanent state of self-defence, justifying, in the words of Pierre Hassner,[10] a kind of 'permanent exceptional status' vis-à-vis international law. 'We have been attacked. We do not need a UN Resolution for our self defence',[11] Paul Wolfowitz declared in February 2002, at a moment when cracks in the transatlantic community were beginning to appear over the American administration's concept of 'pre-emptive strikes'.

It is on the basis of America's feeling of great vulnerability, together with its belief in the invincibility of its military power and its legitimate leadership in the defence of democracy, that the Republican administration has been developing its strategy of war on terror. For Gareth Evans, 'A war against evil is, almost by definition, unlimited and interminable.'[12] Despite the more or less pragmatic, or more or less ideological, tendencies on which the

10. Pierre Hassner, 'Vers l'état d'exception permanent?', *Le Monde*, 24 juin 2003.

11. Quoted in Laurent Zecchini, 'Etats-Unis et Europe: le grand écart des budgets de défense', *Le Monde*, 6 février 2002.

12. Gareth Evans (President of the International Crisis Group), 'Why the war on terror is not going well', *International Herald Tribune*, 11 September 2003.

neo-conservatives in power are divided, the end result is America's claim to complete freedom of action in the name of absolute defence of democracy. As this is a fight for survival, American sovereignty is non-negotiable; as America is a 'power for good', it cannot be wrong; because this is an implacable struggle of good against evil, all those who do not support America are considered to be on the side of evil. Hence the various theories on pre-emptive action against an enemy ('We will not hesitate to act alone, if necessary, to exercise our right of self-defense by acting preemptively against terrorists'[13]), the warning to partners that 'those who are not with us are against us',[14] strategic opportunism regarding alliances ('the mission must determine the coalition, the coalition must not determine the mission'[15]), the defence of national sovereignty ('As we strengthen institutions that allow free nations to cooperate on a multilateral basis, we must take care not to damage the core principle that under-girds the international system – the principle of state sovereignty.'[16]) and resort to democratic Messianism as final justification (the concept of 'regime change' and the domino theory applied to democracies from Iraq to the Middle East).

The result has inevitably been a new theory of relativity regarding international law and multilateralism, as championed by State Department Policy Planning Staff Director Richard N. Haass: 'When should the US delegate some of its sovereignty to join in multilateral institutions or treaties? The only responsible answer is "it depends". The question is whether the benefits of a proposed arrangement – which may include greater predictability, burden-sharing and international legitimacy – outweigh the costs – including lost policy autonomy and flexibility.'[17] Or again, 'When the UN or other bodies are unwilling or unable to move against direct threats, we reserve the right to act in less encompassing alliances or flexible, ad hoc coalitions of the willing . . . No organisation, not even the United Nations, has a monopoly on legitimacy; rather, legitimacy depends most on the rationale for an action and the manner in which it is undertaken.'[18]

The primacy of force, America's right to act and the defence of democracy was thus the amalgam of pragmatism and ideology that was used to justify, in the view of the American public, their country's military intervention in Iraq. Hence the total incomprehension of criticism, even open hostility, almost everywhere in the world, and in the UN in particular, towards an American policy of

13. *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, DC: The White House, September 2002), p. 6.

14. George W. Bush, Knoxville Civic Center, Tennessee, 8 April 2002.

15. Paul Wolfowitz, 38th Wehrkunde conference, Munich, 4 February 2002.

16. Donald Rumsfeld, remarks to the Marshall Centre 10th anniversary, Garmisch, 11 June 2003.

17. Richard N. Haass, 'Planning policy in today's world', remarks at the Kennan Institute annual dinner, 22 May 2003.

18. Richard N. Haass, 'Sovereignty: existing rights, evolving responsibilities', remarks to the School of Foreign Service and the Mortara Center of International Studies, Georgetown University, 14 January 2003.

declining to accept any control on American actions other than self-imposed control. The columnist Thomas L. Friedman, in a celebrated article, wrote: 'After Sept. 11, 2001, Americans wondered "Why do they hate us?" speaking of the Muslim world. After the Iraq war debate, the question has grown into "Why does everybody else hate us?" '.[19] And again, the conviction of Condoleezza Rice on this question is unsettling: 'There was disappointment that a friend like Canada was not able to support the US . . . There was disappointment in the response of the German government too . . . There was time when it appeared that American power was seen to be more dangerous than Saddam Hussein, I'll just put it very bluntly. We just did not understand it.'[20] The incomprehension was largely mutual, to the point that, in a recent opinion poll carried out by the German Marshall Fund, 83 per cent of Americans and 79 per cent of Europeans maintained that Europe and America did not share the same social or cultural values.[21]

Indeed, nothing could be more foreign to EU member states' collective culture than this apology of the use of force and unilateralism in international relations. Not that the Europeans hold identical views on this: all strategic genres are to be found today within the Union, ranging from the most interventionist to the most abstentionist, from the most nationalist to the most multilateralist, and from the most militarist to the most pacifist. Yet the Europeans' shared strategic culture is something very different from a rough average of their various national traditions: in particular it is the result of a unique fifty-year institutional experience marked by permanent compromise, constant negotiation and undeniable success for the Union and its member states. Of course this European culture of law, norms and the peaceful settlement of disputes has only recently begun to apply – and even then only marginally – to foreign and defence policies. But it is omnipresent and contagious irrespective of rivalries, strategic differences and national attitudes among the 25. And it is leading to multilateralism being seen as a paragon of good governance internationally. This is how Javier Solana put the case to the United States: 'The European attachment to a multilateral approach in those issues is a matter of conviction, not of malign strategy. Our experience tells us that sovereignty shared is sovereignty magnified. To misquote Sir Winston Churchill, multilateralism is the worst of international government, except all the others have been tried.'[22] This same conviction is found in the paper on European security

19. Thomas L. Friedman, 'Why the rest of the world hates America', *International Herald Tribune*, 2 June 2003.

20. Quoted in James Harding, 'US seeks to re-engage with old allies after acrimony', *Financial Times*, 31 May/1 June 2003.

21. *Transatlantic Trends 2003* survey published by the German Marshall Fund, 4 September 2003.

22. Javier Solana, 'Europe and America: partners of choice', speech to the annual dinner of the Foreign Policy Association, New York, 7 May 2003.

strategy: 'no single country is able to tackle today's complex problems entirely on its own . . . In a world of global threats, global markets, global media, our security and prosperity depend on an effective multilateral system.' And the United Nations lies at the heart of that system: 'the fundamental framework for international relations is the United Nations Charter.'[23]

This acceptance of the supremacy of collective legitimacy leads to a strict interpretation of the use of force. Few Europeans would deny that the principle of ruling out the use of force in relations between states represents a great step forward by the international community. The use of force, except of course in cases of individual and collective self-defence, is seen by the Europeans as a last resort sanctioned by the United Nations Security Council. That was the conclusion of the European Council in Brussels, at the height of the arguments over Iraq, in February 2003.[24] Like the leading neo-conservative Richard Perle, one can always reduce this European attitude to an admission of technological weakness and military deficiencies ('In the case of Europe, resort to force is often not even the last resort because the Europeans have so little capacity to use force that it is practically excluded as a means of influencing events or effecting change.'[25]), but such an explanation is scarcely more simplistic than suggesting that the American intervention in Iraq was symptomatic of a thirst for oil and an eagerness to colonise. In the end, the essential point is that, for the Europeans, military force is simply one of a wide range of instruments whose combined use is more suited to the complexity of the post-Cold War international environment: 'in contrast to the massive visible threat in the cold war, none of the new threats is purely military; nor can any be tackled by purely military means'.[26] It is therefore no surprise that preventive engagement, using all means available to Europe, should be seen as the optimal response in order to stabilise, at a very early stage, potential areas of crisis and conflict: 'A world which is seen as offering justice and opportunity for everyone will be more secure for the European Union and its citizens. Pre-emptive engagement can avoid more serious problems in the future.'[27]

Does that mean that Americans and Europeans are living on different planets? There is a great temptation to point to opposites in their respective strategic concepts: 'pre-emptive strike' vs. 'preventive engagement and conflict prevention'; 'rogue states' vs. 'failing states'; 'force-based' vs. 'rule-based international system';

23. Op. cit. in note 5, p. 9.

24. 'War is not inevitable. Force should be used only as a last resort.' Conclusions of the European Council, Brussels, 17 February 2003.

25. Richard Perle, 'Is the United Nations the only institution that can legitimize force?', *New Perspectives Quarterly*, vol. 20, no. 2, Spring 2003.

26. Op. cit. in note 5, p. 12.

27. Ibid., p. 10.

'regime change' vs. 'good governance'; 'national interest' vs. 'effective multilateralism' and so on. Yet this would be to misjudge the developments that permeate American and European thinking alike. Javier Solana's paper on European strategy does not ignore the profound changes taking place in the post-11 September world, concerning both the threats and the limitations of the international system as presently constituted. 'We should be ready to act before a crisis occurs. Conflict prevention and threat prevention cannot start too early . . . With the new threats the first line of defence will often be abroad.'[28] The same document also recognises that defence and advocacy of an effective multilateral system presuppose that one does not confine oneself to resounding professions of faith. 'If we want international organisations, regimes and treaties to be effective in confronting threats to international security, we should be ready to act when their rules are broken.'[29] As for the plea, in the text, for a marked increase in the Union's military capabilities, it leaves little doubt about the importance that military force should also have in international stabilisation. On the American side, it is in particular the difficulties encountered in Iraq since summer 2003 that are beginning to shake US certainties and reawaken a debate that has been dormant since the beginning of the crisis. As Phil Gordon has remarked, 'America needs support more than it needs control.'[30] But only time will tell what lessons the United States will in the long term draw from the catharsis of Iraq.

## The two schools of thought

Leaving aside the official rhetoric, one has to come back to the Iraq affair if one wants to try to understand the break-ups and hostility that marked 2003, this *annus horribilis* for transatlantic relations. The spectacle of the oldest democracies in the world falling out publicly over the use of force by democratic states gives cause for reflection. In fact two issues have become mixed up, the one legal and the other ethical, the former focused on the legality of the use of force in the context of the UN Charter and the latter centred on the legitimacy of the use of force in defence of human rights against dictatorships. The first of these debates basically concerns the rules governing the international system and relations between states; the second, conversely, concerns the moral duty of democracies and relations between states and societies.

28. Ibid., p. 11.

29. Ibid., p. 9.

30. Philip H. Gordon (Brookings Institution), 'Swap control for support', *International Herald Tribune*, 20 August 2003.

The legal case is fairly well rehearsed: can a state resort to force in cases other than those allowed for in the UN Charter, i.e. legitimate individual or collective self-defence in the face of aggression, and with the authorisation of the UN Security Council? A question that follows from that is, which is the less bad judge of the supposed aggression, the state itself or the Security Council? The ethics issue is more recent: in clear-cut cases of dictatorship, do democracies have the right and the obligation to intervene on the side of the oppressed? The arguments in both cases have their obverse: the legalistic rhetoric about the use of force leads to greater importance being given to the stability of the international system compared with the democratisation of societies, and order as opposed to liberty, even if that means ignoring tyrants in the name of international law. The argument about ethics has the opposite defect of attaching greater importance to liberty at the expense of stability in the world, even though it may mean upsetting regional balances and in particular destroying, in the name of democracy, the legal foundations of a system that is essential to the very actions of democracies. Taken together, these two dilemmas amount to this: can democracies overstep the boundaries of international law in defence of democracy itself? The answer was unanimously affirmative during the Kosovo crisis, Europeans and Americans agreeing that a NATO intervention without a UN mandate was justified. On Iraq, on the other hand, divergences quickly appeared.

Roughly speaking, these two schools of thought were reflected in the positions adopted by France and Germany on the one hand – which constantly dwelt on the question of UN authorisation – and by Britain and the United States on the other – although they only raised the issue of democratic legitimacy from the moment that a widespread feeling arose that the battle for the first issue (legality) had been lost. And the Europeans' unity fell apart: 'Old Europe' was accused of supporting dictators out of cynical strategic conservatism and of giving preference to the regional status quo rather than the promotion of democracy in the Middle East. Conversely, 'New Europe' was praised by Washington for its revolutionary Messianism in which the defence of democracy against an incarnation of evil overrode strategic considerations thought to be of a former age. The sincerity of the arguments put forward by the different parties will not be discussed here, but they can be summed up as follows: those in favour of military intervention

considered it both legal (as an implementation of UNSCR 1444) and legitimate because of the morality of such action. At the height of the crisis, even the argument about legality became unjustified in the eyes of certain American officials, who were convinced of the righteousness of their fight against evil and therefore of the moral cowardice of the peace camp. For their opponents, military intervention was illegal because there was no proof of the threat posed by Iraq and thus no agreement within the Security Council on a second resolution authorising the use of force – the moral argument being touched on only marginally. Six months on, in the light of the situation in Iraq in September 2003, the absence of any weapons of mass destruction clearly tends to support the case that intervention was illegal, the coalition forces having moreover been described as 'occupying powers' in Resolution 1483. One has nevertheless to recognise that the evidence of the Iraq regime's atrocities against its own population over thirty years leaves the ethical question wide open.

Does this mean that the Union will now have to choose between two different strategic objectives, between international stability and the promotion of democracy? Will a common European strategy have to aim at reinforcing regional status quo and international stability even if that means supporting obviously tyrannical regimes? Or should it overturn the strategic status quo and spread democracy everywhere in the world on the grounds that it is the basis and best guarantee of lasting international stability? Framed in this way, this dilemma, caricaturised by the specious opposition of 'old' and 'new' Europe, can only lead the Europeans to an impasse and divisions. Centuries of history have taught Europe's peoples that there is an age-old and too often tragic tension between force and right, order and freedom, international stability and justice. Throughout the Cold War the peoples of Central and Eastern Europe were only too bitterly aware of that. Yet neither international terrorism nor the spectre of nuclear proliferation, dangerous as they may now be for European security, will make it possible to cut the Gordian knot of international violence that democracies are facing. Similarly, no military power, even one as incontestable and unchallenged as that of America today, will ever be able to deal with the tragic complexity of current realities. Chris Patten recently wrote that 'Democracy does not come from precision missiles'.[31] Only the combination of two objectives – a little more democracy in a little more international

31. *International Herald Tribune*, 1 September 2003.

stability – can serve as a guide for Europeans' actions. These are admittedly modest and perhaps unsatisfactory objectives but, like democracy itself, without doubt the least bad of all.

## Visions of the other

Irrespective of member states' national specificities, it is the alliance between America and Europe that has for over fifty years formed the core of European strategic culture. It would be as unthinkable, for the Europeans, to consider a strategic order without reference to America as it would be to conceive of the organisation of their trade without reference to the Single European Act. Just as the United States traditionally shapes the international agenda, so the Europeans position themselves with relation to America. Under the Bush administration, however, America is projecting a new image.

### Useless or disloyal: the two faces of Europe

Whether in the geographical or political sense, Europe is not, or is no longer, at the heart of America's strategic priorities. And for very good reason: no one will deny that the end of the Cold War and the upheavals created by international terrorism have shifted the major threats away from the continent of Europe towards other regions. Yet does the ending of Europe's strategic significance imply that the Europeans are no longer privileged partners? Has the time come, as Robert Kagan has suggested 'when Americans will no more heed the pronouncements of the EU than they do the pronouncements of ASEAN or the Andean Pact'?[32] Not yet, or at least not entirely. In fact the Americans have two views: either the Europeans are considered 'irrelevant' because they lack any serious military capability, or seen as potentially dangerous since they are excessively organised or politically ambitious. On the one hand, they are seen as useless, a burden or a constraint; on the other a competitor, a threat or a traitor. Successive American administrations have always had an ambivalent attitude towards the Union's military and strategic dimension, giving unconditional support for an increase in member countries' military capabilities but attaching very strict conditions to the political scope and application of these efforts by the Europeans.

32. Robert Kagan, 'Power and Weakness', *Policy Review,* no. 113, June and July 2002.

The neo-conservatives in power do not depart from this tradition of ambivalence but add to it overtones of derision or warning seldom seen in previous Administrations.

Firstly, following 11 September, they systematically evaluated Europe solely in terms of its available military capabilities and reduced the transatlantic debate to the question of the 'technology gap' between American and European forces. Illustrative of this was an editorial in the *Wall Street Journal* of 6 February 2002 entitled 'Unmighty Europe, Why America's allies matter less and less', its main argument being: 'the Europeans have been less relevant to waging war [in Afghanistan] than the Uzbeks, the Kazaks and the Pakistanis.'[33] In a sort of strategic tautology, this obsession with capabilities also makes use of arguments which indicate that the Europeans are relatively useless and add fuel to American unilateral choices: hence the polite refusal of NATO's prompt offer of help following the 11 September attacks.

On the other hand, leading American officials have considerably stiffened their opposition to any inclination on the part of the Europeans to set up an autonomous defence organisation. There was already a serious campaign against Galileo in 2002, even though it was a civil project. There is now considerable suspicion regarding the proposed European armaments agency mentioned in the agenda agreed at the European Council in Thessaloniki. Hostility has even been expressed towards the possible introduction of majority voting on CFSP, as was discussed at one point in the Convention: 'We spend a lot of time working our relations on the bilateral level, explains a US official. If qualified majority was introduced, we would have to do more of our lobbying in Brussels, which will be more difficult for us.'[34] America's claim to the right to participate in the Union's discussions and political bodies extends even to the Democrat opposition.[35] All of this is in addition to the traditional theme of NATO's primacy and the necessity to avoid anything that might look like duplication or competition with the Atlantic military organisation. For the American administration the 'Berlin-plus' agreement between the Union and NATO thus has a general significance extending well beyond the Balkans. And whereas Operation *Concordia* received Washington's blessing as a successful example of that agreement, Operation *Artemis* in the Democratic Republic of Congo came as a shock: NATO officials are concerned that it might set a precedent for

33. 'Unmighty Europe', *Wall Street Journal*, 5 February 2002.

34. Quoted in Judy Dempsey, 'US presses Europeans to weaken alliance', *Financial Times,* 27 January 2003.

35. In particular the idea that 'for appropriate issues and at appropriate levels, U.S. representatives should have the opportunity to observe proceedings and debates – not to participate and to influence, but to hear and to be influenced by their peers' debates', in 'Renewing the Transatlantic Partnership', joint declaration endorsed by Madeleine Albright et al., CSIS, 14 May 2003.

other autonomous EU operations, whether in Moldova or elsewhere, and warn that there will be no repetition.[36]

Nevertheless, the attitude of the present Administration differs from that of its predecessors in a number of respects. First, the credibility of the NATO creed is less assured, in that the same American officials also display a certain casualness regarding NATO itself: to the traditional rhetoric on the collective value of the Atlantic Alliance are added pleas for ad hoc coalitions ('the mission will determine the coalition'), and NATO is referred to as a reservoir from which forces can be drawn as required ('The Alliance itself can call upon this rich reservoir or, as seems increasingly likely, coalitions of the willing can be drawn from it', as Colin Powell has declared).[37] Above all, under this Administration the denunciation of any European autonomy has assumed major ideological dimensions. President Bush's famous phrase 'you are either with us or against us' leaves little room for any differentiation by the Europeans and allows any such difference to be portrayed as a threat or betrayal.

This offensive was launched against the Franco-German partnership even before the Iraq crisis broke out. On 27 January 2003, Judy Dempsey, possibly the best-informed Brussels-based journalist, observed: 'US envoys in Europe are putting pressure on European countries to weaken the deepening Franco-German alliance, fearing it will lead to a more independent European defence and foreign policy.'[38] The Iraq crisis then allowed America systematically to develop this ideology of betrayal by 'old Europe', led by France and liable to punishment and retaliation by the United States. Since then, all aspects of European defence have been seen by the Administration in those terms. The initiative taken in view of an EU military headquarters at Tervuren by France, Germany, Belgium and Luxembourg assumed the proportion of a betrayal by 'chocolate makers'[39] in US rhetoric: 'A few Europeans, on the other hand, think they can create a continental foreign policy and defense policy designed to check US power . . . Their vision of Europe as a countervailing force to the US is one that could shake the foundations of transatlantic relations . . . The US hopes this call for a new brand of European unilateralism will be repudiated by the majority of European countries that want to preserve NATO as the pre-eminent security organization on the continent.'[40] And lastly, one notch higher in the EU-NATO

36. Similarly, there are reservations within NATO over the proposal made by the European Council in Copenhagen to take over NATO's SFOR operation in Bosnia in 2004.

37. *Wall Street Journal*, 29 April 2003.

38. Judy Dempsey, 'Franco-German alliance raises US defence fears', *Financial Times*, 27 January 2003.

39. The term 'chocolate makers' to describe the four countries involved in the Tervuren initiative was coined by State Department spokesman Richard Boucher. Quoted in 'US derides plan to build EU command', *International Herald Tribune*, 3 September 2003.

40. Nicholas Burns, 'The new NATO: healing the rift', remarks made at the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, Brussels, 27 May 2003.

institutional quarrel, is the denunciation of multipolarity as a subversive theory, a mantra taken up by George W. Bush and his adviser Condoleezza Rice: 'multipolarity is a theory of rivalry, of competing interests – and at its worst – competing values . . . Why should anyone who shares the values of freedom seek to put a check on those values?'[41] 'New theories of rivalry should not be permitted to undermine the great principles and obligations that we share. The enemies of freedom have always preferred a divided alliance.'[42]

Useless or underhand, the image of Europe swings between these two extreme perceptions, which have a common underlying theme: America expects the Europeans to provide it with assets, capabilities and support, and not to hatch out any project by themselves. It needs capabilities, not policies. Hence the Bush administration's tendency systematically to marginalise the Union in favour of bilateral relations, the splitting up of countries rather than their unity and ad hoc coalitions rather than properly constituted alliances. Rarely before has an Administration depended so heavily on a network of bilateral relations with each of the European countries. This may be in line with the new strategic pragmatism as expressed by Donald Rumsfeld in January 2002 when he declared that it was the mission that determined the coalition and not the other way round. In this completely depoliticised view of the world, which is reduced to a large fount into which the United States can dip as required to find allies in accordance with its needs, the Union, but sometimes also the Atlantic Alliance itself, has difficulty in establishing itself as a collective actor. Or, conversely, it reflects a fixation on the Europeans' duty to pay allegiance and a deliberate intention to nip in the bud any European collective organisation. According to the columnist William Pfaff, 'Most of Europe's policy leadership recognize that American policy opposes an independent security policy and is now being formulated to "disaggregate" or divide the EU. Their concern is what to do about it.'[43] The theme of the disaggregation of Europe has indeed been evoked as never before in Euro-Atlantic seminars, to the point that Javier Solana felt it necessary to express his concern at this new American fashion publicly: 'In democracies, we cannot afford to ignore our public opinion. In partnerships, we cannot afford to ignore our partners. Different voices must be heard and respected, not ostracised and punished . . .

41. Speech by Condoleezza Rice at the IISS, London, 26 June 2003.

42. George W. Bush, remarks to the people of Poland, Cracow, 31 May 2003.

43. William Pfaff, 'Seeing mortal danger in a superpower Europe', *International Herald Tribune*, 3 July 2003.

Therefore, I am concerned when I hear, for the first time, influential voices asking whether the United States would be better served by disaggregating Europe.'[44]

No one has expressed this tactic of dividing Europe and picking from this 'rich reservoir' with greater frankness than John Hulsman of the Heritage Foundation: 'America has to constantly note differences within Europe in order to exploit them to form a coalition of the willing on any given policy initiative . . . Only a Europe that widens, rather than deepens, a Europe à la carte where efforts at increased centralization and homogenization are kept to a minimum, suits both American national interests and the interests of individual citizens on the continent.'[45] And no subject of disagreement better illustrates this American strategy of bypassing the Union and applying pressure directly and bilaterally on each of the European allies than the International Criminal Court. Even Tony Blair, in an address to the US Congress in June 2003, thought fit to remind his audience of the foundations of any healthy partnership: 'To be a serious partner, Europe must take on and defeat the crass anti-Americanism that sometimes passes for its political discourse. What America must do is to show that this is a partnership built on persuasion not command.'[46]

## Absolute or relative: European views on American leadership

Fifty years of an Atlantic Alliance formed to counter an indisputable Soviet threat shaped a common paradigm according to which the Euro-American alliance was an existential contract linking a common destiny on both sides of the ocean. Even though crises, misunderstandings or even rebellion happened here and there in member countries, any alternative to the Alliance was inconceivable, dangerous and impossible. After 11 September, however, America, with its characteristic rapidity and creativity, embarked on a complete overhaul of its strategic priorities, its interests and therefore its strategies: its conclusion was that the defence of America was no longer necessarily linked to Europe. And the Europeans no longer recognised the America they had previously known.

However, this perplexity among Europeans was not to result in divisions from the outset. It would be wrong to forget that throughout 2002 all Europe's leaders, from Blair to Schröder,

44. Javier Solana, speech to the annual dinner of the Foreign Policy Association, New York, 7 May 2003.

45. John C. Hulsman, 'How America sees Europe', *Heartland*, no. 9, 2003.

46. Tony Blair, Address to the US Congress, 17 July 2003.

from Patten to Solana, took up their pen or went in person to remind Washington of the limits of unilateralism, the dangers in an overly military strategy to counter terrorism and the inestimable value of the partnership between the United States and Europe. A conservative reflex could be seen in all the European leaders. All to an extent attempted to put into practice, even before he suggested it, the strategy of influencing Washington advocated by Tony Blair as being the only possible one. How was it that such cohesion among the Europeans evaporated, sometimes in an exchange of insults, when it came to deciding what action to take apropos of Iraq? Despite the efforts made since to reaffirm the strength of the Euro-Atlantic alliance, two rifts within Europe have become very evident.

The first of these has separated the 'European street' from the majority of its leaders. In addition to the many mass demonstrations held during the Iraq crisis, including – even especially – in the countries participating in the coalition, public opinion polls show a dramatic fall in America's image in Europe. In Britain, support for the United States has fallen from 75 to 48 per cent since mid-2002. During the first six months of the Iraq crisis (November 2002 to May 2003), favourable opinion fell from 80 to 50 per cent in Poland, from 70 to 34 per cent in Italy, and in Spain as few of 14 per cent view American policy positively. At the same time, those in favour of greater European autonomy in foreign affairs amounted to 48 per cent in Britain, 67 per cent in France, 52 per cent in Germany, 63 per cent in Italy and 60 per cent in Spain, compared with only 29 per cent in the United States.[47] According to European sources, among the Fifteen support for a common foreign policy rose by 4 points in two months (April and May, to 67 per cent), and for defence policy by 3 points (74 per cent). Opinion is almost identical among the 10 candidate countries, the corresponding figures being 67 and 77 per cent.[48] And the German Marshall Fund's latest survey of opinion confirms, six months after the beginning of the war, a widening of this gap: only 45 per cent of Europeans are in favour of American leadership of international affairs, compared with 64 per cent in 2002; 78 per cent of Europeans see American unilateralism as a threat, and 71 per cent want the Union to become a leading world power.[49]

The second rift has been between governments, sweeping away the traditional distinction between present and future EU member states, big and small, nationalist and federalist, and a realign-

47. International poll carried out by The Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, results published on 29 May 2003.

48. Eurobarometer, 29 May 2003.

49. German Marshall Fund of the United States, *Transatlantic Trends 2003*.

ment of members with America as the sole criteria. On one side are the countries for whom the United States is the sole criterion determining the functioning of the international system, and therefore of the European system. This group includes both the convinced and the pragmatic, in other words governments that sincerely share the new strategic analysis of the world as proposed by the United States, and those who are sometimes more sceptical of America's decisions but are convinced that they have no choice but to support them. For all of these countries, everything, but everything, is better than a disagreement, and even more so a crisis with the United States. On the other side are to be found countries who feel that, while there is no doubt that the United States is a determining factor in both the international and European systems, there are also other important criteria, such as building Europe, multilateral governance, stability in the Middle East, public opinion and so on. The aim of this group of European countries is certainly not to assert a difference from Washington but, where a difference exists, they feel it must be expressed and accepted. They would even maintain that it is this right to be different and the search for compromise that give the alliance of Western democracies its special value.

This division in Europe over the relationship with America has led to known rifts, caricaturised once again by Franco-British opposition on a host of issues including the use of force, the international order and European defence. In addition to their opposition on Iraq in the UN Security Council, both countries have sharpened their highly antagonistic rhetoric: on the French side, praise for multipolarity; on the British, a plea for a unipolar world; a claim by France to a certain amount of European autonomy in defence at the summit on Tervuren, 29 April 2003; on the other side, scepticism on the part of the British over the very idea of autonomy, and reaffirmation of NATO primacy over any European initiative on defence.

The objection will rightly be raised that these differences between France and Britain are in a way historical, that they existed long before the Iraq crisis, and even that they have formed a part of the ambivalent history of the construction of a political Europe for 30 years. The St-Malo declaration of December 1998 was actually a compromise between two different visions of Europe's future, and did not herald a seamless coincidence of French and British views. Nevertheless, two things illustrate what

is really new about the situation in Europe in 2003. One is the polarisation of the political debate, in which it is the very principle of a duality of European visions that is being called into question and the idea of autonomy ruled out. The other is the positioning of European countries either wholly in favour of American intervention or very much against it, as illustrated by the French veto in the UN, British military involvement, Germany's public distancing of itself, the solidarity, including military, shown by Poland and Spain in particular, not to mention Turkey's refusal to give America military assistance.

It only remains, therefore, to try to comprehend how it is that America, having worked for European reconciliation over half a century, in the space of a few weeks became the main divisive factor in Europe. The theory of a French plot aimed at Washington is clearly far from satisfactory as an explanation, unless of course one considers France to be the greatest superpower on the planet, something that few, including the author of this paper, would venture to suggest. In the same way, it would be futile to conclude that divisions in Europe are solely the result of a deliberate policy by Washington: the United States may perhaps prefer to see a divided Europe, but not at the cost of its own diplomatic credibility in the United Nations. In fact the explanation must be sought in America's two traditional roles in Europe over the last fifty years: providing military protection of the Europeans from external threat on the one hand and the political levelling of states within Europe on the other.[50]

Those functions formed the basis of the Atlantic Alliance. From the beginning of the 1950s, NATO added to its traditional military function a political role that was equally essential, focused in the first place on the integration and supervision of the FRG and then broadened to include the maintenance of stability in postwar Europe and some balance between the European powers. It was above all this political function of the Alliance that France was to criticise when, as General de Gaulle saw it, America's stabilising role in Europe began to change into one of hegemony and political control over the Continent. It was also on the other hand this function that many other European countries valued for numerous reasons: America's role as the 'great equaliser' of powers in Europe reassured the Germans who feared themselves, the others who feared Germany, medium-sized countries who worried at the possibility of a directorate of large powers, and

50. For a detailed analysis, see Nicole Gnesotto, *La puissance et l'Europe* (Paris: Presses de Sciences Po, 1998).

many who saw the spectre of a political Europe dominated by France and Germany. Above all, the link between America's military and political functions was indisputable, the protection provided by the United States ultimately justifying its political leadership of the European system. It was moreover because its mission of providing security against the threat from the East was combined with one of internal stability in the West that the Atlantic Alliance had, and continues to have, a considerable force of attraction, even after the disappearance of the Soviet threat.

But it is also America's double function of providing military protection and political balance between the European powers that the end of the Cold War is partly calling into question. Following 11 September, the European allies are all still agreed on America's function of providing protection, and none of them, certainly not France, doubts the irreplaceable value of that. But it is precisely on the very notion of a common threat that there is questioning and uncertainty and, in the case of Iraq, real disagreement between the allies. America's role of protector has been relativised in the light of the risks resulting from its military decisions, and changes in Turkey's attitude have been a clear indication of this. On the other hand, European countries are no longer all in agreement on the political function of the United States in Europe. A large number of countries admittedly still approve of the role of equaliser played by America, in particular as a counter to Franco-German leadership. It is no secret that the declaration on Iraq issued at the Elysée summit in 2003 was seen by some of the European partners as an abuse of power: the two countries were seen as having gone beyond their recognised role as the Union's institutional driving force and assuming an unjustified political role. Divisions among Europeans in spring 2003 were therefore due largely to a settling of old scores between them, particularly in the discussions within the Convention. On the other hand, there are countries in Europe which consider that America's political function of providing political leadership in Europe is now open to question: because of its style, certainly, but also because of the obvious paradox seen in an American administration that is decidedly revolutionary regarding the international order and stability in the Middle East but extremely conservative when it comes to the European order and the transatlantic status quo – and here Germany's changing attitude has been noteworthy.

To summarise this, a number of European countries have, as a result of the Iraq crisis, abandoned the Cold War paradigm in which America was the absolute protector of Europe and the ultimate equaliser of European countries' ambitions. It is in the fundamental interests of others, however, and in particular the new members of the European Union, to keep that paradigm intact even after the end of the Cold War. The United States for its part challenges this Atlantic paradigm or attaches importance to it on a case-by-case basis as required, showing great flexibility over the Alliance's collective self-defence function but at the same time inflexibility when it comes to the primacy of its political leadership in Europe.

## Conclusion

That observation does not, however, prejudge possible developments in the United States: the impending presidential electoral campaign and the obstacles encountered by America in its strategy on Iraq and the Middle East could result in a more authoritarian style or equally a return by the United States to the middle way of transatlantic partnership. While the Europeans have little chance of influencing fundamental developments in America, they none the less have a pressing obligation to try to reconcile their own, widely differing, visions of Europe's future. Certainly, drawing up, together, a European security strategy is an essential stage in enhancing the Union's role in the world. Yet discussing America together could be just as urgent a task: it is surreal that the 25, who are so ready to discuss anything and everything, should maintain this American taboo and abstain from reflecting together on essentials: in other words, on possible changes in policy by the one partner that is absolutely central to the future of the international system.

# What does America want of Europe?

**David C. Gompert**

Shift or rift
Assessing US-EU
relations after Iraq

**3**

## Introduction

Ask an American what Europe should *be* and he will tell you what Europe should *do*. For historical reasons, even as Europeans look for identity, Americans look for purpose.[1] More to the point, because of Europe's economic weight and political clout, if nothing else, American views on Europe's future hinge on what that future implies for Europe's behaviour in the world and towards the United States. At the same time, because of US primacy, what Europe is and does will to some extent be relative to the United States. This is not said out of American conceit: Europeans themselves speak of Europe's identity and purpose in relation to the United States – as partner, as counter-weight, even as alternative to its value system.[2] Thus, an American view of Europe's future is inseparable from a view of the future of US-European relations.

This essay looks at the possibilities for Europe and for US-European relations in light of US global interests. It does not presume to judge what is best for Europe, only what is best for the United States. If there is a bias, it is simply this: it is in America's interest that Europe succeeds in what it tries to be and do, all else being equal. This is not because an adversarial relationship is necessarily precluded but because it would take policy blundering of biblical proportions on both sides to cause one, if only because of shared basic values.

There is only one place to begin: the US-UK invasion of Iraq over the strenuous objections of two key NATO allies and leading members of the EU. Americans and Europeans alike know that things will not be the same as they were. In the words of Nicole Gnesotto, 'a new Euro-Atlantic order . . . has to be built from scratch'.[3] Indeed. But it is also possible that no new order will be erected because the ruins of the old one are not cleared from the demolition site. This is no time for reminiscing about what was.

1. John van Oudenaren develops this in David C. Gompert and F. Stephen Larrabee (eds.), *America and Europe: A Partnership for a New Era* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

2. French President Jacques Chirac, for example, has declared that, 'Any community with only one dominant power is always a dangerous one and provokes reactions. That's why I favor a multi-polar world, in which Europe obviously has its place.' As quoted in 'France is Not a Pacifist Country', *Time*, 24 February 2003, p. 33.

3. Nicole Gnesotto in 'Rebuilding', *Newsletter* no. 6. (Paris: EU Institute for Security Studies, April 2003), p. 1.

Europeans seem as shaken by the impact of the Iraq crisis on what Europe aspires to be as by its impact on transatlantic ties. For roughly half of Europe to oppose the United States and the other half to oppose the first half strikes at the heart of both the identity and the purpose of Europe.[4] Will Europeans, of either half, entrust to some European Council President or Foreign Minister responsibility for EU global policy when, as Iraq shows, they prefer divided Europe to Europe united behind policy they dislike?[5]

Now that half of Europe has defied America and denounced its conduct, Americans are more ambivalent about what the EU might become. They naturally want a better feel for which half represents future European policies before wholeheartedly backing a more centralised Europe. Whether the United States prefers an assertive coequal power or a divisible herd of docile followers depends on how Europeans see their interests and responsibilities. The two versions recently on display – that of Blair-Aznar and that of Chirac-Schröder – could not be more different, particularly in regard to how to deal with the United States.

As the Iraq crisis shows, the US-European relationship can be no stronger than the contemporary common interests it serves. A relationship based on a genuinely shared strategic outlook would not have fractured over Iraq. Looking ahead, the effects of the Iraq crisis depend on its true meaning. To the extent that Iraq is the *cause* of the transatlantic falling-out, recovery could be relatively swift and much of the prior relationship could be salvaged. To the extent that Iraq is a *symptom* of a larger US-European disagreement, recovery will be hard and change in the relationship must be sweeping.[6] The author leans toward the latter. It is the safer diagnosis: mistaking symptom for cause is a formula for relapse.

This is not to suggest that the Iraq crisis itself is inconsequential. It injected venom into the bloodstream of US-European politics. While the fever is subsiding, the damage will last. Any prescription for Europe and for US-European relations that assumes limitless transatlantic trust is wishful. Any suggestion that the crisis offers some golden opportunity to form a grand partnership ignores politics. But even when the acrimony fades and policies of retribution are cast aside, a larger disagreement about global threats and the utility of power and force will remain.

In the light of the Iraq crisis, but not blinded by it, the pages that follow look at the way forward for Europe and US-European relations. Four questions provide the structure:

4. In public opinion, the Iraq war was opposed by a majority of Europeans, even though at least half of the current and future members of the EU voiced some degree of official support.

5. As called for by the constitutional conference headed by Valéry Giscard d'Estaing.

6. Robert Kagan, 'Power and Weakness', *Policy Review*, no. 113, June/July 2002, pp. 3-28.

- ◗ what lasting *political effects* will the Iraq crisis have on US-European relations?
- ◗ what has the crisis revealed about broader US and European *strategic outlooks*?
- ◗ how compatible, or not, are US and European global *interests*?
- ◗ with these questions answered, what *options* are there for Europe and for US-European relations?

The essay ends with thoughts on one particularly important purpose that effective US-European global partnership could serve.

## The political effects of Iraq – breakdown and catharsis

### Anti-Europeanism – a new American sport

As in any quarrel between friends that spirals beyond normal bounds, regrettable things have been said by each about the other – things that may have been thought all along yet, out of respect, never said; things that will be remembered. This incivility now has a political life of its own that must be reckoned with in US-European policies and possibilities. Indeed, the main effect of the Iraq crisis on US-European relations is political. It is important, if unpleasant, to describe what Americans are thinking about Europeans and vice versa, for this is the stuff of politics.

Actually, thinking about Europe is something Americans rarely do. Other than East-Coast Europeanist cognoscenti, even politically engaged Americans have given little thought since the upheaval of 1989-92 to what Europe ought to be and do. As the United States battled Asian dragons, Europe slipped into its peripheral vision. The Yugoslav wars attracted fleeting US public attention to Europe, but nothing like the jolting look at Europe and US-European relations that the Iraq crisis has brought. The first American political event concerning Europe in a decade has been loud and bitter.

In quieter times, Americans regard Europeans warmly as trusted friends and cousins who are putting together a better Europe after a century of inhumanity and division. Barely noticed in the United States has been the fact that post-Cold War Europe, while no longer a major importer of security, has failed to become a major exporter of security. Because America has felt little need for help in coping with global security challenges, neither the

executive nor legislative branch of government has chosen to make US-European burden-sharing a political issue. This hazy but not unkind image of Europe has been shattered by what many Americans see, fairly or not, as European posturing, pandering, and perfidy over Iraq.

Europeans have been far more maligned by US officials and talking heads over Iraq than the equally unsympathetic Russians. Abandonment during crisis is thought to be Europe's answer to America's role in European liberation, reconstruction, protection, and reunification. Regardless of differences among Americans about the war with Iraq, they believe that Europeans, at least those of the 'Old' persuasion, 'went wobbly' (credits to Margaret Thatcher) when the United States sought *their* strategic support – allies when they needed the United States but not when the tables were turned.

France has been long regarded in US political circles as a self-styled nemesis. It is now seen as having used its last remnant of power, a permanent seat on the UN Security Council, to isolate and embarrass the United States as it tried to deal with a legitimate peril. It seems to have lured the United States into UN deliberations, agreed to Resolution 1441, reneged when Iraq did not comply, and then indicted its ally as a felon in the court of world public opinion. France manoeuvred into a position where by merely threatening a veto it could accuse the United States of an 'illegal' (Chirac's word) act in defiance of the will of the 'international community', in effect making France judge and jury – though, as it happened, not executioner – of US policy.[7] In so doing, France humiliated and weakened the most respected person in the United States and champion of multilateralism, Colin Powell.

Iraq has ended the American fantasy that France would always 'be there' when it really counts. Otherwise, it has not fundamentally changed Franco-American relations, which often run hot and cold. As one observer says, 'France lacks the power to seriously hurt the United States, and the United States thus lacks the motivation to seriously hurt France. If France had the power of Europe the danger would be greater, but French pride . . . is going to keep that from happening.'[8]

In contrast, the prevailing American feeling about Germany is one of disappointment. After all, was Germany not rehabilitated and rebuilt with US help; protected from the Soviet Union by US willingness to fight a Third World War in its defence; and unified

7. Had France acquiesced in a 'second resolution' it would have been unable to charge the United States with acting in defiance of the international community.

8. Robert Levine, Internal Note, RAND. Quoted with the author's consent.

thanks to US steadfastness when others doubted and dithered? Yet here is the heir to Adenauer and Kohl retailing anti-American-ism in a successful bid to rescue his political career. US animosity towards France is stronger, but dissatisfaction with Germany may be more consequential. US-German crisis is by definition crisis in the Atlantic Alliance, which Americans have always seen Germany anchoring on the European side. NATO has weathered many a Franco-American squall but never an outright German break with the United States on something so profound as a decision to use force.

That not all Europeans opposed the United States over Iraq has only sharpened the American reaction to those that did. The Anglo-American alliance and London's angry rebuke of France have left Americans feeling vindicated. Support for the United States from South and East Europeans further cast the dissenting allies in unfavourable relief. EU disunity over Iraq, although better than united opposition to US policy, is taken as evidence of Europe's unreliability – at once both wrong-headed and two-headed. The whole experience has revived the view held in some American quarters that the key to effective policy towards Europe is to prey upon its divisions.

Barring some dramatic and unlikely act of redemption or con-trition, American political resentment towards France and Ger-many, as well as a vague annoyance with 'Europe', will linger. American politicians will not find it expedient to bury this hatchet. US ire is not confined to Congress and political appointees of the current Administration; it reaches deep into governing and chattering institutions. As for the general public, which is seldom exposed to government and media views about Europe and is becoming demographically less linked by age or ori-gin to special US-European ties, the crisis and criticism leave a deep imprint.

## Leader no longer

Of course, the popular European image of the United States is every bit as harsh: America is widely seen as power-hungry and arrogant – traits that hardly evoke leadership. It magnifies military threats so that it can brandish its military power, or so it is thought. Now that it can keep its own casualties to a minimum, it has lost all inhi-bitions about the use of force. Postwar questions about prewar US

claims that Iraq had WMD and posed an imminent threat have fed fears that the United States cannot be entirely trusted. America's support for Israel is seen in some European quarters as the chief cause of Arab and Muslim hostility and evidence that a Jewish cabal controls US policy and plotted the invasion of Iraq.

Because of popular European impressions of America – vote-selling, gun-toting, gas-guzzling, GMO-peddling – lambasting the United States has become smart politics in Europe. European voters who remember D-Day and the Berlin airlift are outnumbered by younger ones, many of whom want Europe to be *Not America*.[9] The German Chancellor is far from the only politician in Europe who has fed upon and fed anti-Americanism. In this atmosphere, is it any wonder that Europeans less and less regard the United States as a leader in the true sense?

Barring another crisis – keep an eye on Iran! – these uncharitable European and American views of one another will gradually soften. But we now know they are there, beneath a thin veneer of comity. Do not be lulled by grinning diplomats promising reconciliation. Iraq or no Iraq, the bonds between Europeans and Americans are no longer so special and unbreakable. Nasty new politics on both sides of the Atlantic will dog any effort to restore old ties or to forge new partnerships.

Iraq could also affect American views of how Europe is constructing itself. While some Europeans suspect the opposite, the United States has consistently favoured integration. Historically, integration was endorsed as a key to lasting European peace. More recently, it has been seen as conducive to effective US-European cooperation because it promised to give Washington that proverbial single phone number to call. The United States has advocated enlargement of the EU to the East and South-East to the point of irritating West Europeans. Now, the Iraq experience will cause the United States to pay more attention to the details of European integration. How authority is distributed among EU institutions and members states, who is in charge of what, what defence arrangements are made, and how the EU harmonises European laws will be viewed more critically through the lens of how US interests could be affected.

One good that could come of the transatlantic crisis over Iraq is catharsis: the need for change can no longer be repressed. Unfortunately, the therapy has so far not been particularly introspective in either Europe or the United States. It seems not to have caused

9. Only 17 per cent of living Germans in 2001 were over 65, and thus old enough to remember such events.

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Europeans to ask whether they should take greater responsibility to meet global challenges, nor to have caused Americans to ask whether leadership requires more than military supremacy, self-righteousness, and diplomacy-by-ultimatum.

Overall, Iraq has both inflamed European concerns that the United States is reckless and kindled American concerns that Europe is feckless. Post-Iraq conduct has not helped: with few Europeans rushing to America's side in the occupation and reconstruction, the image of unsupportive Europe is kept alive in the United States. Revelations about prewar intelligence gaffs, or worse, have prolonged if not deepened European doubts about American trustworthiness. Do not count on politicians to plead for understanding when popular feelings are running the other way. For now, assume that US-European politics will remain combustible and limit the possibilities for transatlantic cooperation.

## The larger problem – the capabilities gap and the role of force

### Europe in denial

Beyond the political damage of Iraq, it is important to understand what the crisis reveals about Europe and the United States in a strategic sense – their respective world outlooks, interests, aims, and policy directions. Like a geological fault, the growing US-European strategic disconnect that began when the Soviet threat vanished was an earthquake waiting to happen.[10] At the epicentre are an objective difference in military power and a subjective difference over its use. The two are related: the expanding gap in military capabilities makes Europeans more nervous about US reliance on force, even as it makes Americans less patient with European nervousness. Yet the same gap makes the United States less reliant on allied military support and thus less attentive to allied views, including those about the use of force. What accounts for this deeper disconnect?

Europeans have been schooled by history, up to and including the Cold War, to equate security with territorial integrity and to gauge threats in proportion to their geographic proximity. Iraq suggests that, despite 9/11, many Europeans still do not accept the indivisibility of global security, especially that Asian insecurity

10. Gompert and Larrabee, op. cit. in note 1, pointed out the danger of such a crisis if the United States and Europe could not overcome their divergent perspectives on global security, especially WMD.

means European insecurity. If they did, their defence spending would have gone up in recent years, like that of the United States. With the exception of the British prime minister, European leaders have not built a public case that European interests are unsafe in an unsafe world or that Europe should globalise its security responsibilities in an era of globalisation. As a result, there is little popular enthusiasm in Europe for building and using expeditionary military forces or for US military 'adventures' (Schröder's word) like Iraq.[11]

The US view, widely and firmly held, is that the global era is, so far at least, a dangerous one, above all because of the relentless spread of WMD and the rise of strategic terrorism. Although Europeans recognise the global terrorist threat – how could anyone not? – they are relatively relaxed about the WMD threat, as evidenced by their tardiness in shifting from non-proliferation to counter-proliferation strategies. This is central: as just demonstrated by Iraq, for Europe and the United States to disagree over a threat the latter considers grave is bound to weaken an alliance designed to meet agreed grave threats.

It is not that Americans and Europeans disagree fundamentally on the facts about the WMD: rather, they disagree about the effects on their own security interests, with Americans alarmed and Europeans calm. In a circular way, both are right. Because Europeans do not have the global security responsibility that the United States does, WMD in fact threaten them less; and because WMD are not so threatening, there is less European motivation to assume global security responsibility, which could create, not reduce, risk to Europe. While US expeditionary forces could be vulnerable to WMD, Europeans have few such forces and little inclination to send them where WMD might be used, such as South-West Asia. Because the United States depends on the credibility of its resolve to intervene militarily to meet its security responsibilities, it is alert to the danger of being deterred, or of being perceived as deterred, by the threat of WMD. Having little global security responsibility, Europeans are unworried about losing credibility. They obviously prefer that WMD should not fall into hostile hands, but they do not see this problem justifying the use of force as long as Europe itself is out of range.

The WMD disconnect would explain European passivity towards distant threats but not the vigorous opposition of many in Europe to US policy on the use of force – opposition not so

11. The 'Headline Goals' of the EU are not being met, and even if met would not result in effective global expeditionary combat capabilities, in the author's opinion.

much about fighting wars as about starting them. Of the significant military actions taken by the United States since the end of the Cold War – Kuwait, Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq – Continental Europeans have supported and even participated in all but the last one. The Iraq war, coming at a time of growing US military superiority and interventionism, raises the question of whether allies that disagree with one another on the legitimacy of force can be allies in any meaningful strategic sense.

Because of the attacks of 11 September 2001, the United States has declared that it may strike before, perhaps well before, being struck. What is advertised as 'pre-emptive' war looks more like preventive war – that is, without a requirement for warning of imminent attack. Many Europeans do not buy this doctrine in principle; they did not buy it in the specific case of Iraq; and they will surely not buy it now that the stated US justification for pre-emptive attack on Iraq has been undermined by the failure to find WMD.

At a deeper level, the United States and Europe do not see eye to eye on very basic questions of sovereignty, legitimacy and intervention. The United States is less inclined than Europeans to respect the sovereignty of a state it considers dangerous, especially if that state's domestic oppressiveness negates its legitimacy.[12] In Iraq, the United States felt it was liberating a nation from a dangerous *and* illegitimate regime whose internal behaviour had compromised its sovereignty.[13] Europeans tend to view sovereign states as legitimate by definition, regardless of the domestic policies of the regime of the day. While this may not preclude international intervention, it does preclude intervention to effect 'regime change'. The Kosovo intervention, which Europeans favoured and joined, was intended to reverse Serbian ethnic cleansing of Albanian Kosovars, not to bring down the Yugoslav state or even the Milosevic clique. Therefore, for the United States unilaterally to attack a sovereign state to remove its regime, however odious, is seen by many Europeans as an illegitimate act.

The American threshold for intervention to effect regime change is lower than Europe's and may also be lower than can be unambiguously supported by existing international law.[14] Consequently, Europeans, ever the champions of international law, believe that the superpower does not feel bound to behave lawfully. While Americans may feel that intervention for regime change is a humane policy that international law *should* reflect,

12. For a discussion of the connection between legitimacy and sovereignty, see David C. Gompert, 'Legitimacy and World Politics', in Anthony Lake and David Ochmanek (eds.), *The Real and The Ideal* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2001).

13. In a speech entitled, 'Reflections on Intervention', Kofi Annan declared that, 'State frontiers . . . should no longer be seen as a watertight protection for war criminals or mass murderers.' Delivered at Ditchley Park, Oxfordshire, United Kingdom, on 26 June 1998, as quoted in Shashi Tharoor and Sam Daws, 'Humanitarian Intervention: getting past the reefs', *World Policy Journal*, vol. 18, no. 2, Summer 2001, p. 21.

14. Changing international law is increasingly recognising both a responsibility and a right of international intervention to stop mass killing. But it has not gone beyond this.

Europeans ascribe America's behaviour to an attitude that its power, combined with some God-given goodness, entitles it to do as it thinks right, outdated rules be damned.

European concerns about US quickness to take up arms against sovereign states comes amidst wider fears about US uni-lateralism, ranging from trade to climate change to arms control. Preventive war against sovereign states by the world's dominant military power is considered unsettling enough; that it should occur without any international mandate is, to some Europeans, downright alarming. Opposition to US policy on the use of force cannot be dismissed as French mischief and German pacifism. Like it or not, the effort to put legal and political chains on the United States is, at least in part, a logical response to a perceived lack of US self-restraint. Differences so profound on matters so profound are bound to affect the cohesion and effectiveness of the US-European alliance, especially when most needed: in crises.

Some Europeans fear that the United States is becoming Messianic in the name of democracy; others, that it has imperial designs or is simply intoxicated with power. Some Europeans have even come to think that the greatest danger to global security is that America will use its power injudiciously or even abuse it. 'Who's next?' is a post-Iraq question asked in many European gatherings. At the same time, because half of Europe seems to agree with America's global security outlook, Europeans are divided over the central question of how to cope with the United States, which affects Europe's purpose, its identity and its ability to maintain a strategic alliance with the United States.

What some Europeans see, then, is no longer America on a pedestal but America on a rampage: (1) prepared to attack sovereign states to destroy regimes that it judges to be dangerous and/or illegitimate, even without a UN mandate; (2) militarily unstoppable and undeterred because of the declining risks of intervention; (3) disinclined to count on allies whose forces have not been transformed and are becoming less interoperable; (4) savouring the taste of hegemony; and, as if all this were not enough, (5) willing to pit Europeans against Europeans to get its way.

## American self-confidence

The same world – and the same country – look different to Americans. The United States did not seek global primacy in the post-Soviet era but has found itself with it more or less by default. Various would-be 'strategic partners' never made the grade. By the measures that really matter, Russia has ceased to be a power. Japan, the juggernaut of the 1980s, has faded and in any case declined to accept international security responsibilities. China has grown more powerful but has quite different interests than the United States. The strongest candidate, Europe, might have assumed global security responsibilities in partnership with the United States in the years since the end of the Cold War, but it looked inward instead.

With good reason, Europeans have been preoccupied with unification and integration, which they see as prerequisites for a world role. NATO has been slow to look beyond Europe and has been more concerned with membership than with purpose. Balkan ghosts took precedence over distant demons. All along, Europe has been content to let the United States provide security outside Europe. Europe might have pre-empted today's US primacy by assuming the mantle of global partner, but it did not.

At the same time, the United States has not discouraged Europe from acquiring greater power in order to take greater responsibility. On the contrary, it has sought to remove artificial geographic limits on where NATO might act, which Europeans resisted.[15] It secured commitments to a NATO Defence Capabilities Initiative, which Europeans failed to honour. It has implored its European allies to increase defence spending, which they have not done. Would a country bent on primacy urge Europe – the world's other great centre of economic and technological power – to expand its military capacity and extend its strategic reach? Would a country intent on using expeditionary force unilaterally plead with its allies to build expeditionary forces? How can Europeans accuse the United States of seeking hegemony through military supremacy when it has been a stronger advocate for greater European military power than European leaders have been?

15. The US effort made to this end made at NATO's Washington summit, 23-25 April 1999, was rejected as an attempt to create a 'global NATO'.

The United States still says that it needs allies. It knows and freely admits that its 'global war on terrorism' cannot succeed without them. Its National Security Strategy contains some fifteen references to cooperation with allies, outside of the realm of counter-terrorism, ranging from cooperation on WMD counter-proliferation to African development efforts.[16] At the same time, the United States has become increasingly protective of its freedom of action and schizophrenic about institutionalised multilateralism. Support for NATO, the UN and the US-EU partnership is seen by US multilateralists as a way to shift at least some of the burden and risk of insecurity from the shoulders of American citizens and soldiers. But sceptics of multilateralism observe that institutions impose restrictions without offering much chance to spread burden and risk. To a unilateralist, Europeans would sooner use institutions to bind the United States than build the capabilities to support the United States in meeting global security threats.

US military superiority, as such, is less important than the specific nature of US military transformation in the growing US-European strategic split over power and force. At a time of European military neglect, the United States has adopted a revolutionary new paradigm of military capability and operations: networking. Progress in force transformation is tipping the US risk-benefit calculus in favour of intervention. The speed with which US and UK forces swept through Iraq and took Baghdad and Basra provided a good look (as did Afghanistan) at the potential of networked forces. Thanks to enhanced awareness, precision and joint integration, unwanted destruction is declining and confidence of swift success is rising. Remarkably, the number of US service personnel killed in five violent interventions since the end of the Cold War – the Gulf War, Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq – is less than 1 per cent of those lost in Vietnam (<500 versus >50,000). European suspicions that the United States wants to specialise in stand-off warfare while getting them to put 'boots on the ground' have been dispelled by recent demonstrations of US ability to do whatever it takes, including a new type of ground warfare, to win decisively.

Transformation is also reducing the US need to have allied forces alongside US forces in combat. As they are transformed, US forces can prevail in any contingency foreseeable on the horizon.[17]

16. *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, DC: The White House, September 2002).

17. In fact, since the end of the Cold War, US force-sizing criteria have assumed that no allied forces participate. By definition, then, US forces are supposed to be able along to handle all contingencies for which the United States plans.

British forces were of great value in the Iraq war and performed superbly by all accounts; but if the United Kingdom had not sent them, additional US forces would have taken their place with essentially no operational impact (though considerable political impact). Finally, transformation is making allied involvement in US combat operations not only less important but also harder.[18] Lacking the same strong motivation to transform – namely, to meet Asian dangers – Europe's traditional forces cannot easily integrate and operate with the networked forces of the United States.

A vicious cycle is at work: the harder it is for allied forces to operate with US forces, the riskier it is for the United States is to rely on them; because of the capability of US forces to win wars without allies, it is less crucial for allies to improve their forces; and the greater the disparity in US and allied capabilities, the greater the discord over the legitimacy of using them. Thus, frankly, in the urgency of Afghanistan, the United States felt that allied forces would be more trouble than help; by the time of Iraq, most allies lacked either the capability or the willingness to fight alongside the United States.

While Europeans assign responsibility for the current predicament to the United States, it is the combination of European defence passiveness and diplomatic aggressiveness that has changed the terms of American debate about relying on allies. The proponents of US multilaterism have been doubly discredited by European failure to build expeditionary forces and European opposition on Iraq. The United States still says it wants to work with allies, within coalitions and under the mandate of international institutions. However, in regard to the use of military force, it has the capabilities to make allied support and international concurrence an option, not a requirement, and at the end of the day to 'do what is right', in its view, coalition or no coalition.

The United States fancies coalitions of the willing because they agree with it. Herein lies the difficulty of any effort to build a new US-European strategic partnership. European-American disagreement on the legitimacy of force makes it less likely that the Alliance as a whole can reach consensus. Consequently, the reliance on variable coalitions will grow at the expense of NATO. It is not clear that an alliance that cannot, or is no longer even expected to, act together can nevertheless plan and build forces to

18. David Gompert, Richard Kugler and Martin Libicki, *Mind The Gap* (Washington, DC: National Defense University, 1998).

operate together. An early test will be whether the decisions of the NATO Prague summit to create transformed NATO expeditionary capabilities are implemented despite the Iraq crisis. While Europeans might blame Alliance disarray on American unilateralism and lack of inhibition about using force, Americans can blame lack of European capability and fortitude to confront real dangers.

The military mismatch has wider implications. Because the United States generally does not need and feels it cannot count on allies militarily, the more centrally military power figures in its global strategy the less it perceives a need for allies *at all*. Military success may be causing Americans to confuse the ability successfully to wage war alone with the ability to advance its interests and succeed in the world alone. This is a dangerous illusion. There could be a growing gap between what the United States can do and what it *thinks* it can do. America, too, may be in denial.

American power is stretched more than most Americans may realise. Not since Vietnam has the tension between global goals ('guns') and domestic needs ('butter') been so severe. The federal budget deficit is ballooning and the economy is crawling.[19] The weakness of the dollar suggests that investors are unconvinced of US economic prospects. The 'long boom' in the US economy is over, owing to the implosion of its most dynamic sectors, information technology and telecommunications. As if the current fiscal and economic strains were not bad enough, the retirement (social security) and health (medicare) burdens of ageing baby boomers will hit with a vengeance within a decade. Quite simply, the United States is engaged in massive borrowing from future American generations, thus masking economic problems and permitting both guns and butter to be bought with little restraint.[20]

One wonders whether the growing bill is being factored into current US global strategy. The United States may be unrivalled, but it is also largely alone and heavily burdened in facing global strategic dangers, which are now becoming homeland dangers. It is increasingly interventionist and is prepared to use force pre-emptively with or without a UN mandate or allies. Consequently, as its postwar struggle in Iraq shows, the United States is left with the bulk of the cost of rebuilding.

Meanwhile, despite their lack of capabilities, distrustful Europeans want a say in when and why the United States should use force. There appears to be no way around the compound problem

19. According to the Congressional Budget Office, the President's budget will lead to a total budget deficit of $1.82 trillion (2004-13). Congressional Budget Office, *An Interim Report: An Analysis of the President's Budgetary Proposals for Fiscal Year 2004*; available at: http://www.cbo.gov/, March 2003, p. 3.

20. Peter Peterson, 'The Way we Live Now: 6-8-03; Deficits and Dysfunction', *New York Times Magazine*, 8 June 2003.

of power and the use of force in the near term. Even if Europeans were immediately to begin transforming their forces, backed up by higher defence spending, it would take many years to field significant expeditionary combat capabilities. And disagreement over the use of force will persist at least as long as the disparity in capabilities does. It is possible that a strategic reversal for the United States – getting bogged down indefinitely in a violent Iraq or drawn into bloody conflict with Iran, for instance – would change US attitudes about the use of force, but do not count on it. At the end of the day, the large and growing US-allied military gap would seem to limit the possibilities for a reinvigorated alliance, at least for now.

Insecurity and conflict, and thus power and force, have been more salient than expected in the post-Cold War world. As long as this persists, so will US primacy and European nervousness about it. But the world is complex, fluid and unpredictable. It would be foolish to predict how power and force will figure in world affairs in the years to come. For all the problems the Iraq crisis has caused and revealed in US-European relations, it may begin a shift from US reliance on force to a broader assault on insecurity, dealing more with the roots of hatred and conflict. If so, American views on partnership with Europe could change.

## An interests-based relationship

The old Euro-Atlantic order, or alliance, was based on conditions that no longer exist: US-allied military interdependence, agreement on the use of force, and a presumption that allies would stand together in crises. Analytically, therefore, the pre-Iraq alliance is not the right point of departure for considering a possible new Euro-Atlantic order. Nor is it wise to proceed from some received wisdom that a close US-European relationship is essential, even if one devoutly believes it is. That intellectual shortcut bypasses the crucial question of how US and European interests match now and looking to the future. Any new Euro-Atlantic order must be able to advance convergent interests while isolating and tolerating divergent ones. Nostalgia aside, US views on the future of and relations with Europe depend on how Europe can help, or hinder, the United States in advancing its interests. At the same time, Europeans cannot be expected to support the United States out of gratitude for its

past protection or deference to its present power. Rather, the value of Europe to the United States must flow from how Europeans see their own interests and from their motivation and capacity to act.

### US interests

More than at any time in its history, the United States depends on the condition of humanity as a whole. Globalisation has chased isolationism to the backwoods of American politics, where it has little support even among conservatives.[21] The wellbeing of US consumers and US investors, who now outnumber US labourers, depends on reaping the benefits of US integration in the world economy.[22] The United States is interested not only in the economic health of its trading partners but also in the resumption of the steady spread of economic freedom, along with democracy, that occurred rapidly in the1980s and 1990s but has slowed of late.

The current state and prospect of the world economy cannot be comforting to the United States. It takes a team of two healthy horses to pull that economy. With Japan deflated, EU economic growth is vital to the world and to the United States. When the US economy took a dive after 9/11, corporate accounting scandals and the dotcom bust, it was hoped that the European economy would provide the necessary vitality. That it could not do so underscores that it is still in need of major reform. Thus, European economic restructuring, openness and productivity are as important to the United States as anything else Europe does. It is one reason for the United States to favour EU integration, which fosters economic strength and reform. Americans who see advantages in a Europe divided should reflect on the long-term economic drawbacks for their own country.

The last two decades of growing US prosperity coincided with extraordinary political and economic progress in the other advanced regions of the world, Europe and East Asia – especially the triumph over communism and the march of integration in Europe and the spread of democracy and stability in East Asia. While Europe has cemented these gains, East Asia has not. Tension and risk are on the rise in East Asia due to the desperate escalation of the North Korean regime, unease about Japanese intentions, separatism in Indonesia, terrorist infiltration in South-East Asia, the growth of China and the Taiwan dispute. If East Asia, the

21. The business-oriented, neo-conservative and traditional multilateralist segments of the Republican party are all highly internationalist.

22. The current US administration does not refer much to globalisation, perhaps because its predecessor did. Globalisation is not a buzzword or a policy; it is a phenomenon that proceeds largely independent of foreign and security policy, though not independent of economic policy. The economic policies of this Administration are at least as 'pro-globalisation' as those of its predecessor. However, many Europeans perceive the US administration's unilateralist tendencies to be tantamount to enjoying the benefits of globalisation while evading the rules.

world's most dynamic region for much of the past few decades, becomes unstable, the United States could be challenged, its economic and security interests could suffer, and its ability to safeguard its interests elsewhere could be impaired.

The Middle East, broadly defined, is critical for a simpler, baser reason: its abundance of fossil fuel. While terrorism and conflict are the manifestations, the underlying problem is the lack of political legitimacy. It took the rise of al-Qaeda to convince the United States that preserving the status quo of the Arab world was shortsighted and risky. The US interest in the transformation of the Middle East, daunting as that might be, ought not be dismissed as a fleeting infatuation with 'democratic imperialism'.

In the Middle East and elsewhere in Asia, the United States has a major interest in avoiding the downside of global economic integration – the proliferation of dangerous technologies and materials, the 'death of distance', the vulnerability of global systems and threats to the United States itself. American security, now even in the territorial sense, depends on meeting these dangers. The United States is determined to shut down at least the most dangerous WMD programmes in the most dangerous states. 'Regime change' might be an unsettling term to Europeans, but it is the only sure solution, however accomplished, to the most acute threats.

The US war on terrorism has narrowed into a war on *strategic* terrorism. For now, the battle is with al-Qaeda. But even after it is won, US homeland security will remain a major concern. It is not situational but structural: a consequence of the mix of US global responsibilities, the asymmetric strategies of overmatched adversaries and the growing reach of determined hostile states and fanatical groups. Permanent vulnerability means that the sources of danger must be addressed.

Europeans who criticise the United States for ignoring the sources of conflict should be paying closer attention to what its government is now saying and doing. The recent US National Security Strategy stresses the need to deal with poverty despair in undeveloped parts of the world that can breed, or be fed upon, by terrorists: 'A world where some live in comfort and plenty, while half the human race lives on less than $2 a day, is neither just nor stable.'[23] President Bush, who sees his main duty to be to ensure American security, has said: 'We find our greatest security in the advancement of human freedom as well as combating famine,

23. US National Security Strategy statement.

poverty and disease.'[24] There is a new bipartisan recognition in the United States that underdevelopment, corruption and illegitimate government nourish the root system of terrorism.

In sum, the United States is interested in global economic openness and expansion, in the renewed momentum of democracy, in defeating and removing threats to global and national security, and in helping poor and marginal societies join the mainstream of human progress. What do these interests suggest about what the United States should want Europe to be and do?

### Where Europe fits in US interests

Virtually everything else the United States wants for itself and for the world presupposes a Europe that is peaceful, stable, and prosperous. The American view is that these conditions must apply to *all* of Europe, extending far to the East as soon as possible – that the delay between German reunification and European reunification has been too long already. The consistent, impatient American view that the EU should be enlarged is based on a conviction that this is the surest way permanently to end the troubled modern history of Eastern Europe, just as prior European integration buried the warring tendencies of Western Europe. How can there be any question that the United States wants the EU to succeed when it is urging all these fledgling democracies to join?

Yet, since the Iraq crisis, Europeans – including very sensible ones – have indeed questioned whether the United States *really* favours a united Europe.[25] It is worth asking, dispassionately: are US interests served by the integration of Europe *as an actor* as they were by the integration of Europe *as a region*? Originally, the United States encouraged European integration out of its belief that a unified Europe could stand up to the Soviet Union and thus allow the United States eventually to end its post-Second World War military presence (which many leading Americans, including Eisenhower and Dulles, thought should be temporary). Even as it became clear that Europe, whether unified or not, required US protection during the Cold War, Americans nevertheless continued to favour European integration in the hope that this would make its allies more stalwart in the face of pressure – less likely to be (apologies for the term) 'Finlandised'. With the end of the Cold War, Americans preferred 'broadening' over 'deepening', due

24. George W. Bush, Coast Guard Academy graduation speech, 21 May 2003.

25. In the July/August issue of *Foreign Policy*, Christoph Bertram states, 'for the first time since 1950, a US administration no longer cares for European integration and even does not mind undermining it.'

mainly to the judgement that inclusion was crucial for locking in democracy, capitalism and peace in Central and Eastern Europe.

While its motivation has evolved, the United States has favoured European integration more or less unconditionally as long as Europe had little ambition or capacity *as an actor* – that is, paradoxically, as long as the goal of a strong and united Europe remained in the distance. Now that Europeans say they intend the EU to become a global power and are evincing interest in global matters, US support for integration has become conditional. Simply stated, the United States would rather have a united Europe as a strong partner than a disunited, weak, and dependent Europe; however, it would prefer European disunity, weakness and dependence to a strong and united Europe committed to countering the United States globally. Thus, the greatest threat to American support for deeper European integration is statements by European leaders that the mission of Europe should be to balance and block US power.

Still, on balance, the United States continues to favour European integration. In part, this may be because Americans are sceptical that Europeans will be able both to achieve the unity and marshal the means to act as a countervailing global force. But there is a more positive interpretation: the United States understands that Europe is its best hope for sharing global responsibilities and burdens. In view of the other US global interests mentioned above, the ideal for the United States is a Europe that is 'whole'; restructuring its economies for growth; committed to free trade and transformation in other regions; and ready to accept global security responsibilities. An integrated Europe is more likely to have these qualities than a divided one. As the EU increases its potential to act globally, US attitudes about it will depend on whether it is in fact prepared to act and, of course, on whether it is more likely to act as a US partner than as a counterweight.[26]

For its part, Europe's primary interest is obviously in its own economic and political coherence. It has powerful motivations: to obliterate the possibility of renewed nationalism and the strife that historically accompanied it; to extend its democratic, prosperous peace eastward; to improve its competitiveness in the world economy; and to become an influential actor in world politics. With Europe's last dangerous dictator behind bars in The Hague, its democratic peace is fundamentally secure. It has put

26. The author thanks Gustav Lindström of the European Union Institute for Security Studies for his insights on the evolution of US attitudes about European integration.

behind it the triple dangers of hegemonic threat from within, hegemonic threat from outside and nationalist and ethnic conflict. Europe can now turn outward. But will it do so or instead remain preoccupied with its own organisation?

European integration still faces some hurdles and tests: implementing enlargement; achieving the right degree of socio-legal harmonisation; fashioning common tax policy, with all its social overtones; finding a formula for common and effective security and foreign policy; and improving policy- and decision-making in general in a larger EU. In the author's view, Europe need not choose between addressing these 'domestic' issues and playing a global role.

However, it appears that Europeans would prefer to keep the world's nastiest security problems at arm's length as long as they can. They know that terrorism requires action and are improving homeland security for their own reasons (not to please the United States). Apart from this, however, they are hesitant to look for trouble far from Europe. Whatever they say, they act as if global security problems are for the United States to face, even if they are not wholly convinced that it will do so wisely and competently.

Security has not become a major European export. Lofty intentions have not been backed by sacrifice. Europe proclaims an interest in improved human conditions and security in the world at large. However, its combined defence and aid spending – a rough indication of total burden of contributing to global security – is \$432/year per capita, one-third that of the United States, at \$1,271.[27] Yet, Europe is increasingly seized with the need to make greater efforts to foster economic and political development in Africa and the Middle East especially.

The foregoing suggests that US and European interests are not merely compatible but *largely the same*: world economic integration and growth, through expanded trade and investment; economic and political development, especially in the Middle East and Africa; security against terrorists; and of course cementing the gains of Europe itself. Thus, the disparity in military power and disagreement on its use that cracked the alliance during the Iraq crisis, and could do so again, is surrounded by an otherwise extraordinary commonality of goals. Moreover, these goals are important enough, and achievement of them will be challenging enough, to demand US-European global cooperation even in the

27. Annual US defence spending per capita (2002): \$1,226.65; annual EU defence spending per capita (2002): \$387.17 (International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 2002-2003*); annual US development assistance per capita: \$45.12; annual EU development assistance per capita: \$77.21 (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, 'OECD DAC Countries Begin Recovery in Development Aid: 5% Increase in 2002', April 2003); available at www.oecd.org.

absence of accord on the use of force. One of the more important points of this essay is that the joint pursuit of shared global interests need not and should not be precluded by the asymmetries in military power and attitudes about force.

## Alternative futures

This essay suggests thus far that:
◗ US views on Europe's future depend on the implications of that future for European global aims and stance toward the United States;
◗ lasting political damage from the Iraq crisis on both sides of the Atlantic limits the possibilities for future US-European relations;
◗ US-European asymmetry in expeditionary military power and disagreement over the use of force – of which the transatlantic crisis over Iraq was a consequence not the cause – will persist, at least until European forces are transformed;
◗ the United States should favour an integrated Europe as an actor as it has favoured an integrated European region, albeit contingent on how this actor chooses to position itself globally vis-à-vis the superpower;
◗ apart from their strategic disconnect over power and force, Europe and the United States have common global interests and need one another to advance those interests.

Against this backdrop, the following alternatives describe Europe and its relationship with the United States, from an American perspective. They vary from an outward-looking Europe to an inward-looking one, and from a Europe in partnership with the United States to a Europe attempting to balance and restrain American power.

### 1. America's strategic partner

In terms of capacity, the United States and the EU are a breed apart from all other powers. They are the world's two largest concentrations of economic, technological, political and military power, holding a wide margin over numbers three and four, Japan and China. With the notable exception of Europe's anaemic

expeditionary military capabilities – making America the only *complete* global power – they are roughly equivalent in overall assets. Additionally, the North Atlantic democracies share enduring values, have convergent interests, as just noted, and know from experience what it takes to achieve close, trustful and enduring cooperation. Although the United States is obviously the more unitary actor, Europe aspires to become 'more active, more coherent, more capable' – commendable traits in a partner.[28] Finally, as the post-9/11 struggle against terrorism shows, the United States needs partners, more so than some Americans admit, to share the risks of providing global security, at a time of growing domestic demands. For all these reasons, it is reasonable to imagine, even in this deep trough in US-European relations, an Atlantic strategic partnership – roughly equal, roughly global – as the main feature of world affairs.

As of now, however, US-European relations bear no resemblance to such a grand endeavour. The same factors that produced the Iraq crisis preclude genuine strategic partnership. The EU is divided in regard to how to deal with the United States. On the whole, Europe is neither willing *nor* able to join the United States in confronting distant challenges with power. At the same time, in part because the United States may overvalue its military power in meeting those challenges, it does not regard strategic partnership with Europe as imperative or necessarily worth the price of diminished freedom of action. Just as Europe is divided, there are deep divisions in the United States about foreign policy, including relations with Europe. Since 9/11, the prevailing American view has been that, at the end of the day, the United States can count only on itself to protect itself and its interests. While hegemony has no public resonance, self-reliance is ingrained in the American character.

American reluctance to treat Europe as a prospective global partner has been reinforced by years of weak European defence investment and the resultant lack of effective and interoperable European expeditionary military capabilities. Political damage from the Iraq crisis is unlikely to heal as long as Americans feel that Europe does not do its fair share in global security and Europeans feels that the United States is trigger-happy.

Again, the Iraq crisis may also have given Americans misgivings about what Europe is becoming. Because prominent European leaders, speaking for Europe, have stressed the need to balance US

28. 'A Secure Europe in a Better World', paper presented by Javier Solana, High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, European Council, Thessaloniki, 20 June 2003.

power and constrain its use of force, there is a natural US suspicion that this will be the aim, or at least one consequence, of tighter European integration – perhaps with Germany, France and the Brussels bureaucracy running roughshod over smaller, newer and pro-US EU members. The United Kingdom is not about to become subordinate to such a Europe, nor will it fight for the soul of the EU, given the option of keeping its distance and its freedom. Because partnership with the United States is not the only option for a stronger Europe (see next alternative), Americans may view the strengthening of Europe with less trust than should exist between strategic partners.

This is not to say that Europe and the United States cannot pool efforts on important global endeavours, such as trade, development, counter-terrorism and health, even as equals in many instances. But the military gap and related discord over the use of force exposed by the Iraq crisis preclude global strategic partnership of more or less equals.

### 2. 'Not America'

Instead of aspiring to become America's global partner, Europe might aim to become a counterweight or even alternative to it. Whether or not it builds expeditionary military capabilities, Europe could hope to balance and check the United States through skilful use of its growing economic and political influence. Indeed, the vision could be that of a 'kinder and gentler' superpower, able and determined to do with reason and aid what the United States tries to do with demands and brute force. With its devotion to social welfare, egalitarianism and integration – and its rejection of things American, from punishing capitalism to capital punishment – Europe could present itself to other societies and regions as an exemplar of human progress. It could in parallel intensify efforts to make the EU a separate defence alliance with its own military, thus reducing its dependence on US military power and freeing itself from perceived US hegemony.

This alternative does not imply that Europe would become an adversary of the United States. Broadly common interests make such an eventuality far-fetched. Indeed, Europe and the United States could cooperate ad hoc and remain nominal allies even as Europe seeks to balance American power. NATO would not need to be dismantled; it could even be useful when the two powers

agreed on the need to cooperate against a specific threat. However, the EU would presumably take over security in Europe itself – arguably a desirable development in any future – and Europe and the United States might or might not see eye to eye on intervention elsewhere. So NATO would have no real strategic purpose, becoming instead a warehouse of military assets.

Is this what the United States wants? The American interests described earlier obviously would suffer from a unified Europe committed to shackling the United States, even if the shackles were only partly effective. While the world economy would not necessarily disintegrate in the context of US-EU rivalry, the ability to resolve bilateral trade and investment disputes and to open up trade globally would be undermined. Jealousy would foster competition, not cooperation, in the developing world. The United States would be left with the ultimate responsibilities and risks of insecurity around the world, but it would encounter Europe vying and interfering with it. As America's struggle in postwar Iraq shows, even when Europe is not able to forestall US actions, the withholding of its support can be painfully consequential.

Europeans can decide for themselves whether blocking America is the direction they wish to take. It may be that unease with US reliance on military power, aggravated by perceived US indifference to European views, could drive Europe in this direction.[29] But this seems unlikely. Disapproval of the United States is widespread but shallow in Europe; and to the extent that it is mainly a reaction to current US policies, it could dissipate as those policies mellow, or prove correct. It is hard to see current European heartburn with the United States translated into burning ambition, with sustainable public support, to build Europe mainly for the purpose of countering American power. As an indicator, European policy-makers' efforts since the Kosovo conflict to win public backing for increased defence spending in order to reduce dependence on the United States have come to naught. Even if all Europe's leaders were to unite in an anti-America appeal – a huge 'if' – the existence of shared democratic values would attenuate the message. And European publics understand quite well that US-European interests are close and that the two economies are joined.

In any case, it is hard to imagine Europeans unifying on such a vision. After all, the question of how closely to cooperate with the United States is what most divides Europe. British, Scandinavians,

29. A point made by Ivo H. Daalder in 'The End of Atlanti-cism', *Survival*, July 2003.

East Europeans and South Europeans would have misgivings about a strategy of organising against the superpower – their ally – despite its faults. Perhaps Russia could be lured into a Paris-Berlin-Moscow troika. But this would just deepen divisions in Europe over relations with the United States, without adding appreciably to the strategic weight of the 'block-America' camp. Presumably, French political strategists understand the special price to be paid in Eastern Europe for any attempt, successful or not, to bring Russia into a 'block-America' strategy.

This analysis raises questions about the reasoning of any Americans who oppose European unity because they worry about the challenge it could pose to the United States. Playing on European divisions to advance American aims may be tactically tempting (if misguided). But that is different from favouring a disunited Europe for fear that a united one would be anti-American. By the same token, fear that the EU will organise itself as a counter-weight to the United States is not a healthy US motivation for cooperating with Europe. Americans and Europeans alike would do well to know their respective interests and reach their respective conclusions about the importance of US-European cooperation in advancing those interests.

For all the arguments against this alternative, it does have some popularity in Europe, especially in the light of Iraq. For Americans to dismiss this phenomenon as a French delusion is to ignore the possibility that their own country's use of its power could be aggravating European anti-Americanism. Whether many Europeans, beyond France, will see a need to balance and constrain US power depends not on the scale of US power but on the way it is wielded. While the image of America unchained, abusing power, is exaggerated, future American behaviour, particularly in regard to the use of force, could either dissolve or accentuate this image.

## 3. Resigned to follow

Based on its experience in the Iraq crisis, the United States might prefer a relationship in which it would be the leader of either a united or a disunited Europe. Ideally, in this alternative, Europe as a whole would defer to US power and US judgement to manage global security, as half of it has done during the Iraq crisis. More realistically, Europe's disunity would prevent it from effectively challenging American policies. The gap in expeditionary military

power would persist, and Europeans might still disagree with US policy on the use of force. But these asymmetries would lose their salience because Europe would be resigned to global strategic dependence on the United States. Europe would be free to focus on integration and to look after its own region. The EU would limit itself to the residual security problems of Europe, such as policing in the Balkans.

Is this the relationship the United States wants? If so, the place to start would be to curry favour with those Europeans who seem to want American leadership – Poland, Spain, Italy and the United Kingdom, of the larger allies – while isolating and punishing the culprits. It is not hard to imagine a substantial, if motley, coalition of European states that recoil from Franco-German condominium and would sooner follow the United States than oppose it. Indeed, if Germany chooses to revert to being a US strategic dependent, France would be alone, as it has so often been in the past when it has taken on the United States.

Americans might be emboldened by the support received during the Iraq crisis to think that this alternative is realistic. It would be wrong to belittle European backing of US policy as passing Mediterranean right-wing politics and predictable East European obsequiousness. There are durable geographic and historic explanations for their support. Compared with some West Europeans, South Europeans appear to be genuinely more sensitive to threats to the south and south-east of Europe, while East Europeans are more conscious of the pitfalls of failing to meet threats with strength. In the short term, the United States might indeed be able to pursue a divide-and-lead strategy towards Europe.

But this alternative is neither advantageous for US interests nor realistic in the long term. As a whole, Europe is beyond the point at which it would resign itself to be a follower in perpetuity, except in specific circumstances. After all, it did not do so during the Iraq crisis, despite intense American lobbying. France has never accepted American dominion, even when Europe's survival required it. Germany will not abandon France in favour of the United States, unless its vital interests leave it no choice. Several other European states will cluster around the two. So, a Europe resigned to follow the United States, like a Europe determined to oppose the United States, implies a Europe divided.

As already noted, fundamental US interests are not served by a Europe divided – the Iraq crisis did not change this one bit. Even

without a hegemonic threat to Europe, the United States must still see the advantages of European integration and unity in making permanent the gains of the last half-century. Moreover, a united Europe can be more effective than a disunited one in sharing global burdens with the United States, if not at present then eventually. Even if a strategic partnership is not on the cards, the United States would rather have a helpful, outward-looking, cohesive Europe than a complaisant, self-absorbed, divided, needy one. European dependence on the United States is good for neither Europe nor the United States.

## 4. Partners with purpose

No partnership can succeed, or even exist in a meaningful sense, without purpose. A compelling purpose for the fractured US-European partnership is right in front of our noses: namely, to remedy the main underlying causes of international instability, division and conflict in the new era. Having prevailed over a challenge from the East, the West must now turn its energies to helping the South succeed. It is one thing to have rich nations and less rich ones – an inevitable consequence of resources and markets – and quite another when humanity's lower third (roughly) lives in a state that the upper third would regard as subhuman by any standard of the twenty-first century. Only if America and Europe, the world's two dominant economies and leading democratic powers, work purposefully and jointly is there hope that the world's poor can rise to a condition of existence that all human beings should enjoy.

US-EU partnership to end severe human poverty, and all that goes with it, must mean far more than Europeans criticising the United States for its meagre development assistance spending and Americans criticising the EU for excluding poor countries' agricultural products from its markets. It could and should be the highest priority and the source of political fuel for the partnership, heralding common commitment and uncommon leadership. If in the course of assaulting this challenge a 'new Euro-Atlantic transatlantic order' begins to form on the rubble of the old, so much the better – though that should not be the aim.

Is this at all realistic, especially with today's divergence in strategic outlooks? 'Conventional wisdom' on both sides of the Atlantic is that the current US administration will continue along a path of threatening and, if that fails, destroying regimes it wishes

to change, especially if they seek WMD, harbour terrorists, or brutalise their people. Such simple extrapolation could be quite wrong, as it has often been in this fluid and unpredictable era. The invasion of Iraq could mark a watershed. US interests and aims will not change: they are shaped by globalisation, superpower status, and post-9/11 vulnerability. Nor will the policies of regime change and pre-emption be jettisoned. But a new phase may begin, calling for new methods, reaching towards deeper causes of conflict, posing different challenges, and revealing new possibilities in US-European ties.

Although the United States will unquestionably retain its military superiority, there are two reasons to think that it might not continue to use it with the regularity it has since the end of the Cold War. First, few if any hostile states – terrorists are a different matter – are prepared to test America now that it has shown its ability and will to use force decisively with few casualties and without UN Security Council approval. Second, the American people are becoming more mindful of the total costs of the use of force, especially the burdens of occupation abroad and 'level-orange' security alerts at home. In particular, the problems, mistakes and dangers experienced by the United States in postwar Iraq have been eye-opening. Ironically, even as fewer regimes want to defy the United States, the United States may shift its emphasis from regime change by threat or force to regime change, or even regime improvement, through transformation.

There is also growing attention in the United States to the plight of large segments of the world that have not participated in globalisation, and the connection between this plight and global insecurity. President Bush has begun to use his bully pulpit to this end. Of course, poverty did not cause 9/11. However, as US anger cools, there is recognition in the United States that sympathy in the Muslim world for the aims of terrorism may have less to do with religious fanaticism than with resentment bred by exclusion. Beneath the Middle East's tendency toward radicalism and conflict is a scarcity of legitimate government and productive human capital.

The situation is as dreadful in Africa as it is dangerous in the Middle East. The band of humanity between the Sahara and South Africa contains 25 of the World Bank's 48 'low-income states under stress' – a euphemism for 'failing'.[30] West Africa stands on

30. John Lloyd 'Poverty, criminal networks, destructive leaders: when does a collapsing state create a haven for terrorists?', *Financial Times*, 7 March 2003.

the brink of becoming a failed region; much of the Democratic Republic of Congo is ungovernable; stateless child armies are looking for wars to fight; predictably, al-Qaeda agents have arrived. No amount of expeditionary military power will eliminate these problems. American military forces cannot change the regimes of 48 countries; and even changing regimes would, in most cases, not be enough to eliminate the problems.

While the United States and Europe have done a good job in helping the former communist states of Central and Eastern Europe transform into free-market democracies within the world economy, they have little to show for a half-century of effort to help the developing world overcome poverty. In the last decade alone, the income gap between 'high-income' countries and 'low-income' countries has grown 50 per cent (from $17,000 per capita to $24,000 per capita).[31] Translate this into inadequate sanitation, filthy water, poor roads, bookless schools and corrupt government, add HIV/AIDS and infectious diseases, and this looms as the greatest challenge for humanity, the West especially, in the coming decades. It is against this standard that history will likely judge the United States and Europe for the first half of the twenty-first century.

The efforts of the United States and Europe to deal with this problem are miserly on human grounds, hypocritical on political grounds, and short-sighted on strategic grounds. In response to criticism of inadequate burden-sharing, Europeans point out that they give more development assistance than the United States; but they provide a mere $77 per person per year. Even with the post-9/11 increase by President Bush, the US level is worse – $59 per person per year.[32] While Europeans and Americans could do far more, the challenge exceeds the means of the EU and the United States if they work separately. They could, for instance, easily double these amounts and combine the best practices in development assistance practiced by Europeans with the strategy on which the new US Millennium Challenge Fund is based.

Increasing, improving and coordinating development assistance is necessary but not sufficient to reverse the growing gap between 'haves' and 'have-nots'. Just as important as aid is US-EU co-leadership to open further the world trading system and give poor countries greater opportunities to sell their products. Notwithstanding the frequent US-EU trade rows, both the United

31. World Development Indicator Database, World Bank, 2002.

32. According to President Bush's Fiscal Year 2004 Budget, International Assistance Programmes would increase to $17.039 billion or $59.59 per capita.

States and the EU are committed to increased trade as a way of stimulating their own sluggish economies. Whether the Doha Round succeeds depends above all on the strength of US-EU cooperation. Apart from US threats to retaliate against French wine for perceived French treachery, the Iraq crisis has not damaged this cooperation. Indeed Iraq, like 9/11, makes it all the more important to eliminate trade barriers, especially those that punish the world's poor.

Just as trade can be critical to development, development should be a primary design principle of trade expansion. African share of world trade declined from 3.3 per cent to 1.6 per cent between 1980 and 2000.[33] The removal of agricultural import barriers and reduction of domestic subsidies is vital in reversing this shocking trend. The leading villains are none other than the EU and the United States themselves, whose failure to open their markets fully to agricultural products from developing countries contributes to a lack of foreign currency earnings, to poverty and to hunger. A US-European partnership to help the world's impoverished might begin with agreement to stop impoverishing them.[34]

In addition to development assistance and trade liberalisation, the United States and EU could concert their efforts toward economic and political transition throughout the developing world – something the two seem to agree is needed. For near-term international security, the Middle East should be the highest priority. For long-term human integrity, Africa must be included. The effort should include security and defence sector reform, without which governance cannot be transformed. They must mount a major assault on HIV/AIDS and other disease in Africa and Asia. Common US-EU positions on drug pricing in poor countries and on genetically modified crops would help; the two should be more concerned about hunger and disease than about gaining commercial advantage over one another.

A US-EU partnership against global poverty would be effective precisely because it would be based on common outlooks and interests, not to mention values – conditions that do not exist in regard to the use of force. But would the gap in power and related disagreement over force undermine such a partnership? That depends on the attitude of US and European leaders. They could of course allow their differences to obstruct other cooperation. But it is not clear why disagreement over the use of force should

33. Africa's share of world investment fell from 4 per cent to 1.6 per cent. 'Chirac to Call for a Shift from Battling Terrorism to Helping Poor Nations', *New York Times*, 1 June 2003.

34. Clyde Prestowitz details how the United States, while criticising the EU for discouraging Third-World use of genetically modified foods is doing as much harm through subsidies and import restrictions; 'As Accusations Fly, Poor Nations Suffer', *Washington Post*, 8 June 2003.

stand in the way of addressing, jointly and effectively, the underlying conditions that can give rise to the need for force and arguments about that need.

However, intensified US-EU cooperation in development would *not* obviate the need to remedy the asymmetries in military power and force that have caused the current crisis. Whatever the future holds for the larger US-European relationship, it is important that the Europeans improve their expeditionary military capabilities by investing more and embracing the new operational paradigm, networking, without which US and allied force will become unable to interoperate. In those circumstances, the disagreement over the use of force can gradually be overcome, especially if the two partners are working at the same time to eliminate the sources of conflict and threats.

What sort of Europe would the United States want in this alternative? Obviously, it would want a cohesive, effective, confident and responsible Europe, which inescapably means an assertive and independent one. This alternative could thus help lay to rest US ambivalence about European integration. In time, a global, equal US-EU partnership in addressing the problems of poverty and disaffection in the South could make the transatlantic security relationship more global and more equal. It could also help restore US-European amity and trust.

## Conclusion

This essay began by arguing that Iraq was a crisis waiting to happen in US-European relations and ended with an appeal for the great Atlantic democracies to confront together the urgent problem that a large segment of humanity still lives in desperate poverty. The path from beginning to end could be stated briefly as follows.

◗ The Iraq crisis reveals that the prerequisites for a US-European strategic partnership do not exist. US and European strategic outlooks – Europe's being regional and (thus) hopeful, America's global and (thus) worried – began diverging not on 9/11 but a decade earlier, when the Cold War ended.[35] Europe is not unified but rather divided precisely over the question of how to relate to the United States. Half of it is distrustful of US power and policy, especially the use of force unilaterally, pre-emptively, and/or to

35. James A. Thomson, in 'US Interests and the US-European Strategic Partnership', pre-publication (cited with the author's consent), makes the case that the divergence of US security interests from European ones began not on '9/11' (2003) but on '11/9' (1989) when communism imploded. He argues that a genuine strategic partnership cannot emerge unless and until the United States or Europe changes its threat perception.

remove hostile regimes. Yet, because Europe lacks expeditionary military capabilities, it has little or no traction with the United States regarding judgments about the use of force. (The exception is the United Kingdom, which has both capabilities and traction.)

◗ No friendly photo opportunities, diplomatic patch, or academic vision can fix this strategic disconnect. It will take years before Europeans transform their forces and create credible expeditionary capabilities, without which discord over the use of force will likely persist. Moreover, the political toxins from Iraq will hamper efforts to build a 'new Euro-Atlantic order', unless there is a compelling strategic purpose to be served in doing so.

◗ Meanwhile, US views on Europe's future – its institutions, cohesion, and aspirations – will be shaped by European behaviour in the world and posture towards the United States. The fact that half of Europe's countries and over half of its people opposed the United States over Iraq, with key leaders arguing that Europe must block US adventures and ambitions, might give Americans second thoughts about European integration, which it has long favoured. (It might also give Americans second thoughts about some US policies.)

◗ Apart from this strategic deadlock, however, US and European global interests are strikingly compatible: a much-needed new burst of economic demand and openness; resumption of the spread of economic and political freedom; the defeat of strategic terrorism; and reducing poverty, misery, desperation and extreme inequities in the world political economy. The United States and Europe need each other to advance these interests, regardless of their respective military capabilities and attitudes about force.

◗ The most important of these common pursuits is dealing with the sources of conflict and hatred that boil in the underdeveloped world – above all in Africa and the Middle East, both of which sorely lack political legitimacy, human productivity and hope. For the West, helping the South at last to succeed is strategically, politically and morally crucial.

◗ This is a task that the United States and Europe cannot achieve without pooling their resources and working together. They appear to agree on the need, especially as Europe broadens its approach to global security and the United States deepens its approach to global security. Moreover, the United States could

have no ambivalence about needing an effective EU as a partner in this venture, be it in development assistance or trade liberalisation.

◗ Meanwhile, proceeding from the initiatives launched at the Prague NATO summit, Europeans must steadily acquire expeditionary military capabilities so that they can join the United States in dealing with global insecurity, which will surely persist even as the two partners attack its roots. As well, US-EU progress in eliminating the sources of conflict can encourage progress towards a new global security partnership, a 'new Euro-Atlantic order', and consensus on when force must be used.

The world as a whole depends vitally on US-European cooperation. For citizens of West, South and East, the future looks much different if the two great democratic powers are partnering for common gain than if they are posturing for relative advantage. At present, the United States is sceptical about both partnership and partner – as are Europeans. This could change dramatically if the two put their minds to extending their success to the rest of humanity.

# Mind the gaps — across the Atlantic and the Union

**Antonio Missiroli**

Shift or rift
Assessing US-EU
relations after Iraq

4

Over the past years, especially since the launch of the European security and defence policy (ESDP) in 1999, Americans have been putting enormous pressure on Europeans to increase defence spending and address the so-called 'capabilities gap'.[1] Needless to say, the gap has further deepened since Operation *Enduring Freedom* in Afghanistan and the dramatic boost to defence expenditure in the United States. Operation *Iraqi Freedom* has only made things worse – while also revealing a lack of other capabilities on the US side and thus rendering the transatlantic debate slightly less one-dimensional.

## American apples and European oranges

In terms of raw military power, the United States is now not just in a class of its own but is approaching the point where it will spend as much as the rest of the world put together.[2] At times, it seems engaged in an arms race with itself. Arguably, however, the proper standard for European defence is not that of the United States. The EU is not planning to assert worldwide military hegemony, nor to match American power projection capabilities or strategic weaponry. Moreover, the EU and the United States are very different political constructions, especially in the military field (which, incidentally, is the least integrated policy area within the Union). On the one hand, they still need to work together and to develop potentially complementary, rather than parallel, force structures. On the other, the surge in US military technology has made interoperability across the Atlantic ever more difficult. Presently, it is generally accepted that only 10 per cent of US forces are fully interoperable with (and available to) NATO; and the very way in which *Iraqi Freedom* was conducted has shown how complicated it is even for their closest military partners – the British – to fight

1. The definition became current in the wake of Operation *Allied Force* in Kosovo: see David S. Yost, 'The NATO Capabilities Gap and the European Union', *Survival*, vol. 42, no. 4, Winter 2000, pp. 97-128. See also David C. Gompert et al., *Mind the Gap: Promoting a Transatlantic Revolution in Military Affairs* (Washington, DC: National Defense University, 1999).

2. See for instance Paul Kennedy, 'The Eagle Has Landed', *Financial Times*, 2-3 February 2002, pp. I-IV, and also the latest figure in the IISS' *The Military Balance 2003-04* (London: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 335-40.

alongside the Americans in a proper war coalition. This said, the technology gap in such areas as strategic lift and satellite intelligence is not that wide after all – it looks wider due to the structural difficulty Europeans have in launching big common industrial projects involving complex negotiations over sharing the costs and benefits and, ultimately, massive investments over a long period of time.

Having different perceptions, concepts, objectives and a different geography, it is almost natural that Europe spends less than America on defence and has different budgetary priorities. Add to that the legacy of the Cold War, when the Europeans relied decisively on the Americans for the essence of their collective defence, thus leaving them key command-and-control and strategic capabilities, while providing manpower (mainly conscripts) and land-based assets that are of little use now. This is to say that constant and unflattering comparisons with the massive American defence effort set benchmarks for the European effort that are impossible to meet, thereby engendering a sense of frustration and futility.[3]

Furthermore, a discussion on European security and defence efforts focused exclusively on *national defence budgets* is too narrow in scope and, above all, inadequate to tackle the real needs and shortcomings of an effective EU crisis management capability. In fact, 'burden-sharing' is not just about comparing the budgets of the ministries of defence (MOD) across the Atlantic or the Union. For their part, MOD budgets do not cover only the defence 'function' – some of them include even pensions, others do not – and expenditure on defence and security as a means for comprehensive crisis management may lie (or be hidden) also elsewhere in national budgets. In turn, some military budgets may look quantitatively adequate, yet they often do so for particular reasons, as the cases of Greece and Turkey – which spend more as a percentage of GDP than other European allies *inter alia* to match each other's force structures in the Aegean Sea – abundantly prove.[4]

Yet it is a fact that, since 1990, Europeans have all reaped their peace dividends: while it is correct (and often forgotten) that the United States also dropped its military expenditure dramatically in the early 1990s, the EU countries – unlike the United States – have not seized that opportunity in order to consolidate their own defence industries or address the necessary reform of the military. If at all, they have done so only belatedly, reactively and, more often than not, inadequately. As a result, in Europe only Britain

3. See also Lawrence Freedman, 'A future for European defence', *Financial Times*, 22 February 2002, p. 15; David P. Calleo, 'Power, Wealth and Wisdom: The United States and Europe after Iraq', *The National Interest*, Summer 2003, pp. 5-15.

4. The first systematic comparative assessment of defence capabilities and policies in the EU was made by Jolyon Howorth and Anand Menon (eds.), *The European Union and National Defence Policies* (London: Routledge, 1997). For a more recent analysis see P. Buffotot (ed.), *La défense en Europe, Nouvelles réalités, nouvelles ambitions* (Paris: La documentation Française, 2001), and *The Military Balance 2003-04*, op.cit. in note 2.

maintains a level of *national* defence expenditure that is up to the country's ambitions – one that may even rival the United States in per capita and per soldier terms – and only France is trying to catch up.[5]

Paradoxically, however, at approximately 50 per cent of the United States, European *total* expenditure on defence not only makes for the second largest in the world (well ahead of third-placed Russia), but seems more or less up to the *declared* foreign and security ambitions of EU members. That is, the overall amount of public money devoted to defence – to which one should add the sizeable funds that the member states *and* the EU as such devote to security at large, including foreign and development aid – could well meet the stated goals of the Union's common foreign and security policy (CFSP).

Put together, after all, the EU-15 bear the main military burden of peacekeeping operations in the Balkans and largely finance peace building in the region.[6] The EU-15 also cover more than 40 per cent of the United Nations peacekeeping budget, provide key troops for other UN-mandated peace support operations (in Africa, for instance), and spend three times as much as the United States on development aid. They are also responsible for the lion's share of civilian aid in the Middle East and of post-conflict reconstruction in Afghanistan. Finally, even in the fight against international terrorism, the EU and its member states can and do provide non-military capabilities that are crucial to effective action and help to balance out the excessive reliance of the United States on purely military ones. As many Europeans love to say, a transatlantic 'capability gap' also exists the other way round – namely for the Americans.

Yet there is no room or reason for complacency, even in the field of foreign and development aid. Arguably, the opposite transatlantic gap in this field is narrowing: the Bush administration recently boosted US expenditure on foreign aid, albeit very selectively, while the EU-15's is basically stagnating. More generally, non-profit charities constitute a quintessential Anglo-American tradition of collecting and channelling development and humanitarian aid, which partially rebalances the overall picture (though the role of NGOs is growing also on this side of the Atlantic). On the other hand, again, European aid is dispersed across 15+1 budgets (the member states' and the Union's), each following its own logic. Even regarding the EU budget proper, it can be argued that Europeans have never clearly decided whether they want their

5. The draft 2003 MOD budget foresaw an increase of 6.1 per cent, including an increase of 11.2 per cent for equipment proper. In fairness, it must be said that British and French MOD budgets also include nuclear weapons and equipment; however, the two countries are the best equipped in terms of expeditionary capabilities. In France, Italy and Spain, MOD budgets include also gendarmerie-type forces.

6. As of March 2002, SFOR in Bosnia encompassed 13,300 personnel from the EU-15 and 3,850 from the United States (out of a total of almost 20,000), KFOR in Kosovo approximately 26,5000 from the EU-15 and 5,300 from the United States (out of roughly 40,000 overall), and the US share has since further declined. For an overview of the EU financial effort in the Balkans, see Marc-André Ryter, 'Managing Contemporary Crises: A Challenge for the European Union', *Research Reports* 18, Series 2 (Helsinki: National Defence College, 2002).

common development aid to be a dedicated instrument of their diplomacy or just an autonomous policy with its own rationale. Hence the relative fragmentation and incoherence of the Union spending in this area, as opposed to the much more focused, instrumental, and sometimes cynical approach of the United States.

Similar (and additional) considerations could be made about the way EU's diplomatic resources are spread throughout the world, namely the amount of duplication and competition, the intra-EU imbalances (set to grow with the forthcoming enlargement),[7] and the direct and indirect hindrances generated by bureaucratic politics (at the national and EU level). In this domain, however, comparison with the United States is misleading for other reasons: by tradition and choice, the State Department career staffing is structurally limited in size, politically volatile (the so-called 'spoils system' makes many key appointments dependent on the Administration in office), and constantly fighting for influence in the US inter-agency debate.[8] Lately, in fact, the Department of Defense has progressively gained ground and resources on the US and international scene, mostly at the expense of the State Department. The overall EU diplomatic picture, by contrast, is one of unnecessarily bloated parallel bureaucracies (up to 45,000 officials across 15-plus national foreign services) rather than one of sheer quantitative inadequacy.[9]

## Euros and defence

All this said, the EU-15 unquestionably have a *defence* budget problem, beginning with the strong imbalance between personnel and equipment expenditure that affects almost all members, and ending with the pittance – one quarter of the US total – that they spend on research and development (R&D). The main problem, in fact, lies with the *quality* of European defence spending, i.e. with the way in which EU member states allocate their limited resources.

Defence procurement is fragmented and nationally focused, thus dispersing financial means and duplicating assets. The existing cooperative programmes – such as *Eurofighter*, *Meteor* or A400M – are all *ad hoc* and purely intergovernmental, creating extra costs and delays. The overall level of investment (especially on equipment and R&D) is largely insufficient if measured

7. For an early assessment see Antonio Missiroli, 'EU Enlargement and CFSP/ESDP', *European Integration* 25, 2003, pp. 1-16. For a NATO perspective, see Timothy Edmunds, 'NATO and its New Members', *Survival*, vol. 45, no. 3, Autumn 2003, pp. 145-66.

8. Cf. for instance I. Mac Destler, *Presidents, Bureaucrats and Foreign Policy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), and William I. Bacchus, *Staffing for Foreign Affairs* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983)

9. See Brian Hocking and David Spence (eds.), *Foreign Ministries in the European Union: Integrating Diplomats* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002).

against the shortfalls that the member states have agreed to address together. It is also spread very unevenly across EU countries, even among the main spenders, thus potentially creating a 'burden-sharing' problem (and a specific gap) *inside* the Union. Nor do the EU-15 use comparable budgetary invoicing or have compatible procurement cycles, which further complicates policy coordination and convergence.[10] The gaps, in other words, are as much intra-European as they are transatlantic – a point that is often neglected or just ignored in such debates.

The European defence budget problem is all the more difficult to address (let alone solve) because of:

(a) The persistent/perceived *lack of tangible strategic threats* to the EU 'homeland'. Even 11 September and its aftermath have not triggered a U-turn in defence spending across the Union – with the possible exception of France – although nearly everybody (public opinion in particular, as shown by the Eurobarometer polls) seems to agree on the need to do 'more' and to do so together, as Europeans. If a serious terrorist threat to Europe emerged, however, important resources might have to be diverted from external projection to internal protection, with negative implications for ESDP.

(b) The *success of European integration* itself, whereby EU members have learned to solve interstate disputes by peaceful means, through negotiation and interdependence rather than open conflict, and tend therefore to extend the same approach to 'third' countries and the entire outside world. As a consequence, in external action they prefer to give priority to non-military means (trade and aid, dialogue and negotiation) and, at least in their immediate neighbourhood, further integration (which partly explains the Union's inherent expansionist drive).

(c) What one may call *inevitable duplications*: the EU member states' forces cannot be considered (nor counted or treated as) a single unit, like the American ones. There certainly are *unnecessary* duplications, as already argued above, and Europeans should aim at some *necessary* duplications of capabilities vis-à-vis the United States (especially as far as strategic assets are concerned).[11] Yet it seems still hardly conceivable that EU members (smaller ones included) should give up e.g. on entire armed services and functions that are considered part of the constitutional tasks of the state.

10. See Burkard Schmitt, 'Essential for NATO's Future: Defence Spending', *NATO Nations*, vol. 1, 2002, pp. 118-20; Daniel Keohane, 'More Bang for Our Bucks', *New Statesman*, 8 July 2002.

11. See also Kori Schake, 'Constructive Duplication: Reducing EU Reliance on US Military Assets', *Working Paper* (London: Centre for European Reform, January 2002).

(d) The *sociological/societal constraints* that derive in part from demography (ageing societies) and in part from established welfare entitlements. Overhauling public expenditure and diverting resources, say, from pensions to defence, is a daunting task for political leaders: it takes time and it does not bring electoral dividends. Moreover, in the short term, citizens and voters tend to give priority to internal protection (social as well as physical) over external projection – hence an in-built rigidity that one cannot ignore.

(e) Last but not least, the *financial and budgetary* constraints imposed by the Stability and Growth Pact for the euro, now combined with a general economic slowdown made worse by the terrorist attacks. With Germany, France and possibly Italy under scrutiny for running excessive budgetary deficits, the room for a dramatic (if any) increase in defence and 'homeland' security spending like the one adopted by the Bush administration after 9/11 is simply unimaginable.

This does not mean that the Europeans are not aware of the problem. In fact, the issue of how to increase defence spending for European crisis management was first addressed publicly in 1999, in the wake of the St-Malo summit and the Cologne European Council. At that time, the debate revolved around applying the political and functional logic of EMU to the fledgling ESDP, thus replicating what was widely seen as a success story. In fact, possible 'convergence criteria' were canvassed, and desirable minimal targets for current national defence expenditure (2 to 2.5 per cent of GDP) or for new investments (0.7 per cent) were mentioned.

Such a '*demand-led*' approach aimed at setting quantitative indicators that were partially arbitrary (not unlike the EMU criteria, for that matter) and intrinsically questionable: simply bloating the budgets of European MODs might not be difficult per se, but it would not automatically translate into better spending for common goals, especially because personnel expenditure is very high and hardly flexible. On top of that, unlike in EMU, no sanctions were envisaged for non-compliance. The underlying paradox of the whole discussion was that the 'convergence criteria' for the euro had been set by finance ministers to curb public expenditure across the board, whereas those for ESDP were being put forward by foreign and/or defence ministers to set public expenditure 'free' in one sector only – with all the risks of a chain reaction and 'band-

wagon' effect on the part of other ministries, that would have ended up jeopardising EMU.[12]

This prospect, combined with what at that time was total British idiosyncrasy for EMU terminology ('convergence criteria'), contributed to channelling the debate towards a *'supply-led'* approach based on voluntary contributions, pledges, peer review and best practice. Such was the functional logic behind the Headline Goal set in December 1999 at the Helsinki European Council and its subsequent implementation and follow-up. Although the exercise has contributed to speeding up much-needed domestic reforms of the military (most notably in Italy and, with more hesitation, Germany),[13] it has delivered very modest results in both budgetary and operational terms. In fact, both cost savings and spending rises in national defence budgets have been minimal across the Union. Even the 'pooling' of forces has been driven mainly – if not exclusively – by a political and/or symbolic rationale, if one looks at the flurry of multinational commands set up over the past few years.

At all events, the Defence Capabilities Initiative (DCI) launched separately by NATO in the autumn of 1999 – in which 58 shortfall areas to be tackled were listed, from surveillance to precision-guided weapons and suppression of enemy air defences – has been equally sterile. As has the Alliance's official benchmark of 2 per cent of GDP for national defence spending: to date, it has been met by barely one-third of the (present and future) allied countries. Undoubtedly, for an economic area that claims to have surpassed the United States in overall GDP terms, this is hardly an impressive performance – all the more so from a qualitative viewpoint.

Would it be possible to combine the two approaches described above and generate some momentum and additional incentives for (a) getting higher value for money (spending *better*), and (b) freeing more resources for 'defence' (spending *more*)? As already argued above, quantitative and qualitative aspects are equally important and may have to be addressed at the same time and, preferably, within the same policy framework. Even if it were possible and accepted, in fact, just spending more would not necessarily generate the required capabilities, since 'pork barrel' politics is well established in the defence field. And even if spending better were to take precedence, spending more would become all the more necessary: savings are certainly possible in the short term,

12. For a recapitulation of that phase see Antonio Missiroli, 'European Security and Defence: The Case for Setting Convergence Criteria', *European Foreign Affairs Review*, vol. 4, 1999, pp. 485-500.

13. Belgium, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and France had introduced similar reforms – mainly in the direction of professional armies (already in existence in Ireland and the United Kingdom) – before the inception of ESDP.

but reconfiguring defence expenditure takes time and money – in terms of early retirement schemes for redundant personnel and/or strategic investments – while increasing capabilities means buying or leasing new equipment off-the-shelf.

Some serious 'pooling' of defence expenditure and means seems the only realistic and viable way ahead, although it may apply differently across the Union, notably in the light of member states' existing capabilities, ambitions and inclinations (military and non-military, industrial and economic). Any forward-looking blueprint for intra-EU and transatlantic cooperation should take all these factors into adequate consideration – all the more so in the light of the forthcoming enlargement of both the EU and NATO – while trying to build on the peculiarities of the European integration process, which make it possible to set jointly and 'from above' extra incentives for policy change.[14]

If these are the gaps, their causes and their effects, it is now crucial to assess whether and how some of the gaps (transatlantic as well as intra-European) can be reduced, or at least managed, in a sensible and realistic way without generating new ones, especially at the political level. In fact, even if the Europeans were to agree swiftly on provisions to address their defence spending problem, a question would be bound to (re-) emerge: *how much is enough*? What, in other words, are or should be the benchmarks against which to measure and evaluate the European effort?

This is a tricky question and, ultimately, probably an unanswerable one. In the light of the current fiscal and political trends, the transatlantic military capabilities gap is unlikely to decrease, even less to be filled – and the same goes for the intra-European one. Yet much depends, again, on the goals and ambitions of each actor involved. If ESDP is to remain primarily an in-area stabilisation policy (the Balkans and little else) and to be carried out mainly through 'devolution' from NATO, the Union does not need to increase defence spending too much. It does need to improve its allocation and use, of course, and to devise appropriate provisions for the financing of long and presumably mixed (civilian *and* military) ground operations. Running a benign protectorate in South-Eastern Europe, in other words, has little to do with the list of military shortfalls detailed in NATO's old DCI. If instead its scope is to be wider, both geographically and operationally, then the current trends should be challenged – on both sides of the Atlantic.

14. For some tentative proposals see Antonio Missiroli, 'Ploughshares into Swords? Euros for European Defence', *European Foreign Affairs Review*, vol. VIII, no. 1, 2002, pp. 5-33; and Antonio Missiroli, 'Euros for ESDP: Financing EU Operations', *Occasional Paper* 45 (Paris: EU Institute for Security Studies, June 2003); Burkard Schmitt, 'The European Union and armaments: getting a bigger bang for the euro', *Chaillot Paper* 63 (Paris: EU Institute for Security Studies, August 2003).

## Hubs and spokes

Once again, however, military expenditure per se does not and will not tell the whole story. Recent developments in postwar Afghanistan, and even more clearly in postwar Iraq, have shown that, in spite of its overwhelming combat superiority and virtually unlimited ability to escalate militarily, the United States does need partners and allies – and not just for reasons of international legitimacy and political support. Conflict prevention, peace enforcement and *state*-building (rather than '*nation*-building') require capabilities that are not exactly abundant in the US armed forces today, and that instead the Europeans – along with the UN – have and are willing to provide, albeit on certain conditions. Such capabilities are of a civilian but also a military nature – if lower-intensity than those the United States has developed most effectively – and they challenge the received American wisdom whereby 'peacekeeping is for wimps'. Even the currently accepted notion whereby the United States has the 'hard' power and the EU the 'soft' – a notion that owes much to Robert Kagan's catchy 'Mars vs. Venus' metaphor[15] – deserves to be challenged, intellectually as well as politically. Joseph Nye, for instance, argues that 'hard' power is economic as well as military, while 'soft' power is rather cultural and value-oriented than strictly or purely diplomatic.[16] Accordingly, therefore, the United States has long been also a 'soft' power, while Europe has 'hard' edges, especially if seen as also encompassing countries with significant military assets and expeditionary forces (and the readiness to use them).

It is a fact, at any rate, that neither side of the Atlantic can presently rely on a balanced comprehensive set of crisis management capabilities. In a way, each has to catch up on its own weaknesses. This is why the recurrent idea of a transatlantic division of labour is not entirely convincing. Already in 2002, in the aftermath of Operation *Enduring Freedom*, that idea was expressed through another catchy formula whereby 'the US fights, the UN feeds, and the EU funds' – a radical and extreme version of mutual complementarity, and one that ultimately leaves little room for concerted action. In order better to understand the implications of each stage of crisis management, instead, it is essential to have a certain degree and wider array of usable capabilities. This, in turn, makes pre-conflict consultation and coordination across the Atlantic a

15. See the latest and more elaborated version of his original essay: Robert Kagan, *Paradise & Power: America and Europe in the New World Order* (London: Atlantic Books, 2003).

16. See Joseph S. Nye, *The Paradox of American Power: Why the World's Only Superpower Can't Go It Alone* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).

quintessential public good. In fact, interventions aimed at building a more secure world for all require that both the United States and the EU work on their own weaknesses and start filling the gaps – which clearly requires political, economic and also technological cooperation.

Instead, especially between 2002 and 2003, the United States seems to have been more interested in dividing its European allies and partners – and they, in turn, seem to have been more prone to slashing at each other in the most diverse formations: big vs. small, big vs. big, old vs. new. However, it is in the long-term interest of the United States – and it is already the case now when tackling international terrorism with non-military means (as the newly created Department of Homeland Defense is expected to do) – to deal with a unitary and cohesive EU capable of delivering on commitments and to do so in one go, with one voice and also one hand, so to speak. For its part, the EU has recently delivered a document – the so-called 'Security Strategy' put forward by Javier Solana, High Representative for CFSP, at the Thessaloniki European Council of June 2003[17] – that basically takes on board most of the worries expressed by the United States while addressing them in a more distinctively 'European' fashion. This attempt at reducing the gap in the threat assessment could well be a starting point for more and better cooperation in tackling international problems – across the Atlantic as well as within the Union.

Ideally, this would mean operating through 'hub-and-spoke' formats, whereby each side acts in a crisis by making best use of its own strengths while fully acknowledging those of the other and taking them into adequate account. For this to materialise and the logic of comparative advantage to become current practice, however, each side has to have a credible bit of everything in its toolbox. At the transatlantic level, this may well result in the Americans playing, more often than not, the 'hub' to the European 'spokes'. At the EU level, this may well demand a balanced and flexible trade-off between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots' in terms of capabilities. But the effectiveness of the model lies precisely in the functional interdependence and adaptability of its components. A certain amount of duplication would do no harm in that it would make each side potentially replaceable by the other – if and when necessary.

To a certain extent, this approach can also be transposed to the intra-European context proper. This could mean, for instance, allocating specific functional roles to certain member states, espe-

17. Entitled 'A Secure Europe in a Better World', the document can be consulted at http://ue.eu.int/oressdata/EN/reports/76255.pdf.

cially (but not exclusively) smaller ones. For operational as well as political reasons, such 'roles' should be somewhat similar in NATO and the EU, with 'double-hatted' forces and capabilities. Interestingly, the Alliance is already going down this road, especially with its new Central and East European members, by explicitly encouraging the development of 'niche' capabilities at the national or plurilateral level. Such role specialisation should not be limited to military capabilities only: for various reasons, again, certain EU member states may prefer to develop primarily (or only) civilian ones. What matters is the overall effect: it may not entirely do away with the 'unnecessary' duplications, but it may improve effectiveness and foster consolidation across the (EU) board.

Needless to say, sheer size does not automatically generate good capabilities: such relatively small countries as Denmark or the Netherlands have excellent ones, for instance. However, for such other countries as Belgium or Austria, just raising MOD budgets to more than 2 per cent of GDP would per se have a minimal impact on the *overall* EU picture; focusing on certain functions and more or less entirely doing away with others, instead, would have a much more significant one. Conversely, the countries currently performing best – namely Britain and France – happen also to be those that wish to preserve and further develop all-round capabilities and, above all, those who are least willing to 'pool' (and even less 'communitarise') the management of defence resources. Hence the need for some trade-off between the different EU actors – all the more so since role specialisation presupposes, entails and eventually requires closer political integration and a substantial lack of immediate/territorial threats. Either condition (or both) may not be acceptable or applicable to *all* present and future member states. Finland and Greece, for instance, tend to focus more on territorial defence than, say, Portugal or Ireland, with predictable effects on their respective force structures.

An additional problem with role specialisation is that it must not be too radical: in other words, it would be useful – operationally as well as politically – that no single country be the only potential provider of a given capability (for instance, de-mining or decontamination units). If that country, in fact, had to withdraw or abstain from an operation, the whole Union – or the Alliance, for that matter – would find itself crippled and irreplaceably deprived of that capability.

In sum, there is scope for generating 'hub-and-spoke' formats for crisis management, predominantly built around a 'framework nation' (or a group of countries with already integrated structures) but with as much flexibility and interoperability as possible. Incidentally, such a scheme is not entirely new for European defence: the enhancement of national headquarters was already envisaged by the Western European Union (WEU) in the late 1990s, and is now being considered an option for ESDP. In fact, five member states (Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Greece) have 'offered' national command and control capabilities to the EU, with a view to 'multinationalising' them progressively.

Taking this line of development, however, certainly implies an amount of political and operational flexibility; certainly a high degree of functional integration and mutual complementarity; but, above all, it implies the acceptance of some form of leadership or special responsibility. Within Europe, however, such acceptance is more difficult than across the Atlantic or within NATO. In part, it is because the Union is a legal community based on equal rights for all members. Unlike NATO, it has no visible hegemon within. In part, too, it is because CFSP and ESDP have been more declaratory than operational to date, thus hiding or downplaying the existing 'capability gaps' within the EU.[18] But it is also because the problem has been managed clumsily, above all by the potential leaders themselves.

So far, there have been two main formats in which the problem has come to the fore – without being solved. One is the '*directoire*', whereby a restricted group of major EU members (normally the 'Big Three') claims the lead and convenes separately. Since Tony Blair has started reshaping British policy in a less Euro-sceptic approach, the United Kingdom has increasingly pushed this 'triumvirate' concept. However, lacking substantial decisions or proposals that can win the support of all member states, such 'minilateralist' meetings – in spite of or perhaps due to their unquestionably symbolic and media-oriented character – tend to trigger the hostility of the 'left-outs' and, therefore, to do more harm than good to EU policy-making. Since the difficult negotiations leading up to the Treaty of Nice in the autumn of 2002, the tensions between the 'big' and the 'small' have become a recurrent feature of European politics.

18. Such a mainly declaratory approach, in turn, has generated a credibility gap. See Christopher Hill, 'The Capability-Expectations Gap, or Conceptualising Europe's International Role', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, vol. 31, no. 3, September 1993, pp. 305-28.

The second format pops up whenever there is disagreement among the 'Big Three'. It has adopted different labels but, basically, it revolves around the concept of an 'avant-garde' or 'core group' built around the Franco-German couple, much as it may well include other (smaller) countries. As such, its rationale has less to do with size and more with the willingness to integrate further and faster. Actual capabilities may or may not matter, while the symbolic/presentational factor is equally important – and equally divisive.

In both cases, an important implicit message has also been sent to the other member states: if they did not accept the terms offered by the self-appointed leaders, these would be ready to proceed anyway – within or outside the common EU institutions. In other words, the different leadership or 'clubbing' configurations have been used as political deterrents, and in a tactical rather than strategic manner. Precisely for this reason, perhaps, they have substantially failed so far.

And this is a pity, of course: first, because without some sort of internal 'engine' or driving force EU policy-making normally grinds to a halt; and, second, because in security and defence policy in particular there is plenty of scope for both flexibility and leadership.[19] Consensus is certainly important in that it increases legitimacy: external action is not primarily about producing laws and norms and, therefore, it does not always require majority voting. External actions, however, are rarely conducted by all members of any organisation or alliance, be it the UN, OSCE or NATO. They are normally conducted by coalitions of countries willing and able to enforce decisions taken on a consensual basis. The Union's ESDP is no exception, in principle, although participating in the first common operations – at this particular stage of the European integration process, with enlargement around the corner – also has a highly symbolic character. In perspective, however, actual capabilities do matter and it is a bit unrealistic to argue that all member states are equal on the international scene. Of course, some caution and care may be necessary, and leadership ambitions may have to be founded on objective capabilities and means rather than political claims. Hence the usefulness of the 'hub-and-spoke' formats, which make it possible to combine leadership and flexibility without predetermining once and for all the respective roles and, therefore, without generating resentment.

19. For a background (pre-Nice) analysis of the problem, see Antonio Missiroli, 'CFSP, defence and flexibility', *Chaillot Paper* 38 (Paris: Institute for Security Studies of WEU, February 2000).

In this respect, the final deliberations of the European Convention chaired by Valéry Giscard d'Estaing between late February 2002 and mid-July 2003 include provisions that may help address the problem more properly. In fact, the draft constitutional treaty delivered by the Convention (under review by the EU Intergovernmental Conference that opened in Rome on 4 October 2003) entails *inter alia* some new norms that would make it possible for a group of member states to: (a) conduct operations on behalf of the entire Union; (b) set up 'structured cooperation' to develop higher military capabilities; (c) join in a specialised agency for armaments cooperation; (d) adhere to a special declaration on mutual defence.[20]

These norms are certainly improvable, especially with a view to making them more acceptable to all member states and avoiding the negative side effects of both the '*directoire*' and the 'avant-garde'. While (a) is somewhat superfluous and (d) potentially divisive – in that it may ultimately create separate and competitive security regimes within both the EU and NATO – (b) and (c) have great potential, provided they are handled with care, fairness and transparency. In this respect, much will also depend on the way in which such other new provisions as the creation of an EU 'Foreign Minister' and a 'European external action service' are finalised and put in place: in principle, they could well become the catalysts – a European hub in its own right – for the common EU voice and hand in international affairs that has been missing since the establishment of CFSP and ESDP. On the whole, however, all these institutional novelties already represent a good institutional and political basis for a more effective EU policy, one in which the existing internal gaps do not widen nor hamper cooperation and specialisation – across the Union as well as the Atlantic.

20. The Articles in question are, respectively, III-211 (operations), III-212 (armaments agency), III-213 ('structured cooperation'), and III-214 (mutual defence). For the text of the draft constitutional treaty, see http://european-convention.eu.int/docs/Treaty/cv00850.en03.pdf.

Shift or rift
Assessing US-EU
relations after Iraq

# American foreign policy and transatlantic relations in the age of global politics

**Ivo H. Daalder and James M. Lindsay***

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The age of geopolitics in American foreign policy is over; the age of global politics has begun. Throughout the twentieth century, traditional geopolitics drove US thinking on foreign affairs: American security depended on preventing any one country from achieving dominion over the Eurasian landmass. That objective was achieved with the collapse of the Soviet Union. In the 1990s, Washington, working in conjunction with its European partners, consolidated this success, creating for the first time in history a peaceful, undivided, and democratic Europe. Now no power — not Russia, not Germany, not a united Europe and not China or Japan — poses an immediate hegemonic threat to Eurasia. Indeed, the threats to the United States no longer pivot on geography. Al-Qaeda can be just as deadly whether it is located in Pakistan, the Philippines or Portland, Oregon.

Rather than resting on geography, the new age of global politics has two overriding and unprecedented features. One is the sheer predominance of the United States. Today, as never before, what matters most in international politics is whether — and how — Washington acts on any given issue. The other is globalisation, which has unleashed economic, political and social forces that are beyond the capacity of any one country, including the United States, to control.

American primacy and globalisation both complement and contradict each other, bringing the United States great rewards as well as great dangers. Primacy gives Washington an unsurpassed ability to get its way in international affairs; globalisation enriches the American economy and spreads American values. But America's great power and the penetration of its culture, products and influence deep into other societies breed intense resentment and grievances. Great power and great wealth do not necessarily produce greater respect or greater security.

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American leaders and the American people are now grappling with the double-edged sword that is the age of global politics. They do so at a time when Europeans are showing a greater confidence in the capacities of a united Europe, as well as a greater wariness of where unfettered American power might lead. These developments are creating immense strains in transatlantic relations. America wants fewer constraints so it can respond quickly to the threats it sees. Europe wants Washington to do more to recognise and accommodate what can be competing European interests. Whether Washington and Europe recognise their legitimate differences and work to find ways to reconcile them will determine the future of the Atlantic Alliance.

## The lone global power

The United States is today the only truly global power. Its military reach — whether on land, at sea, or in the air — extends to every point on the globe. Its economic prowess fuels world trade and industry. Its political and cultural appeal — what Joseph Nye has called 'soft power' — is so extensive that most international institutions reflect American interests.

But is America's exalted position sustainable? Militarily, the vast gap between the United States and everyone else is growing. Whereas defence spending in most other countries is falling, US defence spending is rising rapidly. The United States now accounts for nearly four in every ten dollars the world spends on defence. In 2003, the United States will spend as much on defence as the next 11 countries combined. The 2003 increase in defence spending alone is greater than the entire British defence budget and three-quarters the size of China's. Most remarkably, America can afford to spend more. Defence spending takes a smaller share of the US gross domestic product than it did a decade ago — and even the Bush administration's projected increases will produce an overall budget equal to only about 3.5 per cent of GDP, about half of Cold War highs. There is little prospect of any country or group of countries devoting the resources necessary to begin competing with the United States militarily, let alone surpassing it.

The economic gap is smaller than the military gap, especially if the United States is compared with the European Union. But

American dominance is still remarkable. Not only is the US economy the world's largest but, after nearly two decades of expansion, it accounts for 31 per cent of the world's total output. This is greater than its share in 1970. The US economy in 2000 was equal in size to that of the next four economies (Japan, Germany, France and Britain) combined, and it accounted for almost half the GDP of the G-7 countries. The US economy also has proven itself at least as adept as its major competitors in realising the productivity gains made possible by information technology. Furthermore, Europe and Japan face severe demographic challenges as their populations rapidly age, creating likely labour shortages and severe budgetary pressures. Meanwhile, China is modernising rapidly, and Russia may have turned the corner, but their economies today are comparable in output to those of Italy and Belgium — and they have yet to develop a political infrastructure that can support sustained economic growth.

How can the United States transform its unrivalled power into influence? Unless employed deftly, America's military and economic superiority can breed resentment, even among its friends — as the Iraq war vividly demonstrated. A growing perception that Washington cares only about its own interests and is willing to use its muscle to get its way has fuelled a worrisome gap between US and European attitudes. European élites increasingly criticise the United States as being morally, socially and culturally retrograde — especially in its perceived embrace of the death penalty, predatory capitalism, fast food and mass entertainment. Europe has also begun to exercise its diplomatic muscle in international institutions and other arenas — as witnessed in the debate over the Landmine ban, the Kyoto Protocol and the International Criminal Court — and to seek to create new international regimes designed to limit America's recourse to its hard power.

The sustainability of American power ultimately depends on the extent to which others believe it is employed not just in US interests but in their interests as well. Following its victory in the Second World War, the United States led the effort to create not only new security institutions, such as the United Nations and NATO, but also new regimes to promote economic recovery, development and prosperity, such as the Marshall Plan, the Bretton Woods monetary system, and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. These institutions and agreements preserved and

extended American power — but in a way that benefited all who participated. The challenge for the United States is to do the same today.

## Globalisation

Globalisation is not just an economic phenomenon, but a political, cultural, military and environmental one as well. Globalisation is also not new: networks of interdependence spanning continents were increasing rapidly in the decades before the First World War as the steam engine and the telegraph reduced the cost of transportation and information. What distinguishes globalisation today is the speed and volume of cross-border contacts. As an example, a century ago, the United States received a few million foreign visitors annually. Most travelled by boat for weeks to reach American shores. Today the United States welcomes well over 300 million foreign visitors each year, the vast majority of whom reach America within hours of leaving home.

The prophets of globalisation have trumpeted its benefits, particularly how the increased flow of goods, services and capital across borders can boost economic activity and enhance prosperity. Total world exports increased nearly 18-fold between 1970 and 1999.[1] As a result, trade in 2002 accounted for 25 per cent of total global economic output, double its share in 1970.[2] Foreign direct investment and mergers and acquisitions similarly experienced phenomenal increases. The spread of ideas and information across the Internet and other global media has broadened cultural horizons and empowered people around the world to challenge autocratic rulers and advance the cause of human rights and democracy. Globalisation can even lessen the chance of war. For example, fearing that war with Pakistan would disrupt their ties to US-based multinationals, in mid-2002 India's powerful electronics sector successfully pressed New Delhi to de-escalate its conflict with Pakistan.

But globalisation also brings terrible new perils. A handful of men from halfway across the globe can hijack four commercial airliners and slam them into key symbols of American power, killing thousands. A computer hacker in the Philippines can shut down the Internet and disrupt e-commerce thousands of miles away. Speculators can produce a run on the Thai baht, plunging Russia

1. Bank of International Settlements, Press Release, 9 October 2001.

2. *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1990*, 110th edn. (Washington, DC: US Census Bureau, 1990), p. 829; *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 2001*, 121st edn. (Washington, DC: US Census Bureau, 2001), p. 829; and 'United we fall', *The Economist*, 28 September 2002, p. 24.

and Brazil into recession, robbing American exporters of markets and costing American jobs. Greenhouse gases accumulating in the atmosphere in both of these newly booming economies can raise global temperatures, possibly flooding coastal plains and turning mountain meadows into deserts.

## Hegemonists vs. globalists: the utility of power

Much of the foreign policy debate in the United States today revolves around assessments of the fundamental importance of American primacy and globalisation. Hegemonists, so-called because they emphasise American primacy, see a world in which the United States can use its predominant power to get its way, regardless of what others want. They believe the United States must summon the will to go it alone if necessary. Globalists, on the other hand, emphasise globalisation. They see a world that defies unilateral US solutions and instead requires international cooperation. They warn against thinking that America can go it alone.

Hegemonists see two great virtues in America's primacy. First, it enables the United States to set its own foreign policy objectives and to achieve them without relying on others. The result is a preference for unilateral action, unbound by international agreements or institutions that would otherwise constrain America's ability to act. As Charles Krauthammer puts it, 'An unprecedentedly dominant United States . . . is in the unique position of being able to fashion its own foreign policy. After a decade of Prometheus playing pygmy, the first task of the new [Bush] administration is precisely to reassert American freedom of action.'[3] The views, preferences, and interests of allies, friends or anyone else should therefore have no influence on American action.

Second, because American power enables the United States to pursue its interests as it pleases, hegemonists believe American foreign policy should seek to maintain, extend, and strengthen that relative position of power. As President Bush's National Security Strategy states: 'Our [military] forces will be strong enough to dissuade potential adversaries from pursuing a military build-up in hopes of surpassing, or equaling, the power of the United States.'[4] In other words, the United States can achieve its policy objectives best if it can prevent others from acquiring the power

3. Charles Krauthammer, 'The New Unilateralism,' *Washington Post*, 8 June 2001, p. A29.

4. *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, DC: The White House, September 2002), p. 30.

necessary to oppose it effectively when interests clash. A better definition of American hegemony would be hard to find.

In contrast, globalists stress how globalisation both limits and transforms America's capacity to use its power to influence events overseas. At bottom, the challenges and opportunities created by the forces of globalisation are not susceptible to America acting on its own. Combating the spread of infectious diseases, preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction, defeating terrorism, securing access to open markets, protecting human rights, promoting democracy and preserving the environment all require the cooperation of other countries.

But, globalists argue, it is not simply that the nature of the issues arising from globalisation limits the reach of American power and compels international cooperation. It is also that globalisation is diffusing power away from states. As Jessica Mathews argues, 'National governments are not simply losing autonomy in a globalizing economy. They are sharing powers — including political, social, and security roles at the core of sovereignty — with businesses, with international organizations, and with a multitude of citizens groups, known as nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). The steady concentration of power in the hands of states that began in 1648 with the Peace of Westphalia is over.'[5] NGOs, which also encompass crime cartels and terrorist groups, are more nimble than states and frequently succeed in frustrating their policies. What hegemonists miss by ignoring the changing policy agenda and rise of NGOs, or so the globalists contend, is that even the most powerful state is losing its ability to control what goes on in the world. As a major globalist text argues, 'few of today's foreign policy challenges are really amenable to unilateral action — to truly "going it alone". In most instances, cooperating with other countries and with international institutions is less an option than a necessity.'[6]

## Who is right?

Both hegemonists and globalists are right in important ways. Take the hegemonists first. Despite globalisation, power remains the coin of the realm in international politics. Five decades of concerted US and allied efforts may have transformed Europe into a Kantian zone of perpetual peace where the rule of law has

5. Jessica T. Mathews, 'Power Shift,' *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 76, January/February 1997, p. 50.

6. Stewart Patrick, 'Multilateralism and Its Discontents: The Causes and Consequences of U.S. Ambivalence', in Stewart Patrick and Shepard Forman (eds.), *Multilateralism and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Reiner, 2002), p. 25.

triumphed, but in much of the rest of the world military might continues to hold sway. True, no country, not even China, poses the geostrategic threat to the United States that first Germany and then the Soviet Union did in the twentieth century. Still, lesser-order threats abound, from Pyongyang to Teheran, and US military and economic power will be needed to contain, or if necessary extinguish, them. More broadly, the rule of law demands more than simply codifying rules of behaviour. It also requires the willingness and ability to enforce them. But that requirement, as Mancur Olson demonstrated years ago, runs into a fundamental collective-action problem — if the potential costs of action are great and the benefits widely shared, few will be willing to incur the costs.[7] That is where overwhelming power, and the concomitant willingness and ability to provide for global public goods, makes a crucial difference. So, without American primacy — or something like it — it is doubtful that the rule of law can be sustained.

The wise application of American primacy can further US values and interests. The use (or threat) of American military might evicted Iraqi troops from Kuwait in 1991, convinced Haiti's military junta to relinquish power, ended Serbian atrocities in Kosovo, broke al-Qaeda's hold over Afghanistan, and forced Saddam Hussein from power. Nor does American primacy advance only US interests and values. As the one country willing and able to break deadlocks and stalemates preventing progress on issues from promoting peace in the Balkans, Northern Ireland and the Middle East to preserving financial stability around the world, the United States frequently advances the interests of most other democratic states as well. Often, the United States is exactly what Madeleine Albright said it was — the indispensable nation that makes it possible to mobilise the world into effective action.

The United States does differ from other countries. Unique among past hegemons in not seeking to expand its power through territorial gains, it is also unique among its contemporaries. Its primacy and global interests prompt others both to seek its assistance in addressing their problems and to resent it for meddling in their affairs. The ambivalence the world feels about American engagement — as well as the singular nature of that engagement — makes it imperative that the United States not mistake the conduct of foreign policy for a popularity contest. Doing the right thing may not always be popular — but it is vitally important.

7. Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1965).

But globalists are right that while America is powerful, it is not omnipotent. Far more able than most countries to protect itself against the pernicious consequences of globalisation, it is by no means invulnerable. Some crucial problems simply defy unilateral solutions. Global warming is perhaps the most obvious case, but others include stopping the spread of weapons of mass destruction and fighting global terrorism. In other cases, such as protecting the American homeland from terrorist attack, unilateral action can reduce but not eliminate risks.

Similarly, unilateral American power may not be enough to sustain the benefits of globalisation. Globalisation is reversible. The Great War, the Great (Russian) Revolution and the Great Depression combined to strangle the economic and social interactions that emerged early in the twentieth century. Economic globalisation today rests on an intricate web of international trade and financial institutions. Extending, developing and improving these institutions requires the cooperation of others. Without it, the benefits of globalisation, which help to underwrite American power, could erode.

Globalisation has greatly broadened America's foreign policy agenda. Infectious diseases, poverty and poor governance not only offend our moral sensibilities but also represent potential new security threats. Failed and failing states endanger not just their own citizens but Americans as well. If the United States cannot find ways to encourage prosperity and good governance, it runs the risk of seeing threats to its security multiply. It could eventually find itself harmed not by bears in the woods but by swarms of tiny pests.

Finally, cooperation can extend the life of American primacy. Working with others can spread the costs of action over a wider array of actors, enabling the United States to do more with less. By creating international regimes and organisations, Washington can imbed its interests and values in institutions that will shape and constrain countries for decades, regardless of the vicissitudes of American power. And cooperation can build bonds with other countries, lessening the chances of cultural and political tactics that can over the years sap US power.

## Implications for the transatlantic relationship

Europe's shift in strategic priorities has been much less dramatic, at least for now, than that of the United States. The principal focus of European foreign policy today is what it has been for more than fifty years — to eliminate the possibility of a return to internecine conflict through an ever greater commitment to sharing sovereignty within a European Union. The EU is the focal point for European policy and activity over a vast range of areas — from trade and monetary policy to judicial, social and (increasingly) foreign and security policy. For the immediate future, the EU has embarked on a fantastically ambitious phase, encompassing both deeper cooperation among existing members and enlargement of the overall union to incorporate many of the neighbouring countries in the east. A constitutional convention, to be followed by a decisive intergovernmental conference, will decide the parameters of Europe's union in future years — including whether Europe will emerge more and more as a single international actor in the foreign and security policy field, as it has been in the economic sphere. The enlargement project is equally ambitious. More than 100 million people will be added to the European Union, increasing the EU's overall population by nearly a quarter. Yet, the combined GDP of the countries to be added is only nine per cent that of the current members.[8] The costs and consequences of enlargement are likely therefore to be enormous. Think of the United States incorporating Mexico into a North American Union.

Europe and America increasingly have very different policy priorities, straining transatlantic relations. While some of the strain is issue-specific — relating to missile defence, global warming, Iraq and the like — much of it reflects very different perspectives on the nature of global politics. The Bush administration has a distinctly hegemonist view of the world. Most Europeans, in contrast, have a globalist one.

The primary foreign policy consequence of this disparity is that the transatlantic relationship is less pivotal to the foreign policy of both the United States and Europe. For America, Europe is a useful source of support for American actions — a place to seek

8. GDP figures are drawn from the *Eurostat Yearbook* 2002 (http://europa.eu.int/comm/eurostat/Public/datashop/print-product/EN?catalogue=Eurostat&product=yearbook02-EN&file=free.htm [accessed July 2003]).

complementary capabilities to build ad hoc coalitions of the willing and somewhat able. But to Washington, Europe is simply less central to its main interests and preoccupations than it was during the decades of the Cold War. For European countries, America's protective role has become superfluous with the disappearance of the Soviet threat, while its pacifying presence is no longer warranted given the advance of European integration. The task of integrating all of Europe into the zone of peace now falls squarely on Europe's shoulders, with the United States playing at most a supporting role. Even the stabilisation of Europe's periphery — from the Balkans in the south to Turkey, the Caucasus and Ukraine in the east — is one where Europeans will increasingly have to take the lead.

So what future is there for the transatlantic relationship? Divorce is the most radical option but it would fly in the face of major forces keeping the partners together. For all that has changed in transatlantic relations over the past decade, the core of the relationship remains largely intact. This core consists of a commitment to a set of values — peace, democracy, liberty and free enterprise — that is shared by Americans and Europeans alike. Divorce is also made more difficult by the unprecedented degree to which the United State and Europe have become economically intertwined. On the trade side, more than a third of all US exports outside NAFTA are destined for the EU, while 27 per cent of all non-NAFTA US imports originate in the EU. Twenty-seven per cent of the EU's non-EU exports go to the United States, while almost a fifth of the EU's imports from outside the Union come from the United States.[9] The degree of financial interdependence is greater still. In 2001, the EU accounted for more than 60 per cent of all foreign direct investment into the United States (or about $800 billion), while over 45 per cent of all US FDI in 2001 was invested in Europe.[10] The mutual dependence created by these economic realities would make it that much more difficult for the United States and Europe to go their own separate ways.

But if divorce is unlikely, a renewal of the partnership is no easier. The structural shifts in relations militate against it. Today, unlike during the Cold War when the costs of disunity were immediate and prohibitive, the United States and Europe have the luxury of irresponsibility. In contrast, renewing the partnership on a new, more durable basis will require difficult and costly adjustments in both Europe and the United States. Europe will have to

9. 2001 import and export statistics are drawn from WTO data, (www.wto.org/english/res_e/statis_e/its2002_e/section3_e/iii17.xls [accessed July 2003]) and (www.wto.org/english/res_e/statis_e/its2002_e/section3_e/iii39.xls [accessed July 2003]).

10. Bureau of Economic Analysis, 'Direct Investment Positions for 2001: Country and Industry Detail', *Survey of Current Business*, July 2002, pp. 33, 35.

enhance its capacity for joint action — especially in the military field. Real partnership requires real and interoperable military capabilities. Europeans will also have to demonstrate a willingness to carry more of the burdens, not just in Europe but increasingly beyond Europe as well. This will require Europeans to extend their strategic vision beyond the geographic confines of Europe to include much of the rest of world — and not simply in terms of economic opportunity and development needs (though these will remain important), but also in terms of overall security and political requirements.[11] Finally, a renewed partnership will require the United States to demonstrate a willingness to accord Europe a greater — if not an equal — voice in their relationship. Not only must Washington be willing at times to defer to Europe's lead (even if this is in a direction the United States does not fully support), but it must also show that it is committed to international cooperative means — including treaties, regimes, and norms — to enhancing the security, prosperity and wellbeing of all.

Without a formal divorce or a renewed partnership, US-European relations are likely to drift — with transatlantic relations and institutions falling more and more into disuse. But drift is not likely to be sustainable for long. It will either, willy-nilly, end in divorce, or produce a crisis so severe that leaders on both sides of the Atlantic take steps to update and renew the partnership. Which of these outcome comes to pass will depend to a significant extent on the policy and preferences of the dominant player in the relationship.

## A tipping-point?

President Bush and the policies his Administration pursues represent the tipping-point in US-European relations. Nothing preordains the end of this relationship, but Bush's policies — and even more so his personal style, especially the certainty with which he holds his views, the manner in which he defends them and above all the religiosity of his rhetoric — aggravate the existing deep fissures that have emerged in transatlantic relations. President Bush often appears more interested in demonstrating the righteousness of his positions than in finding ways to accommodate other perspectives into US policies. The terrorist attacks against the World Trade Center and Pentagon only reinforced this tendency.

11. In an attempt at formulating such a vision, Javier Solana presented a security strategy along these lines at the Thessaloniki summit. Javier Solana, 'A Secure Europe in a Better World', European Council, Thessaloniki, 20 June 2003 (http://ue.eu.int/pressdata/EN/reports/76255.pdf [accessed July 2003]).

For all the shared sense of shock engendered by the television images beamed across the globe, Europeans and Americans reacted very differently to the 11 September attacks. Whereas little changed in Europe's policy, perspectives and priorities, the impact of the attacks on the United States was truly profound. For the American people, the terrorists shattered their sense of physical invulnerability. For the Administration, the attacks came to define its policy, foreign and domestic, in every conceivable dimension. And for President Bush, the devastating events provided the fundamental purpose of his presidency. He would destroy the terrorists before they could strike again. He would defeat tyrants that harboured terrorists or ruled rogue states. And he would make sure terrorists and tyrants could not get their hands on the technologies of mass destruction.

So far, the immediate consequences of this American single-mindedness have been manageable. Differences between the United States and its major European allies have continued to grow, but have not yet reached breaking-point. But that point may be approaching faster than is generally realised. The current crisis in relations comes at a time when the centripetal forces keeping the alliance together are probably weaker than at any time since the Second World War — and the centrifugal forces are at least as strong as at any previous point in time. At both the public and élite level, there is a growing anxiety among many Europeans that their inability to affect American foreign policy behaviour renders the costs of alignment with the United States increasingly great — perhaps greater even than the benefits. That is a disquieting development.

Yet, it is equally possible that the deterioration in US-European relations will lead to a realisation on both sides of the Atlantic that a major readjustment is necessary in order to renew and update the partnership in ways appropriate to the era we now live in. Europe would invest in the resources necessary to complement its soft power resources with real, hard power capabilities. The United States would once again come to realise that allies and alliances are institutions to harbour and strengthen rather than abandon or take for granted. A partnership of relative equals could emerge from this readjustment to deal with common challenges ranging from terrorism and weapons of mass destruction to

energy security, climate change and infectious diseases — provided both sides decided this is what they wanted. What is no longer possible is for the relationship to continue to drift. There is too much resentment, and too many are becoming alienated from the relationship, for the drifting apart to continue indefinitely.

Relations between Europe and the United States have reached a turning point. Either it comes to an end or it will be renewed. Which one of these possibilities comes true will depend on the parties — and especially on the United States, which, as the senior partner, has the greatest ability either to get the relationship back on track or to push it off the road completely.

Shift or rift
Assessing US-EU
relations after Iraq

# Power without restraint?
# Back to realities

**Jean-Yves Haine**

The attacks of 11 September were a world-changing event for America. They provided the Bush administration with a new paradigm in international politics, effectively putting an end to the post-Cold War era. The 'war on terror' became the US new mission that had to be carried out with an assurance that reflected the outrage felt throughout the country. This new assertiveness gave American foreign policy an inflexible character, reinforced by the Bush administration's predetermined beliefs and strategic options that favoured unilateral and militaristic approaches. For Europe, by contrast, this tragedy did not have the same intensity in a region still swallowing the end of its half-century-long division. While the United States initiated a new global agenda in world politics, European countries were, by and large, focusing on difficult regional issues of enlarging and deepening the European Union. The more assertive and forceful US foreign policy became, the more wearily and suspiciously Europeans answered. The unilateral tone and the global scope of the war on terror led to increasingly divergent security perceptions and interests across the Atlantic. The gap between an increasingly revisionist United States and a generally status quo Europe took a dramatic turn in Iraq.[1] The prewar period saw one of the deepest NATO crises since at least Suez in 1956. Constructive diplomacy, mutual respect and well understood long-term interests should have avoided this unnecessary division of the West.

   This paper will focus primarily on the US side of the transatlantic equation. Its aim is first to understand why the global approach and the unilateralist preference were so strong among the Bush administration's officials; second, to underline the flawed logic and the inherent risks of the strategic choices made by Washington; and third, to underline their likely consequences for America. In particular, the go-it-alone policy option and the preventive Iraqi war illustrate the limits of US power, and the current difficulties in Iraq point to a more modest and realist approach to

1. The term 'revisionist' is not pejorative. It depicts the reality of the current international system. The term was first used by Hans Morgenthau, *Scientific Man vs. Power Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1946). For further developments on this notion, see Arnold Wolfers, *Discord and Collaboration, Essays in International Politics* (Baltimore, Md.: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1962), pp. 81-102.

world politics. Clearly, European countries have to develop a more coherent, coordinated and responsible foreign policy if the European Union wants to influence Washington and, beyond, gain a role more appropriate to its economic weight in the world. A more balanced and constructive partnership should result from this recognition of mutual weaknesses and respective strengths. In retrospect, the 9/11 tragedy could have represented a new binding glue across the Atlantic like the Soviet challenge in the late 1940s. In any case, the fight against international terrorism and WMD proliferation can only be decisively won if the West acts together. After all, the main lesson of the Cold War was indeed that American power was essential, but allied unity was even more crucial. This message should not be forgotten on both sides of the Atlantic.

## Global by ambition, alone by choice

The recurrent privilege of the American superpower was that history was generally taught from outside, rarely lived from inside. With the fall of the Twin Towers, America rediscovered the real world. It was an historical moment, a period of 'tectonic shifts' as Condoleezza Rice put it, similar to the rise of the Soviet challenge at the end of the 1940s. President Bush, like Harry S Truman, proceeded to a global analysis of the threat of international terrorism, but unlike his predecessor, George W. Bush favoured a unilateralist approach to tackle these new security threats. More broadly, the answer of the Bush administration to this new 'day of infamy' displayed permanent trends as well as new specific features of US foreign policy. Among the former, several old habits can be identified: a Manichean approach to the definition of the enemy, a global interpretation of the threat, an ideological perspective in framing the challenge, a missionary zeal in fulfilling its new-found mission with the usual premium on power, technology and warfare as solutions to the new security dilemmas raised by international terrorism. Among the latter, several innovations stand out: a sovereign and unilateral prerogative to proclaim what is right and wrong for the world, a clear emphasis on unilateralism to achieve US objectives, a shift from institutional management to ad hoc coalition building and a new prominence given to the preventive use of force.

This combination represents a more assertive version of American exceptionalism in world affairs, a kind of 'Wilsonianism in boots', a Jacksonian interpretation of 'democratic imperialism'.[2]

The 'war on terror' was thus the Bush administration's answer to the trauma of 11 September. This formula, which has become the alpha and the omega of US foreign policy, has the political advantage of unwavering determination that contrasts with Clinton's evasive approaches and reflects the legitimate feeling of outrage in US public opinion. It offered none the less the misleading simplicity of erasing complexities and dilemmas inherent in world affairs, it was based on the weak assumption of moral clarity, since Washington had to rely on dubious allies like Pakistan or Saudi Arabia to reach the source of Osama bin Laden's terrorism, and it pursued an elusive goal far more ambitious than the fight against al-Qaeda.[3] If the 'war on terror' slogan was not new per se, the belief that it could actually be won was the real disturbing novelty.[4] The new global challenge was addressed with a different assumption that made all the difference between a prudent realist policy *à la* Kissinger and the pre-emptive doctrine *à la* Wolfowitz. The working hypothesis seemed simple enough: US hegemony should be used to win, not to manage, the 'war on terror' and the axis of evil that supported it. US supremacy allows for autonomous actions and makes it possible to ignore traditional allies. With the evident but reassuring perception of US power and the hubris that came with this conviction, the Bush administration began to articulate its grand strategy.

To understand this emphasis on sovereignty and power, the focus should be put first on the personalities that make up Bush's team and second on the doctrine they promoted. The group around President Bush are heterogeneous, but they reached agreement on the new mission to eradicate terrorism. Broadly put, we can distinguish three different groups inside the White House. Among the first faction, we find Dick Cheney, a discreet but influential voice, and Donald Rumsfeld, a 'not-so-quiet American', as *The Economist* put it, who could be called 'assertive nationalists'. They made their career during the Cold War and, from this experience, held several deep beliefs about the myth of arms control, the failure of détente and the fallacy of needlessly entangling international institutions. The end of the Cold War was first and foremost the direct result of a policy of strength, not an exercise in soft persuasion. Hard power provides the real leverage, the essential

2. The first expression belongs to Pierre Hassner, 'The United States: the empire of force or the force of empire?', *Chaillot Paper* 54 (Paris: EU Institute for Security Studies, September 2002), p. 43. The second is from Ivo Daalder, in Stephen Fidler and Gerard Baker, 'America's democratic imperialists', *Financial Times*, 5 March 2003.

3. As Professor Van Evera has stated, 'Defining it as a broad war on terror was a tremendous mistake. It should have been a war on Al Qaeda . . . The Administration defined it as a broad war on terror, including groups that have never taken a swing at the United States and never will. It leads to a loss of focus. Al Qaeda escapes through the cracks. And you make enemies of the people you need against Al Qaeda.' Quoted in Lemann Nicholas, 'The War On What?', *The New Yorker*, 16 September 2002. See also Michael Howard, 'Mistake to Declare this a War?', *RUSI Journal*, no. 146, December 2001, pp. 1-4; and Eliot A. Cohen, 'A Strange War', *The National Interest,* Special Thanksgiving Issue, 2001, pp. 3-8.

4. As Stanley Hoffmann wrote more than thirty years ago: 'The problem is not that of realism versus idealism, or moralism versus power, every action in international affairs contains both aspects. The question is whether abstract principles and clumsy assumptions help to resolve the issue. Here US foreign policy is not moralist, idealist or legalist. The main sin is its formulism or formalism. Formulism because complexities are reduced to political slogans and simplistic formulæ, formalism because these formulæ reveal an insufficient grasp of the political, historical and social processes that foreign policies must deal with.' Stanley Hoffmann, *Gulliver's Troubles or The Setting of American Foreign Policy* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1968), p. 126. The 'war on terror' slogan fits his description perfectly.

ingredient behind diplomacy. These assertive nationalists favour a sovereign and assertive way of pursuing US national interest. The second group is more ideologically oriented and relatively new to the Washington landscape, as their neo-conservative label suggests. Senior officials such as Paul Wolfowitz and Douglas Feith at the Pentagon favour an extension of the empire of liberty, they proclaim American power as a force for moral good in the world. Taking stock of unparalleled US hegemony, they used 11 September as an alibi to promote a far wider ambition than the fight against terrorism. Their ultimate aim is to redraw the map of the entire Middle East. In that respect, Iraq is not simply an attempt to tidy up unfinished business, it is the first step leading to the democratisation of the region. Such ideas had been promoted well before September 2001, in think tanks like the American Enterprise Institute or the Project for the New American Century. Somewhere between the end of the Afghan campaign and President Bush's State of the Union Address in January 2002, came the convergence of views between these two groups that would produce the war against Iraq. The third branch in the US administration is symbolised by Colin Powell, a self-styled 'Rockefeller Republican'. Suspicious of arrogant idealism and fearful of the consequences of any military campaign, the Secretary of State cultivates a classic method to enhance national interests based on international legitimacy and institutional alliance. He was instrumental in bringing the President to the UN framework in September 2002, but he was constantly undercut by the determination of the Vice-President to fight the war, even without a Security Council resolution.[5] Seen as a dove by the 'democratic imperialists', Colin Powell embodied the State Department's prudent realism and tactful diplomacy, but he is also totally loyal to the President.[6] As diverse as they may seem, these groups share some common characteristics: all believe in US power, all are convinced of American superiority and all reject former President Clinton's foreign policies of liberal internationalism. For his part, the President arrived at the White House inexperienced in world affairs. His own philosophy amounted to a populist commitment to American liberties, a distrust of the federal government, and a deep patriotic feeling expressed in his attachment to the US Armed Forces. In foreign affairs, he displayed a Jacksonian conviction that merged vigilance and modesty abroad, the superiority of US values and suspicion of international institutions.[7] 11 September gave him a

5. As one biographer of George W. Bush puts it, between a Powell and a Rumsfeld, there is a difference analogous to that between two Civil War generals, George McClellan and Ulysses S. Grant. In each case, the first favoured 'the smallest possible war', the second 'the biggest possible victory'. Anthony Lewis, 'On the West Wing', *New York Review of Books*, February 2003.

6. 'Now lots of people call me "the reluctant warrior" or "the dove". Fine, would you like to tattoo it on me? I don't mind. I've seen war, I've been in war, I've led men in battle . . . I don't have to demonstrate my toughness or my credentials to anyone.' Richard Wolffe and Tamara Lipper, 'Powell In the Bunker', *Newsweek*, 24 March 2003.

7. 'Jacksonians approach foreign policy in a very different spirit, one in which honor, concern for reputation and faith in military institutions play a much greater role . . . The United States must be vigilant, strongly armed. At times, we must fight preemptive wars. Of all of the major currents in American society, Jacksonians have the least regard for international law and international practice.' Walter Russell Mead, *Special Providence, American Foreign Policy and How it Changed the World* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2001), p. 246.

mission embraced with the zeal of a born-again Christian. His journey from modesty to activism on the world scene was as impressive as was the conversion of his National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice, from great-power balancer to regime-change enforcer. In this change, both seemed to have assumed the crusaders' clothes with a blind confidence about the chosen means and the final end.[8] This faith contrasts with a somewhat chaotic decision-making process that gives complete freedom to senior members of the Administration to express their often contradictory views while the President makes the crucial decisions behind the scenes. Well beyond the classic divide between the State Department and the Pentagon, this Eisenhower style of presidency is perceived from abroad as inconsistent and disconcerting. For European allies, it is especially difficult to get a clear picture of US strategic options when conflicting opinions are delivered simultaneously and when traditional channels of diplomacy are replaced by unilateral diktat expressed in public forum and TV shows.

The doctrine as stated in the National Security Strategy (NSS) of September 2002 presented an ambiguous, and in many ways impossible, compromise between these different factions. As such it represents an original combination of US exceptionalism that combines the realities of US hegemony and the universal value of liberty. The idealistic side is all too obvious: Wilsonian rhetoric is used in the document to stress the imperative need to promote justice, liberty, and freedom. These, the document proclaims, 'are right and true for every person, in every society'. This affirmation could be seen as excessive, but it is hardly new. Like the 'Four Freedoms' Address delivered by Franklin D. Roosevelt on 6 January, 1941 or the 14 April 1950 NSC-68 document's determination to protect 'essential elements of individual freedom', in time of crisis, the natural tendency is to reaffirm American principles. The next step is to relate these principles to available capacities, and here the document assumes, not very surprisingly, America's indisputable hegemony around the world. But this unparalleled hegemonic position, once a source of questioning if not a motive for inaction and withdrawal, is now a welcome reality that offers opportunities to shape the international arena. Moreover, the NSS document expressed a need to maintain that position to discourage other nations from acquiring weapons to challenge US power. At the same time, it identified threats in the combination of terrorism,

8. As Nicholas Lemann has observed: 'Though Bush and Rice would appear to be an unlikely pair, the common ground between them encompasses religious faith and football fandom and a sardonic sense of humor; more broadly an outsider-inside-the-establishment feeling and a tendency to see life in terms of good guys and bad guys; even more broadly, a complete absence of self-doubt.' Nicholas Lemann, 'Without a Doubt', *The New Yorker*, 14 and 21 October 2002, p. 178.

tyranny and technology, i.e. weapons of mass destruction (WMD). The combination of these 'three T's' makes the security environment more complex and dangerous. Thus, this accepted hegemony follows paradoxically from a sudden, unprecedented and now exposed vulnerability. At its core, the NSS document calls for the United States to use its 'unparalleled military strength and great economic and political influence' to establish 'a balance of power that favors human freedom'.[9] A combination of unparallel supremacy that should stay unchallenged and a global perception of the new threats constituted the basis of the Bush doctrine.

Bush's specific approaches rested, however, on the methods envisaged for achieving these ambitious goals, notably pre-emption and coalitions of the willing. The first option, pre-emption, received a detailed treatment, even though media reports tended to exaggerate the place of this strategy in the document. Pre-emptive strikes as such were not new to US foreign policy, even though they were previously associated with covert operations.[10] The NSS made clear that 'today, our enemies see weapons of mass destruction as weapons of choice. We must be prepared to stop rogue states and their terrorist clients before they are able to threaten or use weapons of mass destruction against the United States and our allies and friends.' The Administration posits a policy of 'proactive counter-proliferation', whereby it 'will disrupt and destroy terrorist organizations by . . . identifying and destroying the threats before they reach our borders'.[11] This strategy revealed two controversial features: Firstly, the document assumed that containment and deterrence, the strategic pillars during the Cold War, were no longer applicable in a world where the threat of retaliation 'is less likely to work against leaders of rogue states'. Even if the argument only questions the rationality of the leaders of these specific states, the assumption none the less shifted the emphasis from the weapons involved to the personality of leaders that may have them. This *intuitu personae* interpretation of nuclear deterrence was clearly new. Secondly, it rejected the classic international law definition of pre-emption based on imminent danger of an attack by proclaiming the right to 'anticipatory action to defend ourselves, even if uncertainty remains as to the time and place of the enemy's attack'. This 'right' constituted a clear broadening of the *jus ad bellum* and represented a liberal, to say the least, interpretation of the UN Charter. Indeed, when Israel pre-emptively destroyed the Osiraq nuclear power plant in Iraq on 7 June 1981,

9. The phrase 'balance of power that promotes freedom' is repeated five times in the document. Its paternity belongs to Condoleezza Rice. At the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies in April 2002, she observed that 'an earthquake of the magnitude of 9/11 can shift the tectonic plates of international politics . . . this is a period not just of grave danger, but of enormous opportunity . . . a period akin to 1945 to 1947, when American leadership expanded the number of free and democratic states – Japan and Germany among the great powers – to create a new balance of power that favoured freedom.' Quoted by Frances Fitzgerald, 'Bush & the World', *The New York Review of Books*, 26 September 2002.

10. Examples of pre-emptive operations include Guatemala (1954), Cuba (1961) and Chile (1973). Moreover, President Clinton 'partially justified the 1998 cruise missile attacks on targets in Afghanistan and Sudan on preventative grounds'. See Ivo H. Daalder, James M. Lindsay and James B. Steinberg, 'The Bush National Security Strategy: An Evaluation', *Brookings Policy Paper*, 4 October 2002, p. 7.

11. Bush initially outlined this thinking during his West Point speech on 1 June 2002: 'Before the day of horror can come, before it is too late to act, this danger will be removed.' In other words, 'the best defense is a good offence'. There is a Jacksonian simplicity in killing before being killed. See Robert L. Bartley, 'Thinking Things Over: At Dawn in a New Diplomatic Era', *The Wall Street Journal*, 17 June 2002.

the UN Security Council unanimously, including the United States, condemned the act as 'clear violation of the Charter of the United Nations and the norms of international conduct'.[12] By pre-emption, the Bush administration actually meant prevention.

The second specific feature of Bush's strategy was the 'coalition of the willing' mantra. The Jacksonian impulse of the Bush team encouraged a unilateral approach to international issues and a deep distrust of multinational frameworks. Once elected, President Bush implemented this unilateralist impulse with astonishing speed: the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty was abandoned so as to implement the National Missile Defense, US judicial standards were deemed superior to those of the proposed International Criminal Court, which was thus rejected, and the Kyoto Protocol appeared to be contrary to US environment policy and was therefore not even discussed. After 11 September, Washington did not build on the sympathy expressed throughout the world for American victims: what the White House wanted was total freedom of action. When Secretary-General Lord Robertson invoked NATO's Article 5, there was no answer from the White House, especially the Pentagon, when Operation *Enduring Freedom* was launched in Afghanistan.[13] However President Bush chose the UN path when the Iraqi threat was addressed in September 2002. But in parallel with this, the right to act alone if necessary was repeated as a warning against non-compliance from other Security Council members. A genuine willingness to work collectively was clearly absent. It seems inconsistent to choose the UN path while dismissing the institution, and pointless to search for a coalition while affirming a willingness to go it alone anyway. This instrumental view of international institutions alienated many traditional allies and friends of Washington. Moreover, for the first time since 1945, the United States did not employ its traditional grouping strategy vis-à-vis Europe, but chose a divide and rule course, emphasising the paralysis of an 'old Europe' against the vision of the 'new one'. True, European divisions were deep and Washington did not really need to emphasise them very strongly. If one reads carefully the so-called 'letter of the Eight' published in the *Wall Street Journal*, its content, as far as Iraq was concerned, had nothing particularly offensive for the rest of Europe. But the very fact that Washington used, if not promoted, it in order to underline European divisions was a significant departure from its traditional role. Instead of

12. UN Security Council Resolution 487 dated 19 June 1981. Jeanne Kirkpatrick, the then US Ambassador to the UN, described it as 'shocking' and compared it to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. See Nicholas D. Kristoff, 'The Osirak Precedent', *The New York Times*, 15 November 2002.

13. In sidelining NATO in Afghanistan, some arguments were technical but most were purely political. See Brian Collins, 'Operation Enduring Freedom and the Future of NATO', *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs*, vol. 3, no. 2, Summer/Fall 2002, pp. 51-6.

bridging gaps, Washington deepened and exploited them. If this tactic made sense in the short term for democratic imperialists' willingness to topple Saddam, it none the less weakened the US position in the long term against terror. Rumsfeld's diplomacy, or more adequately the lack of it, led to an increasing alienation of traditional allies and ultimately to United States' isolation. The European reaction was evidently negative but excessive too. After all, coalitions of the willing are precisely what EU members are trying to achieve among themselves by 'enhanced cooperation' in defence matters. Moreover, in an Alliance of 26 members, it was understandable that Washington refused to be limited by the lowest common denominator. The main vehicle for cooperation was thus through coalitions of the willing as opposed to institutional frameworks.[14] In this respect, NATO becomes merely a toolbox for an American agenda to which allies have to submit or run the risk of being ignored. The consensus and reciprocity that formed the backbones of the Atlantic grand bargain for fifty years are dismissed for unilateral and sovereign actions. Coupled with the simplistic 'being with us or against us', this disinclination confronts traditional allies with an impossible dilemma of choosing between blind submission and overt opposition.[15] As a result, allies who expressed doubts about the war in Iraq were not keen to grant concessions when Turkey asked for assistance through NATO's Article 4. This unnecessarily damaging crisis was a direct consequence of Washington's neglect for allies. These two elements, the global war on terror and opting to wage it alone, gave an imperial tone to US foreign policies. Their combination has huge implications not only for the international system but most importantly for the United States itself.

## Flawed by logic, risky by nature

14. Donald Rumsfeld, 'The Coalition and the Mission', *The Washington Post*, 21 October 2001.

15. On 20 September 2001, President Bush addressed the US Congress declaring, 'either you are with us or you are with the terrorists'. This statement, astonishing as it was, was barely mentioned the day after in the American press. It made headline news in *Le Monde*, the very newspaper that had said that everyone was American now.

Global in its essence, the Bush doctrine received its first application where failed states are also rogue states, i.e. WMD proliferators. Washington being deterred in the case of North Korea, although a perfect example of this deadly combination, Iraq became the first recipient of this imperial impulsion. The strategic reasons seemed evident to the Bush administration. Disarmament, regime change and stability in the Middle East are reinforcing arguments for the President. The case presented to the international community was,

however, confusing. Generally, the United States tends to colour strategic necessities with an idealistic blend. With Iraq, it was the other way around. Washington shaded its main objective of regime change with strategic motives linked to disarmament and terrorism. Contrary to a basic realist analysis, the White House tended to attribute to Saddam Hussein malicious intentions first and hypothetical capabilities second. Reversing this order of priorities, most Europeans focused on current capabilities and disregarded past behaviour. They were more or less ready to recognise the remote threat that a nuclear Iraq is likely to pose for the region in the future, but they did not support regime change by force, something that seemed to them too provocative a gesture in a country that had nothing to do with 11 September. In other words, Saddam Hussein was indeed a confirmed liar but ultimately he was not a danger. Being asked to choose their camp by Donald Rumsfeld, most European countries would have preferred to avoid the dilemma. For some, notably France, the challenge was irresistible. Precisely because Iraq was a war of choice, not a conflict of necessity, and because military victory was preordained, the debate evolved rapidly from the particular case to general principles, from Saddam's disarmament to Washington's use of force, from the opportunity of a second UN resolution to the relevance of the UN itself, from a specific demand of assistance by Turkey to NATO's *raison d'être*. At some point, every major actor, through sheer arrogance, stubborn pride and purely internal political short-sightedness, cornered itself into a position that did not reflect its own interests. In this game of diplomatic massacre, the only winner was bin Laden, who seemed to have succeeded to achieve what 40 years of communism had failed to bring about: the end of the West.[16] In Iraq, only the war went well. The prewar management was a fiasco; the postwar stabilisation is not yet a success. Even if it is too early to make a judgment about the pacification and the reconstruction of Iraq, this war has had major impacts for the international system and for the United States itself. Briefly put, the main problem of the current US strategy is one of correlation between ends and means: being too idealist, it is not realist enough. The latter points to the flawed logic of preventive war, the former to the inherent limits and risks of nation-building operations.

Regarding the doctrine of prevention, different arguments must be distinguished. First, there is the risk of being pre-empted yourself or to trigger the use of the very weapons you want to

16. For realists, the unity of the West ended with the Soviet collapse. As Owen Harries has argued, 'The political "West" is not a natural construct but a highly artificial one. It took the presence of a life-threatening, overtly hostile "East" to bring it into existence and to maintain its unity. It is extremely doubtful whether it can now survive the disappearance of that enemy.' Owen Harries, 'The Collapse of the West', *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 72, no. 4, Sept-Oct 1993, p. 22.

17. As Richard Betts commented before the conflict: 'The United States is about to poke a snake out of fear that the snake might strike sometime in the future, while virtually ignoring the danger that it may strike back when America pokes it . . . Washington has given Saddam more than enough time to concoct retaliation, since he has had months of notice that the Americans are coming. The Bush administration has made this war the most telegraphed punch in military history.' Richard K. Betts, 'Suicide from Fear of Death?', *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 82, no. 1, January-February 2003, pp. 35 and 38. The title of this article comes from Bismarck's characterisation of preventive war: 'Preventive war is like committing suicide from fear of death; it would put the full weight of the imponderables on the side of the enemies we have attacked.' Quoted by Jack Snyder, *Ideology of the Offensive: Military Decision Making and the Disasters of 1914* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984), p. 113.

18. On this, see Marc Trachtenberg, 'A Wasting Asset: American Strategy and the Shifting Nuclear Balance, 1949-54', *International Security*, vol. 13, no. 3, Winter 1989-90, pp. 5-50. According to recent archives, McGeorge Bundy, National Security Adviser to President Johnson, was in early 1964 in favour of a limited air strike to destroy China's Lop Nor nuclear facilities before Beijing produced a nuclear bomb. Robert H. Johnson, State Department Policy Planning Staff, explored the issue of pre-emption in a major study in April 1964, 'The Bases for Direct Action Against Chinese Communist Nuclear Facilities', but President Johnson rejected it. William Burr and Jeffrey T. Richelson, 'Whether to Strangle the Baby in the Cradle: The United States and the Chinese Nuclear Program, 1960-1964', *International Security*, vol. 25, no. 3, Winter 2000/01, pp. 54-99.

eliminate. When prevention is applied to a country that is supposed to have weapons of mass destruction, the probability of preemption before the prevention with such weapons is very likely.[17] Temptations emerged during the Cold War to strike first before enemies acquired nuclear capabilities, but they were ultimately rejected by Harry S Truman vis-à-vis the Soviet Union and by Lyndon Johnson vis-à-vis China.[18] The emphasis on preventive action against a rogue state reveals the inability of Washington to put itself in the shoes of those who feel the threat of invasion. If the adversary is really a rogue state in the process of acquiring WMD, preventive action increases the likelihood that these weapons will be used.

Second, it increases rather than decreases the risks of proliferation. As North Korea's proclamation has demonstrated and as Iran's determination indicates, it is safer to declare your weapons of mass destruction in order to deter your enemies. In other words, the US doctrine has not diminished the willingness of these countries to acquire nuclear weapons. As far as interstate relations are concerned, deterrence remains a valuable concept.

Third, any preventive strike by definition reinforces the importance of evidence and intelligence and puts the credibility of the striker in line. As 11 September itself tragically demonstrated, intelligence is not science but an educated guess. Temptations of reading intelligence reports according to pre-existing beliefs and preordained conclusions are always present; they are especially difficult to escape for an administration so influenced by ideology. The debate about WMD in Iraq is far from over, but the reputation of Washington and London has clearly suffered in the process. Containment was in fact a less risky option. Indeed, a majority of realist scholars have forcefully stressed the point that the war against Iraq was simply unnecessary: the containment of Saddam Hussein's threat had actually worked. Both logic and historical evidence suggested that a policy of vigilant containment would have been successful. If Iraq tried to use WMD to blackmail its neighbours, expand its territory or attack another state directly, its move would have been met by the vastly superior power of the United States. As John Mearsheimer has forcefully argued, containing Iraq was a sound policy because 'it only takes a leader who wants to stay alive and who wants to remain in power. Throughout his lengthy and brutal career, Saddam Hussein has

repeatedly shown that these two goals are absolutely paramount. That is why deterrence and containment would work.'[19]

Fourth, behind a preventive war lies the false assumption of security through expansion. Saddam's dictatorship may have been removed, but this leads to significant security issues in the entire region, not least for the Americans themselves. As Jack Snyder has written, 'historically, one problem with this strategy has been that the pacification of one turbulent frontier has simply led to the creation of another one, adjacent to the first'.[20] Moreover, if disarmament through regime change worked for Iraq, this solution would likely be valid as well for Syria, Iran, etc. This snowball effect is reinforced by the reputation argument repeatedly used by the Bush administration: 'If we fail to act against Saddam's non-compliance with inspections, he will conclude that the international community has lost its will, that he can go right on and do more to rebuild an arsenal of devastating destruction. Some day, some way, I guarantee you, he will use that arsenal.'[21] But Saddam was a test of US reputation just because the White House says so. With this rhetoric, every issue is seen through the prism of American resolve to fight the war on terror. This considerably narrows the room of manoeuvre for diplomacy and temptingly expands the use of force. This reasoning dangerously amounts to self-fulfilling prophecy. As the father of containment George Kennan commented after the release of NSS 2002, 'anyone who has studied history knows that you might start a war with certain things in your mind, but you end up fighting for things never thought of before.'[22] To his comment, one may be tempted to add that along the way, you act with fewer allies and you end up with more enemies. As the crisis over Iraq has clearly demonstrated, the risk of being isolated is real. This isolation may not be a factor for waging war, but it becomes one for building peace.

These arguments underlined strategic effects of preventive action. In Washington, there was such confidence in US power that these likely consequences were easily ignored. Any superpower is prone to disregard long-term difficulties in favour of short-term advantages. The ideological character of the Bush administration reinforced this natural tendency.[23] The regime change motive ultimately overrode all the strategic doubts and security uncertainties. Most importantly, the real motive behind the preventive war against Iraq rested more on the nature of the

19. For arguments along this line, see John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt, 'An Unnecessary War', *Foreign Policy*, no. 134, January-February 2003, pp. 51-9; Morton H. Halperin, 'A Case for Containment', *The New York Times*, 11 February 2003; Nicholas D. Kristof, 'Containment is better', *The New York Times*, 8 February 2003.

20. He adds: 'America is emotionally primed to accept the myths of empire. This may feel right, but it is no way to run a grand strategy.' Jack L. Snyder, 'Imperial Temptations', *The National Interest*, no. 71, Spring 2003, p. 38.

21. Donald Rumsfeld, Testimony before the House Armed Services Committee, 18-19 September 2002.

22. Quoted by Bruce Cumings, 'The next in line', *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*, vol. 59, no. 1, Jan/Feb 2003, p. 25.

23. On this, see Robert Jervis, 'The compulsive Empire', *Foreign Policy*, July-August 2003, pp. 83-7.

regime than on the real or supposed threats it posed. Iraq as such had no direct link with the terrorism of al-Qaeda; it diverted US resources from the real danger of international terrorism and proliferation. But if regime change was the real objective, then the strategy of going alone involved unnecessary risks and intrinsic dangers. Enforcing democracy using tanks is per se a perilous endeavour. As such it requires serious efforts and long-term involvement in the domestic affairs of the country involved. Most importantly, it demands international legitimacy and collective support. The risks of this Wilsonian endeavour were systematically ignored as the lack of any coherent postwar planning suggests. Here also, several remarks are in order.

First, the militaristic approach to nation-building runs the risks of deepening the problems it is supposed to solve. Clearly, security must be restored, but in the short term casualties on both sides breed cycles of violence and repression. In the long term, the line between reconstruction and occupation becomes less and less clear. In these conditions, Iraq, even with a democratic system in place, will not necessarily be friendly to the United States. Local population must have a voice when American planes and tanks are deployed in their territories. Getting agreement from unrepresentative governments leads to resentment and opposition. Breaking this vicious circle is indeed a daunting task. The relatively small number of US military forces dedicated to this task complicates the matter furthermore. Condoleezza Rice once said that 82nd Airborne soldiers were not supposed to help kids go to kindergarten. The real weakness of the US effort lies precisely in the lack of units that should carry out these tasks.[24] It is not only the number of troops that is problematic; it is using the right kind of forces. There the United States has something to learn from Europe.

Second, rebuilding a nation demands a whole range of tools: soft power components are indispensable elements that must back up hard power. The restoration of the rule of law implies the involvement of police forces, officials of the judiciary branch, including prosecutors and judges, who must first replace local authorities, then educate locals to enforce justice. The creation of the Iraqi Governing Council is a first step in the right direction. Political activity is no longer clandestine, debates are proliferating on campuses, new political parties have emerged and a free press is back in business. But political progress must be matched by

24. Out of a total fighting force of about 490,000, the United States has only around 37,000 military police, a figure that has not changed much in decades. The MP, a specialist soldier with the kind of training and equipment needed to enforce order in urban areas, is the closest the United States has to a peacekeeping soldier. Almost half of them – 15,000 – are active-duty troops, with the balance in the Army reserve or the National Guard. There are about 12,000 MPs currently assigned to Iraq.

economic development. Clearly, oil revenues will not suffice to cover the economic recovery of Iraq in the short term. On the contrary, oil fields need investment, engineers and contractors. What Iraq needs most is job creation. More broadly, Washington must commit more resources in terms of money and personnel to restart the economy. The triad of security, governance and economy will improve only together.

Third, without even addressing the complex issues of democratisation and the Islamic world, nation-building is a long, painful and costly process. As the Balkans experience suggests, long-term involvement is unavoidable in transforming the end of a war into a lasting peace. The current Administration has so far underestimate this unpleasant reality. If Operation *Enduring Freedom* in Afghanistan was a military success, the stabilisation of the country is so far limited to Kabul.[25] Washington refusing to go beyond the capital, Afghanistan has by and large returned to its warlord system of division and confrontation. Moreover, in planning next year's budget, the Bush administration has simply forgotten to provision any financial aid to Afghanistan. With Iraq, such neglect will not remain benign.[26] The lack of serious postwar planning was simply astonishing, and the bureaucratic battle inside Washington, notably between the State Department and the Pentagon, made things even worse. In a word, the Bush administration waged war with one voice, but it pursued peace with many discordant voices. In any case, President Bush could not afford to repeat the Afghan precedent. This does not mean that current US efforts are doomed to fail, but it does mean that they will be more costly and longer than the Administration planned on.[27] The occupation of Iraq will be counted in years, not in months.

Fourth, the go-it-alone policy favoured by President Bush severely restrained its postwar options. Too often during the prewar period, Europeans had the impression that crucial decisions had been already made when they were consulted. They were left with a frustrating 'take it or leave it' method that rendered consultation a mere formality. Members of the Administration, intellectuals from conservative think tanks and numerous pundits in the media often used inflammatory rhetoric promoting confrontation rather than negotiation. At the end of this painful process, the President in his own martial and assertive manner made his choice. Viewed from Europe, this style of government led to

25. Even from a strict military point of view, the Afghan campaign failed in one of its main objectives, i.e. the capture of bin Laden. In this respect, Tora Bora was a fiasco.

26. See Paul Krugman, 'Conquest and Neglect', *The New York Times*, 11 April 2003.

27. As Niall Ferguson has argued, 'An empire cannot be run on a shoestring, but there is right now no other way, because the imperial metropole is in denial. America is a colossus with feet of clay. Denial of reality is not in the national interest. What worries me is the terrible possibility that Mr. Rumsfeld and Mr. Bush genuinely believe- and Mr. Bremer, and many others genuinely believe- that the United States can withdraw from Iraq in the very near future, having held free and fair elections.' Niall Ferguson, 'America as Empire, Now and in the Future', in *The National Interest*, 23 July 2003; available at www.inthenationalinterest.com.

confusion and misunderstanding. Allies were left without any room for manoeuvre to be involved and listened to in this peculiar decision-making process; the usual channels of influence seem to have been closed and traditional diplomacy was increasingly difficult when the main avenues used to express opinion were television studios rather than embassies. Opportunities for concerted action in Iraq were unnecessarily missed. This unilateral posture has significant consequences for peace building operations in Iraq. Washington has to support the heavy burdens of reconstruction and security mainly alone. The UN route is essentially closed, but it must ultimately be reopened. What should have been a collective effort is now essentially an American crusade. In this respect, despite its military weakness, or maybe because of it, the European Union has developed a variety of civilian forces from police officers to civil administrators trained to help in the establishment of the rule of law. With its experience in the Balkans, the EU acquired a real expertise. It is in the interests of the United States and Europe that peace building efforts become multilateral in Iraq. This could only be achieved through a new UN mandate that would legitimise the US presence and could open the road for a multinational operation. Legitimacy is an elusive quest. At the end of the day, it will be gained and recognised if American actions in Iraq are conducive to a more democratic, stable and wealthy Iraq. If the war in Iraq becomes a breeding ground for terrorism, then not only the legitimacy but most importantly the security of the United States would be at risk.

The Bush administration's global interpretation of the threat and its ideological perspective in framing the answers, i.e. the strategy of preventive war it has endorsed and the regime change it has implemented, should have made it more attentive to multilateral requirements. Enjoying a comfortable degree of support at home does not remove the need to gain consent abroad. US supremacy is undisputable, but precisely because its exercise pursued a global ambition, alliance politics, international legitimacy and world public opinion matter even more. Ultimately, international realities cannot be escaped indefinitely without affecting US politics and economics.

## Multilateral by identity, together by necessity

From an international politics perspective, the preventive strategy put forward by the Bush administration is unnecessarily dangerous and ultimately self-defeating; the go-it-alone decision put an especially heavy burden on the already difficult task of nation-building. Combined, these two elements already had considerable consequences: they led to a growing isolation of and a deteriorating image of America in the world.

Prevention seems an 'un-American' way of managing security, an endeavour that amounts to a 'Pearl Harbor that would ultimately alienate a great part of the civilized world', as Robert Kennedy argued during the Cuban missile crisis. For 175 years, he said, 'we have not been that kind of country'.[28] The Iraqi crisis forcefully illustrated these points. The strategy of prevention and the unilateral approaches it entailed were far less supported by US public opinion than the Administration thought. If Colin Powell persuaded the President to choose the UN road during summer 2002, it was because he brought with him convincing poll figures showing that multilateralism was the most preferred option of the American people.[29] Despite the failure to obtain consensus at the UN after resolution 1441, the US public today still seems to endorse more active involvement of the United Nations in Iraq, especially if this could lead to more balanced burden-sharing in terms of forces on the ground. Victories are of course always popular but they lead to long-term investment, occupation and duties beyond borders that the US public has generally been reluctant to endorse. Public support for the occupation is already eroding. In mid-April, just after the fall of Baghdad, 73 per cent of Americans said it was worth going to war in Iraq, according to a Gallup poll. The figure is now 56 per cent.[30] It is extremely doubtful that American public opinion will tolerate a long-term military presence that entails almost daily casualties. Without even entering into the debate about possible deceptions by some officials in presenting the Iraqi threat to the American people, it is clear that the popularity of President Bush is already eroding. Briefly put, President Bush's global and unilateral security agenda does not fit very well into America's traditionally reluctant internationalism. The Vietnam analogy is already flourishing in media circles.

28. On 17 October 1962, George Ball wrote in a memo to the President: 'We tried Japanese as war criminals because of the sneak attack on Pearl Harbor . . . A surprise strike far from establishing our moral strength . . . would in fact alienate a great part of the civilized world by behaving in a manner wholly contrary to our traditions.' The President's brother used the Pearl Harbor analogy at the crucial meeting of 22 October. See Phillip Zelikow and Ernest May, *The Kennedy Tapes, Inside the White House During the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1997), pp. 121, 143, 238 and 244.

29. See the report of Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, 'American Public Opinion & Foreign Policy', issued in October 2002; available at www.worldviews.org. See also Craig Kennedy and Marshall M. Bolton, 'The Real Transatlantic Gap', *Foreign Policy*, November–December 2002, pp. 66-74.

30. The Gallup poll was conducted in the first week of July 2003. More worryingly, according to a Pew Research Centre poll, the share of those who think the military effort is going very well has fallen by two-thirds, to just 23 per cent; quoted in 'And it used to be such a pleasure', *The Economist*, 10 July 2003, p. 43. In parallel, 7 out of every 10 Americans support putting Iraq's reconstruction under the UN.

Moreover, ignoring the international community has a cost. Official figures from the Bush administration put the occupational duties expenses at $3.9 billion per month, at least twice as much as previously estimated. According to recent studies, the reconstruction effort could range from $8 to 30 billion a year for at least two years.[31] Thus, while the costs of the Iraqi campaign were relatively limited, spending to build the peace will be significant. A rough estimation of Iraqi reconstruction would lie somewhere around $300 billion. The US economy should be able to cope with this liability. However, the White House now acknowledges a deficit of $455 billion in this financial year, and $475 billion for next year, which amounts to 4.2 per cent of its gross domestic product. Coupled with a jobless economic growth, this puts the White House on the defensive.[32] The non-partisan Congressional Budget Office forecasts that America's federal budget deficit could total up to $5 trillion over the next 10 years, and this could be a moderate estimate if the trend continues. Foreign investors now hold about two-fifths of the federal debt, doubling the proportion they held 10 years ago. This state of dependency contrasts heavily with the unilateralist assertion that Washington can go it alone where and when it deems necessary. It is highly questionable in economic terms.[33] In any case, the go-it-alone policy will narrow President Bush's room for manoeuvre domestically and economically. As he must know from his father's experience, the real story of American politics is not the primacy of foreign politics but rather the primacy of domestic economics. Overstretched was an adjective pretty much in vogue in the 1980s. It will come back to haunt the city on the hill when the vertigo of its budget deficit calls for a new modesty in foreign policy. Such fears of overstretch are already growing inside the military. The Pentagon's plan to overhaul US forces around small units and high-tech weaponry seems at odds with occupation and peacekeeping operations which need to keep large amount of troops abroad.[34] Washington is keen to fulfil its global ambitions, but US public opinion is far more reluctant to assume these imperial responsibilities.

These unnecessary short-term burdens came mainly from the Bush administration's misplaced intoxication with power. Washington's unilateral and imperial tone had already produced a wave of deep antipathy throughout Europe and beyond. Over the past years the United States became a campaign issue in elections in Germany, South Korea and Pakistan. Questioning American

31. See the different assessments in the special report of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace 'From Victory to Success: Afterwar Policy in Iraq', reprinted in *Foreign Policy*, July-August 2003, p. 58.

32. Deborah McGregor, 'Democrats take aim at soaring budget deficits', *Financial Times*, 16 July 2003.

33. Some have tried to evaluate the cost of the go-it-alone policy. 'The extra cost of unilateralism could be very roughly $100 bn. In other words, America would have saved that much money by finding a strategy that elicited broader support. Thus, unilateralism has a price: about $1,000 for each American household. Of course, these are only the direct financial costs of the Bush administration's decision to go it alone, notwithstanding Britain's contribution. Iraq is just the starkest example of unilateralism costing America dear.' See Brainard Lael and Michael O'Hanlon, 'The heavy price of the US going it alone', *Financial Times*, 5 August 2003.

34. See Michael O'Hanlon, 'Breaking The Army', *The Washington Post*, 3 July 2003.

motives became a successful electoral strategy for local politicians in all three places. During the Iraqi crisis, Washington's lack of diplomacy has alienated many friends. The neglect of international institutions has wider effects. By smooth persuasion rather than unilateral ruling, the American security agenda was for the most part of the Cold War endorsed by other actors. A framework like NATO, by encouraging diffuse reciprocity, made US hegemony acceptable. An alliance is a source of restraint and a resource for help. International institutions add legitimacy to US actions. In the current context, this may well be the most precious asset that Washington has to cultivate.[35] Without the backing and active involvement of Europe and Russia in the Middle East, the US effort is doomed to failure; without the cooperation of international peacekeepers, nation-building in Iraq would be a far more difficult endeavour to sustain. Neo-conservatives should not forget that, while America enjoys unprecedented global reach, it is also because allies have made this possible. When force is considered, the assistance of many countries in terms of overflying rights, base locations, or active participation on the ground remains critical. Moreover, divisions in Europe could only lead to a weakened Atlantic Alliance, which is not in the interest of the United States at a time when NATO appears to be the only organisation that could deliver security multilaterally. Ignoring allies can lead to severe restrictions, as refusal of overflight rights demonstrated in the Iraqi case. Specifically, the mismanagement of relations with Turkey illustrated the limits and contradictions of US power. Bribery and threats of punishment were not tools welcomed by a newly elected parliament that for once enjoyed real autonomy from the military. It seems contradictory, to say the least, to promote democracy for Iraq while neglecting its value in Turkey.

More broadly, institutions offer a reliable framework where power is best exercised, where cooptation rather than coercion is the rule, where collective action increases rather than decreases efficiency. Numerous issues, from global warming to AIDS, require collective answers. As President Woodrow Wilson perfectly understood, any attempt to redesign international politics must count on the support of international legitimacy and widespread public opinion to have any chance of success. Washington being the revisionist power in the world, it should be especially keen to seek a multilateral framework. The neo-conservatives

35. As John Ikenberry has remarked: 'Rather than invent a new grand strategy, the United States should reinvigorate its older strategies, those based on the view that America's security partnerships are not simply instrumental tools but critical components of an American-led world political order that should be preserved. U.S. power is both leveraged and made more legitimate and user-friendly by these partnerships.' John G. Ikenberry, 'America's Imperial Ambition', *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 81, no. 5, September/October 2002, p. 60.

considered international support as a mere luxury that could be avoided, but it appears more and more as a reality that can no longer be ignored.

## Options for the future

The main problem of current US foreign policy lies in the perceived abundance of power, the assertiveness it invites, the blindness it allows, the Messianic ideology it permits and the realities it ignores. These realities are unpleasant, but they cannot be evaded any longer. Wrong assumptions lead to challenging strategic choices. So far, waging war against Iraq has not led to democratisation in the neighbouring states, it has not significantly helped the peace process in the Middle East, it has not convinced Iran or North Korea to abandon their nuclear ambitions and it has not decreased the risks of another terrorist attack. Most importantly, the peace- and nation-building process in Iraq itself is far more difficult than previously reckoned. The Bush administration now faces a series of these painful alternatives.

The first acknowledgement must concern the relative merits and effects of hard and soft power. The military might of the United States is unquestionable, but to defeat two extremely weak countries like Afghanistan and Iraq does not constitute serious evidence. The real test lies in the adequacy between forces and objectives. If democratic peace in the Middle East is really the number one priority of this Administration, then Washington will have to commit more resources and reach for more allies. In other words, the United States must develop and enhance its capacity to do peacekeeping operations successfully. If there is one reform to introduce in the US Army, it is not new high-tech devices but low-intensity conflict management. This should lead to the creation of professional units specifically aimed at peace enforcement and peacekeeping operations. Moreover, international action cannot be reduced to military strikes. Precisely because the United States is by far the most powerful actor in the international community, it must be especially careful to use its power with the consent of others. A unipolar world will not last forever. In that respect, the preventive doctrine will merely accelerate the process of coalition building against the United States. As the Iraqi crisis unfolded, a

unique coalition emerged between France, Germany and Russia. Clearly this odd combination does not yet represent a serious challenge to US hegemony, but an entente between Beijing and Moscow would be another matter. If the balance of power logic has any validity, historians will look back at the end of 2002 as the first significant shift in power relationships since the fall of the Berlin Wall.[36] The tendency to strike and neglect is extremely damaging in the long run. In other words, the foreign policy of the United States must cease to be dictated by the Pentagon, and return to its genuine location, the State Department.

Second, the Iraqi case must be reassessed completely. The Bush administration cannot allow it to become a duplication of Afghanistan. The worst possible outcome would be a repetition of such catastrophic precedents like Beirut in the 1980s or Somalia in the 1990s. Having freed Iraq from Saddam Hussein, the United States must commit resources so as to achieve the objective of building a lasting peace. Premature withdrawal is not an option. Devolution to the Iraqis themselves is the exit strategy, but it will take time. In this respect, the involvement of the United Nations seems inescapable in order to legitimise the current efforts in Iraq. But even this acknowledgment of past mistakes is not a guarantee of success. For the European governments that opposed the war, sending troops who could become casualties in a conflict rejected by their public opinion is a difficult political choice. None the less, it is not in the interests of the European Union for the Iraqi occupation and reconstruction to turn out badly. US credibility is at stake, but so are Europe's ambitions and responsibility. Since June 2003, effective multilateralism in a UN framework has been an official aspect of European security strategy. If asked by the UN, Europeans should answer the call positively, as they did with Bunia in Africa. This does not necessarily mean sending troops but it could lead to a multinational plan for reconstruction and aid. In other words, European soft power would become an indispensable part of a legitimate effort to build a democratic Iraq.

Third, the challenge of terrorism cannot be met alone. The cooperation of others for tracking, arresting and delivering terrorists remains crucial, as do intelligence sharing and judicial collaboration. Unless Washington, blinded by its military technology, is willing to contemplate the unilateral use of force for every issue on the agenda and ready to ignore the importance of traditional

36. Ivan Eland, 'The Empire Strikes Out: The New Imperialism and Its Fatal Flaws', *Policy Analysis*, November 2002, no. 459, Cato Institute; Fareed Zakaria, 'Our Way: The Trouble With Being The World's Only Superpower', *The New Yorker*, 14 and 21 October 2002; Josef Joffe, 'Continental Divides', *The National Interest*, no. 71, Spring 2003, pp. 157-60.

relationships, the United States will still need friends abroad. [37] Since the war on terror will ultimately be won in hearts and minds, the American model, whose strength rests on values, economy, culture and democratic leadership, must remain the envy of the world, not a subject of worldwide resentment. In other words, the example set by American democracy is a better weapon than America's war-prone crusade. These basic realities should move US foreign policies towards a more prudent and less imperial posture. This does not mean isolationism. American domestic politics being easily polarised, temptations of isolationism may grow in the coming months if current difficulties in Iraq persist. There is a middle course between an imperial and an isolationist America.

Finally, the current administration should rediscover the value of international law and legitimacy. Acting alone to change regimes may be an overwhelmingly tempting tactic for a hegemon like the United States but, precisely because it is advocated and practiced by a great power, it sets a new standard of international rules of conduct and a clear precedent that could be duplicated by other powers. China could well decide to adopt a 'preventive strategy' against Taiwan, India could do the same with Pakistan, etc. If every country decides to pursue its own interests by unilaterally deciding to launch preventive actions, then world politics will be a truly Hobbesian world of endless conflicts. Preventive doctrine is not only a hazardous policy, it is a dangerous idea, and as such it should be abandoned. It is not the risks entailed by its actual implementation, or its likely poor results in terms of counter-proliferation, or the overextension it implies, *it is the idea itself* that is disturbing, especially since the war against Iraq was successful. The true meaning of international norms and rules lies in the definition of what is and what is not permissible in the international arena. Norms shape expectations and calculations of statesmen; they generate understandings among the units of the system and they influence public opinion. These understandings are always fragile, the temptations to overcome them always present. In that respect, initiatives by the great powers are especially crucial because they above all shape these norms, invite imitation and emulation, and sanction their respect. The Concert of Europe after 1815 and Roosevelt's Four Policemen after 1945 were

37. As Stanley Hoffmann has argued: 'The war against terrorist networks that threaten the United States, its allies and even non-allies such as Russia, cannot be won by the United States alone. For one thing, we need the cooperation of other governments in arresting, trying or delivering to us suspects and possible plotters. And if military action becomes necessary, as it did last year in Afghanistan, we need the participation and endorsement of as many countries as possible.' Stanley Hoffmann, 'America Alone in the World', *The American Prospect*, vol. 13, no. 17, 23 September 2002. See also Chas. W. Freeman Jr., 'Even a Superpower Needs Help', *The New York Times*, 26 February 2003.

attempts to organise world politics around understandings among great powers. The current UN Security Council is the last embodiment of that principle. Its main duty lies in ensuring the application of two cornerstones of today's international relations: the sovereignty of its units and the legitimacy of collective action. Because US doctrine sets up a unilateral assessment of security imperatives, it explicitly proclaims that there is one law for the United States and other states of which it approves, and another law for all the rest. In other words, Washington is above international law or interprets it according to its own evaluation of its national interests. As the historian Paul Schroeder wrote, 'this is Orwellian: all states are equal, but some, especially the United States, are vastly more equal than others. This position and policy is more than Orwellian; it is imperialist.'[38] The ultimate danger of such reasoning is that it opens the Pandora's box of anarchy in the current international system. In an already uncertain environment, collective actions, allied diplomacy and UN rules and legitimacy represent elements of long-term stability.

The solidarity expressed worldwide after 11 September has vanished in an incredible short space of time, and the positive global image of the United States has dramatically diminished.[39] Far from being the welcome leader of a coalition of friends and allies, Washington has become the main target of dissent and opposition. To put it briefly, the tendency to disdain what Thomas Jefferson called a 'decent respect to the opinions of mankind' has led to Washington's unprecedented alienation from the world. Its 'indispensable' power, once a motive of admiration, has become a reason for suspicion. If this trend continues, the seeds of democracy planted by American tanks will ultimately grow into enemies of America. The democratic peace that is at the core of the neo-conservative agenda will not exist if Washington persists in ignoring dissenting voices from abroad. American power and influence rest upon an idea, a unique and irreplaceable myth: that the United States really does stand for a better world and is still the best hope of all who seek it. What gives America its formidable international influence is not its unequalled capacity for war but the trust of others in its good intentions.

38. 'Critical areas of modern international relations – trade and business, communications, travel by land, sea and sky, the commercial use and exploitation of the sea and sky, international tourism and travel, international science and scholarship, immigration and emigration, the control of state borders, international property rights and business practices – even human and civil rights and religion – which were once in the realm of war, that is, governed solely by power, force, fraud, and individual state self-interest, have now throughout the developed world been generally brought into the realm of peace. And this expansion is the product of a long-sought, dearly-bought, highly fragile combination of these two fundamental principles of modern international relations: the recognition of state independence, and the willing acceptance by most international actors of the necessity and benefits of international associations and their requirements and rules. This structure is what the intended American preemptive war on Iraq threatens and would violate.' Paul W. Schroeder, 'Iraq: The Case Against Preemptive War', *The American Conservative*, 21 October 2002.

39. Several polls conducted at the end of 2002 and early 2003 illustrated this trend. See Brian Knowlton, 'A Global Image on the Way Down', *International Herald Tribune*, 5 December 2002, and Christopher Marquis and Marjorie Connelly, 'World's view of America worsens', *The New York Times*, 19 March 2003.

In October 2000, the second of the presidential election debates between Al Gore and George W. Bush featured a lively exchange on American foreign policy. Mr Bush insisted that America's standing in the rest of the world would depend on the way it behaved: 'If we are an arrogant nation, they will resent us. If we are a humble nation, but strong, they will welcome us.' It is a tragedy that, after 11 September, the exercise of that power has so far produced such anger throughout the world. As John Quincy Adams warned in 1821, 'if America is tempted to become the dictatress of the world, she would be no longer the ruler of her own spirit.' The neglect of such a lesson has so far characterised President Bush's war on terror.

Shift or rift
Assessing US-EU
relations after Iraq

# US and European priorities in the Middle East

**Patrick Clawson**

As 2003 opened, differences across the Atlantic about the priorities regarding the Middle East became a major factor in US-European relations, with the United States putting in first place the nexus of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction (WMD), especially the threat from Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq, while many in Europe wanted more emphasis on the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. Although by mid-year the tensions among the Western allies about the Middle East had abated, nevertheless profound differences remain about priorities and strategies. Intriguingly, transatlantic cooperation about Middle East policy has often proved easier to achieve when the two sides concentrate on the immediate tactical steps to be taken next, and more difficult to reach when the discussion turns to what overall approach to adopt and what general goals to aim for. This contrast – tactical agreement, strategic difference – applies to the main issues about the Middle East, examined in turn below: the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, with a subtheme on whether the international community should more forcefully intervene if the process becomes bogged down; Iraq's reconstruction; Iran's nuclear programme; and reform in the Arab world.

## Israeli-Palestinian peace process

The Quartet formula may have massaged differences about the Israeli-Palestinian peace process between America, on the one hand, and the European Union, Russia and the United Nations, on the other hand, but it has not resolved them. For most American officials, 'pursuing the peace process' means creating an enabling environment in which Israelis and Arabs can once again attempt to resolve their differences via negotiations. In contrast, for many European officials, 'pursuing the peace process' means arranging a resolution to the conflict, and if bilateral negotiations continue to

make as little progress as they have over the last decade, then the solution may have to be more or less dictated by the international community. The 'road map' masks this chasm but does not bridge it.

That said, there is room for greater US-European understanding on peace process issues, should the parties be ready to accommodate each other's core concerns. An enhanced role for Europe in the negotiation and implementation of peace accords may be welcomed by Washington, especially if it takes the form of more active European efforts to press the Palestinians and Arab states to take the difficult steps to promote peace if the Israelis do the same. If European leaders had invested the same amount of political capital in helping to bring about President Bush's 24 June 2002 vision of 'new Palestinian leadership' as they did in pressing for the many drafts of the 'road map', then the prospects for real progress would be much more advanced than is currently the case. After having worked closely with the United States to press Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat to appoint a prime minister, Europe did not play as active a role as it could have in assisting the transfer of power to Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas. Now that Abbas has resigned, it would be useful if the Europeans were to publicly and privately press Arafat to allow the next prime minister – presumably Ahmed Qureia– to function effectively. It would also help if Europeans would support the prime minister in myriad ways, while downplaying Arafat's role and warning him against obstructionist tactics.

Another way of describing the difference across the Atlantic is that Europe tends to focus on the outcome of the Israeli-Palestinian dispute, while the United States focuses on the incremental process of discussions between the two parties. Many in Europe thought that the 1993-2001 Oslo peace process was too open-ended, without a clear vision of what the permanent solution would be. In this conception, the Oslo process foundered in large part because of the lack of a clear end-game – specifically, the Palestinians lost confidence that they would get an independent state in the entire West Bank and Gaza, and Israelis stalled to prevent this from happening. By contrast, the US approach was focused on creating the mutual confidence which would allow the two sides to define a solution they found acceptable. In this conception, Oslo failed because Israelis and Palestinians both lost faith that they had reliable peace partners on the other side:

Israelis lost faith that the Palestinians would cease violence and accept a Jewish state, and Palestinians lost faith that Israel would withdraw from the settlements.

As restarted in 2003, the peace process has moved significantly closer to the European conception on this matter of outcome versus process. Specifically, President George W. Bush has committed the United States, for the first time, to a two-state solution with a fully independent Palestine. This is a serious change from the past – and it was only because the United States adopted this stance that the Israelis have accepted the inevitability of a two-state solution.

While Europe and the United States have moved closer on whether to define from the start what the final outcome of Israeli-Palestinian discussions will be, there is still a chasm across the Atlantic on how to understand the Arab-Israeli conflict. The two sides do not see eye-to-eye on what is the most basic issue at stake in the Arab-Israel conflict. For most in Europe, the central question is Israel's occupation of Palestinian lands. For the United States, the basic source of the conflict is the Arab refusal to recognise Israel as a Jewish state. This transatlantic difference comes through on many fronts, but two are of particular importance. First is the differing understanding of the role that Arab states play in the conflict, that is, the Arab states other than Syria, which is obviously a party to the conflict with Israel. For Europe, the Arab states are potential facilitators of an agreement, but not essential participants. By contrast, the United States expects Arab states to reinforce the political legitimacy of compromises with Israel, as a vital means of reinforcing moderate elements within the Palestinian leadership. Even more important in the US view, Arab states such as Egypt and Saudi Arabia have a central role in addressing the Israeli people's scepticism about Arab intentions and in preventing radical elements from fanning the flames of the conflict, e.g., halting the flow of money which fuels terror and combating hateful propaganda which incites violence. At no time during the Oslo process were those who carried out acts of terror against Israelis ever branded by the Arab states – or by the Palestinian leadership – as enemies of the Arab and Palestinian cause. Violence against Israel is seen by too many in the Arab world as legitimate. And too many in Europe take the attitude that anti-Israel violence, even when directed against Israeli civilians, is a natural response to occupation.

Another manifestation of the transatlantic difference about the conflict is that Europeans do not think Israel has a serious security problem and do not see any particular reason why they should reassure Israel that they accept the legitimacy of a Jewish state. This European confidence about Israel's security comes across to many Israelis as a lack of concern about Israeli security. Israelis are acutely sensitive to the dangers to their state. Palestinian targeting of civilians inside Israel, especially by groups associated with Fatah, makes the Israeli public think that the goal of the Palestinian uprising has been to destroy Israel, not to achieve a state alongside it. Similarly, Arab refusal to acknowledge the Jewish historical ties to Jerusalem and insistence that refugees must be able to emigrate to Israel irrespective of implications for Israeli society raise doubts about the acceptance of Israel's moral legitimacy as a Jewish state. Many Europeans argue that Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's policies are what have put Israel at risk, that greater security for Israel is not the same thing as security for greater Israel, and that Israel's security would be best served by compromises that lead to peace with the Palestinians – claims that ring hollow to an Israeli population suspicious that Palestinians refuse to accept Israel as a Jewish state. Transatlantic cooperation about the peace process is harder to achieve when many in Washington doubt if Europe cares about Israeli security. It would help to have clear, consistent and repeated European statements about Israeli security, presumably including the claim that its proposals are good for Israeli security.

On a quite different front, there is a considerable difference of opinion across the Atlantic about where to apply pressure in order to make progress in the peace process. Whereas Europeans complain that the United States has been applying pressure only to Palestinians while leaving Israel untouched, Washington sees itself as being actively engaged in encouraging Israel to take difficult steps. Specifically, the United States has urged Israel to affirm its support of President Bush's 24 June 2002 vision of two states, living side-by-side in peace and security – which means giving up the dream of Greater Israel, no easy matter for a right-wing Israeli government. And Washington has pressed Israel to take steps to alleviate the humanitarian problems of Palestinian civilians, even though disbanding checkpoints runs the risk of more terrorist episodes.

Rather than seeing the Israelis as the principal barrier to peace, the American argument has been that a fundamental problem impeding Israeli-Palestinian peace has been Palestinian unwillingness to accept responsibilities and to act on them. That is why the United States has placed such importance on reform of the Palestinian Authority, especially its top leadership. While Europeans do not on the whole agree with the thesis that the Palestinian side has been the principal barrier to a peace agreement, they do entirely agree that Palestinian reform would do much to advance the cause of peace. Indeed, Palestinian reform and the appointment of a prime minister has been a good example of the kind of tactical issue on which Europe and the United States agree, even though their reasons for supporting this step differ considerably – a difference which emerges quickly when discussion turns from the immediate tactical step to such broader issues as whether Arafat is a valid peace partner.

To many European ears, the US argument that the Palestinians have not lived up to their responsibilities sounds like a reason for more forceful international intervention, so as to prevent Israelis and Palestinians falling further into the abyss of violence, terrorism, retaliation and despair. However, Washington would argue that the sad reality is that if the Palestinian leadership is not capable of doing what is required when they have the full support of the international community, then an international force assuming responsibility on their behalf is sure to fail as well. In this circumstance, the international intervention would only postpone the time when Palestinians have to take responsibility for themselves. Without the Palestinian will to change course, there is very little chance that change will be produced from the outside.

As viewed from Washington, if Palestinians fail to live up to their responsibilities, the alternative is not internationalisation but unilateral separation. Israel has its own powerful reasons to disengage from the West Bank and Gaza: the demographic reality that, by the year 2009, there will be more Arabs than Jews living between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River. Unilateral separation, built around a high-tech security separation barrier (variously described as a fence and a wall) and the creation of new Israel Defense Forces (IDF) rapid reaction forces, could create a new basis for Israeli security and at the same time end Israeli rule over Palestinian lives. But such a separation barrier is a long-term

solution that will work only if it is truly separation of the two sides, that is, if the settlements lying outside the fence are evacuated. And the separation barrier would have to be drawn in such a way as to leave Palestinians a coherent, contiguous territory. Rather than flatly opposing a separation barrier, Europe would be well advised to join with the United States in calling on Israel to locate the barrier to so as to reduce the number of Palestinians living inside it and to ensure greater coherence to the Israeli defence perimeter, so as to reverse the illogic of large numbers of Israeli soldiers having to protect small numbers of settlers.

On a different note, it will be interesting to see what the impact on transatlantic relations regarding the peace process is when Central and East European countries such as Hungary, the Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia play a greater role in European Union affairs. The impression in Washington – strongly reinforced by Central and East European government officials – is that those countries have a deep distrust of Arafat and a considerable sensitivity to the security threats facing Israel. The legacy of dealing with Palestinian radicals during Soviet days, as well as the ties to emigrants living in Israel and the lack of any significant domestic Muslim community, may make Central and East European views about the Arab-Israeli conflict quite different from that in Western Europe.

### International intervention for Palestinian-Israeli peace?

If the peace process runs into new difficulties, there may come a moment when many in Europe propose a more active international intervention. One idea sure to attract attention is a proposal to dispatch international troops either to impose or enforce calm between warring Israelis and Palestinians. Already, proposals to this effect have been floated by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan; French Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin; and Palestinian Foreign Minister Nabil Shaath. Moreover, NATO Secretary-General Lord Robertson has raised the possibility that NATO might consider the dispatch of alliance troops to the West Bank/Gaza.

Proposals for a West Bank/Gaza 'international intervention force' (IIF) may be popular in Europe, but they do not resonate with the Bush administration. The prerequisites for a successful deployment, even in the event of a political agreement by the two

sides, are daunting. Drawing on the experience of recent interventions around the globe, a deployment to the Israeli-Palestinian arena would require sufficient resources and a robust enough mandate to pursue rejectionist militants for an indefinite period. Based on deployments in the Balkans and East Timor, an IIF for the West Bank and Gaza would require 35,000-85,000 troops. Even if the US commitment was only half such a force, that would be at least a division equivalent, at a time when seven of ten active US Army divisions are already committed to peacekeeping or stability operations in the Korean Peninsula, the Balkans, Afghanistan and Iraq – a commitment which would place a major additional burden on the US military. Any deployment of such a force would almost certainly require European agreement to take on a much bigger role in the other peacekeeping and stability operations, which might not sit well with European parliaments or publics.

The burden an IIF would impose is, however, only a small part of the problem. More important, the experience of the various international forces deployed in the Arab-Israeli arena over the past half century shows that they are, for the most part, either irrelevant or ineffective.[1] When the going got rough, UNEF backed down and did not protect Israel's right of naval passage through the Straits of Tiran. Even under its limited mandate, UNIFIL never has impeded Hezbollah activities in southern Lebanon. In no case has an international force been usefully deployed to achieve a cessation of hostilities. And deployments are usually not short-term operations; the fact that UNTSO observers remain deployed along Egypt's border with Israel despite the 'truce' of 1949 having been superseded by a full peace treaty nearly a quarter-century old says much about the bureaucratic tenacity of these institutions. Only two of the seven international deployments are generally perceived as successes: UNDOF on the Golan Heights and the MFO in the Sinai. The reason for this success is simple: more than anything else, UNDOF and MFO represent the commitment of Syria and Israel and Egypt and Israel, respectively, to maintain calm along their respective borders. UNDOF and MFO are manifestations of that strategic decision, not the reason for it.

Nor are other experiences around the world with peacekeepers encouraging for solving the central problems in the Israeli-Palestinian context. While massive international pressure was key to

1. Since the 1948 Arab-Israeli war, international forces have been deployed in the Arab-Israeli arena on seven occasions. Five of these were under a United Nations mandate; on two occasions, 'coalitions of the willing' were assembled and dispatched without a UN mandate. The United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation (UNTSO) was established in June 1948 by Security Council Resolution 50. The first United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF I) was established by the General Assembly in November 1956 to supervise the cessation of hostilities in Sinai. On 18 May 1967, Secretary-General U Thant consented to an Egyptian request for the prompt removal of UNEF. In October 1973 Security Council resolutions 340 and 341 established a second Emergency Force (UNEF II) to supervise the cease-fire between Egyptian and Israeli forces. Following the signing of the Egypt-Israel peace treaty, the Soviet Union vetoed a resolution authorising UNEF II's extension and UNEF II expired in July 1979. The United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) was established in May 1974 by Security Council Resolution 350 to maintain the cease-fire between Israel and Syria. The United Nations International Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) was established in March 1978 under UNSC Resolution 425, in response to a protest submitted by the Lebanese government against the incursion of Israeli forces. International deployments outside a UN framework. When the UN Security Council opted not to support the Egypt-Israel peace treaty by forming a peacekeeping force under a UN mandate, the United States assumed responsibility to organise and lead the Multilateral Force and Observers. The second non-UN peacekeeping force is the Temporary International Presence in Hebron (TIPH) established in 1994 following the massacre of Palestinian worshippers in the Patriarchs' Cave/Al-Haram al-Ibrahimi by an Israeli settler, based on an agreement among Israel, the Palestinian Authority and the three participating European powers (in this first arrangement, Norway, Denmark and Italy).

the successful cease-fires in Bosnia and Kosovo, SFOR and KFOR were only able to implement agreements reached by the parties themselves. Indeed, in both Balkan cases, the way the international presence works is by pressing for more and more agreement on how to coexist. The international community has not imposed agreements; it has twisted arms to get the parties to sign on and then to slowly implement. 'Permanent status' issues have been left unresolved and even unaddressed, for to resolve or even address them would inflame militants on all sides. And the international forces in the Balkans have not been successful in persuading the parties to implement those parts of peace accords that require compromise on their side, such as the return of refugees and dismantling illegal institutions in Bosnia and Kosovo. Local parties have proven themselves quite creative and resourceful at blocking implementation of provisions of agreements that they resent. And international forces have had little impact on the underlying people-versus-people hatreds. That is worrisome, because it suggests that peace is sustainable only so long as the international force is present, and that war and genocide could flair up once the international force leaves. The international community has never found an effective means to dissipate such hatreds.

The IIF will be no more effective than UNIFIL unless it can effectively curtail terrorism – for terrorist attacks are sure to come from those extremists in the Palestinian community who oppose the existence of Israel. It seems implausible that an IIF that is less likely to accept significant risk to protect Israelis than the IDF, and that is relatively unfamiliar with the terrain and the operational environment, would be any more successful than the IDF at preventing terrorist attacks on Israeli civilians inside Israel or on the roads and settlements of the West Bank and Gaza. Such a force would enjoy few, if any, military advantages over the IDF. And the relations between the IIF and the IDF would be fraught with dangers of misunderstanding and tension. Deployment of an IIF would entail the insertion of tens of thousands of foreign troops into a compact geographical area. Under even the most optimistic scenario for IIF operations – namely, the establishment of a clear border line to patrol, with no Israeli settlements beyond that line – there would still be many delicate issues to settle, such as whether the IIF will assume responsibility for pursuing terrorist suspects who have not been apprehended by the Palestinian authorities or for dismantling the social-economic infrastructure of terrorist

organisations. The IIF could be the worst of all possible worlds for the West: a cause of tension in relations with Israel because it does not stop terrorist attacks, but simultaneously an exacerbator of the already significant level of anti-Westernism among both Palestinian and wider Arab and Muslim public opinion because it pursues Palestinian militant terrorists.

If any lesson is to be drawn from the experience of past international deployments, it is that the key to peace is not the presence of an international force – regardless of how robust it is or how broad its mandate – but rather the willingness of each side to implement their commitments to keep the peace and to prevent violence. Well-intentioned though it certainly is, international intervention in the absence of an Israeli-Palestinian agreement (or, at least, set of understandings) will prevent the adjustment to reality that is a necessary prerequisite to peace and will instead defer the possibility of reaching a final resolution to this tragic conflict. Those in Europe who advocate a West Bank/Gaza IIF need to articulate a more detailed and precise vision of exactly how such a force could advance the cause of peace, if they want the United States to be interested in the idea.

## Reconstructing Iraq

At the time of writing (late August 2003), it is unclear whether the glass is half-full or half-empty in Iraq, or indeed whether the glass is emptying or filling. Before Saddam's overthrow, pro-war advocates had raised expectations about how quickly and thoroughly Iraq would be transformed, and that created a standard against which the postwar reconstruction is measured by many. If the reconstruction is instead judged by more modest and appropriate standards, then the view in the Bush administration and among European governments that supported the war is that things are going about as might be expected: gradual progress with occasional setbacks. So far, the problems have been concentrated in Baghdad and the 'Sunni triangle', with the great majority of the Shia and Kurdish population accepting the occupation – grumbling about its shortcomings but certain life is better today than under Saddam.

There is strong consensus in Europe, including among the harshest critics of the war, that the reconstruction of Iraq must not fail. But there is strong transatlantic disagreement about how

to achieve that end. Many in Europe, and nearly all in the countries critical of the war, are convinced that success requires a much larger role, including decision-making responsibility, for the international community including the UN. For all their complaints about a two-tier system in which the United States fights wars and Europe and the UN clean up after, Europeans are even more unhappy that the Bush administration appears convinced that the United States must lead the Iraq reconstruction. The Bush administration is sceptical that UN-led recovery operations have done well in the past; in sharp contrast to the European consensus, the Bush reading of the record in Bosnia and Kosovo is that those cases have not been particularly successful. The Bush team remains profoundly sceptical that a UN-led Iraq operation would transform the country's political culture. After all, there is considerable scepticism in Europe about de-Baathification, which is seen by some as too quickly tearing down the established structure without first building a new political framework.

Aside from Britain, most European governments appear to have been sceptical before the war that WMD was a *casus belli*; hence few have suffered the kind of damage from the failure to find WMD in Iraq that have so affected British Prime Minister Tony Blair and President Bush. That said, the failure to find WMD has reinforced the European public's cynicism, if not hostility, towards the United States.

Despite residual grumpiness in Washington and among European critics, the dispute about the war is to a remarkable degree behind us. Yet, if both sides had to do it all again, they would do it exactly the same as before: everyone thinks they did the right thing. This does not bode well for future issues of US-European or intra-European contention. On the other hand, it is easy to exaggerate the transatlantic character of the divisions about Iraq. Washington wags say that the truly deep division was trans-Potomac, not transatlantic. And the differences among EU states were real. It is hardly surprising if many in an enlarged EU are less comfortable with key security decisions being made by French-German consultation, and the obvious counterweight for those unhappy about French-German decisions is to turn to Washington.

## Iran's nuclear programme

The United States has for years judged Iran to be the world's foremost state sponsor of terrorism. While the most direct way to sever the link between Tehran and its main terror arm, Hezbollah, is via Damascus, Washington is vigilant about Iran's support for a network of Islamist terrorist organisations and persistent in pressing Iran to end its financial, political, material and operational support to them. At the same time, the gravest threat Iran poses to both American and European interests is not terrorism, but instead its pursuit of nuclear weapons and the long-range missiles with which to deliver them.

Iran's nuclear programme has long been a matter of concern, but 2003 brought a sharp change in the perceived urgency. The February 2003 International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) visit to the Natanz facility revealed that Iran's centrifuge enrichment programme was vastly more advanced than had been suspected by Western intelligence services, plus the fact that such a sophisticated facility had been largely if not completely overlooked by those intelligence services raised the disturbing possibility that Iran may have successfully concealed other facilities as well. Then came the Iranian failure to be forthcoming to the IAEA, not only about how it had developed the centrifuge technology but also about the import and subsequent use of 1.8 tons of natural uranium from China in the early 1990s. The June IAEA report raised many disturbing questions about Iran's nuclear activities, questions made more worrying by Iran's resistance to opening its facilities (e.g., repeated refusals to permit environmental sampling at suspected facilities).

For years, the United States has pressed other industrial countries to withhold nuclear and missile technology from Iran. Europe has generally prevented technology exports by its nationals; the record of transatlantic cooperation on this front has been quite good. However, Europe has not made Iranian proliferation the same priority as has America. In particular, there is little to no evidence of active European support for the US pressure on Russia about this matter. The issue of Russian dual-use technology exports to Iran has been a major item – and sometimes the main

item – on the agenda of bilateral US-Russian presidential and foreign ministerial meetings; there is little public evidence that has been the case in bilateral meetings between Russian and European country officials.

Nevertheless, Iran's nuclear programme is seen by some as an issue that can demonstrate US-EU solidarity against WMD proliferation. After all, in stark contrast to the Iraq case, the intelligence about the Iran threat is coming from a UN agency, namely, the IAEA – and there is no doubt that Iran is developing worrisome capabilities, such as centrifuges for enriching uranium. But there are complicating factors that impede transatlantic cooperation about Iran's nuclear programme. First is the differing views about Iran's government. Iran takes advantage of the split between its formal, largely powerless government and its aggressive, revolutionary institutions to argue that the state should not be sanctioned for the actions of hardliners, even when endorsed by Iran's supreme leader. Washington is unimpressed by such an argument, whereas European governments place high priority on reinforcing President Mohammad Khatami. This transatlantic difference could well resurface if Iran's formal government offered concessions which Washington thought Iran's more powerful revolutionary institutions would not respect.

Second, the United States is less willing than Europe to live with the basic deal behind the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The NPT allows countries to acquire a wide range of (in the US view) troubling capabilities in return for being open and transparent. The NPT gives Iran every right to have a full closed-fuel cycle, with large uranium enrichment facilities and a reprocessing plant that can extract substantial amounts of plutonium – capabilities which would permit Iran at any time to rapidly 'break out' of the NPT, building a considerable number of nuclear weapons in a short time. To date, Europe's focus has been on getting Iran to live up fully to the NPT deal, specifically, to be more open and transparent, especially to sign and implement the IAEA Additional Protocol (the final stage of Programme 93+2). It is by no means clear that the United States can live with this, that is, with an Iran that develops all the capabilities permitted under the NPT. Perhaps a way can be found to preserve transatlantic consensus about the NPT deal through enhanced safeguards, that is, through making Iran the test case for a new set of country-neutral rules (i.e., rules which will eventually extend to all countries) which

reinforce the present IAEA system based on periodic inspections with more up-to-date safeguard technologies based on real-time electronic monitors and sensors, more along the lines of what the IAEA was doing in Iraq. Enhanced safeguards would maintain the basic NPT deal – troubling capabilities are permitted to those who are transparent about what they are doing – but provide greater reassurance of advance warning if a country is preparing to break out of the NPT by using those capabilities to build nuclear weapons.

There are many grave risks in accepting Iran's acquisition of dangerous capabilities while concentrating on preventing Iran from taking the final step of assembling nuclear weapons. One is that Iran would be tempted to provide terrorists with nuclear weapons. After all, mass casualty terrorism done by proxies has worked well for Iran to date. Iranian assistance to the terrorists who blew up the US and French barracks in Beirut in 1983 was a grand strategic success, forcing the United States and for a while France out of Lebanon while not bringing any retaliation down on Iran. Similarly, the 1996 bombing of the Khobar Towers barracks in Saudi Arabia brought the Saudis to make a strategic reconciliation, and once again, Iran faced no retaliation.

Another risk is that Iran acquires nuclear weapons, further nuclear proliferation is likely – indeed, the NPT system might begin to seriously fray. Other rogue states may decide that nuclear weapons acquisition entails few strategic costs and confers considerable strategic benefit. Iran's neighbors might become nervous enough to decide they needed nuclear protection; for instance, Saudi Arabia could ask Pakistan to station nuclear weapons on Saudi soil, perhaps to be delivered by on the long-range Chinese missiles the Saudis bought in 1988 on the model of US deployment of nuclear weapons on German soil to fit on German missiles during the Cold War (note that such an arrangement would be fully consistent with the Saudis' NPT obligations). To forestall these dire outcomes, the most promising anti-proliferation tool would be closer Western security ties with allies threatened by the Iranian proliferation breakthrough, such as: changing declaratory posture, e.g., extending a nuclear umbrella over its regional friends; enhancing access to advanced conventional weapons, such as missile/air defences; and expanding the US presence in the region.

But rather than lock the barn door after the horses have bolted, the ideal would be to stop, if not reverse, Iran's nuclear programmes. Unfortunately, the options to achieve this all suffer from serious problems.

### Multilateral diplomacy

In recent months, the United States has made considerable progress at persuading the European Union, the IAEA, and even Russia that Iran's nuclear programmes are troubling. But it is optimistic to think that Iran will cease or reverse nuclear proliferation because of diplomatic pressure. And if US diplomatic efforts are successful at persuading the UN Security Council to impose on Iran penalties such as economic sanctions, it is by no means clear that those would be effective. More likely, Tehran will do just enough to split the international community, while continuing with clandestine nuclear programmes.

It would be nice to think that the West could persuade Tehran that its WMD programmes actually worsens Iran's security rather than enhancing it. Iran's nuclear programme is remarkably inappropriate from a realpolitik perspective. Unlike proliferators such as Israel, Pakistan or North Korea, Iran faces no historic enemy who would welcome an opportunity to wipe the state off the face of the earth. Iran is encircled by troubled neighbours, but nuclear weapons do nothing to help counter the threats that could come from state collapse in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq or Azerbaijan. And Iranian acquisition of nuclear arms would set off a chain reaction – increased US assets directed against Iran, active Israeli planning for Iran contingencies, and quite possibly nuclear proliferation by Iranian neighbours such as Saudi Arabia and Turkey – which would leave Iran worse off than if it had never developed nuclear arms. How much better off Iran would be strategically if it pressed instead for agreements to limit arms throughout the Gulf: to restrict the size of the new Iraqi army, to freeze and reduce the size of the Arab Gulf monarchies' militaries, and to phase down the size of the US force in the area. However, Iran's leaders seem remarkably impervious to careful strategic thinking, intent instead on reinforcing the strategic loneliness which has characterised the Islamic Republic from the beginning.

## A 'grand deal' with Tehran

The United States is in no position to work out a deal with the Islamic Republic of Iran. The obstacles are many. There is little reason to think that Iran's hardliners, who for years refused to even talk to Washington, are interested in a deal with the United States. Based on their history (e.g., the release of hostages in Lebanon), Iran and the United States are each convinced the other cheats and refuses to respond to overtures. Any deal might involve terms so generous it would seem that Tehran was being rewarded for being a proliferator, which could encourage others to proliferate. Plus, any deal would give the impression that Washington was supporting Iran's hardliners, thereby selling out the democratic forces.

That said, Europe is well placed to work out a deal. Indeed, the ongoing negotiations for a Trade Cooperation Agreement (TCA) between Brussels and Tehran provide the EU with a vehicle. Iran badly wants the TCA, and it has already agreed to discussions about nuclear issues in conjunction with the TCA talks. The cynical analyst might suspect that Iran's strategy is to get the EU to agree to a TCA in return for Iran doing what it planned to do all along, namely, to acquire a wide range of nuclear capabilities, such as a fully closed fuel cycle with enrichment and reprocessing, while holding off on actually building a nuclear weapon. If in fact Iran is able to secure significant economic concessions from the EU in return for Iran doing what it had all along planned to do, that could be a powerful bad example to others considering proliferation: construct a threatening nuclear programme, agree to 'limit' it to what had been planned all along, and receive a significant reward from Europe. Such an approach will not be praised in Washington.

## Regime change

European leaders in general do not seem to think the regime in Tehran is either fragile or ripe for counter-revolution. Europeans are more likely than Americans to consider the risks in setting the state against the people, which can miscarry à la Tiananmen Square in China. For these reasons, Europe would be unwilling to join the United States in promoting regime change; indeed, EU members are so convinced of the need to reinforce the reformers in

the largely powerless executive branch that they would actively work at cross-purposes to any US efforts to sideline or replace those reformers.

The transatlantic differences about regime change may hide a basic agreement: both European and American leaders agree that history and the Iranian people are not on the side of the Islamic Republic's hardliners. Both America and Europe are expecting considerable change in Iran's policies. If the Europeans are quietly confident change will come to Iran through a gradual strengthening of the reformers' hand, Washington expects that, at some point, the people's demand for far-reaching change will force much faster and dramatic change than anything the reformers have contemplated. Either way that change comes, the expectation has been that if Iran's dangerous weapons programmes can be slowed down enough, then political change could come before Iran became a nuclear power. That seemed a reasonable proposition in the late 1990s when the reform movement was moving from strength to strength and Iran's nuclear programme seemed to be advancing at a snail's pace. But now the hardliners are resurgent and the nuclear programme is racing ahead. It would be optimistic to count on political change – either changed policy at the instigation of reformers, or power seizure by a popular movement – in the few years before Iran becomes a nuclear power.

Washington will be tempted to promote the victory of democratic forces in Iran. But there are few good policy instruments available. Presidential statements of encouragement and increased radio/television broadcasting are to be expected, but that is a far cry from the kind of vast covert regime-change operations conjured up by overly active imaginations in Iran and Europe.

If regime change succeeded, that would only be step one in a process of ending the Iranian nuclear programme: a democratic government would be intensely nationalist and so would be loathe to give up nuclear programmes until it better understood the strategic cost such programmes entail, especially the suspicion they cause.

### Military action

Such action need not be an Osiraq-like bombing raid. At the low end, the United States might declare that the closer Iran gets to hav-

ing nuclear weapons, the more America will counter the potential Iranian threat, such as directing more assets against Iran and providing more support to friendly countries near Iran. Or the United States could use special forces to mount covert attacks designed to look like industrial accidents.

However, it is unclear if either covert operations or an all-out air attack would be capable of stopping Iran's nuclear programme for long. Iran's known programme involves several large facilities far inland which could be hard to destroy. Iran may well have other unknown facilities, and it could probably reconstitute most destroyed facilities (other than Bushehr) within a few years.

At the same time, military operations could involve a substantial cost. Iran could retaliate, e.g., with terrorism. And military action could lose the United States the sympathy of the Iranian people. But despite these disadvantages, it is not likely that the United States will rule out the use of force. After all, leaving open the possibility that military action would be required may be Washington's best approach for persuading Europe to take tougher action against Iran's nuclear ambitions.

Faced with nuclear progress in Iran, Israel might decide this constitutes a threat to the very existence of the Jewish state and so take military action, which many in Iran and the region would assume was approved by the United States. This would be most likely were Western nations to do little besides deploring Iran's actions. There would be many disadvantages for the West were Israel to do so, not least of which could be Iranian retaliation via Hezbollah attacks which in turn seriously set back the Israeli-Arab peace process. Any policy towards Iran's nuclear programme should therefore include consultations with Israel to ensure that its security concerns are adequately addressed – if Israel is to be asked to live with an Iran that has disturbing capabilities, then it is only appropriate to provide Israel with enhanced security measures that reinforce the deterrence against Iranian nuclear attack.

Despite their many differences about policy towards Iran, hopefully European and American leaders could agree on at least one fundamental principle for guiding policy. That principle would be to induce Iran to end its most dangerous activities by offering, though bilateral and multilateral means, significant incentives (bigger 'carrots') for responsible behaviour and promising painful, punitive measures (bigger 'sticks') for continued irresponsible behaviour. To date, European leaders seem to be

concentrating on the incentives to the near exclusion of the punitive measures, while Americans do the reverse. It would be progress if each side more openly acknowledged that the most promising approach combines both 'carrots' and 'sticks', and if each side more bluntly stated that it was prepared to consider using both instruments.

## Promoting reform

For decades, the bipartisan view in Washington was that democracy complicated the Arab-Israel peace process and threatened to replace shaky regimes with fanatical revolutionary states. Setting aside whether that was ever the case, it is clear that the fundamentals have now changed. After all, authoritarianism run amok produced Saddam's tyranny; the authoritarianism of the Palestinian Authority is a major obstacle to peacemaking; and authoritarianism among America's Arab allies helped lead them to export their security problems, eventually resulting in the horror of the 11 September 2001 attacks.

Top Bush administration officials have spoken repeatedly of a desire to remake the Middle East. The reaction of many in Europe has been scepticism about how much the United States will actually do in this regard. Much of that scepticism is based on the misconception that the only meaningful model for transforming the Middle East is the East European revolutions of 1989-91, i.e., a sudden wave of change sweeping away decades of authoritarian rule. In fact, the democratisation efforts of the 1990s – most especially the experience of the former Soviet Union – teaches the dangers of 'instant democracy', i.e., the artificial imposition of democratic-sounding practices such as elections in the absence of the building blocks of democracy, including free press, political parties, and the habits of criticism and compromise. If elections are held prematurely, the only ones organised to compete are the totalitarians of the past and radicals who organised illegally under the old regime – and neither of these are true democrats.

President Bush's approach is to focus on creating the building blocks of democracy, namely, freedoms and liberties. The immediate focus of US policy is going to be on greater tolerance, personal freedom, rule of law, and the economic reforms which create a vibrant, independent middle class. This process of liberalisation

will strengthen US friends in the region, not threaten their rule. Broadening their political base, allowing dissent to expressed within the system, will make these governments more stable. In other words, the twin US objectives of liberalisation and stability are mutually reinforcing, contrary to the European intellectuals' image that Washington will never seriously pursue liberalisation because that would undermine its friends.

To date, there has been minimal transatlantic cooperation on how to promote liberalisation in the Middle East. That has led to some unfortunate side-effects to US or European initiatives. For instance, there has been some unhealthy competitive dynamics between the EU and US initiatives for dramatic trade agreements with Middle Eastern countries, such as the US-proposed free trade agreement with the entire region. Surely there would be advantages for some more coordination.

## Conclusion

Progress in the stabilisation and reconstruction of Iraq would create a momentum for change in the Middle East that should be used to reinforce the fight against terrorism, pressure on rogues, and promotion of democracy, and in addition it would release US resources – not least of which being presidential time and attention – that could be devoted to the Arab-Israeli peace process. On the other hand, an Iraq quagmire would come to absorb more and more resources, as well as creating the image of an impotent United States. In other words, if the United States fulfils its mission in Iraq, it will not have to choose among competing priorities; if it fails in its mission in Iraq, it will not have the luxury of choosing among them, either. For this reason, developments in Iraq will be the main factor determining US policy towards the Middle East in 2004. And the more successful the United States is in Iraq, the more magnanimous it will be about differences with Europe regarding the Middle East, whereas the less successful America is in Iraq, the more likely it will be to blame that failure on those who opposed the war in the first place.

Shift or rift
Assessing US-EU
relations after Iraq

# The Achilles heel
# of transatlantic relations

**Martin Ortega**

**8**

The Middle East is the Achilles heel of transatlantic relations. Without any doubt, the transatlantic relationship is the most powerful and successful alliance that history has witnessed and yet, in an imperfect world, nobody is wholly invulnerable. Policy towards the Middle East is a dangerous bone of contention between allies which might degenerate and debilitate the alliance. Will this minor weakness prove fatal, like Achilles' heel, or will the allies react consequently and adopt the necessary measures to protect their most exposed spot?

True, the European Union and its member states, on the one hand, and the United States, on the other, share the same principles and values. However, there are few joint declarations in which those principles and values are applied to the Middle East region. The Quartet, in which Russia and the UN also figure, provides an interesting framework that has produced some consensual documents on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, including the 'road map'. Yet it is no exaggeration to state that the Americans and the Europeans had different priorities in mind when they adopted this document. The paucity of transatlantic declarations on the Middle East stands in sharp contrast with the abundance of EU declarations on the same issue. Maybe this implies that the Europeans speak a lot yet do not act, but it may also imply that Europeans have some shared views regarding the region while Americans and Europeans disagree.

Shifting from declarations to realities, it is fair to say that the Europeans followed American leadership in the Middle East until a few years ago. To explain this affirmation, some historical background is needed. Since the Suez crisis and during the Cold War, European states supported the central role of the United States in the region, which ensured (1) oil supplies, (2) some kind of stability and predictability through a network of alliances with pro-Western governments, and (3) the defence of Israel. Broadly speaking, European states welcomed the US diplomatic and military presence in the Middle East, which had clear additional benefits for them and which they could not afford or even dream of.

## US leadership, ups and downs

In the 1990s, the Europeans continued to follow America's leadership, as European support in four areas demonstrated:
◗ war against Saddam Hussein to liberate Kuwait in 1991;
◗ Middle East Peace Process starting from the 1991 Madrid Conference;
◗ UN-backed sanctions against Iraq;
◗ containment of Iran.

However, at the end of the 1990s it became increasingly clear that the Europeans (or at least most of them) were departing from a simplistic acceptance of US policies in the Middle East. Small fissures were first detected on the aforementioned areas; later on those fissures widened to become more or less manageable gaps and, with the Iraqi crisis, painful fracture.

First, the Peace Process ran into trouble after the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin in November 1995 and the election of Benjamin Netanyahu as Prime Minister of Israel in May 1996. Although the EU and its member states continued to support efforts made by the Clinton administration to reach a peace agreement, some differences between the transatlantic allies' respective condemnations of Israeli settlements were palpable, and the Europeans were more outspoken when they referred to the Palestinian 'right to self-determination' or to a Palestinian 'state'. Rather quickly, these differences became a transatlantic gap when the newly elected (February 2001) Prime Minister Ariel Sharon explicitly stated the need to expand Israel's territory and conducted a policy of retaliation and reoccupation to tackle Palestinian terrorism. Instead of exerting pressure to restrain such policies, President George Bush supported Sharon, particularly after the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks, and repeatedly affirmed Israel's right to self-defence. In contrast to the coincidence of views between Bush and Sharon, the EU and its member states tried to keep a balanced position, criticised violence on both sides and insisted on a negotiated solution, as many European Council statements and the deeds of both the EU High Representative and its Special Envoy demonstrated. The Quartet, created in April 2002, was a laudable attempt to find common ground on the Middle East conflict, but the short and gloomy history of the 'road map' and its (lack of)

implementation show that, while it was possible to find an agreement in theory, in practice the American and European views on the conflict were too far apart.

Second, agreement on Iraq also eroded gradually during the 1990s. Shortly after the 1991 Gulf War, transatlantic harmony on how to tackle the Iraqi issue was visible in the hard sanctions regime that was adopted at the UN Security Council, in Operation *Provide Comfort*, and in the declaration on no-fly zones in northern and southern Iraq. In fact, it must be remembered that France, the United Kingdom and the United States declared a southern no-fly zone in August 1992. The Europeans still accepted some sporadic use of force, such as the cruise missile attack of June 1993, in reprisal for an alleged attempt to assassinate ex-President Bush in Kuwait. Also in October 1994, Britain, France and the United States sent warships to the Gulf when Saddam Hussein simulated another imminent attack on Kuwait. But in the following years some Europeans slowly started to express doubts vis-à-vis America's policies on Iraq. The points of contention were the extent to which the Iraqi WMD programmes had been suppressed, the partial removal of sanctions and the use of military force against Iraq. Indeed, some European states' attitudes towards Iraq markedly deviated from that of the United States during 1998: UNSCOM's withdrawal from Iraq and the reported accusations of partiality were sources of tension between Europeans and Americans. Operation *Desert Fox* (December 1998) was not acceptable to many Europeans, and France ended its participation in enforcement of the no-fly zones. UNSC Resolution 1284 of December 1999 tried to find a compromise between the various European positions and between the transatlantic allies, but this compromise was merely cosmetic. The debate on Resolution 1284 and its further implementation demonstrated that the various Western positions on Iraq were in deadlock. Although they accepted the application of the oil-for-food programme, the United States and Britain maintained that coercive action was the best way to keep Iraq under control. France, other EU members and Russia believed that excessive sanctions hampered economic recovery and that continued use of force against Iraq obstructed the establishment of an effective verification regime. The latest chapters of this rather sad story are well known to everyone.[1]

1. A European interpretation of the prewar crisis, where the reasons for European scepticism vis-à-vis a military solution are spelled out, can be found in Martin Ortega, 'Iraq: a European point of view', *Occasional Paper* 40 (Paris: EU Institute for Security Studies, December 2002).

Third, the Europeans also contested the American policy of 'double containment' in the region as far as Iran was concerned. American and European policies towards Iran have not evolved in parallel. The EU has constantly upgraded its relations with Iran, from 'critical dialogue' to 'comprehensive dialogue' to negotiations, which started in mid-2002, in view of a Trade and Cooperation Agreement, and has only since spring 2003 been more reluctant to upgrade those relations, adopting a more assertive policy in which the EU requests Iran to meet three conditions: guarantees regarding its nuclear programme, respect for human rights and a more forthcoming policy in the Middle East.[2] For its part, the United States has preferred estrangement rather than rapprochement. The Iran-Libya Sanctions Act (ILSA) of 1996 and the Iran Nuclear Proliferation Act of 1998 are but two manifestations of a policy that excluded dialogue. A brief attempt to improve bilateral relations, however, took place following a rhetorical exchange between Presidents Clinton and Khatami that paved the way for a symbolic lifting of American sanctions on some Iranian products and a more profound change of policy, as Secretary of State Madeleine Albright announced in a speech on 17 March 2000. However, the new Republican administration soon went back to a policy of confrontation which reached a peak in January 2002 when President Bush included Iran in the 'axis of evil'. Although European concerns on WMD – and in particular nuclear – proliferation in Iran are sincere, and even though these concerns have led to the more assertive European policy mentioned earlier, American and European positions on how to deal with Iran are not identical. The Europeans continue to maintain relatively intense commercial and political exchanges with Iran,[3] in the belief that this approach will contribute to reinforcing democratic change internally and a more peaceful environment in the region. Indeed, the British-French-German initiative of October 2003 (although not carried out within the CFSP framework) led to Iran's agreement to inspections of its nuclear programme.

## EU involvement

The European Union as such has only been partly involved in this gradual process of transatlantic divergence over the Middle East conflict, Iraq and Iran, which has taken place since the late 1990s.

2. See EU General Affairs & External Relations Council conclusions of 16 June 2003, and the EU-US joint declaration on WMD proliferation (Washington, 25 June 2003).

3. In May 1999, the United Kingdom re-established diplomatic relations with Iran. President Khatami visited Paris (October 1999), Berlin (July 2000) and Madrid (October 2002), while Commissioner Chris Patten visited Iran in February 2003. The EU is Iran's main trading partner: in 2001 EU imports from Iran totalled €6.7 billion, whereas the value of EU exports to Iran amounted to €6.6 billion.

The main protagonists of this process have been the major European states. Along with these states, however, the EU has also played an important role in the transatlantic debate on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, for there was overall agreement among EU members. This role was equally possible because the EU had kept a low profile in attempts to resolve the conflict. Indeed, the transatlantic disagreement has been a discreet, almost secretive, shadow that has accompanied the highly publicised but superficial agreement among the Quartet. In the Iraqi crisis, the EU could not possibly have any role, given the differing positions of member states. Conversely, the EU has also been instrumental in the European policy towards Iran, and, in any transatlantic debate on this issue, the EU's past and current dialogues with Iran must be taken into account.

When it comes to weighing the relative roles of the EU and its member states in the transatlantic debate on the Middle East region, the immediate reaction in many American quarters is to dismiss the European Union as a handicapped actor, given the lack of agreement amongst European states. This assessment is obviously wrong; the EU is not yet a strong international actor but it is already present in the region, as the EU's endeavours to pacify the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during the second *intifada* and the EU's position on economic relations with Iran clearly show.[4] Another American view of the EU's role is that the EU cannot possibly have any influence because it has no military leverage. As the Iraq war has demonstrated, sometimes having too much military muscle can sometimes be a liability rather than an asset. In the Iraq war, instead of a foreign policy, the United States has implemented a power projection policy, which reminds us of the old European saying 'war is much too serious a thing to be left to the military' that could be rephrased for the occasion as 'war and its aftermath are much too important to be left to the Pentagon'.

The EU and its member states have indeed influence based on a new concept of 'power' which has many dimensions – political, legal, economic and cultural – as well as military. Moreover, the international role of the EU should be seen in historical perspective. The EU common foreign and security policy was created by the Maastricht Treaty (February 1992, entered into force on 1 November 1993) and was reinforced by the Amsterdam Treaty (1997, entered into force on 1 May 1999) and therefore the EU could not have any leverage in events that took place before those

4. As early as 1996, the European Union criticised the extra-territorial effects of the US Iran-Libya Sanctions Act, which led to a EU-US agreement (11 April 1997), whereby the US pledged to neutralise those effects on EU firms and citizens. The EU insisted non the less that its final aim was the complete removal of that piece of legislation.

dates. To give two temporal illustrations, the EU did not even exist when the Oslo agreements were signed on the lawn of the White House in September 1993, and the CFSP had no operative instrument (High Representative, military dimension) when Operation *Desert Fox* took place in December 1998.[5] In historical terms, thus, the EU is just a few-years-old international actor which is starting to determine its position in the neighbourhood and on the broader international scene. The EU security strategy drafted by Javier Solana in June 2003 is eloquent proof of this.

## Shaky scenarios

How will the ups and downs of transatlantic agreement/disagreement on policies towards the Middle East region evolve in the coming years? Has the Iraqi crisis established a precedent that could be reproduced in other cases, or was it just an exception? We are now living in a particularly volatile international environment and, therefore, it is impossible to foresee. The answer will none the less depend largely on developments in three fields: the region itself, US attitudes towards the world and the development of the EU as an international actor along with its member states.

Positive developments are of course possible. Unexpected changes in the Middle East may ease transatlantic tensions. Saddam Hussein might be captured and some fresh evidence of WMD programmes might still be uncovered. The Iraqi population might come to the conclusion that the American tutelage of their political process and their economy is the best guarantee to ensure their welfare, so that a constitutional deal between the three communities (Sunni, Shia and Kurd) could be reached. Also, a full democratic transition in Iran may lead to the abandonment of any remaining WMD programmes. Following a violent confrontation, in which both parties have suffered greatly, Israeli and Palestinian societies might recognise that starting a new phase of negotiation is the only way out for their conflict. But the contrary is also possible. As far as the United States is concerned, after the November 2004 elections, the US President might declare a new policy towards the Middle East region which is more palatable to the Europeans – or not. Finally, the European Union might decide

5. On the other hand, it must be noted that the EU is involved in regional cooperation frameworks in the Middle East, notably the Barcelona Process and the EU-Gulf Cooperation Council dialogue, which have a lesser impact on the transatlantic relationship.

to adhere to US policies in the region, partly as a result of the accession of the ten new members in May 2004, partly owing to a possible fresh outbreak of international terrorism. In this scenario, the few states that do not share that view would be a small minority and would have to reluctantly accept US policies in order not to destroy the remnants of a CFSP. But the EU could also evolve otherwise. The EU member states that supported the United States invasion of Iraq might reach the conclusion that their support has not been worthwhile – they have not received satisfactory rewards and the situation in the region is now much worse – so they decide to contribute to a stronger CFSP including a common policy towards Middle Eastern issues.

The many possible developments at the three angles of the Middle East-US-EU triangle make it impossible to advance a convincing prediction. In this author's view, however, the transatlantic gap on the Middle East will continue to grow, unfortunately. It seems quite unlikely that the situation in the region will improve. Both recent history and older regional dynamics lead one to think that no spontaneous positive change is in view. So the key to the evolution of transatlantic relations on the Middle East lies in developments at the other two angles of the triangle, and for the time being they are pushing in opposite directions.

In the United States, one cannot see how the Republican administration's involvement in Iraq, on the one hand, and determined support for Sharon's policies, on the other, might change without serious political costs for the government. If a new president takes office after the November 2004 elections, substantial changes in Middle East policy, as well as in other areas of foreign policy such as the transatlantic relationship and the US role in multilateral institutions, are likely – although there has been broad common ground between Democratic and Republican voices vis-à-vis the Middle East conflict, Iraq and Iran since the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks.

Turning to this side of the Atlantic, it is obvious that the EU and its member states have developed a more assertive and independent foreign policy in the last few years. Of course it is very difficult to generalise, it is also undeniable that two camps ('Atlanticists' and 'autonomists') do exist, and trends may change overnight (for instance, a future German government might

adopt a new transatlantic policy). But, seen in historical perspective, there undoubtedly exists a tendency towards a more distinctly European policy on the Middle East, and this applies not only to the EU[6] and its members but also to other European states. The attitudes of Germany and Turkey during the run-up to the Iraq war are telling in this respect. Despite a privileged strategic dialogue with the United States and a solid working link with the North Atlantic Council, Russia has not given unqualified support to US policies in the Middle East. It is true that many European governments endorsed the US desire to attack and occupy Iraq, and some are contributing with armed forces on the ground; but it is equally true that the fact that the Iraqi WMD and terrorist threats have not been proven, the fact that law and order have not yet been imposed in Iraq, and the fact that the Middle East conflict has not improved after the Iraq war, have weakened those governments' positions. Indeed, if Iraqi territorial integrity were put at risk as a result of the US-led war, stability in the Middle East region would suffer. After the Iraqi experience, it may well be that EU members feel less inclined to follow America's leadership in the Middle East if it is not based on agreed principles in the future.

Paradoxically enough, divisions amongst the EU members on the Iraqi issue spurred the definition of an overall EU security strategy, which was drafted by Javier Solana and presented to the Thessaloniki European Council in June 2003. The document 'A secure Europe in a better world' can be construed as a recognition by the Europeans that dangerous threats (WMD proliferation, terrorism and failing states) must be tackled, which would imply European alignment with the US security agenda. But the document can also, at the same time, be read as the affirmation of a distinct European approach to tackling those threats – along with other major global problems also mentioned in the paper. The implications of this 'European approach' for the Middle East are enormous, since, in the EU security strategy, all Europeans would be expressing their confidence in the resolution of international conflicts using multilateral institutions, and a whole range of methods – in addition to military power. After all, this would be a solemn confirmation of existing European policies that point in the same direction.

6. The European Commission and the European Parliament have produced a number of documents on the Middle East conflict (and to a lesser extent on Iran) that repeatedly call for the definition of more assertive EU policies.

## American and European perceptions of the Middle East

Transatlantic divergence over Middle East issues will increase in the coming months and years, since different political and cultural views of the region underlie policy-making on both sides of the Atlantic. The Middle East is the Achilles heel of transatlantic relations because American and European policies are based on two diverse sets of perceptions. The United States is currently a regional hegemonic power, with strong military presence and vested interests in the Middle East. For their part, the Europeans are external powers and, even though member states have individual interests, they look at the region through an EU lens. Thus, while the United States sees interstate relations there as a ruthless, Hobbesian fight that must be mastered, most Europeans tend to think that, in spite of the currently tense situation, international negotiation and peaceful resolution of disputes may eventually lead to regional peace and stability, and cooperation.

There are obviously common elements in the American and European views of the Middle East. In particular, protection of oil supplies is a shared interest, although the United States is more inclined to use military force to tackle disruption of those supplies.[7] Also, both Americans and Europeans show similar attitudes towards domestic politics and democracy in the region: they pay lip service to the principle but are not ready to sanction democratic transitions with unpredictable results. With some nuances, transatlantic allies back governments that follow pro-Western policies and cooperate in the fight against terrorism. Consequently, many current governments in North Africa, the Gulf states or in Pakistan are keenly supported, irrespective of their democratic credentials. Finally, the fight against terrorism and WMD proliferation in the Middle East is a joint objective, as shown by recent actions regarding Iran.

However, other aspects of Middle East policies have become increasingly controversial. If the late 1990s witnessed a gradual divergence between the transatlantic partners on Middle East issues, as was pointed out above, in the last few years this divergence has become a gap in four specific cases. Aside from Iraq, which continues to be the most visible rift, Israel-Palestine, root

7. Oil supply from the Middle East is a vital interest for both the EU and the United States. However, having refused any reform of its energy consumption habits, the United States continues to need oil in a different way from the Europeans. Perhaps for that reason, the American public would accept a military intervention to protect oil supplies more readily than Europeans (see for instance opinion polls carried out by the German Marshall Fund of the United States). For its part, the EU is deeply involved in the reduction of fossil fuel consumption.

causes of terrorism and regime change have been perceived differently on either side of the Atlantic. The American perception on these issues could be roughly summarised as follows:

◗ *Israel-Palestine*. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is not a classical territorial dispute but rather a determined Israeli fight for survival in a hostile environment, disregarding the possible rights of the adversary.[8] Israel is fighting in self-defence (even when military action takes place on Palestinian territory) and the armed Palestinian factions are terrorist groups. Therefore, the main objective of any international intervention in the conflict should be to hold back Palestinian terrorism. Damage caused by Israeli military action is involuntary collateral damage caused in legitimate defence. Despite a stated recognition of the two-state solution, the US government's declarations and deeds do not contribute to the actual realisation of that notion.[9] Since September 2001, the coincidence of views between President Bush and Prime Minister Sharon implies a certain similarity of American and Israeli national projects, particularly owing to ideological leadership – with a strong religious component – and to solidarity in their respective national all-out struggles against external threats and terrorism.

◗ *Terrorism*. The greater Middle East region has generated a serious terrorist threat to the United States, and the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks still constitute the tragic evidence that that threat is very dangerous and must be tackled vigorously. Without any doubt, the greater Middle East is the region where this threat has its roots, but war against terror should focus neither on political aspects nor on regional issues. Rather, this war must be fought by undertaking strong policing measures at home and tough military responses abroad. There is no link between the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and international terrorism, for the terrorists' main aim, from an American point of view, is the destruction of Western values and civilisation. While the possible association between the terrorist threat and Iraqi WMD led to the war against Saddam Hussein, the fight against terror still continues in post-Saddam Iraq since Iraq has now become a battleground for international terrorism.

◗ *Regime change*. In the region, there are friendly governments and rogue regimes. 'Carrots' are for friends, 'sticks' for enemies. The United States government would not accept any kind of

8. Two more elaborated works on the same issue are: Dana Allin and Steven Simon, 'The moral psychology of US support for Israel', *Survival*, Autumn 2003; and Gerd Nonneman, 'A European view of the US role in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict', in Martin Ortega (ed.), 'The European Union and the crisis in the Middle East', *Chaillot Paper* 62 (Paris: EU Institute for Security Studies, July 2003).

9. For all the fanfare accompanying President Bush's recognition of the two-state principle, including the idea that it was the first time a US president had formulated that principle, it is obvious that President Clinton's mediation constituted a more serious attempt to achieve two states.

dialogue with 'rogue' regimes. In this context, it was imperative to overthrow Saddam Hussein, and Iran and Syria must be contained. If, in the future, there is evidence that a rogue regime is pursuing WMD proliferation or supporting terrorism, military action and regime change should not be excluded – with or without the international community's consent.

Quite different parameters underpin the European perception of the Middle East region:

◗ *Israel-Palestine*. The Israelis and the Palestinians are entangled in a fratricidal conflict, in which both parties are employing unacceptable means. Violence on both sides must stop simultaneously and a solution must be found through negotiation and mediation. (The EU believes that the United States is the most capable mediator, but it also insists on having a role of its own and, in establishing the Quartet, the EU has insisted on giving a role to the international community.) Since 1948, Israel has conducted a noble fight to defend its existence and territory, but new historical circumstances in the 1990s allowed for a peaceful resolution of the conflict. From a European perspective, the point of departure is the 1948 UN partition plan, i.e. a two-state solution, reaffirmed at the Madrid Conference and in the Oslo process, whereby two states live side by side in peace. Palestinian and Arab attempts to destroy the Israeli state are as unacceptable for Europeans as Israeli attempts to impede the creation of a Palestinian state. Details could be sorted out, and the situation on the ground is obviously favourable to Israel, but the idea of a two-state solution should not be abandoned, in order to uphold the international order's basic principles. In this context, Israel has a special responsibility for two reasons: it is a democratic state and it is the occupying power.[10]

◗ *Terrorism*. International terrorism is a major threat to our security. Since the horrendous September 2001 attacks in the United States, which generated a current of sincere solidarity in Europe, the European Union has been fighting alongside the United States against this threat. However, terrorism is a complex phenomenon, and is inextricably linked to politics in the Middle East. Therefore, a whole range of instruments – not only military – must be employed. International cooperation and policing measures must definitely be undertaken, but resolution of

10. The European Commission has declared: 'Israel's compliance with internationally accepted standards of Human Rights is not satisfactory. Two important specific areas need to be tackled. Firstly, the issue of reconciling the declared Jewish nature of the State of Israel with the rights of Israel's non-Jewish minorities. Secondly, the violation of Human Rights in the context of the occupation of Palestinian territories. There is an urgent need to place compliance with universal human rights standards and humanitarian law by all parties involved in the Israeli/Palestinian conflict as a central factor in the efforts to put the Middle East peace process back on track.' (Communication on Human Rights in the Mediterranean, 21 May 2003).

conflicts, particularly the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and democratisation in the Middle East will in the long run contribute to overcoming the terrorist threat.

◗ *Regime change*. America's clear-cut distinction between friendly and rogue governments in the Middle East is not shared by most European governments, and certainly not by the European public. 'Good' and 'evil' are distributed in the Middle East, as well as in other human societies, in a more intricate way. The Europeans do not acquiesce with the idea that democracy may be imposed by armed force and the notion of regime change as a foreign policy option. Dialogue with all Middle East governments is the best way to engage them in a peaceful and cooperative process.

## The price of prejudice: Israel and Iraq

It would be inappropriate to try to demonstrate that the American set of perceptions on the Middle East region is wrong, while the European assessment is right, for such judgements would always be subjective. However, it is possible to affirm that the American perceptions are (a) leading to US isolation on the international scene, and (b) leading to decisions that are not necessarily helping the US position or that of American allies on the ground. These two assertions may be explained through the Israeli and the Iraqi cases.

The majority of the international community does not share the US view of the Israeli-Palestinian dispute, as the record in the United Nations clearly shows. Recently, the United States vetoed a draft UNSC resolution on 16 September 2003 calling upon Israel not to deport or threaten the safety of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat.[11] Three days later a special emergency session of the UN General Assembly passed a resolution with a similar request to Israel, adopted by 133 votes to 4, with 15 abstentions. The four negative votes were Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia and the United States.[12] On 15 October 2003, the United States vetoed another draft UNSC resolution[13] that would have declared Israel's building of a barrier in the West Bank illegal. In the Iraqi case, before the war, the United States, with Spain and the United Kingdom as co-sponsors, tried to obtain UNSC approval of a draft resolution that would have authorised the use of force, but lack of the necessary nine affirmative votes led to withdrawal of the draft.[14] From an American point of view, the temptation is always to

11. Eleven UNSC members voted in favour and three abstained (Bulgaria, Germany and the United Kingdom).

12. The 15 EU members and the 10 EU acceding countries voted in favour.

13. Bulgaria, Cameroon, Germany and the United Kingdom abstained, while the other 10 UNSC members voted in favour.

14. Political developments show that later adoption of UNSC Resolutions 1483 and 1511 did not imply a higher degree of consensus on postwar Iraq.

understate these facts and deduce from them that UN bodies are irrelevant. However, a more even-handed conclusion is that only a few other members of the international community share America's perceptions and policies towards the Middle East. If you are the only global superpower you can afford this, but weaker states can none the less also reasonably question the strength of the superpower's moral authority on those issues.

Furthermore, the US perception of the Middle East leads to political decisions that are putting at risk its own position in the region and that of its allies. This is a paradox, for the American goal is of course the opposite, but, from the evidence, the United States does not always get the desired results on the ground. It is, for instance, debatable that Ariel Sharon's policies are reinforcing Israel's position in the region and globally. In the long term, i.e. in 20 years' time, Sharon's policies may (or may not) have led to a more rich and powerful Israel. However, for the moment, those policies are having negative effects on Israel's security, economy and society. The Palestinian *intifada*, which includes totally unacceptable terrorist attacks against the Israeli civilian population, has distorted Israel's security and economy, but since he was first elected Prime Minister in February 2001 Sharon has gone along with a spiral of retaliation, destruction and reoccupation of Palestinian territory. Far from the principle of 'land for peace' that inspired the peace process, Sharon's actions seem to be guided by the ambitious principle of 'land *and* peace'. As a result, a security conundrum is degrading Israel's international position: while security and prosperity within a given territory were a possible – although difficult – outcome of the peace process, which could be guaranteed by the international community, the security and prosperity of greater Israel are proving very difficult to attain, and the international community would not accept the resulting acquisition of territory. All in all, for the purpose of this chapter, the question is not Sharon's policies; rather it is, why is the American government supporting those policies if they are putting at risk not only Israel's security and economy but also Israel's international stance? The answer must be found in the field of psychology and perceptions.

In the previous case, US empathy of the incumbent Israeli government hindered recognition by the US government that some decisions taken by Prime Minister Sharon could have a negative impact on Israel and its population. In the case of Iraq, the US

perception that regime change was imperative led to a dubious war. Moreover, the idea that Saddam Hussein's regime was inherently 'evil' led to decisions that have undermined US reconstruction efforts. Shortly after the war, the US administrators of Iraq decided to dismantle the Iraqi Army and disband the Ba'ath party, whereas it is obvious that, in autocratic regimes, such structures actually sustain the state. The alternative structures that have emerged in Iraq (tribes, ethnic and religious communities) are fragmentary and do not guarantee the country's unity and territorial integrity. Therefore, following the end of the occupation, civil strife between communities or even disintegration of the country could happen, something that would not be in the interests of the United States. In sum, the main lesson stemming from all those cases is that maintaining such a peculiar perception on Middle East issues, which underpins policy-making for the region, has not necessarily worked to the US advantage.

## From perception to vision: towards an EU policy on the Middle East

In addition to an American 'perception', there equally exists a European 'perception' of the Middle East region, as was stated above. Given this common European view, in principle it should be feasible to define a more determined common European policy for the region which would be a basis for action for both the EU and its member states and could be put forward in a frank transatlantic dialogue on Middle Eastern regional issues. This is not obviously the case owing to three major difficulties that might be called 'internal', 'external' and 'historical'.

The internal difficulty is twofold. On the one hand, the most visible obstacle to development of a more assertive EU Middle East policy is lack of agreement among EU member states. Nevertheless, the glass is half full, not half empty. While there is basic agreement on Iran and the Middle East conflict (as well as some other EU regional policies, such as the Barcelona Process and the EU-Gulf Cooperation Council dialogue), it is not always easy to reach agreement on practical measures needed to implement the EU's stated policy on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, for instance, would find it difficult to impose economic sanctions on the parties.[15] On Iraq,

15. See, none the less, footnote 19 below.

the split between France and Germany, on the one side, and Spain and the United Kingdom, on the other, is still hampering adoption of an EU common policy on the postwar phase. In cases where the EU members are split, there is not the slightest possibility of building a common foreign policy. However, in cases where a majority favour a specific course of action, it should be possible to move forward. EU policy-making on the Middle East plainly shows that unanimity, as the preferred method for decision-making in CFSP, is a burden. We do not know whether the EU will ever have a foreign policy worthy of the name. Only time will tell whether sovereign states, after having made many compromises in the context of the integration process, will agree to adopt appropriate methods for defining a common European foreign policy in order to tackle vital issues. However, even the most powerful EU members must recognise that they are too 'weak' individually to play a significant role in crucial international issues, such as the main problems of the Middle East.

On the other hand, lack of coordination between European states and institutions can be considered another aspect of the internal difficulty. In the case of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, for instance, since 2001 the EU has tried to manage the crisis using a wide range of actors and means (the Council and its declarations, successive EU presidencies, the High Representative and the Special Envoy, the Commission and individual member states) and the right synergy amongst them has never been achieved. As a result, the EU's role during the crisis has been unsatisfactory for European citizens, for member countries, the Union itself and for the parties in conflict. It may well be that the constitutional reform under way will introduce the changes necessary to achieve more effective intra-European coordination.

The external difficulty is related to America's (deliberate or involuntary) influence on EU members. Some EU member states would not dare to share in a European foreign policy on the Middle East that in any way impinges upon US policy. Therefore, US attitudes vis-à-vis a stronger EU Middle East policy form an important element when negotiating that policy within the EU. While the United States appreciates European cooperation in the fight against international terrorism, acknowledges that there is a common EU policy on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and welcomes the new, more assertive policy on Iran, it showed a more ambiguous reaction regarding European policies concerning the

war on Saddam Hussein. However, the Iraqi precedent clearly demonstrates that, in the age of globalisation, sheer diplomatic pressure is not a good substitute for close scrutiny of the merits of the case. More generally, the Iraqi case shows that the United States has an ambivalent position vis-à-vis the creation of an effective CFSP and ESDP, and this ambiguity must be resolved in Washington.

Finally, there is a less obvious, but no less important, difficulty that the definition of an EU policy on the Middle East region must confront. As Robert Cooper has put it,[16] the EU and its member states are living in a post-modern world, where borders between states have lost their traditional relevance. In contrast, the Middle East is still a typically modern world, in the sense that open conflicts hamper international cooperation and war is a foreign policy option. The relationships between the two regions are hazardous because of this historical difference.[17] In other words, Europeans and Middle Eastern actors are living in different historical times, which somewhat blurs the European comprehension of the region. Having replaced bloody territorial disputes by political integration, from a European standpoint, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, for instance, has a nonsensical aspect. Europeans believe that apparently unsolvable frontier disputes can indeed be resolved and interstate cooperation can be established instead. Conversely, from an Israeli (or Palestinian or Arab) point of view, borders are of the essence, as was the case in Europe in previous centuries.

Nevertheless, this EU historical challenge cuts both ways. On the one hand, the current European mindset is not well suited to understanding primitive conflicts; on the other, the European Union is well placed to exert a unique positive influence on those conflictive environments. This is not the case for the United States: while the United States seems to be more at ease in those troubled waters, it does not represent in itself a regional model for the Middle East, and its hegemonic approach leans towards rather inequitable arrangements. The European Union also runs the risk of 'contamination': the geographical proximity of both regions (contrasted with their historical remoteness) suggests that either the EU propagates stability to the Middle East or the Middle East spreads instability in Europe.

16. Robert Cooper, 'Is there a new world order?', in Geoff Mulgan (ed.), *Life after politics* (London: Fontana, 1997).

17. Robert Cooper (ibid.) confesses that interactions between the three contemporary historical worlds (post-modern, modern and pre-modern) are awkward, and does not offer a clear solution. He later proposed the regeneration of empires ('Why we still need empires', *The Observer*, 7 April 2002). The metaphor is misleading, since today we have the UN system, which has nothing to do with the old historic notion of empire. The metaphor might also lead to neocolonialist attitudes and dubious justifications of the use of force.

## Basic principles for an EU Middle East policy

The aforementioned internal, external and historical difficulties should not impede reflection on what an EU policy towards the Middle East should ideally look like. Indeed, a common European policy is badly needed to establish new regional dynamics in the Middle East. Leaving aside those difficulties, it may well be that the EU's contribution to lasting peace and security in the Middle East is irreplaceable.

What should the basic elements of an EU Middle East policy be? The Treaty on European Union created a CFSP that is based on principles, and those principles must inform EU foreign policy on any region or issue. The new constitutional treaty that is being negotiated will most probably similarly underpin the EU's foreign policy on values and principles. This should be the central aspect of any European contribution to the debate on the Middle East. If the Europeans are really determined to produce a long-term solution to instability, they must advance the idea that peace and security in the Middle East (and the associated benefits this will have for the West) will not be achieved through the use of force and control of the region's natural resources. Regional peace and security can only be achieved through the establishment of a new political environment based on principles such as the peaceful resolution of conflicts, international cooperation, respect for human rights and democracy.

Bearing in mind its 'post-modern' character, the EU should promote a new approach to relations between our post-modern world and the modern and pre-modern worlds in the Middle East region. The Balkans could serve as a model for such relations. After a painful learning process in the 1990s, a combination of diplomatic pressure, economic sanctions, military interventions, support for democracy and post-conflict reconstruction led to the stabilisation of the Western Balkans. The Balkan experience also shows that the broader international community must be involved, since the effort required is enormous: the need for human and economic resources, the know-how and the necessary legitimacy con only be obtained through a joint effort. Moreover, foreign intervention to 'accelerate history' must be objective and neutral, so that the local actors perceive that intervention is not

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being made in pursuit of spurious interests. After some hesitation, the proper transatlantic synergy was achieved in the Balkans. The Middle East is a harder test but, given the issues at stake, it is worth trying. There are obvious differences, though. The final destination for the Balkans region is EU accession, whereas this is not an imaginable objective for the Middle East. However, at least in part, some kind of integration could eventually be possible, particularly for Israel and Palestine, provided they reach a peaceful and lasting agreement.[18] In a world where both threats and opportunities are global, the EU could eventually offer soft security guarantees to Israel and Palestine – if they agree to create the necessary peaceful context – that might be more effective than hard military guarantees in a conflictive environment.

◗ For the European Union, the main political guideline in the region should be rapprochement not confrontation. The Peace Process begun in Madrid in 1991 is the model for resolving old, deeply rooted disputes. On the other hand, the Barcelona process, or Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, is an interesting initiative that attempts to bridge historical gaps. We can detect errors and learn lessons from their short history, but both processes show the way, and clearly demonstrate that old dynamics of confrontation *can* be transformed. But time and perseverance are needed. Even though regional integration is not feasible for the time being, the applicability of the lessons of some positive aspects of recent European history (postwar reconstruction, external sponsorship, rapprochement of former enemies, CSCE, etc.) to the region should be analysed thoroughly.

◗ Member states, the European Union and the international community as a whole can no longer afford to allow the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to continue to fester. Since the end of the Cold War, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has potentially been the most dangerous international issue, as recent history plainly shows. The European Union has repeatedly demonstrated its will to contribute to a balanced and long-lasting solution to the conflict. However, the Union should be more deeply involved in its resolution and should employ all means, including economic diplomacy,[19] to pacify the conflict and reach a just and lasting solution based on the two-state principle.

◗ The war on Iraq has unleashed unexpected and dangerous regional dynamics. Nevertheless, direct implication on the

18. Alfred Tovias ('Mapping Israel's policy options regarding its future institutionalised relations with the EU', CEPS *Working Paper* no. 3, Brussels, January 2003) has proposed various types of EU-Israel relationship, including EU membership, but this reflection can only succeed if it is accompanied with a solution for the EU relationship with the future Palestinian state and for the regional context.

19. The European Council has recently stated that 'the EU relationship with those [who will not implement policies conducive to dialogue and negotiations] will be inevitably affected' (Brussels European Council, 17 October 2003, para. 51). This slightly more assertive language was preceded by fairly strong declarations by both Javier Solana (European Parliament, 9 October) and Chris Patten (15 October).

ground is neither necessary nor perhaps possible. In the present difficult circumstances, the EU and its member states should stick to principles of international law: support for democracy, territorial integrity and maintenance of peace and security, including non-proliferation of WMD. If we consequently uphold those principles, some 'period of turbulence' is possible, but they still remain the best guarantee for a stable region. In the 'period of turbulence' and beyond, the UN Security Council must continue to play its role fully as the main authority responsible for the maintenance of peace and security.

◗ Opposition to Iranian nuclear ambitions must be accompanied by a clear stance regarding the internal debate on democratisation that is taking place there. The moderates should be supported and transition to democracy should be encouraged. Iran should be offered the possibility to engage in constructive regional relations. Estrangement of Iran might paradoxically lead to political involution and WMD proliferation.

◗ The most effective therapy against international terrorism is democracy. The EU should increase its support for democratisation in the Middle East since the record has not been totally satisfactory so far. The most dangerous terrorists are educated citizens from autocratic countries. A democratic environment could help to canalise potential terrorists' frustrations into the internal political debate.

◗ The price of stability in the Middle East should not be global warming and climate change. Global resources and environment policies should be rethought at the highest political level, and the EU must have a leading role in that effort.

◗ The use of armed force in international relations should adhere to generally agreed international rules, starting with the UN Charter, and the Middle East must not be an exception. Following the paralysis of the Security Council during the Cold War, in the 1990s new practices concerning the use of force were established. Force may be used in self-defence, in pursuance of a mandate from the Security Council or in the case of humanitarian catastrophe or extreme necessity (as in Kosovo in 1999 or Sierra Leone in 2000). Since 1945, one of the basic rules of international relations has been that territory may not be acquired by the use of force.

◗ If and when possible, an international conference on the Middle East must define a comprehensive regional arrangement. Obvi-

ously, the United States should take the leading role (as it did in 1991), but the Europeans can shoulder a large part of the burden, and local actors and the UN must be deeply involved as well. Again, since the Second World War, the Middle East has been one of the regions where the most serious risks and threats to global peace and security have been concentrated. The international community should act accordingly and find a permanent solution.

## Epilogue: the advantages of a transatlantic policy on the Middle East

This chapter has shown that there is a growing divergence between American and European policies on the Middle East. Also, some basic principles that should guide EU policy vis-à-vis the region have been offered. These conclusions are grounded in the idea that American and European perceptions of the Middle East region are quite different. This pessimistic observation implies that further transatlantic disagreement on Middle East issues lies ahead.

Is it possible to conceive of a rapprochement of those 'conceptual worlds' that precede and underpin foreign policy-making? Indeed, collective perceptions and assumptions, right or wrong, usually move at a very slow pace. The few relatively quick changes in collective psychology that history has recorded have been due to a general realisation that a specific course of action was wrong. In the coming year, developments in Iraq and in the region might eventually convince the American public and Administration that the decisions to invade Iraq and ignore other conflicts in the region were misguided after all. If this is the case, a new transatlantic understanding on how to deal with Middle East issues will be within reach.

Be that as it may, the advantages of a transatlantic agreement on Middle Eastern issues, and joint implementation thereof, are enormous. In spite of ongoing misunderstandings, both Americans and Europeans must constantly remember that when they act in unison, they can have a positive and decisive impact on peace-building and region-building. In historical perspective, the best example is the integration process that the European continent has witnessed since the Second World War. More recently, the Balkans experience constitutes fresh evidence of the same assertion.

In the Middle East, separate actions undertaken by the United States, on the one hand, and the Europeans, on the other, have shown their flaws and weaknesses in the recent past. Should they reach consensus, their intervention will be crucial in all domains. First, their impact on domestic political developments in the region would be beneficial. Americans and Europeans share the view that transitions to democracy should not entail instability. Some American voices have also pointed out the relation between democracy and the fight against terrorism. As Martin Indyk has written: 'If the United States is to "dry up the swamp" that generated the al-Qaeda terrorist phenomenon, it is going to have to confront the dilemma of political change in the Arab world.'[20] This is a view that most Europeans would be ready to endorse. Second, a transatlantic agreement would undoubtedly contribute to the region's prosperity. Instead of presenting individually grand projects for free-trade areas that are never implemented, the EU and the United States should define a joint plan of action for economic development of the region. A comprehensive plan is needed, for the excessive importance of oil is condemning the region to permanent instability. Third, a profound and sincere agreement between the transatlantic partners is the sole prospect for resolving deep-rooted regional international conflicts in the foreseeable future. Resolution of intricate issues such as the Israel-Palestinian dispute or postwar Iraq will only be achieved through transatlantic consensus.

Let us hope that consideration of these advantages will sooner or later persuade decision-makers on both sides of the Atlantic. After all, Achilles did not hurt himself. Achilles died as a result of an external attack on his vulnerable heel. Knowledge of one's own weaknesses is the first step towards more effective self-defence.

20. Martin Indyk, 'Back to the Bazaar', *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2002, p. 86.

Shift or rift
Assessing US-EU
relations after Iraq

# The Balkans: from American to European leadership

**Daniel Serwer**

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This analysis of US/EU cooperation in the Balkans starts from an examination of the fundamental interests involved. It proceeds to an assessment of the last ten years of international intervention, especially in Bosnia and Kosovo but with a cursory look at Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro.[1] It then looks at the prospects for the future, analysing where there is a continuing need for US engagement as well as Europe's capabilities and limitations in taking over a leadership role. It concludes with some recommendations on current policy issues.

This topic is especially important in the aftermath of the Iraq war. Many of the issues arising today are similar to those of ten years ago in the Balkans: a resource-rich but divided Europe is having trouble finding how it can cooperate with a decisive and militarily superior United States that is far more prepared to use force. The divisions within Europe and the military gap between Europe and the United States are even greater today than ten years ago, but the level of transatlantic unhappiness is not much worse. The question today is how long transatlantic strains will persist.

The United States and Europe worked hard from 1994 on – despite mutual recriminations – to create habits of cooperation in the Balkans, mainly by entering limited joint enterprises even when some of their interests diverged. So long as US and European objectives were not in conflict, these limited efforts improved the effectiveness of the international community and grew into a broad European vision for the Balkans.

Iraq and its neighbours are far more vital to American interests, so the United States is unlikely ever to want – as it has in the Balkans – to surrender leadership to Europe. The democratisation of Iraq and eventually other countries in the Middle East is likely to remain a US-led effort. But US leadership does not preclude cooperation with Europe. Transatlantic relations may improve if Europe can be engaged in Iraq in specific joint enterprises

appropriate to its means and capabilities, like providing humanitarian assistance and public security, rebuilding the justice and health systems and providing a social safety net. Such limited joint enterprises may even lead eventually to a shared vision of a democratic Middle East.

## US interests in the Balkans are multiple but secondary

With upwards of $24 billion invested in the Balkans (counting both military and civilian expenditures) over the past ten years, it would be easy to assume that the United States has vital national interests in the region.[2] This is not, however, the case.

During the Cold War, the United States viewed the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) as an important buffer that helped prevent the Soviets from gaining a port on the Mediterranean and, in the event of Soviet invasion of Western Europe, would slow the Warsaw Pact advance on NATO's southern flank. It was also a uniquely valuable example of a country that had succeeded in leaving the Soviet bloc. While the SFRY caused US diplomacy a good deal of difficulty through the Non-aligned Movement, the overall bilateral posture of the United States towards Yugoslavia was friendly and positive. Tito was an American favourite and exploited his relationship with the United States to stay in power indefinitely – the United States would not complain too much about his human rights record so long as he maintained the SFRY's military/strategic usefulness. After his death in 1980, the Americans maintained their support, despite the worsening dysfunctionality of the Yugoslav Federation.

When the Berlin Wall fell, the main reasons for American favour disappeared. The collapse of the Soviet Union meant that neither Russian invasion nor access to a port on the Mediterranean was to be feared. The Americans decided that they had less need of Yugoslavia and failed to provide major economic support even to its reform leadership under Prime Minister Ante Markovic. When the Federation disintegrated in the early 1990s, the first Bush administration made diplomatic efforts to keep it together and to democratise it but concluded that the United States, in the inimitable words of Secretary of State James Baker, had no dog in the fight that developed into the wars of Yugoslav succession because survival of Yugoslavia was no longer a matter of vital US

2. This guesstimate is based on US General Accounting Office, 'Balkans Security: Current and Projected Factors Affecting Regional Stability', GAO/NSIAD-00-124BR, April 2000, which gives a figure of $21 billion through FY 2000. If anything, $24 billion through FY 2002 is on the low side.

national security interest. The only military commitment the United States made was at Christmas 1992, when it warned it would use military force if Serbia provoked violent conflict in Kosovo.

It is often assumed that the incoming Clinton administration changed Baker's 'no dog in this fight' approach, but that is a false impression from hindsight and was not the case at the time. While candidate Bill Clinton had threatened to lift the arms embargo and even bomb the Serbs if they continued to fight against Bosnia's Sarajevo-based government, as President he failed to convince the Security Council to lift the arms embargo and hesitated to bomb for two and a half long years, until European support had been secured. Even in Washington this is often forgotten, and conservative Republicans portray Clinton as rushing headlong into the Balkans. In fact he deferred to the prevailing European view at the time that bombing the Serbs would pour oil on the fire of the Balkan wars. Only in the spring of 1993, when NATO deployed its 'no-fly' zone enforcement over Bosnia, did the United States drop the line that Yugoslavia was 'out of area', and even then there was great reluctance to become engaged on the ground. The United States would not have deferred if it had thought its vital national interests were at stake.

President Clinton reiterated the Christmas warning, judging that Kosovo, or more accurately the consequences of a Serb military crackdown there, merited US military intervention. While this move unquestionably contained an element of humanitarian purpose, it should not be understood as entirely humanitarian, or even as protection for a group, the Kosovo Albanians, who had political clout in the United States. The main purpose of US intervention, then and later, was to avoid a refugee exodus that would destabilise the south Balkans. It was believed, and often reiterated, that the entrance of large numbers of Albanians into Macedonia as a result of repression in Kosovo would destabilise that fragile former Yugoslav republic and lead to a mad scramble among Bulgaria, Albania and Greece for territory that each had at one time claimed. This hypothetical nightmare scenario spiralled in the worst case into war between Greece and Turkey, which was not as remote a prospect in the early 1990s as it is (we all hope) today. In 1999, when the United States did finally intervene – after lengthy hesitation – in accordance with the Christmas warning, the nightmare scenario was a major reason.[3]

3. For a thorough examination of the initial US approach to the Yugoslav conflict and the dynamic of later involvement, see David C. Gompert's 'The United States and Yugoslavia's Wars', in *The World and Yugoslavia's Wars*.

The Clinton administration first used military force in Bosnia in 1994 (tentatively) and 1995 (decisively). The interests it was protecting were secondary ones. There was no immediate threat to US national security. There was of course a humanitarian purpose, especially after the Serbs overran Srebrenica and murdered much of its male Muslim population. There was also a feeling that the United States, itself a multiethnic country, did not want to see the collapse of multiethnic Bosnia. More importantly for US national security, by 1995 the NATO Alliance was at risk. The European forces that made up most of the UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) were ineffective and subject to attack, especially if they moved to withdraw. State Department Assistant Secretary Richard Holbrooke convinced President Clinton, with difficulty, that the United States would have to go in to Bosnia to protect a European withdrawal and save the Alliance. At the same time, Clinton's Republican presidential rival, Senator Robert Dole, was beginning to gain headlines with criticism of the Administration's failure to act in the Balkans. The US intervention thus resulted not from a single overriding vital American interest, but rather from a combination of secondary interests that included rescue of the European forces in the Balkans, a response to Senator Dole on the home political front, support for a multiethnic society and humanitarian purposes motivated by the 'CNN effect'.

There was one further interest, not acknowledged publicly at the time but much on the minds of State Department officials in all their dealings with Bosnia (then and, as it turns out, also now). The United States did not want the formation of an Islamic republic in central Bosnia, known among Bosnians at the time as 'the green garden'. This was a primary motive for the American effort to form the Bosnian Federation – a Muslim and Croat governing entity created to end the Muslim/Croat fighting of 1992 and 1993. The specific fear was that if the Croat and Serb nationalists were successful in ethnically cleansing the territories they controlled in Bosnia they would force the Bosnian Muslims into a 'rump' Muslim state that would act as a platform for Iranian terrorism in Europe (the notion of terrorism on American soil was still unknown). The threat of Islamic fundamentalism in Bosnia may seem far-fetched – the Bosnian Muslims were for the most part notoriously liberal in their practice (and non-practice) of Islam. But Iran was a main arms supplier to the Bosnian Army during the UN arms embargo, and perhaps a thousand *Mujaheddin*, Islamic

extremists coming from Arab countries, had entered Bosnia to fight against Serbs and Croats. There was a noticeable increase in Islamic practice in Bosnia during (as well as after) the war, and considerable political interest in a separate, Islamic republic, which would be no more welcome to the United States today than it was in the mid-1990s. Avoiding that outcome is an important component of the tenacity with which the United States has sought to maintain a multiethnic Bosnia, today as in the past.

More generally, the US continues to have an interest in the rule of law in the Balkans, in order to prevent the region from becoming a haven or transit point for terrorists, the drug trade, human trafficking and arms trafficking. The discovery this year that Serbia, even under its more democratic, post-Milosevic government, continued to export arms to Iraq and Liberia, despite UN arms embargoes, underlined this point. But in this respect, the Balkans are no different from many other parts of the world, and less important than some.

## European interests are more vital but varied

While US interests in the Balkans are multiple but secondary or indirect, European interests are more immediate and vital but vary from country to country. For the EU, the Balkans are the 'near abroad', or 'Europe's Mexico'. Instability in the Balkans has repeatedly generated a flow of refugees and economic migrants, especially from Bosnia, Albania, Kosovo or Serbia into the European Union. While the Balkans do not represent a serious military threat to Europe, conflict there has prompted extensive deployment of European troops, including precedent-breaking deployments of German and Italian forces, which required difficult political decisions by their respective parliaments.

Europe did not, however, look at the Balkans through a single lens in the early 1990s. The Italians, due to physical proximity and historical factors, were more acutely aware of Yugoslavia than most other European countries, including not only Yugoslavia's role as a buffer state but also the threat it had represented at the end of the Second World War – Italy lost substantial territory to Yugoslavia, and Trieste was the last place in Italy from which the Allies withdrew their postwar administration in 1954. During the Cold War, Italy maintained correct but wary relations with

Belgrade, not the least because of mistreatment of Italians, hundreds of thousands of whom had fled the Istrian peninsula in Croatia at the end of the Second World War, and failure to recognise the rights of those who remained.

Once the Cold War ended, Italy resolved a number of contentious issues with Yugoslavia and sought at all costs to keep the Yugoslav Federation together. Italy also tried to convince its European Community (EC) partners that Yugoslavia was important and that they should join in this effort. While the French, who had historically good relations with the Serbs, agreed and supported Belgrade's effort to keep Yugoslavia in one piece, the Germans did not. With many Croat economic migrants in Germany, Croatia was able to elicit Bonn's sympathy for its independence aspirations. Germany, its full sovereignty only recently restored, declared itself ready to go it alone. Putting at risk the EC's Common Foreign and Security Policy declared just weeks before at Maastricht in December 1991, Bonn insisted that its EC partners join it in recognising Slovenia and Croatia as independent states. France, Britain and Italy reluctantly went along, while continuing to seek a peaceful resolution of the Yugoslav question, mainly through the Hague, London and Geneva International Conferences on Yugoslavia.

Thus each of the largest European powers viewed Yugoslavia somewhat differently. They (and the United States) could all agree on a lowest common denominator: the importance of the humanitarian crisis precipitated by the war in Croatia in 1991-92. They sought by deploying humanitarian assistance and EC monitors to ameliorate the situation. Thus it was that while the Yugoslav Navy was shelling Dubrovnik, Europe was flying in relief supplies, even while its own navies floated nearby. Europe agreed that only peaceful means should be used – the analogy of pouring 'oil on fire' seemed compelling at the time. Whatever their differences on other issues, the Europeans agreed that military intervention seemed more likely to create refugees than to prevent them.

The numbers of refugees and migrants nevertheless grew dramatically, reaching a peak in Western Europe of about 235,000 in 1992, and a total of over 1 million for the entire decade. During the 1990s former Yugoslavs accounted for the largest share of asylum seekers (nearly one in four) in Western Europe, surpassing all other groups.[4] Most European countries provided only temporary asylum and therefore did not allow the refugees to work, thus

4. United Nations High Commission for Refugees, *The State of the World's Refugees 2000: Fifty years of Humanitarian Action*, (New York: United Nations, 2001), Annex 10, p. 325.

entailing enormous social welfare costs, which themselves became an important European interest, especially in Germany. The United States, by contrast, accepted many fewer refugees but allowed them to work and settle permanently. The importance of the migration issue to the Europeans was graphically illustrated in 1991, when tens of thousands of Albanians crossed the Adriatic clinging to decrepit ships in an effort to escape the economic disaster of post-communist Albania. The Italians twice – once in 1991 and later again in 1997 – deployed their army in Albania mainly to stem this flow of human cargo. One consequence of the refugee inflow has been a dramatic increase in drug trafficking and other crimes committed by (a small percentage of) refugees from former Yugoslavia, especially Albanians. Germany and Italy have particular concerns in this regard, as does Switzerland.

Europe shared throughout with the United States an interest in preventing the destabilisation of Macedonia, the only republic of former Yugoslavia that managed to secede from the Federation peacefully. The extent of European engagement with Macedonia was, however, limited by the attitude of Greece, which refused to recognise the Republic of Macedonia by that name (or to allow other European countries to do so) and until the mid-1990s conducted a serious campaign against what it insisted on viewing as a country with ambitions to usurp Greek patrimony and even territory. Europe in any event would not have joined the US 'Christmas warning', because of its reluctance to use military instruments. But it was limited even in the use of its political, diplomatic and economic clout as a result of Greek concerns. While the issue of what Greece will call Macedonia has still not been resolved (everyone else at least informally calls it by the names Skopje prefers, either Republic of Macedonia or just Macedonia), Greece has in recent years realised that its interests are more threatened by instability in Macedonia than by its name, or by Macedonian territorial ambitions. Greek firms have become major investors in Macedonia and Athens went along with the signing of Europe's first Stabilisation and Association Agreement with Macedonia (called the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in the agreement) in 2001.

Thus European interests in the Balkans are much harder to define than US interests, because they vary from one country to another, but they are also more immediate. Where the Americans have been concerned about the Balkans because of global terror-

ism or the impact on the NATO Alliance or prevention of humanitarian crises, Europeans also fear the flow of migrants, mistreatment of their co-nationals, criminal and security threats on their territory and the domestic political impact of what might happen only a few hundred kilometers away.

## Lack of cooperation leads to ineffectiveness

To summarise: the US does not have vital interests in the Balkans, but it has enough secondary interests to have caused it to intervene, both militarily and non-militarily, several times in the 1990s. The EU does have vital interests, but they vary significantly among major EU member states, which find it difficult at times even to find the lowest common denominator.

Europe's ineffectiveness in the Balkans in the period 1991-95, which was supposed to be the 'the hour of Europe', is well known and need not be described in all its miserable detail. The failure of UNPROFOR – a force made up mainly of West European troops – to protect the UN protected areas (most dramatically by the Dutch at Srebrenica), the failure of a massive reconstruction effort (costing nearly $200 million eventually) in Mostar to reintegrate the city, the failure of international conferences to find solutions that would stick (a failure to which American aloofness contributed), the failure to lift the siege of Sarajevo – the list is a long one.

The list of US failures is no less impressive, though less often discussed. The failure to get the UN Security Council to lift the arms embargo on Bosnia, the failure for several years to convince the West Europeans to bomb the Bosnian Serb forces, the failure to block growing Iranian influence in Bosnia, the failure to stop Milosevic's crackdown in Kosovo (or to react vigorously), the failure to realise after Dayton that Milosevic was part of the problem and not part of the solution – the list is also a long one. The Americans have shown only sporadic high-level interest in the Balkans, because of their lack of vital interests there, while the Europeans have shown more interest but have been hampered in accomplishing much by lack of European unity.

Disagreement between the United States. and Europe aggravated this situation. The peoples of the Balkans are masters at

playing the great powers off against each other – the failure of the Europeans and Americans to come to an agreement gave their determined and malicious political leaderships just the opening needed. The Bosnian Muslims and Croats as well as the Albanians cozied up to the Americans, French and Italian officials preferred the Serbs, the Germans felt affinity with the Croatians. The result was a hotchpotch of international efforts, alignments and objectives that lacked coherence and effectiveness.

This was particularly apparent in 1991-92 when the European Community turned to Lord Peter Carrington and later David Owen to attempt an overall settlement for Yugoslavia, the UN turned to Cyrus Vance to negotiate a settlement in Croatia, and Germany insisted on diplomatic recognition of Slovenia and Croatia, dragging the EC member states along despite Carrington's objections. The United States stood aside, as the EC preferred, resisting recognition of Slovenia and Croatia but mainly leaving matters to the Europeans. Europe was unable and unwilling to think about the use of force, which left that instrument in the hands of Milosevic, who used it in Croatia and Bosnia to carve out Serb territories and in Kosovo to repress non-violent Albanian demonstrations. The Europeans bumbled from the Hague peace conference (1991), to the London peace conference (1992) to the 'permanent' International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia (ICFY) in Geneva without success. European diplomacy seemed not to be seeking results so much as trying to keep the process going. Europe lacked a vision of the outcome it wanted, not to mention a plan for getting there.[5]

The situation reached its nadir in 1993, when Vance and Owen were unable to gain strong US support for their peace plan, two wars raged in Bosnia (between Muslims and Serbs and between Croats and Muslims) while the Serb Republic of Krajina consolidated itself on about a quarter of Croatian territory with backing from the Yugoslav National Army, which also joined the Serbian police and paramilitaries in cracking down in Kosovo. The UN tried valiantly but unsuccessfully to stem the tide of war and European negotiating efforts moved from failure to failure. At odds with each other, the Americans and Europeans seemed incapable of finding a common approach to the increasingly violent ethnic cleansing and genocide, a term both hesitated to use.

5. This reflected a general difference between European and US negotiating styles as well as a specific response to the Balkans situation, see 'U.S. Negotiating Behavior', *Special Report* 94, (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, October 2002).

## US leadership changes the picture

Only in 1994 and 1995 did the Europeans and Americans begin to move the situation forward. The key was determined American leadership and European willingness to let the Americans take over. This was first apparent with the formation of the Bosnian Federation in the spring of 1994, when the Americans (with a lot of help from the UN) managed to end the fighting between the Muslims and Croats that had broken out the previous year. The Europeans, who contributed relatively little to this effort, found themselves playing catch-up by pledging to make Mostar whole again, as their contribution to the federation-building effort. The Contact Group – which then consisted of the United States, Germany, France, the United Kingdom and Russia – came to an agreement that the Federation would, in any peace settlement with the Serbs, occupy 51 per cent of the territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina. It is a measure of the force of European/American agreement that this percentage was maintained in the next year's negotiations at Dayton, even though the Croat and Muslim forces had already taken more than 65 per cent of the territory and were rapidly taking more. The Contact Group, along with the G-8 and the UN Security Council, were increasingly used after Dayton to minimise divisions among the great powers and ensure a minimum of coherence.

Then in the spring of 1995 the Americans convinced the Europeans within NATO to agree to the so-called 'Gorazde rules', which provided for an automatic NATO response if the UN-designated 'safe areas' – which until then were safe only in name – were attacked. When the marketplace in Sarajevo was mortared in August, the Gorazde rules triggered NATO bombing. Meanwhile, the Americans hatched a peace plan and sold it to the Europeans, a plan that kept Bosnia whole but divided it into two entities, one the Muslim/Croat Federation and the other Republika Srpska. The Europeans, tired of being blamed for failures in the Balkans, wisely saw the advantage of having the Americans take the initiative and grudgingly backed their efforts to achieve a cease-fire and convene the Dayton peace talks.

The Americans throughout this period were referring to the Europeans by the 'f-word': 'feckless'. The Europeans thought the Americans arrogant and abrasive. The Americans were doing their best to block what they regarded as unhelpful European meddling. At Dayton, the Americans managed to exclude the Euro-

peans, with the exception of the Germans, from any serious participation in the negotiations. Allowing the Germans a role, in particular on the Federation, ensured that the EU could not unite in rebellion against the United States. To keep the rest of the Europeans busy, the Americans intentionally engaged them in interminable discussions of the annexes to the agreement concerning the powers of the High Representative, who was to be the senior civilian implementing official in Bosnia, and arrangements for civilian policing. To keep the Bosnians in line, the Americans would threaten to abandon their effort to negotiate a solution and leave the whole affair to the Europeans.

The Americans were determined to have a weak High Representative, one who could in no way interfere with the NATO chain of command, which they aggressively defended against French suggestions of adjustments. The Americans got their way on the High Representative: the powers agreed at Dayton were minimal, but they failed to convince the Europeans to arm the international police force and give it executive powers. The failure had a silver lining for at least some Americans: the Defense Department did not really want anyone but NATO with guns on the ground in Bosnia – it was the State Department that had put forward the proposal. The net result was a bad one: a civilian administrator with little authority and no serious capacity to ensure public security.

In short, Dayton was not auspicious for European/American cooperation, or at least so it seemed at the time. But nothing succeeds like success. While many Europeans (and Americans) predicted the imminent collapse of the Dayton house of cards, they also hedged their bets. The French, who had contributed little at Dayton beyond protests of American security measures, insisted that the formal signing occur in Paris and tried to sell the notion that it should be called the 'Elysée agreement'. The Europeans also lined up at least nominally in favour of what became known as 'Dayton implementation', which in many respects was a peace process occurring after the signing of a peace agreement rather than before. Though European assistance was notoriously slow in arriving, over the years most of the troops and money came from Western Europe, which gradually rallied around the Dayton agreement and the aggressive American efforts to force its implementation, complaining all the while about how unworkable the agreement was.

The Europeans were in many respects correct. The Dayton agreement left in place the warring parties, the Dayton constitution increased the stranglehold of nationalist political parties on power, and the provisions for return of refugees and displaced people therefore proved painfully difficult to enforce. The weak High Representative took more than a year to assemble a serious staff, even as the Americans were insisting on early elections and a prompt military withdrawal within a year, as President Clinton had promised the Congress. It soon enough became apparent that this was nonsense, the one-year deadline for US troops to withdraw was cancelled and NATO began a more concerted effort to support civilian implementation efforts, including the use of constabulary forces under NATO command to conduct crowd control and other police tasks. By the end of 1997 the need for stronger civilian leadership led the Peace Implementation Council to award or recognise the 'Bonn powers', which in effect made the High Representative the law of the land in Bosnia, with the power to remove officials and to promulgate laws. Under General Wesley Clark as Supreme Allied Commander Europe and Eric Shinseki as ground commander, NATO deliberations and actions became important beyond the military sphere, as the troops undertook a series of moves aimed at weakening the grip of extreme nationalism in Republika Srpska. Thus the common enterprise of Dayton implementation – however grudgingly and argumentatively accepted by the 'arrogant and abrasive' Americans and their 'feckless' European partners – gradually brought Europeans and Americans closer together and created a clearer sense of 'international community' engagement than had existed previously.

The Americans continued to take most of the initiative, in Kosovo as well as in Bosnia. As Milosevic intensified his crackdown on the Albanians, the Americans hesitated to fulfil the Christmas warning and sought instead to inject international observers into the situation, hoping that this would obviate the need for military intervention and put Milosevic on the spot. By July of 1998, European and American civilian diplomatic monitors were deployed into Kosovo. They were reinforced with non-diplomat civilians in the autumn. But the fighting continued and became increasingly desperate. The Europeans and Americans agreed on giving Milosevic an ultimatum – reach a peaceful agreement on Kosovo or face the use of force by NATO – and then tried jointly to repeat the Dayton success by imposing an agreement at

the Rambouillet peace talks, where the French hoped to demonstrate that they could match the American diplomatic performance at Dayton, while at the same time demonstrating culinary (and hence cultural) superiority.

The French by all reports can claim success in shaming the fare offered at Packy's Sports Bar during the Dayton peace talks, but the diplomatic effort at Rambouillet failed. Milosevic was determined to hold on to Kosovo, whose loss would put his own political future at risk. This led – because of prior agreement between the United States and Europe on how to react if Yugoslavia stymied the diplomatic effort – to the NATO bombing in March. Milosevic knew full well that there was no love lost between the Americans and the Europeans, and that popular opinion in many European countries opposed the war. Even in the United States, the Administration was unwilling to risk seeking Congressional approval, and there was no real question of seeking UN Security Council approval because of Russian opposition. Within Serbia, the threat of bombing undermined the Serbian democratic opposition and strengthened the grip of the regime. Milosevic had every reason to believe that NATO would split before he had to cave in.

He was wrong. Again a common enterprise – this time war – gave the Americans and Europeans reasons to hang together, lest they hang separately and lose the NATO Alliance to boot. A common enterprise once again created a habit of cooperation that was difficult to break. But war in the European view was not a sufficient approach to the Balkans. Germany in particular wanted to offer a 'carrot' as well as a 'stick' and invented the idea of a 'Stability Pact'. In European terms, a stability pact is a prelude to greater integration. The real significance of the Stability Pact – today a hotchpotch of worthy but not newsworthy projects to integrate the Balkans regionally while moving them all closer to Europe – was its recognition that all the Balkans states could and should eventually join the European Union. Here we see emerging for the first time since Dayton a European idea – it appears to have been hatched in the German Foreign Ministry and sold by Chancellor Schröder directly to President Clinton –that would transform the peace process throughout the Balkans and begin to shift leadership from Washington to Brussels.

Habits of US/European common enterprise soon produced three more results in the Balkans. By the end of the NATO/Yugoslavia war, it was apparent to both Europeans and

Americans that Milosevic could no longer be considered part of the solution but was in fact a large part of the problem. They set out to bring down the dictator, relying on overt assistance to a growing and non-violent but chaotic Serbian democratic opposition as well as on financial and travel sanctions. The financial sanctions were particularly effective, impoverishing the regime. The Americans provided assistance to a student 'resistance' movement (Otpor), as well as to other NGOs and political parties. The Europeans not only followed suit but also invented with the reform-minded Yugoslav economists of G-17 their own way of reaching regional leaders beyond Belgrade through the 'Energy for Democracy' programme. Zoran Zivkovic, then the mayor of the central Serbian town of Nis and now Prime Minister of Serbia, was one of the beneficiaries of this effort to supply energy directly to democratic leaders beyond the Beltway.

Soon after the joint effort to bring down Milosevic succeeded in October 2000, the Europeans and Americans confronted a new challenge: Albanian guerrillas were again on the attack, first in southern Serbia and later in Macedonia, apparently in an attempt to create at least a 'greater Kosovo' if not a 'greater Albania'. The Americans had ignored the problem while Milosevic was in power – the guerillas gathered in the demilitarised Ground Safety Zone on the Serbian side of the Kosovo/Serbia boundary were an annoyance to their enemy, and the Americans may even have encouraged the rebellion. With a new regime in Belgrade, the signals changed quickly. The problem was contained once NATO decided to cooperate actively with the Yugoslav Army, no longer under the control of Milosevic and under strict orders to behave correctly towards the local population. In Macedonia, the task was much more difficult. The Macedonian Army lacked capability, NATO (mainly the Americans) found it difficult to control the mountainous border between Kosovo and Macedonia over which guerrilla supplies flowed, and the guerrillas proved both tough and clever in winning over the Albanian population, which had not previously been inclined to violent rebellion.

It was again a joint US/EU effort that resolved the problem in Macedonia. The cooperation started badly: Robert Frowick, an American who headed the OSCE mission in Macedonia, put forward a set of ideas for resolution of the conflict and began to deal indirectly with the Albanian guerrillas. The EU and the Macedonian government objected and chased Frowick, who lacked full US

backing, from the scene. His ideas were nevertheless revived within a couple of months, this time as a joint US/EU effort by Jim Pardew and François Léotard, a former French Minister for Defence. In August 2001, they were able to force the government and guerrillas to accept the Ohrid framework agreement that ended the fighting in Macedonia and put the country on its current track towards Europe.

Finally, Europe and the United States found common purpose in holding Serbia and Montenegro together. Despite doubts among non-official observers in both the United States and Europe about the wisdom of doing so, the EU led the effort to bludgeon Montenegro into remaining in a 'state union' with Serbia. This solution looks unlikely to last, but for the moment it has stabilised the situation and created more favourable conditions for democratisation and economic development in both republics. It is now seems inconceivable that the break-up of this union will lead to serious violence.

It is difficult to escape the conclusion that it is not so important what the Americans and European do, so long as they do it together. A shared vision helps, but is not necessary, so long as the EU and United States do not have opposing visions. Whatever the shortcomings of their common enterprises – the Dayton agreements, the air campaign against Yugoslavia, the Solana solution for Serbia and Montenegro, the Frowick ideas for Macedonia, the effort to oust Milosevic by democratic means – the Balkans are far better off because the EU and United States worked together on these projects than they would be if the United States and EU, or its member states, had marched in their own directions.

## The future of US/European cooperation in the Balkans

The idea that Balkans states belong in Europe is now driving the peace process in the Balkans, by mutual agreement of the United States and EU. Any residual hesitancy about this in the United States disappeared in the autumn of 2000, when Slobodan Milosevic fell from power in Belgrade and George W. Bush won the presidential elections in the United States. Until Milosevic fell, it was difficult to imagine that Serbia could be part of the Stability Pact, and in fact it was not. The Republicans, who had been highly critical of what they mistakenly regarded as President Clinton's rush to inter-

vene in the Balkans, made it clear quickly that they would welcome a shift of the Balkans burden back to the Europeans.

We have in fact seen marked progress towards Europe in the Balkans in the last several years, especially in Croatia, Romania, Bulgaria and Albania. These countries are leading the region towards NATO and the EU by concerted efforts to meet the membership requirements. Each has shortcomings, but their leaderships are trying to match actions to ideals. It is now particularly important that Zagreb, which leads the region in moving towards the EU, facilitate the return of Serbs to Croatia and arrest any remaining Hague indictees. No member of Partnership for Peace should fail to fulfil its obligations to the Tribunal.

The main current problems in the Balkans lie principally in Serbia and Montenegro, Kosovo, Macedonia and Bosnia. It is not important to catalogue all the difficulties. What is important is to identify those that require continuing US engagement and cooperation with Europe. Solve these few, and leadership can be turned over to the Europeans without endangering progress in the Balkans.

First among the problems requiring US attention is reform of the security sector in Serbia. It is all too clear in the aftermath of Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic's tragic assassination that it was a mistake to leave in place the network of criminals, security forces, businessmen and politicians that had been the backbone of the Milosevic regime. It is also a mistake to say the United States pressed the Serbs too hard, or that Djindjic would be alive today if the international community had ignored the issue of war criminals. The crackdown that the Serbian government pursued in the aftermath of the assassination, using extraordinary emergency powers, should have occurred immediately after the overthrow of Milosevic in October 2000. Even as they look forward to a Serbia that meets the highest human rights standards, the United States and Europe have supported a limited crackdown. They should also insist on the essential follow-on measures: deep reform of the police, army and security services. It is especially important that the Europeans and Americans expand the assistance that they provide to Serbia and Montenegro focused on the rule of law.

The second problem requiring US attention is the final status of Kosovo. By the end of this year, the UN Mission in Kosovo

(UNMIK) will have turned over all but a few powers to the Provisional Institutions of Self-Governance in accordance with Security Council Resolution 1244. The UN – with support from the United States and EU – will also likely have succeeded in opening a dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina on non-status issues of importance to both Serbs and Albanians. Before his death, Zoran Djindjic had called for immediate talks on final status, in order to avoid what he saw as de facto independence, which would damage the prospects for Serbia's reform factions at the polls as well as Serbia's prospects for a closer relationship with the EU. The Kosovo Albanians, for their part, want independence and will not sit still forever in an international protectorate, though some are content at the moment to establish facts on the ground in hopes that independence will follow of necessity. Their fondest wish is for the United States to break with the Europeans and recognise Kosovo's independence unilaterally.

The United States and Europe have so far tried to postpone consideration of final status indefinitely. They rightly claim that Kosovo has not yet met all the standards the UN has set as preconditions. At this point the crucial standard is treatment of Serbs and other minorities. The United States needs to use all the influence deriving from its special relationship with the Kosovo Albanians to convince them that they must allow Serbs and other minorities to return to their homes securely, worship in their churches without risk and travel throughout Kosovo without harassment or threat. If this happens, final status talks can begin. Europe, while reluctant, will engage once the United States takes the initiative. Europe cannot be expected to proceed on Kosovo final status without the United States.

The best way for the United States to signal its willingness to proceed on final status would have been to propose a serious American candidate to lead the UN mission in Kosovo as Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) starting in the summer of 2003. It is an anomaly that Europeans have since 1999 held the top jobs in both the military and civilian operations in Kosovo. The right American would be able to do what his three European predecessors have failed to do: convince the Kosovo Albanians that the only way to final status is by correct treatment of Serbs and other minorities. The unwillingness of the Americans

to put forward a strong candidate for SRSG reflects their failure to recognise that it will be difficult to postpone the opening of final status talks beyond 2005. The United States and Europe need to ready themselves for these talks. Continuing refusal to face this issue could catch the international community unprepared, creating serious risks of unrest and instability.

The third main issue on which the United States needs to focus is establishment of the rule of law throughout the Balkans. This requires transfer of those indicted for war crimes to The Hague. Paddy Ashdown, the current High Representative in Bosnia, has made justice his first priority, but unless Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic are captured no one will believe it. Nor will it be possible to withdraw US troops.

Rule of law goes far beyond the question of war criminals and touches vital US and European interests, such as ensuring there is no Balkans haven or transit point for international terrorists. A significant percentage of the drugs, arms and human trafficking reaching Europe pass through the Balkans and enrich their mafias, and until recently Serbian and Bosnian Serb companies were supplying Iraq as well as Liberia with weapons. Terror, drugs and arms will be permanent US and European concerns in the Balkans. The United States and Europe need to invest seriously in building up the institutions required to meet their own security objectives.

There are many areas in which the United States is now little needed in the Balkans, where Europe and the multilateral financial institutions can and should take the lead. The United States need not engage heavily on economic reform and development – the resources available to the US government in this area are minimal, and the IMF, World Bank and the EU are vastly better equipped and funded. Likewise, social welfare concerns – while all too real and important – should fall to others. Most of the state-building function, while vital because the Balkan wars were due in large part to weak states, should fall to the EU, which will want to shape Balkan states in a European mould. Last but not least, the United States and Europe should look to NATO for leadership on military reform, and play a role when needed through NATO or in bilateral activities that complement NATO's efforts.

## Is Europe ready?

The next question is whether Europe, which failed in the Balkans a decade ago, can improve its performance now. Today's Europe is better prepared and equipped. It has fielded an excellent team: in addition to Ashdown in Bosnia and until recently the UN's Michael Steiner in Kosovo, there are Javier Solana, Chris Patten and Erhard Busek in Brussels. Europe has footed most of the bill for the Balkans, and provides most of the military manpower – now about 75 per cent, vs. 15 per cent for the United States.[6] The Common Foreign and Security Policy, while a shambles on Iraq, persists in the Balkans.

The problem Europe faces is not its admittedly limited military capacity, or even the Europeans' reluctance to use it. There is no military challenge in the Balkans today that the Europeans cannot handle. There never was. The real problem is political will and credibility. Especially the Albanians, but also the Serbs and Bosnians, show little respect for the Europeans, even though they pay the bills and even though the ultimate goal for all the peoples of the Balkans is integration within Europe.

In order to make the vision of a future within Europe more credible, the European Union needs to stop treating the Balkans as a distant region that needs to be stabilised and begin to view it as a neighbouring area into which the EU intends to expand. This shift in approach has already occurred for Romania and Bulgaria, but it is not yet complete for the Western Balkans. Until the spring of 2003, EU plans called for a steady decline in assistance to the Western Balkans through 2006, to nearly half the level provided in 2000. The Thessaloniki summit in June 2003 stopped this decline, opened the door to expanded cooperation with the Western Balkans and restated the perspective of membership in the EU once the necessary criteria are met. But Thessaloniki failed to reverse the decline in assistance or to provide – as advocated by the European Stability Initiative – the Western Balkans with the kind of structural assistance that has worked so well to accelerate economic development in other laggard areas of Europe.[7] This shift would greatly enhance the credibility of the EU and spur the countries of the Western Balkans to serious reform efforts. Otherwise,

6. The rest of the force consists of peacekeepers from European countries that are not members of the NATO Alliance or of the European Union, as well as non-European contributing countries.

7. 'Western Balkans 2004: Assistance, cohesion and the new boundaries of Europe', *European Stability Initiative*, 3 November 2002. See also Commission of the European Communities, 'The Western Balkans and European Integration', COM (2003) 285 final, Brussels, 21 May 2003 and 'The Thessaloniki agenda for the Western Balkans: Moving towards European Integration', European Council Conclusions, 16 June 2003.

doubts will linger as to whether the Europeans are really prepared to see the Balkans countries within the EU, even at a far-off and still unspecified date.

But the issue of credibility is not only one of resources and vision. Europe lacks common purpose and unity of command and control. It is still easy to play the Europeans off against each other. To the extent they can agree among themselves, the positions they take are often the lowest common denominator. Rarely are they able to deploy all the levers of their considerable power to achieve a clear result, as Solana did – perhaps unwisely – when he forced Montenegro to stay in a confederation with Serbia. Even then, the so-called 'Belgrade agreement' negotiated by Solana as an official of the Council seems to have fallen short of what the European Commission wanted. The signals sent by Brussels since the signing of the agreement have therefore been confused and contradictory. Often, the Europeans find it difficult to coordinate their economic, political, diplomatic and military instruments so as to achieve a clearly defined objective. Seldom do they even try. The future European constitution may make it more, not less, difficult for Europe to project power in a unified and decisive way. Unanimity will still be required for foreign policy decisions, and military forces will remain under national control. Election of a Council president with a longer term of office than under the current rotational system is unlikely to improve coordination on foreign policy and security questions with the Commission, which will continue to have its own president.

The next test for the Europeans is Macedonia, where they have taken over the military task from NATO. The prospects are reasonably good, mainly because the Macedonian and Albanian participants in the new Government seem determined to fulfil their commitment to the peace process and at the same time to confront the crime and corruption that are the greatest threat to the country's viability. Europe needs to focus on making its military operation in Macedonia a success. Once that has been achieved – perhaps as early as the end of 2003 – Europe can and should prepare to take over the military mission in Bosnia (where it already has responsibility for the police monitoring mission), provided that the war criminals are in The Hague and NATO has the vexing problem of unifying the Bosnian armed forces is on its way to

resolution. With the Americans stretched thin because of the enormous military task in Iraq, and several major European countries unwilling to pitch in, increased European burden-sharing in the Balkans is becoming ever more urgent.

## Conclusions

In concluion, there are two current policy questions confronting the United States and Europe:

◗ how should they deal with Serbia in the wake of Zoran Djindjic's assassination, and
◗ what should they do about the final status of Kosovo?

Serbs are looking to the United States and Europe for help and support in the aftermath of the assassination. They merit assistance, not only in tracking down the murderers, but also in cracking down on the underworld whose dirty work they did. The new Prime Minister has made clear that he intends to pursue the reform direction mapped out by Djindjic, though his support in Parliament for doing so is becoming shaky. In the immediate aftermath of the assassination, the Serbian government seized the opportunity to accelerate reform of the military and judiciary, but the police and secret services remain relatively untouched. The logical outcome of security sector reform is arrest and transfer to The Hague of indicted war criminals. The only question is how quickly this can be achieved. Unlike the Council of Europe, which admitted Serbia and Montenegro to membership despite its failure to cooperate fully with The Hague, the United States has not dropped its conditions for bilateral assistance to Serbia or watered them down, though it certified Serbia as qualifying for assistance by the 15 June deadline. Clearly the US conditions would be more effective with a greater degree of coordination on conditionality with the Europeans, who provide more benefits to Serbia and have greater leverage if they choose to use it. The day the Europeans become serious about conditionality will mark the end of the long delay in Belgrade's cooperation with The Hague.

Kosovo Albanians are looking to the United States to support independence – they see Europe as hostile or marginal. The United States has to decide whether it will do so, if not what it will support, and if yes how independence or another solution will be sold to the Serbs, Albanians and Europeans. While it is clear enough that the Security Council will have to bless a decision on final status, the United States and Europe have to decide in what forum the issue will be negotiated and who will lead the effort. A joint effort along the lines of the successful Ohrid negotiation seems appropriate. They also need to make it clear to all concerned that a decision on Kosovo's final status will not be allowed to affect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Macedonia, two countries in which much of the decade-long US and EU investment in the Balkans lies. And they have to insist on protection of the Serbs and other minorities, as a precondition to a decision on final status.

The Balkans are today more than midway in two transformations. The region is closer to peace than war, and closer to European than to US leadership. The right way out of the Balkans for the United States, and into the Balkans for Europe, is to finish these transformations. The job will get done quicker with US/European cooperation on the remaining essential tasks: security sector reform in Serbia, a decision on Kosovo's final status and capture of the indicted war criminals. Once these have been completed, the Americans will continue to be a major political presence but will reduce their Balkans military commitments to a level commensurate with their interests, and the Europeans will assume their proper leadership role in full.

Shift or rift
Assessing US-EU
relations after Iraq

# The interplay between the EU and the United States in the Balkans

**Dimitrios Triantaphyllou**

**10**

EU-US relations in the Balkans have been in constant evolution since the peninsula caught the world's imagination over a decade ago with the end of the Cold War and the beginning of the violent dismantling of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Though violence, ethnic cleansing, and high tensions have abated, the Balkans are attempting to undergo another revolution of sorts – that of transformation and adaptation to European norms and standards and membership of 'Euro-Atlantic structures' – at a time when the Balkans are shifting 'from American to European leadership'. The purpose of this chapter is not to challenge many of the fundamentally-sound assertions regarding European weakness in the Balkans in the early and mid-1990s, or the American diplomatic and military cavalry stepping in to save the day to ensure that the wars of Yugoslav dissolution would not seep over the external borders of former Yugoslavia (they have not to date). Rather, the focus will be on the interplay between the United States and the European Union in the Balkans and the benefits accrued for the EU.

The Balkans is certainly a region where the EU and the United States have worked relatively well together in defining objectives, goals, and actions after an initial period of disarray at the beginning of the 1990s. At first, both sides of the Atlantic were slow to grasp the significance of the break-up of Yugoslavia, with NATO not involving itself at an early stage. Instead, the United Nations model without the United States used in Bosnia was a failed experiment (as UNPROFOR's sad record in Bosnia demonstrates) which led to much of the UN's marginalisation in the military arena, NATO's emergence as the peace enforcer in Europe and the EU's realisation that it had to acquire the requisite military capabilities (the Kosovo war painfully demonstrated the EU's serious weaknesses in this domain).

Western or foreign involvement in the Balkans is as old as the history of the peninsula.[1] It was the wars in former Yugoslavia that put the Balkans back on the map of Europe. According to

1. See Leften S. Stavrianos, *The Balkans*, 1815-1914 (New York: Holt, 1963); Barbara Jelavich, *History of the Balkans: Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* and *History of the Balkans: Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); and Misha Glenny, *The Balkans 1804-1999: Nationalism, War and the Great Powers* (London: Granta Books, 1999).

historian Mark Mazower, '[w]hile the rest of the continent was coping with mass immigration, new regional diversities and what were often euphemistically termed "multi-cultural societies", southeastern Europe looked as if it was reverting to an earlier historical logic of territorial wars and ethnic homogenisation. Was this Europe's past or its future?'[2] By remaining outside Europe's mainstream for centuries, 'Balkan societies failed to synchronize their development with the state-building process of Western Europe. Their subsequent effort to catch-up was accompanied by a sense of helplessness and fatalism.'[3] Though the violence and differences between the various states and ethnic groups was contained throughout the Cold War period, the collapse of communism altered the rules of the game, leading to radical changes in terms of security in the Balkans. With ideological/military blocs no longer in competition with each other and the relative disappearance of external threats, the new threats came from within states, as exemplified by Yugoslavia's disintegration. In other words, the 'outbreak of war [in Yugoslavia] ran against the spirit of integration and cooperation which prevailed in the international community following the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989.'[4] It also brought external powers back to the Balkans despite the fact that the region had lost the strategic importance it had acquired post-1945 due to the East-West divide.

This Western involvement did not come without severely testing the transatlantic relationship, at least until 1995 when the United States and NATO intervened in late 1995 to put an end to the Bosnian war.[5] Since, Western policy has been relatively smoother, demonstrating unity of purpose in an albeit uncertain manner in that policy as to how to proceed is constantly recalibrated, given the gradually improving but tenuous situation on the ground. Though the response to the Yugoslav crisis expressed largely through multilateral organisations such as the EU, the CSCE/OSCE, the UN, the WEU and NATO, 'each of these bodies, while having some independent character, was essentially subject to the will of its member states, or at least its most powerful and influential ones.'[6]

The unwillingness of the United States, haunted by memories of Vietnam, to commit itself early in Bosnia, and the EU's 'delusions of civilian grandeur', mesmerised by the potential of 'soft power', led to the Bosnian debacle.[7] According to Misha Glenny, in all former communist states, 'the outgoing communists bureau-

2. Mark Mazower, *The Balkans* (London: Phoenix Press, 2001), p. 128.

3. Thanos Veremis, *Action Without Foresight: Western Involvement in Yugoslavia* (Athens: ELIAMEP and YALCO, 2002), p. 9.

4. James Gow, *Triumph of the Lack of Will: International Diplomacy and the Yugoslav War* (London: Hurst & Company, 1997), p. 3.

5. The debates leading up to the so-called 'Endgame Strategy' are presented in detail in Ivo H. Daalder, *Getting to Dayton: The Making of America's Bosnia Policy* (Washington, DC: Brookings University Press, 2000), ch. 3.

6. Op. cit. in note 4, p. 156.

7. Dana H. Allin, 'NATO's Balkan Interventions', *Adelphi Paper* 347, July 2002, pp. 16-19.

cracies devised ways of adapting to the new conditions, preserving their privileges against the challenge of political or economic competition.' In Yugoslavia, the West was unprepared for Slobodan Milosevic's use of aggressive nationalism as he reinvented himself.[8]

In this setting, the differences were not only across the Atlantic but within EC (EU after the 1992 Maastricht Treaty) member states as well. This was due to a number of factors. Committed as the EU was to a common foreign and security policy in the wake of German unification and the end of the Cold War, the Yugoslav crisis caught it unprepared.[9] Another factor contributing to the West's 'myopia' was that the Gulf War, ongoing at the time the conflict broke out in Yugoslavia, distracted policy-makers.

Subsequently, one can conclude with relative confidence that the Balkans represents today one of the few regions of the world where there is policy consensus as to how to deal with the region among the EU-15 and between the EU and the United States. That is to say, there seem to be no real differences with regard to long-term objectives – stabilisation and integration within the EU and Euro-Atlantic structures. The general consensus on both sides of the Atlantic is that the region should be prevented from becoming a vacuum in which organised crime and terrorism predominate and poverty fuels migration to Europe and America. To do this, the effort has been placed on establishing the rule of law, building partners in the region with the new generation of democratically elected leaders who hold the ultimate responsibility of maintaining a sustainable peace.

Yet to view the Balkans and the evolution of the EU-US relationship there from a purely negative perspective of having to act together by necessity in order to avoid further instability is erroneous. It fails to do justice to the important positive contributions of EU-US interplay in the fields of conflict resolution and reconstruction and the stabilisation of the post-Cold War order until the post-9/11 mutations in US foreign policy. The biggest problem or thorn across the Atlantic has been an understanding of each side's interests in the Balkan conflicts. For the United States, its interests have always been 'multiple but secondary',[10] while the Europeans have only now in 2003 begun to define a security concept which is still in its embryonic state. Hence questions such as 'Is Europe ready?' or 'Can the EU hack the Balkans?' arise in Washington.[11]

8. See Glenny, op. cit. in note 1, pp. 634-5.

9. It should be remembered that the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) planned for 1990-91 was initially meant to focus on monetary union and its institutional consequences. The 1989 revolutions across Central and Eastern Europe and German unification in 1990 put foreign and security policy on the IGC agenda.

10. In 1992, George Bush Snr dismissed Bosnian hostilities as a 'hiccup' and his Secretary of State James Baker declared, 'We have no dog in that fight'. Baker's successor, Warren Christopher, called Bosnia 'a humanitarian crisis a long way from home' that 'does not involve our vital interests'.

11. See Daniel Serwer, 'The Balkans: From War to Peace, From American to European Leadership', Testimony before the US House of Representatives Committee on International Relations, Subcommittee on Europe, 10 April 2003; Morton Abramowitz and Heather Hurlburt, 'Can the EU Hack the Balkans? A Proving Ground for Brussels', *Foreign Affairs*, September/October 2002.

Acting as the superpower it is, America's intervention led to the breakdown of the international consensus 'that reigned throughout the cold war period on the crucial question of the limits of self-determination'.[12] It suggested 'a clear break with the morality of the Cold War, symbolized by the Brezhnev doctrine of limited sovereignty, during which NATO was prepared to tolerate human rights abuses in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.'[13] In other words, the new doctrine of humanitarian intervention that came into effect with America's use of military force in Bosnia in 1995 and later with NATO's Kosovo campaign of 1999, beyond the recriminations regarding the legality of intervention, has assisted in the formulation of a new approach in international relations which defines 'the limits of self-determination; the management of ethnic conflict; the necessity of crisis management; the imperatives of a new type of peacekeeping; and the legitimacy of humanitarian intervention.'[14]

One need only assess EU policy before 1995 to understand the tectonic impact that American leadership and involvement in the Balkans have had on EU policy, instruments and capabilities today.

## Between the end of the Cold War and the Dayton/Paris Accords

In 1991, the EU was still operating under European Political Cooperation (EPC) rules, which ruled out any discussion on military security issues. Despite EPC restrictions, the issue of military intervention was raised, both NATO and WEU making assessments as to the numbers required to influence events in Yugoslavia but the United Kingdom's reluctance to become engaged unless the United States was also involved led to the scrapping of a WEU mission in Eastern Croatia that had been suggested by France and Germany.[15] The context is particularly important in considering why the EU took at least two years (1991-1993) to get its act together, only to be confronted by American reluctance to become involved until 1995. In particular, the interplay of the three principal European actors (France, Germany and the United Kingdom) with each other and the United States is key. The transformation of Western European security after the Cold War played a key role in defining

12. Karl Kaiser, 'The Balkans as a Model', *Internationale Politik, TransatlanticEdition,* vol. 4, Autumn issue, 2003, p. 31.

13. Misha Glenny, 'Managing Chaos – The Balkans Today', in Robert B. Zoellick and Philip Zelikow (eds.), *America and the Balkans* (London: W.W. Norton, 2001), p. 81.

14. Op. cit. in note 12, p. 81.

15. See Fraser Cameron, *The Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union, Past, Present and Future* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), pp. 28-9.

the involvement of European countries in the Yugoslav war, and vice versa.

As a result, the EU and its CFSP had not been perceived as a credible security actor in the Balkans. Three decisions could account for that: the declaration that the 'hour of Europe' had arrived; the recognition by Germany of Croatia and Slovenia on the basis of their having met certain Helsinki norms, in December 1991, and by the rest of the EU at the Maastricht summit of December 1991; and the establishment of the Contact Group in 1994 which allowed for the big European states to concert with the United States and Russia.

The issue is further compounded if the policies of the EC/EU and key European states are analysed.

## The European Union

To begin with, the European Union's approach was both ambitious and ambiguous. It suffered from its inability to play an effective role in the Yugoslav war, and from its failure to formulate cohesive policy despite the implementation of the CFSP mechanism. During the Cold War, the EC's relations with the CMEA (Council for Mutual Economic Assistance) were virtually non-existent on a bloc-to-bloc basis, as the EC operated on the basis of bilateral trade agreements with individual CMEA countries, and the Soviet Union was opposed to multilateral negotiations.[16] More specifically from the Balkans, only Romania and Yugoslavia had signed cooperation agreements with the EC in the early 1980s. In 1988, the EC and the CMEA signed a 'Joint Declaration' paving 'the way for the extension of the EC's contractual relations with the USSR's satellites'.[17] On the basis of the EC-CMEA Joint Declaration, the EC's policy was to establish a network of bilateral relations with all Central and East European countries.

After the end of the Cold War, EU policies could be characterised in three baskets.

1. The EU politically distinguished between the Central and East European countries (CEECs) and the former Soviet Republics in that the former were potential applicants for EU membership while the latter remained in a different category. In this manner the EU aimed to draw distinctions as to the extent of 'Europe' in the political sense of the word.[18]

16. The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA or COMECON) was an international organisation active between 1956 and 1991 for the coordination of economic policy among certain nations then under communist domination, including Albania (which did not participate after 1961), Bulgaria, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Mongolia, Poland, Romania and the Soviet Union. Yugoslavia participated in matters of mutual interest as an associate member. Although the CMEA was formed in 1949, a formal charter was not ratified until 1959.

17. Dimitris Papadimitriou, 'The EU's Strategy in the Post-Communist Balkans', *Journal of Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, vol. 1, no. 2, May 2001, p. 70.

18. For example EU macro-financial assistance was limited to Albania, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, the Czech Republic, the Baltic states, Slovakia, Moldova, Ukraine, Israel and Algeria, although assistance through the PHARE, TACIS, and MEDA programmes was available to many more states. See European Commission, Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs, *European Economy: Report on the Implementation of Macro-Financial assistance to Third Countries in 1994*, 1995.

2. The EU's central role was economic. From 1990 macro-financial assistance was extended to third countries, mainly from Central and Eastern Europe, in order to support their political and economic reforms as part of a much broader EU process of establishing closer links with its neighbouring countries.[19] The principles or guidelines for assistance included exceptional character (case-by-case basis); complementarity (to assist in filling the residual external financing gap 'over and above the resources provided the IMF and other financial institutions'); and conditionality (aid is conditional on the fulfilment of macroeconomic performance and structural adjustment criteria).[20]

3. The EU shared responsibilities with NATO, the OSCE and WEU in the political field. The convening of the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) and its CFSP pillar in 1990; the Treaty on European Union (Maastricht); the widening initiative leading to an EU of 15 states; and the signing of Association Agreements with some CEECs were all indicative of the EU's new assertiveness.

What comes out of these three principal EU approaches is a variety of different initiatives which, though significant in their own right, provided no substitute for an overall security strategy toward the East. What the EU did in most cases was generate expectations that have been left unfulfilled on the policy-making front.[21] Of course, part of the problem stemmed from the national approaches of the most influential EU member states – Germany, France and the United Kingdom.

### Germany, France, and the United Kingdom

Germany pursued enlargement as well as deepening simultaneously as a result of the collapse of the Soviet Empire. Germany's place in Europe was transformed from being the central pillar of a solid Western bloc to the front-line western edge of a deep chasm created by the Soviet collapse. In other words, the domestic question of unification affected Germany's external relations to an unprecedented degree. The EMS near–collapse of 1993 was indicative of this. Unification led Germany to forge closer relationships with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe in order to safeguard the economic links these states had with eastern Germany so that the costs of unification might be lowered. As a result Germany

19. A process expanded with the Association Agreements and eventual membership of these associated countries as formulated in the June 1993 Copenhagen Summit.

20. *European Economy: Report on the Implementation of Macro-Financial assistance to Third Countries in 1994*, 1. The principal instrument for pre-accession strategy on the financial plane was the PHARE programme. With over 4 billion ecus allocated until the end of 1995, the European Council of Ministers at Cannes decided to add a further 1 billion ecus annually 'which would lead to the total of 11 billion ecus, during the nineties, for economic reconstruction and development as well as the strengthening of civil society and democracy'.

21. For more on EU policies towards the East, see Marie Lavigne, *The Economics of Transition: From Socialist Economy to Market Economy* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), pp. 191-240.

was more interested in the countries of Central Europe or the Visegrad Four (or Three, depending on Slovakia's troubling direction) over the rest of the CEECs due to their immediate proximity.

Germany's solo diplomatic recognition of Croatia and Slovenia in December 1991 (over the wishes of its envoy in Belgrade and other European states) might have led the rest of the EU in acting together and recognising these states but it did not help the situation on the ground much, given the German constitutional debate at the time over the non-use of German forces in out-of-area conflicts. In effect, Germany attempted to redefine its Ostpolitik in post-Cold War terms as well as to convince its EU allies that its Ostpolitik should be adopted Union-wide.

France had been forced to rethink its security thinking in the light of the Soviet Union's collapse. Fearful of a predominant Germany, France attempted to join the Germans in stressing the primacy of new European security initiatives. With limited economic interest in the CEECs, France basically stressed deepening over enlargement, fearful that enlarging the EU to the CEECs would bring its heavily subsidised agricultural sector under direct threats from the CEECs, which held a competitive advantage in this area. In other words, France was not as hard-pressed as Germany to enlarge the Community.

Thus while France looked for ways to enlarge WEU as the European security pillar, it remained rather lukewarm towards enlargement to the CEECs, despite the establishment of bilateral policies or approaches with most of them. Its participation in Bosnia, with its large contingent, was guided principally by its interest and commitment to having the European pillar strengthened while waiting for the development of more coherent strategies. France was also fearful that any emphasis on the East would defer EU attention from areas of particular concern to France such as the Maghreb and the Mediterranean region as a whole. As a consequence of this, France seemed to be in favour of giving priority to membership for Cyprus and Turkey over the Baltic states as Germany wanted. Of course, such jostling for position was partly remedied by compromise between the two sides as was indicated by cooperation over the Juppe-Kinkel plan for Bosnia.

The United Kingdom had seen its role diminished in light of the fact that its special relationship with the United States was challenged, the United States having indicated that it would rather deal with a United Europe in that it represented a more

reliable and focused partner than a Europe with 15 or more voices. This left the United Kingdom no choice but to get involved to a greater degree in European unification in order to remain at the centre stage of the Continent's politics. Thus the United Kingdom was willing to accept changes such as widening the Union; sending troops to Bosnia in order to have a say in the EU position; agreeing with Germany on tripartite cooperation with Turkey in order to counterbalance Franco-German cooperation. Yet at the same time, the United Kingdom tried to limit these initiatives as much as possible, as was demonstrated by its tough positions in the 1996 IGC debate. This tug-of-war between the three dominant entities in the EU indicated that national concerns and fear of dominance by one side over the others took precedence over a concerted approach to Balkan policy.

Thus in its policy towards the Balkans, the European Union pursued a bilateral rather than multilateral approach. Bulgaria and Romania concluded Association Agreements in 1993, while Slovenia did so in 1994. Albania signed an agreement on commercial cooperation in 1993. The other states had no such agreements. Even in terms of the Yugoslav crisis, recognition of Croatia, Slovenia and, subsequently, Bosnia did not come about due to coordinated policy among the EU members but primarily due to pressure from one or more member states. There was also a perceived tendency among individual EU members to prioritise their interests in particular Balkan states, Germany being primarily concerned with Croatia and Slovenia; Italy with Slovenia, Croatia and Albania; France with Romania; Greece with Serbia and Bulgaria.[22]

On the security and political front, the Western security response and initiatives were of limited character in that they were not regional in scope. The European Union's 'Pact on Stability in Europe', ratified on 20-21 March 1995, suffered from serious flaws in its focus and orientation, despite its laudable intentions.[23] It excluded precisely those regions most likely to be the source of further conflict in Europe. Only Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Greece and Turkey were included from the Balkans by virtue of these states being members of the EU or holding associate membership of the Union. Thus the emphasis on conflict prevention rather than conflict resolution excluded the most volatile (in terms of security) states and regions of the Balkans. Also the Pact failed to address within the framework of security any component of economic development. In Europe's most underdevel-

22. Yannis Valinakis, 'The Development of an EC Balkan Policy and Greece: The Political Background' (in Greek), *Special Study* no. 15, Hellenic Centre for European Studies, June 1992, pp. 25-31.

23. Stemming from the initiative of then French Prime Minister Edouard Balladur, the June 1993 European Council in Copenhagen decided to launch a process of preventive diplomacy culminating with the Pact on Stability in Europe. The reasons or intentions behind the EU's initiative are well-meaning: (1) the urgent need to reinforce stability in Europe by preventing tensions and potential conflict; (2) contributing to the efforts of the countries preparing for accession to the EU; (3) implementing the provisions for a common foreign and security policy, as stipulated in the Treaty of Maastricht. See Stephanos Stathatos, 'Pact on Stability in Europe', in Theodore Couloumbis, Thanos Dokos and Thanos Veremis (eds.), *The Southeast European Yearbook 1994-95* (Athens: ELIAMEP, 1995), pp. 99-104.

oped economies it is axiomatic that, without economic development, any agreement on political security can only be ephemeral. Likewise, the January 1994 NATO summit in Brussels, although a move in the right direction, especially for the security of the Visegrad countries with the launching of the Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme, did not satisfactorily address the security needs and concerns of the Balkan states at a time in history when the enlargement of NATO and the European Union were of vital importance for the Balkans and the geopolitical stability of the region.

According to one analyst, despite the EU's meek record in putting an end to the Yugoslav war, several positive lessons can be discerned: 'Firstly, the Twelve, in spite of everything, succeeded in maintaining a relatively united position on Yugoslavia: none of the parties to the conflict was able to play one European country off against another, and this Community cohesion was no doubt beneficial in the face of the risk that the conflict might spread to all of the Balkans, or even to Central Europe as a whole . . . Secondly, the balance of power among the Twelve shifted in favour of the Franco-British partnership once the step towards military action had been taken. It is an irony of history that the two countries most opposed on the very problem of Europe's future development and often the most simplistic in their defence of, respectively, WEU and NATO, often found their positions the closest – on the ground and in the UN – in the management of the Yugoslav crisis . . . The third conclusion concerns Germany. The Yugoslav crisis has been one whose military management has – until now – had to do without major American and German contributions, in other words contributions from two of the countries that are the most vital for European security.'[24] Thus despite its lack of cohesion, the seeds of ever-closer EU cooperation over Yugoslav policy were planted at that time.

## The implications of US involvement

Nevertheless, it was US involvement that led to a qualitative improvement in the EU's record in the Balkans. In particular after the Kosovo campaign, where the United States led and paid most of the bills,[25] the EU and its member states have taken the lead in assuming responsibility for the peace. Beyond a declared intent to build up more effective military capabilities, the EU along with the

24. Nicole Gnesotto, 'Lessons of Yugoslavia', *Chaillot Paper* 14 (Paris: Institute for Security Studies of WEU, March 1994).

25. Some 62 per cent of the more than 37,000 sorties were made by US aircraft while US planes flew 79 per cent of the intelligence and 65 per cent of the support missions. The cost of the operation is more difficult to estimate. According to the Congressional Research Service, for FY 1999, the joint military expenditures for Operations *Allied Force* (Kosovo air war), *Joint Guardian* (KFOR) and *Sustain Hope* (DOD-Provided Refugee Relief) amounts to over $5 billion. For the rest of the participating NATO Allies (minus Belgium and Canada, which did not provide figures) the sum total comes to less than $2 billion. In terms of humanitarian/reconstruction assistance, the United States contributed $713 million, for the other allies the sum is over $830 million, while the EU contributed over $1 billion. See CRS Report for Congress, 'NATO Burdensharing and Kosovo: A Preliminary Report', RL30398, 3 January 2000; http://www.fas.org/man/crs/#europe.

World Bank has developed an overall economic recovery plan for the region; it has launched the Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP) and the individual country Stabilisation and Association Agreements (SAAs) in order to respond to demands for a closer relationship with the EU from Balkan countries; it has guaranteed membership to at least two Balkan countries, Bulgaria and Romania, in the near future; and it has pledged a substantial amount of money for Balkan reconstruction.[26] Each of the EU's initiatives could be disputed, as they have been, for their shortcomings by a number of international watchdog organisations,[27] but they are indicative of the EU taking the lead to assume responsibility for providing the structures within which to consolidate long-term recovery in the Balkans.

Thus the international community's objectives in the Balkans today are relatively straightforward: to put the Balkans on a path to stability and integration with the rest of Europe sometime in the future by ensuring that the EU and NATO are the primary agents of international influence, as the 29 July 2003 EU-NATO agreement for a concerted approach for the Western Balkans suggests, and that local ownership takes hold over the political and economic transformation of the region before the American component withdraws at some time in the future. [28] The EU-NATO agreement for a concerted approach also addresses the question of leadership, which has been a key American concern if it is to draw down its resources even further from the region; nowhere has this been more evident in terms peace operations in the Balkans.

Who leads? The Balkans as a test case or showcase of cooperation in peace operations in Europe over the last decade shows the long and arduous road to the current EU-NATO consensus and clear leadership. Peace operations evolved from strictly UN ones to UN-mandated operations bringing together the UN and a number of European-centred organisations such as the EU, NATO, the OSCE, and, until recently, WEU. In other words, more flexible and apt forces under NATO and, now, EU command have supplanted the rigidity or orthodoxy of the 'blue helmet'-type operations. The changing nature of most post-Cold War conflicts in Europe and elsewhere from interstate to intrastate (or an amalgam of both) conflicts and the monumental failure of the UN to cope with these until the United States took the lead in terms of its humanitarian intervention in Bosnia in 1995 and in Kosovo in 1999 go a long way towards explaining the current leadership role of NATO and the EU.

26. Christopher Makins, 'Overview', op. cit. in note 13, p. 13.

27. See, for example, and www.esiweb.org.

28. 'EU and NATO Agree Concerted Approach for the Western Balkans', http://www.ueitalia2003.it/NR/rdonlyres/681217FD-D7F2-42CB-B4A7-B3A8045F0FB1/0/0729UENATOEN.pdf.

It was former Yugoslavia that provided the United Nations with a substantive operational presence for the first time in Europe. Its role was at times central, at times contested, sometimes marginal and even non-existent, depending on the operational theatre and the situation on the ground.[29] Since 1991, four periods that mark the evolution of the UN's operational role in Europe can be discerned:

◗ 1991-1994, when the UN played a central role in the maintenance of peace on the European continent (UNPROFOR);
◗ 1994-1998, where the UN was largely discredited and was gradually marginalised (creation of the Contact Group, Dayton);
◗ October 1998-June 1999 when the UN role is contested (OSCE-led Kosovo Verification Mission; Operation Allied Force);
◗ June 1999-present, which corresponds to the establishment of peace in Kosovo under a leading legal and political role for the UN. [30] For example, UNSC Resolution 1244 regarding Kosovo was negotiated in the G-8, implemented by the UNSC, and involves the EU, NATO and the OSCE in the current post-conflict division of labour.

The UN's changing fortunes in the 1990s in the Balkans mark the emergence of NATO and, later, the EU. NATO's relationship with the United Nations since the early 1990s could be defined as having developed along the lines of two distinct models. The first is the 'subcontracting' model which is based on Chapter VIII of the UN Charter (the partnership between the UN and regional organisations); the second is a dual-track policy by NATO summarised as 'with the UN if possible, without the UN if necessary'. A number of operations such as Maritime Monitor, Maritime Guard, Sharp Guard (together with WEU), Sky Monitor, Deny Flight, and NATO's role in implementing the Security Council's 'safe area' policy in Bosnia-Herzegovina under the dual-key arrangement are examples of the 'subcontracting' model. It was the failure of the UNPROFOR mission in Bosnia, combined with the difficulties of implementing the dual-key arrangement and, after a series of reversals such as the Sarajevo market place massacre in February 1994, the fall of Gorazde in April 1994 and the fall of Srebrenica in July 1995 that NATO's (read: greater US interest and involvement) role was significantly augmented with Operation Deliberate Force leading to the UN and NATO determining together the terms of the cease-fire leading to the Dayton Peace Accords.

29. See Thierry Tardy, 'L'ONU en Europe : vers un rôle opérationnel subsidiaire', Recherches et Documents 17, Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique, Octobre 2000.

30. Ibid., pp. 2-3.

The Dayton Accords and, in particular, 'The General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina', provide another example of the 'subcontracting' model for NATO by adding a new dimension to the relationship between the UN and NATO in terms of forms of cooperation under conditions of peace, as part of a 'post-conflict state-building' effort. IFOR and SFOR fall in this category. After purely military tasks (cessation of hostilities, withdrawal of foreign troops, redeployment of forces, prisoner exchanges) were achieved, halfway through IFOR's mandate, IFOR and later SFOR began addressing a number of civilian tasks or supporting tasks such as the establishment of a secure environment for the conduct by other organisations of 'civilian' tasks associated with the peace agreement, including elections, humanitarian assistance, law enforcement, the return of refugees and so on. Thus, while the UN's military role had become a thing of the past given NATO's primacy in that field, NATO had gradually acquired a greater legal and political role as well at the same time.

The Kosovo problem changed the nature of UN-NATO relations substantially, since Operation Allied Force raised the issue of whether an intervention can be legitimate but illegal. In early 1998, NATO had expressed concern over developments in Kosovo. In March of that year, NATO's Permanent Council had declared: 'NATO and the international community have a legitimate interest in developments in Kosovo, inter alia because of their impact on the stability of the whole region which is of concern to the Alliance.' The Security Council's inability to issue a resolution authorising the use of force by NATO and in the light of the deteriorating situation in Kosovo led NATO in October 1998 to threaten the use of force against a sovereign state (the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia) without a Security Council mandate and in a situation other than the invocation of Article 51 (legitimate defence) of the UN Charter. After its marginalisation on both the politico-diplomatic and military fronts, the United Nations now found itself contested legally in the management of a crisis irrespective of the fact that it was argued that the intervention in Kosovo would be an exception and that it was not meant to set any precedent.

UN Security Council Resolution 1244 of 19 June 1999 paved the way for the establishment of a UN administration in Kosovo (UNMIK) pending a definite settlement of the status of Kosovo

under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, with key roles for both the UN and NATO (KFOR). Consequently, the United Nations was reintegrated in the political, diplomatic, and legal processes.[31] Nevertheless, on the military front the UN had lost its primacy in Europe to NATO (and the EU) and while its legal authority has been re-established, in the political and diplomatic fields it shares authority along with NATO, the European Union, and, to a lesser degree, the OSCE – a far cry from its uncontested and central role in 1991-1994. On the other hand, NATO has demonstrated to date its resilience to adapt to new missions.

The Kosovo conflict was instrumental in propelling the EU towards acquiring military capabilities. The Kosovo war of March-June 1999 'made it painfully clear that Europe depends upon American military capabilities' and that European governments 'were militarily impotent to support regional crisis management, even in a situation that was in immediate geographic proximity'.[32] In other words, 'the "Kosovo factor" demonstrated that Europe's inability to be more than a minor contributor in the implementation of the Atlantic Alliance's air campaign.'[33]

The evolution of the EU from a civilian power to a civilian power with some military capabilities thus coincides with the growth of peace operations and the need for conflict management on the European continent. Its inability to play a key role in the military field allowed NATO to gain the upper hand there. The development of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), partly spurred on by the European's bleak showing in the Kosovo campaign and the EU enlargement process, reinforced the Union's relationship with NATO. In the political-diplomatic domain, the EU has been acquiring and playing a central role since 1999. Together with NATO, the EU played an important role in stabilising the Preshevo Valley in southern Serbia; along with the United States, the EU was the key player in assuring that civil war did not break out in FYROM in 2001; and the EU fundamentally negotiated the Belgrade Agreement between Serbia and Montenegro in Spring 2002 which deters the possibility of a unilateral move by Montenegro to gain its independence from Serbia in a manner that could destabilise the greater Balkan region. The EU's role is further enhanced by its taking over from the UN's International Police Task Force (IPTF) in Bosnia with the European Union Police Mission (EUPM) on 1 January 2003 and the launching of a military operation (Operation Concordia) in the former

31. Ibid., pp. 19-21.

32. Peter van Ham, 'Europe's New Defense Ambitions: Implications for NATO, the US, and Russia', *The Marshall Center Papers*, no. 1, April 2000, pp. 7-8.

33. François Heisbourg, 'Europe's Strategic Ambitions: The Limits of Ambiguity', *Survival*, vol. 42, no. 2, Summer 2000, p. 15.

Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) on 31 March on the heels of NATO's Operation *Amber Fox* and the forthcoming 1 December 2003 launch of an EU police operation in FYROM.

The aforementioned EU-NATO agreement on a concerted approach to the Western Balkans suggests a resolution of the leadership question as both organisations view themselves in a strategic partnership 'sharing a common vision for the future of the Western Balkans: self-sustaining stability based on democratic and effective government structures and a viable free market economy, leading to further rapprochement towards European and Euro-Atlantic structures.' The accord recognises that crisis management has both military and non-military requirements and it addresses the uncertainties of US commitment to the Balkans by building on the 16 December 2002 EU-NATO joint declaration for closer political and military co-operation between the two organisations by assuring EU access to NATO's planning and logistics capabilities for its own military operations. After all, over 80 per cent of the troops on the ground in the Balkans come from EU member states.

## American exceptionalism and the Balkans

The EU-US interplay in the Balkans has thus been strenuous for all sides but over the long run positive for the EU because it has forced its member states to work together and to further advance the causes of CFSP and ESDP and its ability to project power beyond its frontiers. A quick look at the sources of instability that remain in the Balkans suggests that the Union is better equipped today to deal with these:

◗ economic stagnation which has generated unemployment and underemployment;
◗ hundreds of thousands of refugees and displaced families that still await return or resettlement;
◗ inadequate money for reconstruction and development;
◗ prominent war criminals remain at large;
◗ key institutions have resisted reforms;
◗ political and legal reforms are impeded by corruption and by entrenched vested interests including organised crime syndicates;

◗ periodic nationalist flare-ups in FYROM;
◗ the future status of Kosovo and the future of Serbia and Montenegro;
◗ the sustainability of the Dayton settlement.

The Union's presence on the ground in Kosovo and Bosnia and its arrangement with NATO combined with its most effective foreign policy instrument to date – the prospect of enlargement suggests that the EU could effectively manage future Balkan flare-ups and concerns even if the prospect of enlargement for the countries of the Western Balkans could not materialise for a long time.[34] Never mind the legitimate concerns of the EU and its member states collectively and individually over the often intrusive nature of US power, over the long run the active US presence in the Balkans as the major powerbroker has permitted the emergence of the EU as a powerbroker in its own right and, undoubtedly, the powerbroker of the future in the region. The peace operation or peacekeeping dimension as I have tried to show has been crucial in beefing up the EU's credibility.

Apart from the constitutional particularities and revision of borders potential regarding the last three aforementioned concerns, the other sources of instability cut across the region and are very much addressed by the EU as it seeks to expand 'to the region the area of peace, stability, prosperity and freedom established over the last 50 years by the EU and its Member States', be it through its donor assistance programmes, its civilian and military presence on the ground, the Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP) or the Stability Pact.[35] On the other hand, although Albanians, Bosnian Muslims and Serbs might prefer a greater US role to the EU, the tell-tale signs suggest that EU is at the forefront by initiating in Vienna in October 2003 the first Kosovo-Serbia negotiations since the failed Rambouillet talks of 1999;[36] and in attempting to tackle head on the viability of Bosnia-Herzegovina via the much maligned top-down actions of Paddy Ashdown, the High Representative there and a commitment to take over from NATO and SFOR in the near future. The EU role in both Kosovo and Bosnia-Herzegovina indicates a recent assertiveness in tackling the Balkans' problems, which evolves from the augmentation both of the EU's responsibilities in the region and the transition from US to European leadership, thereby making coherence the norm rather than the exception.

34. On the fog of uncertainty surrounding the accession of the Western Balkan countries into the EU see my paper 'The Balkans between stabilisation and membership', in Judy Batt et al., 'Partners and Neighbours: a CFSP for a wider Europe', *Chaillot Paper* 64 (Paris: EU Institute for Security Studies, September 2003).

35. http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/see/index.htm.

36. See Vesna Peric Zimonjic, 'Kosovo talks to begin but independence is off agenda', *The Independent*, 13 October 2003.

This collective EU experience is an asset in attempting to deal with the American foreign policy exceptionalism stemming from the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks on American soil and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, in spite of the divergences among European allies, as it leaves the management of conflicts on the Continent to the Europeans themselves. It puts a strain on already stretched European resources (the recent 'big bang' enlargement comes with a huge price tag attached to it,[37] as do continued peacekeeping efforts on the ground in the Balkans) at a time when the United States is slowly returning to the UN fold, demanding greater assistance in the reconstruction of postwar Iraq where European troops are already present, as they are in Afghanistan under NATO command. The request for greater EU investment enhances the EU's bargaining power in shaping events in its immediate neighbourhood and in setting limits to a sudden US disengagement from the Balkans conditioned on European economic contributions to reconstruction elsewhere in the world. In other words, after its humiliation over the Balkans at the beginning of the 1990s and its experience and humility under US leadership since, the EU is in a much stronger position to condition the rules of the game in the region in concert with the United States, as it has the ability to provide both the 'carrots' and 'sticks' that will steer Balkan governments along the path of progress and reform. Obviously, both the United States and the EU need to work together to avoid a 'reversion to violence'.[38] But if these two partners cannot act in harmony for one reason or another in the Balkans, the EU is ready to tackle the region's problems, whatever the merits or demerits of its approach, thanks in part to the American stimulus of the last decade.

37. While the non-financial gains of enlargement such as political and economic stability and security far outweigh the cash price, the extension of the EU's institutions with 4,000 new staff members, the ongoing negotiations over institutional reform of an enlarged EU and the impact of enlargement on the EU's external borders will take time, effort, and resources to be sorted out.

38. Council on Foreign Relations, *Balkans 2010: report of an Independent Task Force* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 2002), p. 3.

Shift or rift
Assessing US-EU
relations after Iraq

# The US response to terrorism and its implications for transatlantic relations

**Brian Michael Jenkins**

**11**

The first incidents of terrorism in its contemporary form occurred more than three decades ago, although at the time they were not seen as related events, and the term 'terrorism' was not immediately applied to them. Since then, however, terrorism has been recognised on both sides of the Atlantic as a global issue of major importance. As the terrorist threat has escalated, nations have responded, gradually setting aside their political differences to define, outlaw and cooperate in combating terrorism. But this has taken many years, and never has there been any unanimity, even among like-minded allies. Although the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 made counter-terrorism the focal point of American foreign policy and brought international cooperation against terrorism to unprecedented levels, differences still persist.

This essay reviews the evolution of the terrorist threat over the past 35 years, identifying the key terrorist events and the policy issues they raised. It describes how the United States has responded to terrorist incidents and explores the differences between American and European approaches to counter-terrorism as well as the differences among the Europeans themselves. It concludes that despite these differences, even closer coordination of international efforts is desirable and can be achieved.

## Towards a global phenomenon

Terrorism, as we know it today, emerged from the frustrations of revolutionary and resistance movements in the late 1960s. Unable to duplicate the success of the Cuban revolution, South America's guerrillas moved from the countryside into the cities, where spectacular actions would at least bring them greater attention. In the Middle East, Palestinians abandoned their dependence on conventional Arab military power following the debacle of the Six-Day War and adopted the terrorist tactics of Algeria's FLN, while in

Europe and North America, antigovernment and antiwar protests spawned small groups determined to use violent means of expression.

Bombings became the most common form of terrorist action. Letter-bombs added a new twist. Assassination and kidnapping were then added to the arsenal. In 1969, a team of Brazilian guerrillas kidnapped the American ambassador and successfully exchanged him for 15 of their imprisoned comrades. This set off a wave of kidnappings in Latin America.

Hijacking airliners as a means of escaping from the Soviet Union or Cuba, or, for some, as a means of returning to Cuba, became common in the 1960s, but in 1968 Palestinians hijacked an Israeli airliner and successfully demanded the release of prisoners held in Israel. The new tactic proliferated. In 1970, a Palestinian group hijacked three airliners and flew them to an airfield in Jordan, precipitating an international crisis, since the incident involved aircraft and passengers from several nations. Like the view of the crumbling World Trade Center towers in 2001, the final image of the aircraft being blown up in the Jordanian desert (after the passengers had been removed) became an early icon of international terrorism.

Airliners also faced the peril of terrorist sabotage, and airports themselves became venues for terrorist attack. In 1972, three members of the Japanese Red Army, which was allied with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), attacked passengers arriving in Tel Aviv on a flight from the United States. Twenty-five passengers were killed and 76 were wounded, many of them Puerto Rican pilgrims visiting the Holy Land. The international complexity of this incident made it another signal event in the early annals of terrorism.

The Lod Airport massacre, as the attack in Tel Aviv came to be known, was followed in September 1972 by the Munich incident, in which members of a group calling itself Black September took members of the Israeli Olympics team hostage. In a disastrous shoot-out with German police, all of the Israeli hostages and all but three of the terrorists were killed. The three surviving terrorists were exchanged for hostages held aboard a Lufthansa flight hijacked the next month. The Munich incident produced another visual icon and inspired a wave of terrorist takeovers that came to be known as 'barricade-and-hostage' events.

The relationship of these incidents to one another was not self-

evident at the time. Beyond the similarity in tactics, there was no obvious connection between a kidnapping in Uruguay, a bombing in Spain and a hijacking in the Middle East. Why should actions carried out by persons who called themselves Tupamaros, Monteneros, Provos or Fedayeen be addressed within the same analytical and policy framework? 'International terrorism' had not yet emerged as a concept.

Those who bombed government buildings, kidnapped diplomats or hijacked airliners did not see themselves collectively as terrorists, and they offered little in the way of a unifying theory to explain how their actions would ultimately contribute to their cause. Action attracted recruits, and spectacular events brought publicity; hostages could be exchanged for imprisoned comrades; and terrorist attacks might provoke governments to over-react. These were tactical benefits. Mao Tse-tung wrote that political power grows out of the barrel of a gun, but Mao was a strategist. Terrorists seldom thought beyond the barrel of a gun. It was the analysts who made sense of terrorism, who saw it as a new mode of conflict, who conducted the tutorial.

There was, in fact, a vague sense of unity among the early groups. Cuba tried to promote the notion of a global revolution at the Tri-Continental Conference in 1966, but the attempt was more show than substance. Left-wing revolutionaries in Europe found inspiration in the actions of South America's urban guerrillas. Before blowing himself up in a failed bombing, the Italian Marxist Giangiacomo Feltrinelli designed a uniform modelled on that of Uruguay's Tupamaros, who wore none – a revolutionary fashion statement. Members of Germany's Red Army Faction saw themselves as a faction in a worldwide revolutionary struggle. The PFLP deliberately recruited other nationalities to facilitate its international operations. Chased out of Japan and seeking a world stage, members of the Japanese Red Army formed common cause with the PFLP, one of the few longer-lasting terrorist alliances. But most connections were casual. There was as yet no global terrorist network.

Terrorist tactics spread by demonstration and imitation. Terrorists in Europe and North America picked up the South American tactic of kidnapping to make political demands. Following the Munich incident, terrorist takeovers of embassies and consulates increased during the 1970s. Airline hijackings spread throughout the world.

Terrorism exploited the technology of modern society. Jet air travel gave terrorists worldwide mobility, so that local conflicts were globalised. Commercial airliners also gave terrorists lucrative targets – nationally labelled, portable containers of hostages, or victims in the case of sabotage. Small arms and explosives had become readily available. Modern industrialised society offered infinite vulnerabilities.

The most important incentives to contemporary terrorism, however, were developments in communications. Radio, television and communications satellites gave terrorists almost instant access to a worldwide audience, publicising their cause and creating widespread alarm. Public media, not secret training camps, provided inspiration and instruction. What had begun as disparate attacks by diverse groups became a global phenomenon.[1]

## Escalating violence

Terrorism increased in violence and intensity in the decades following the 1970s. Terrorist tactics changed somewhat in response to attempts to counter the threat. Heightened security at airports and growing international opposition caused hijackings to decline, but not to end. Better security at embassies, along with increased resistance to terrorist demands and a growing willingness to use force to end hostage sieges, reduced the incidence of embassy takeovers.

At the same time, terrorists increasingly turned to large-scale bombings. In 1978, a truck bomb in Beirut killed more than 200 persons. A bomb at the train station in Bologna killed 75. In 1983, a truck bomb driven by a suicide driver destroyed the American embassy in Beirut, killing 64. Later that year, two suicide truck bombers killed 241 US marines and 58 French soldiers in Beirut on the same day. In December 1983, a suicide attack severely damaged the American embassy in Kuwait.

While hijackings declined, incidents of airline sabotage became more deadly. The sabotage of an Air India flight in 1985 killed 329; in 1987, a bomb brought down a Korean airliner, killing 115; a year later, 270 persons were killed in the sabotage of a PanAm flight; and the following year, the sabotage of a UTA airliner left 171 dead.

1. See Brian Michael Jenkins, *International Terrorism: A New Mode of Conflict* (Los Angeles: Crescent Publications, 1974).

Not satisfied with the body counts they could achieve with single attacks, terrorists increasingly devised schemes involving closely coordinated multiple attacks: two suicide attacks on the same day in Beirut; five bombs on the same day in Kuwait; seven bombs on the same day in Bombay; two American embassies in Africa bombed on the same day. One ambitious plan that did not succeed was the 1995 scheme to sabotage 12 US airliners on the same day – if the terrorists had succeeded, thousands of people would have been killed.

By the 1990s, large-scale violence had become increasingly frequent. In 1992, IRA terrorists detonated a massive car bomb at the Baltic Exchange in the heart of London's financial district. That same year, Islamic extremists bombed the Israeli embassy in Buenos Aires, killing 28. In 1993, Islamic extremists attempted to destroy the towers of the World Trade Center in New York with an explosives-filled van left in the underground parking area. The bomb killed 6 people, injured more than 1,000 and caused a half-billion dollars in damage.

That same year, the IRA detonated a huge truck bomb in the heart of London. A warning kept casualties low – one person died and 40 were injured – but the device caused more than a billion dollars in damage. In Bombay, Muslim terrorists set off a series of car bombs, killing 273 people and wounding more than 700. In 1994, Islamist extremists bombed the Jewish Community Center in Buenos Aires, killing 85 people and wounding more than 200. In 1995, terrorists in Tokyo released nerve gas in Tokyo's subways, killing 12 people and causing more than 5,500 others to be treated at hospitals. That same year, antigovernment fanatics in the United States bombed a federal building, killing 168. The following year, Islamic extremists drove a massive truck bomb into a US military housing compound, killing 19 and injuring more than 300. In 1998, al-Qaeda operatives drove truck bombs into the American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, killing a total of 224 persons and injuring more than 4,500. The century ended with the attack on the USS *Cole*, in which 17 died. In only 12 attacks, terrorists killed more than 800 persons and injured 10,000.

Terrorism had unquestionably become bloodier. In the late 1980s, 57 per cent of all international terrorist incidents were purely symbolic, meant to publicise, not to kill. But by the mid-1990s, the proportion had dropped to 32 per cent. At the same

time, attacks in which the intent was clearly to kill increased from 27 to 36 per cent. Between the late 1960s and the beginning of the twenty-first century, the 'lethality rate' of terrorism (the total number of dead divided by the total number of incidents) increased fourfold – and that statistic does not include the 11 September 2001 attack.[2]

Analysts called this the 'new terrorism'. The first generation of terrorists carried out their violence on behalf of political causes – ideology and local nationalism. The early terrorists worried that large-scale violence risked betrayal, could threaten group cohesion and might alienate their perceived constituency. The new terrorists, in contrast, were driven by ethnic hatred and, above all, by religious fanaticism. Convinced that they had God's approval, they worried less about moral constraints or earthly constituencies. Their goal was to kill in quantity.

The trend culminated spectacularly in the 11 September attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon – a multiple suicide hijacking that involved targets in two cities and killed more than 3,000 people. The terrorists intended to kill more, but 25,000 people successfully evacuated the towers before the buildings collapsed, and passengers in the fourth hijacked airliner fought back, causing the plane to crash before reaching its intended target.

The attack demonstrated both the determination and the ability of terrorists to carry out attacks of mass destruction. It raised concerns that in an effort to kill on an even greater scale, terrorists might resort to unconventional weapons: a more effective version of the nerve gas attack in Tokyo; biological warfare; or the dispersal of radioactive material. Terrorism thus became linked with the world's other major security concern, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Even if attacks with unconventional weapons did not cause mass casualties, they could result in panic, costly decontamination and serious economic disruption.

## The US response

US policy on terrorism has been largely driven by events. Indeed, policy is rarely created in the abstract. It responds to events that create a requirement to do something. Policy is reactive, an accumulation of statements and actions that then become precedents, and it

2. These statistics are derived from The RAND Corporation-St Andrew's University chronology of international terrorist incidents, 1968-2003.

is constantly evolving. This is especially true in the case of a moving, multifaceted phenomenon such as terrorism.

Concern about international terrorism on the part of the US foreign policy community was driven by two overlapping issues: the use of tactics that fell outside the accepted norms of diplomacy and armed conflict, and the spillover of terrorist violence into the international domain. The latter was particularly important, since the prominence of the United States in world affairs and its involvement in many contentious areas made Americans frequent targets.

Much of the early US antiterrorist policy focused on dealing with hostage incidents – hijackings and kidnappings. In addition to increasing security at airports, the United States sought to improve international cooperation in the return of passengers and aircraft and the prosecution or extradition of hijackers.

In response to the kidnappings of American diplomats by urban guerrilla organisations in Latin America, the United States initially took the position that the host country must do whatever is necessary to obtain the release of hostages, including yielding to the kidnappers' demands. As kidnappings continued, however, resistance grew, and the policy moved towards one of no concessions. The no-concessions policy was sealed in blood in March 1973, with the murder of two American diplomats by members of Black September who demanded, among other things, the release of the convicted assassin of Senator Robert F. Kennedy. The no-concessions policy has remained one of the pillars of the US response to terrorism, although some attempts have been made to find creative ways to bend it. The same hardline policy was applied to embassy takeovers.

American presidents learned that hostage situations could be politically perilous. Frustration over US inability to rescue or negotiate the release of American hostages held for more than a year in Iran probably contributed to President Carter's defeat in the 1980 presidential elections. Six years later, the revelation that the United States, in contradiction to its own no-concessions policy, had secretly sold weapons to Iran in return for the release of American hostages in Lebanon deeply embarrassed the Reagan administration.

Efforts to combat terrorism had clearly come to depend on international cooperation, but international politics complicated attempts even to define international terrorism. Discussions in

international forums inevitably bogged down in futile debate. Some saw terrorism simply as an alternative mode of warfare employed by nations or groups that lacked the conventional means of waging war, not as something to be outlawed. In the 1970s and 1980s, many governments in Africa and Asia were led by individuals who had fought for independence and had once been called terrorists themselves. They now sought to exclude from the definition of terrorism anything done by persons engaged in the continuing wars of liberation. Others wanted to turn the definition around and apply it to violence and other repressive acts by colonial, racist and alien regimes against peoples struggling for liberation.

The United States tried to define terrorism objectively on the basis of the quality of the act, not the identity of the perpetrators or the nature of their political cause. It offered the rationale that all terrorist acts are crimes, and many of those acts would also be war crimes or 'grave breaches' of the rules of war if one accepted the terrorists' assertion that they wage war. All terrorist acts involve violence or the threat of violence, sometimes coupled with explicit demands and always directed against non-combatants. The perpetrators are usually members of an organised group whose purposes are political. The hallmark of terrorism is the execution of actions in a way that will achieve maximum publicity and cause major alarm. This introduces a distinction between the victims of the violence and the target audience. Indeed, the identity of the victims is often secondary or even irrelevant to the terrorist cause. International terrorism comprises actions where terrorists attack foreign targets, export violence or target international transport.

The US position never won universal endorsement, but ultimately the international community did achieve a rough consensus. It did so on technical rather than moral grounds. Without agreeing on a precise definition of terrorism, nations denounced it as a form of political expression or a mode of armed conflict and managed to gradually construct a corpus of conventions that identified and outlawed specific tactics that were of concern to all: airplane hijacking, the sabotage of commercial aircraft, attacks on airports, attacks on diplomats and diplomatic facilities, the taking of hostages, bomb attacks on civilian targets, and so on. This tactic-by-tactic approach gradually expanded to cover virtually all the manifestations of international terrorism. It was seen as a major diplomatic success, although it took decades to achieve.

In the late 1970s, dealing with state sponsors of terrorism became a major policy issue in Washington. Under pressure from Congress, the US Department of State identified Iran, Syria, Libya, Iraq, Sudan, North Korea, and Cuba as state sponsors of terrorism. The list has changed little in the past quarter-century. In 2000, the National Commission on Terrorism recommended that Afghanistan be added to the list and that both Pakistan and Greece be identified as countries that were not fully cooperating with the United States, a suggestion that provoked howls of protest in the capitals of both countries.[3]

Countries identified as state sponsors of terrorism were subject to economic sanctions that denied US assistance and prohibited trade with the United States, but sanctions were effective only if they were universally enforced. International compliance was patchy at best. Syria's blatant involvement in a 1986 plot to plant a bomb aboard an airliner departing from London did lead to European sanctions against that country, and, largely to appease an angry United States, Europe went along with some sanctions against Libya in 1986. Suspected Libyan involvement in the sabotage of PanAm 103 in 1988 and a French airliner in Africa in 1989 resulted in more stringent sanctions being imposed until Libya agreed to turn over two Libyans suspected of involvement in the PanAm incident to an ad hoc criminal tribunal in The Hague. When Libya did so, US sanctions remained in effect for other reasons. In an attempt to achieve more universal compliance, the United States sought to reinforce US sanctions with UN-imposed sanctions. In 2000, Afghanistan became subject to UN sanctions for its refusal to turn over known terrorists.

Sanctions were also imposed on Iraq as a consequence of its invasion of Kuwait in 1990 and the subsequent Gulf War. However, the issue transcended Iraqi sponsorship of terrorism and involved Iraq's suspected secret efforts to manufacture chemical, biological and nuclear weapons.

Sudan entered into productive discussions with the United States in mid-2000 concerning possible removal of American sanctions. With the overthrow of the Taliban in Afghanistan in 2001 and Saddam Hussein in Iraq in 2003, the sanctions were lifted for those countries.

Sanctions have been criticised as blunt, ineffective instruments – the modern economic equivalent of medieval siege warfare. Clearly, they inflict more suffering on ordinary people than on the

3. Report of the National Commission on Terrorism, *Countering The Changing Threat of International Terrorism* (Washington, DC: US Government, 2000).

governments in which the people have no say. None the less, economic sanctions probably moderated the behaviour of those governments, although that would be hard to prove. Efforts have been initiated to develop more precisely targeted sanctions that hurt rulers, not the general populace.

Another continuing policy issue is that of whether terrorism should be dealt with as a crime or a mode of war. These are two different concepts with entirely different operational implications. If terrorism is considered a criminal matter, the appropriate response is to gather evidence, correctly determine the culpability of the individual or individuals responsible for an incident, and bring the perpetrators to trial. Until 9/11, this was the primary approach taken by the United States, and it received wide international acceptance. To enhance this approach, the United States extended the jurisdiction of US courts to cover all terrorist acts against US citizens and facilities anywhere in the world, thereby giving the FBI legal authority to investigate terrorist crimes and apprehend terrorists anywhere. Although not all nations accepted this assertion of jurisdiction, a number of terrorists were turned over to US authorities for prosecution in the United States.

Public trials of terrorists kept terrorism firmly in the realm of crime, stripped terrorists of their political pretensions and allowed governments to make a public case against those terrorists still at large. Dealing with terrorism strictly as a criminal matter, however, presents a number of problems. Evidence is extremely difficult to gather in an international investigation where some countries might not cooperate, and apprehending individual terrorists is always difficult. Moreover, the criminal approach does not provide an entirely satisfactory response to a continuing campaign of terrorism waged by a distant group, and it offers little remedy against state sponsors of terrorism.

If, on the other hand, terrorism is viewed as war, there is less concern with individual culpability. Only proximate responsibility needs to be established – for example, membership of a terrorist group. Evidence does not have to be of courtroom quality: intelligence reporting will suffice. The focus is not on the accused individual but on the terrorist organisation.

The United States has used military force in response to terrorism on several occasions: In 1983, US aircraft bombed suspected terrorist bases in Lebanon in retaliation for the attack on the US marines in Beirut. US forces bombed Libya in 1986 in response to

a Libyan-sponsored terrorist attack in Germany and indications of further attacks being planned. An Iraqi intelligence facility was bombed in 1993 in response to Iraqi involvement in the attempted assassination of former President Bush during a visit to Kuwait. Al-Qaeda's attacks on American embassies in Africa provoked a military response aimed at killing al-Qaeda's leaders in Afghanistan and destroying an alleged bio-weapons facility in Sudan. The former was unsuccessful; the latter was controversial, as it could not be proved that the pharmaceutical plant destroyed in the bombing was, in fact, engaged in weapons production.

Despite its record of dubious effectiveness, military action was still considered useful. It could disrupt the terrorists' operations, forcing them to move their camps, tend to their own security and worry about the possibility of further strikes. It could also be used to reinforce diplomacy. Military force served as a warning to states that sponsoring terrorism was not without serious risks. It demonstrated resolve, and it clearly signalled that the country taking military action regarded terrorism as a very serious issue.

Military force was also viewed in some cases as necessary for domestic political purposes, not as a cynical ploy to garner political support or distract the public from other issues but as a way to demonstrate to an alarmed populace that something was being done. The British suffered terribly in the bombing of London and other English cities during the Second World War. Their ability to take the punishment without a complete collapse of morale rested in part on the fact that British forces were fighting to destroy the source of the threat. The absence of military action, in contrast, could reinforce feelings of national impotence, which, in turn, could lead to popular support for draconian measures to ensure security. And these could imperil civil liberties.

Before the terrorist attack of 11 September 2001, however, opportunities for military action against terrorism were limited. Terrorists themselves offered few lucrative targets for conventional attack, and any response had to be calibrated so as to be seen as proportional to the provocation. A military response, moreover, had to be delivered soon after the terrorist incident that provoked it. And it was always difficult to sustain military operations beyond the first strike. The United States may have wanted the terrorists to fear that it might attack them again, but in fact, it never did. (Israel did, but with uninspiring results.)

American policy remained pragmatic. Efforts to combat terrorism were just that. American diplomats paid less attention to root causes and conflict resolution, lest counter-terrorism become mixed up with political judgements. However, the United States has devoted considerable effort to resolving the Middle East conflict, helped to bring about an end to the violence in Northern Ireland and intervened to prevent ethnic cleansing and other atrocities in the Balkans, which, if left to fester or produce vast semi-permanent populations of refugees, could have become new sources of terrorist violence.

Progress was made. Intelligence was improved through unilateral efforts and through improved liaison with other intelligence services. An international legal framework was created, and international cooperation increased. Whatever the effectiveness of sanctions, countries preferred not be identified as state sponsors of terrorism. The volume of international terrorism, as it was defined by the United States, declined after reaching a high point in the late 1980s, and certain tactics declined significantly. All this could have been seen in 2001 as a measure of success. Then the attacks on 11 September wiped out any sense of achievement.

Those attacks profoundly affected the way Americans viewed national and personal security. Unprecedented in their scale of death, destruction and psychological impact, greater by an order of magnitude than any previous terrorist attack, the 9/11 attacks killed more people in a single day than terrorists in Europe had killed in 30 years. Deterrence, the strategy that had protected America through the Cold War, did not work against terrorist foes. Intelligence had failed. Security had failed.

Although Americans had lived under the threat of nuclear war for nearly half a century, 9/11 was not theory, it was not cinema. It was real, and it left deep feelings of anxiety and anger. Some of the ordinarily gentlest of hearts called for the harshest response, arguing that those who perpetrated or applauded such acts – and there were many who did – would be impressed only by massive retaliation. Fearing further attacks, the United States, with world support, struck back, toppling the Taliban and scattering al-Qaeda as the first steps in what was perceived to be the beginning of a long war against terrorism.

The 11 September attacks provoked a more formal expression of belligerency – a presidential declaration of war backed by a

congressional resolution. Just short of a formal declaration of war, it meant, operationally, that the United States would no longer respond within a framework of retaliation. Timing and proportionality would not be constraints. The United States would attack those responsible for 9/11 when, where and with whatever methods it deemed appropriate. The response would not be a single attack but would be a continuing global campaign.[4]

The 9/11 attacks fundamentally altered American defence thinking. 'Homeland security', a new concept in the United States, was increased, but no one realistically expected that improved intelligence and better security provided an adequate guarantee against further terrorist assaults. Security was seen to require continuing offence – not just the relentless pursuit of al-Qaeda, but the destruction of its affiliated organisations and other terrorist groups with global reach that had attacked US targets in the past or might threaten US security in the future. 'We will take them down one at a time', promised a high-ranking State Department official.

The edge of action was pushed in time and space. Henceforth, the United States would, if necessary, take pre-emptive action to protect itself against terrorists. The ignoring of Afghanistan after the Soviet withdrawal was seen as mistake. In the future, the United States would intervene to prevent failing states from becoming new terrorist strongholds.

Throughout the 1990s, a series of national-level commissions had warned that the United States faced new threats to its security, principally the escalating threat of terrorism and the proliferation of WMD. The terrorists on 11 September employed hijacked airliners as missiles, causing mass destruction. Training material and other documents subsequently discovered at al-Qaeda camps in Afghanistan confirmed the group's interest in chemical, biological and nuclear weapons. In addition to concern about terrorists developing their own WMD capabilities, there was always a concern that hostile states might provide terrorists with advanced weapons to wage surrogate warfare against their foes. This assumption requires a level of scrutiny it has not thus far received. None the less, the two threats – that of terrorism and that of WMD – were conflated. The response to 9/11 quickly became the 'war on terror', a linguistic shift that signalled a policy shift.

4. For two discussions of counterterrorism strategy, see Brian Michael Jenkins, *Countering al Qaeda: An Appreciation of the Situation and Suggestions for Strategy* (Santa Monica, Calif.: The RAND Corporation, 2002); and Paul K. Davis and Brian Michael Jenkins, *Deterrence and Influence in Counterterrorism: A Component in the War on Terrorism* (Santa Monica, Calif.: The RAND Corporation, 2002).

This line of thought, supported by a frightened American public, propelled the determination of the Bush administration to deal with Iraq. The pursuit of al-Qaeda and the removal of Saddam Hussein were seen as part of the same campaign. Not everyone agreed.

## Transatlantic differences

It would be absurd to imagine that an issue as emotional and contentious as terrorism, one so politically perilous for those in power, would produce unanimity in perception and policy. Even among like-minded allies, there were differences. The United States and European countries cooperated closely in their attempts to combat terrorism but diverged in several areas. Historical experiences differed; nations did not all face the same terrorist threat. Policies to combat terrorism, like other policies, are subject to internal debate and evolve as circumstances change. Just as there were differences between the United States and Europe, there also were differences among the European countries. The differences arose in several areas: perception of the terrorist threat, broader Middle East policy, overall willingness to cooperate, policy in hostage situations, support for sanctions and the use of military force.

The United States always saw international terrorism as a global threat and often took the lead in diplomatic efforts to combat it, but in the 1970s Europeans often complained that Americans were not paying adequate attention to the problem. At a 1980 Council of Europe meeting on terrorism, Europeans warned that some day the United States would be faced with a major terrorist attack that would command its full attention. Indeed, since 9/11, counter-terrorism has framed America foreign and defence policy,

The focus on the Middle East has been a major difference between the approach of the United States and that of Europe. For the United States, the principal terrorist threat emanates from the Middle East. Domestic extremists and émigré groups pursued campaigns of terrorism in the United States from the late 1960s into the 1990s, but 18 of the 24 most significant terrorist-caused crises confronting the United States were the result of events in the Middle East. Of the seven countries identified by the United States as state sponsors of terrorism, only two, Cuba and North Korea, were not Muslim or Middle Eastern. Yet, even as recently as 1999,

some French officials complained that it was difficult to get the Americans to comprehend the international nature of the terrorist threat posed by Islamist extremists.

The Middle East's secular extremists and, subsequently, its religious fanatics have seen themselves as being at war with America. America's steadfast support for the state of Israel has angered many, but even US attempts to broker agreements between Israel and the Palestinians have provoked reactions by hardliners who oppose any accord. America's (and Europe's) continuing support of Arab monarchies and dictatorships that are widely seen as corrupt is another source of antagonism. Muslim fanatics have come to see even America's theoretical commitment to the principles of freedom and equality, along with what they regard as a subversive and libertine American pop culture, as a dangerous influence to be eradicated. Their beliefs inspire them to strike violently at the American presence and influence. One continuing foreign policy challenge for the United States has been to keep efforts to combat terrorism from appearing to be a war against the Arab world or Islam. The United States opposes the violent tactics, not any system of beliefs.

The United Kingdom has also, on occasion, been a target of Middle Eastern terrorists. Its airliners were hijacked, its embassies were bombed, and its citizens were held hostage along with other nationals in Lebanon; and 300 British nationals died in the 11 September attack on the World Trade Center, making it Britain's worst terrorist incident. But for 30 years the principal source of British concern was the campaign of the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and its successors, in which more than 3,000 persons – Catholics, Protestants, soldiers, gunmen on all sides of the struggle – died.

Like the United Kingdom, Italy, Germany and Spain have been concerned primarily with the domestic terrorist threat: the ETA in Spain, the Red Army Faction and Revolutionary Cells in Germany, and the Red Brigades and right-wing conspiracies in Italy. Faced with serious domestic terrorist challenges, these countries have tended to see terrorist attacks on nationals abroad or carried out from abroad as a secondary problem.

Although it attempted to steer a neutral course between Israel and the Palestinians, even Austria was an arena for Palestinian attacks: in 1973, Palestinian terrorists seized Jewish hostages at Vienna's airport; two years later, a Palestinian-sponsored multina-

tional terrorist team led by the infamous Carlos took over OPEC's headquarters in Vienna; and in 1985, Abu Nidal's terrorist commandos opened fire on passengers at Vienna's airport.

As a steadfast ally of Israel, the United States has often tended to view terrorism from an Israeli perspective. Americans admire Israeli toughness and tend to regard all Israelis as counter-terrorism experts. This has enabled Israeli governments to influence US counter-terrorism policies.

Both Israel and the United States have complained that European governments, while vigorously pursuing domestic terrorists, have been soft on Palestinian terrorists, refusing to arrest them, giving convicted Palestinians light sentences, quietly paroling them soon after conviction, or promptly releasing them when other terrorists have seized hostages. Germany's quick release of the Palestinians responsible for the Munich incident in the subsequent hijacking of a Lufthansa plane; France's failure to arrest Abu Daoud, a wanted Palestinian terrorist leader; Italy's release of Abu Abbas, the leader of the group that had taken over the *Achille Lauro* in 1985 and whose getaway was thwarted when American jets forced his plane to land in Sicily, were all cited as examples of craven surrender to Palestinian terror. Some critics went further, alleging that European governments had cut secret deals with the Palestinians, promising them a permissive environment in return for local immunity from terrorist attacks.

It is true that European governments, while supporting the state of Israel in principle, tended to view the Palestinians far more sympathetically. Moreover, Yasser Arafat was a member of the Socialist International, giving him an independent channel to fellow socialists in Europe, while Europe's generation of '68 carried with it romantic views of the Palestinians as fellow revolutionaries, which enabled it to overlook misdeeds committed in the name of a just cause.

But it was more than just sympathy for the Palestinians. Part of Europe's pro-Arab stance reflected pragmatic self-interest in an economic realpolitik sense. And some Europeans from the far right and far left of the political spectrum found common ground in antipathy towards Israel, with a whisper of old-fashioned anti-Semitism.

European attitudes hardened as religious fanaticism increasingly became the driving force behind Middle Eastern terrorism.

Growing immigrant populations, not easily absorbed into national cultures, also provoked animosity. This turned to concern when it became apparent that many in Europe's Muslim community applauded the 9/11 attacks, and that al-Qaeda had established recruiting and operational networks throughout Europe. The threat was no longer a distant one. Europeans themselves are divided on how to deal with the problem. Europeans are as devoted as Americans to religious tolerance, but this cuts both ways. People are just as free to be Muslims as they are to be Catholics, Protestants, Sikhs or Jews, but how should governments deal with those who, in the name of religion, preach intolerance, hatred and holy war? There are varying degrees of support for greater restrictions on immigration and asylum, forced assimilation, multiculturalism, heightened internal security measures, and round-ups and crackdowns. At the same time, European governments do not want to alienate or ignite large immigrant populations.

Cooperation has sometimes been a problem even among the closest of allies. London complained to Washington that IRA sympathisers were able to readily raise funds in the United States and that American courts were unwilling to extradite known Irish terrorists. America's large Irish population did complicate US efforts to deal with the troubles in Northern Ireland. At the federal level, the US government officially supported the British government against the IRA, but elected representatives with Irish constituencies and local politicians in cities such as Boston and San Francisco adopted postures that reflected the republican sentiments of the local population. The extradition of IRA fugitives to the United Kingdom was difficult, and the collection of funds allegedly for Irish widows and orphans continued into the 1990s. At the same time, the United States was able to exploit its credibility with both the British government and its Irish opponents to help bring about a political dialogue that ultimately ended the violence.

Not all the differences were between the Europeans and the Americans. At the 1980 Council of Europe meeting in Strasbourg, representatives of Spain, Germany and Italy complained that France was uncooperative in pursuing terrorists who sought sanctuary on French soil. One Italian official claimed that Red Brigade members summer on the French Riviera, unmolested by the

authorities. France responded by reminding the three countries of the historical circumstances that were at the root of their terrorist problems – a coded reference to the fact that all three had once been ruled by fascist governments.

Approaches to dealing with hostage situations have varied both among countries and over time. The British have held to a strict no-concessions policy in dealing with terrorist kidnappings. In contrast, while a no-negotiations, no-concessions policy remained the official US line, Washington did not object when other governments made concessions to obtain the release of American hostages (or when corporations routinely paid ransom for kidnapped executives); and in violation of its own stated policy, the United States secretly negotiated for the release of Americans held in Lebanon.

Germany has been tough on its domestic terrorists but could be described as somewhat easier-going when dealing with international terrorism, and the German government has generally been flexible in dealing with hostage situations. Similarly, Italy has vigorously suppressed its domestic terrorists but until 11 September was less zealous in going after Middle Eastern terrorists. The Italian government refused to negotiate in the case of the kidnapping of former Prime Minister Aldo Moro but made concessions in other kidnappings. Germany and Italy have adhered to European and UN-imposed sanctions but without enthusiasm. France has been tough on domestic terrorists but has shown far more pragmatism when dealing with terrorist threats from abroad and has been more inclined to negotiate deals to obtain the release of French hostages.

Europe was ahead of the United States in taking military action to rescue hostages held abroad. In 1977, German commandos rescued hostages aboard a hijacked Lufthansa airliner in Mogadishu, and French commandos rescued hostages aboard a hijacked bus in Djibouti in 1976. The United States had only begun to train its special rescue force in the late 1970s; in 1980, it launched an ambitious but unsuccessful attempt to rescue American hostages in Iran.

The United States has favoured the imposition of tough diplomatic and economic sanctions on those it has labelled state sponsors of terrorism. The United Kingdom did not produce its own list of state sponsors but was equally vigorous in imposing sanc-

tions on Syria, Iran, Libya and Afghanistan. The continental countries were far less enthusiastic.

The use of military force in response to terrorism has been a major point of contention. European governments do not believe that military retaliation has worked, although France joined the United States in launching a symbolic air strike in Lebanon after the attack on its paratroopers in 1983. While many in the United States admire Israel's policy of retaliation, it was not considered a useful option for US counter-terrorism policy until the mid-1980s. Even then it was contested, with the Defense Department taking a more cautious position on the use of military power and the State Department arguing that military force was an essential component of American diplomacy.

In 1986, American aircraft bombed Libya. The military results of the attack were negligible, and the long-term effects on Libya were debatable. Libya's ruler cooled his bellicose rhetoric but two years later Libyan agents sabotaged PanAm 103. The American attack, however, did alarm the Europeans, who feared that if they did nothing, the Americans would strike again, bringing the 'Mediterranean to a boil', as one European diplomat put it. To head off further American military action, as well as to prevent Libyan reprisals, European governments cracked down on Libya's diplomatic presence and other activities in Europe – something that the United States had sought for some time. Washington saw this as an unanticipated collateral benefit of its attack.

Words were tougher than deeds. In fact, until the war in Afghanistan, the United States employed military force on only five occasions in a quarter-century; the attacks were single events and, with the exception of the attack on Libya, they could be described as largely symbolic.

Ironically, although France and the United States currently seem to be the furthest apart in terms of how to address today's security challenges, they are perhaps closer than any other countries in their shared experiences and in their responses to terrorism. Both have been targeted by the Japanese Red Army. Both were the targets of sustained terrorist campaigns carried out by fanatic Islamists. On the same day that 241 American marines were killed by a truck bomb in Beirut, another suicide bomber killed 58 French paratroopers in their quarters. Paris suffered a bombing campaign carried out by Iranian extremists in the mid-1980s and

another carried out in the mid-1990s by Arab fanatics. Both France and the United States saw their citizens kidnapped and held for years in Lebanon in the latter part of the 1980s; both cut secret deals to free some of them. A year after a terrorist bomb brought down PanAm 103, killing 270 people, a terrorist bomb brought down a UTA airliner, killing 171. Libyan agents were behind both attacks. Published reports that Algerian hijackers holding an Air France airliner in 1994 had planned to crash it into the Eiffel Tower raised concerns about suicidal hijackers – a nightmare that became a reality in the United States on 11 September.

Both countries have been vigorous in their responses to terrorism. Both have relentlessly hunted down terrorist foes abroad – French intelligence agents pursued Carlos for 19 years before apprehending him in Khartoum. Both countries have resorted to direct covert action abroad, France more than the United States prior to 11 September. Alone among the European countries, France has used military force in retaliation for terrorist attacks. And despite their differences over the exercise of national power in the world and the specific issue of Iraq, the two countries continue to cooperate closely in combating terrorism, although not without the usual complaints that the French are balky or that sharing with Washington is a one-way street.

## Efforts and challenges post-9/11

The terrorist attacks of 11 September brought immediate expressions of international sympathy and support. The Security Council of the United Nations unanimously adopted a resolution calling for measures against al-Qaeda, the Taliban and their associates. All nations were required to submit specific plans to improve their efforts to block terrorist financing, prevent terrorist acquisition of weapons and sensitive material, increase security, share information and implement other counter-terrorism measures.

The European Union endorsed military action against al-Qaeda and the Taliban and adopted an action plan that identified a series of measures to improve cooperation within Europe and between Europe and the United States. In an unprecedented show of support, NATO decided that the 9/11 attacks constituted an attack against all 19 members and committed them to military

action. It was the first time in the 52-year history of the Alliance that the collective action clause had been invoked.

Cooperation has continued, prompted by the discovery that al-Qaeda's network was far more pervasive than had been imagined, but some erosion was perhaps inevitable. The United States rejected NATO's offer and went into Afghanistan alone; international forces later assumed a security role in Kabul. Not all Europeans were comfortable with Washington's expansion of the 'war on terror', especially after President Bush's reference to the 'axis of evil' in January 2002. At times, American rhetoric has seemed calculated to alienate allies. Many in Europe believe that the Palestinian issue had to be addressed before progress could be made in reducing Islamic hostility toward the West. Some in Europe adopted the attitude that the terrorists were mainly after the United States – it was not Europe's problem.

Perceptions are also important. Americans, especially conservative Americans, tend to see Europeans as feckless, venal shopkeepers. Many Europeans see Americans, and especially the current Administration, as arrogant, lawless cowboys, not smart enough to stay out of trouble. Sadly, such stereotypes have obscured shared core values.

The determination of the United States to expand the war on terrorism to the removal of Saddam Hussein was undeniably divisive. Even after Hussein was overthrown, bitterness and suspicion have persisted, and many fear that the continued violence faced by the occupation forces could distract the United States from its diplomatic endeavours in the Middle East, the under-resourced effort in Afghanistan, and the war on terrorism itself. Worse, some worry that, without visible progress, a historically impatient America will tire of continued casualties in Iraq, the chronic turbulence that is called Afghanistan and the intractability of the Palestinian issue, and will revert to an isolationist posture. At present, that scenario seems far-fetched, but Americans have little experience with and even less desire for costly imperial tasks.

Where do we go from here? In a remarkably prescient book, Comte Alexandre de Marenches, former head of the French intelligence service, noted that one of the 'principal weaknesses of Western nations . . . is that they are unable to deal with a global adversary with a global perspective whose theater of operations is the entire planet. All too often', he wrote, 'we are content with a

local or regional, tactical view, a Franco-centric view, an American perspective'. He proposed a series of measures that would better equip the world to deal with the global challenges of the 'Fourth World War' – failed states, rogue states, terrorists and weapons of mass destruction. His ideas included a worldwide intelligence effort and a nimble multinational military force capable of pre-emptive action, overt or clandestine, which would operate under the control of a club of nations representing those countries committed to respect for individual freedoms – a 'club for decent people', he called it.[5]

The world has already made considerable progress toward fulfilling this vision. There is a vigorous worldwide intelligence effort against terrorism, and the special forces of several countries have operated together on several occasions. While policy-makers exchange charges of unilateralism on the one hand and commitment to unwieldy and outmoded international institutions on the other, all recognise that success in combating terrorism, rogue states and weapons proliferation will require international cooperation; they also concede that circumstances may not always permit lengthy international debate.

The challenge now is to institutionalise commitment and cooperation, to take the web of relationships and agreements advanced over the past 35 years – and especially since 11 September – and turn them into a muscular operational capability under new alliance arrangements. Bringing counter-terrorism beyond coordination to orchestration, intelligence beyond liaison, and operations beyond ad hoc coalitions will require the creation of new institutions.

It would be gratifying to conclude this review with a list of specific proposals which, if implemented, would guarantee greater international cooperation against terrorism, but the experience of more than three decades counsels against such desiderata. History shows that even the closest of allies in the darkest moments of peril were beset by national rivalries, mutual suspicions, legitimate differences and personal vendettas, which complicated but did not prevent the achievements of major advances toward lofty goals. Experience also suggests that progress will be made not by grand formulas but through the accumulation of small steps. This is the reality of democracy and diplomacy. Sadly, further acts of terrorism may be prerequisite to continued progress.

5. Alexandre de Marenches and David A. Andelman, *The Fourth World War: Diplomacy and Espionage in the Age of Terrorism* (New York: William Morrow, 1992). This is an updated version of Alexandre de Marenches and Christine Ockrent, *Dans le Secret des Princes* (Paris: Editions Stock, 1986).

The ultimate defence against today's terrorism derives from a shared commitment to certain ideas about individual rights that go back to the American and French revolutions, which are repeated in the most recent treaty articles proposed by the European conventions. We may hold these truths to be self-evident, but, in fact, their implementation has been the product of more than two centuries of political – often armed – struggle. They have been disseminated through colonisation and imposed by military occupation. We have fought costly wars in their defence. Now, faced with new threats, we need to maintain the courage of our convictions.

# Terrorism: European myths and realities

**Gustav Lindstrom**

Shift or rift
Assessing US-EU
relations after Iraq

**12**

The threat of international terrorism is not new. While the attacks of 11 September 2001 brought global terrorism to the forefront of the international agenda, modern international terrorism can be traced back several decades. Since the early 1980s alone, there have been slightly fewer than 10,000 international terrorist incidents worldwide.[1] While the total number of terrorist incidents globally has remained fairly stable since 1991, the number of casualties has increased since the mid-1990s. Overall, 6,721 individuals died as a result of these attacks between 1991 and 2002.

With the advent of globalisation, terrorists have been quick to adapt new methods and technologies to enhance their organisational, doctrinal, and operational capabilities.[2] 11 September combined both old and new techniques to pull off the most devastating terrorist attack in history – resulting in the death of over 3,000 individuals. It made terrorism the top priority for the US administration: '[t]he gravest danger our Nation faces lies at the crossroads of radicalism and technology . . . the enemy is terrorism.'[3] Its ripple effect led to wars against Afghanistan and Iraq.

The terrorist attacks of 11 September also brought new challenges for the transatlantic relationship. Both the United States and Europe were forced to take a hard look at their security postures in this new era. The war in Iraq, in particular, brought to the surface mounting tensions and revealed assumptions about motives and interests on both sides of the Atlantic. In some cases, notions about European concerns and commitment to the fight against terrorism were based, in part, on long-standing myths. This document highlights and then dispels three such myths.

## Myth 1: Europeans don't care about terrorism

The myth that Europeans are not concerned by terrorism probably reached its high point prior to the war in Iraq in March 2003. The

1. US State Department, *Patterns of Global Terrorism 2002*, April 2003. Terrorism is defined as 'premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience.' International terrorism involves citizens or the territory of more than one country.

2. For more on this, see Ian Lesser, John Arquilla, David Ronfeldt and Michele Zanini, *Countering the New Terrorism*, MR-989-AF (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND, 1999).

3. *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, DC: The White House, September 2002).

unwillingness of several large EU member states to participate in the war was perceived as an indication of diverging perceptions across the Atlantic. For some American decision-makers, European resistance to military engagement in Iraq translated to a serious underestimation of the terrorist threat.[4] Besides the threat posed by unaccounted weapons of mass destruction (WMD) which directly threatened the United States and its allies, American policy-makers were concerned by Iraq's ties to al-Qaeda. In their mind, Saddam Hussein could sell or transfer WMD to terrorist groups ready to use them.

On the European side, a number of decision-makers did not view Iraq as a credible terrorist threat.[5] French and German officials – including French President Jacques Chirac – argued that a second war in the Gulf could lead to unintended consequences and destabilise the Middle East region.[6] Saddam's inability or unwillingness to satisfactorily comply with UN resolutions, while worrisome, was deemed resolvable over time through the use of UN inspectors. Public opinion polls across Europe showed a clear majority against a US-led war against Iraq. This was also the case in countries such as Spain and the United Kingdom, where the political leadership supported US calls for direct confrontation with Saddam Hussein.[7] Many Europeans were similarly not convinced that Iraq had direct links with al-Qaeda, effectively limiting the possibility that unaccounted WMD be transferred or sold to them. According to Jean-Louis Bruguière, France's leading anti-terrorism judge, 'no evidence of links between Iraq and Al Qaeda' was ever found.[8]

The diverging perceptions across the Atlantic vis-à-vis Iraq and the terrorist threat it posed fed the myth of Europeans' supposedly lackadaisical attitude towards terrorism. However, closer inspection shows that the disagreement over Iraq seems to be an anomaly. Generally speaking, terrorism is viewed fairly consistently across the Atlantic. According to the Worldviews 2002 Survey, a majority of European and American respondents regard international terrorism as an 'extremely important threat' to their respective countries' vital interests for the coming ten years.[9] Likewise, international terrorism instils the most fear among EU citizens. When presented with a variety of threats, international terrorism was feared by 82 per cent (Figure 1), closely followed by the spread of WMD (72 per cent).
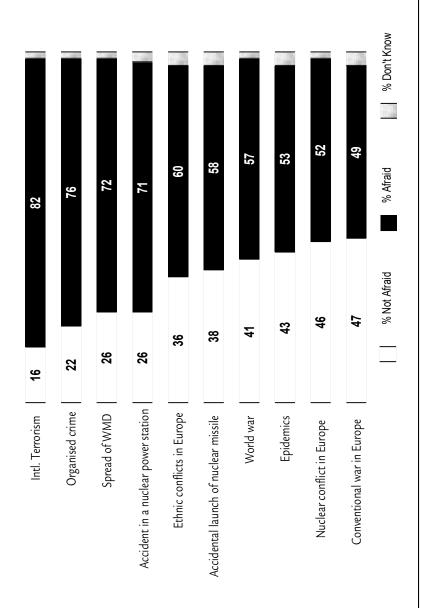
4. A frequently cited example is Secretary of Defence Rumsfeld's categorisation of France and Germany as 'old Europe', specifically calling both countries 'a problem' concerning Iraq. For more, see the Pentagon briefing from 22 January 2003 (www.dod.mil/news/Jan2003/t01232003_t0122sdfpc.html).

5. However, it should be acknowledged that leaders in eight European countries signed a joint statement which referred to 'the Iraqi regime and its weapons of mass destruction represent a clear threat to world security'. 'Leaders' statement on Iraq: Full text', Thursday, 30 January 2003, from BBCi @ http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/2708877.stm. This was followed up by a similar declaration by the Vilnius 10 group on 6 February 2003.

6. Angus Roxburgh. 'Europe's new gang resists US "bullying" ', BBC News Online, 12 February, 2003. 'Interview with President Chirac', Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 16 February 2003. (http://www.iraqwatch.org/government/France/MFA/france-mfa-chirac-021603.htm). For more on European positions, see Marta Dassù, 'How to Deal With Iraq: the European Perceptions', Paper prepared for the CEPS/IISS European Security Forum, 9 September 2002.

7. See http://www.eosgallupeurope.com/int_survey/tables.htm.

8. Rotella, Sebastian. 'Allies Find No Links Between Iraq, Al Qaeda', *Los Angeles Times*, 4 November 2002.

9. European nations polled include the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, France, the Netherlands and Poland. As such, the results are not necessarily representative of all EU member states.

## Figure 1: Ranking of EU citizens' fears

| Category | % Not Afraid | % Afraid |
|---|---|---|
| Intl. Terrorism | 16 | 82 |
| Organised crime | 22 | 76 |
| Spread of WMD | 26 | 72 |
| Accident in a nuclear power station | 26 | 71 |
| Ethnic conflicts in Europe | 36 | 60 |
| Accidental launch of nuclear missile | 38 | 58 |
| World war | 41 | 57 |
| Epidemics | 43 | 53 |
| Nuclear conflict in Europe | 46 | 52 |
| Conventional war in Europe | 47 | 49 |

% Not Afraid  % Afraid  % Don't Know

Source: Standard Eurobarometer 58, March 2003 (Fig. 3.14). Based on fieldwork carried out between October and November 2002.

Policy-makers across the European continent are similarly concerned by terrorism. A 2003 survey of European opinion leaders showed that 93 per cent thought 'terrorism in serious and widespread form is a danger that will be with us for the foreseeable future'.[10] EU policy-makers have translated these concerns into concrete action. Post-11 September, a host of measures were enacted across European countries to boost protection against possible future terrorist attacks. Generally speaking, these included a combination of measures:

◗ establishing top-level response structures – such as steering committees and task forces – to streamline counter-terrorism efforts;
◗ enhancing protection of critical infrastructures such as nuclear plants, bridges and waterways;
◗ increasing security and surveillance in areas of commercial transportation – especially in the field of aviation (persons, luggage, aircraft);
◗ strengthening individual EU country borders;
◗ boosting investment in intelligence capabilities;
◗ engaging in international consultation (EU level, NATO, US, UN);
◗ enhancing preparedness against nuclear, biological, chemical and radiological (NBCR) weapons;
◗ studying biometric data options for improved surveillance and control (visas and passports);
◗ increasing capabilities to prevent money laundering;
◗ sending troops and other personnel abroad to take part in the global war against terrorism; and
◗ strengthening legal and law enforcement structures to deter terrorism and bring terrorists to justice faster.[11]

At the EU level, several tools have been devised to counter terrorists. Most of these fall within the legal area and serve to facilitate EU cooperation vis-à-vis crime. For example, Eurojust, which coordinates investigations and prosecutions within the EU, commenced its work on 7 April 2002. As of 1 January 2003, the criminal law of all EU member states was aligned so that terrorist acts can now be prosecuted and punished in the same manner throughout the EU. The European Arrest Warrant (hopefully to be operationalised on 1 January 2004) will facilitate the intra-EU extradition process.

10. 'Survey of Influential Leaders in Europe 2003', IPSOS, RSL.

11. For greater detail on the specific measures implemented among select EU countries post-9/11 see van de Linde et al., 'Quick scan of post 9/11 national counter-terrorism policymaking and in implementation in selected European countries', RAND Europe, MR-1590, May 2002.

The EU's new security strategy, unveiled by High Representative Javier Solana at the Thessaloniki summit in June 2003, highlights terrorism as one of the three 'key threats' facing Europe. The acquisition by terrorist groups of WMD is identified as 'the most frightening scenario'. To address these, joint threat assessments are being developed to attain a common vision of the scope of threats. Thus far, the Working Party on Terrorism (COTER) has produced 9 regional threat assessments, including 55 country threat assessments.[12] Not publicly available, these assessments include recommendations for an EU strategy to fight terrorist groups.

The myth in question would be more accurate if it were argued that terrorism threats are perceived differently across individual EU member states. Not surprisingly, European countries with a history of domestic terrorism tend to be more wary of future terrorist attacks and take additional steps to curb terrorism. Thus, threat perceptions are higher in EU member states such as Spain, France, Italy and the United Kingdom that have a direct connection with domestic terrorism. The opposite is true in EU member states with no first-hand experience of terrorism.

For example, according to a 2003 Gallup Europe survey, only 1 per cent of respondents in Denmark and Finland think the threat of terrorist attacks in their country is very high (Table 1). By contrast, 27 per cent of respondents in the United Kingdom and 17 per cent in Spain think the threat of terrorist attacks is very high. The high figure for the United Kingdom probably includes a '9/11 effect' stemming from the country's close collaboration with the United States in the war against international terrorism. To these respondents, the close US-UK alliance may portray the United Kingdom as a more attractive target for terrorists.[13] Despite these differences, the majority of respondents (55 per cent) across the EU-15 see the threat as either 'very high' or 'rather high'.

Overall, European public support for combating terrorism is strong. Along with 'fighting unemployment' and 'maintaining peace and security in Europe', fighting terrorism is the top priority according to a November 2002 Eurobarometer survey. Ninety-one per cent of respondents considered it the most important EU priority. Fighting terrorism was considered the top priority in five of the fifteen EU member states, attaining second place in two countries and in third place in four other countries.[14]

12. *Presidency Report to the European Council on EU External Action in the Fight Against Terrorism*, Presidency Conclusions, Annex I, Thessaloniki, 19-20 June 2003.

13. No corresponding data was found for the period prior to 11 September 2001.

14. Standard Eurobarometer 58, November 2002.

Table 1: Would you say that the threat of terrorist attacks in [our] country is very high, rather high, rather low or very low?

| | Very High % | Rather High % | Rather Low % | Very Low % | Don't know % | High* % | Low** % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Austria | 2 | 9 | 62 | 24 | 3 | 11 | 85 |
| Belgium | 7 | 25 | 55 | 11 | 2 | 32 | 66 |
| Denmark | 1 | 11 | 54 | 31 | 4 | 12 | 85 |
| Finland | 1 | 6 | 58 | 34 | 1 | 7 | 92 |
| France | 8 | 51 | 36 | 4 | 1 | 59 | 40 |
| Germany | 13 | 37 | 43 | 5 | 3 | 49 | 48 |
| Greece | 16 | 25 | 41 | 16 | 1 | 41 | 57 |
| Holland | 4 | 24 | 55 | 16 | 2 | 28 | 71 |
| Ireland | 7 | 18 | 46 | 26 | 3 | 25 | 72 |
| Italy | 15 | 44 | 34 | 6 | 1 | 59 | 40 |
| Luxembourg | 4 | 18 | 57 | 19 | 2 | 22 | 76 |
| Portugal | 9 | 17 | 48 | 22 | 4 | 26 | 69 |
| Spain | 17 | 53 | 24 | 3 | 3 | 70 | 27 |
| Sweden | 2 | 13 | 60 | 24 | 1 | 15 | 83 |
| United Kingdom | 27 | 56 | 14 | 2 | 1 | 83 | 16 |
| EU-15 | 14 | 41 | 36 | 7 | 2 | 55 | 44 |

Note: May not add up to 100 per cent due to rounding. *'High' groups together the values for 'Very High' and 'Rather High'. **'Low' groups together the 'Rather Low' and 'Very Low' answer categories.

Source: International Crisis Survey, EOS Gallup Europe, January 2003.

## Myth 2: Europeans are not willing to use military might to combat terrorism

While the United States is frequently labelled a 'hard power' ready to use force to achieve its foreign policy objectives, the European continent tends to be characterised as a 'soft power', hesitant to commit forces to achieve such goals. It is not uncommon to hear policy-makers on both sides of the Atlantic make reference to the informal saying that it is the United States that makes the dinner (by carrying out military operations), with Europeans doing the washing-up (by sorting out postwar conditions).[15] Robert Kagan asserts that these differences can be traced back to diverging levels of military power:

> Strong powers naturally view the world differently than weaker powers. They measure risks and threats differently, they define security differently, and they have different levels of tolerance for insecurity. Those with great military power are more likely to consider force a useful tool of international relations than those who have less military power.[16]

Unfortunately, this perception does not tell the whole story – effectively feeding the myth that Europeans are not willing to commit military resources to combating terrorism. EU member states are willing to commit forces when required – including for missions to fight terrorism. However, EU policy-makers see the use of military force as an option that should be used sparingly. The use of military force represents just one of many options available for fighting terrorism which also includes preventive efforts (such as poverty alleviation) and collaborative measures (e.g. cooperative police work and intelligence).

One only needs to go back to the initial stages of Operation *Enduring Freedom* in Afghanistan to note that several EU member states were ready to commit forces through NATO. The motive explaining the lack of European participation in the military phase against the Taliban in Afghanistan is frequently downplayed. The United States declined allied support to ensure the highest levels of deployability, mobility, and interoperability. In the minds of US planners, similar delays to those experienced during Operation *Allied Force* in Kosovo – to ensure the participation of allies – would hamper the execution of military plans in Afghanistan.

15. For example, see Robert Kagan, 'Power and Weakness', *Policy Review*, no. 113, June 2002.

16. Robert Kagan, *Paradise & Power: America and Europe in the New World Order* (London: Atlantic Books, 2003), p. 27.

Moreover, it was thought that the implementation of 'network-centric' warfare, which was to be tested on the field for the first time, would have been compromised by the presence of allies lacking similar capabilities. European allied participation was thus generally limited to special forces personnel who tend to train with their US counterparts and could be integrated into the communications grid more easily. On the European side, Denmark, France, Germany, Norway, and the United Kingdom participated in the US-led Operation *Enduring Freedom* (Table 2).

Table 2: European assets provided in support of
Operation *Enduring Freedom*

| Country | Assets provided |
|---------|-----------------|
| Denmark | - 100 special forces personnel. <br> - One C-130 aircraft and a contingent of ground support personnel (Kyrgyzstan). <br> - Six F-16 aircraft deployed to Manas in October 2002. |
| France | - One infantry company sent to Mazar-el-Sharif (area security). <br> - Carrier battle group to support combat operations in North Arabian Sea. <br> - National and coalition airlift support in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. <br> - Deployed marines, army mountain forces, land-based strike aircraft, and a carrier battle group to assist OEF. |
| Germany | - Combat ships and maritime aircraft. <br> - Special forces. <br> - Post-conflict, German-led contingent of 1,300 soldiers (including 200 Dutch personnel) under ISAF-3 |
| Norway | - 10 mine-clearing vehicles and personnel. <br> - Special forces. <br> - Six F-16 aircraft deployed to Manas in October 2002. |
| United Kingdom | - Thousands of soldiers, including special forces. <br> - Air and naval support. <br> - From January to July 2002, led ISAF with over 4,000 personnel. <br> - Aerial refuelling and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance support. |

Source: Fact Sheet, Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, Washington, DC, October 2002, http://globalspecops.com/nato.html.

EU member states such as Belgium, Denmark, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal and Spain contributed with logistical and other support. For example, Belgium provided the largest multinational humanitarian assistance mission to Afghanistan from

6 to 29 October 2001, delivering 90 metric tons of food supplements. Spain maintained a 50-person hospital at Bagram until September 2002 to treat soldiers and civilians.[17]

Less well-known is that several EU/NATO members contributed militarily to Operation *Enduring Freedom* outside Afghanistan. For example, Operation *Active Endeavour* (OAE) is a surveillance operation in the Eastern Mediterranean begun after 11 September. The operation entails the escort of civilian ships in the region by military vessels to protect them from terrorist attacks. As of March 2003, NATO's maritime forces began to escort civilian allied ships crossing the Straits of Gibraltar. Currently, Task Force operations will be assured by rotation by Standing Naval Force Atlantic (STANAVFORLANT), Standing Naval Force Mediterranean (STANAVFORMED), and Spanish naval forces.[18] As of late August 2003, over 3,000 merchant vessels have been monitored since the beginning of OAE. According to one estimate, the monitoring has had a 'direct impact on the trafficking of arms and drugs and an estimated 50 per cent decrease in illegal immigration into Europe'.[19]

Finally, it should be noted that European forces also played a role in the post-conflict process in Afghanistan. Before NATO took over the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF-4) on 11 August 2003, Germany and the Netherlands had headed ISAF-3 since early February 2003.

A related myth concerns European public opinion. Numerous opinion polls prior to the war in Iraq showed strong European sentiment against a war in Iraq. The public unwillingness to commit forces or engage in Iraq should not be equated to European unwillingness to use military might to combat terrorism. Involvement in Iraq hinged on several dimensions that are not necessarily tied to terrorism. Factors that may have led to the sentiments expressed in the opinion polls probably included the level of evidence concerning the presence of WMD, the degree of progress made by the UN inspectors, the perceived threat level posed by the Iraqi regime and links to terrorist organisations such as al-Qaeda.

A better gauge of European public opinion concerning the use of military force to combat terrorism is available through surveys posing specific questions related directly to the use of military force and terrorism. In such circumstances, there is closer agreement between European and American respondents. This is reflected in the Worldviews 2002 survey that asked a host of

17. Source: Fact Sheet, Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, Washington, DC, October 2002; http://globalspecops.com/nato.html.
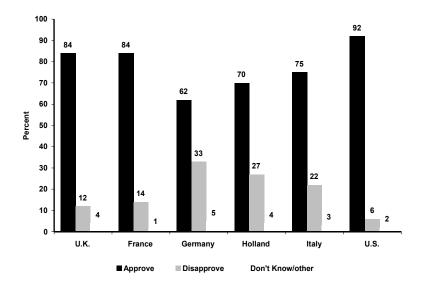
18. 'German Ships to Operate in Straits of Gibraltar', *Atlantic News*, 2 April 2003.

19. 'NATO/Terrorism: Six Months of Expanded Naval Operations in Mediterranean', *Atlantic News*, 21 August 2003.

questions in the United States and several EU member states relating to the use of troops in a number of hypothetical situations.

For example, Europeans and Americans surveyed overwhelmingly approve the use of military force to destroy a proven terrorist camp (Figure 2). In the survey, roughly three-quarters of Europeans respond that they would approve the use of military troops for such purposes (versus 92 per cent in the United States). In all countries surveyed, the majority approve the use of such force, including in France and Germany – countries that were indirectly labelled as pacifist during the Iraq war.[20] Among those polled, French and British respondents were the most favourable, with 84 per cent of respondents approving the use of military troops for such purposes.

**Figure 2: Would you approve or disapprove the use of (own country) military troops to destroy a terrorist camp?**
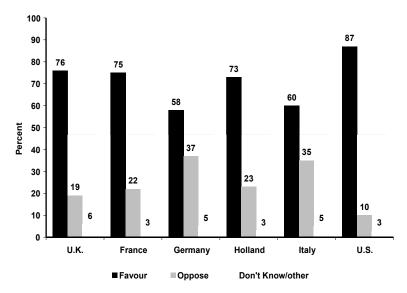


Source: *Worldviews 2002 Transatlantic Key Findings Topline Data*. The Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, September 2002.

A majority of European respondents would likewise approve the use of air strikes against terrorist training camps and other facilities. Approximately 68 per cent are favourable towards the use of such assets compared with 87 per cent in the United States

(Figure 3). Respondents in the United Kingdom, France and Holland were the most supportive, with 76, 75, and 73 per cent respectively approving the use of air strikes. Least support was found among German respondents, where 'only' six out of ten would approve of such use of force to combat international terrorism.
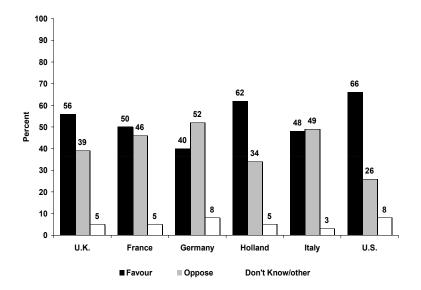
**Figure 3: In order to combat international terrorism, please say whether you favour or oppose air strikes against terrorist training camps and other facilities**



Source: *Worldviews 2002 Transatlantic Key Findings Topline Data*. The Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, September 2002.

Finally, roughly half of the European respondents surveyed would support the assassination of terrorist leaders to combat terrorism. Among the European countries surveyed, 51 per cent of the respondents supported such action. This is a significant finding, especially given the specific method suggested. Targeting individual terrorist leaders represents a very direct approach that raises moral, legal and political issues. Among the EU member states surveyed, only respondents in Germany showed a preference opposing such measures, with 52 per cent disapproving – not a vast majority (Figure 4). In the United States, a slightly higher proportion of respondent (66 per cent) approved the assassination of terrorist leaders to combat terrorism.
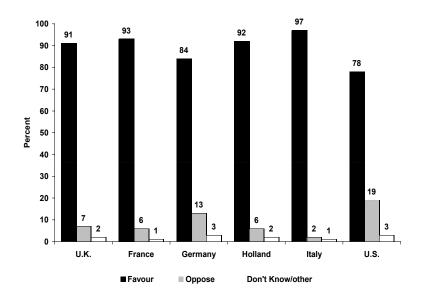
Figure 4: In order to combat international terrorism, please say whether you favour or oppose the assassination of terrorist leaders



Source: *Worldviews 2002 Transatlantic Key Findings Topline Data*. The Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, September 2002.

It is important to emphasise that these types of responses do not preclude the use of other options to combat terrorism. Indeed, many options exist that are non-military in character. As noted earlier, European respondents in these same countries show very strong public support for 'soft' policies to combat terrorism. For example, about nine out of ten European respondents favour helping poor countries develop their economies to combat terrorism (Figure 5). The corresponding figure for the United States was 78 per cent – a figure showing that there is substantial agreement across the Atlantic. Greatest support for these types of measures was found among Italian, French and Dutch respondents – all of whom were over 90 per cent in favour.

Figure 5: In order to combat international terrorism, please say whether you favour or oppose helping poor countries develop their economies



Source: *Worldviews 2002 Transatlantic Key Findings Topline Data*. The Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, September 2002.

Among European policy-makers, there is substantial willingness to take proactive steps short of military operations to combat terrorist operations. Several EU member states have a long history combating domestic terrorists. For example, EU member states have confronted Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA-Spain), the Irish Republican Army (IRA-United Kingdom), November 17 (Greece), the Red Army Faction (RAF-Germany), the Red Brigades (Italy) and the Armed Islamic Group (GIA-France). With respect to the 'new' terrorism, al-Qaeda cells have been broken up in Britain, Germany, Italy, Belgium and Spain. These operations and arrests have involved the coordination of hundreds if not thousands of personnel across Europe. Beyond al-Qaeda, other terrorist organisations are targeted as well.

A final observation regarding policy measures against terrorism is that they tend to reflect reactions to previous events. For example, in the United States, policy-makers' strong support for tough anti-terrorist legislation can be traced to the attacks of 11 September. Looking at actual US responses to Islamist terrorism prior to 9/11, overt US military responses to terrorism were usually limited – perhaps because they occurred outside the United States (Table 3).
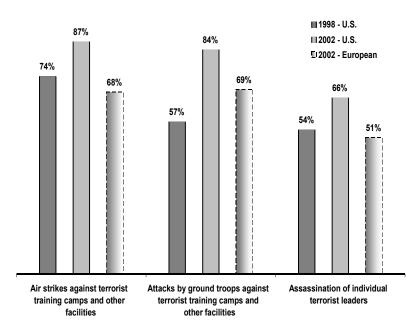
Table 3: US military responses to Islamist terrorist attacks prior to 11 September

| Attack (location/target) | Overt US Military Response | Year |
|---|---|---|
| Beirut (Lebanon) | Withdrawal | 1983 |
| Aden (Yemen) | None | 1993 |
| Mogadishu (Somalia) | Withdrawal | 1993 |
| Al-Khobar Towers (Saudi Arabia) | None | 1998 |
| Embassies (Kenya/Tanzania) | Cruise-missile attacks | 1998 |
| USS *Cole* (Yemen) | None | 2000 |

Source: Schachter, Jonathan. *The Eye of the Believer: Psychological Influences on Counter-Terrorism Policy-Making.* RAND RGSD-166, Santa Monica, CA 2002.

A similar pattern exists in Europe, where intra-European differences in perceptions of terrorism can be partially traced back to historical experiences of terrorism. Prior to 9/11, US and European attitudes concerning the use of force to combat terrorism were more similar. In fact, the responses to the poll questions described earlier (Figures 3, 4 and 5) are very similar when comparing US responses pre-9/11 with European responses post-9/11 (Figure 6). This suggests that the assertion that 'the US changed after 11 September' is fairly accurate in this particular dimension. This should come as no surprise given the sheer magnitude of the attacks, the chilling methodology used to perpetrate the attacks and its execution on US soil. This raises the question of how the EU might have reacted, both in the area of policy-making and popular reaction, had an attack of similar proportions occurred within the EU.

Figure 6: US respondents – percentage favouring different military measures to combat international terrorism



Source: The Chicago Council on Foreign Relations and the German Marshall Fund of the United States.

As Figure 6 shows, the greatest difference in US and European opinion revolves around the use of ground troops against training camps and other facilities. While 69 per cent of European respondents support such a move, the corresponding figure in the United States pre-9/11 was 57 per cent.

## Myth 3: European and US approaches to combating terrorism are incompatible

Post-9/11, there is a perception that European and US approaches to combating terrorism are incompatible. For the US, the 'struggle against international terrorism is different from any other war in our history . . . progress will come through the persistent accumulation of successes – some seen, some unseen.'[21] This US 'global war on terrorism', is contrasted with Europe's 'fight against global

21. *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism*, (Washington, DC: The White House, February 2003), p. 1.

terrorism'. The difference is perceived to be substantial. In the words of Javier Solana, the EU High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy,

> 'war' suggests that the means will be military and the outcome clear. In preferring to talk about a 'fight' against terror I hope we better convey the fact that our most successful instruments are likely to be non-military ones – police, intelligence and judicial co-operation – and that we must address the causes of terror as energetically as we address its manifestations.[22]

Another difference between 'war' and 'fight' is in the time horizons implied. A war can be interpreted as a long-lasting and directed effort against a particular movement or ideology (in this case global terrorism); a fight rings closer to a targeted short- to medium-term effort against an identifiable opponent (al-Qaeda).

However, a closer look at European and US approaches to combating terrorism shows that there is substantial overlap and cooperation between the two. Since 9/11, levels of cooperation, especially in the area of intelligence-sharing to combat terrorism, have reached new heights.[23] For example, at the EU level, joint task forces were established – allowing the CIA and FBI personnel to take part in terrorist investigations on European territory.[24] Disagreements over Iraq did not change patterns. French and American officials have agreed to cooperate on new anti-terrorism techniques. Prior to the G-8 meeting held in Evian in June 2003, officials announced the establishment of a Franco-American working group to develop biometric techniques, such as fingerprints and iris-scanning, in the fight against terrorism.[25]

In addition to intelligence cooperation, on 20 September 2001, the EU and United States issued a joint statement on combating terrorism. It outlined new areas of EU-US collaboration to 'reduce vulnerabilities' raised by international terrorism. These include cooperation in the areas of:

◗ aviation and other transport security;
◗ police and judicial cooperation, including extradition;
◗ denial of financing of terrorism, including financial sanctions;
◗ denial of other means of support to terrorists;
◗ export control and non-proliferation;
◗ border controls, including visa and document security issues;
◗ law enforcement access to information and exchange of electronic data.[26]

22. 'Leading the Fight Against the Causes of Terror', interview with Javier Solana published by the *European Voice*, 3-9 April 2003.

23. Adam Townsend, 'Keeping EU-US anti-terror cooperation on track', *European Voice*, 3-9 July 2003.

24. Ibid.

25. 'Franco-US thaw on Security', BBC News, 5 May 2003; http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/europe/3001323.stm.

26. *Joint EU-US ministerial statement on combating terrorism*, Brussels, 20 September 2001. For full text, see Maartje Rutten (comp.), 'From Nice to Laeken', *Chaillot Paper* 51 (Paris: EU Institute for Security Studies, April 2002).

With the passage of time, these guidelines have been operationalised and are resulting in closer teamwork across the Atlantic. One example is the strategic cooperation agreement signed in December 2001 providing for the exchange of technical and strategic information between the European Police Office (Europol) and US authorities.[27] Among other provisions, the agreement allows for the exchange of intelligence and personal data.

In the area of transport security, eight individual EU member states have concluded bilateral agreements with the United States to join its Container Security Initiative (CSI) programme. Through these agreements, the United States can station customs officials in a number of ports with major container traffic to the United States. Eighty-five per cent of all container traffic between the EU and United States is currently covered through bilateral agreements.[28] The EU Commission, which would have preferred direct US-EU negotiations instead of the bilateral agreements, is looking to establish an EU-wide agreement so that every major port is covered. At the EU Council meeting of 18 March 2003, negotiating directives for expanding customs cooperation were unanimously adopted. Hopefully, this will allow the EU Commission to achieve 100 per cent coverage of major ports within the EU and ensure reciprocity.[29]

At the most recent EU-US summit held in Washington DC on 25 June 2003, two landmark agreements were signed between the EU and US to enhance collaborative efforts in the fight against terrorism and crime.

1. *EU-US Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance:* gives EU law enforcement authorities access to bank accounts throughout the United States (and vice versa) for investigations into serious crime such as terrorism. The agreement also allows the creation of Joint Investigative Teams (JITs) to improve practical cooperation with respect to legal assistance.[30]
2. *EU-US Agreement on Extradition:* establishes direct contact between central authorities and expedites extradition requests by simplifying documentation and alleviating legalisation and certification requirements. It is worth noting that the agreement covers a broad range of offences. According to the agreement, any offence punishable by more than one year in prison (which typically is the case in terrorist-related events) will be extraditable.[31]

27. 'Presidency's draft report on the European Union's activities in the fight against terrorism', Council of the European Union, DG E VIII, 15211/02, 4 December 2002.

28. Container security is likely to remain on the agenda for the foreseeable future. Worldwide, it is estimated that only two per cent of all containers are checked for content veracity – effectively providing strong incentives to terrorist activity. Overall, approximately 250 million containers are shipped annually – representing 90 per cent of all cargo. Maarten van de Voort and Kevin A. O'Brien, *"Seacurity": Improving the Security of the Global Sea-Container Shipping System*, RAND Europe MR-1695-JRC.

29. http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/us/sum06_03/cs.pdf and http://europa.eu.int/comm/taxation_customs/customs/information_notes/containers_en.htm.

30. Mutual legal assistance seeks to improve the effectiveness of judicial assistance and to regularise and facilitate its procedures.

31. General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union.

According to the European Commission and General Secretariat of the Council of the EU, future EU-US cooperation will increase the focus on counter-terrorist activities. Likely agenda issues are likely to be:[32]

◗ information collection and sharing issues;
◗ prevention strategies – specifically to counter suicide and bomb attacks as well as the recruitment of terrorists;
◗ coordination mechanisms to enhance counter-terrorism assistance directed at countries of concern;
◗ methods to improve border controls and travel documents, including questions of biometric identifiers;[33]
◗ financial instruments to combat financing of terrorism.

Collaboration is not limited to just intelligence and judicial cooperation. It also includes a small military component which was activated shortly after the 11 September attacks. In the Horn of Africa, US and European personnel collaborate within the framework of the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA). Its main objective is to fight terrorism in east Africa. Initially based at the US counter-terrorism warship USS *Mount Whitney*, the entire contingent was transferred in May 2003 to Camp Lemonier – a former French Foreign Legion base located in Djibouti. Stretching across 36 hectares, the base is now home to approximately 1,800 US personnel as well as representatives from other cooperating countries.

### Implications for the transatlantic link

In many ways, US-EU cooperation in the fight against terrorism serves to strengthen the transatlantic link. Besides facilitating the exchange of information, personnel, and other resources, it forces both sides to coordinate their respective efforts. This is significant at a time when relations across the Atlantic are floundering in the aftermath of the war in Iraq. Just as important, collaboration is essential to effectively counter today's terrorists who rely on the (technological) advantages offered by globalisation to enhance the reach and devastation of their acts. As demonstrated by the attacks of 11 September, terrorists today can partially plot and prepare their actions in one country to carry them out in another. In such a world, the anti-terror/counter-terror chain is only as strong as its weakest link, making collaboration essential.

32. EU Fact sheet 'The Fight Against Terrorism', European Commission and General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union.

33. Under the US Enhanced Border Security and Visa Entry Reform Act of 2002, countries whose citizens enjoy visa-free travel to the United States (applicable to all EU member states) will need to start issuing passports with biometric identifiers (e.g. digital fingerprints or iris scans) no later than 26 October 2004; Sharon Spiteri, 'EU to tighten visa and passport security', *EU Observer*, 26 June 2003.

However, several challenges lie ahead. First, as with any other collaborative effort, it is important that the United States and the EU fine-tune their respective visions of how best to combat terrorism. The key question here is the balance between the use of force and non-military tools in the fight against terrorism. While the tools used ultimately depend on the case at hand, there are general starting points that are used to determine how to handle particular threats. The persistence of the myths discussed in this chapter is not baseless. As with most myths, they contain some truth. In this case, there tend to be discrepancies between US and European approaches to combating terrorism. While Europeans place the weight of their policies on preventative steps (such as poverty alleviation and police cooperation), US policy-makers are more likely to focus on pre-emptive or direct engagements (for example by using or threatening to use military force). Effective collaboration will only be maximised when both sides forge a common vision and strategy for how to best address the terrorist threat.

Second, both sides need to have a common understanding of who represents a terrorist threat. For example, the United States and EU did not initially agree on the terrorist status of Hamas. The initial discrepancy most likely affected some dimensions of the Middle East Peace Process. Different views on how to classify and handle groups such as the Iranian Mujahadin Khalq may affect transatlantic cooperation further down the road. Agreement both inside the EU and between the EU and the United States concerning who and which groups constitute terrorist threats is necessary to implement effective policies across the Atlantic.

Finally, in an age of pre-emption, Europeans and Americans have to come to an agreeable solution concerning when pre-emption is justified and when it is not. While this may be decided on a case-by-case basis, it is important that some tacit pre-emption guideline exist to give certain indications of when it may be acceptable to move against a burgeoning terrorist threat. To do so, both sides need to ponder what constitutes sufficient evidence and intent before any proactive action can be taken. This would ensure that policy-makers on both sides of the Atlantic are 'on the same page' in the fight against terrorism. This is especially crucial now that the greatest threat is WMD ending up in the hands of terrorists willing to use it.

In the long run, the fight against terrorism cannot be carried out in a unilateral fashion. Only a concerted international effort to work together will allow policy-makers to diminish would-be terrorists' advantages such as the possibility to pick the place and time for their deeds. As a global problem, terrorism will continue to require multilateral solutions.

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**Daniel Serwer**, Director of Peace Operations and Balkans Initiative at the United States Institute of Peace (USIP). Dr Serwer previously served as a Foreign Service officer at the United States Department of State. Between 1994 and 1996 he was the United States special envoy and coordinator for the Bosnian Federation, mediating between Croats and Bosnians and negotiating the first agreement reached at the Dayton peace talks.

## *Abbreviations*

| | |
|---|---|
| CEEC | Central and East European Country |
| CFSP | Common Foreign and Security Policy |
| CIA | Central Intelligence Agency |
| CJTF-HOA | Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa |
| CMEA | Council for Mutual Economic Assistance |
| CNN | Cable News Network |
| COMECON | Council for Mutual Economic Assistance |
| COTER | Counter-terrorism Working Party |
| CSCE | Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe |
| DAC | Development Assistance Committee (OECD) |
| DCI | Defence Capabilities Initiative |
| DoD | Department of Defense |
| EC | European Community |
| EEC | United Kingdom |
| EMS | European Military Staff |
| EMU | Economic and Monetary Union |
| EOS | Earth Observation Satellite |
| EPC | European Political Cooperation |
| ESDP | European Security and Defence Policy |
| ETA | Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (Basque: 'Basque Homeland and Liberty') |
| EU | European Union |
| EUPM | European Union Police Mission |
| FBI | Federal Bureau of Investigation |
| FDI | Foreign Direct Investment |
| FLN | National Liberation Front |
| FY | Financial/Fiscal Year |
| FYROM | Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| GIA | Armed Islamic Group |
| GMO | Genetically Modified Organism |
| HIV/AIDS | Human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immune deficiency syndrome |
| IAEA | International Atomic Energy Agency |
| ICFY | International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia |
| IDF | Israel Defense Forces |

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|---|---|
| IFOR | Implementation Force |
| IGC | Intergovernmental Conference |
| IIF | International Intervention Force |
| IISS | International Institute for Strategic Studies |
| IPTF | International Police Task Force |
| IRA | Irish Republican Army |
| ISAF | International Security Assistance Force |
| JIT | Joint Investigative Team |
| KFOR | NATO-led Kosovo Force |
| MEDA | Mediterranean European Development Agreement |
| MFO | Multinational Force and Observers |
| MOD | Ministry of Defence |
| MP | Military Police |
| NAFTA | North American Free Trade Agreement |
| NATO | North Atlantic Treaty Organisation |
| NBCR | Nuclear, Biological, Chemical and Radiological (weapons) |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organisation |
| NPT | Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons |
| NSS | National Security Strategy |
| OAE | Operation *Active Endeavour* |
| OECD | Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development |
| OEF | Operation *Enduring Freedom* |
| OPEC | Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries |
| OSCE | Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe |
| PFLP | Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine |
| PfP | Partnership for Peace |
| PHARE | Poland-Hungary: Aid for the Reconstruction of Economies |
| RAF | Red Army Faction |
| R&D | Research and Development |
| SAP | Stabilisation and Association Process |

| | |
|---|---|
| SFOR | Stabilisation Force in Bosnia-Herzegovina |
| SFRY | Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia |
| SRSG | Special Representative of the Secretary General |
| STANAVFORLANT | Standing Naval Force Atlantic |
| STANAVFORMED | Standing Naval Force Mediterranean |
| TACIS | EU programme of Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States and Mongolia |
| TCA | Trade Cooperation Agreement |
| TIPH | Temporary International Presence in Hebron |
| UK | United Kingdom |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNDOF | United Nations Disengagement Observer Force |
| UNEF | United Nations Emergency Force |
| UNIFIL | United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon |
| UNMIK | UN Mission in Kosovo |
| UNPROFOR | UN Protection Force |
| UNSC | United Nations Security Council |
| UNSCR | United Nations Security Council Resolution |
| UNTSO | United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation |
| US | United States |
| USS | United States Ship |
| USSR | Union of Soviet Socialist Republics |
| WEU | Western European Union |
| WMD | Weapons of Mass Destruction |

The idea behind this transatlantic book predates the intense transatlantic exchanges that took place prior to the war in Iraq in early 2003. The run-up to the passage of UN Resolution 1441 in November 2002 provided clear indications that Euro-American relations were about to enter previously uncharted territory.

Given these developments, the Institute decided to produce an extensive study analysing the state of transatlantic relations. For each topic, two authors – one American and one European – were commissioned to provide their thoughts and insights. The result is twelve distinct chapters covering six diverse topics. The book provides both a general overview of US-European relations and investigates specific issue areas through case studies. The diversity on the American side is particularly great, with five different institutions represented among the authors. On the European side, contributions come from the multinational research team at the EU Institute for Security Studies.

This book should be of interest to policy-makers, analysts in academia, and research institutes concerned with EU-US relations. With transatlantic relations at a crossroads, near-term developments will be critical for determining the future direction of the partnership. A lively alliance with America could be as likely as a widening gap between the two partners. This book attempts to shed light on these potential evolutions – aiming to contribute to the overall policy debate presently taking place.