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Terms of engagement

The paradox of American power
and the transatlantic dilemma
post-11 September

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Europeans were abruptly reminded of the old Oriental adage that 'the only constant in life is change' after the attacks of 11 September and the profound changes in strategy that followed in America. Abruptly, because nothing in the Europeans' strategic culture, the humdrum institutional language of the Atlantic Alliance or even developments in the ESDP had prepared them for the paradox that transatlantic security relations could be called into question but not so much by a desire for European autonomy as by developments in America itself.

Two American attitudes are in fact causing concern for the Europeans: unilateralist fever coupled with the over-militarisation of American foreign policy. With an increase of \$48 billion asked for by the President for the Pentagon's budget alone, a systematic refusal to negotiate any constraints on the country in the field of disarmament in particular, minimal political rhetoric on regional crises like that in the Middle East and a staggering casualness regarding NATO as a multilateral forum, these changes in American strategy are in direct contradiction to the corpus of Europe's principles on security: the precedence of the political over the military, negotiation and compromise as the very foundation of international interplay, and a refusal to allow any state to put itself outside, above or in defiance of international law. In the same way, the Europeans are puzzled by the new division of tasks that is emerging, in which the Americans fight the 'hard' wars and the Europeans are left with the thankless job of cleaning up afterwards with peace-building and nation-building. Will it be possible to continue to fuel a Euro-American alliance in the light of such differences? How can a strategic partnership be rebuilt when America applies the same military-technological criteria to its allies as it does to the rest of the world, judging them to be more or less useful or parasitic depending on the quality and size of their military capital, and more or less dependable or untrustworthy in accordance with the criticisms that they may in the past have dared level at the United States?

The debate is now open. From the evidence it would appear that the military future of NATO, the European Union's strategic role and the place of military factors in states' foreign relations are now not so much constants as just variables, the various combinations of which may influence, sometimes in quite contradictory ways, both the future of the

European security system and that of the Euro-American relationship. Julian Lindley-French, a research fellow at the Institute, argues that the solution necessarily lies in re-engagement: by the United States in a global concept of security, and by the Europeans in a serious commitment to defence.

This Chaillot Paper is therefore a strong plea for common ground for understanding and cooperation to be found between a more political America and a more military Europe. In that respect it is very different from other papers in this series. Many of the analyses or solutions put forward by the author will be hotly debated. Yet it is precisely by providing such food for thought on the future of Euro-American relations, which is now more necessary than ever, that this Chaillot Paper will prove its utility. Nothing would be more harmful to the Europeans than the perpetuation of a strategic conservatism that the American press reports every day no longer corresponds either to the interests or the day-to-day policies of Washington. But if the Europeans can still redefine together the terms of their involvement in the management of world affairs, it remains to be seen whether America is still open to discussion.

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Sir Lew Grade comes from a long tradition of failed British film producers. In 1980 he produced a film that bankrupted him. Entitled *Raise the Titanic*, the film was a box office flop of appropriately Titanic proportions. When asked about his risky investment, he said that on reflection it would have been cheaper and easier to lower the Atlantic than raise the Titanic. Observers of transatlantic security relations could be forgiven for feeling pretty much the same about the state of American-European relations as the shock of 11 September is replaced by the search for coordinated policy. Not only do Americans and Europeans disagree about the means of international relations; they seem increasingly to bicker about the ends.

The old cliché that Americans and Europeans are bound by common values, and that that is enough to ensure a commonality of purpose, looks increasingly threadbare. Be it steel protectionism, the environment, capital punishment, agriculture or a host of other interests, it is clear that the two sides are not only partners but competitors of sorts, with two very different world views in which partnership can no longer automatically be taken for granted. Certainly, a Bush administration that demands European fealty over Afghanistan yet discriminates against European steel producers at the same time has little sense of any 'special relationship'. Moreover, these tensions ultimately reflect broader popular viewpoints that are increasingly spilling over into the international domain. Americans, by and large, regard Europeans as free-riding ingrates that Americans have twice saved from themselves and the Soviet Union in the past century and who are now being decidedly spineless over their support for an America at war. Whereas Europeans regard Americans as overbearing, uncultured exhibitionists who exaggerate their own prowess at the expense of others (mainly Europeans) and regard the American Way as the only way, part of a caricatured foreign policy that reflects the dominance of the domestic over the international in US policy-making, of which US policy towards the Middle East is but the most

obvious example. The problem is that there is a kernel of truth in both viewpoints: America, the Clint Eastwood of international relations, the 'High Plains Drifter' who rides in alone and evicts evil; Europe, the Laurence Olivier of international relations, a purveyor of fine lines and subtle ploys, who looks good but exerts himself little. Given that context, the transatlantic relationship will not endure as an effective security partnership simply because of nostalgic appeals to 'oneness'. It will have to be worked at with myths exposed and truths told – if, that is, the relationship is to be founded upon political realism.

This objective of this *Chaillot Paper*, therefore, is to explain why, after such heartfelt expressions of solidarity in the immediate aftermath of 11 September, tensions between the United States and its European allies have re-emerged so quickly. As such, the paper is a European commentary on the nature of American power in the modern world, the terms of its engagement and its impact upon transatlantic security relations. Its core argument concerns an essential paradox in the application of American power, particularly under the Bush administration, in which the more complex and multilateral the nature of the challenges and threats the West faces, the more unilateral and militarised is US engagement. At the same time, the way in which the United States uses its immense military power is often limited and ineffective, reflecting a refusal to engage in essential forms of military engagement, such as peacekeeping and peacemaking.¹ Thus, neither the political nor the military forms of American engagement reflect the nature or extent of US power.

At a time when the United States should be seeking the active and direct involvement of partners, it seems to be going out of its way to 'celebrate' its own power through a narrow form of both unilateralism and engagement. Nowhere is this more apparent than in its relationship with the European Union and its member states, which should be its closest partners in the struggle against terrorism and its causes. Involvement in carrying out Washington's policies is welcomed, but only on US terms, leading to a bizarre paradox in which the involvement of others, far from multilateralising solutions, ends up being little more than unilateralism-plus. It is as though the United States was involved in a battle of wills to prove that its power, and its power alone, can prevail over the threats and risks it faces. Given the nature of those threats, and their sources and the type of engagements they will require, that is unlikely to be the case. Thus, partners are essential,

1. Although this paper criticises the use of US military power, it is not a criticism of the men and women of the US armed forces, who have shown themselves to be among the best and most courageous in the world.

but their involvement must grant them rights as well as obligations. There can be no taxation without representation.

This paper, therefore, is an unashamed appeal for a much broader application of American power. Recent events have demonstrated that, whilst the United States has an unrivalled capacity to attack, it does not always engage, at least not in the ways that Europeans and much of the rest of the world regard as engagement: a triad of evenly-balanced diplomatic, military, aid and development tools. Too much of the American effort seems focused on the violent aspects of security and not enough on pre-conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction. Even its limited engagement in these areas is focused by and large on the Middle East, which, important though that region is, seems driven as much by domestic as international factors. This is reinforced by its niggardly attitude to the involvement of the European Union in the region, apparently because it is not as pro-Israel as Washington. This dichotomy has profound consequences for the way the West 'does' security. Indeed, if the United States over-militarises foreign and security policy, Europe tends to over-civilianise it, with the result that Americans and Europeans disagree profoundly over the method and manner of security management. In a world increasingly fraught with risks and dangers, it is important that the partners find a common and cohesive approach to such management, and that they do so rapidly. The world not only needs more America, but a better America. It also needs more Europe and a stronger Europe. That is the core contention of this paper.

This military/civil security dichotomy is demonstrated by the figures. The gross domestic product of the United States in 2000 was €11.3 trillion (\$9.9 trillion), some €4.9 trillion (\$4.3 trillion) greater than the combined GDPs of Germany, Britain, France and Italy, the world's third, fourth, fifth and sixth largest economies respectively.² At €374 billion (\$329 bn) the US defence budget is larger than the defence budgets of the nine next biggest defence spenders worldwide. Today, America spends close to forty per cent of world defence expenditure, whilst the €54 bn (\$48 bn) increase sought by the Pentagon for the 2003 defence budget allocation is more than twice Italy's entire defence budget and some €14 billion (\$12 bn) more than that of the United Kingdom, the world's third largest defence spender.³ In fiscal year 2003 the United States will spend 3.5 per cent of its GDP on defence, whereas Germany spends 1.5 per cent, Italy 1.9 per cent (although that includes the figures

2. From *The Military Balance 2001-2002* (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the IISS, 2001).

3. How things change. The 1992 *SIPRI Yearbook* wrote: 'Whilst the 1980s was characterized by the fastest and largest sustained peacetime expansion of US military expenditure, the 1990s will be characterized by the steady and sustained reduction of US military expenditure and forces. It is still premature to speak of a 50 per cent reduction by the turn of the century, as predicted by some civilian analysts. However, the military share of the US GDP is certain to go down from its late 1980s peak of around 6 per cent to around 3 per cent by the late 1990s.' The irony is that such is the power of a US economy apparently under pressure that the increases announced will represent only slightly greater than 3 per cent of GDP. S. Deger and S. Sen, 'World Military Expenditure', in *The SIPRI Yearbook 1992* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 191.

for the Carabinieri) and Belgium 1.3 per cent. Only Britain and France, at 2.6 per cent and 2.4 per cent respectively devote anything like similar amounts of their GDPs to defence.⁴

The sheer scale of the ambition of current US defence expenditure plans defies the European imagination. Moreover, the Bush administration plans to add to the defence budget each successive year so that by 2007 the defence budget will stand at €510 bn (\$451 bn).⁵ The plan for 2002-03 to increase defence spending to €428 bn (\$378.6 bn) will be the largest single increase in twenty years. That is more than €1.13 bn (\$1 bn) per day. The increase includes €43 bn (\$38.3 bn) in new spending, which is almost the same size as the UK defence budget, and €11.3 bn (\$10 bn) 'should the President deem it necessary to fight in Afghanistan or elsewhere'.⁶ In short, it pays to stay on the right side of America.

Yet that is not the whole story, because security is not just about defence expenditure; it is far broader. Whilst the United States spent €10.3 bn (\$9 bn) in aid in 2000, the top seven EU member states alone spent €25 bn (\$22 bn).⁷ According to the US General Accounting Office, of €81 bn (\$71 bn) provided to the Central and East European countries between 1990 and 1999, the European allies within NATO provided €54 bn (\$47 bn). As part of the plans for EU enlargement, the major confidence and security-building programme in Europe, the European Union will spend \$60 (€70 bn) between 2000 and 2006. Of almost €17 bn (\$15 bn) disbursed in development assistance to the Balkans between 1993 and 1999, the European Allies and the European Union spent €7.8 bn (\$6.9 bn) and €3.8 bn (\$3.3 bn) respectively, the United States contributing only €1.4 bn (\$1.2 bn). The European Union and the European allies also led the way in development aid to the Newly Independent States (NIS), a vital area of security interest to both Americans and Europeans, providing between 1990 and 1999 €22.8 bn (\$20 bn) of the approximately €40 bn (\$35 bn) provided by all donors.

Even on the military side progress is being made, in spite of the justifiable criticisms of the European military effort. 70 per cent of the forces of the European Allies are being professionalised and modernised. By March 2001, European countries were providing more than 60 per cent of the 20,000 troops in Bosnia and 37,000 of those in Kosovo, with the United States providing about 20 and 25 per cent respectively. During Operation Allied Force in 1999, whilst the United States provided most of the air combat capabilities, the European Allies provided most of the ground troops and

4. All GDP statistics from 'Unmighty Europe', *Wall Street Journal*, 6 February 2002, p. 5.

5. All statistics taken from P. Kennedy 'The Eagle Has Landed', *Financial Times*, 2-3 March 2002, pp. 1 and 4.

6. From 'US Advises Europeans to Spend More on Militaries', *International Herald Tribune*, 6 February 2002, p. 2.

7. Figures taken from *NRC Handelsblad*, 16 March 2002, p. 15.

disbursed more than \$10 bn of the \$15 bn in development assistance. Add that to European aid and development efforts in the Middle East, Asia and Africa, not to mention troop deployments around the globe, it is clear that, while Europe might not be ‘doing its bit’ in the way that America would like, it is doing quite a bit of it nevertheless.⁸

That said, the extent of the power disparity between America and its European allies is clear, and in many ways it is unreasonable to expect the United States to be anything other than unilateralist. The very power that so defines America gives it no other option than to interpret leadership as a form of international unilateralism. Thus, the choice the United States has to make is one between types of unilateralism. On the one hand, America could offer the world inspirational broad unilateralism that reflects its own core ideals, and which is open to the counsel and views of others. On the other hand, it could choose a much more narrow view of unilateralism, born of sectional and partial interpretations of the American ‘interest’, allied to a narrow form of engagement. Paul Kennedy writes that it is ‘. . . a historical irony that the republic whose first leader cautioned against entangling alliances and distractions abroad is now, a quarter way into its third century, the world’s policeman.’⁹ If only that were the case. Unfortunately, what takes place outside the United States rarely seems to be of interest to Americans, with the result that in spite of all its power, the United States eschews the role of world policeman, preferring instead to avoid a fundamental part of the security management cycle. For allies this can be, to say the least, a little irritating because the United States is constantly reminding the world of the need for its leadership, but then exercising it in an inconsistent and often partial manner. It therefore does no credit to the United States when it refuses to undertake one of the core functions of such leadership, namely nation-building. Frankly, American unilateralism is more often than not of the wrong kind, reflecting a domestic parochialism ill befitting a state upon which so much of the world’s future shape and hope depends. It is a kind of splendid isolation allied to an à la carte foreign policy in pursuit of a narrow interpretation of national interests, a political contradiction that is doing the West long-term damage, often leaving a security gap to be filled by those far less capable and indeed far less benign than the world’s reluctant and inconsistent hegemon.

Leadership requires commitment, consistency and engagement, through (and with) every facet of the peace/tension/crisis

8. All statistics from ‘European Security: US and European Contributions to Foster Stability and Security in Europe’, Report to the Congressional Committees by the United States General Accounting Office, November 2001.

9. Op. cit. in note 5.

sis/war spectrum. Unfortunately, for a state that prides itself on its moral exceptionalism, twenty-first century America behaves on occasions like a nineteenth century European Great Power.¹⁰ Consequently, its failure to live up to its own lofty ideals over the past ten years has left a strange vacuum at the zenith of the world power structure. This is somewhat ironic, given American and European history, because it is increasingly Europe that feels it occupies the moral high ground of international politics, partly because it does not have the same responsibilities as the United States (i.e. it can afford to), but partly because of its different approach.

Equally, for all its failings, the world is still fortunate that the United States is its greatest power. If Nazi Germany or the Soviet Union had won the great systemic struggles that pockmarked the twentieth century, it is doubtful that a European would be writing these words, for fear of incarceration or worse. But those achievements were not America's alone. It was the nineteenth century political moralist Lord Acton who warned about the corrupting influence of power. Neither America, nor its power, is inherently corrupt, because the checks and balances inherent in its system of government provide some protection, not just for itself, but for the world over which it presides. However, the degree to which American power sets it apart from the world is a cause of legitimate concern that needs to be addressed, particularly when that power is used inconsistently. What America lacks is a guiding principle for its power founded upon a broad view of the common good. Gone are the great doctrines of Truman, Eisenhower and Kennedy, to be replaced by what seems on occasions to be a 'balance-sheet' foreign and security policy that assesses American interests on the basis of short-term political profit or the undue influence of certain 'over-mighty' shareholders. On 11 September that perception of the world was rocked to its foundations in what was perhaps the greatest single shock to the American people and political Establishment in the history of the United States.

11 September

11 September raised a plethora of questions, but one above all stands out: how will America use its power in the wake of an attack that did so much damage, both physical and psychological, to the hitherto enduring sense of American invulnerability? Before the attacks, such was US power that the world seemed on occasion little more than a pawn in the great gambits of domestic move and

10. Although it was John Adams who famously remarked, 'there is no special providence for Americans, and their nature is the same as that of others.' John Adams, *Works* (1850-56).

countermove that make up political life within ‘the Beltway’.¹¹ What was good for America was good for the world had again become the catch-phrase of an America that after the trauma of Vietnam seemed once again to have fallen in love with an invincible self-image.¹² Has 11 September changed that?

Furthermore, the application of American power since 11 September seems to have gone hand-in-hand with the creation of yet another American ‘power-myth’: America the almighty but America the oppressed, standing alone in its war against terror. Nowhere is this myth more prevalent than in the love affair between the American people and the US military, which is by far the world’s strongest and yet, for all its power, often cosseted and protected from threat and risk in a way that profoundly undermines the utility of American military might in the world. In spite of some notable operations in Afghanistan, and for all the rhetoric that pours forth from Washington, the United States has demonstrated a marked reluctance to use the US Army – not just for warfighting but peacemaking and peacekeeping. The 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) underlined this essential contradiction. It emphasised the need for a forward military presence, and the role of the United States as the essential stabiliser, particularly in Asia. The QDR also recognised that the United States could not operate directly from continental North America without new basing rights in sensitive areas. It called for the development of more flexible forces that would underpin conventional deterrence and restored limited war concepts that had been displaced by a Powell Doctrine that was founded upon a fear of casualties and the use of massive and decisive firepower. And yet, the practice of US defence policy demonstrates that the fear of casualties, not so much amongst the American people or the armed forces themselves but the US military and political elite, continues to undermine what pretence there is to a global strategy. ‘Peacekeeping is for wimps’¹³ and ‘Superpowers don’t do windows’,¹⁴ Europeans are told. Could it be that the muscular championing of warfighting takes place precisely because America is fearful of complex and dangerous peacekeeping/making missions of the kind undertaken by the European-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan? Americans will take casualties but only for the right type of war, and that does not include bolstering security through hands-on peacekeeping in a land where ‘warlordism’ has traditionally been the only mechanism for stability. Is the United States a one-armed superpower?

11. It was E. H. Carr who wrote, ‘to internationalise government in any real sense means to internationalise power...’ This could be paraphrased to read ‘the internationalisation of American domestic policy is a function of the scope of American power’. E. H. Carr, *The Twenty Year Crisis, 1919-1939* (New York: Harper and Collins, 1946), p. 107.

12. Many Europeans are disparaging about Vietnam and its impact upon the American psyche. They should not be. After all, was it not Britain’s failure in the Boer War that led to the loss of confidence that helped result in the precipitous decline of empire? This experience is still seared in the minds of American commanders, and rightly so. General Fred Franks Jr., who led VII Corps during the Gulf War, captures the impact succinctly. ‘The soldiers couldn’t help it that their leaders had fouled up the strategy and adopted tactics that did not accomplish their strategic objective. The soldiers had gone out and done what they were asked to do. They were point men and stepped on a mine, or got wounded in an ambush or in a firefight. Why blame them?’ What Franks is getting at is that the US military became much more overtly political after Vietnam, and ever since then the political leadership has been trying to re-establish the trust between it and the military. There were ghosts of that in Somalia, and the refusal to do peacekeeping is partly because the politicians recognise they must never put the military in that position again. See Tom Clancy, *Into the Storm* (New York: G. P. Putnam, 1997), p. 78.

13. Charles Krauthammer, ‘We Don’t Peacekeep’, *International Herald Tribune*, 10 January 2002

14. The phrase ‘Superpowers Don’t Do Windows’, was attributed to John Hillen, an adviser to George W. Bush during the 2001 presidential campaign.

Certainly, the war in Afghanistan reinforces the impression that Europe and the United States are embarked on strategically divergent paths along which the partners see the utility and application of the military tool very differently. The rhetoric of the 'force-sizing construct' in the QDR clearly emphasises an implicit division of labour with the European allies, as the United States retreats ever more forcibly into the role of a technological super-warrior.¹⁵ This divergence, moreover, has been to the fore in the war against terror as Washington employs the rhetoric of political multilateralism, on the one hand, and the reality of military unilateralism, on the other. Implied therein is a division of labour that Europeans must sternly resist if they are to avoid ceding control of the strategic agenda to the United States. It will not be in Europe's interest simply to become America's garbage collector. Certainly, neither the QDR nor the war in Afghanistan leaves much room for partners. Britain, in particular, finds itself having to step into the security breach left by US reluctance to complete the full spectrum of security missions, as the overstretch from which its armed forces suffers attests.¹⁶

The challenge of engagement

In a world that abounds with so many weak and failing states, particularly in Africa and Asia, can the West afford to simply ignore such a vicious cycle of despair and collapse? Europeans, by and large, say no, and have invested billions of euros (far more than the United States) in an effort to ease what are profound problems.

However, even those levels of aid and assistance pale into insignificance alongside the challenge the West faces. For Europeans it is a particularly delicate matter because of the charge of neocolonialism that may be levelled against them. Moreover, the sheer scale of the need is so daunting that both Europeans and Americans face a profound dilemma: they can either step in and try and rescue societies with aid and practical support, or simply disengage and deal with the consequences that such despair begets. The United States, it would appear, has simply chosen to ignore the causes and focus instead on punishing the consequences. In no small measure, the constituency of support that exists around the world for al-Qaeda and their like springs from the crises from which so many suffer who live beyond the West's borders. For the moment, American power sets the agenda for how the West engages with instability, because Europe alone cannot

15. Michele A. Flournoy and Kenneth F. Mackenzie Jr. write: 'In the past US forces have been sized predominantly for two elements: warfighting and presence. Other missions and activities have been treated, explicitly or implicitly, as lesser included cases in sizing the force: it was assumed that forces sized for warfighting and presence would be sufficient to meet any other needs. However, the increasing peacetime demands placed on the US military have called this assumption into question, with increases in so-called low density/high tempo strains in part of the force.' Michele A. Flournoy and Kenneth F. Mackenzie Jr., 'Sizing Conventional Forces', in Michele A. Flournoy (ed.), *QDR 2001 Strategy Driven Choices for American Security* (Washington: NDU, 2001) p. 174.

16. UK armed forces are over 40 per cent deployed, leading to problems of retention, particularly for the technical grades.

carry such a burden. However, simply ‘forgetting’ about places, such as Africa, offers no way forward. The West may not be faced with a clash of civilisations, but if it is not careful it might find itself facing the first global class war between the rich West, on one side, and everybody else, on the other, and no amount of defence expenditure will ensure victory in that struggle.¹⁷

European responsibilities

Equally, the West’s failure is not entirely the responsibility of the United States. A significant part of the blame for the malaise can be attributed to European policy, particularly the weakness of European military capability. If Europe is to be an ally worth having then Europeans need to invest significantly more in their security and defence. Gone are the days when Europeans could spend 1 per cent of GDP on defence and then look around the world to see what to do with it. At the same time, such is the nature of the American governmental machine that, even if they did, it is questionable whether America is any longer willing to accommodate allies or respond to outside influences. Put simply, Washington finds it very hard to listen to anyone. Congress, in particular, is all too willing to listen to its own prejudices, particularly about Europeans.

Antony Blinken recently counselled against exaggerating the extent of the drift in transatlantic relations.¹⁸ He called it an invention of élites, who failed to recognise that in many ways the United States and its European partners and allies were moving closer, not further apart. That may be true at one level but there seems little doubt that the United States under the Bush regime has returned to a concept of power that is by and large military-based, and it is that which is driving Europeans and American apart. Joseph Nye points out that power in the contemporary age is like a three-dimensional chess game in which US power is of differing levels of utility at different levels of the game. It is not surprising that the Bush administration concentrates on the military because of its preponderant power. As Nye points out, in the economic sphere Europe engages America as an equal.¹⁹ Indeed, although closely interconnected the transatlantic security relationship is becoming increasingly distinct from the transatlantic economic relationship, even though ‘spillover’ from one affects the other. American leadership, it would seem, still has to recognise that, and indeed the limitations this dichotomy imposes upon its power within the wider transatlantic relationship. That is

17. Samuel P. Huntington’s famous thesis on the clash of civilisations is very specific on this matter. ‘In the emerging world, the relations between states and groups from different civilizations will not be close and will often be antagonistic. Yet some intercivilization relations are more conflict-prone than others. At the micro-level, the most violent fault lines are between Islam and its Orthodox, Hindu, African, and Western Christian neighbours. At the macro-level, the dominant division is between the “West and the rest”, with the most intense conflicts occurring between Muslim and Asian societies, on the one hand, and the West, on the other. . . The central problem in the relations between the West and the rest is, consequently, the discordance between the West’s – particularly America’s – efforts to promote a universal Western culture and its declining ability to do so.’ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order* (London: Touchstone, 1996), p. 183.

18. Antony Blinken, ‘Doing the right thing on European defence’, in Julian Lindley-French (ed.), ‘The 2001 Paris Transatlantic Conference’, *Transatlantic Series* (Paris: Institute for Security Studies of WEU, 2001).

19. Joseph S. Nye, *The Paradox of American Power* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 149.

an essential paradox of American power. Absolute American power is a constraint upon the United States *to* act, but the nature of power in the modern world is a constraint upon American action. The delusion that America has a choice about when, where and how it can act is in the long-term interest neither of the United States nor its partners. It is power, not morality, that sets America apart and conveys exceptionalism upon it – economic, political and military. It is an exceptional America that has exceptional responsibilities.

Consequently, the United States cannot choose its role, because its power imposes one. If the United States, therefore, is to realise effective leadership it must ask itself not what the world can do to America but what America can do for the world. How the United States answers that question will dictate to a large extent the future of the international system over which it presides. Unfortunately, US reluctance to make, keep and sustain peace in the world on a consistent basis represents a profound weakness in American policy. It is a weakness that will have profound implications for the future transatlantic security relationship.

Terms of engagement – the structure

In this paper, Chapter One examines America's world in the wake of 11 September, by considering the context for contemporary American policy and the place, if any, of Europe within it. Chapter Two then considers how the United States perceives threats and how the victory of vulnerability, i.e. reactive as opposed to proactive policy choices, and the narrow unilateralism that results from it, have led the world's most powerful and open society to become one of the most defensive. Chapter Three then examines how the United States responds to vulnerability through its response to the threat its power generates as the world's exceptional target. Chapter Four looks at the impact of narrow unilateralism upon multilateral engagement and how it has attempted to offset this through fig-leaf contributions to peacekeeping and peacemaking and the creation of a warrior culture to mask profound uncertainty over both its strategic role and direction. Chapter Five looks forward to a new transatlantic security relationship founded upon a new organising principle in which Europeans recognise that America is going to do its own security 'thing', and Americans recognise that Europe will do its own security 'thing' whilst preserving the ability of the two security 'things' to do things together.

Narrow unilateralism, narrow engagement

The weakness of power

America's world in the wake of 11 September is one of unrivalled power and authority, and yet unparalleled uncertainty. It is a world in which the United States, for all its economic and military might, seems both over-equipped and ill-equipped to confront the challenges of the post-modern age. Catastrophic terrorism, the blinding poverty of the South, the millions of lives blighted by AIDS, an entire continent on the brink of social, political and economic implosion and an environment slowly decaying into toxin seem beyond American power. For the Bush administration, if a problem does not succumb to American power, and succumb quickly, it would appear that it is deemed not to exist. Such a partial political approach places a particular premium on military power. This was reflected in the Pentagon's submission for the 2003 defence budget, of which the *New York Times* wrote: 'With America at war, everyone expected a healthy but reasonable increase in next year's defense budget. Instead the Bush administration has presented a bloated and unbalanced proposal that would deepen future budget deficits, distort national priorities and slow the transformation of military forces to respond to the novel needs of 21st century warfare.'²⁰

There are some parallels between US power and that of former imperial powers such as Rome and Britain, in that America is the undoubted hegemonic power of its time and dominant in its world. However, the nature of the United States and its power also make it very different. Unlike Britain and Rome, America does not seek direct control of extensive overseas territories. Indeed, it has historically acted through proxies or allies to extend the sphere of its influence. This is partly because Americans have a benign view of their own power which is essential to America's sense of itself and its mission – America, the moral and democratic beacon of the world. Yet like Rome and Britain, there is a threshold of challenge

20. 'Binge at The Pentagon', *New York Times* editorial in *International Herald Tribune*, 7 February 2002, p. 6.

beyond which American power becomes devastatingly punitive, reinforced by an 'evangelical' streak in American foreign and security policy. The United States, in the name of righteous indignation, can and will bring power to bear that no other force on earth could countenance. Al-Qaeda and the Taliban made that miscalculation, as have so many others, interpreting American openness for softness. Consequently, whilst the United States is good at being benign and good at being angry, it is not good at being engaged constantly in the messy greys of security that it finds so challenging and Europeans take for granted. Therefore, even after 11 September, at a time of great national trauma, there is something incomplete about the use of American power. That is not to say that anyone else could have done the job any better, but that the United States could have and chose not to. Even after the conduct of several robust operations in Afghanistan, it is still a job only half done. As John Lewis Gaddis puts it, 'we'll need to address the grievances that fuel terrorism in the first place... A relatively small investment of resources and intelligence secured for the U.S. and its allies, during the second half of the 20th century, a far more congenial world than what they had had to live through during its first half. Can we apply the same strategy now against the conditions that breed terrorists in so many parts of what we used to call the "third" world? We'd better try, for some of these regions are at least as much at risk now as Europe and Japan were half a century ago.'²¹

Furthermore, the nature of American power blurs the distinction between foreign and domestic policy, partly because hegemony offers the possibility of imposing the latter on the former. No other state could even begin to consider such a possibility. Thus, the cut and thrust of Washington does not prepare America well for global power because, whilst there are few external constraints upon it, there are a lot of internal constraints generated by the many vested interests that are part of the fabric of the American political scene – another similarity with Rome and Britain at their peak. This is an essential weakness of American power, because power exceptionalism makes the United States exceptionally subjective, i.e. it exports subjectivity. Moreover, as 11 September has demonstrated only too well, it also makes the United States exceptionally vulnerable. While the United States has opportunities denied to others, it also faces challenges that no other state has to confront.

Vulnerability and power breed unilateralism. However, in the

21. John L. Gaddis, 'And Now This', in S. Talbot and N. Chanda, *The Age of Terror – America and the World After September 11* (New York: Basic, 2002), pp. 20-1.

US context, paradoxically, unilateralism is also a barrier against isolationism. Indeed, unilateralism is in many ways the result of a complex deal between an élite who recognise the need for some engagement and an American people, many of whom would prefer to have little to do with the world beyond. In effect, unilateralism represents the terms on which the American people permit the American élite to engage the wider world – ‘OK, if you must but only on our terms’. This is inherent in American history and the way America sees itself. The Cold War misled many, particularly Europeans, about the American political nature. It seemed a permanent facet of both the international environment and American engagement to many whose formative years were during that tense and difficult period. It was a conflict between two behemoths engaged in an ideological struggle for the supremacy of their ideas that was so all-embracing that it was difficult for other states to have a political identity distinct from that struggle, even the United States itself. However, the Cold War was the exception in American history, a period of exaggerated external engagement that was forced upon it. Hitherto, American exceptionalism had been self-contained – the Shining City on the Hill, distant but visible to all around. In the wake of every major international military engagement into which the United States was forced to enter since the completion of its self-colonisation and its emergence as a world power at the end of the nineteenth century, the United States has sought to withdraw back within itself, a job having been done. Thus, the United States has traditionally seen history as episodic, neatly compartmentalised, in which America was either disengaged and withdrawn or engaged and supreme.

Consequently, every American engagement has been intended as a temporary and decisive detour from self-containment. From the charge of Teddy Roosevelt’s ‘Rough Riders’ up San Juan Hill in 1898, to Pershing’s Army in the fields of France and Flanders, from Cassino Ridge to Omaha Beach, from Pearl Harbor to Iwo Jima, from the Imjun River to the Mitla Gap, from Kosovo to Afghanistan, the United States has always had a sense of being oppressed and opposed by a world that remains brim-full of those opposed to its ideals and who simply do not ‘get it’. Each time, with diminishing resolve, it has hoped that the world was now safe for democracy, and each time it has been disappointed. Each time the instinct of the United States has been to retreat safe within its borders, and each time it has been reluctantly dragged out again to deal

with this monster or that. In short, whilst the world has never known such a power, never has such a power been so detached from the world around it. Hence the shock on 11 September when the world came to America and shook its understanding of how the United States is perceived in the world. For that reason, above all others, 11 September is an historical pivot that will force Americans to make a choice. Whilst isolationism is no longer a serious option, the nature and extent of US engagement with the post-11 September world will decide the shape and fate of the twenty-first century. Thus, allies and enemies alike await America's longer-term considered response to those awful events with both anticipation and trepidation.

Leadership without cost

Leadership without cost was meant to be a given. President Bush Senior talked of a New World Order and Senator Richard Lugar of the end of threat.²² Francis Fukuyama saw the American political establishment as the embodiment of a neo-utopian end-state through the combination of liberal democracy and market economics that would represent the end of history.²³ These glory years were reinforced by the Clinton years of prosperity in which leadership without responsibility became an inherent feature not only of international policy but also of domestic politics. America had proven its supremacy in all areas. Technology was the future for the economy and the military alike. It was a shining path that would light up the shining city and protect it from those less fortunate and jealous of the American way.

Thus, the 1990s were the years of myth building, of 'Wall Street Warriors' making millions on the back of a Gordon Gekko-type corporate boom,²⁴ a myth of economic supremacy reinforced by a reinvigorated relationship between the American military and the American people. Since the Second World War the US military has held a very special place in the US political and popular mind. However, in the wake of the Vietnam War the military suffered a sharp reduction in its standing that triggered a period of profound self-doubt about what America itself stood for. In the 1980s the United States began to rediscover its perception of supremacy, as first the Soviet Union withered and then the war that every American military planner had dreamed of was so conveniently provided by the evil incompetence of Saddam Hussein. The United States learned

22. James Baker puts the 'new threats' in context. Commenting on President Bush Senior's New World Order he wrote, 'While the President and I realized our central mission was to end the Cold War, we also began preparing for the post-Cold War period. To a great degree, this involved either adapting or creating institutions, but it also meant that we would have to begin developing longer-term strategies for dealing with an emerging class of transnational problems that didn't fit into traditional categories: terrorism, narcotics, the environment, and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.' From James A. Baker, *The Politics of Diplomacy* (New York: G. P. Putnam, 1995), p. 46.

23. See Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1992).

24. Gordon Gekko was the character played by Michael Douglas in the film *Wall Street*.

to lead again and the success of Operation *Desert Storm* restored not just America's sense of moral exceptionalism, but also military exceptionalism. It led to a renewal of patriotic fervour reinforced by countless Hollywood films that not only glorified America's role in the world, but also progressively wrote others out of it. It was a point of departure with Europe, as America the military superpower became ever more powerful in the minds of its people, and its allies ever less so. This relentless drive to superiority resulted in a blurring of the distinction between the fact and fiction of American power and an exaggerated concept of the utility of military power in international relations. 'We have defeated the Soviets and smashed Saddam, the Europeans can look after themselves', was pretty much the complacent battle cry of the 1990s.

Moreover, military presence was not, in any case, going to be the defining feature of the American empire, even if military power was to be the veiled fist of American might. That was a failed vision that the British and Romans had learned to their cost as their empires crumbled under the burden of imperial overstretch.²⁵ Security was to be an extension of a globalising economy in a globalised world in which everyone would be linked to everyone and everyone would be vulnerable to everyone, with the exception of the United States. 'It's the economy, stupid', was the catch-phrase of the 1992 Clinton presidential campaign. American power henceforth would be defined more by a struggle for business than ideas. Security was a done deal at home and would be extended across the world through prosperity and the spread of Western ideals, liberal-democracy and capitalism. The new ambassadors would be the multinational corporations (MNCs) that were the champions of globalisation and American economic might. Consequently, three developments took place during the 1990s that were to have profound consequences for US foreign and security policy. First, the state withdrew as America embarked upon the sustained and systematic under-funding of its traditional foreign policy tools, ably backed up by the hawkish xenophobia of Senator Jesse Helms during his tenure at the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Second, the public representatives of the United States progressively became institutions whose primary responsibility was to their shareholders, not to the people they employed or the environment in which they operated. This was not the fault of the multinationals, which are the most powerful wealth generators in the world, but for all the talk of responsible corporate governance the primary

25. Paul Kennedy has often been criticised for getting his predictions about US decline spectacularly wrong. In fact, his analysis of the trends is often acute. Writing in 1992 he wrote prophetic lines: 'History is, once again, producing its winners and losers. Economic change and technological development, like wars or sporting tournaments, are usually not beneficial to all. Progress, welcomed by optimistic voices from the Enlightenment to our present age, benefits those groups or nations that are able to take advantage of the newer methods and science, just as it damages others that are less prepared technologically, culturally, and politically to respond to change.' Paul Kennedy, *Preparing for the Twenty-First Century* (London: Harper-Collins, 1993), p. 14.

mission of the multinational corporation was to produce cheap 'over there' and sell high 'over here'. Third, in 1993 the US armed forces engaged in a disastrous peace support operation (PSO) in Somalia.²⁶ The sight of the body of one of the eighteen American soldiers killed in an attempt to arrest the Somali warlord Muhammad Farrah Aideed being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu on prime time network television was truly horrific and became seared on the American public and political consciousness. Was this Vietnam revisited? Thus, with a few exceptions, the 1990s too often saw the worst of America, not its inspiring best. Millions the world over perceived exploitation and neocolonialism as a Reaganite-Thatcherite view of foreign policy, and the progressive retreat of American diplomacy, combined with the failure in Somalia and foreign policy confusion and irresoluteness to create an image of strategic incompetence.²⁷

Disengaged America, distracted Europe

In any case, there were no longer any strategic threats, only risks posed by weak and failing states and those outposts of obduracy resistant to the Fukuyama thesis. The gratitude of its European allies was America's by right, so it was about time they got off their collective 'butts' and did their 'bit' for America's 'vision' for the world, such as it was. Henceforth, the American military would only deal with the big stuff, because that was all it could deal with, not the petty crises of small and weak states a long way away. Europe could do those as part of a new division of labour in transatlantic security relations in which the United States would say 'go', and the Europeans would dutifully go about their peacekeeping business. It was the worst of both strategic worlds, in which Americans would not and Europeans could not.

The strategic miscalculation was to underestimate the force for evil that could be generated by an unholy trinity of weak states, fundamentalism and globalising technology. A new breed of adversary emerged that was no longer powerful and rational, but weak and roguish; which combined the parochialism of the tribe and traditional values with the communications of the Internet age. A new strategic equation emerged as relatively small groups saw the possibility of access to destructive power that grew exponentially larger, particularly after the collapse of the Soviet Union. They were people who could not be trusted to think in the geostrategic terms

26. Robert D. Kaplan writes, 'Emotional coverage of Somalia by a world media foreshadowed an American intervention that, because it was ill-defined, led to the worst disaster for US troops since Vietnam - a disaster that helped influence policymakers against intervention in Rwanda. In a world of constant crises, policymakers must be very selective about where and when they believe it worthwhile to get engulfed in the Clausewitzian "uncertainty" of conflict.' Robert D. Kaplan, *Warrior Politics* (New York: Random House, 2002), p. 129.

27. The National Intelligence Council's *Global Trends 2015* reinforces this point. It writes, 'In the absence of a clear and over-riding national security threat, the United States will have difficulty drawing on its economic prowess to advance its foreign policy agenda. The top priority of the American private sector, which will be central to maintaining the US economic and technological lead, will be financial profitability, not foreign policy objectives.' *Global Trends 2015* (Washington: National Intelligence Council, 2000), p. 13.

defined by Washington, as by the second half of the 1990s it became clear to analysts that the world was going to be far less amenable to American power than had been hoped. Unfortunately, whilst the threat posed by catastrophic terrorism was understood well before 11 September, and conditions proved excellent for the spawning of such a threat, Washington (and Europe) by and large ignored it. The Middle East, in particular, continued to spiral down into instability through a dangerous mix of demographic explosion, religious fundamentalism and inequality, allied to appalling governance by regimes many of which were close American allies. There were trends that were unfortunately masked by the false dawn of the Middle East Peace Process from 1993 onwards. Policy became the triumph of hope over experience. At the same time, America progressively retreated from any pretence of even-handedness in the Arab-Israeli conflict, as the influence of domestic political lobbies proved greater than that of those calling for a balanced approach. A few hard-line states continued to refuse to cooperate with America, whilst the European allies seemed so obsessed with their own grand project that they too chose to ignore much of what was going on in the world beyond, typified by their failure to get to grips with a humanitarian disaster on their own borders in the Balkans.

Defining America's role in the new security environment

In the absence of a defining threat, the United States had trouble defining its role. This, in turn, further undermined its international mission and even though it now has a 'new' enemy, it is too early to tell whether a role that matches American means with security ends can be fashioned from a non-state actor such as al-Qaeda. If Britain once famously lost an Empire and struggled to find a role, America won an 'empire' and does not know quite how to engage with it. Unfortunately, pressure on Washington to resolve this dilemma is not only endogenous to the United States. The nature of the international system is such that if power abhors a vacuum it also abhors an underemployed hegemon. Indeed, semantically it is questionable that a hegemon can be a hegemon if it chooses not to exercise its power in a hegemonic manner. Again, power equals responsibilities, particularly for a liberal democracy founded on value-led governance. Like the British Empire in the wake of the Napoleonic wars, someone has to fill the power gap at the peak of

global governance, and the nature of the world makes it impossible for a hegemon to avoid that duty, yet all too often that appears to be US intent. Today, the world needs three things from the United States: first, a more sustained application of its power; second, a wiser and more altruistic application of its power;²⁸ third, a broader concept of power and engagement.

Consequently, a *sine qua non* of extended European engagement in partnership with America will be a clear, consistent and competent expression of American commitment to effective and just global governance – not world government but global governance. In effect, the United States needs a new doctrine of engagement for the twenty-first century – broad unilateralism. If not, an inconsistent America will progressively undermine the transatlantic security relationship and a Europe damned by Washington if it does too much and damned by Washington if it does too little will be forced to turn away. Captain Kirk or Robinson Crusoe, Florence Nightingale or Terminator, Europe simply does not know which to believe, because American policy has become too parochial, short-term and reactive for it to be called leadership, focused more on the mile between the White House and Capitol Hill than on the world beyond.

The only constant seems to be the unfailing disinterest in matters non-American evinced by the American people themselves. In the past American leaders such as Roosevelt, Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy and even Nixon, refused to bow to narrow concepts of engagement driven by popular disinterest or distaste. Unfortunately, politics has become cheap in Washington during the strategic vacation that America has enjoyed over the past ten years. The refusal of the Bush administration to become the policeman of the world seems almost to have become a badge of honour with some members of the Administration. Americans have never seen themselves in this role – watchful, patrolling on the ground, prepared to keep the peace yet also act more forcefully if required. Unfortunately, that is not the kind of action Americans understand, and as the struggle against al-Qaeda moves from being one of decisive engagement to a protracted struggle, the weakness of both US policy and its armed forces is becoming apparent. Indeed, it would appear that the Pentagon neither knows how to finish the job, nor has the tools to do it. For the British this is particularly galling, because they see the need for extended engagement but lack the power so to act.

28. Of course, much depends on how one defines 'wise'. Robert D. Kaplan takes a 'might is right' approach: 'In the twenty-first century we [the US], as in the nineteenth, we will initiate hostilities – whether in the form of Special Forces operations or computer viruses directed at enemy command centers – whenever it is absolutely necessary and we see a clear advantage in doing so, and we justify it morally after the fact. Nor is that cynical. The moral basis for our foreign policy will depend upon the character of our nation and its leaders, not upon the absolutes of international law.' (I am not aware that international law has any 'absolutes' – J. L-F.) Op. cit. in note 26.

The bonfire of the certainties

Consequently, narrow engagement has come as a profound disappointment, because the initial reaction of the Bush administration to 11 September was both measured and effective. In the early days it undoubtedly made many of the right choices, reassuring allies and yet refusing to be deflected by them, intimidating adversaries and yet inviting partnership with states hitherto regarded with suspicion. Naturally, the US military was at the forefront of the American response. First, the hour demanded it: the United States had been attacked and some form of military response was appropriate. Second, it was the kind of action Americans understand.

11 September marked a tragic conclusion to an American decade at the close of an American century. America, like Europe, had been 'out to lunch' strategically in the 1990s,²⁹ engaged in a strange game of Emperor's new clothes with its European allies, over how to manage security most effectively. Leadership without cost, what Joseph Nye has called 'soft American hegemony', became a political doctrine promoted and celebrated by a political class keen to profit from the surge of optimism that followed in the wake of the Gulf War and the booming economy of the 1990s. America was great, rich, powerful and unrivalled. America had saved the world from itself and everyone, particularly the feckless allies, had better start to recognise it. On 11 September America awoke to a new reality, the weakness of power, vulnerability and the bonfire of the certainties.

The United States has always defined itself as much by its enemies, as its values, seeing itself as a Luke Skywalker against the world's Darth Vaders or a reluctant hero, such as Gary Cooper in *High Noon*. America, the 'ordinary Joe' molested by events that are not and never have been of its choosing. As indicated earlier, only an enemy of sufficient stature can counterbalance innate popular isolationism. But the historic enemies had all been vanquished. Britain is America's closest friend, but finds itself carrying ever more of the burden, leading most of the tiresome but essential peacekeeping and peacemaking operations the Americans disdain in the belief that its 'and me too' policy will buy it respect in Washington. Russia has to all intents and purposes bitten the dust as an enemy, not least because if any state is threatened by radical political Islam it is Russia. Indeed, it faces a much more cogent threat from al-Qaeda and others of its ilk to both its south and east than

29. Robert Kaplan writes, 'The very weakness and flexibility of such a non-traditional American-led empire will constitute its strength. The power of this new imperium will derive from it never having to be declared, saving it from the self-delusive, ceremonial trappings of the United Nations . . . But expanding this multiethnic American imperium can only be done nimbly; a single war with significant loss of American life . . . could ruin the public's appetite for internationalism.' *Ibid.*, p. 149.

the West. Japan is content to saunter along under the American wing, trying to sort out its perpetually ailing economy and getting out the chequebook from time to time, but little more. Germany is as close an ally as America can get and more interested in free-riding on the United States, Britain and France for its security than having any pretensions of world engagement. China, which has never been America's enemy, is at one and the same time flattered and appalled in being cast in the role of lead villain. France is France – irritating.

A realistic transatlantic security dialogue?

For a brief moment in the immediate afterglow of the Cold War it appeared that America might achieve its goal – leadership without cost, power without responsibility. Consequently, the United States and Europe pretended nothing had changed in the transatlantic security relationship when in fact its most powerful reason for being had been removed. It was convenient for both sides to contend that the shared values inherent in the relationship could protect it from the strains and stresses that affect all alliances when the core objective has been achieved. However, strategic divergence was and is taking place, and it is only now that the managing of such divergence is on the policy agenda. Without such a discussion the transatlantic security relationship will wither on the vine.

Certainly, America's world today is not that of Europe's. It is a world viewed through the eyes of a country at war, one in which policy choices abound that seem mysterious, exotic and often dangerous to others. However, because of US power and its predilection for extra-territoriality, partners supplicate even if they harbour the most profound of concerns. This has reinforced a strategic myopia in the transatlantic security relationship in which no one dare address the depth of the problems that confront it. Thus, America plays at peacekeeping whilst its hugely expensive Army sits at home sharpening its computers and inventing new ways to fight wars that are not going to happen, whilst Europeans pretend they can organise themselves into effectiveness without spending any money. Both sides talk the talk of partnership, engagement and enlargement but walk the walk of unilateralism and self-delusion, resulting in a form of engagement in which political multilateralism and military unilateralism are rolled into strategic pretence.

Narrow unilateralism and the victory of vulnerability

'The landscape changes, yet the mandate remains the same: it is to preserve peace and security and promote freedom and democratic ideals. Today we again have some choices before us. And our task is to make the choices together, to share the risks and the responsibilities and to benefit in common.'

Donald Rumsfeld, US Secretary of Defence, 3 February 2001³⁰

Ever more powerful, ever more vulnerable

At the heart of George W. Bush's foreign and security policy is a concept of national interest and a perception of threat that is as narrowly defined as at any time since before the Second World War, even after 11 September. What passes for a 'Bush Doctrine' is, in fact, narrow engagement, based on the innate suspicion of an American president who has had very little to do with the outside world, founded upon a very simple principle that would not have been out of place in a John Wayne western: 'you are either for us or against us'.³¹ Threat assessment everywhere is a subjective, political process but the Bush Doctrine reflects more the trade-off with the American people over the rules of American engagement than a serious attempt to understand the nature of threats, to place them within a proper hierarchy and develop multifaceted tools with which they can be engaged.³² As French Foreign Minister Hubert Védrine has put it: 'Today, we are threatened by a new simplistic approach that reduces all the problems in the world to the struggle against terrorism... this is not well thought out'. In exhorting Europeans to speak out he accused the United States of acting 'unilaterally, without consulting others, taking decisions based on its own view of the world and its own interests'.³³ Védrine might have over-stated the case but he was not wrong in essence.

Having been on strategic vacation for ten years, the shock of 11 September has led to a kind of Newtonian equal and opposite reaction. Now there are enemies everywhere. In Osama bin Laden

30. See 'Rumsfeld Discusses US Defence Policies', text of speech by Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld to the Munich Conference on European Security Policy, 3 February 2001, from USDefence.docs.

31. Speaking about Iran's role in the war against terror, President Bush summed up his doctrine, 'Iran must be a contributor in the war against terror . . . Our nation, in our fight against terrorism, will uphold the doctrine of either you're with us or against us.', in 'Bush Warns Iran not to Hide al Qaeda', *International Herald Tribune*, 11 January 2002, p. 1.

32. Robert Jervis wrote, '... when actors have intentions that they do not try to conceal from others, they tend to assume that others accurately perceive these intentions. Only rarely do they believe that others may see a much less favourable image of themselves than they think they are projecting.' Robert Jervis, 'Hypothesis on Misperception', *World Politics*, vol. 20, no. 3, (April 1968), p. 482.

33. 'France Upbraids US as Simplistic', *International Herald Tribune*, 7 February 2002, p. 1.

Americans found the quintessential non-American, anti-hero beloved of so many Hollywood productions and essential to American engagement.³⁴ Moreover, just like Saddam Hussein before him, bin Laden has enabled the American political élite to 'personalise' the threat, creating a Clint Eastwood-type showdown that forces allies and adversaries alike to make a stark choice: either show fealty or be counted among the enemy. It is almost strategic feudalism that is in the interests of neither the United States nor its allies.

This helps to explain the renewed emphasis on Iraq. There can be no doubts about the evil nature of Saddam Hussein and his regime, but the emphasis on a military solution to the problem that he poses highlights not only the dangers of narrow engagement but also a refusal to recognise that it is not only the American people who need to be convinced. The United States has to prove its case and its strategy to European and other public opinion, because failure to do so will undermine political coalition-building that will be essential to success.³⁵ A high-intensity military attack might well get rid of Saddam Hussein, but what next? First, there is no guarantee that his successor will be any more amenable to Western values and influence. Second, there is a very real chance that Iraq will break up into a Kurdish-dominated weak state in the north and an Iranian-dominated de facto weak state in the south. This would not only upset Turkey, a key ally, but result in the failure of American policy objectives in the region that were put in place by George Bush Senior and unleash a wave of anti-Western sentiment throughout the region that would place regimes close to Washington under intense pressure. It could even result in the attainment of al-Qaeda's war objectives: the removal of these regimes and the West from the map of the Middle East. What price Israel then?

Much of this bluster is designed to hide the fact that 11 September caught the United States government and military cold. Since the end of the Cold War the United States has been wedded to a way of 'doing' war that is outdated and old-fashioned, with generals and admirals desperate to find a new Soviet Union with whom to do battle. Consequently, 11 September has become emblematic of an American vulnerability that was already apparent in the months prior to the attack, a leitmotif of US government failure. It seems strange, therefore, that the response of the military has been to call for more of the same type of military and

34. Ironically, Hollywood seems to have taken 11 September threats far more seriously than the Pentagon. Three films in particular, *Executive Decision*, *The Siege* and *The Peacemaker*, all had plots involving nihilistic Islamic terrorists, using hybrid weapons of mass destruction, the villain of one of the films being based on Osama Bin Laden. The irony was that two of them used civilian aircraft as bombs, one of which had Capitol Hill as the target. According to BBC programme Panorama of 24 March 2002, they discussed their scenarios with the Pentagon prior to filming but the US military failed to see any significance in their scenarios. Shortly after 11 September, Pentagon officials went to Hollywood to create the '911 Group' with producers and scriptwriters to try and imagine future scenarios for terrorist attack.

35. The level of European ambivalence is revealed by an opinion poll in the United Kingdom, America's closest ally. Whereas 50 per cent and 52 per cent of Britons felt Bush and Blair had responded appropriately to the attacks on 11 September, only 35 per cent felt the United States would be correct in stepping up military action in Iraq and only 34 per cent thought the United Kingdom would be correct to support it. See 'In the Line of Fire', *Time*, 1 April 2002, p. 29.

more of the same types of weapons systems. In effect, more of a 'visible defence' designed to make Americans feel more secure when, in fact, it affords little security against the type of threat posed by catastrophic terror. The tragic irony is that, because of poor choices being made by the American political establishment, the threat becomes magnified not diminished. As a result, vulnerability shapes the US security agenda to such an extent that there is little room for others to influence the process. Indeed, because the United States *must* be free to act, only through a kind of full national body armour will America *be* free to act. The result is that narrow unilateralism becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy, partly because the limited tools available to American foreign policy reinforce narrow engagement, and partly because for political reasons the response must be quick, overwhelming and complete. Consequently, allies have become at best cheerleaders, and at worst an encumbrance.

Furthermore, because the al-Qaeda terrorists were not warriors in the classical sense the sense of vulnerability has been intensified. Equally, however much the West may despise them and their insane value system, they are warriors of a sort who point to a future in which the criminal and soldier merge.³⁶ It is precisely this merger that has led to confusion over the status of the detainees at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba – soldier or criminal. Clearly, enemies will no longer confront the United States directly, because no one will take on the US Navy, Army or Air Force. They will, instead, exploit America's weaknesses, its openness, its popular fear of the external and its distaste for sustained engagement. In return, the new enemy will call for a new type of military engagement which will need not only effective homeland security (it is highly questionable how secure open societies can be) but more importantly better human intelligence, both in the regions from whence threat emerges, at home, better special forces who can go in relatively small numbers to pre-empt attacks and support weak states whose desperate condition creates the environment for extremism, and robust peacekeepers who can prevent anarchy and chaos. In many ways Europeans are better placed than Americans to furnish these kinds of forces. It was not simply coalition politics that led Britain's Special Air Service (SAS) exceptionally to mount a full-squadron attack on Tora Bora to rescue US Rangers.³⁷ It was not simply coalition politics that led to demands from the United States for Australian, Danish, Dutch, French and German special

36. Lieutenant-Colonel Ralph Peters writes that American soldiers 'brilliantly prepared to defeat other soldiers. Unfortunately, the enemies we are likely to face . . . will not be soldiers, but warriors – erratic primitives of shifting allegiance, habituated to violence, with no stake in civil order.' Ralph Peters, *Fighting for the Future: Will America Triumph?* (Mechanicsburg: Stackpole, 1999), p. 32.

37. Confirmed by a former senior UK military officer.

forces during Operation *Anaconda*. And it was not simply coalition politics that led the United States to request Britain's Royal Marines to undertake some of the most difficult and dangerous search and destroy missions in Afghanistan. Put simply, the US military is not as good as it likes to think, is not well structured to fight this kind of war and does not know how to 'peacekeep', and Europeans are not as weak as Americans constantly infer. Indeed, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that the actual and rhetorical fireworks in Afghanistan and Washington cover a basic failing of US military posture and policy. Make no mistake, this is a war that has only just begun and will be the strategic focus for at least a decade, and spending further billions on 'network-centric warfare'³⁸ will not win it. Moreover, the American obsession with figures and size often masks the reality of burden-sharing in which European forces undertake crucial operations while operating under US control. That needs to be recognised by Washington.

Unfortunately, because the United States is both quantitatively and qualitatively more powerful than Europe it *can* act unilaterally, seduced by its own potential, even if it often reduces complex, multidimensional threats to overly simplistic policy prescriptions. This intensifies the European dilemma, because it merges power and threat into a one-dimensional security paradigm. This is an essential part of the American security model that in turn reinforces the search for definitive, dramatic, rapid and above all low-casualty solutions to the challenges it confronts. This is almost the exact opposite to how Europeans treat threat, engaging it from the other end of the power telescope, often endeavouring to 'love' a challenge to death with copious aid and endless diplomacy. Therefore, because of Europe's enduring sense of its own inherent military and political weakness, threats must be engaged in a progressive, protracted and gradual manner. Europe often sees no way of winning, whereas America expects nothing less. It is a deep divide in the culture of security that separates the partners because, whilst Europeans will tend to engage, Americans will only get involved if their engagement will prove decisive.

For a short period in the immediate aftershock of 11 September, Americans and Europeans were united in common purpose. In that window of consensus NATO's Article 5 was invoked as a statement of political solidarity. However, as the months have passed so the schism in security culture has reasserted itself, with

38. Network-centric warfare emphasises the use of Information Technology and situational awareness in warfighting. As such, it is system-based and therefore distinct from 'platform-centric' warfare, which emphasises traditional platforms, such as tanks, ships and aircraft.

Europeans far more concerned than Americans about addressing the root causes of terror, such as hopelessness and despair in the Middle East, and instability and tribalism in Afghanistan and Central Asia. The United States, on the other hand, continues its manhunt for Osama bin Laden and Mullah Omah, and the break-up of al-Qaeda, with little regard for the non-punitive aspects of engagement that will be essential to success. It is no coincidence, for example, that the leader of the West's diplomatic effort was Tony Blair rather than Colin Powell, because according to the Bush Doctrine it is not for the United States to build diplomatic coalitions, but for others to decide whether and to what extent they will follow the United States.

Absolute security and the paradox of power and American society

At the Munich Conference on Security Policy (Wehrkunde) in February 2000, in defending the decision of the Bush administration to construct a robust missile defence shield, Secretary of Defence Rumsfeld captured the mix of power and vulnerability that has led to narrow unilateralism and narrow engagement: 'No US President can responsibly say that his defense policy is calculated and designed to leave the American people undefended against threats that are known to exist. And they are there, the threats. Let there be no doubt: a system of defense need not be perfect; but the American people must not be left completely defenseless. It is not so much a technical question as a matter of the President's constitutional responsibility. Indeed, it is, in many respects . . . a moral issue.'³⁹ Implicit in Rumsfeld's statement is the suggestion that defence of the people is more important for an American president than a European president or prime minister. However, Europeans by and large accept the constraints and limits upon their absolute freedom as part of what is a 'security bargain' in which they recognise that security can only be achieved through multilateral engagement. This is anathema to Americans, and as American power grows so does its frustration with any constraint or limit upon its actions. Success is thus defined by Washington as freedom of manoeuvre, and it is the need for such freedom that drives the search for unilateral solutions. Unfortunately, 11 September reinforced the paradox of American power: however much the United States spends on homeland security or military

39. Op. cit. in note 30.

capabilities, no American can be truly safe precisely because America is so powerful and so open.

This quintessentially American paradox perplexes Europeans because it leads towards an absolutism in American foreign and security policy that again sits at variance with the European experience. For Europe, security is endless engagement in a world in which previous attempts to gain an unequivocal advantage have always ended ultimately in disaster. It has been a long and painful lesson. Charlemagne and the Holy Roman Empire, the England of Edward III and the Hundred Years War, the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, Philip II of Spain, the Thirty Years War, the fall of Napoleon, the Franco-Prussian War, the First World War and the Second World War are the stuff of Europe's security experience on a continent in which no actor can be or is permitted the luxury of either leadership or withdrawal. Certainly, American power creates jealousy amongst the European partners because it is galling that the United States has the power to make such a choice. It is also frustrating precisely because US power also allows the Bush administration to be inconsistent.

Will the United States be as tough on Irish terrorism as it is on Islamic terrorism? It is unlikely. Inconsistent American engagement also forces states such as Britain and France that, because they lack the power to control the supply side of crises (i.e. the ability to prevent them), find themselves having to react to the demand side of crises (i.e. the need to resolve them) even though they lack the means to deal with them. Thus, American inconsistency provides a powerful rationale for EU security and defence policies. Unfortunately, only full, sustained and comprehensive American engagement will stabilise the international system and prevent it from spiralling out of control, because the United States is the one power that can effectively influence crises once they happen. Unfortunately, not only will convincing the American people of that basic fact of strategic life be well nigh impossible without their engagement, effective engagement during the pre-crisis stage is unlikely. Pat Buchanan represents the views on foreign policy of a lot of ordinary, decent Americans and he captures succinctly the dilemma faced by US policy-makers. 'With the memory still raw of 58,000 Americans coming home in caskets from Vietnam, U.S. statesmen must take account of a new restraint on intervention – a deep antipathy among Americans for spilling the blood of our soldiers, if our country is not attacked. Because of

Vietnam, the Silent Majority wants to stay out of wars unrelated to U.S. vital interests. At their peril do political leaders underestimate this determination.⁴⁰ Thus, a security vacuum is opening that Europeans might have to fill.

Furthermore, the Department of Defense's victory over the State Department reinforces such narrow engagement. Whilst there was some equilibrium between civilian concepts of foreign policy and military concepts of security policy, some form of security management continuum existed. Moreover, the State Department and the Pentagon effectively restrained each other through the kind of bureaucratic checks and balances so beloved of the American Constitution. However, the cult of military exceptionalism has undermined the co-optive aspects of America's external policy. This is demonstrated by the disparities in American investment in the civil and military sides of security, with the United States spending seven times the amount on its military than it does on its foreign service.⁴¹

Why American leadership falters

This paper calls for enlightened American leadership but its response to threat not only underlines US-European divergence but helps to explain why its 'leadership' falters. Indeed, a strange paradox is apparent in Euro-Atlantic responses to threat. Firstly, the lower the threat and the less that states are involved, the more confused and ineffective US policy becomes. Secondly, the greater the threat and the more it involves state actors, the less effective European policy becomes. Thus, not only does US 'leadership' weaken the further down the escalation ladder threat is posited, but narrow unilateralism also effectively prevents construction of sustained political coalitions essential to its long-term success. In essence, US leadership can be on occasions be self-defeating.

For the United States the *prospective state strategic threat* remains the cornerstone of American policy, even if, in the wake of 11 September, it is thankfully the most remote. Nevertheless, state strategic threat was still the prime driver of the 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review and remains at the top of the American strategic agenda, whereas it is questionable whether it is on the European strategic agenda at all. Whilst there is no immediate strategic challenger to the pre-eminence of the United States, China is regarded in the eyes of the US military establishment (and the political

40. Patrick J. Buchanan, *A Republic, Not an Empire* (Washington: Regnery, 2002).

41. Figure supplied by Ambassador Richard Gardner of the National Committee on American Foreign Policy.

Right) as the state most likely to emerge as the 'balancing' power in the international system over the next ten to twenty years.⁴² Although armed with only a limited number of intercontinental ballistic missiles, China clearly has the potential to proliferate both vertically (through improved nuclear capabilities) and horizontally (increased nuclear capabilities), and is currently engaged in an extensive modernisation programme that is causing some regional concern, particularly in India.

However, Europeans recognise no such threat determinism, partly because it is one threat that lies well beyond any European security concept, i.e. Europeans would rather not know. Europeans like to impress themselves that the European Union represents a new way of organising power in the international system that rejects balance of power as the only context for the ordering of power.⁴³ In fact, both Americans and Europeans reject balance of power politics, even if they frequently engage in it. However, whereas many Europeans would prefer to pursue security through a form of redistribution of power, the United States seeks to dominate the international system to such an extent that no strategic challenge will ever again be posed.⁴⁴ Thus, whilst an assumption of conflict inevitability is implicit in US thinking, Europeans far too often opt for a form of conflict myopia. Equally, for the Republican Right there is something disturbingly convenient about the Chinese 'threat' because it provides them with the serial international 'baddie' they need to underpin their concept of hegemonic leadership. Certainly, a proliferating China helps to justify 'missile defence-plus'; the construction of a robust space-based missile defence similar to the 1983 Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI)⁴⁵ concept, which would appear to be the end-game of many on the Republican Right. Back to the future, as it were. During the Cold War hard-liners in both Washington and Moscow essentially justified their respective policies by the existence of their counterparts at the other end of the missile track. Thus, the spectre of symbiosis between hard-liners, lobbyists and manufacturers in America, on the one side, who would benefit from missile defence, and hawks in the Chinese, Russian and other governments, on the other, is of genuine concern to Europeans. 11 September might have placed the Great Game in abeyance but it has by no means brought it to an end. At the strategic level, therefore, US engagement does constitute some form of leadership, partly because of the absence of any real European engagement at this level of threat, even if it is not leadership as Europeans would define it.

42. Whilst Steve Cambone, who was Chief of Staff on the Rumsfeld Commission, expressly denies that NMD is aimed at China, he does make the point that '... the intelligence community now projects that by 2015 China will add a "few tens" of newly-designed ICBMs to the roughly twenty ICBMs it now deploys. This modernization and expansion program, begun some time ago, would provide more capability than China has today. In relation to a limited US Defence, after China completes this program the balance will be roughly where it is today. If China expands its modernization effort beyond current projections, then they do so out of strategic ambition and not in response to a US deployment.' See Steve Cambone, 'Threats and risks prompting a commitment to Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD)', in Burkard Schmitt and Julian Lindley-French (eds.), 'National Missile Defence and the Future of Nuclear Policy', *Occasional Paper 18* (Paris: Institute for Security Studies of WEU, September 2000), p. 15.

43. Historically, so have Americans. Speaking at the Yalta Conference in 1945, President Roosevelt called for 'the end ... of unilateral action, the spheres of influence, the balance of power, and all the other expedients that have been tried for centuries - and have always failed.' Robert Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), p. 520.

As the renewed concerns about Saddam Hussein at *mid-strategic state challengers* provide the second level of threat for the United States and include increasingly advanced ‘states of concern’ armed with weapons of mass destruction with access to dual-use technologies that can be bought off the shelf (COTS).⁴⁶ Iraq is the most obvious concern, hence the continual efforts to link Saddam’s regime to al-Qaeda and the anthrax attacks that took place after 11 September. However, Europeans and Americans differ fundamentally about the extent of such threat and the methods with which to deal with it. President Bush, in his 2002 State of the Union address, referred to Iran, Iraq and North Korea as an ‘axis of evil’ that America was committed to confronting and destroying. Whereas Europeans by and large accept the potentiality for threat posed by these three regimes, they do not agree that military action would provide solutions and are profoundly concerned that US proposals to attack Iraq could destabilise the entire region and lead to the collapse of the coalition against terror. Clearly, the difference in power and concepts of engagement between America and Europe is shaping a profound dichotomy in European and American threat perceptions at this level.

The consequence of this disagreement manifests itself not only over the utility and efficacy of multilateral regimes. For the Bush administration, the march of technology and the progressive weakening of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the Biological and Chemical Weapons Conventions (BWC/CWC) are the harbingers of creeping proliferation and a marked increase in the ability of mid-strategic competitors to threaten the United States. To Washington this intensifies the need for pre-emptive, unilateral action. First, such action would deny an aggressor regional hegemony of the variety favoured by Saddam Hussein in the 1980s that could potentially lock the United States and the West out of regions and areas fundamental to their interests and the security of the wider world. Second, without it they could prevent the United States (and the West) from engaging in wars of intervention that promote Western values and styles of state governance at the expense of traditional, Westphalian concepts of state sovereignty. Third, regional hegemony could also prevent the United States from engaging in punitive wars such as that in Afghanistan. Certainly, the strategic uncertainty that such threat entails will need to be combated, but for Europeans the approach must be balanced,

44. A high-ranking US official confirmed this to the author in 2001.

45. On 23 March 1983, President Ronald Reagan announced the Strategic Defense Initiative. It was built around three defensive layers, two of which were space-based and would intercept a missile in both the boost and mid-trajectory phases, and a third that would attack incoming warheads that had escaped the other two defensive phases. Given the available technology in 1983, the system soon became dubbed ‘Star Wars’.

46. (COTS) Commercial Off The Shelf.

with both long-term engagement and, if needs be, short-term punishment employed as part of a toolbox approach to managing threat. From an American perspective, the threat posed by both strategic and mid-strategic challengers justifies in principle their approach to security, but they are far less sure-footed about dealing with these threats in practice. This undermines US leadership. Unfortunately, both American and European responses are inadequate, resulting in either one-dimensional reactions or a lack of credibility in dealing with complex security challenges. Whilst strategic and mid-strategic threats provide scenarios for the full spectrum warfighting/dominance doctrine of the US military, the complexity of modern threats mitigates against such solutions and enables the Europeans to avoid hard questions about the need to invest more effectively in military capability.⁴⁷ Consequently, coordinated Western security policy tends to be more effective at the high-intensity and low-intensity ends of threat but pretty inept at dealing with anything in between.

Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda represent the quintessential third-level threat, with the potential to 'import' elements from both strategic and mid-strategic threat levels. *Sub-strategic, asymmetric warfare*⁴⁸ includes catastrophic terrorism, both state and non-state sponsored, with potentially global reach, particularly when allied to internationally organised crime. As such it represents the most immediate challenge to both Europeans and Americans and yet, because of its amorphous nature and the difficulty of tackling it, such threat again highlights profound divergence in European and American approaches. This could explain why the impression given by much of the debate since 11 September is that this threat was a 'bolt from the blue'. In fact, the likelihood of such attacks has been a constant within the transatlantic strategic community for the past ten years. Certainly, the lack of preparation and re-structuring of security services to deal with such a threat has underlined the extent to which both Americans and Europeans have been 'out to lunch' strategically for the past ten years. Such threats are also the most resistant to American approaches, requiring a long-term, multifaceted civil-military engagement for which narrow militarily focused engagement is wholly unsuited and to which Europeans have shown themselves more sensitive, even if they lack the tools to engage them effectively. Both Europeans and Americans find it difficult to manage the comprehensive mix of civilian, military, police and intelligence capabilities

47. *Joint Vision 2020*, the Pentagon's main conceptual planning statement, defines full spectrum dominance as '... the independent application of dominant manoeuvre, precision engagement, focused logistics, and full dimensional protection. Attaining that goal requires the steady infusion of new technology and modernization and replacement of equipment. However, material superiority alone is not sufficient. Of greater importance is the development of doctrine, organizations, training and education, leaders, and people that effectively take advantage of the technology.' *Joint Vision 2020* (Washington: Department of Defence, 2000), p. 4.

48. Interestingly, *Joint Vision 2020* states: 'The potential of ... asymmetric approaches is perhaps the most serious danger America faces in the immediate future – and this danger includes long-range ballistic missiles and other direct threats to US citizens and territory. The asymmetric methods and objectives of an adversary are often far more important than the relative technological imbalance, and the psychological impact of an attack might far outweigh the actual physical damage inflicted.' *Ibid.*, p. 6.

that consistent engagement requires. Indeed, for all its many assets and capabilities, the United States seems surprisingly ill prepared for such engagement, partly because of the fierce ‘turf battles’ that exist between the various Federal agencies (CIA, FBI, DoD, DIA, NSC, State Department) that became all too apparent in the wake of 11 September. Inadequate ‘jointery’, i.e. effective inter-service coordination, and not just between the four military services, remains an important shortcoming of the American effort. The possibility of such a terrorist attack was understood well before 11 September by the CIA, which had stated that it was far more likely that a terrorist group or disaffected state would undertake a nuclear attack against America using asymmetric means than attempt to launch a nuclear missile strike.⁴⁹ Ultimately, it is impossible to break the linkage between acts of terror and their root causes.⁵⁰ In the Middle East, a lack of even-handedness in American support for Israeli policy in its struggle with the Palestinians and the splits within the Administration between the doves in the State Department and the hawks in the Pentagon reinforce the transatlantic security dichotomy.⁵¹ Most right-thinking Europeans unequivocally support Israel’s right to exist and, indeed defend itself, but most of those same Europeans also believe that neither of those objectives will be served so long as US foreign policy appears to be held hostage by domestic groups in the United States that prevent Washington from acting fairly and effectively. Consequently, the ability of the United States to lead is relatively weak at this level of threat because it is not only ill prepared but regarded by many as incapable of balanced policy.

Cyber-warfare provides a more exotic level of threat and one of which Americans are acutely more conscious than Europeans. American society is the world’s only true cyber-society and is increasingly concerned about the vulnerability that such reliance engenders. Indeed, cyber-warfare, as both an offensive and defensive doctrine in the United States, is far in advance of its European counterparts and underlines the divergence in how Europeans and Americans see threat and, indeed, themselves. Consequently, Americans are increasingly concerned about homeland security. They fear that their ability to act abroad could be seriously compromised by attacks on Critical National Infrastructure (CNI) by cyber-terrorists who could disrupt domestic life to such an extent that the United States would be paralysed, both politically and militarily. This reflects the extent to which technology both

49. The former Assistant Secretary of State for International Security Policy, Ashton B. Carter, writes: ‘today, some of the most critical missions – counterterrorism, combating WMD proliferation, homeland defence (including protection against computer network attacks and biological weapons), information warfare, peacekeeping, civil reconstruction, and conflict prevention (or “preventive Defence”) – are accomplished in an ad hoc fashion by unwieldy combinations of departments and agencies designed a half-century ago for a different world. Too many of these missions are institutionally “homeless”. . . although it is widely agreed that America needs the means to accomplish these homeland missions. . . the US government is not well structured for these jobs.’ Ashton B. Carter, ‘Keeping America’s Military Edge’, *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2001, p. 94.

50. It is therefore ironic that the former CIA Case Officer for Central Asia and the Caucasus, Robert Baer, told the BBC *Panorama* programme of 24 March 2002 that the CIA had no network at all in place in Afghanistan or the Caucasus throughout the 1990s. An intelligence failure of catastrophic proportions that will weigh heavily on the legacy of the Clinton administration.

51. US policy towards Israel is even a source of tension with the UK. *The International Herald Tribune*, writing during the Israeli operation of April 2002, said that ‘. . . The military push was aimed at “rooting out terrorists” and destroying “this infrastructure of terrorism”, [Colin] Powell said on ABC-TV. That position drew unusual criticism from Britain, probably the closest US ally in the campaign against terrorism.’ Foreign Secretary Jack Straw said that the recent Israeli drive into the West Bank could not be excused as being part of the global “war on terrorism”, the BBC reported.’ ‘US Won’t Call Arafat a Terrorist, Powell Says’, *International Herald Tribune*, 3 April 2002, p. 1.

defines America's strength and underlines its vulnerability. Indeed, technology sets the United States apart from the rest of the world because it allows American policy-makers to think of possibilities that Europeans and the rest of the world cannot begin to grasp. Consequently, not only are Europeans 'out of the loop' in these areas, but responses tend to be national rather than international. Paradoxically, it is very hard for the United States to lead in these areas, because there is so little European engagement at this level of threat.

Limited wars of intervention and peace support operations (PSOs) are a response to threat which also tends to divide Americans and Europeans. As the struggle in Afghanistan has amply demonstrated, limited wars of intervention and robust PSOs are increasingly the currency of modern international security, as the inviolability of Westphalian state sovereignty gives way to conditional sovereignty linked to the nature of governance within a state. Bosnia and Kosovo in the 1990s marked a point of divergence between the United States and its European allies that was reinforced by the crisis in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. American tardiness was more than a simple desire to let the Europeans deal with problems in their own area. It reflected a policy battle in Washington between the broad and narrow unilateralist strains of American policy: those who wanted to withdraw from such conflicts, because they were not directly injurious to American interests, and those who believed that a value-laden international system required engaged American leadership.

Furthermore, wars of intervention and PSOs have confronted Europeans with a stark choice. They can either accept the US security model and prepare for hypothetical high-intensity conflicts that are unlikely to occur for at least a decade or concentrate their relatively meagre resources on what Americans rather pejoratively call small-scale contingencies that are 'here and now'.⁵² They cannot do both, even though some try. It is the Sierra Leones and Afghanistans of this world that require complex and prolonged engagement, often involving a fusion of on-the-ground peacekeeping, peacemaking and warfighting that the United States finds so challenging because they imply a very different use of military power than that for which the US armed forces are prepared. A military doctrine (the way armed forces do things) divide is opening up within the Atlantic Alliance that is likely to become progressively acute as operations such as those of the Interna-

52. This distinction is important, because the United States regards the Petersberg tasks as 'small-scale contingencies', although the way the tasks have evolved over the past ten years does not automatically ensure that any operation under them would be necessarily small-scale.

tional Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan become increasingly long-distance and dangerous, and the United States becomes increasingly recalcitrant. Certainly, whilst wars of intervention and PSOs sit at the top of the European threat response spectrum, they are well down that of the United States. Moreover, because the old 'in-area', 'out-of-area' divide which hithertodefined European security is becoming meaningless, ever more pressure is being exerted on Europeans to lead where Americans choose not to.

NATO, the EU and the utility of allies

As the debate over action in Iraq is demonstrating, power breeds not so much contempt as indifference towards the views of others. The sheer preponderance of American power has made it difficult for the Bush administration to see the point and value in allies, in spite of the globetrotting efforts of Tony Blair on behalf of the 'coalition against terror'. Indeed, the coalition against terror cannot be called a coalition in the classical sense, because the United States did not create it, nor is it part of it. In effect, the allies created their own coalition in support of unilateral US policy, mainly out of solidarity but partly because, had they not, it could have marked the end of the North Atlantic Alliance. It is abundantly clear that the United States would have prosecuted the war in Afghanistan with or without allies, and rightly so. However, the United States has become increasingly contemptuous of coalitions, be they of the political or military kind.⁵³ This American disregard for the politics of coalitions forced the NATO Allies into a political corner post-11 September, with profound implications for the Alliance. In invoking Article 5 of the Washington Treaty the Allies confused preserving what is left of the Alliance's unity of purpose with the generation of a genuine transatlantic coalition that would provide both support for and constraints upon American policy. In effect, they gave the Bush administration a blank cheque and in the process transformed the quasi-automatic armed assistance clause at the heart of the Alliance into a mechanism for ensuring non-critical Allied support for US policy.

Naturally, the usual platitudes were exchanged about the enduring nature and value of the transatlantic security relationship in the wake of 11 September, but a process that became apparent in Kosovo in April 1999 is now undeniable: without the mili-

53. As James P. Thomas points out, although the 1997 QDR stressed the role of coalitions for lesser operations, the US military has 'generally not followed the QDR's guidelines in its preparations for coalition operations'. Thomas goes on, 'According to a 1999 Defence Science Board study, the US has not paid enough attention to coalition issues in its planning, and has relied too much on "ad hocery" in the formation, management and execution of multinational operations.' James P. Thomas, 'The Military Challenges of Transatlantic Coalitions', *Adelphi Paper* 333, 2000, p. 29.

tary means to enact security policy as America defines it, Europe is increasingly irrelevant in Washington.⁵⁴ Thus, transatlantic weakness reflects both the hubris of American power and European military weakness. Like it or not, the utility of effective European military power will be as much a *sine qua non* for influencing the policy of the world's only superpower as it will be for bolstering Europe's diplomatic efforts and protecting European citizens. Herein lies another paradox. The United States will only listen if Europe gets its military act together, but that very power will make America uncomfortable because it will further undermine the US capacity to lead. It is questionable, therefore, whether the United States really wants a muscular Europe that uses burgeoning military power to tip the political balance within the relationship in its favour, hard though that is to imagine. It is probably only a sense of prevailing irritation with Europe that will distract Washington from its perennial fascination with itself and force it to sit up and take notice of allies. Certainly, influencing America will not only involve Europe making itself useful to the United States, but in time must also involve a Europe powerful enough and self-confident enough to be able to actively challenge America's unquestioned world leadership. For most Europeans, whilst NATO must remain the essential mechanism for transatlantic security cooperation, the only forum within which such a 'challenge' could be mounted is the European Union, not as a means of confronting America, but as a way of ensuring that the West does not become the monolithic politico-economic-military bloc about which so many of its adversaries complain.

To reiterate, an effective and credible European military capability would have four implications for the United States. First, it would reinforce the value of Europeans as allies by helping to spread the risk that American power generates for the United States, and thus 'democratise' leadership within the West. Second, it would reinforce the EU's role as a mechanism that prevents American power from conditioning the policy choices of Europeans. Third, it would help to re-internationalise US foreign and security policy. Fourth, it could help to 'liberate' US foreign policy from the clutches of defence policy within which it has become entangled. However, if Europe is intent on the creation of a sufficiently robust European defence it will have to invest in it, and that will mean a significant mindset change in European capitals, where defence expenditure is too often seen as a drain on limited resources rather than a form of security investment.

54. *Allied Force* fundamentally exposed European weakness in key areas that effectively handed the political leadership of the campaign to the United States. General Wesley Clark writes, 'NATO itself had no intelligence. NATO only received national intelligence and then disseminated it. It had no collection and little analytic capabilities. Nor did NATO possess the means to conduct battle damage assessments. Other [than the United States] NATO countries also lacked intelligence collection and battle damage assessment capabilities. In fact, 99 per cent of the target nominations came from US intelligence sources. In this area, and in this area alone, due basically to lack of European capabilities, the operation assumed an excessively national character.' Wesley K. Clark, *Waging Modern War* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2001), p. 427.

Contrary to what much of the hype has suggested, 11 September did not in itself create change in the transatlantic security relationship, but it has certainly accelerated existing dynamics. Indeed, many of the current tensions that afflict the transatlantic security relationship are part of an active process of renegotiation between the NATO Allies that has been under way since 1990. A process of change has only become potentially dangerous with the re-emergence of some form of palpable threat. Not that this is anything new. There is a well-fostered and carefully honed myth that transatlantic security relations over the past fifty years have been seamless. They have not, and this is simply the latest phase of an ongoing process of change and adjustment. In fact, by transatlantic standards the past decade has been surprisingly harmonious, partly because it was in the interests of both sides to maintain the pretence of political cohesion. However, 11 September has made the search for an effective relationship ever more pressing both because there is a new threat that needs to be tackled and because the United States and Europe are drifting apart at such a rate that NATO is in danger of failing.

It is not without a certain irony, therefore, that the war against terror could mark the end of US dominance in the transatlantic relationship if policy choices continue to diverge. Europe is a wealthy and powerful civil actor and by no means negligible militarily, but it is no hegemon. Therefore, the way the EU (and all its member states) sees itself and its world role is markedly different from that of the United States because the level of threat is, to some extent, proportional to the level of power that a state or group of states enjoys. This poses a profound security dilemma for Europeans. On the one hand, they can continue to identify themselves squarely with the security interests and policy of the United States and benefit from the 'export' of American military security. On the other hand, such a policy stance also entails the export of the threats that the United States itself both generates and confronts and which will grow if Europe becomes a stronger military power. None of this guarantees that NATO will fail, but it should lead to a fairly radical re-think about how it is organised, given the new transatlantic security environment. One thing is clear: Europe will need to start making tough strategic choices.

Narrow unilateralism and the victory of vulnerability

The complex relationship between power and vulnerability drives the United States to seek absolute security, but being unsure how to achieve it the United States is an imperfect, neurotic hegemon. Unfortunately, how the United States determines and shapes its security also shapes much of the world, leaving the international community waiting upon a consistent and definitive doctrine in American foreign and security policy. In effect, much of the world is constantly trying to second-guess the next move, but has little ability to influence it, which forces allies to question whether it is better to be close to America or maintain a respectful distance. Europe is, therefore, condemned to be America's friend and ally and yet it is profoundly concerned about where American policy is leading it, firm in the knowledge that America's very endeavour to escape from vulnerability will doubtless fail. Europe is also firm in the conviction that at some point the United States will have to deal with the world as it is, not as it would like it to be. In the meantime, Europe can only hope that prior to this realisation the United States will not have made too many enemies. 11 September and the depth of the resentment felt towards the United States in so many parts of the world suggest that this hope may be vain.

*'It was the largest turnaround in the history of the intelligence agency, and I was part of making it happen.'*⁵⁵

Congressman Curt Weldon commenting on his role in convincing the CIA to adjust its assessment on the missile threat to bring it in line with that of missile defence advocates.

Making the threat fit the politics

Europeans do not question the existence of the threats identified by Washington. They question their extent and the timing of US assessments because they lack confidence in the provenance of American policy, what drives it, who sponsors it and why certain choices are made and not others. Nowhere has this mistrust been more to the fore than over missile defence. On 15 January 2002 an article appeared in the *International Herald Tribune* under the title 'Who Fired Up the Missile Threat? Republicans in Congress Know'. The article traced the abrupt volte-face in US intelligence of the missile threat to the United States. It noted that the change in thinking was prompted in part by a series of missile tests in North Korea and Iran and nuclear tests in India and Pakistan, as well as reports of Russian scientists selling their services. However, it went on, 'there is also evidence that the new intelligence forecasts were the result of something else: a concerted campaign by the Republican-dominated Congress, supported by Israel, to focus attention on the leakage of missile technology from Russia to Iran. The government of then Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu feared that Israel could soon become a target of Iranian missiles. Congressional Republicans wanted to build public support for a national missile defense system.'⁵⁶

American concerns over the spread of weapons of mass destruction and their associated delivery systems should not be dismissed out of hand, because this is a very real problem that will

55. 'Who Fired Up the Missile Threat? Republicans in Congress know', *International Herald Tribune*, 15 January, 2002, p. 1.

56. *Ibid.*

need to be tackled, be it through arms control or defensive and offensive military mechanisms of some kind. Unfortunately, to many Europeans, whatever the merits or demerits of the system itself, missile defence is the most overt example of the victory of vulnerability, narrow unilateralism and the predominance of domestic politics over international politics in the US foreign and security policy process. As such, missile defence has become the leitmotif of extraterritoriality and the search for absolute security, as well as indicative of a complicated and convoluted relationship between the intelligence, political, strategic and defence-industrial communities in Washington that understandably makes Europeans suspicious.

Certainly the powerful role of narrow, domestic political considerations in the missile defence debate cannot be denied. It is, therefore, hardly surprising that the 'marketing' of missile defence to the Allies has been so badly mismanaged. There have been several charm offensives and offers of extensive 'consultations'. However, the tone of these consultations would not have been out of place in the 1950s and 1960s, at a very different time, when the United States effectively informed allies of policy. By the time Europe was approached, missile defence was a done deal. It is as though the Bush administration is incapable of understanding how Europe has changed over the past thirty years and how, thereafter, to engage with it. At the 2001 G8 summit in Genoa, this was self-evident, with President Bush evincing a basically 'take it or leave it' approach that has been the essence of this Administration's engagement with Europe. To offset some European sensibilities, the Administration at least attempted to blur the boundaries between national, theatre and force missile defence to reinforce the credentials of missile defence as an internationalist package. However, nothing in the recent policy announcements of the Bush administration suggests that it has been diverted from its own internal timetable for the development and ultimate deployment of a missile defence system that now goes far beyond the limited shield envisaged by the Clinton administration, with little regard for the strategic implications of such a stance.⁵⁷ The only limits are technological rather than political, to which the October 2001 decision to unilaterally abrogate the 1972 ABM Treaty attests. It is a back to front approach to strategic assessment that Europeans find deeply worrying.

Thus, the manner of the US approach tends to undermine

57. The United States is trying hard to assure the allies about the 'extra-territoriality' potential for 'national' missile defence. One of the most respected proponents of missile defence is General Larry Welch, President of the Institute for Defense Analyses in Washington. He said, '... it is no longer "National" Missile Defense, because whether defending against a specific kind of missile, from short-range to long-range defence of deployed forces, defence of support elements in a host nation or, indeed, defence of a nation, is a matter of where one lives relative to the threat, not of the nature of the threat itself. Furthermore, the current proposals expand the defence to allies. So, it would seem . . . that the "National" Missile Defense issue is pretty much a non-issue.' Larry Welch, 'The cost in treasure and relationships', in Julian Lindley-French (ed.) 'The Paris Transatlantic Conference 2001', *Transatlantic Series* (Paris: Institute for Security Studies of WEU, 2001), pp. 28-9.

cooperation even if an idea may have merit. Again, even though missile defence enjoys a strong 'ideological' element of support, it implies a link between domestic political considerations and vested interests that are permitted to ride rough-shod over wider security concerns. In July 1998 the Rumsfeld Commission, which had been charged with examining threats to the United States posed by the spread of ballistic missile technology, predicted that a rogue state would be able to 'inflict major destruction' on the United States 'within about five years' of a decision to develop an ICBM.⁵⁸ According to committee members, the five-year estimate was based largely on briefings from missile engineers at major US defence contractors, including Lockheed Martin and Boeing.⁵⁹ Again, access of those with vested interests to the US policy-making process undermines the credibility of American policy and makes Europeans suspicious of any US attempts to involve allies after a domestic deal has already been done. It also raises the suspicion that Europe is used to reinforce what is actually a partisan domestic political position, irrespective of whether it is in Europe's interests.

Absolute security – where myth meets policy

The extent of this domestic game is demonstrated by the politics of missile defence. Republican conservatives have used missile defence very successfully as a means to outbid Democrats in a form of political security poker that has profound implications for the way that American foreign and security policy is perceived. This has made it very hard for Democrats to counter the conservative case without being seen to be soft with American security, an infallible vote loser. The consequence is unilateral treaty break-out, the breaking of international promises by the United States to keep domestic ones, with little regard for the longer-term impact upon America's reputation as a treaty partner, even if it was clear that adjustments were required to the now obsolete 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. Negotiating was simply too much bother; why not let might be right?

In the aftermath of 11 September, the United States appears to be ensnared in a form of missile defence creep. It is now only a matter of time before the technological and political imperatives of missile defence combine to move the process inexorably towards the construction of an architecture that more resembles the old

58. The bipartisan Rumsfeld Commission, which reported in 1999, reached four primary conclusions: a) 'Concerted efforts by a number of overtly or potentially hostile nations to acquire ballistic missiles with biological or nuclear payloads pose a growing threat to the US, its deployed forces, and its friends and allies'; b) 'The threat is broader, more mature and evolving more rapidly than has been reported in estimates and reports by the Intelligence Community'; c) 'The Intelligence Community's ability to provide timely and accurate estimates of ballistic missile threats to the US is eroding'; and d) 'The warning times the US can expect of new, threatening ballistic missile deployment are being reduced. Under some plausible scenarios...the US might have little or no warning before operational deployment.' See Stephen Cambone, 'Threats and risks prompting a commitment to Ballistic Missile Defence', in Burkard Schmitt and Julian Lindley-French (eds.), 'National Missile Defence and the Future of Nuclear Policy', *Occasional Paper 18* (Paris: Institute for Security Studies of WEU, September 2000), p. 7.

59. *International Herald Tribune*, 15 January 2002.

Global Protection Against Limited Strikes (GPALS) proposals of the Bush Senior administration, even the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI). Any such developments will put Europeans in a difficult position, particularly if, as seems likely, their territory is needed for the basing of key elements of the system. The political dynamics in Washington are also being reinforced by a technological dynamic, which is probably the most pronounced difference with previous attempts to disentangle America's security from that of others. Moreover, the technology drive inherent in the missile defence programme further increases the influence of the various defence-industrial lobby groups that spend their time pounding the corridors of Congress, which again undermines European confidence in the strategic rationale for the system.⁶⁰

Acting rationally?

Furthermore, al-Qaeda gave the conservative Right further ammunition to support its unique strategic assessment. Prior to 11 September many Democrats did not quite 'buy' the rogue state concept. However, a marked feature of the debate post-11 September is how 'bipartisan' the perception of threat has become, even though it was noticeable how rational many of the so-called 'irrational actors' were in their response to the attacks. Even enemies expressed their condemnation of the attacks. China, in particular, was strong in its support of the United States, particularly in the UN Security Council. Consequently, domestic opposition to missile defence has further receded in the wake of 11 September, and for that reason, if no other, al-Qaeda has succeeded in changing the structure of both American and international politics. In 1983 Secretary of Defense Harold Brown and his team, the men who negotiated the ABM Treaty, even went on record during the Reagan administration as objecting to the then Administration's attempts to circumvent the treaty with spurious legalese. Today, there seem to be few such domestic objections. Europeans, on the other hand, live for treaties, they spend their lives wrapped up in a treaty-legal merry-go-round as part of a perpetual process of confidence-building that is necessary for states (i.e. the rest of the non-American world) who can never dream of absolute security. Therefore, the decision to unilaterally abrogate the ABM Treaty sent a strong and negative message to Europe that reinforced the perception of narrow unilateralism and narrow engagement by an

60. Joseph Cirincione put the problem succinctly: 'I have tracked ballistic missile defence programmes for over 16 years, beginning in 1985 as a member of the professional staff of the Committee on Armed Services of the US House of Representatives. Over the years, I have seen a dozen different systems proposed, funded, tested, and debated. There has been a long line of officials who have appeared before congressional committees to swear that their technology was ready to go, that the threat was urgent, that this was our highest national security priority. They just needed a little more money, a little more time. "Ready to go", they promised, but in sixteen years, nothing has been ready to go.' From the transcript of Joseph Cirincione's speech to the 2001 Paris Transatlantic Conference.

over-mighty America. To Europeans, the United States appears at times to act like a revisionist power when in fact it is *the* status quo power, reflecting again a dichotomy between revolutionary American approaches to security and the more evolutionary European approach.

The contribution of missile defence to transatlantic defence

There are benefits that missile defence might bring to transatlantic security relations post-11 September. It might finally lead to a broader-based Euro-American discussion about defence needs in the modern world. However, if that is to be the case then missile defence will need to be presented to Europeans in a far more sophisticated and sensitive manner than hitherto, one layer of a multilayered, multifaceted homeland defence package that is as relevant to Europeans as it is to Americans. Missile defence, critical national infrastructure protection (CNIP), critical information protection (CIP), the safeguarding of health, food and water supplies, information warfare/cyber-warfare (IW/CW) and information assurance strategies could be essential elements in the defence of populations in advanced, developed societies. In spite of the immense challenges posed by protecting open societies, Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld was correct when he said that the United States had a moral responsibility to defend its citizens. It is not without a certain irony that Washington might find it easier to sell missile defence to its European partners as part of a *bigger* homeland defence package than to try to sell missile defence as a separate item. Indeed, Europeans remain profoundly unsure as to whether their involvement in US missile defence would actually enhance their own security or diminish it.

Clearly, Americans and Europeans are thinking in different time-scales, and given the strategic uncertainty that is a fact of contemporary international politics, Europeans, at the very least, need to undertake their own thoroughgoing threat assessment. Non-proliferation and counter-proliferation regimes appear to be failing and could well progressively fail, and it seems only logical that Europeans and Americans start thinking about how to manage a world in which, potentially, no one is safe from anyone, any-time, anywhere. Indeed, in some ways, in spite of the appalling and tragic loss of life on 11 September, the West was lucky, because

al-Qaeda demonstrated its intent, but lacked the capability of a true weapon of mass destruction. Whether it is al-Qaeda or another such group, that weakness is unlikely to persist over time. It was a wake-up call, a call to arms that highlighted several new aspects of the contemporary international system that both Americans and Europeans need to heed.

First, the strategic framework for arms control has undoubtedly moved on since 1972, and if arms control is to be relevant in a new political context then it must be overhauled. However, such change can only be realised multilaterally, not unilaterally. Indeed, any attempt by the United States to unilaterally overhaul arms control would, by definition, represent its abandonment by the one power that can effectively anchor it, and that would be a tragedy for the international system. The Bush administration has yet to grasp the dangerous and long-term implications of its decision to abrogate the ABM Treaty.

Second, the Europe of 2002 is not the Europe of 1972. If allies retain any value in Washington then the United States had better start listening to their concerns over missile defence more seriously than has hitherto been the case. Like it or not, the kind of system that is envisaged by the Bush administration will need active European participation, not least for the basing of key components. Thus, there can be no cosy bilateral deals with the Russians. Missile defence is a multilateral, not a bilateral game.

Allied or afterthought?

The problem with missile defence is not so much whether it will work or not, it is the method by which it is being justified and sold to others. For Europeans, there are a range of important and legitimate concerns that the United States will need to address but has not. These include the extent to which missile defence will divert scarce resources, the danger that missile defence will encourage counter-proliferation rather than non-proliferation and the danger that missile defence will trigger an offensive-defensive arms race.⁶¹ The debate over missile defence took place within a domestic vacuum and it was only thereafter that the impact of such a system on allies and adversaries alike began to enter the American political consciousness. Consequently, missile defence has become for the rest of the world the definitive emblem of narrow unilateralism, raising dark suspicions that what is being foisted upon a

61. The intelligent European position is summed up by Burkard Schmitt who points out, '... a "true" BMD for the European Union, covering the territory of all member countries, is in the foreseeable future neither necessary nor feasible. From a technological point of view a ballistic missile threat to European territory from a proliferator cannot be ruled out, but the risk does not at the moment justify major investment.' Burkard Schmitt (ed.), 'Nuclear weapons: a new Great Debate', *Chaillot Paper* 48 (Paris: Institute for Security Studies of WEU, July 2001), p. 167.

world is not a shield that will reinforce America's will to engage, but a shield that will mask a desire to disengage when direct US interests are not involved. Washington must double its efforts to counter that impression. Hopefully, the American political élite will realise that everything that goes on inside 'the Beltway', resonates in the world beyond because that is the nature and extent of American power. Indeed, for a superpower, there is no such thing as a domestic debate. Be it foreign and security policy, energy policy, tax policy, steel policy or missile defence, what happens at the peak of US decision-making has a profound impact upon the world.

Even if missile defence is *the* cornerstone of a complex offence-defence security policy, the style and manner of the Congressional debate, in particular, reinforces the impression of narrow engagement. Thus, Europeans are sceptical, to say the least, about a form of security management that provides marginal protection at great cost, on the one hand, and threatens disengagement and strategic instability, on the other. To much of the rest of the world missile defence still appears to be a Republican ruse designed to knock Democrats offbalance as part of the ongoing battle for control of the imperial purple, part of the quintessential internal battle that will decide the fate of millions of Americans and non-Americans the world over.

Certainly, the question that the United States has yet to satisfactorily answer is why is so much being invested in a system that apparently has little to do with the nature of the emerging threats? Answer that and Europeans might be more willing to engage with it. Europeans for their part must hear the American case out. The world is a dangerous place and getting more so. Unfortunately, missile defence suggests a political process that shuts out outsiders and raises the prospect of a politically and militarily hermetically sealed United States that can project power but is subject to the ideas of none – whether allies or adversaries. Indeed, it suggests a rejection of international society by the one power that can lead the world to a condition that is more than a mere Hobbesian state of nature overseen by a feckless Leviathan. Recently, a new American abbreviation did the rounds of European capitals – 'AMD'. The 'A', Europeans were assured, stood for 'allied' missile defence. 'Afterthought' might seem more appropriate.

Peacemaking, peacekeeping, NATO and the doctrine of narrow engagement

*'The emphasis will . . . be on . . . sophisticated high-tech weapons. These would not be designed to deal with the kind of low-level warfare and peacekeeping missions that are the major threats of violence today. Those unglamorous jobs would be left to regional organizations, and America would concentrate on standoff weapons and long range projection of force.'*⁶²

Peacekeeping and wimps

The war in Afghanistan has proved very little about the US willingness to sustain casualties across the broad range of missions. Moreover, it has proved very little about the US military's ability to do the job. Indeed, in many ways, the war has typified and unfortunately exemplified the American way of 'doing' war, applied narrow unilateralism and the fear of casualties that endows US policy-making with that strange mix of power and vulnerability. Writing on the US prosecution of the war in Afghanistan, Richard Cohen of the Washington Post wrote: 'The virtually nonexistent US casualty rate is either a signal achievement or a debacle in the making. At the moment no one can say for sure. The fact remains that America's war aims may be compromised by America's reluctance to take casualties . . . America is still reluctant to put troops on the ground.'⁶³ Whilst this is not entirely fair, there is a point to be made. In January 2002 the first British troops arrived in Kabul to set up the headquarters of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). This is not the first time in the recent past that Europeans have gone where the US Army will not. The US Air Force and Navy deliver the ordnance from on high or from afar, whilst what limited ground operations are undertaken are done so primarily by small numbers of British special forces and some elements of the US Army and Marines. In April 2002, Royal Marine Commandos arrived to seek out and destroy members of the Taliban and al-Qaeda in their mountain hideouts. It is amongst the most dangerous of missions. Indeed, Britain is the only country

62. F. Lewis, 'The New U.S. Military Thinking is Upside Down', *International Herald Tribune*, 24 August 2001, p. 6.

63. Richard Cohen, 'Even a Low risk War Brings its own Cost', *International Herald Tribune*, 9 January 2002, p. 7.

with troops engaged in every aspect of the ground operations: special force and specialised force operations and peacekeeping. It is fighting alongside significant numbers of other Europeans in an operation that would have been unthinkable a year ago. And yet Charles Krauthammer speaks with such distaste of much of this effort: 'The American military is the world's premier fighting force. Peacekeeping is a job for others. The Canadians invented it in the late 1950s and have completely reorganized their armed forces for that role.'⁶⁴

In fact, European peacekeeping and peacemaking are to some extent reflections of narrow US engagement. They are also the essential day-to-day tasks of modern security management, a platform upon which to found multifaceted constructive security engagement. Certainly, it is no surprise that Americans are such bad peacekeepers, hiding as they do behind the pretence that the American military is the champion of a warrior culture with forces that must not be sullied by lesser tasks. Even when they do engage in such operations, their risk-averse approach is such that it prevents them from engaging with the people they are supposedly protecting, which is the essence of successful peacekeeping. This problem was tacitly acknowledged in the 2001 report prepared by the Pentagon's Andrew Marshall as part of preparations for the 2001 QDR. In that report Marshall proposed splitting the US Army into two halves. One half would remain focused on higher-intensity conflict whilst the other half would be lighter, more flexible and trained for what the United States calls small-scale contingencies, such as peacekeeping. The Army fought this proposal with great vigour, so that when the QDR was published in September 2001 the proposal had been watered down and replaced by a Defense Transformation process that recommitted the US Army to fighting high-intensity conflict using hi-tech weaponry. America, the world is told, does not do peacekeeping.

Certainly, several of the more robust ground operations in Afghanistan demonstrated that the United States is prepared to take casualties so long as they are undertaking operations involving high-intensity warfare in which they can bring overwhelming power to bear. However, they are profoundly casualty-averse in any but the most intense operation. This has resulted in an emerging division of labour, particularly with the British. During the Gulf War, Britain undertook many of the truly dangerous ground and air missions. In addition, British and French forces have led

64. Charles Krauthammer, 'We Don't Peacekeep', *International Herald Tribune*, 10 January 2002.

almost all the dangerous ‘snatch’ missions in Bosnia, Kosovo and elsewhere. In East Timor, Sierra Leone and now Afghanistan it is Europeans, not Americans, who are keeping the peace in what is a very dangerous environment. And yet in spite of significant losses sustained during these operations the French and British people and their leaderships have stood firm, their armed forces developing a reputation for excellence in a key area of the military art alongside which American perceptions of European weakness sit rather uncomfortably. Indeed, it is because of the US doctrine of narrow engagement that the leading allies have been forced to fill the gap, culminating with the deployment of the British-led ISAF in Afghanistan. In time, the US decision to withdraw from comprehensive security management will further undermine America’s ability to lead.

Renationalising transatlantic security relations

Within NATO such divergence is now all too apparent and has progressively undermined the position of the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), who is increasingly torn between his role as America’s senior officer in Europe (CINCEUR) and supreme commander of NATO forces in Europe.⁶⁵ NATO Secretary-General, Lord Robertson of Ellenby, put it succinctly at the 2002 Munich Security Conference when he warned that transatlantic solidarity was bound to shatter ‘... if the Americans do the cutting edge while the Europeans are stuck at the bleeding edge, if the Americans fight from the sky and the Europeans fight in the mud.’⁶⁶ It was an inability to reconcile these tensions that led to the unseemly dispute during Operation *Allied Force* in Kosovo between the then SACEUR, General Wesley Clark, and the British commander, General Sir Michael Jackson, when Clark was told forcibly by his British subordinate that: ‘Sir, we are not taking any more orders from Washington’ (although the words actually employed were apparently somewhat more forceful).⁶⁷ Consequently, US disinclination to use the NATO decision-making and command and control structures increasingly gives the impression that the United States is no longer really a part of NATO. During Operation *Allied Force* this led to the renationalisation of the Alliance effort, as each commander sought guidance from his respective national command authority. In such a febrile political environment it is questionable whether SACEUR can con-

65. This was shown in a very practical way during Operation *Allied Force* over Kosovo. Michael Ignatieff writes, ‘All operations using American assets – such as planes with stealth technology or cruise missiles – were managed not through the NATO chain of command but through EUROM . . . Clark kept the coalition from paralysing the air war by keeping NATO out of missions using American planes.’ Michael Ignatieff, *Virtual War* (London: Vintage, 2001), pp. 102-3.

66. ‘Pentagon in a League of its Own’, *International Herald Tribune*, 4 February 2002, p. 1.

67. Op. cit. in note 54, p. 394.

tinue to function as both a multinational and a national commander. Indeed, if the post is to work at all, given the progressive detachment of the United States from the Alliance, NATO might well have to be Europeanised and SACEUR 'denationalised'.

The war in Afghanistan is by no means over and whilst the United States refuses to take part in the International Security Assistance Force much of the deterrent value built up by its willingness to use massive stand-off force in Afghanistan will be undermined. Thus, whilst American firepower might have won much of the battle in Afghanistan, the United States could lose the war. The similarities with Vietnam are all too apparent. Whether Washington likes it or not, peacekeeping and peacemaking will be fundamental to the credibility of American leadership. Without a willingness to engage in such 'muddy boots' operations, that credibility will be undermined, possibly crucially. It is an issue the United States cannot dodge.

Consequently, the reconstruction of American credibility will depend upon the degree to which the United States can adjust its definition of engagement – diplomatic, military and economic. Much is made of the amount that America spends on its armed forces, the level of investment in each individual American serviceman and woman compared with its European counterparts.⁶⁸ However, whilst many over-invested American soldiers are patrolling the streets of American bases, many under-invested European soldiers are on the streets of East Timor, Sierra Leone, Bosnia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Kabul and elsewhere, getting on with the peacekeeping/peacemaking job. Again, that is not to underestimate European weakness, given the problem with getting Europeans to operations and keeping them there, but it is more than simply a question of defence expenditure.⁶⁹ Washington will sooner or later have to recognise that it might not like the way many Europeans 'do' security, but so long as it is not prepared to do those same jobs then it has few grounds for complaint.

Narrow engagement and NATO enlargement

This is the essence of narrow engagement, and it is fundamentally changing the nature of the transatlantic security relationship. The consequences of this retreat are apparent in the tensions that arise in its primary institution, NATO. 2002 will be a vital year for the Alliance. The Prague summit in December will see the next wave of

68. According to EADS the United States spends \$26,800 per annum in Research and Development on each member of the US armed forces, whereas the Europeans spend on average \$4,000. This is an average; the United Kingdom spends around \$19,000 per annum.

69. The United States is right about European defence expenditure but it seems to assume that they will spend any increase (should it ever happen) on what the United States thinks is appropriate. As Donald Rumsfeld has said, 'unless European countries augment their own defense budgets we're going to find it very, very difficult to continue to work with some of these countries.' *International Herald Tribune*, 6 February 2002, p. 1.

members formally invited to join, with the possibility of a new NATO-Russia Council also on the agenda. Thus, a NATO from the Atlantic to the Baltics could become a reality. At the same time, both Europeans and Americans want the Alliance to retain its capacity for military effectiveness as much as they value the political flexibility necessary to accommodate enlargement. Something might have to give. For Europeans this creates a dilemma, because the United States appears to place the enlargement of NATO before its effectiveness. This reinforces the impression that whilst the United States might be *with* NATO it is hardly any longer *of* NATO. As Dominique Moisi recently pointed out, 'In the 1960s it was France under Charles de Gaulle that threatened NATO's cohesion – in 2001, it is Donald Rumsfeld's America that is doing so. Basically the question before us is this: What happens to a creature when its creator no longer trusts it? What is the meaning of an alliance if the immediate reaction of its leader is, "don't call us; we'll call you, because we basically don't trust you?" Look, I am all for NATO, but if the Americans are not, what am I to do?'⁷⁰ Much, therefore, will depend on how the United States handles the Prague summit, because the method of enlargement will be a test of the depth of the residual US commitment to NATO. Without that commitment, in both military and financial terms, any attempt to bring the armed forces of the new members up to NATO standards of interoperability will fail. Moreover, if enlargement only takes place under the euphemistic title of 'political NATO', then the United States will have demonstrated that NATO only retains utility in the American political mind as a means of creating and disciplining European political support for unilateral American action. In such circumstances engaging could become synonymous with decoupling.

The transatlantic security paradox

Following the attacks on New York and Washington, the Europeans find themselves in an awkward position. As the need to fill the security vacuum created by the doctrine of narrow engagement becomes pressing, so does the zeal with which the United States prevents others from acting. Thus, European defence faces a profound security dilemma, with a NATO weakened by the progressive erosion of commitment from its central pillar confronted by Europeans who are progressively developing an alternative

70. From Thomas L. Friedman, 'The End of NATO? Europe had Better Catch Up', *International Herald Tribune*, 4 February 2002.

‘security executive’ for Europe in the EU and an alternative way of engaging in security. A paradox of American power is that even at its zenith it confronts allies and partners who are also rediscovering their own international political authority, partly as a result of having to fill the void created by a reluctant superpower. For fifty years Americans were used to a form of command power within the Alliance and for much of that time most of the Europeans were prepared to accept it. It was part of the 1949 bargain whereby the United States agreed to protect Europe in return for European support for American leadership elsewhere in the ideological struggle with the Soviet Union. Unfortunately, whilst Europe has evolved in a way that few would have thought possible in 1949, the United States and its concept of power seem to have remained relatively static, with the result that even if Europeans can add value to the overall security effort the United States demurs if it means involving them in the decision-making process. Consequently, Allies who object to leadership based upon narrow American political considerations confront Americans used to driving the political and military agenda. The result is transatlantic tension, tension that is most marked over how burden-sharing is defined, i.e. either in purely military terms or taking into account the large amounts of civil aid that the European Union has committed as part of its holistic approach to security. Unfortunately, this tension has become more intense not less in the aftermath of 11 September, which appears to have reinforced the traditionally narrow American definition of burden-sharing.

As Senator Chuck Hagel has rightly said: ‘The world wants and needs US leadership, but nations of the world must be able to trust our word and trust our commitment . . . our allies must respect us and our adversaries must fear us. Rhetoric without actions will result in failure, instability and lack of trust. Credibility can be found in a clearly defined foreign policy backed by the might of the US military.’ He went on to say: ‘Foreign policy is the framework for US interests in the world . . . a clearly defined foreign policy will ensure that our allies and adversaries understand that America will use force when the situation demands.’⁷¹ Unfortunately, in the absence of an enunciated doctrine beyond the ‘with us or against us’ level it is hard for Europeans to regard the United States as a credible foreign policy partner – powerful most certainly, but not credible. Therefore, for many Europeans, American attitudes, not just to NATO enlargement but also to the EU, are

71. Chuck Hagel, ‘History’s Lessons’, *The Washington Quarterly*, Spring 2001, vol. 24, no. 2, p. 97.

indicative of an American policy that has failed to change with the times, a policy that encourages Europe to pay more and do more without the United States wishing to concede political influence. Again, this is leadership without cost, justified as the price Europe must pay for all those years when America 'saved' Europe. Indeed, it is this relationship between America's own view of its historic 'largesse' and European perceptions of hard-ball US self-interest that not only irritates Europeans but also leaves them uncertain as to American intentions. One minute Europe never does enough, the next Europe is being warned against doing too much.

Henry Kissinger said recently that it was time to return transatlantic security relations to a state-based, interest-led interaction.⁷² In effect, he was suggesting that transatlantic security relations need to be de-institutionalised because of the political gridlock that now seems to afflict transatlantic policy coordination. Certainly, this would be in the American interest, because it would recast transatlantic security relations in a series of bilateral relationships in which the Americans would inevitably be stronger. It would also undermine one of the principle objectives of contemporary West European policy: to generate a critical mass of collective power that is sufficient to influence Washington. Thus, after years of supporting political union within Europe, US transatlantic policy starts to resemble what has hitherto been a markedly French approach: building bilateral 'cobwebs' that place the United States permanently at the political, if not geographical, centre. Inevitably, such a policy will contend with an emerging Europe that on most issues prefers to deal with the United States as a bloc.

The obvious response to such a policy is 'EU-caucusing', which has become an ever more apparent reality within the Alliance and which complicates life for the United States which, hitherto, has been the main font of proposals within NATO upon which the Allies have been invited to comment. Today, this right of initiation is being ceded to Europeans and, not surprisingly, Washington is not entirely happy about this process. It may well be that over time this shift towards the Europeanisation of the Alliance will be accelerated as the EU hardens its admittedly embryonic European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). Certainly, an enlarged and more cohesive EU would also change the political balance within the Alliance in favour of the Europeans. This is partly because of the much more intense nature of economic relations between EU

72. Henry Kissinger, *Does America Need a Foreign Policy?* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2001).

member states, and partly because of the European emphasis on peacekeeping rather than warfighting, which is more relevant to the contemporary needs of the majority of members and more achievable for those seeking to join. Indeed, in spite of the problems of political cohesion that enlargement would entail for the EU, it could well strengthen the position of the four big European powers – France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom – and thus reinforce the development of a security *directoire*. In spite of claims by Washington to be disinterested by the method of how Europe organises its military effort, such a development would hardly be in the US interest.

America's criteria for security engagement

Given the uncertainties associated with US security engagement in the aftermath of 11 September, there now appear to be eight criteria for engagement. First, the United States must have complete control of all aspects of the crisis-management cycle, even those parts of it in which it is not effectively engaged, such as conflict avoidance and post-conflict reconstruction. Thus, allies are forced to become recipients of received American wisdom rather than real partners. To enforce this the United States insists that it retain control over key assets and capabilities, such as strategic intelligence, lift and logistics. Second, the United States must control the decision over when and what type of intervention should take place. As a result, operational planning is 'parachuted' in to avoid the compromises that multinational planning would involve through, for example, a reformed SHAPE. That makes it difficult to properly undertake the planning of multiple-intensity missions by variable-member coalitions, many of which will not be American-led. Third, SACEUR's first duty is as Commander-in-Chief of US forces in Europe (EUCOM). This further reinforces a de facto hierarchy between the United States and its allies even within the multinational command chain, and further undermines NATO.⁷³ Fourth, only the White House and the Pentagon retain the effective right to review key elements of an operation, such as the target list. This removes allies further from operational decision-making. Fifth, even if the shape and structure of an operation has already been agreed with allies, Congress retains a *droit de regard* over the operation and can demand the unilateral withdrawal of US forces at any time. Sixth, the United States must be seen in the media to lead,

73. This can backfire on SACEUR. During Operation *Allied Force* during a tense stand-off between the United Kingdom and General Wesley Clark over the proposed use of British troops to block Pristina Airport to Russian reinforcement, Clark wrote that this was, 'a striking example of what was to become an increasingly "open" secret of NATO operations: NATO commands were like puppets, with two or six or sometimes dozens of strings being pulled from behind the scenes by the nations themselves, regardless of the formalistic commitment of forces.' Op. cit. in note 54, p. 399.

even if that is not the reality on the ground. Seventh, whilst overwhelming American power must be brought to bear at the outset of an intervention, US forces must not be put at risk. Consequently, graduated responses and ground insertions tend to be ruled out at the outset, breaking the link between 'crime' and 'punishment'. Eighth, allies who can take the blame (and receive the body-bags) if an operation fails must carry out complex, less media-friendly, longer-term deployments, such as that by ISAF in Afghanistan.

These criteria for engagement are driven by a complex interplay between political and bureaucratic actors in Washington. Consequently, American foreign and security policy tends to be geared for short-term military operations that often appear to succeed spectacularly but which fail politically in the longer term. It is a mistake that was made in the Gulf and in the Balkans and could now be repeated in Afghanistan. It also marks a significant divergence between Americans and Europeans because, whilst Americans tend to see themselves as 'problem eradicators', Europeans tend to see themselves as 'solution builders', and this reinforces divergence in the culture of threat response. Whilst domestic bipartisan consensus on imminent action is a political *sine qua non* in the United States, external consensus, so beloved of Europeans, is nice if one can get it, but by no means essential. The United States is unilateralist by instinct but 11 September reinforced the need to dominate rather than cooperate. For the well-being of the West, Europe must resist this. It would be easy to suggest that a transatlantic division of labour might be a solution, with the United States focusing on warfighting and the Europeans doing the rest. Unfortunately, if such a division of labour was to work it would also need to be reflected politically, and as yet Washington has shown no serious proclivity towards subjecting itself to a consequential level of European influence. Europe will only change this by getting its security and defence act together, because evidently only military power carries weight within Washington.

The run-up to the war in Kosovo established the *de facto* terms of US engagement. The United States effectively controlled the negotiation process with the Serbs, only allowing Britain and France to play the role of 'fall-guys' at Rambouillet when diplomatic failure was imminent. During the conflict itself the United States established a separate chain of command for its forces outside of the NATO framework and controlled the rules of

engagement of NATO forces, but let NATO, and by extension the European allies, take much of the blame when things went wrong.⁷⁴ The White House became particularly concerned when it was apparent that the Europeans were preparing for (and leading the calls for) a ground operation, and effectively delayed the entry of European forces into Kosovo itself, primarily because the United States was not receiving enough media coverage on US TV networks. Finally, whilst the Europeans provided the overwhelming bulk of peacekeepers, they were rather infamously accused by candidate Bush of not doing enough. Thus, whilst for the United States success must always be unilateral, only failure, it would seem, can be multilateral.

Transatlantic strategic dysfunctionality is also exacerbated by the emerging gap in the military doctrines of America and its European allies. This places the British and French, in particular, in a delicate position. It could be argued that the gap actually reinforces their role as a link between the United States and the other Europeans, and in some respects that is the case. Certainly, the French and the British, more than any other European powers, have incorporated themselves into the American military-technical concept that is the revolution in military affairs (RMA).⁷⁵ However, the post-11 September US defence expenditure increases will accelerate the strategic disconnect between Americans and Europeans, because the stand-off technology involved will further undermine Alliance interoperability. No one expects the United States to 'dumb down' its effort, even if many Europeans regard US defence planning as by and large irrelevant to the threats that are now emerging. However, Europeans are faced with a choice. They can either try and close the gap with the United States, which is highly unlikely, or they can organise themselves optimally to meet their own security requirements. Ironically, it could be US policy that finally kick-starts the charade that is European defence into something meaningful. Britain and France will be key to this, because only they can effectively lead the construction of European defence, and not before time.

Whatever happens, Europeans and Americans *must* ensure that they retain the capacity to work together when they so choose. At present, Britain and France find themselves endeavouring to bridge a widening gap at a time when the sheer scope and range of missions being undertaken is growing exponentially. As the overstretch of British forces attests, these demands are potentially lim-

74. It was no coincidence that the both the civilian and military spokesmen for NATO during the Kosovo conflict were British, not American.

75. The 'doctrine' of the RMA to a significant extent militates against effective low-intensity engagement. Marine Lieutenant-General Paul van Riper says that American forces will have to operate in a range of settings, 'from deserts to foliage, to densely populated urban areas with embedded antagonists, environments not conducive to technological dominance'. Paul Van Riper, 'Information Security', *Marine Corps Gazette*, June 1997.

itless. Therefore, if this problem is not actively addressed the process of doctrinal and military-technical divergence could become acute relatively quickly. There clearly is a need to think afresh about the transatlantic security relationship. No European policy-maker, if asked the question on 10 September, would have envisaged the deployment of European forces into Kabul. European leaders must face up to the new security environment in which they are now engaged.

Britain and France will find themselves the natural leaders of European coalitions,⁷⁶ with the future of NATO less a pseudo-EU, i.e. a political organisation, and more an interoperability nexus. Indeed, with the United States being unlikely to 'do' coalitions, they will become a European method of organising security operations. Consequently, the future role of the Alliance as the essential mechanism for the organisation of coalitions will tend to reinforce the shift away from American leadership within it. How can the United States lead coalitions in which it chooses to play little or no role? Certainly, the vacuum left by the retreat of American leadership within NATO will tend to highlight European planning approaches that emphasise peacekeeping and peacemaking in a multilateral environment, thus bypassing the United States. Consequently, NATO force goals will have to be Europeanised or replaced progressively by EU force goals. Equally, the Europeans will have to develop a specific peacekeeping doctrine that will enhance the peacekeeping interoperability that was sadly lacking on occasions in Bosnia and Kosovo, and extend basic peacekeeping doctrine to non-NATO, non-European forces.

In an ideal world . . .

Narrow unilateralism is undermining not only America's leadership in the broader world, but also the cohesion of the Atlantic Alliance. Consequently, a schism is emerging in transatlantic military doctrine as America insists it concentrate on 'high intensity warfighting' whereas the Europeans engage in a kind of 'full spectrum peacekeeping'.

Even if the United States wanted to engage in effective peacekeeping its forces simply do not have the skills and capabilities to do so. One of the throw-away lines of American defence planners is that peacekeeping is a subset of warfighting. Indeed, warfighters worry that peacekeeping dilutes warfighting, whereas warfighters

76. Britain has constructed its security policy around coalitions. *Whitehall Paper 50*, which was based on a report for the UK government states, 'According to the OECD the UK today has the world's fourth largest economy allied to flexible, professional forces that are regarded as amongst the world's best. Indeed, British influence and prestige is at a level not enjoyed for a generation at least. However. . . status breeds demands and pressures on UK forces are not going to go away. Therefore, successful coalition operations will remain essential to the realisation of future UK security policy.' Julian Lindley-French (ed.), 'Coalitions and the Future of UK Security Policy', *Whitehall Paper 50* (London: RUSI, 2000), p. 99.

cannot keep the peace. This operational dilemma has been demonstrated on numerous occasions in Bosnia, Kosovo, Macedonia and now Kabul, where the skills of British forces have been at a premium because they have been so finely honed on the tense streets of Northern Ireland. American forces have found it difficult to adapt their warfighting culture to the day-to-day management of complex security situations where difficult and delicate decisions often become the responsibility of individual soldiers – warfighter or peacekeeper. Peacekeeping calls for a very specific set of skills and experience that cannot merely be dismissed as an intrinsic element of warfighting. If these tensions and failings are not confronted by allies who are prepared to deal with them effectively, the transatlantic security relationship will continue its slide into disrepair until one day no one will really care any more.

In an ideal world the United States would undertake peacekeeping and peacemaking operations as part of a broad civil-military doctrine, but for all the reasons discussed above that is not going to happen. However, the security challenges that confront Europeans and Americans remain, and if a serious effort is to be made to manage them given the constraints upon both European and American policies, some form of division of labour *will* be necessary. However, it will fail if the hierarchy is based upon American dominance and European subservience, because the changing political balance within the transatlantic security relationship and concerns about narrow unilateralism are now too profound for the status quo ante to be preserved. At the very least, therefore, American-European relations are set to become progressively more ‘informal’, losing any reflexive solidarity that they may once have had. That is no bad thing because friends can hardly call themselves as such if (a) they are not equal; and (b) they do not disagree from time to time yet retain the basic respect essential for a functioning relationship. Thus, if transatlantic security relations are to survive (and the situation has not yet reached the point where both sides are ready to end them) as something worth having, a new organising principle is needed. Transatlantic security relations are in need of a re-think.

Re-engaging transatlantic security relations

*'The security and welfare of each member of this [transatlantic] community depend upon the security and welfare of all. None of us alone can achieve economic prosperity or military security. None of us alone can assure the continuance of freedom. This is still true today. Our challenges have changed, and NATO is changing and growing to meet them. But the purpose of NATO remains permanent . . . together, united, we can detour the designs of aggression, and spare the continent from the effects of ethnic hatreds.'*⁷⁷

President George W. Bush

Doing the transatlantic security 'thing'

Unfortunately, given the context of US policy the doctrine of narrow engagement is almost certainly irreversible. That it will have a profound impact upon the transatlantic security relationship cannot be doubted. Indeed, it is self-evident. However, far from presaging the final demise of NATO such change could, if suitable reforms were carried out, mark the start of a new age of transatlantic renewal based upon a new political realism in which autonomy and interoperability are the *modus operandi*. The United States is the world's only superpower and, as such, it has a global role to play. As indicated above, the power that such a role entails means that it is unlikely in future to be part of coalitions. It will lead them from time to time but will not join them. Coalitions will become Europe's organising mechanism for supporting the United States when and where it sees fit. It will, therefore, have to be a 'modern relationship' in which the United States does its own security 'thing' (it already is) and the Europeans, primarily through the European Union, develop their own security 'thing', but Americans and Europeans preserve the ability to do 'things' together. It must be a relationship in which two pillars of power, rather than two layers, work effectively alongside each other, engaged in comprehensive security management covering all

⁷⁷ 'Remarks by the President to the Troops and Personnel', 13 February 2001, at www.whitehouse.gov.

aspects of the security cycle. In the military realm only a renewed NATO could effectively provide that link, because the mechanisms and standards for transatlantic interoperability already exist within the Alliance. Nor need such a concept deny those who seek to join NATO a role in this new relationship, although they will have to recognise that the organisation they join will place far more responsibilities upon them, and far more rapidly, than they originally envisaged. Thus, as the Alliance transforms itself into an enabler of coalitions of varying membership, undertaking multiple-intensity missions, it will increasingly become a European organisation in which a large pool of forces (enlargement) should, in time, complement forces capable of undertaking a range of missions at differing levels of intensity (interoperability). It will be a European NATO that not only guarantees the link with the United States, but also fosters more effective civil-military cooperation (CIMIC) between the Alliance and the EU.

Europe's side of the new transatlantic security bargain

The new transatlantic autonomy will put Europeans under pressure, and rightly so, because Europe cannot afford to be complacent in the military realm. European defence has for too long been essentially product-led, with the emphasis more on the role of defence as a key indicator of progress towards political union, rather than a vehicle for the achievement of threat-relevant military effectiveness. Indeed, for the past ten years Europe has acted as though it only seemed prepared to recognise as much threat as it could afford. A market-led approach to defence planning by Europeans would start with a recognition that on 11 September the 'market', in the form of a new threat, became part of Europe's security environment, not just America's. First, the primary mission of Europe and European defence in what is a new strategic environment, will be to organise itself optimally given the threats Europe confronts and the resources that a robust Europe could generate, so that Europe can seriously confront the challenges that it will undoubtedly face over the next few years. No state, not even the United States, can deal alone with the kind of threats posed by al-Qaeda and its like, and it is unlikely to be the only challenger.

Second, Europeans urgently need to take a few steps that Americans have every right to demand of them if they are to demonstrate that they value the transatlantic security relationship. At the very

least, there needs to be greater conceptual convergence between European political leaders and their armed forces about the role and utility of military power. Europe has a generation of political leaders in some countries who have never served in the armed forces and for whom, all too often, the political interpretation of military power is different from the military interpretation, implying a mismatch between the ends and the means. Europe must develop military capabilities that match the threat environment in which it exists. Trying to do either too much or too little with armed forces will either lead to disaster or profoundly undermine European diplomacy.

Third, Europe needs a 'one-stop shop' (not a talk shop) approach to hard security that combines the more traditional offensive aspects of security management with the need for homeland defence, such as civil defence, critical national infrastructure protection, critical information protection, CW/IW, Information Assurance etc. The European Union would seem far better placed than NATO to provide such a focus.

Fourth, the EU states must finally follow through with their grand declarations to create truly mobile, deployable, sustainable and professional armed forces that can cope with robust operations prolonged over distance and time. A good start would be the proper fulfilment of the Headline Goal set out in the 1999 Helsinki Declaration to create the European Rapid Reaction Force. There must be no more 'smoke and mirrors' with the Headline Goal Force Catalogue. Europe could reinforce its strategic leverage by producing 5,000 SAS-standard special forces and forming the forces of many of the partner, less well-off and militarily less advanced countries into specialist peacekeeping units.

Fifth, Europe needs to properly reorganise its defence effort to finally rid itself of the chronic duplication of defence-industrial capabilities so that industries themselves can furnish effective equipment for European forces at affordable prices, on time and to budget. This would require more than industrial cooperation, and involve a long, hard look at defence procurement, financing and auditing techniques and methods. At the same time, moves towards a genuine transatlantic defence market should be pursued. 'Fortress Europe' will not help European defence. This process would significantly benefit from an extension of the Declaration of Principles between the United States and the United Kingdom, which effectively gives the United Kingdom 'most

favoured defence industrial partner' status. American concerns about the reliability of some Europeans over information security need to be noted and where adjustments are necessary they should be made. Certainly, such a market would benefit all the partners through technology transfers and economies of scale. Europeans would get more 'bang' for their 'buck' and Americans would have access to European markets. However, if such a market were to be realised the United States would have to fundamentally change its approach to export controls and ensure reciprocity in the relationship. Far too often in the past transatlantic defence cooperation has been a metaphor for the United States taking what is best in Europe and giving precious little back.

Finally, European politicians will need to take a political risk and explain to their respective publics why they have to increase defence expenditure (or what should more accurately be called *security investments*). At present, current proposals for defence financing and restructuring do not augur well because, whilst Europe is brim full of restructuring plans that look good on paper, they lack one vital ingredient – money. Certainly, European states can make one-off cash windfalls by closing redundant bases and downsizing forces, but modernisation and professionalisation do not come cheap. Most European countries, with the exception of France and the United Kingdom, are restructuring on the basis of defence budgets still founded on the fantasy of the post-Cold War peace dividend. European defence simply will not work if European states continue to set expenditure benchmarks at around 1-2 per cent of GDP. The world is moving on and so are the threats. Nor will it work if equipment and personnel budgets continue to be so perversely inverse. It is not simply any longer a question of spending better, but of spending *more* and better. Certainly, until Europeans produce a 'market'-sensitive security and defence product in which costs and risks are shared proportionately, the EU's much-vaunted European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) will remain a strategic sideshow. Equally, the case of those Europeans who object to *directoires* made up of the big states is fundamentally weakened when they themselves make so little real effort towards their own and the common good.

NATO and the role of coalitions in transatlantic security relations

There are several other steps that could be taken to start the Alliance on the road to reform and would reflect the new transatlantic security relationship. First, the reintroduction of genuine consultations with Allies, who must be made to feel that Washington takes their views into account in a meaningful way. That will require a change of mindset on the part of the Bush administration and less 'off the cuff' ritualistic criticisms of Europeans on Capitol Hill. Second, any final roadblocks preventing the use of Alliance planning and command structures for European-led multilateral coalitions must be removed. These are not just the result of Turkish and Greek objections to the Berlin-plus process and use of such assets for EU-led operations. The US Army will have to give up its long-standing suspicions concerning the reform and Europeanisation of SHAPE. Third, the United States must concede that allied leadership of coalitions in which the United States is not the majority 'stakeholder' will include, from time to time, the placing of US forces under European command. Fourth, access to SHAPE and other core elements of the integrated military staff must be open to all members and partners if the force generation and management of European coalitions within a transatlantic context are to be effective. Fifth, SACEUR must be 'de-nationalised' by the breaking of the traditional link with the post of Commander-in-Chief US Forces Europe (CINCEUR). Sixth, an EU operational planning cell needs to be created within the EU that is compatible with a reformed SHAPE. Seventh, there are only two European states that can act as lead nations for coalitions, Britain and France.⁷⁸ It is therefore essential that the post of DSACEUR be opened up to senior French officers irrespective of whether France formally re-enters the integrated military staff.

Such developments would reflect a NATO finally coming to terms with the significant changes under way in the structure and balance of the transatlantic security relationship. NATO, hitherto, has been seen as two concentric circles with the United States as the core and the allies gathered around it. This has made it difficult for the Allies to act autonomously, a stated EU aim, and has tied their force structures too closely to those of the United States. Such a posture does not necessarily best suit their security and

78. Britain's commitment to the EU's ESDP has often been underestimated by American commentators. As Jolyon Howorth points out, '... all the signs suggest that the united Kingdom has thrown itself fully into the project. Whether or not the United Kingdom will eventually become a fully-fledged member of the EU's other integrated projects (the Euro, Schengen), it seems beyond question that, barring a political upset, London is now seriously committed to the cause of CESDP.' Jolyon Howorth, 'European integration and defence: the ultimate challenge?', *Chaillot Paper 43* (Paris: Institute for Security Studies of WEU, November 2000), p. 93.

defence needs. As indicated above, the NATO of 2002 increasingly represents two levels (rather than two circles) of capability. Level one (the lower level of escalation dominance) contains the Europeans and Canadians who are almost exclusively focused on the Petersberg tasks of humanitarian and rescue operations, peacekeeping and the use of combat troops in peacemaking. Level two is the exclusive (and ever more so) domain of the United States, with its penchant for hi-tech, high-altitude global solutions to strategic and sub-strategic threats. Many on both sides of the Atlantic have erstwhile rejected this division of labour because it changes the task-sharing principle upon which NATO was founded. However, such a division of labour is now unavoidable in some form and merely the most overt expression of divergent strategic threat assessments. But, division of labour must not mean division of influence and that means Europeans 'buying into' at least some strategic elements. Indeed, nuclear weapons apart (which have little or no role in the European strategic context), Europeans can still only escalate from the smallest of small-scale contingencies to some way up the non-strategic escalation ladder. The larger European powers must bring this to an end. Equally, the United States, for all the reasons discussed earlier, seems unable or unwilling to undertake 'muddy boots' peacekeeping and engaged nation-building tasks which are the essence of modern security and can, therefore, only escalate from the mid-range of conflict intensity to a point at which only madness on the part of an adversary could trigger a challenge.⁷⁹

What is essential is not that every state can share every risk equally but that an escalation continuum is maintained between European and American capabilities. Thus, a modified division of labour is perhaps the most powerful rationale for the Alliance because American and European strengths still, in theory, complement each other. At the same time, such a division of labour will only work if it goes hand in hand with genuine European autonomy. Again, a division of labour must not enshrine a relationship in which the United States acts and Europe cleans up behind it. The denial of strategic initiative implied in such a relationship would not be good for Europe, nor, given the narrowness of American engagement, that good for the United States. American policies must at least be conditioned by partnership, even if they are fashioned by 'lonership'. In that respect, NATO remains the only organisation capable of functioning as a transatlantic command,

79. Interestingly, the US Air Force underlined this tension when it undertook its first war in space exercise. *The International Herald Tribune* wrote: 'Spurred by the increased reliance of the US military and the US economy on satellites, and facing a new Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld, who is more focused on space than his predecessors were, the Space Warfare Center here staged the military's first major war game to focus on space as the primary theater of operations, rather than just a supporting arena for combat on earth. The scenario was growing tension between America and China in 2017.' 'US Air Force Prepares Itself to do Battle In Outer Space', *International Herald Tribune*, 30 January 2001, p. 1.

80. *Joint Vision 2020* frames the challenge that NATO must confront. 'Since our potential multinational partners will have varying levels of technology, a tailored approach to interoperability that accommodates a wide range of needs and capabilities is necessary. Our more technically advanced allies will have systems and equipment that are essentially compatible, enabling them to interface and share information in order to operate with US forces at all levels.' That is certainly not how the British see it, for example. Even they are increasingly concerned about their ability to maintain contact with hi-tech US forces. JV 2020 goes on: 'However, we must be capable of operating with allies and coalition partners who may be technologically incompatible, especially at the tactical level.' *Joint Vision 2020* (Washington: Department of Defence, 2000), p. 23.

81. Rachel Anne Lutz reinforces the need for a European hub and spoke structure built around the United Kingdom and France. She writes that there are 'considerable differences between the [EU] Member-States themselves in terms of size, interests, influence and political and military status. To illustrate, the United Kingdom and France are the world's number four and five economic powers... Militarily, Britain and France are the world's number two and three military powers, each with its own strong and increasingly successful autonomous security and defence identity, and are the only two EU Member States to possess nuclear weapons or to hold permanent seats in the UN Security Council.' Rachel Anne Lutz, *Military Capabilities for a European Defence* (Copenhagen: DUP, 2001), p. 8.

force and operational planning bridge between the Petersberg task level of threat and the strategic challenges for which the United States is preparing.⁸⁰ Only NATO can provide effective strategic and tactical burden-sharing that reflects the political, financial and military reality of partners who, whilst believing the same things, see the world differently and can only afford so much security. NATO is, in effect, in the transatlantic insurance business. However, before NATO can undertake such a role it must be given much clearer instructions about its mission/s, as well as the necessary funds to underwrite such a transformation effectively. NATO must therefore be rescued from its erstwhile role as a political metaphor for the wider transatlantic relationship and rebuilt as the military-operational arm of a flexible and contemporary partnership, a military-technical alliance that reflects the realities of the twenty-first century, not those of the mid-twentieth.

Preserving the link

These developments also imply a progressively modular, flexible force structure for European armed forces both within the Alliance and beyond in which certain states (not just the United States) provide the core elements to which others bolt on to meet political and operational needs – in effect, an intra-European division of labour.⁸¹ Such an approach implies a degree of political flexibility within Europe that would also mark a radical break with the past because, whilst it would be nice to operate always at fifteen (EU) or nineteen (NATO), that is not the nature of contemporary security management. Moreover, the United States cannot ignore the first law of crisis management: the more an actor brings to a coalition the greater the say he will have in the political direction of that coalition. If the United States is in the minority, as is the case with ISAF in Afghanistan, it cannot expect to control such an operation politically through behind-the-scenes manipulation. Again, there must be no taxation without representation and certainly no control without engagement.

In the recent past, the United States has warned of the danger of unnecessary duplication of strategic American assets and capabilities, such as satellite intelligence, lift and logistics packages, focusing on the need to avoid unnecessary cost. However, there was also an underlying political message: Europe should remain dependent upon the United States for key elements of operational

command and control and, therefore, subject to American political control. This has got to stop. Even with the best will in the world, the United States cannot guarantee European access to key assets and capabilities. As Kori Schake points out, ‘... the Berlin [1996 Berlin-plus] agreement did not – and probably could not – resolve the fundamental problem of assured access: how to guarantee the availability for European crisis-management of scarce assets that the US needs for fighting wars and managing crises globally. The Berlin agreements offered the WEU assured access to NATO assets, but in order to use them effectively, it would also need access to US assets.’⁸² Within the two basic layers of Alliance capability there are a further four levels of military-technical capability: the United States is in a league of its own, the United Kingdom and France are in a kind of military-technical mid-Atlantic, then come the other continental West Europeans and finally the new members. The extent of the technology/spend gap is such that it is beginning to have a negative impact upon combined doctrine, i.e. the way the Allies operate together in the field.

Therefore, NATO’s primary mission within a new transatlantic security relationship must be to repair the operational link. To reiterate, the Alliance is *the* essential transatlantic military interoperability nexus and as such it should be armed with a simple motto, ‘Preserving the Link’. At the core of a new NATO will be effective Europeanised command and planning assets. It has been assumed that SHAPE can provide the Europeans with command and planning ‘services’ in the event of an EU-led operation. Unfortunately, given the rigidity of SHAPE, and its emphasis on Fulda Gap-type simulations and exercises, it is not yet capable of providing the command and operational planning functions the Europeans need for the kind of flexible coalitions they are likely to form. Thus, if SHAPE is to provide the Europeans with those services then it must be reformed radically. If not, the EU NATO members might have to look to the EU.

Any European command and planning hub would, by definition, be a lighter version of its American planning and command counterpart – at a lower level of capability but nevertheless an enabler for European-led coalitions that reinforce European political and operational autonomy. This would not only enable Europeans to undertake operations in their own right, such as the deployment of ISAF, but also enable them to add significantly to a US-led coalition using new NATO standards when it so chose. The

82. Kori Schake, *Constructive Duplication: Reducing EU Reliance on US Military Assets* (London: CER, 2002), p. 21.

stock phrase of the debates in the 1990s over NATO's European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI) used to be 'separable but not separate'. Narrow unilateralism and its impact upon the transatlantic debate now suggests a more radical solution: separate-able but compatible.

The Europeanisation of the Alliance would also help ease relations between NATO's ESDI and the EU's ESDP. Indeed, if the EU became the main focus for intra-European burden-sharing and interoperability for low- to medium-intensity operations 'in and around' Europe, it would make every sense for NATO to act as the transatlantic nexus for medium- to high-intensity operations with the United States, thus retaining its residual collective defence role as well as the ability to project coalitions worldwide. Such an approach would represent a sensible division of labour with clearly demarcated geographical and mission boundaries.

It is difficult, therefore, to understand US nervousness, because such a development would be wholly in the American interest. Every step that Europe takes towards breaking its dependency upon America will necessarily make it a more capable and effective partner. Indeed, any development in European capabilities will as a minimum mean re-inventing the Defence Capabilities Initiative (DCI), whether the process takes place under a different name or inside a different organisation. To paraphrase Bill Clinton – it's the capabilities, stupid! The deployment of the ISAF in Afghanistan has already shown the need for European forces to become more deployable, sustainable, flexible, mobile, robust (survivability) and interoperable. Of course, the further development of European defence would also have both political and organisational implications. However, to achieve these changes the United States is going to have to accept that narrow unilateralism as the organising principle for the transatlantic security relationship will not work. A shift in the political culture of the relationship is needed through more democratisation, dissent and divergence, which will not sit comfortably with the traditions of American international leadership. First, it is going to have to get used to a North Atlantic Council that is very much more political than hitherto. If the Allies take on more missions they will have more say. Second, the role of the EU in security management will become progressively more important. Third, the principle that membership of an organisation is a *sine qua non*, not only of participation but leadership of coalitions, is a thing of the past for

both NATO and the EU. There may even be occasions when Russia plays the role of 'lead nation'. However, above all, the United States is going to have to get used to a Europe that talks back.

Missile defence: Europe's criteria for engagement

If the transatlantic security relationship matters at all to the United States, it also needs to engage Europe far more consistently and effectively over missile defence. Certainly, there has been a change in the tone of the engagement with Europe over recent months but substance still appears elusive in the absence of any specific architecture around which to negotiate. Frankly, Europeans still see no pressing security need to follow the American lead. Therefore, if the United States really wants to take Europe along the missile defence road with it then it might consider the following criteria for European engagement.

► **If the United States is going to 'do' missile defence, it must do it well.**

The United States should construct a system that really works or not do it at all. A missile defence system that is little more than a 'security placebo' will result in the worst of all worlds – a destabilised strategic environment with no security dividend. Unfortunately, when the Joint Chiefs of Staff get their hooks into missile defence and the real fight begins for their favourite programmes, the danger remains that the subsequent budget battle will still leave missile defence emaciated and ineffective.

► **Place missile defence within the wider security context.**

The United States must emphasise that missile defence is only one aspect of a homeland defence package that is as relevant to Europeans as it is to Americans. Missile defence, Critical National Infrastructure Protection, Information Warfare/Cyber-warfare and Information Assurance strategies are all part of a multi-tiered approach to the protection of open societies that Europeans need to address just as much as Americans.

► **Consult, listen and change.**

The United States should demonstrate to the Allies that their concerns have real currency. The 'marketing' of missile defence to the Allies has been frankly awful, driven by a profoundly mistaken

belief that the United States is so powerful that it need heed the advice of no one. Not even the United States can get away with that.

► **Recognise that European sensitivities over the ABM Treaty are more than just European prissiness over a Cold War hangover.** Europeans live for treaties. It is a fact of confidence-building posturing life for those states (i.e. the rest of the non-American world) that can never dream of absolute security. Unilateral abrogation of the ABM Treaty has sent all the wrong messages to Europe about the importance of treaties to the United States, and reinforces the emerging sense of an over-mighty America.

► **Make the distinction between a Strategic Defense Initiative, GPALS and missile defense much clearer.**

Much of the talk of a three-layered system that now includes boost phase, mid-course and endo-atmospheric interception again makes Europeans suspicious about American motives. Is the United States really trying to rebuild SDI by stealth from the bottom up with China the main target? Most serious European analysts are convinced not, but even the suspicion makes it very hard for European leaders to support missile defence. It would help if the United States were far more transparent concerning the inputs and methodology of its threat assessment process. The United States needs to take the Europeans on a well constructed 'thought journey'.

► **Do not implicitly vilify China to justify missile defence.**

China has its problems but do not make it the enemy that most Chinese have no desire to be. The United States can justify missile defence on the basis of strategic uncertainty and proliferation over the next two defence planning cycles. Europeans are uneasy at the prospect of American 'hawks' developing an unhealthy symbiotic relationship with Chinese and Russian hawks. No more self-fulfilling Cold War nightmares, please. If missile defence is to be justified it must be part of a balanced system for future defence, not as a reflex from the past.

► **Recognise that the linkage between a strategic nuclear build-down and missile defence will cause considerable political difficulties for the nuclear Allies.**

If the United States cuts its nuclear arsenal below 2,000 strategic

nuclear warheads, as seems likely under the Nuclear Posture Review, this could cause difficulties for the British and French. First, their systems will suddenly be far larger components of the strategic nuclear balance, with the result that they will be involuntarily sucked into the arms control process at a politically sensitive moment in the run-up to the 2005 Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Second, in the absence of an effective European missile defence capability there will be increased pressure on the United Kingdom and France to play an extended deterrence role for Europe independent of the United States. The United States must be sensitive to these concerns.

▮ **Missile defence will end NATO as a nuclear alliance.**

Deterrence rests on credibility. The enlargement of NATO and the resulting/consequent dilution of Article 5 will affect the nuclear guarantee at the core of Alliance policy. The United States must recognise that missile defence will exacerbate this problem because, like it or not, it implies progressive decoupling. Indeed, even today, NATO is not so much an alliance as a coalition with attitude. Missile defence will reinforce the need for a new NATO that recognises these realities and more properly prepares it for its role as the military-technical interoperability nexus of the twenty-first century.

▮ **No taxation without representation and no participation without protection.**

The United Kingdom and Denmark (and by extension Europe) are likely to be the eyes of at least part of the missile defence system. That makes two key Allies a potential target for those many states and groups disaffected with the United States, which must recognise that it would be extremely difficult for Denmark and the United Kingdom to participate unless there was a guarantee that, in return for participation, they would be afforded the same level of protection as the United States.

▮ **No more 1986 memorandums of understanding.**

In 1986, the United Kingdom signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the United States for its industries to participate in the development work undertaken by the Ballistic Missile Defense Organisation (BMDO) for SDI. At the time the United Kingdom had certain technologies that were of use to the United

States. As with many so-called ‘cooperation programmes’ the cooperation went all one way and the United Kingdom received virtually nothing in return. It was no way to treat an old ally, and the United States should take steps to ensure it does not happen again if Europe does become actively involved in the programme. If allied countries participate they must have real contracts with real benefits, not vague promises that they may be allowed to ‘deliver the milk’ from time to time.

► **Do not justify missile defence on the basis of technological capability.**

Europeans have a strong suspicion that one of the driving forces behind missile defence is the technological imperative that tends to blind Congress from time to time. The United States should be honest with Europe about the technological claims. Prove it works. For example, Europe will need a lot of convincing that the United States can develop a functioning SATKA (surveillance, acquisition, targeting and kill assessment) capability that could intercept an ICBM in boost-phase or mid-phase launched from anywhere in the world. That would entail global battlespace dominance and the ability to make a negative return decision within ninety seconds from launch. US credibility will suffer if a missile defence capabilities/expectations gap emerges.

► **Make a clear distinction between force protection, theatre defence and national missile defence.**

Missile defence is still national, and the United States should not pretend otherwise. It may be that Europe could, for example, buy into the first two and not the third. Linkage of these three levels of capability should be avoided.

► **Be honest with American and European public opinion about what missile defence can and cannot do, and when.**

European leaders also have electorates to whom they are answerable. Millions of Americans support missile defence because they believe that it will make them safe. It will not or, rather, it will only increase their security marginally. There is no such thing as perfect security, nor is there such a thing as a perfect security end-state.

► **Do not militarise space.**

By all means establish surveillance architecture in space but not

weapons platforms. Space, for Europeans (and others), is like the Antarctic – inviolable – and the United States should recognise that. It is a place for mankind to explore together as part of a commitment to building confidence in each other by putting more earthly conflicts in perspective. Indeed, such exploration helps to limit the need for systems such as missile defence. If the United States takes the *military* high ground, it will lose the *moral* high ground.

► **Make a joint commitment with Europe to search for a new arms control paradigm that can run in parallel with missile defence.** The United States is right: the old arms control theology is out of date and needs to be reconstructed, and ABM does belong to another age. However, an arms control vacuum would be far worse. Missile defence, therefore, must not imply the wholesale abandonment of arms control, because it remains a valid part of national and coalition strategy. Such abandonment would dangerously undermine the common perspectives upon which the wider transatlantic relationship is founded.

► **Cut the link between missile defence and European defence.** Each must stand and fall on its own merit. To link the two in the political mind is fraught with danger and could lead to the worst of all worlds – a weakening NATO, a still-born European defence and a missile defence system that builds a wall right down the centre of the Atlantic. At the moment, Europeans and Americans have trapped themselves in what is an absurd bargain whereby Americans are being asked to accept a European force that might never do anything, in return for Europeans accepting a missile defence system that might never work. That is bad politics.

NATO enlargement: re-coupling the Alliance?

NATO enlargement is an acid test of the strength of transatlantic security relations. William Hopkinson sums up the dilemma of NATO enlargement succinctly: ‘What is sensible and appropriate to do on NATO enlargement should, in principle, hinge on what NATO is for, and how its purpose will be affected, for good or ill, by any particular option.’⁸³ Good question. It was Madeleine Albright who gave the transatlantic security relationship the 3Ds (no discrimination, no decoupling and no duplication). However, what

83. William Hopkinson, ‘Enlargement: a new NATO’, *Chaillot Paper* 49 (Paris: Institute for Security Studies of WEU, October 2001), p. 75.

the NATO enlargement process needs today are the 5Cs: credibility, cohesion, convergence, commitment and candour. First, a credible security policy that does away with a vestigial Cold War doctrine that is progressively undermining the deterrent value of the Alliance and preventing the EU from undertaking a more effective role. Second, policy cohesion with the EU to ensure that the negative, but unavoidable, implications of asymmetric enlargements are kept to a minimum. Third, planned convergence of the enlargement policies of the two organisations so that valuable and limited resources are not lost by candidate/accession countries trying to fulfil what are essentially competing membership requirements from NATO and the EU. Fourth, political commitment from existing NATO members to ease the legitimate security concerns of accession and candidate countries through the use not only of the enlargement 'tool', but other confidence- and security-building measures. Fifth, a candid statement on both the likely timetable for enlargement and the reality of the security 'product' that new members can expect from the Alliance.

It is vital that Americans and Europeans harbour no illusions: enlargement will fundamentally change the Alliance. Indeed, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania must feel a little like Groucho Marx when he said that he would not wish to be a member of any club that would have him. Through no fault of their own, the NATO that these states join will not be the NATO that they thought they were joining . . . precisely because they are joining. Enlargement is a necessary evolution in European security but it must be founded on political and military realism.

Terms of engagement

Much is made in the European press and amongst analysts about the need to communicate European efforts to Washington, the prevailing assumption being that if only Washington understood better all would be well and good in the transatlantic security relationship. In fact, Washington is brim-full of people, even within that much-maligned institution, Congress, who understand Europe and its policies. The real issue is this: does Washington care enough to want to listen or, if not, can it be made to listen? If so, then Europe's challenge is less one of communication and more one of action, and that means making both NATO and European defence work, and that in turn means both more security investment and more hard military capabilities. Only then is the United States likely to pay any attention and only then will Europe become effective.

The latest round of US defence spending increases merely reinforces the impression of an America locked in an arms race with itself, producing an ever greater quantity of ever more advanced military hardware that seems to have little or nothing to do with the threat it confronts, emphasising a markedly different concept of security to that of Europe. This is not entirely surprising. Be it in terms of power, political culture or political geography, Europe and America are not in the same position and the two sides need to recognise that. It is not the end of the world. From a European perspective America's very power makes it feel uniquely powerful and uniquely vulnerable at one and the same time, and its very vulnerability (or at least sense of it) drives it to dominate. This power complex is reinforced by a political culture that seems to see security as a series of zero-sum absolutes: one either has it or one does not. Certainly, Europeans find such ambition difficult to grasp, because their historical experience has made mutual vulnerability an inherent part of the fabric of stability, which explains why

Europeans find scrapping the ABM Treaty so unpalatable. Indeed, because Europe has so little ability to influence outcomes in the international system, compared with the United States, it is forced to assess threats and risks differently and approach their management far more cautiously. Consequently, Europeans tend to be much more focused on intent rather than capabilities, and Europe must correct this if a proper balance is to be struck between military and non-military aspects of Europe's security effort. Equally, that oft-heard American accusation that Europe takes risks with security is not without a certain truth. Certainly, there is a tendency for Europeans only to recognise as much threat as national exchequers can afford, and this has got to stop.

At the same time, the entry of the European Union into the realm of hard military security in several very important respects represents a reaction to narrow American unilateralism and narrow engagement. The impression is too often given by the United States that it wants to preserve the Cold War structure of NATO on a global scale, with the same master-client relationship. Those days are gone. However, the danger is that, by refusing to allow reform of the Alliance and failing to recognise Europeans as genuine partners who can bring a range of civil and military security tools to the table, the United States makes the EU far more attractive as a place for Europeans to 'benchmark' their own military effort. As this paper has argued, there is nothing intrinsically wrong with that, but it should be done with the support of the United States and not as a reaction to it. However, the United States has to create the political conditions for that. If not, then NATO will die and that would undermine the security of both Europeans and Americans. To reiterate, Europe is never going to bridge the military-technical gap for one very good reason – it does not need to.⁸⁴ The danger of attempting to do so would be that Europe ends up with a little bit of everything but not much of anything, which is the very antithesis of sound defence planning. Europeans are far more likely to increase defence expenditure if they think the targets are strategically sound, achievable and affordable and complement their own approach to security management. Ironically, that can only help NATO and, by extension, the United States. NATO Force Goals, as they are currently configured, attempt to accommodate the contending political and military realities that exist on either side of the Atlantic. As such they are doomed to fail, which will only result in time and energy

84. David C. Gompert, Richard L. Kugler and Martin C. Libicki, capture the paradox in the US position with regards to the military-technology gap. On the one hand, they point out that: 'The transatlantic schism [in technology] could turn fatal to the alliance in the event of a violent conflict with a WMD-armed rogue over shared interests, in which European forces fail significantly to respond alongside US forces...' and then they go on to admit that 'European militaries are not challenged by the same mission as their American cousins'. See David C. Gompert, Richard L. Kugler and Martin C. Libicki, *Mind the Gap – Promoting a Transatlantic Revolution in Military Affairs* (Washington: NDU, 1999), p. 7.

being lost on what is ultimately a pretty pointless argument.⁸⁵ Senator John McCain said recently that European defence had created tensions within the Alliance. ‘What the transatlantic partnership needs now’, he said, ‘is not new institutions but improved capabilities’.⁸⁶ That is right, up to a point. It also needs a new deal – a re-engaged transatlantic security relationship in which Americans listen to Europeans just as much as they lecture them about what they need to do.

The irony of all these tensions is that if the EU defence effort of which the United States is so suspicious develops into an effective capability it will almost certainly reinforce the transatlantic security relationship. As a wealthy Europe becomes a progressively stronger military power, many of the threats that are unique to America today will become steadily more relevant to Europe. That is the long-term paradox in the militarisation of Europe and the EU. Indeed, as power becomes less and less unbalanced in the relationship (it will probably never be equal), vulnerabilities will become harmonised and threats shared, just as they were in the Cold War. Certainly, a sense of shared vulnerability will be almost inevitable if Europe sees itself as a genuinely autonomous political actor reliant upon no external agent for its security and defence. By demanding unquestioning fealty, the United States encourages free-riding because it effectively denies free choice. American policy, therefore, should be to actively encourage European defence, because that is the surest route back to the mutual threat perception that a long time ago underpinned the transatlantic security relationship.

More America, better America

This paper also argues for more America, an America more engaged in all aspects of security in the world. It argues for a stronger Europe, a more effective Europe and for a transatlantic security concept that is both global and cohesive. Taken together, American and European approaches could combine to create an effective security toolbox with a global reach for the application of a mostly benign, but occasionally stern, joint hegemony under American leadership. Without question a strong West is the best hope for world peace. However, decisions about when, where and how to apply the various tools available will require a relationship between the United States and its European partners that the US political

85. Stefano Silvestri and Andrzej Karkoszka suggest what they call ‘General Duplicability Rules’ to overcome the NATO/EU military investment dilemma within which two sets of criteria would both enhance NATO’s military performance and assist in the development of autonomous European capabilities. What they propose would be a form of focused investment. See Stefano Silvestri and Andrzej Karkoszka, ‘The EU-NATO connection’, in François Heisbourg, ‘European defence: making it work’, *Chaillot Paper* 42 (Paris: Institute for Security Studies of WEU, September 2000).

86. From ‘Defence debate stresses the need for more talks’, *Financial Times*, 5 February 2002, p. 3.

élite will find very hard to digest. Equally, the United States is too powerful to be anything other than unilateral. Therefore, it must embrace the culture of partnership even as it reinforces its leadership, through a broader and more inclusive application of American ‘unilateralism’, allied to a far broader concept of engagement than the Bush administration has hitherto seemed willing to consider. Ultimately, whilst Europe’s political and military weaknesses are well known, it is failings in the application of American power that prevent an effective transatlantic approach to global security management post-11 September. To summarise:

► Complex, multifaceted and multilateral challenges and risks can only be addressed by joint action. Unfortunately, they are too often subject to a narrow interpretation of American unilateralism and engagement because the more powerful America becomes, the more vulnerable Americans feel. To offset this inherent weakness Americans and Europeans need to engage in a frank security dialogue that emphasises each other’s strengths, responsibilities and mutual interests (of which there are still many) rather than each other’s weaknesses.

► The power of the United States externally is such that it tends to export domestic policy rather than construct classical foreign policy. This leaves little room for allies.

► The sense of vulnerability from which Americans suffer, allied to dictates of the US electoral cycle and the nature of American politics, tends towards rejection of multifaceted civil-military security and emphasises overly militarised foreign and security policy, whereas European approaches tend to over-civilianise security policy. This policy dichotomy is preventing effective cooperation between Americans and Europeans over security matters because it reinforces a perception of strategic divergence. In fact, European and American approaches to security would complement each other if they could be coordinated more effectively.

► US security policy effectively failed on 11 September, and yet the United States seems to be embarked on a course of action that can best be described as ‘more of the same’. Even if there were a solely military solution to the threat posed by al-Qaeda and its like, they represent a new kind of warfare, by a new type of warrior for which the US military is unprepared. The United States needs to reinvest in human intelligence and better special forces, in addition to higher-intensity capabilities. The British, in particular, could teach

the United States valuable lessons in these areas.

► The United States regards any European involvement in security management as a failure of US leadership. This strategic parochialism is reinforcing a perception of political divergence that in the longer run will be far more profound than questions of European military weakness and low defence expenditure.

► The world needs a policeman (and policemen), and whilst only the United States can lead, Europe's historical experience ideally suits it to such a role. Moreover, being a policeman is not simply a question of 'flogging' em and hanging 'em'. Winning the battle for hearts and minds is at least as important, and if it engaged in such a role the United States would find Europeans willing partners.

► Equally, a division of labour in which the United States sets the strategic agenda and Europe cleans up afterwards is unacceptable. Europeans cannot afford to simply cede the strategic agenda to the United States, because partnership cannot be built on hierarchy. At the same time, Europeans have for too long avoided hard strategic choices. If Europe wants to influence Washington and add value to the West's overall security effort, it is time for Europeans to come off the strategic fence and make those choices. As a minimum, Europe should invest in SAS-standard special forces, human intelligence networks and robust, projectable and sustainable peace-keeping and peacemaking forces as part of a rapid and cost-effective enhancement of its capabilities.

► The United States is undermining the transatlantic security relationship by exaggerating its own military prowess and by effectively writing Europeans and others out of history.⁸⁷ If the twentieth century was that of America, the twenty-first century is in danger of becoming the century of the American myth. The United States must give Europeans credit where credit is due.

► Transatlantic security relations are becoming progressively more 'informal' as policy disagreements spill over into the security domain. However, the need for Americans and Europeans to act together remains of paramount importance. Therefore, a new organising principle is required founded upon flexibility, autonomy and interoperability. Only a reformed and enhanced NATO could perform such a role. As such, the Alliance remains the key to a new transatlantic security relationship.

87. All states create myths and all states write others out of history, be it the French with their fantasy that they liberated themselves, or the British that they were saved from invasion by the Royal Air Force rather than the Channel (and the RAF). Unfortunately, Hollywood adds an additional layer of falsehood to the American world view that reinforces popular American views of being better than others. Whether it be downplaying the role of the allies on D-Day or simply stealing the history of others, as was the case with the film *U-571*, which simply replaced Britons with Americans, it has a damaging role on the perception of Americans and of others about Americans. Somehow Europeans and Americans have to get back to a new popular realism. Michael Ignatieff states: 'To awake from history, is to recover the saving distance between myth and truth. Myth is a version of the past that refuses to be just the past. Myth is a narrative shaped by desire, not by truth, formed not by the facts as best we can establish them but by our longing to reassured and consoled.' This could apply equally to the search for absolute security. Michael Ignatieff, *The Warrior's Honor* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1998), p. 167.

One final service . . .

There is one final service that a strong Europe could perform for the United States. It was one of the Founding Fathers, Alexander Hamilton who wrote, 'the passions of men will not conform to the dictates of reason without constraint'. It was another, Thomas Madison, who wrote, 'ambition must be made to counteract ambition'. The United States needs Europe not just to legitimise its actions in the world, but also to play the role that friends everywhere play – reality check. Indeed, if the United States is seen to listen to Europe from time to time, it will ensure that America itself is heard with less prejudice elsewhere. Hamilton also wrote, 'Men often oppose a thing merely because they have no agency in planning it, or because it may have been planned by those whom they dislike.' Not everything must be or can be invented in America, not least the security and defence of Europe. Europe must find its own way and make its own mistakes, just like those clumsy, loud-mouthed Yanks who arrived in war-torn Britain in 1942 and were initially unable to learn lessons from the war-weary British.

Thus, America has to make a choice – broad unilateralism or narrow unilateralism. Europeans cannot make that choice for Americans but if Europe's old friend is open and willing it can help it choose correctly. As Joseph Nye puts it, 'American power is less effective than it might first appear. We cannot do everything. On the other hand, the United States is likely to remain the most powerful country well into the next century, and this gives us an interest in maintaining a degree of international order . . . To a large extent, international order is a public good – something everyone can consume without diminishing its availability to others . . . Too narrow an appeal to public goods can become a self-serving ideology for the powerful. But these caveats are a reminder to consult with others, not a reason to discard an important strategic principle that helps us set priorities and reconcile our national interests with a broader global perspective.'⁸⁸ Those are the terms of engagement.

88. Joseph S. Nye, *The Paradox of American Power* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p.149.

Abbreviations

ABM	Anti-Ballistic Missile
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
BMDO	Ballistic Missile Defense Organization
bn	billion
BWC	Biological and Toxic Weapons Convention
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CIMIC	Civil-Military Cooperation
CINCEUR	Commander-in-Chief Europe
CIP	Critical Information Protection
CNAD	Conference of National Armaments Directors
CNI	Critical National Infrastructure
CNIP	Critical National Infrastructure Protection
COTS	Commercial Off The Shelf
CW	Cyber-Warfare
CWC	Chemical Weapons Convention
DCI	Defence Capabilities Initiative
DIA	Defense Intelligence Agency
DoD	Department of Defense
DSACEUR	Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe
EAPC	Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council
ESDI	European Security and Defence Identity
ESDP	European Security and Defence Policy
EU	European Union
EUCOM	European Command
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GPALS	Global Protection Against Limited Strikes
ICBM	Intercontinental Ballistic Missile
INLA	Irish National Liberation Army
IPP	Individual Partnership Programme
IRA	Irish Republican Army
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan
IW	Information Warfare
MAD	Mutual Assured Destruction
MAP	Membership Action Plan
MNC	Multinational Corporation
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MTCR	Missile Technology Control Regime
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NIS	Newly Independent States
NMD	National Missile Defense
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NSC	National Security Council
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PAC	Patriot Advanced Capability
PARP	Planning and Review Process
PfP	Partnership for Peace

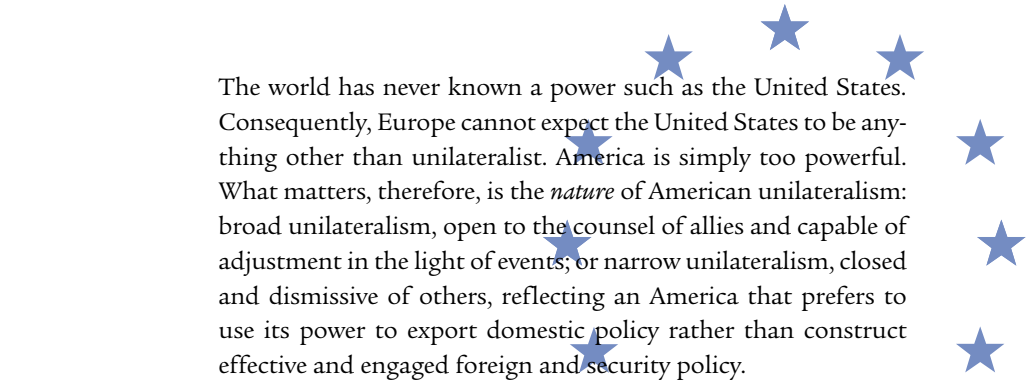


PSO	Peace Support Operation
QDR	Quadrennial Defense Review
RAF	Royal Air Force
RMA	Revolution in Military Affairs
SACEUR	Supreme Allied Commander Europe
SAS	Special Air Service
SATKA	Surveillance, Acquisition, Targeting and Kill Assessment
SDI	Strategic Defense Initiative
SHAPE	Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
US	United States
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WEU	Western European Union
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction

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The world has never known a power such as the United States. Consequently, Europe cannot expect the United States to be anything other than unilateralist. America is simply too powerful. What matters, therefore, is the *nature* of American unilateralism: broad unilateralism, open to the counsel of allies and capable of adjustment in the light of events; or narrow unilateralism, closed and dismissive of others, reflecting an America that prefers to use its power to export domestic policy rather than construct effective and engaged foreign and security policy.

Unfortunately, the more powerful the United States becomes the more vulnerable it perceives itself to be. Consequently, 11 September has reinforced the trend towards narrow unilateralism and a narrow concept of engagement that is not only undermining transatlantic security relations but reinforcing a myth of American military exceptionalism the application of which is often as narrow as the policy that controls it. This often leaves the armed forces of America's European allies having to undertake essential military tasks that are the 'stuff' of modern security, such as extended special forces operations and peacekeeping and peacemaking, which Americans regard as beneath their war-fighting colossus.

Contrasting American and European perceptions of power and vulnerability are reinforcing division in the transatlantic security relationship. Consequently, shared interests and values are no longer sufficient to ensure an effective and balanced security relationship, because the partners have increasingly different security concepts in which Americans tend to over-militarise security, whereas Europeans over-civilianise it. Therefore, a new organising principle is needed to reflect a new transatlantic security reality in a new security environment in which flexibility and autonomy will be essential if American and European strengths are to be utilised to effect.

The world needs American leadership, but leadership that is engaged, comprehensive and open. America also needs a strong Europe, not only to work alongside it in the struggle for security worldwide, but to act as the indispensable reality check on American leadership. If the EU is rightly to take on more of the responsibility for organising European security in its broadest sense, NATO must remain *the* forum for effective transatlantic military cooperation in the twenty-first century.

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