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Terrorism, proliferation: a European threat assessment

Harald Müller



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Terrorism, proliferation:
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assessment

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Terrorism. Proliferation. Iraq. For several months now these words have been in the minds of everyone and constantly in the headlines of newspapers, and perhaps — at the time of going to press — the cause of a new war in the Middle East and terrible international upheaval.

For the United States, these three words define completely the new international security paradigm and by themselves justify all the dramatic changes in strategy made by Washington, for better or worse. In the light of these new threats, the Bush administration has made a drastic reappraisal of all its instruments for external action (priority being given to the military), its relations with allies (with emphasis on ad hoc coalitions) and its principles of action (unilateral pre-emption if necessary). America's European partners have looked on powerless, anxious, supportive or hesitant, but always terribly divided among themselves, at this American strategic revolution and its many consequences.

Neither terrorism nor the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is absent from the Europeans' concerns and security policies. Yet they have never, within the European Union, been the object of a study or a common strategy on prevention or coercion 'at 15'. So it is not surprising, at this moment of truth, that Europeans' positions are defined firstly in relation to American policy — with every imaginable variation from complete agreement on some sides to radical opposition on others — and not with respect to a truly European threat assessment, something that simply does not exist. Strange as it may seem, the Union does not analyse the world. Yet there will be other crises after Iraq that are likely to produce the same destructive rifts in the Atlantic Alliance, work on building Europe or even the project of European integration itself.

In this Chaillot Paper, Harald Müller attempts to fill this gap. Director of the Peace Research Institute Frankfurt and a recognised international expert on nuclear proliferation, he sets out elements, taken from numerous open sources, of what could be a specifically European analysis of the threats posed by terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction — European not because of the sources used but because it reflects the culture,

heritage, practices and in particular the overall objective of the Union as an international actor.

The author's conclusions are far from optimistic regarding the medium-term threats to European security. In this respect they scarcely differ from analyses on the other side of the Atlantic. Divergences from the Bush administration's approach, and they are important ones, concern the types of response and policy that should be worked out, for the European Union, to counter these threats.

There was a time when the collective threat had a unifying effect: that posed by the Soviet Union was the cement that held together the transatlantic alliance, an alliance that was the guarantor of Europeans' common security. Now, since the risks and threats are increasingly diffuse, clandestine, anonymous, hard to foresee and identify with any degree of certainty but in all cases terrifying, differences of view among Europeans and between them and the United States tend to outweigh consensus and cohesion. Hence the renewed questioning of issues that were taboo for over fifty years: does European integration really have a political objective, and if so what is it? Is American leadership absolute or relative? Might there be incompatibility between the European project and America's vision of the world? Many would have preferred not to have been obliged to open this Pandora's box, but it opened by itself following the shock wave that is still reverberating after the 11 September attacks. Thinking about European security now also means trying to answer those questions.

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Since 11 September, it has become fashionable to maintain that nothing is as it was before. This statement is, however, much less reasonable a proposition than the memory of the unforgettable images of that day may suggest. It is thus useful, at the beginning of a study of security in today's circumstances, to list those items that have emphatically not changed:

- ▶ Power relations in the world have not changed. The United States was the dominant power before the attacks on its territory, and it is more dominant today than ever before.
- ▶ The problems resulting from globalisation, such as financial instability, poverty, unequal development and damage to the world's ecology are still there, and there are still no comprehensive solutions to them.
- ▶ Regional conflicts continue to cost lives, and continue without let-up. Conflict between the great powers is looming in East Asia as before.
- ▶ The need for instruments of global governance, though largely ignored in the most important capital city of the world, is becoming increasingly urgent, and is not being properly addressed.
- ▶ Finally, the sources of large-scale, extremely violent terrorism have existed for more than a decade and will not go away quickly and easily. Thus, there is much more continuity than the superficial comments that abound in public discourse would have it.

The three single most important changes that can be identified are:

- ▶ the sudden emergence of a clear and present danger that has answered, for the time being, the question of what the dominant security problem in the post-Cold War world is: 'megaterrorism', a non-state form of terrorism in which a readiness to take life knows no bounds;
- ▶ the surprising fact that this risk constitutes an unprecedented common interest for the major powers: they are all threatened,

in one way or another, by the possibility of major terrorist incidents. This commonality affects their relations and mitigates their (otherwise continuing) differences in varying degrees;

- ▶ the decisive change, as a corollary of this new security situation, in relations between Russia and the West on the basis of this common interest, with the present reality that the period of indifference, or even increasing tensions, between the two sides in the late 1990s is over, and a solid security relationship appears now to be emerging. This an important shift in the geopolitical landscape.

The definition by the United States of the post-11 September situation as a global war has strongly affected the intra-American and international discourse on international relations and thereby modified the framework in which these three aspects of change are being debated and treated in practice. Rather than a complete break in the continuity of history, then, we find a mix of old and new, even though the notion that everything must be rethought serves the agendas of certain people all too well. In these present circumstances security policies need to be grounded in a thorough analysis of the most obvious threats and possible responses to them. In devising a European security policy that is appropriate to the current situation, it has to be borne in mind that it could be a terrible mistake to throw all those instruments of security policy that were developed prior to 11 September out of the window.

To establish a basis for comparison, this paper starts with a brief summary of what European security has implied (a) before the end of the Cold War, and (b) ever since. It then discusses the contested notion of security itself that has been deliberated in both academia and politics in a lively and controversial manner. In this context, it has to be noted that the term 'European security', that is, as used in this paper, the security of the European Union, has a specific meaning that is not – as is frequently believed – totally identical with either the security of each of the member states or the 'sum' of their national securities, but goes further.

On this basis, the terrorist threat is assessed. Due attention is paid to the specific form – in terms of ideology, political objectives, and means of violence – that terrorism has adopted over the last two decades and found its expression in 11 September, and more recently in the Djerba and Bali attacks. The other major security

threat that has been intensely discussed in recent years, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, follows, and its connection to terrorism is assessed.

The transatlantic relationship has to adapt to current circumstances. After the display of solidarity immediately following the attacks on New York and Washington, it soon became clear that this is anything but easy to do. Unlike most accounts of this relationship, it is discussed here not only as a security asset but, doubtless to the surprise of some, also as a risk as far as European security is concerned. The study concludes with the consideration of options for Europe to deal with the security problem as defined earlier.

Understanding security

Remembering security

During the Cold War, Europe confronted – or was convinced of the need to confront – a militarised, strongly motivated, nuclear, superior power and its allies without the luxury of equivalent conventional forces or, alternatively, strategic depth. In addition to the threat of aggression, the risk of unintended escalation loomed large. Europeans lived in the awareness that, if war came, it would most likely be a nuclear one that would lay waste their lands. The only escape from this situation lay in a firm alliance with a friendly and superior power, the United States, which, fielding significant conventional forces and guaranteeing deterrence through its nuclear arsenal, could contain the enemy. The alliance, though, was not completely comfortable. As the protector was an ocean away, geostrategic interests were not identical, nor were strategic culture or political outlook. Tensions and cracks in the alliance appeared, were mended, and appeared again.¹ Nevertheless, the alliance held together, and the threat was kept *extra muros*. But its dark shadow never disappeared entirely.

All history becomes shrouded in myths after a while, and it did not take long for the Cold War era to suffer the same fate. It is thus useful to clarify what the Cold War was *not* in terms of security. For example, it was not a contest with a reliable, easy-to-predict enemy, as we read repeatedly today. Looking at national defence ‘white books’, NATO communiqués, and, most notably, pronouncements by the likes of the Committee on the Present Danger, a precursory organisation for the kind of security thinking now dominating US defence policies, we learn how very difficult it was at the time to assess reliably the intentions, strategies and even capabilities of the Soviet Union and its allies, to try to figure out whether their basic attitude was defensive, opportunistic, or outright offensive, how willing to take or avoid risks the Soviet leadership was, and what risk the West was facing of bad surprises, sudden

1. These are described in David N. Schwartz, *NATO's Nuclear Dilemmas* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1983).

aggression or breakthroughs in military technology. To impute to this dangerous looking past the nostalgic order that, today, we construct in contrast to the amorphous terrorist threat, is simply to falsify history.²

Likewise, the Cold War was far from being a purely interstate conflict, as we are told today. Throughout the forty-five or so years it lasted, concern that Moscow's 'fifth column' might undermine or overwhelm Western democracies was quite stark. Indeed, the Cold War started with that very concern – over Communist activism in Greece and Turkey. Throughout all those years, the work of 'moles', agents, and Moscow-inspired organisations and movements was believed to be a strong and reliable instrument in the hands of the Soviet leadership and its long-term planning. Communist parties, leftist unions, the anti-nuclear movement, the anti-Vietnam and German Student Movement, Eurocommunism, the Portuguese revolutionaries, the terrorists of the 1970s and the peace movement of the early 1980s were all put into the same category. And much as some of these assessments were clearly in error, as many others were correct. The Soviet Union exerted strong influence over Western communist parties until well into the late 1960s, it tried to infiltrate and influence peace movements, and it lent some – limited – support to the social-revolutionary terrorist groups in the 1970s.³ In other words, the intrastate dimension of the security problem is not new, but was an, admittedly subordinate, feature of the Cold War as well.

After the Cold War, no clear, unequivocal threat or enemy substituted for the Soviet Union, no new scheme replaced the unmistakable pattern of bipolarity. The security *problématique* consisted of a mixture of rather vague and ill-defined components.⁴ The revitalisation of a militarised and totalitarian Russian empire was one of them; it never materialised and was, fortunately, not taken seriously enough to develop into a self-fulfilling prophecy. China's ascendancy, a very powerful factor in US security scenarios, played little role in European debates as China was one Russian Federation away – far enough indeed – and could not be identified as a factor affecting European security in the foreseeable future. With that, the list of candidates for a full-scale replacement of the Soviet Union ran out. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and missiles was frequently discussed, but most of the time as a future rather than a present danger. And – as will be discussed at some length later on – Europeans saw too little prospect

2. Including, interestingly enough, the picture given of the nuclear past in the Pentagon's Nuclear Posture Review; 'Nuclear Posture Review [Excerpts], Submitted to Congress on 31 December 2001,' released 8 January 2002, www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/policy/dod/npr.htm.

3. For an account, and critique, of enemy images see Richard Ned Lebow and Janice Gross Stein, *We All Lost the Cold War* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994).

4. See, for instance, Edward A. Kolodziej, 'Renaissance in Security Studies? Caveat Lector!', *International Studies Quarterly*, December 1992, pp. 421-38, and 'What is Security and Security Studies?', *Arms Control*, vol. XIII, no. 1, April 1992, pp. 1-31; Richard K. Betts, 'Should Strategic Studies Survive?', *World Politics*, vol. 50, no. 1, October 1997, pp. 7-33; Neta C. Crawford, 'Once and Future Security Studies', *Security Studies*, Winter 1991, pp. 283-316; Colin S. Gray, 'New Directions for Strategic Studies? How Can Theory Help Practice?', *Security Studies*, Summer 1992, pp. 610-35.

of an actual, vital conflict between themselves and ‘the usual suspects’ to start considering proliferation of these most dangerous weapons in military and strategic terms.

More attention than before was thus devoted to non-state security risks. After the end of the Cold War, such risks were seen not in the context of the malevolent strategy devised by a hostile mastermind sitting in a major capital that tried to employ non-state instruments as proxies in an interstate conflict. Rather, they were interpreted in their own right, as individual, uncoordinated, free-standing threats to European interests with their own, independent dynamics.

Terrorism continued to figure on this list, though ‘Euroterrorism’ had receded to the fringes of Europe, to Northern Ireland, the Basque country and Corsica, where separatism continued to feed violent action. The classical leftist terrorism had sung its swan song with the demise of the Soviet Union at latest, even though individual acts in Italy pointed to the continued existence of (presumably small) groups of activists. The recent destruction of the leftist 17 November Greek terrorist organisation, which had for a while mysteriously survived the magic date of communism’s demise, and the successful detention of its ageing leadership, signified more than anything else that this period was over.

The ‘new terrorism’ was not yet being considered by many outside a small group of experts, even though the possibility of nuclear terrorism had strained the phantasies of some since the 1980s.⁵ This slowly changed in the mid-1990s.⁶ While the first, forceful attack in 1993 against the World Trade Center was largely ignored by European security analysts, the wave of terror in France and the spectacular, but fortunately aborted, plan to blow up a civilian aircraft over Paris or even – as some reports had it – crash it into the Eiffel Tower⁷ led, at least within France, to a more focused debate on terrorism as a serious threat to national security. Prior to 11 September, however, the notion that this was becoming a problem common to all European countries remained confined to the closed and narrow circles of agencies concerned with countering terrorism. Debates in the Union’s third ‘pillar’ – justice and home affairs – introduced in the Maastricht Treaty, related to the subject matter, but they were far from dominating security debates. In the European ones, terrorism did not even gain the limited prominence it obtained in the United States in the second half of the 1990s, where it was identified increasingly as a serious and

5. Bernard O’Keefe et al., *Report of the International Task Force on Nuclear Terrorism* (Washington, DC: Nuclear Control Institute, 1986).

6. See Walter Laqueur, ‘Postmodern Terrorism’, *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 75, no. 5, 1996, pp. 24-36.

7. Rohan Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda. Global Network of Terror* (London: Hurst & Company, 2002), pp. 122-3.

growing threat to US interests, including within the United States itself.

Additional, diffuse security problems entered the debates: ethnic conflict and failed states, with their repercussions on migration and organised crime – the latter two items also being seen as security risks in their own right – were among the more politico-military issues. The inclusion of resource dependency, degradation of the environment and uncontrolled financial flows – subjects significantly far removed from the classical understanding of security – appeared to indicate a certain degree of despair on the part of security analysts to put enough subjects and substance together in order to justify the still significant (in manpower and financial terms) efforts to provide security.⁸ At the same time, these debates marked the efforts of people who were primarily interested in these other fields of policy to enhance their access to those resources by putting a security label on them.⁹ From academia emerged a quite justified warning about the procedure of ‘securitisation’, i.e. the voluntaristic description of an issue as a security problem, thereby triggering notions of extraordinary danger and equally extraordinary measures to counter it.¹⁰

Throughout the 1990s, the security debate remained convoluted, vague, tentative and unfocused. The main progress made in European defence cooperation, significantly, related to the ‘Petersberg tasks’ and the instruments needed to carry them out. Those tasks, closely analysed, concerned much less issues of security proper, but the normatively and morally motivated use of military means to achieve the noble objectives of preserving or enforcing peace, or rescuing humans in trouble elsewhere. Connections to a more classical understanding of security were made, to be sure – for example the notion of ‘horizontal escalation’ of a Balkan conflict across Europe, analogous to 1914, or the instability engendered by mass migration. Yet these arguments were less than convincing given the reality on the ground. Security institutions built up over the decades and strengthened during the transition period at the end of the Cold War made a new ‘Sarajevo’ most unlikely, even if the West had abstained from an intervention; and West European societies were, by and large, rich enough and adaptable enough to cope with migration flows as and when they occurred. In fact, humanitarian intervention was clearly aimed at pursuing broader political rather than narrower security objectives. What security meant therefore remained unclear.

8. Thomas F. Homer-Dixon, ‘Environmental Scarcities and Violent Conflict: Evidence from Cases’, *International Security*, vol. 19, no. 1, Summer 1994, pp. 5-40; Myron Weiner, ‘Bad Neighbours, Bad Neighbourhoods: An Inquiry into the Causes of Refugee Flows’, *International Security*, vol. 21, no. 1, Summer 1996, pp. 5-42; Joshua S. Krasna, ‘Testing the Salience of Transnational Issues for International Security: The Case of Narcotics Production and Trafficking’, *Contemporary Security Policy*, vol. 20, no. 1, April 1999, pp. 42-55.

9. Marc A. Levy, ‘Is the Environment a National Security Issue?’, *International Security*, vol. 20, no. 2, Fall 1995, pp. 35-62.

10. Barry Buzan, Ole Waever and Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework For Analysis* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 1997).

11 September changed the debate. A new focus appeared. However, and quite ironically, 11 September at the same time triggered a new and increasingly heated debate, not least across the Atlantic, on precisely what this new focus might be.

Security today

Security appears to be a straightforward concept, but it is not. If one asks either laymen or specialists for their preferred definition, they all give different answers. In addition, the meaning of the term changes with time, as old threats to what was assumed to be security fade and new ones appear, changing the realm of security as they do so. Nor should one forget that behind security there are powerful social formations such as the military, its civilian bureaucracy, the related industrial and research establishments and, last but not least, think tanks and security intellectuals, all of whom thrive on the security business and nurture a vested interest in the continuation of something to be called security, and threats thereto, which help ensure their continued with existence.

National security

The classical meaning of 'security' is national security. The term is still used in most states of the world and shapes their security strategy and policy. National territory is seen as a sanctuary whose integrity must be defended against possible intrusions, interventions and aggression. The main threat is believed to exist in military form.¹¹ The risk of being overwhelmed or blackmailed by the superior armed force of an enemy drives states to seek minimum defensive capabilities that would deny an adversary certain victory and keep him guessing whether aggression would succeed or simply end in costly and risky stalemate. Or, alternatively, states try to erect deterrent capabilities that threaten so much damage to an aggressor's homeland that the cost-benefit analysis of aggression turns out negative even if nominal victory in battle is achieved. Besides overall superiority, states are also anxious to avoid being beaten in a surprise, blitzkrieg operation by a well-armed enemy who is not necessarily superior in armed forces, but well deployed and has a concise strategy and the operational and logistical

11. Robert Jervis, 'Cooperation under the Security Dilemma', *World Politics*, January 1978, vol. 30, no. 2.

instruments to implement it, and skilled at deception and surprise. Ultimately, armed forces at a high state of readiness, or secure second-strike deterrent forces, have been seen as the best counter to this type of contingency.

National security in the classical sense was not restricted to the notion of invulnerability to invasion and conquest. The integrity of one's own political institutions, leadership and national population also counted as elements of the term. National decision-making must rest on one's own deliberations, conducted without undue outside pressure in the proper institutions whose function is to make these decisions. External blackmail, or improper transnational influence by the enemy through a fifth column, agents provocateurs and the like was seen as undermining security. Foreign intelligence penetration of core state institutions was also interpreted as seriously compromising security. And irredentist, secessionist and separatist movements, possibly supported and nurtured from abroad, rang the loudest national security alarm bells in the countries concerned, since such movements and activities threatened both the integrity of national territory and the cohesion of the national population. Altogether, this means that, in addition to territorial and institutional integrity, something like the 'identity' of the respective polity is also generally seen as a legitimate subject of security.

An interesting addition to the traditional notion of national security came through the creation of the Atlantic Alliance. Unlike historical alliances that were more or less a matter of the opportunity of a given historical moment, NATO was meant to be persistent. This also meant that the national security of each NATO member was to be seen as equivalent to the national security of every other member. True, the exact wording of Article 5 of the Washington Treaty included a let-out, as it was left to each member state how to fulfil its promise to the Alliance once the Council had determined that an aggression against one member state had taken place. But the way the Alliance conducted its business made it overwhelmingly clear that what was expected from members was nothing less than complete unity and solidarity at the moment of truth, and the way NATO's armed forces were deployed was a clear sign that no member could easily disengage when solidarity was called for.¹² That 11 September gave cause to invoke Art. 5 in a situation for which it was obviously not intended

12. Of course, France left NATO's integrated military structure in 1966, but without renouncing its Alliance obligations.

merely demonstrated the strength of this understanding of identical (or largely overlapping) national securities, even if the practical consequences were much less than many had foreseen when the decision was taken.

Comprehensive security

Already in the 1970s, but more evidently in the 1980s and 1990s, a much broader understanding of security emerged that went far beyond the narrow definition of national security. It was generated first in academic circles but soon found its way into political discourse, not least through the impact of bodies like the Brandt, Palme and Brundtland Commissions. The broadening of the meaning took three directions. First, it was perceived that security should include not only one's own, but equally the adversary's vital interests. Second, it was noted that security might be endangered through more than military threats alone. Third, and closely connected to the latter point, it was realised that collectivities other than the state could be the subject of security.

The first aspect of this wider definition of security gave birth to the terms 'common' and 'cooperative' security. It started from the time-honoured concept of the security dilemma: as the international system has no ultimate arbiter to settle disputes between its members, each state is left to its own devices to ensure its survival. Unfortunately, efforts taken for one's own defence, and defence only, may from another state's perspective look dangerously threatening. As this state prepares the response deemed appropriate and necessary to counter this new danger, one's own security is diminished by the enhanced threat emerging from this response, and so on. What was initially meant as a limited, defensive measure engenders a spiral of armament and counter-armament that leaves everybody less secure.¹³ Understanding that one's own security activities impact upon the security of others, and taking their security needs into account, is thus the starting point for the concepts of both common and cooperative security. Even in an anarchic system with inevitable conflict and rivalry, the reasoning goes, a modicum of security can be achieved by self-restraint in the light of others' vital interests, and by cooperative instruments such as crisis-management mechanisms, transparency, confidence-building and arms control.¹⁴

13. Op. cit. in note 11.

14. Janne E. Nolan (ed.), *Global Engagement: Cooperation and Security in the 21st Century* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1994).

The idea of 'comprehensive security'¹⁵ emerged from certain almost simultaneous developments in the 1970s. The first was the realisation, coming in the wake of the Arab oil embargo and the quadrupling of the price of oil in 1973-74, that Western economies were quite vulnerable to interruption in the supply of vital resources (even though, with hindsight, they proved incredibly resistant to the challenge, and aside from crude oil it is hard to think of any other natural resource that could have a widespread impact on Western economies). The term 'economic security' gained currency during those years and indeed motivated the creation of the first military concepts for securing Persian Gulf oil in the form of the US 'Rapid Deployment Force'; but the main Western response consisted in founding the International Energy Agency, with its rules governing strategic oil reserves and measures to curb demand in the event of a supply crisis.

The second development was the recognition of increasing environmental damage, with its huge local, regional and, increasingly, also global consequences. Strongly articulated in the various reports of the Club of Rome (beginning in 1972), this insight helped create the notion of 'environmental' or 'ecological' security, which suggested that environmental damage could seriously affect human life, and even the stability and survival of whole states, a suggestion that is not totally convincing beyond the special case of those small island countries that may indeed disappear as a consequence of the rise in sea level caused by global warming.

Over time, more and more areas were hung on the security Christmas tree: drug trafficking, organised crime, financial flows, migration, terrorism, proliferation, ethnic war (elsewhere), national culture, gender. Astonishingly enough, official security policy proved quite eager in adopting this inflation of the term security. It found its way into documents like defence 'white books' and the like. One can speculate whether the extensive menu served those members of the Western security communities well who were concerned that the elimination of the main enemy, the Soviet Union, might create a void that could challenge and jeopardise their very existence.

Wild ideas about military intervention appeared to save the rain forests or to secure the transport of medical supplies needed for European patients against the threat of pirates in faraway sea lanes. The widespread dogma that the Western military must

15. J. Tuchman, 'Redefining Security', *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 68, no. 2, Spring 1989, pp. 162-77.

secure access to vital raw materials enjoyed a revival (as if the world market could not deal with the interruptions that could be caused by local turbulence or even the malevolent actions of a state actor). Military intervention was used in more or less ill-fated attempts to combat drug production (rather than taking the unpleasant measures at home to curb, or, alternatively, liberalise, demand). All this appears to indicate that the frantic search for credible new threats did indeed play a role in the security discourse.

With this broadening of the meaning of security, though, it finally became clear that the time when the state held the exclusive sights to 'security' was over. Indeed, the area covered by the subject ranged from the whole world ('global security') through the environment to subnational groups ('societal security', whereby the survival and autonomy of each identifiable substate collectivity had to be secured otherwise security did not exist) and down to individuals ('human security'). Human security, relating to the weakest parts of society, became a popular and official term in UN parlance, informing both development policies and post-civil war peace building and consolidation activities.¹⁶ It is also guiding the work of UNESCO in its SECURIPAX Forum.¹⁷

Removing the state from the centre of security affairs and replacing it by the lofty ideals of a global community or the sovereign individual, though, was not what was in the mind of the Western security establishment. On the contrary, the new notions of security were integrated, as much as possible, into the pre-existing concept of national security. The state, it turned out, was much more in danger than the common understanding of security (which was confined to the possibility of cross-border military attack) would suggest. Rather, it was encircled by a panoply of ominous and dangerous problems that required forceful responses. That those 'problems' that could wield a weapon loomed larger in the security discourse than those – like 'environmental threats' or 'uncontrolled financial flows' – that did not, came as no surprise to those well versed in the realm of bureaucratic politics. The security bureaucracies preferred those new threats for which their old instruments were best suited.

16. Astri Suhrke, 'Human Security and the Interest of States', *Security Dialogue*, vol. 30, no. 3, September 1999, pp. 265-76.

17. www.unesco.org/ securipax.

European security¹⁸

If one starts from the more conservative view that territorial and institutional integrity are the core of security, an interesting question arises concerning Europe – which is here taken to mean the European Union – and its security. The European Union, one must remember, is no nation state. It is hence no bearer of the ‘national security’ flag. It is equally unclear whether the ultimate aim of the Union is a federal European state or whether its present existence as a political system *sui generis* will be prolonged indefinitely even as the integration process progresses step by step. This means that one has to think carefully when applying the concept of security to this strange political animal.

It is probably uncontroversial to propose that in any case ‘European security’ covers the territorial integrity of the Union at a whole, which means the inviolability of the borders of each and every single member state. The mutual relationship of the Union and the integration project is so intense, deep and long-term in nature that it would affect the security of Finland or Sweden if Greece or Portugal were attacked. The European Union as such would cease to exist if its Western members chose not to respond after a member in the East had become a victim of aggression. (This statement opens the delicate issue of the overseas territories of some member states that are constitutionally part of their homeland. To avoid complexities, the issue is left aside for the purpose of this essay.) Fortunately, this most traditional security risk appears very remote. Europe’s territorial security is better than it has ever been, even though there is a residual risk of a Greek-Turkish clash, and the quarrels between Spain and Morocco remain. Neither, however, appears likely to flare up into real war in the foreseeable future.

Likewise, the relationships (notably in economic terms) among member states, and the ensuing interconnections between their degree of national welfare, are so interdependent that the breakdown of the institutions of one member state would inevitably affect the stability of all others. In that sense, European security is coextensive with the sum of the national security of all the member states.

¹⁸ This is an analyst’s perspective. My definition may thus deviate from the official meaning of ‘European security’ laid down in Article 11 et seq. of the Treaty on European Union.

But it is even more. The definition of security given here, just repeated, includes the integrity of the institutional setting and the identity of the political unit being considered. In European terms this means both the institutions of the Union and its identity, that is, the essence and the direction of the European project. External events that threaten to undermine the very cohesion that keeps the Union together and stand in the way of its further progress must be seen – from the viewpoint of the Union rather than any member state – as a threat to European (as opposed to British, French, German, Italian and so on) security. Thus, even if the security of the individual member states is preserved, that of Europe can still be violated; this is an important feature of Europe that has to be kept in mind when discussing the corollaries of 11 September.

As stated earlier, the significance of 11 September for security analysis is not as easy to gauge as some would have it. A sober assessment is required that takes account of the general type of threat that terrorism poses to European security in the accepted sense and then applies that analysis to the form of 'megaterrorism' that entered public awareness on that date and, in the eyes of many, presents a qualitatively new threat distinct from terrorism as formerly known.

Classical terrorism versus 'megaterrorism'

It is useful to think of terror in Clausewitzian terms. This does not necessarily mean qualifying terrorism as a form of war since, if we rely on the modern definition, war is fought by 'certified' parties, that is states or substate units that can claim with some justification to represent sections of the population within the embattled state, and employ organised fighting units in their conflict. These qualifications of course exclude terrorists as parties to wars. If a Clausewitzian approach appears nevertheless to be useful, it is in terms of a contest of wills in which the parties use instruments of violence in parallel processes of physical destruction and symbolic signalling of intentions. Clausewitz has argued that this contest has an inherent tendency to proceed towards the 'absolute', that is, towards the cataclysmic exchange of unlimited violent means, as neither party is willing to surrender and begins each round of the exchange at an enhanced level of force in the hope that the increase may convince the enemy to submit. The same tendency is seen in the struggle between terrorists and the state. Terrorists resort to more ruthless, broader, effective levels of force as they cannot vanquish the hated state. The state, by changing laws, acquiring new means of intelligence, improving its weaponry and so on, provides for responses to these new levels of violence. In theory, it is conceivable that this interaction moves towards ever more violent levels of

struggle. In practice, as Clausewitz noted in his analysis of war, the struggle meets constraints ('friction'), some of which lie in its political character.

The aim of classical terrorists¹⁹ – that is, the self-styled leftist social-revolutionaries such as the Red Army Faction, Action Directe or the Brigade Rosse of the 1970s and 1980s, and the ethnical separatists of the ETA, IRA or Corsican vintage – was to take over political power or sever a certain part of it and create a new, independent state. To attain that objective, they pursued a four-pronged strategy. First, by attacking and killing representatives of the state, they wanted to shatter the self-confidence and coherence of the hostile élites and make them increasingly insecure and vulnerable. Second, by exposing the vulnerability of power, they wanted to undermine the loyalty of the population and their belief in authority, thereby creating an awareness that things are changeable. Third, by creating incidental or intentional victims among the civil population, they wanted to create widespread fear and ensuing popular pressure on state authorities to make compromises with the terrorists. And last, by forcing the state to take harsh countermeasures they wanted to deliver the proof of their proposition that the state was repressive and cruel, engendering public alienation and an increased desire in the population to resist.

Here lies the decisive reason why classical terrorism suffered from an important constraint on the possibility of unlimited violent escalation. The need to win over the population meant that attacks on the population had to remain limited. Ethno-nationalist terrorists like the PLO, for their part, had to take care not to alienate world opinion, whose support for their cause was needed. A secondary reason for exercising restraint was the necessity to avoid such forceful countermeasures by the authorities that the terrorists would be extinguished by the crackdown, at least as long as they were not strong enough to risk open battle; they thus had to steer a fine course between their strategic need to provoke the state into unpopular moves and the need to keep these moves from overwhelming the terrorist infrastructure.

Because of the existence of these inevitable constraints on the actions of classical terrorists, RAND analyst and terrorism expert Bruce Jenkins was quite right to maintain that 'terrorists want many people watching but not many people dead'.²⁰ It was, however, a mistake to believe that this hypothesis could be applied to

19. Peter Waldmann, *Terrorismus: Provokation der Macht* (München: Gerling Akademie Verlag, 1998), pp. 75-97; Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1998), Chapters 3, 4.

20. Brian Jenkins, 'International Terrorism: A New Kind of Warfare', *RAND Corporation Paper* (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND, June 1974).

all forms of terrorism everywhere and at all times. Even for ordinary separatist terrorist movements – or indeed all terrorism rooted in ethnic distinctiveness – the use of violence against the alien oppressors already knows fewer limitations. The oppressor's population is not to be won over. The use of force against this population, then, is only constrained by the strategic consideration of having to negotiate independence with the enemy. If, however, the belief prevails that eviction and cleansing rather than negotiation is the path to independence, then this constraint falls by the wayside as well, and the only remaining curb might be the fear of overwhelming retaliation against the area and the population that the terrorists claim to represent.

Looking at classical terrorism from a European security perspective, it is quite evident that the *European* level was never threatened by terrorist movements. They did not push European member states against each other or otherwise create alienation among them, and the Commission, the Parliament, the Court, Council or summit meetings were never targeted. They simply did not have the European Union (at that time, the Community) in their sights and, in this regard, were quite old-fashioned. While there was networking and mutual assistance among the groups, their focus was their respective state, where they wanted to change the regime in line with some vague and lofty socialist ideal or impose acquiescence in their region's secession. They never managed to pose a serious threat to the identity, survival, institutions or territorial integrity of any of the states attacked. To be sure, populations were apprehensive, as were authorities, but in a tenacious struggle the agencies charged with combating terrorists wore them down, generation by generation, until they were basically extinct; the most visible indication of this victory of democracy was the letter of surrender from the RAF in 1992. ETA and the radical wing of the IRA are still active, but, for all the grief they cause, their impact on internal security remains limited.

While there appeared to be a risk of excessive curbs on civil liberty at some time in the 1970s, and this risk was exposed by advocates of more rather than less liberalisation of West European democracies, the fear was never realised. Western Europe remained liberal, and democracy was preserved and – e.g. in the form of protection of privacy, the dismantlement of borders and the free movement of people under the Treaty of Schengen – even impressively enlarged. Populations were not alienated from their

political authorities and institutions by terrorist provocations but, if anything, developed even more loyalty as terrorism faced them with a clear choice of values. The ideology, means and ends of the terrorists never posed a real threat to security as defined in the previous chapter.

'Megaterrorism' is a different matter: it is understood to mean forms of terrorism where the Clausewitzian constraints on the use of violence are not effective. This form of terrorism sets no limits on the number of fatalities it wishes to cause. The 'Jenkins doctrine' simply does not apply to this phenomenon.

A trend in this direction was increasingly visible from at least the mid-1980s.²¹ While the number of terrorist attacks went down from an average of more than 600 in the mid-1980s to about 450 in the early 1990s and less than 400 in the late 1990s, the number of casualties, that is, the level of violence per attack, increased significantly. More attacks were lethal, and took a higher toll than before. And these statistics of course do not include data on prevented attacks, some of which would have been enormously deadly (such as the foiled attempt on Los Angeles Airport, the Eiffel Tower, the simultaneous destruction of a dozen wide-bodied passenger aircraft over the Pacific or the attack against the Strasbourg synagogue). During the same period, the involvement of terrorist groups ostensibly motivated by religious zeal increased significantly. In 1968 no such group was registered, in 1980 it was about 3 per cent of all known terrorist groups, in 1992 these groups made up slightly more than a quarter, and in 2000, more than 40 per cent. It is plausible that the increasing lethality of terrorism and the increasing share of organisations made up of religious fanatics should correlate, as indeed they do.²² Attacks causing mass casualties over the last ten years have almost invariably been committed by such groups, ranging from the Japanese Aum Shinri Kyō to al-Qaeda.

Megaterrorism and religious extremism

This all shows that religiously motivated terrorism and Islamic fundamentalism are not the same thing. Religious terrorists exist across all world religions. In its extreme interpretations, religion appears to be a strong driving force for the application of ruthless violence to achieve supposedly sacred objectives. The adoption of such world views represents a reaction to the uprooting of

21. Hoffman, *op. cit.* in note 19; Walter Laqueur, *Die globale Bedrohung. Neue Gefahren des Terrorismus* (München: Propyläen Verlag, 2001); Kai Hirschmann and Peter Gerhard (eds.), *Terrorismus als weltweites Phänomen* (Berlin: Berlin Verlag, 2000).

22. 'Patterns of Global Terrorism 2001', US Department of State; RAND-St. Andrews, 'Chronology of International Terrorism', current database.

traditions, certainties and traditional life-worlds that globalisation has caused among rural and newly urbanised social strata. Fundamentalism, in which the violence-prone interpretations of religion are rooted, even though fundamentalism is far from being automatically or universally violent, is the reorientation to a purportedly absolute, unvarying truth that is to be found in the foundations of a religion. The certainty gained in identifying with this truth is a tool to locate one's identity in the vagueness, disorientation and inevitable insecurity that the conditions of life today impose.²³

All cultures, and all humans within them, are exposed to these conditions. However, those people whose perspectives for life are relatively stable, whose life experiences present continuity, and whose expectations are largely fulfilled are less likely to succumb to fundamentalist temptations. Poor and badly disappointed people are at higher risk of seeking consolation in fundamentalist 'truths' that help explain away their disappointments and exonerate them of personal responsibility for their past and future. People with a hoped-for but factually uncertain rise to leadership positions who have experienced fairly rapid changes in their social milieu, and whose identity has hence been shattered, are more vulnerable than others to the siren songs of fundamentalism. This includes first-generation immigrants into urban areas from rural milieux, and primarily those among them who have undergone higher education. Fundamentalism gives them elite answers to their urgent questions as future leaders of their countries: what is the justification for the deprivation of their people, what is the response to the apparently irresistible, alien Western challenge? It is in particular young academics and engineers who are confronted with these questions. They are expected to define the future of their countries, being privileged compared with the mass of their poor and semi-poor compatriots. The average citizen of a country can take refuge in escapism, but young academics are denied this way out. They are in contact with the 'cutting edge' of Western superiority, the avant-garde of Western culture, science and philosophy, and are forced to make a choice. Fundamentalism offers those who decide on opposition a source of self-confidence, and an 'Archimedian [firm and immovable] point' from which a firm position against the West can be taken and founded. It is for this reason that we find among the leaders of fundamentalist movements an astonishingly large proportion of academics,

23. Gabriel A. Almond, Emmanuel Sivan and R. Scott Appleby, 'Explaining Fundamentalisms', in Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (eds.), *The Fundamentalism Project* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1995), vol. 5, pp. 425-44.

scientists, doctors and engineers, while in the rank and file the lower social strata usually predominate.

Fundamentalism takes on different forms. It may be a purely individual revival of the sources of one's own religiosity, unworldly meditation or contemplation in the mystical tradition. The same attitude occurs also in a collectivist, 'communitarist' fashion, as the common retreat into a mystical identity with God, without any ambition to realise one's own ideals in the real world. Fundamentalism can also focus on penetrating society, on proselytising one's own faith as a guide for everyday life, on offering services such as health, education, and social security in addition to or as a substitute for those of the state where it is lacking: this causes the strength and popularity of the Muslim Brothers in many Arab countries, or of Hamas among the Palestinians. Fundamentalism can also strive to participate in, or take over, political power, but to choose a non-violent, legal rather than illegal path as did the Muslim Brothers in Jordan or the FIS in Algeria prior to the military coup in 1991. It would thus be a mistake to equate fundamentalism with terrorism, just as it is a mistake to see Islam as a fundamentally violent religion.²⁴

It would be equally wrong, however, to underrate the incredible momentum that a disposition to use violence gains when it feeds on religious motivation. And it is also a statistical fact that the number of fundamentalist terrorists of the Islamic faith is larger, and their acts of violence are therefore more numerous, than those of other religions. In addition, it is the only religiously motivated terrorism that has managed to create a transnational, globally organised network.

Fundamentalist politicisation

To go from culturally motivated fundamentalism to politically directed terrorism requires a process of politicisation. It starts with the notion of global inequality, misgivings about the colonial and imperial past and the perception that the cultural assault originates in the West. These circumstances create a diffuse anti-Western feeling (which oddly enough coexists with the partial adoption of Western ideals such as democracy, consumer preferences and the like) that gives particular prominence to the United States as the West's leading power.

24. Gabriel A. Almond, Emmanuel Sivan and R. Scott Appleby, 'Fundamentalism: Genus and Species', *ibid.*, pp. 399-425.

This resentment is enhanced by two additional factors. First, people are being mobilised and polarised politically through key conflicts of great symbolic value. The Middle East conflict, in the first place, and secondly the Kashmir and Chechnya conflicts, play this important mobilising and polarising role. Among young people, a romantic solidarity and the readiness and desire to fight to assist their oppressed 'brethren' appear. The West, and the United States in particular, appear as the allies of the enemy, or at least as indifferent or tolerant of injustice and deadly violence. The Middle East conflict in particular, whose symbolic weight overshadows by far other world events for Arab (and other) Muslims, channels frustration, hostility and hatred towards the United States with what is perceived as its biased support for the Israeli cause.

The second factor of politicisation is the authoritarian/totalitarian structure of most political systems in the Muslim world. People who have undergone political mobilisation have little opportunity to express their views and participate in politics if they do not join the powers that be outright. Opposition or critics are forced underground, where violent political action often appears to be the only alternative to acceptance. Most Muslim countries are badly governed.²⁵ Political and religious repression curbs creativity in Arab countries more than in other regions of the Third World, the potential of women in society remains largely unexploited, per-capita income has shrunk in the last twenty years, productivity is decreasing, and research, development, science and technology are comparatively undeveloped. Thus, high expectations in the Arab world remain largely unfulfilled. Whenever reality frustrates expectations, a mixture of violent and revolutionary feelings emerges. This does not mean that terrorists are themselves necessarily victims of social misery. Rather, an environment of economic stagnation, social injustice, political repression and lack of prospects increases enhances the statistical probability of a readiness to use violence, particularly if the paths to participation in political life are blocked. More people are then likely to be seduced into joining radical groups.

The governments of many of those countries, such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Morocco, rely on the protection of the United States. The United States is thus identified with the hated domestic oppressors. The United States is seen as a hegemon that keeps these repressive governments in power for its own interests, notably oil. Domestic repression in Arab countries, thus, is

25. For the Arab world, see 'United Nations Development Programme/Arab Fund For Economic And Social Development, Arab Human Development Report 2002. Creating Opportunities for Future Generations', New York, 2002.

ascribed to the United States. Because of their provocative superiority and their ‘alien’ culture – alien, that is, in the eyes of traditionalists – the United States conforms to the image of an enemy even better than the repressive governments themselves.

Both politicisation factors point in the same direction: they make it easier for frustrated people to identify a preferred enemy, and hence fronts become clear. Initial lack of orientation and perspective give way to a new, clear certainty and a new, heroic warrior’s perspective.

Violence without limits

Militant political theology provides this warrior identity with a firm, indisputable because transcendent, basis. This theology defends a God-given truth and a way of life derived from it, against modernity, secularism, hedonistic consumerism, cultural alienation and competing religions. The central place that religion assumes in this vision is seriously underestimated in the West. These people are not nihilists, neither do they instrumentalise religion to attain their seemingly secular goals. They are as dangerous – as well as intriguingly charismatic – as they are because they believe what they preach.²⁶

A readiness to resort to unrestricted violence springs from a conviction that one is acting in the name and on the order of the highest, that is, divine, authority and pursuing a path that is absolutely true and absolutely necessary. From this, a sharp demarcation between ‘us’ and ‘them’ emerges which is of course characteristic of all concepts of an enemy but is of particular saliency for religious extremists as the enemy is seen as the agent of absolute evil, the enemy of God. The resulting conception of the world is strictly Manichaeic; the enemy is ‘demonised’, and this provides the justification for whatever level of violence is needed to ensure victory over him. Fighting the enemy combines the acts of strategic utility, God-willed punishment, purification of Earth from the forces of evil and worshipping. In classical terrorism, messages had to be communicated to the enemy (whose will was to be broken) and – as the ‘interested third’ – the people (who were to be both terrified and won over). In addition to these two recipients, religious terrorism also addresses God: the terrorist act is meant as a reverent proof of faith. This makes terrorist strategy

26. Jessica Stern, *The Ultimate Terrorist* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999).

virtually impermeable to rationalist counter-arguments. Religious terrorists see themselves as fighting in an ultimate, 'cosmic' war, frequently with millenarian or apocalyptic ingredients.²⁷

The strategic calculus

Nevertheless, it would be a grave mistake to understand religiously motivated terrorists not as strategic actors but as 'irrationalists', 'nihilist killers' and the like. In our culture, the way religious terrorists derive and define their goals is certainly beyond rationality. The way they devise their strategy and adapt ends to means is emphatically not. While the Clausewitzian limits on the 'absolute' are not applicable, a strategic relation between political goals (informed by extremist religious considerations) and violent means does exist. This is, first and foremost, true of al-Qaeda.²⁸ Islamist extremists perceive themselves as fighting in a desperate, defensive war against a total assault directed against Islam and its true believers. This crusade dates back to colonialism and started with the Napoleonic invasion of Egypt. The 'forces of evil' managed to suppress Muslims by force, but also to undermine their will to resist by fielding a 'fifth column', that is, unfaithful, secular Muslims and, first and foremost, apostatic leaders who refused to apply Islamic law and serve the non-Islamic regime.

When Islamic radicals turned to militancy, they first targeted these domestic leaders as the proximate enemy. By removing them and replacing the secular nation state by an Islamist one – as in Iran – they would start a movement to change the global balance of power (as with the old Soviet 'correlation of forces'). Each Islamic country conquered in that way would represent a step towards pushing anti-Islamism back from its ascendancy over the Umma, the community of all Muslims. This was the strategy followed by Abd el-Salam Faraj,²⁹ the mastermind behind the assassination of President Anwar al-Sadat of Egypt. However, the strategy failed. Egypt could not be conquered, Faraj and many of his companions were executed. The armed rebellion of the Muslim Brothers in Syria suffered a similar fate with the massacre at Hama in 1982.

As a consequence, militant religious leaders such as Omar Abd al-Rahman reversed the order of priorities. It was now believed that, as long as apostatic governments could rely on US support, they were possibly impregnable, though the fight against them

27. Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God. The Global Rise of Religious Violence* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2000), ch. 8.

28. The clearest expression of al-Qaeda's worldview and strategy is by bin Laden himself, www.az-zam.com/html/articlesdeclaration.htm.

29. Op. cit. in note 27, p. 81.

was still worthwhile. Osama bin Laden's mentor in Afghanistan, Ahmed Azzam, held a different opinion, but Osama was drawn to al-Rahman's viewpoint.³⁰ The Gulf War of 1991 reinforced this interpretation. For militants, it was a clear expression of America's will to dominate the Muslim world. The strong military presence in Saudi Arabia, hub of world oil production as well as host country of the two holiest sites, was seen as a double assault for dominance over Muslim wealth and culture. In bin Laden's political theology, the 'occupation' of the peninsula by US forces was a central, defining moment. Al-Rahman and bin Laden after him thus decided that the primary target was now the US protector.³¹ Apostatic governments were still a worthy enemy, but the fight against them was relegated to secondary priority, worthwhile for those who had no chance to join the global fight against the dominant power. This fight was taken up by al-Qaeda as its most important mission.

The strategic objectives are long-term and potentially unlimited. It is the liberation and unification of the Umma in an Islamic state. What this might mean for Muslims in Western-dominated societies is unclear so far, but bin Laden's reported condemnation of Australia because of its role in East Timor – a largely Christian-dominated area with a Muslim minority – is a sobering indication. From the European perspective, his reference to Spain as previously Muslim territory is even more disquieting.³² It would no doubt become a major strategic consideration of militant Islamists if the intermediate goals were achieved one day. The major intermediate goal is to eliminate all non-Muslim presence and influence from the Muslim world, to expel, in particular, all Western military forces, beginning with those of the United States. Shorter-term goals are firstly the eviction of the United States from the Arabian peninsula and the overthrow of the Saud family – which would bring enormous financial resources to the cause – and secondly the dismantlement of Israel.

Obviously, there is no way to defeat the United States in open battle. If proof of that were needed, the campaign in Afghanistan provided it. But even earlier, al-Qaeda's doctrine had embraced the principle of asymmetric strategy: to look for the weak points in the enemy's posture and attack them with the best means available. For all its religious motivation, al-Qaeda sees the fight against the West as a political struggle in the Clausewitzian sense, a powerful struggle in which violence is instrumental in bending the will of

30. Op. cit. in note 7, pp. 22, 23.

31. Steven Simon and Daniel Benjamin, 'The Terror', *Survival*, vol. 43, no. 4, Winter 2001, pp. 5-18, esp. pp. 6-9.

32. Op. cit. in note 7, p. 86.

the adversary. For this, traditional military force is not needed. What is needed is to find the means by which the will of the more powerful party can be broken.³³

In this regard, al-Qaeda draws its hope from its assessment of itself and its enemy. Al-Qaeda leaders look on themselves as battle-hardened, determined warriors who are invincible because of their faith and because, they believe, they have the support of Allah. In contrast, the West, and the United States in particular, is seen as soft, hedonistic, averse to fighting, cowardly and attached to a good, affluent life. Since Western societies are assessed as godless and irreligious, they do not have access to the source of strength that feeds the courage of Muslim Jihad warriors. Al-Qaeda sees proof for this judgment in US talk of zero casualties, the preference for air over ground war, and its abrupt retreats from Lebanon in 1983 and Somalia in 1993 having suffered numbers of casualties that Muslim militants would consider acceptable.³⁴

From this analysis of the situation, a clear strategy emerges: to hit as hard as possible, and cause as many casualties, fatalities, and damage as possible, against the enemy's most vulnerable assets. Weak spots have included isolated military positions in Muslim countries where a culturally familiar and (occasionally) politically sympathetic environment provides shelter. Much more important – because they are more vulnerable, more valued, and thus offer more important leverage over the enemy's will – are targets, notably civilian ones, in the US homeland. To kill large number of US civilians, do damage to the US economy and destroy symbolic landmarks that are dear to Americans is, in the eyes of these strategists, the most decisive operation that they can conduct. It is equally true, however, that other targets with less leverage, but still with an impact on US will, will not be rejected if action can be taken with a reasonable prospect of success.

Weapons of mass destruction

The discussion of al-Qaeda's strategy has analysed the central position of shocking mass murder; this distinguishes this group – like other religious militants – from earlier terrorists to which Brian Jenkins's famous doctrine, that they do not want many people dead but many people watching, applies. In New York and Washington, knives were enough to turn aircraft into bombs. Had the plane that crashed into the second WTO tower carried a primitive, low-yield

33. Bruce W. Bennett, Christopher P. Twomey and Gregory F. Treverton, 1999: 'What Are Asymmetric Strategies?', RAND Document DB-246-OSD; Steven Metz and Douglas V. Johnson II, 2001: 'Asymmetry and U.S. Military Strategy: Definition, Background and Strategic Concepts', Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, Carlisle, Penn., January 2001.

34. See bin Laden's fatwa, www.azzaam.com/html/articlesdeclaration/htm.

(1-5 kt) nuclear weapon that exploded on impact, people within a radius of at least several hundred meters would have been killed, raising the number of fatalities by an order of magnitude. Precisely because of the changed strategic calculus of terrorists driven by politico-religious motivations, the possibility of their using weapons of mass destruction must be taken seriously; there is nothing in their political theology or their strategy that would stand in the way of resort to such means.

Aum Shinri Kyu has proven that this assessment is correct, although the case of the 1995 Tokyo attack also shows that even for a very wealthy and resourceful group, and including for chemical weapons, usually considered the easiest WMD to handle, using these weapons to maximum effect is no trivial task. The same is true for biological weapons (with which Aum Shinri Kyu experimented in vain), and for radiological weapons if it involves combining radioactive material and conventional explosives and detonating it in a way that contaminates more than a tiny area. It applies, with additional emphasis and force, to the technically most demanding WMD, nuclear weapons.

Al-Qaeda had shown an interest in these weapons even before 11 September.³⁵ Documents found in Afghanistan pointed to considerations on radiological weapons, and laboratory equipment was uncovered that gave indications that some experiments with CW production might have taken place. Eavesdropping on the Milan cell recorded discussions on the planned use of a (still unknown) allegedly very efficient chemical agent, and some documentation found in the United States also contained references to chemical weapons.

Even before 11 September, there were rumours that al-Qaeda had tried to obtain nuclear weapons, material and knowledge from the former Soviet Union. Later rumours alleged contacts with Pakistani nuclear scientists, two of whom were temporarily detained, apparently without firm evidence.³⁶ Little has been revealed about al-Qaeda's intentions concerning biological weapons. But since it is known that terrorists have considered using all other WMD, lack of evidence is no reason to suppose a lack of intent.

As stated, moving from intention to possession to successful use is no easy thing, even for a well-funded terrorist group. It became a more difficult progression for al-Qaeda after the group

35. Stefan Leader, 'Osama bin Laden and the terrorist search for WMD', *Jane's Intelligence Review*, June 1999, pp. 34-7.

36. BBC News, 25 October 2001, 'Pakistan holds nuclear scientists', news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/english/world/south_asia/newsid_1619000/1619252.stm.

had been deprived of its sanctuary in Afghanistan. This was one of the main achievements of the 2001-02 campaign: whatever plans and activities existed, it appears that they were aborted at an early date. The rumour in November 2002, of a planned CW attack on the London underground mentioned that the agent of choice was to be cyanide, a deadly but not the most effective chemical agent. It is precisely the one that was employed in the abortive 1993 World Trade Center incident, so this does not speak for great progress, so far, in al-Qaeda's CW development.

Al-Qaeda would certainly be greatly helped by external provision of ready-to-use weapons, and material or know-how. It is in this context that the G-8's '10 plus 10 over 10' programme adopted in summer 2002 that will spend US\$20 billion over a period of ten years to make WMD assets of all types in the former Soviet Union secure is of crucial importance and requires Europe's full and lasting support.³⁷ It is an unconventional instrument of European security, but one that serves it better and more directly than some of the military programmes the member states consider or push forward.

A militant Islamic group looks perhaps less attractive as an employer to former Soviet scientists and engineers and other 'WMD soldiers of fortune' from differing origins is more than a secular state government. The risk/gain calculus of the expert might tend to give more weight to the risk of being dependent on an alien group, and the lack of a sanctuary makes the idea of scientific mercenary less attractive. Unless the group succeeds in buying weapons on the spot – something authorities in former Soviet republics should be capable of preventing – it might not be so easy to enhance terrorist capabilities by enlisting external expertise.

This assessment does not apply to experts who are sympathetic towards the political theology of the terrorists. It cannot be ruled out – remember the Pakistani case – that individual Islamist radicals could work on WMD programmes in countries like Pakistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya or Iran, and seek or cultivate contacts with al-Qaeda operatives without the knowledge or approval of their masters. On this there is nothing in the public domain, but the possibility must be considered.

Finally, there is the much discussed possibility of active assistance by WMD-proliferating states to terrorists that is at the heart of the declaratory policy of the US government in favour of

37. Christina Chuen, Michael Jasinski and Tim Meyer, 'The 10 plus 10 over 10 Initiative: A Promising Start, But Little Substance So Far', <http://cns.miis.edu/pubs/week/020812>.

toppling Saddam Hussein's regime. An assessment of this risk requires an analysis of the capabilities, interests and strategic calculus of these states.

Organisation and operations

It is in the nature of terrorist groups that their organisational structure remains opaque. Al-Qaeda has frequently been described as a new type of terrorist network with extremely flat hierarchies and a minimised role played by the organisation.³⁸ Al-Qaeda is thus thought to be much less vulnerable to decapitation, and much more capable of continuing to operate if parts of the organisation are eliminated. This would certainly make the network much more frightening and gives it sort of a mythical aura. But is the description accurate?

There are a couple of reasons why the image of a hierarchy-less network does not appear to be completely plausible.

- ▶ *Socialisation and cultural milieu.* The overwhelming number of al-Qaeda terrorists originate from hierarchical, strictly patriarchal societies. It would be a major challenge for a group of people with this common socialisation to develop a revolutionary institutional structure that is so much different from the environment in which they have grown up.
- ▶ *Historical examples (Leitbilder).* Al-Qaeda, like all Islamists, looks back to the original Islamic community during the time of the Prophet and the first caliphs. While there was a certain degree of equality, there were also clear lines of hierarchy. They ran from the Prophet through his small group of advisers and close relatives to the broader community (three levels of hierarchy); and from the caliph through the viziers and the group of elders to the people (three to four levels). The assassins, an early Islamist terrorist group during the Middle Ages, likewise had the 'old man from the mountains' as supreme leader, a group of senior officers around him and young warriors that went out to kill apostates to order. Discipline was strict and enforcement harsh.
- ▶ *Personal experience.* For many in the al-Qaeda organisation, including the more senior members, one defining experience in their career was the war against the Soviets in Afghanistan. Even though guerrilla organisations' hierarchies are somewhat flatter than that of a formal army, they are nevertheless strictly hierarchical. The ideal consists of a line of command running from

38. Peter L. Bergen, *Holy War Inc. Inside the Secret World of Osama Bin Laden* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 2001); Udo Ulfkotte, *Propheten des Terrors. Das geheime Netzwerk der Islamisten* (München: Goldmann Verlag, 2001), pp. 15-50.

the field commander through a group of captains or lieutenants to the ordinary fighters. This personal contact will have shaped their approach to their terrorist activities.

- ▶ *Institutional constraints and selection mechanisms.* Terrorists operate in a dangerous and hostile environment. Discipline and suppression of deviant behaviour that is extremely dangerous to the survival of the group are an existential necessity. Extensive disputes may lead to equally fatal indecision. Authority is thus needed. This pushes these groups into leader-follower structures which, again, engenders hierarchy.
- ▶ *Sociogenetic/temporal aspects.* It is trivial to remark that organisations grow by some people being there at the start, others joining later, and others again entering after the second group. This makes for different levels of experience, and different degrees of mutual trust and familiarity. Usually these factors produce a hierarchical structure that puts those with the longest presence in the organisation more to the top and the rest more to the bottom. In terrorist enterprises where personal experience is an invaluable asset for the organisation, the above mechanism should play a significant role.³⁹

If we look from this viewpoint at the evidence we have about the al-Qaeda network, the following conclusions appear to be in order.

- ▶ There are three types of networking. In the *first*, al-Qaeda links up with existing autonomous national/regional/ethnic Islamist groups that have their own political agenda and organisational structure. Al-Qaeda lends support to these groups, including financial aid, technical advice, the seconding of personnel and the provision of ideas on how to act and what to target. Decision-making, though, is left to these groups alone. Lines of communication are horizontal rather than vertical. It appears that these groups are largely located in Third World countries (including the Caucasian region of Russia), but not in Europe. The second network links al-Qaeda to 'independent mujaheddin', small groups that rely on some support from al-Qaeda and are willing to respond to their ideas for activities, but are largely independent. The third network links al-Qaeda to cells consisting of people that were recruited, indoctrinated and trained by al-Qaeda, work on the agenda set by its leadership – the struggle against the United States and its allies – get their main funding, selection of targets and operations, and (possibly, but not certainly)

39. I rely, if not otherwise indicated, on Gunaratna, 2002; Rolf Tophoven, 'Neue terroristische Strukturen: Osama bin Laden und die "Al Qaida"', in Hans Frank and Kai Hirschmann (eds.), *Die weltweite Gefahr. Terrorismus als internationale Herausforderung* (Berlin: Berlin Verlag, 2002), pp. 245-62; Ulrich Schneekener, *Netzwerke des Terrors. Charakter und Strukturen des transnationalen Terrorismus* (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, 2002).

precise orders on operations from the al-Qaeda leadership. It is this type that presents the greatest risk to Europe. In addition, it appears that Jordanian al-Qaeda operative al-Zarqawi has built up a semi-independent terrorist network in Europe and North Africa that is capable of acting on its own.

• Bin Laden's issuing of fatwas prove a claim to authority. Fatwas are authoritative statements by religious leaders concerning the judgment, and prescriptions for the related behaviour of the faithful, with a claim to supreme truth and the need to adapt behaviour accordingly. While fatwas can be challenged by religious competitors, they inevitably contain a claim to authority. Bin Laden made this claim even though, as a religious layman, he is not supposed to have the authority to issue fatwas. In addition, the video and radio messages issued by the al-Qaeda leadership have the threefold function of impressing enemies, instigating mobilisation of the mass of the faithful and calling followers to action (they may also contain secret, coded messages to organisation members, but this is speculation). This is, again, a claim to authority. All these claims imply an awareness of hierarchy. The organisation of the centre into functional 'departments' – reported in all studies on al-Qaeda – points in the same direction.

• Most important, the evidence about organisational structure that we can draw from the break-up of the cells by Western security agencies points to the existence of an intermediate level between the al-Qaeda leadership and the operative cells. The identification of such 'nodes' as the weak spots in the networks that are the structure of the new type of 'netwar' has been diagnosed even by the theorists of very flat hierarchies.⁴⁰ What are these nodes and what are their functions?

■ First, they comprise assembly points for radical Islamists where sympathisers, that is, potential recruits, can collect and can be screened by al-Qaeda operatives. These assembly points are radical Mosques and Koran schools as well as extremist religious leaders and preachers who indoctrinate potential recruits.

■ Second, there are the recruiters who watch, screen and select young Muslims for al-Qaeda and direct them to training places – formerly Afghanistan, now unknown. These people would usually have some connection with the assembly

40. John Arquilla, David Ronfeldt and Michele Tanini, 'Networks, Netwar and Information-Age Terrorism', in Ian O. Lesser et al., *Countering the New Terrorism* (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND, 1999), pp. 39-84.

points, but also keep connections to the 'centre' where the training is carried out. London-based cleric Sheikh Omar Mahmood Abu Omar, alias Abu Quatada, recently arrested, is a case in point.⁴¹

- Third, there are the intermediaries, 'logistical guides' such as Ramzi Binalshib for the Hamburg cell, or regional chiefs, such as Abdel Rahim el Nashiri, the supposed leader of al-Qaeda in the Persian Gulf region, or Imam Samudra, the organiser of the Bali slaughter. They appear to serve as links between local/regional activities and the centre, with authority to issue messages (perhaps also orders), serve as a communication link and transfer financial and technical resources.

The nodes are vulnerable, since they stand out. They must articulate themselves at least semi-publicly (as regards the first function), be in touch with the first – observable – ones in order to do their job (the second) and travel and communicate (the third and partially the second). All these activities have observable signatures, which leaves them open to intelligence and police observation. They constitute weak links in an organisational chain that has become all too mystified by public media and political utterances. The main task for authorities is to direct their efforts accordingly.

The risks to European security

Given its ideology and its strategic thinking, it is clear that the United States will remain al-Qaeda's overarching target. Where the organisation cooperates with national terrorist networks, however, other targets also gain prominence. This is certainly true for Russia (because of Chechnya), India (because of Kashmir) or Israel (because of Palestine). However, the attacks against Australian tourists in Bali, and the reported statement by bin Laden that because of its engagement in East Timor Australia is anti-Islamic, indicate that operations can take unexpected directions that look strange to the external observer.

What does all this mean for Europe? What is the risk of European countries becoming targets of al-Qaeda or allied groups? We must expect the answer to depend on a group of variables, namely:

41. Glen Frankel, 'Britain arrests key figure tied to Al Qaeda', *International Herald Tribune*, 26/27 October 2002.

- ▶ special grievances against individual countries;
- ▶ opportunity of successful attack compared with other targets;
- ▶ the availability of infrastructure favouring the preparation and conduct of terrorist operations.

Special grievances

The existence of a 'special grievance' means that something in the policy of a European country is particularly averse, or seen as particularly hostile, to the views of Islamist extremists. France and Britain head the list. France attains this prominent position because of its perceived acquiescence or involvement in preventing the ascendancy of Islamists in Algeria, and its – supposed – support for the repressive campaign by the Algerian government against these Islamists. There is no need to prove this point. France was the victim of terrorist acts committed by the GIA in the mid-1990s, only just escaped an 11 September-like attack on the Eiffel Tower, was the planned target of an attack by the Frankfurt terrorist group, and obviously also the scene of an assault with chemical agents prepared by the Milan terrorist group, all of which had proven links to al-Qaeda.

Britain finds itself in the line of fire because it is America's closest ally and most visible in the campaign against terror using military means, as proven during the operations in Afghanistan. Its hostile position towards Iraq – its participation in the perpetual enforcement of the no-fly zones as well as support for the US policy of considering the forceful removal of the Iraqi regime – might also enhance its prominence in Islamist terrorists' eyes as a leading hostile power. As bin Laden previously perceived the first Gulf War as an offensive against Islam, he (and/or his followers/successors) will not fail to do so again; the reported warning by al-Qaeda leader Al-Zuwahiri and the later statement by what is believed was bin Laden himself support this point.

Germany, also included in each warning, occupies a less prominent position, but its involvement in Afghanistan might still be visible (and, in the eyes of radical Islamists, objectionable) enough to attract attention. Al-Zuwahiri's and bin Laden's threats appear to confirm this. Among other European countries, Spain's possessions in North Africa appear not to have incited hostility among terrorist groups so far, but given bin Laden's invective against Australia because of East Timor, could well do so in the future. Spain,

together with Italy, might also instigate hostile feelings because of restrictive immigration policies aimed at migrants from northern Africa and from Kosovo, all inevitably of Muslim faith. It appears unlikely that additional European countries will appear on the list of 'particular grievances' in the near future.

One point that emerges here and should not be lost, but is picked up again in the discussion of the transatlantic relationship below, is that, though Europe, as part of the West, is fundamentally at risk of becoming a target, that risk is significantly enhanced for those countries that have a high profile in the campaign against terror. Aligning visibly with the United States is a move – made for good reasons – that nevertheless brings with it additional dangers for the countries that so decide. It would be desirable for the US government and public to be more aware of this risk which its allies are taking in the interests of solidarity.

Opportunity

Opportunity depends on three factors: the availability of 'good' targets, the prospects of successful preparation and operation, and – in that same context – a more benign environment in terms of the measures taken by authorities to prevent terrorism as compared with those in other potential target states.

In principle, targets attractive to al-Qaeda and related groups abound in all European states. In the first line are US installations such as military facilities, embassies and consulates-general as well as less obvious sites such as US-run schools, universities or cultural assets. In the same vein, Israeli and Jewish sites are particularly endangered and are also widely available across Europe. Beyond this, there is no limit to the perverse phantasy of the terrorists to choose targets that serve the strategy discussed above: to create maximum damage, pain and grief in order to force the withdrawal of the attacked state from the 'war against Islam'. As the aborted attack on the Eiffel Tower indicates, highly destructive assaults against targets of the highest symbolic or cultural value are a constant possibility. They are found in almost every major European city, and it is not possible to draft a 'short list' that would give the guarantee that everything of value can be protected. But it has to be noted that Brussels, being the home of EU and NATO headquarters, certainly attracts more attention than most other cities.

The prospects of a successful operation depend, of course, on the possibility that countermeasures by the authorities are likely to identify and apprehend the terrorists before they can act successfully. It is thus important for European states to pay continuous, close attention to the problem and exert maximum possible pressure on terrorists without undermining the constitutional principles and individual liberties the protection of which motivates the fight against terrorism in the first place. European states must not lower their guard even if there is a lull in terrorist attacks, if other, non-European targets appear to be of greater interest to them, or if a series of successes appears to confirm the efficiency of the work of European authorities.

For, in the end, 'opportunity' is no absolute, but a relative concept. Terrorists operating globally will always compare the obstacles they are facing in one place with those elsewhere. And they will usually choose, if targets of roughly equal value present themselves in two different states, the one where resistance is likely to be lower. It is thus crucial that counter-terrorist measures should be applied effectively across Europe. As European governments erect additional barriers to terrorist attacks, so too do others. It is thus essential to avoid a 'funnel effect' in Europe, whereby the energies and activities of terrorists are channelled towards the spot deemed weakest. This applies equally within Europe: in particular, Schengen countries should do their utmost to erect and maintain an equal level of counter-terrorist protection and proficiency. One should also bear in mind that, in non-democratic states, repression is harsher and intrusion into private life can reach levels that are absolutely prohibited and unthinkable in democracies. In addition, we have to note that elsewhere the shock of 11 September has permitted central authorities to impose more constraints on individual liberties than European publics are (quite understandably) willing to tolerate. If such gaps open and cannot be closed by adopting the same types of measures, then other measures must be substituted.

What is needed is thus not an imitation of measures taken in the United States. Rather, to achieve optimum effectiveness with measures and authority presently available must be the first and foremost aim within Europe. The lessons of 11 September do not point to a lack of legal authority, surveillance instruments or

similar assets for police and intelligence services. On the contrary, they indicate an astonishing failure of authorities to implement what lawmakers had entrusted to them. It begins with a failure to maintain a translation capability to evaluate intelligence intercepted in good time. Moreover, the intelligence community was aware of a threat against US territory, had ample evidence that terrorists were considering the use of commercial aircraft as instruments to carry out attacks, had observed a meeting of al-Qaeda operatives in Kuala Lumpur in January 2000 two of whom, Khalid al-Mihdhar and Nawaf al-Hazmi, would later join a flight school in the United States, live together with another of the later hijackers, Hani Hanjour, and participate in the 11 September attacks, had produced a specific warning from an agent on the increased participation of Islamists suspected of having terrorist connections in flight training and had detained Zacharias Moussaoui in August 2001 because he wanted to learn to fly only, not to start or to land.⁴² Yet they were unable to connect these leads and build up a coherent picture. Without these flaws, it is quite likely that at least some of the perpetrators would have been captured before 11 September, and that the framework of the plot would have been uncovered from Zacharias Moussaoui's computer that the FBI failed to tap, not because it lacked the authority but, incredibly, because of a mistaken legal understanding of what authority was available. Incredibly, even the Hamburg group was under the surveillance of German and US intelligence while it was preparing for the 11 September attacks.⁴³ Rather than thinking up all the pipe dreams of an authoritarian security state that, as terrorist attacks in Saudi Arabia or Pakistan have amply shown, is all but immune to that sort of threat, the agencies responsible for internal security should be instructed to apply what they have got as best they can. In addition, intra-European cooperation and coordination must be optimised. If this is done well, the deterrent walls against terrorists will be as high as we can make them.

In Europe, the most important measure is not necessarily the additional empowerment of agencies with additional legal authority, but rather increased cooperation, the enhancement of technical capability and the provision of additional manpower for agencies often severely lacking in resources that are overwhelmed by the fourfold burden of fighting organised crime, economic crime, illegal migration and terrorism.

42. US Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, 'Joint Inquiry Statement, Part I', Eleanor Hill, Staff Director, Joint Inquiry Staff, 18 September 2002; US Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, 'The Intelligence Community's Knowledge of the September 11 Hijackers Prior to September 11, 2001', Eleanor Hill, Staff Director, Joint Inquiry Staff, 20 September 2002.

43. Oliver Schröm, 'Im Visier der besonnenen Fahnder', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung*, 12 January 2003.

Infrastructure

Terrorists need an environment that permits the preparation of operations without the immediate risk of being detected. What Mao Tse-tung once said about the guerrilla applies to the terrorist as well: he must be able to swim in the people like the fish in water. To operate successfully, Islamist terrorists need large Islamic communities in both their host and target states.

It is, of course, necessary to qualify this statement and to be as precise as possible. It is not meant that Islamic communities are identical or sympathising with or supportive of terrorist groups. That is not the case. Most Muslims living in Western Europe are as appalled by al-Qaeda as their fellow citizens and reject both the fundamentalist ideal of an Islamic society and state and the militant's addiction to violent means to achieve it; it is essential to realise that terrorism as well as fundamentalism are not majority movements in the Islamic world: if anything, it appears that fundamentalism is on the decline.⁴⁴ Many Muslims are very well integrated into societal, economic and political life. Yet the existence of a broad cultural community permits the terrorists to hide among the cultural 'background noise' that makes their quick identification impossible. This is an inevitable consequence of the new composition of urban populations in West European metropolises, and will remain so in the future.

Within these communities, there is always a certain probability that a proportion of them will naturally be alienated by their new environment. In addition, racist and hostile attitudes towards immigrants, failure of authorities to protect immigrants against such racist assaults, restrictive immigration policies that put immigrants under special, discriminatory legal and economic regimes, and a failure to fulfil economic or career expectations, can create pockets of diffident and dissatisfied persons, notably among the youth, that create a pool of sympathisers, helpers and potential recruits for terrorist groups. Zacharias Moussaoui, the 'twentieth hijacker' of 11 September, is a case in point: a highly ambitious youth, he became a victim of racist attacks, including by the police, and developed increasing hatred against the Western world that, in his view, had denied him his due. Islamism became the tool for stabilising his personality, and violent Jihad the way to take his revenge. It is important to note that this type of career is a possibility, not a necessity: Moussaoui's elder brother, Abd

44. Gilles Kepel, *Jihad. Expansion et déclin de l'islamisme* (Paris: Gaillard, 2000), Part III; Olivier Roy, *The Failure of Political Islam* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998).

Samad, who came from the same milieu, took a quite different path – towards successful integration.⁴⁵ In this sense, right-wing, conservative policies that are anti-immigration and anti-integration, and thereby foster a feeling of alienation, particularly among young Muslims, do a dangerous disservice to the security of their countries. Even though they are used to thinking of themselves as bulwarks of domestic security, in that regard, the proponents of such policies are emphatically not.

Finally, within large Muslim communities, there is also the likelihood that a certain number of extremist religious leaders abuse the liberty accorded to them in democracies to preach hatred and violence. The mosques and Koran schools which they lead become nodes for indoctrination, recruitment, and networking. They provide a meeting place for sympathisers and new adepts for terrorist groups. Messages can be distributed and money exchanged. Tolerance of these practices, quite wrongly, under the banner of religious freedom, has been self-defeating. Mosques and leaders of this type are found across Europe, with a particularly strong concentration in the United Kingdom. Curbing the activities of these nodes of terror without further alienating Muslim communities is one of the immediate tasks for the European campaign against terrorism.

Another related factor which needs mentioning is the availability of potential allies who do not originate from the Islamist milieu but share some of its aversions, enemy images and inclination to use violence. The reaction of rightist extremists to 11 September suggests that assistance might be offered by such groups to Islamist terrorists, out of a shared feeling of hostility towards the United States, Jews and Israel. It is also conceivable, though we have not seen strong indications, that anti-Americanism may feed sympathies, on the extremist left, for bin Laden and his kind.

If we take all three factors into account – grievances, opportunity and infrastructure – we must conclude that the larger European countries, notably France, the United Kingdom, Germany and, some distance behind them, Italy and Spain, plus Brussels as a most visible city, are the most likely to host active terrorist cells and risk becoming the target of terrorist operations. The risk for the rest is not zero, notably because individual idiosyncrasies play a strong role in terrorism and make the results of strategic analyses, like the one proposed here, somewhat contingent and hazardous. But there is little more we can do.

45. Nicolas Richter, 'Sie sassen da und schwiegen', *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, 28 October 2002, p. 3.

Coping with ‘megaterrorism’: short- and long-term responses

From these considerations, a few consequences can be drawn on how to fight this type of terrorism. No strategy, however, will be perfect. The nature of the beast means that terrorist incidents will occur, and people, sometimes many people, will die. Our societies must be prepared to sustain some degree of casualties without breaking down. This is the first and main requirement of a long-haul fight against this scourge.

Immediate responses

One of the most frequent flaws in discussions about combating terrorism is a failure to distinguish between the effectiveness of measures over time. Terrorism is a phenomenon that will not disappear over night, no matter what countermeasures we take. Strategies for the long term are needed. Nevertheless, at the same time terrorism is an imminent threat that requires a focus on the here and now as well; with some effort and good luck, terrorist attacks can be uncovered in advance and prevented. Anti-terrorist strategies must thus include instruments that have both immediate and long-term effects.⁴⁶

Military action

Some idealists believe that the military has no role to play in the fight against terrorism. Today we hear voices that, because Osama bin Laden has not been caught, Afghanistan is not yet stable and many al-Qaeda operatives have moved to Pakistan and elsewhere, the Afghan campaign was a failure. This is utter nonsense. The Afghan campaign eliminated al-Qaeda’s ability to train large numbers of people in combat and terrorist techniques in an undisturbed environment, and to build weapon laboratories to enhance the effectiveness of its activities, which was a real achievement. Overall, however, the use of military means against terrorism is certainly of limited value – which is why the almost single-minded emphasis of the United States on the military instrument and preemptive action is so misplaced⁴⁷ – but it is not without value in those situations where terrorism takes on a territorial dimension and thus becomes susceptible to military operations that depend on having, a target with coordinates to be effective. Military power

46. I agree with the line taken by Paul R. Pillar, *Terrorism and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 2001), possibly the best treatise on anti-terrorist strategy.

47. Michael Howard, ‘What’s in a Name?’, *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 81, no. 1, 2002, pp. 8-13.

must be applied whenever a state gives terrorists a sanctuary, wittingly or unwittingly, and proves unwilling or incapable to reign them in. Terrorists use sanctuaries to develop quasi-military structures such as camps, storage areas, headquarters and laboratories that are legitimate objectives for military attack. In these cases, forceful action to terminate these activities, under UN Security Council mandates, is an inescapable and very useful ingredient of the campaign against terrorism. Acting via the Security Council – except in a situation where there is clear evidence of an imminent attack – is plainly preferable to a radical broadening of the meaning of ‘self-defence’ as proposed in the US National Security Strategy. Leaving it up to individual governments to interpret the terrorist-host nation relationship and decide upon action will open a Pandora’s box of abuse where terrorism is used as a pretext for national aggression. It must be left to the international community to decide upon the appropriate measures to be adopted when a state harbours a terrorist organisation in defiance of a Security Council request to sever that relationship.

Intelligence and police

The first line of short-term defence, however, remains intelligence and police work.⁴⁸ As stated above, the problem is not so much increasing empowerment as the perfect use of present authority, and the enhancement of technical and staff capability. If, instead of enhancing the intrusion into the daily lives of citizens, two hundred staff with Arab, Pakistani and Indonesian language capabilities, Muslim faith and intimate knowledge of the culture of immigrant communities were added, the gain would be all the greater. Indeed, the single most effective measure to enhance our defensive capabilities is, in the true sense of the word, pedestrian: a significant enlargement of the number of Muslim police, daily patrolling suburbs with a Muslim majority, developing relations of trust with the immigrant populations and detecting signs of unusual appearances and activities in their district. That sort of friendly and trusted social control is so much more productive than profiling techniques that criminalise whole sectors of the population and lead to resentment and alienation, curbing cooperation between immigrants and authorities and thereby increasing the ‘background noise’ in which the terrorists love to hide. Raising the percentage of Muslim policemen so that it equates to the percentage of Muslims in the population and employing them on foot

48. Richard K. Betts, ‘Fixing Intelligence’, *ibid.*, pp. 43-59.

patrol is probably the foremost anti-terrorist measure easily available to European societies. However, it runs counter to the prevailing tendencies to cut down on personnel, introduce extra legislation and depend on high technology.

Within the Union, enhancing coordination and strengthening the information pool available to national authorities is essential. The creation of the Terrorism Task Force within Europol with analytical and information-dissemination capabilities has already enhanced coordination among member states. The Open Source Digest has proven an important instrument for providing authorities in all member states with the same level of information that is openly accessible. Of great value is the Arabic-English translation system, which is essential for evaluating the large quantity of intelligence information that is only available in Arabic, and helps those member states with inadequate translating facilities to keep up with this important source of information.⁴⁹

Of great use in this regard is the Union's common definition of terrorism and also the agreement to define what a terrorist crime is and to impose common minimum penalties on perpetrators.⁵⁰ Another enormously important tool is the new common European arrest warrant, but it will become effective only in 2004.⁵¹

Part of this policing effort relates to the uncovering, freezing and confiscation of terrorists' financial assets. The Europeans, as members of the Financial Aid Task Force and by complementing their internal money-laundering instrument, directive 91/308, participate in this effort. In addition to this internal work, Europeans must help exert pressure on those Gulf countries that are still a major source of terrorist financial support and are hesitant to fulfil promises and obligations to curb that support.⁵²

Preparing to cope with emergencies

As stated above, prevention will not always be successful. It is imperative to prepare sufficient capacity to cope with the consequences of attacks. The courageous work of New York's police and firefighters is a case in point. The consequences of the collapse of the Twin Towers would have been unimaginable in a community with less well organised emergency services.

Some types of emergencies could overwhelm even well prepared response capacities of small, medium or even large states. This applies to attacks involving weapons of mass destruction or attacks on targets whose destruction could cause mass casualties,

49. EUROPOL Report, Brussels, 2001, pp. 12-14.

50. Council Decision 2002/475/JI.

51. Council Document 14867/1/01 REV 1.

52. Jonathan M. Winer and Trifin J. Roule, 'Fighting Terrorist Finance', *Survival*, vol. 44, no. 3, Autumn 2002, pp. 87-104.

such as dams, chemical facilities containing hazardous material or nuclear power plants. For these contingencies, the preparation of the population, national health systems, decontamination services and forces for the enforcement of public order is essential. These agencies must also be prepared to take in reinforcements from abroad and integrate them without delay and effectively in an overall response system. They must also combine military and civilian assets, as the ability to deal with these threats is spread across sectors.

The legal foundations for such transborder and cross-sector emergency assistance must be laid, and the organisations required to work together must be well trained for cooperation in the most difficult circumstances. The recent EU joint exercise to thwart a BC weapons attack, conducted in southern France, was a promising beginning, but needs enhancement and elaboration. Likewise, it is all very well that Britain is preparing its citizens for BC attacks by issuing specific instructions;⁵³ however, in London, the capital most likely to be the victim of such an attack, there are at any given moment a six-figure number of non-British people on the streets, most of them fellow Europeans. It would make much more sense in terms of an effective, Europe-wide response capacity to have common instructions on how to react in an emergency. Otherwise, the risk will be even greater that scores of humans will be confused, whereas coordinated action could save many lives.

Maintaining public morale

The terrorists' aim is to break the will of the polity. A democratic community's political will, in the end, rests with the people. Often overlooked in the theatre of media spectacle over terrorism, the single most effective, persistent, and therefore most important countermeasure to the terrorist threat is the determined refusal of the population to have their everyday lives disrupted, and their courage to live as normal even in the face of the permanent threat that a horrific incident may take their lives or those of their loved ones. Only if this attitude of the people can be kept up will the terrorists lose out. It is for this reason that the war metaphor promoted by the US president is not a good idea. The metaphor serves to mobilise political will and to legitimate quite extraordinary powers for the executive and, therefore, helps the short-term interests of the powers that be. But all the same it produces extraordinary uncertainty and anxiety and, if 'the war' is not won quickly but drags on – which, given

53. Sarah Lyall, 'Britain to advise public on surviving gas warfare', *International Herald Tribune*, 16 November 2002.

the type of enemy, is unfortunately inevitable – serves to discourage people from living normal lives. What we need instead is every possible encouragement for normalcy. It is the preservation of normalcy that kills the momentum of terrorism.⁵⁴

The most counterproductive move that one can think of, in this context, is generalised warnings of imminent danger without any indication as to what the population is to watch out for, and how it is supposed to protect itself. Yet that is exactly what the chiefs of intelligence and police services have been providing in autumn 2002. It is hard to see the point in this, unless it is a general way of covering themselves in case something horrible happens, when the heads of agencies can then say ‘we told you so’. Never mind that ominous warnings without any proposed remedy are likely to spread panic and anxiety in a population that is, understandably, already fairly nervous. Yet spreading panic is exactly what the terrorists want to achieve. Are we really willing to pay intelligence officials high salaries to do Osama bin Laden’s work for him?

Middle- and long-term options

Solving conflicts

Intrastate and international conflicts do not necessarily cause terrorism, and their end does not necessarily terminate it. Yet conflicts such as the Israeli-Palestinian one, or the struggles over Chechnya or Kashmir, serve as reference points for terrorist propaganda worldwide (as they imply double standards that discriminate against Muslims) and as a breeding ground for recruits for terrorist organisations among the young on the deprived and disadvantaged side in these conflicts. In this sense, solving violent struggles in a way that would generally be regarded as acceptable and just by majorities on either side would help, over time, to reduce and eventually drain the pool of young adults prone to using violence for their political (or religio-political) objectives.⁵⁵

The end to the Afghan civil war (apart from doing away with al-Qaeda bases and the power of their Taliban protectors) thus offered the hope that the number of Afghans available for terrorist recruitment would shrink considerably, as their energies can now be redirected to the civilian, productive strands of life.

54. Op. cit. in note 46.

55. Barry R. Posen, ‘The Struggle against Terrorism: Grand Strategy, Strategy and Tactics’, *International Security*, vol. 26, no. 3, Winter 2001/02, pp. 39-55.

The European Union has been involved in conflict solution and peace building and, therefore, disposes of experiences and proven instruments in this field.⁵⁶ It would surpass the brief of this paper to go into this question in more detail. Europeans should be aware that this is a segment of the campaign against terrorism where they should commit themselves with a considerable effort.

The most important conflict in that regard is the one between Israel and the Palestinians. It serves as a rallying point for the whole Muslim world, its Arab part in particular. Thus, it is aligning a mobilised population against Israel and the West, the United States as the visible protector of Israel in particular. The formula pursued by the Sharon government – first, an end to terrorism, then negotiations and (maybe) a Palestinian state – negates the dialectics between the status quo and violence. While understandably putting Israeli security first and foremost, its consequences undermine that very security. Without the clear and credible prospect of change (most particularly through an end to new settlements and the removal of existing ones such as those in Gaza and Hebron) the Palestinian population cannot be turned away from tolerating, condoning, abetting or supporting violent actions that they view as part of resistance, even though they are in fact horrible crimes against innocent civilians.

Europeans need to take a clear, consistent stand on these issues, not least in their relations with the United States, which is today the only actor capable of influencing Israel. All the support, economic as well as military, that a peace process needs, should be made available. In terms of the long-term campaign against terrorism, a full, visible and credible Western commitment to a lasting Middle East peace is certainly the most important step – not under any delusion that terrorism would stop overnight, but with the expectation that one of its main sources would dry up in the long run.

Assistance in building legitimate state authority

Afghanistan was not exactly a 'failed state' when it became a serious problem as a refuge for transnational terrorism. At that time, the outcome of the civil war appeared largely decided, and the Taliban controlled more than 90 per cent of the national territory, which is

56. For the Commission, see http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/cfsp/new/ip_01_560_en.htm.

certainly more than many recognised governments around the world. Nevertheless, after the overthrow of the Taliban, building a new sovereign state with sufficient legitimacy and an effective monopoly of force within Afghan territory became a crucial international task. It quickly became evident that overcoming the Taliban and al-Qaeda with military means was not enough to eliminate the terrorist menace. Enduring support for Afghan state-building will remain a precondition for preventing Afghan territory from becoming a sanctuary for terrorists again. This will require a long-term military, political and economic commitment.

The same is true where state authority is lacking altogether, as in Somalia. Such places must be closely watched for their proclivity to become safe harbours for new terrorist infrastructures. Many states in sub-Saharan Africa are hardly states at all in the accepted sense. Many of them have sizeable, alienated populations and/or Muslim minorities or majorities. Where the gaping vacuum of power and authority threatens to attract terrorists, the international community must be prepared to decide quickly and decisively on intervention, and, if intervention occurs, to create stable institutions that grant human and minority rights, develop practices of good governance and promote growth and public welfare.

The decision to devolve sovereign authority from a country to the international community is not one that can be taken by a single state. It behoves the legitimate organ of the community itself, the Security Council, to mandate this fateful type of intervention. Given its global reach and unlimited will to use violence, transnational terrorism is the incarnation of the 'threat to peace and security' that it is the Security Council's mission to counter. In mandating this type of action, the international community assumes a heavy responsibility. The people in the country concerned – suffering as they are in any case – have a right to expect a serious and long-term follow-up to any short-term military action driven by concern that terrorists may take over or exploit a situation where the state is no longer in control.

With their particular interest in and special relations with Africa, Europeans are well placed to make a major contribution to such state-building endeavours if the need arises. Long-term state-building, however, is clearly the superior concept in comparison with pre-emptive or preventive military action. The latter is event-

focused and a tactical placebo rather than a strategic remedy. In order to seal off countries from terrorism for good, a long haul, not short-term activism, is required.

Helping with development: the question of justice

Not every terrorist is poor. Bin Laden, for one, is very rich. But poverty provides the background for alienation and resentment and helps terrorists with their recruitment activities. There are considerable misgivings in the developing world about the distribution of wealth and power in the world. These misgivings concern the relationship between North and South, but also the fact of miserable governance and distributional injustice within the South itself. While not an immediate cause of terrorism, this situation, like certain conflicts as discussed above, make the ground fruitful for attempts at terrorist recruitment. Stable economic, social and political environments that create realistic hopes for betterment in the future and for successful careers for young people are a powerful antidote (though not a perfect guarantee) against the temptations of terrorism.

Resources available for development aid, state-building and the support of civil society must be definitely enhanced. The developed world has failed to provide the 0.7 per cent of GNP that it was to devote to development aid for more than two decades, and the country spending most lavishly on military investment, the United States, has the poorest record among the industrialised countries. The promise given in Monterey in 2002 to enhance US development spending by \$5 billion, though highly welcome, does not really change the imbalance significantly. The EU, in contrast, has made development policy a centrepiece of its external relations from the outset. It is a true strength of the Union, even if some member states could do better in enhancing the funds available for development assistance. We have to develop the understanding that these are investments for our own security as well as help for the welfare of far-away people. The more countries in the world are on the path of stable and sustainable development, the less people will be desperate enough, or so alienated and frustrated, that terrorism presents an irresistible temptation. Thus, while calls for enhanced defence spending are heard loudly, the relationship between defence and development spending has to change rather in favour of the latter.

Cultural dialogue

Lastly, engaging seriously across cultural boundaries is an important ingredient in the fight against terrorism.⁵⁷ This transcultural dialogue is essential for Europe, as it of course contains citizens of different cultural origin who are supposed to live and work together peacefully anyway. That dialogue can have many facets. One very valuable approach is the Barcelona process, which links the European Union with its Mediterranean neighbours.⁵⁸

Governmental activities in this field must certainly be supported by a strong non-governmental pillar. Local communities, non-governmental organisations, the churches and Islamic communities all have roles to play in it. Initiatives like that taken by the Turkish government or the Pope in the aftermath of 11 September 2001 are certainly very useful steps. Long-term projects like the one to establish the elements of a transcultural 'world ethos'⁵⁹

also serve a useful purpose: The definition of a common basis of values that is the heritage of all cultures and religions goes a long way towards defusing the hermetic boundaries that fundamentalists want to draw around themselves and serves the exclusionary notion of 'we against them' that is always part of the terrorist rhetoric about the world. At the same time, understanding and respecting differences where they exist is equally important. Learning about the other culture is a good start in self-immunisation against the terrorist poison.

Conclusion

There is no panacea against the threat of terrorism as it appeared before the world on 11 September 2001. The counter-strategy calls for a complex and expensive set of instruments, as the causes of terrorism are themselves deep-rooted and complex. All elements in this set are essential. None is dispensable. Only taken together will they result in a useful tool with which the threat can be tackled on all fronts. The risk involved in apparently quick and easy (military) technological solutions is obvious; so is the almost instinctive drive to enhance the legal authority of intelligence and police services at the cost of civil liberties and with only vague prospects of success in countering terrorism. Long-term aspects of anti-terrorist strategies always run the danger of being overlooked and underfinanced,

57. Mohammed Abu-Nimer, 'Conflict Resolution, Culture, and Religion: Toward a Training Model of Interreligious Peacebuilding', *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 38, no. 6, November 2001, pp. 685-704.

58. Dorothee Schmid, 'Optimiser le processus de Barcelone', *Occasional Paper 40* (Paris: EU Institute for Security Studies, 2002).

59. Hans Küng, 1993: *Projekt Weltoffenheit* (München: R. Piper Verlag, 1998).

with regrettable consequences. Given the present American inclination to bet on the more traditional instruments of enhancement of military and state power, the Europeans would be well advised to keep the broader strategic picture in mind.

WMD proliferation

The second, not completely unrelated security problem of our time is the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. As for the structure and capabilities of terrorists, much of our knowledge about the capabilities of states trying to acquire weapons of mass destruction remains within the realm of speculation. Proliferators rarely come out in the open; the recent revelations by North Korea itself (unclear as they are as of today) remain an exception. The signatures of activities vary from nuclear reprocessing and certain types of uranium enrichment (which is highly visible due to heat emissions) to biological agent growing (very invisible due to small space and negligible energy needs). And it is erroneous to believe that what governments know from their services gives them much more certainty about the real capabilities than ordinary mortals can learn from open sources; the difference in knowledge is relative, not absolute most of the time and in most cases.

It is also necessary to acknowledge that threat analysis of WMD cannot be based only on an assessment of capabilities. That assessment is essential, certainly, but it must be combined with intention and strategy. French or British nuclear weapons are not a concern for their European partners, as the relations are amicable and there is no intention in Paris or London to threaten nuclear use against any European country. In order to understand the risk entailed in proliferators' WMD we must understand whether there are circumstances and objectives that might induce these countries to employ their weapons against Europe. The third element in threat assessment is remedies. A threat against which instruments are available is less horrible than one that cannot be countered.

The following assessments are based on a detailed comparison and scrutiny of recent reports on the status of proliferation of WMD and their means of delivery, with the emphasis on Iraq.

Proliferation in far-away regions: North Korea, South Asia

All WMD proliferation is worrying. It is far from certain to result in stable deterrence relationships and much more likely to create risks of instability in the region where it occurs.⁶⁰ In addition, it presents a serious challenge to the global regimes designed to curb or eliminate the threat of WMD. Proliferation will therefore always tend to diminish European security, just as regional stability and robust global regimes contribute to it. In addition, since the United States with its global interests is a significant strategic actor in all regions of the world, European interests will always be concerned if WMD are used or their use is threatened in far-away regions, because the political repercussions working their way through US policies and politics will never be negligible. Nevertheless, in a narrow sense only proliferation that relates directly to European territory, because of existing quarrels between European countries and the proliferators and by geographical proximity – measured in terms of the range of the means of delivery available to proliferators – will be discussed as a threat to European security. It should be noted that proliferation in general is detrimental to European interests in a political sense, but only a segment of proliferation events amount to a *threat* to Europe.

It is for this reason that the virulent proliferation in North Korea can be left out for the time being. Europeans have not been involved in the peninsula except through their efforts in recent years to help diplomatically with détente, notably through establishing diplomatic relations with Pyongyang. Due to distance and lack of geopolitical interest, there are no political quarrels pitting North Korea against Europe. North Korea's chemical weapons, its presumed efforts to develop a biological weapons capability and its admitted nuclear programme – including recently admitted uranium enrichment activities – do not concern Europe directly. They relate to the country's regional situation and are, in the first place, a deterrent as well as a bargaining chip vis-à-vis the United States. Nevertheless, the *Taepo Dong II*, a ballistic missile under development with an estimated range of up to 10,000 km, would be of interest to Europe, as it opens up the prospect of bringing Europe within reach. The missile, not yet flight-tested, could be ready for deployment late in the current decade.⁶¹ North Korea remains a headache because of its policy of gaining hard currency

60. Scott D. Sagan and Kenneth N. Waltz, *The spread of nuclear weapons: a debate* (New York: Norton, 1995).

61. US National Intelligence Council, Foreign Missile Development and the Ballistic Missile Threat Through 2015, Washington, DC, 2001, pp. 4, 9; Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Carnegie Analysis, 'Chemical and Biological Weapons in the Middle East', www.ceip.org/files/nonrolif/templates/article.asp?NewsID=2669; 16 April 2002, pp. 241-54.

through the transfer of missiles and missile technology, but it is not a direct threat.

The same is true for South Asia.⁶² Europe is certainly concerned that the tense Indian-Pakistani relationship could escalate out of control and lead to the world's first nuclear exchange ever. But by the same token, Europe entertains viable relations with both countries. India, the state with the greater potential technically and in nuclear and missile terms, is an economic partner of growing importance. Relations with Pakistan are of less significance economically, but are far from being adversarial: like the United States, Europe has a strong interest in Pakistan's stable development as the only long-term hope of reducing the country's unfortunate role as a seedbed of radical, militant and violence-prone Islamist radicalism.

While India's nuclear weapons have a global significance in the eyes of the Indian élite, affording the country the status of world power, strategically both India and Pakistan think and adopt postures in regional terms, within the Chinese-Indian-Pakistani triangle of deterrence. The range of missiles remains confined to this zone, and Pakistan in particular has a long way to go before its missile range can be extended to the point that it can threaten European territory. Its longest-range missile, the *Shaheen II* (possibly 2,500 km), only recently on the drawing board, would not even reach the eastern shores of the Mediterranean.⁶³ So even if Pakistan should fall into the hands of the radicals – a sobering and improbable, but not impossible, contingency – there would be no immediate military threat to Europe. Indian and Pakistani nuclear and missile proliferation is a serious political, but not military security concern for the Europeans. However, it goes without saying that a nuclear exchange in South Asia would strongly affect the European Union, since it would change the parameters of world politics

Minor concerns, major proximity: Israel, Egypt, Libya and Syria

Israel

Israel is rarely included in the 'list of proliferators', and in official American documents on the problem of proliferation it is conspicuously absent. Yet it is by far the most capable country, in terms of

62. Andrew C. Winner and Toshi Yoshihara, 'India and Pakistan at the Edge', *Survival*, vol. 44, no. 3, Autumn 2002, pp. 69-86.

63. US Department of Defense, Office of the Secretary of Defense, 'Proliferation: Threat and Response', Washington, DC, 2001, p. 29; US National Intelligence Council, op. cit. in note 61, pp. 13, 14; Carnegie Endowment, op. cit. in note 61, pp. 207-20.

non-conventional weapons and their delivery, in the Middle East, in addition to its impressive conventional superiority. Israel is credited with a nuclear force of between 100 and 200 warheads, aircraft capable of carrying them (F-15I), and two types of ballistic missiles, the *Jericho I* (500 km range) and the *Jericho II* (1,500-2,000 km), second in range only to the largely useless, inaccurate and obsolete CSS-3 missile acquired by Saudi Arabia from China during the 1980s. Israel is believed to have some chemical weapons capability and at least to conduct intense research on biological weapons in its Biological Research Institute at Nes Tzyona.⁶⁴

While the *Jericho II* could reach much of southern and central Europe, Israel is not seen as a threat to Europeans. Relations are at a minimum correct, mostly good, and to some of the EU member states (Netherlands, Germany) very close. The EU entertains a free-trade zone with Israel, and economic, political and cultural contacts are frequent and intense.

Although Europeans genuinely care for Israel's security, they tend to be much more critical than the United States of Israeli policies towards the Palestinians. In particular, occupation of Gaza and the West Bank and the operations of the IDF in the occupied territories are openly and frequently criticised. For there is the feeling that, while Israeli WMD do not affect European security, they have a negative bearing on it, if only indirectly. In upholding an imbalance that is seen as threatening or unbearable, for reasons of status, by its Arab neighbours, and in combination with the unresolved issue of continued occupation of Arab territory, these weapons and their delivery means create a stimulus on the Arab side to catch up. In other words, the weapons that Israel believes it needs to guarantee its own security lead to the search for an equaliser in certain Arab countries that, in turn, tends to diminish Israeli security and has an impact on European security as well.

Egypt

Egypt was the first Middle East state to use chemical weapons (during the Yemen war in the 1960s) and is today credited with a CW capability and BW research. Consideration of a nuclear programme was brought to an end with the death of President Nasser. However, Egypt has pursued quite ambitious missile programmes, but is still left with the *Scud* only.⁶⁵

64. Carnegie Endowment, op. cit. in note 61, pp. 221-36.

65. Dany Shoham, 'Chemical and Biological Weapons in Egypt', *Nonproliferation Review*, Spring/Summer 1998, pp. 48-58.

Egypt, which is at present firmly connected to the Western world, is not seen as a threat in Europe, but rather as a very important partner in the Arab world. If anything, there is concern about the economic and social viability of this big country. However, there is also confidence that Egypt, which was host to quite violent and dangerous terrorist Islamists in the 1980s, will be capable of withstanding this menace, because of the opposition of a majority of the population to extremism and the authorities' ability to keep the threat in check, as they did after the assassination of President Sadat. It was only after the failure to turn the power structure in Egypt upside down that extremists like Omar Abd al-Rahman turned against the United States as direct target and that Ayman al-Zawahiri joined Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda.⁶⁶

Libya

The proliferating country closest to Europe is Libya. At the end of the 1980s, there was great concern about the rapid development of chemical weapons in the wake of revelations that a small German chemical engineering company had installed a turnkey chemical weapons plant at Rabta. Moreover, Colonel Gadaffi once (1986) ordered the firing of *Scud* missiles at the Italian island of Lampedusa and in the direction of Crete, but the missiles fell short of their targets – an event ironically symbolising the overall futility of Libya's WMD efforts.⁶⁷ Libya is reported to have used chemical weapons on a small scale against hostile forces in Chad. Its chemical weapons development apparently slowed down considerably during the 1990s, leaving Tripoli with a quantity of chemical warfare agent at most in the low hundreds of tonnes. Biological weapons research and development is probably under way, but no weaponised agent is believed to exist. No significant progress has been reported on the nuclear programme since the 1970s; it is assumed to be far from a military capability.

Missile acquisition has been confined to the *Scud B*, which is capable in 'best' circumstances of reaching some of Italy's Liparian islands and the western part of Crete, but the 1986 incident showed that, for technical reasons, the threat is lower than the measurement of range alone would suggest. Libya has made strong efforts to develop its own missile production capability, and has probably sought North Korean assistance and possibly

66. Steven Simon and Daniel Benjamin, 'The Terror', *Survival*, vol. 4, no. 4, Winter 2001, pp. 5-18.

67. For the following, US DoD, *op. cit.* in note 63, pp. 45-49; Carnegie Endowment, *op. cit.* in note 61, pp. 305-12.

negotiated on the delivery of the 1,300 km range *Nodong* missile, but so far, apparently, to no avail.⁶⁸ In addition, relations with European countries, notably Libya's immediate neighbour Italy, have improved in recent years. To a large degree that has become possible through Colonel Gaddafi's clear attempts to reintegrate into the international community, a positive long-term effect of the economic sanctions that were imposed on Libya in the wake of the Lockerbie bombing. There is thus no conflict that could possibly stimulate Gaddafi to consider the use of chemical weapons against Europe, even if he had the capability to deliver them.

Syria

Syria is credited with an extensive chemical weapons programme. The core of it appears to be the air- and missile-delivered nerve agent sarin. A development programme for the even more lethal VX is reportedly under way. Syria's missiles (*Scud* B and C) cannot reach present EU territory, but can reach Cyprus, which is due to become a member in May 2004. Syria is not known to be working on longer-range means of delivery. The country is believed to look into biological agents, but is not reported to have produced or weaponised such agents. No nuclear weapons programme is under way, only relatively small-scale general nuclear research, and the facilities are subject to IAEA safeguards.⁶⁹

Its security concerns relate to Israel: Damascus wants to preserve a counter-deterrent capability against Israel's conventional superiority and nuclear capability. It believes it needs such a counter-deterrent in the light of the Syrian capital's location – some 30 km from the present Israeli positions on the Golan Heights – and the fact that, in occupying these heights, Israel is dominating the high ground above the easily negotiable Syrian lowland.

There are no political quarrels between Syria and Europe now that Syria appears to have ended its support for terrorist groups operating on European soil, though Europe would welcome a more forthcoming Syrian attitude to a Middle East settlement. If Bashar al-Assad continues with his so far very tentative and timid programme of economic overture, the EU will certainly become Syria's major partner, further reducing tensions and creating opportunities for developing viable relations.

68. US National Intelligence Council, op. cit. in note 61, p. 12.

69. US DoD, op. cit. in note 63, pp. 42-5; US National Intelligence Council, op. cit. in note 61, pp. 12, 13.

Of medium concern: Iran

Among the countries of the Middle East, Iran is the other member of President Bush's 'axis of evil' besides Iraq. From a European perspective, Iran's stance is much more ambivalent, with dangerous traits on the one hand, but positive trends and thus opportunities for openings on the other hand. This ambivalence derives from the dual (both religious and secular) structure of Iranian politics: conservative, partly fanatic clerical elements under the highest religious authority, Ayatollah Khamenei, command a monopoly of force, the military, the 'guardians of the revolution' (Pasdaran), a sort of élite militia, the secret service and the justice system, and also function as a sort of constitutional court (judging from a purely theological perspective) while the remaining executive functions and the legislative rest with the reformers under President Khatami.

Iran developed a chemical weapons capability during the war with Iraq in response to Iraqi chemical attacks to which the international community reacted weakly, if at all, and did not offer protection. It reportedly used chemical weapons on a small scale in the latter part of that war. Since then, chemical agent production has probably been expanded. Its chemical technology has apparently so far permitted the production of only relatively old-fashioned agents – blister, blood and choking agents. Research and development of nerve agents and biological weapons research are reportedly continuing, though large-scale agent production and weaponisation have not been reported. Iran has declared past chemical weapons activities, but has stated that they were terminated at the end of the Iran-Iraq war and that the related equipment has been dismantled or 'civilianised'. Despite suspicion and public declarations about Iran's chemical weapons, no country has asked for a challenge inspection by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons under the terms of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Iran's nuclear activities have given rise to much speculation. American and Israeli sources are convinced that Iran has an active nuclear weapons programme. Other services from time to time report on suspect procurement activities – for example attempts to acquire enrichment technology – that fit badly with the present stage of development of Iran's civilian nuclear energy economy. However, one has to note that a powerful dual-use programme was

already active under the Shah. After it was dismantled in the early Khomeini years, it was brought back on stream in the mid-1980s, most likely in response to intelligence that Iran might have gathered about Saddam Hussein's nuclear weapons efforts. That is now some seventeen to eighteen years ago, and it is quite astonishing, given that Iran did not start from scratch in 1984 or 1985, that Iran is not closer to having a nuclear weapon than the standard assessment of 'several years away'. This does not speak for a crash programme of Iraqi dimensions, even if the very broad approach to the whole fuel cycle that Iran is pursuing on the basis of a very rudimentary civilian programme obviously poses more questions than Iranian authorities are ready or capable to answer. More recently, evidence has mounted – not least through contacts between Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency – that construction of significant fuel cycle facilities, namely uranium enrichment and heavy water production, is under way. Obviously, these facilities are still a long way from reaching operational readiness, but this step up the proliferation ladder is a sobering indication (as are developments in North Korea) that the confrontational strategy of the 'axis of evil' philosophy can have rather unintended results.

The missile programme pursued by Tehran is probably the most worrying part of the pattern of its proliferation activities. Iran has a number of *Scud* Bs and *Scud* Cs, and has developed national production capacities with North Korean, Chinese, and Russian assistance. It has flight-tested the *Shahab-3*, a missile with a range of 1,300 km that can reach western Turkey and all of Cyprus. Two other projects, the *Shahab-4* and *-5* are presumably still only at the blueprint stage and might reach the test stage as space launch vehicles (SLV) rather than as ballistic missiles, but, if fully developed and deployed a decade or more from now, could reach deep into Europe. In terms of strategic objectives, these development plans are a mystery if Iran's security interests are confined to its regional concerns.⁷⁰

This is something that has to be resolved between the EU and Tehran before it becomes a serious security concern, since the extension of missile range without a sensible strategic rationale cannot be simply noted without some response. Europe has not joined the total technology embargo against Iran imposed by the United States. It observes particular precautions in licensing exports and technology transfers to the Islamic Republic to

70. US DoD, op. cit. in note 63, pp. 34-8; US National Intelligence Council, op. cit. in note 61, pp. 9, 10; Carnegie Endowment, op. cit. in note 61, pp. 255-70.

prevent WMD-capable dual-use technologies from being transferred. Nevertheless, Europe has become an important economic partner for this country whose economy is still in dire straits due to bad mistakes made by the clerics on ideological grounds and for the self-interest of their huge economic conglomerates that figure as Islamic foundations.⁷¹ Simultaneously, Europe has kept up a 'critical dialogue' with Tehran, on the conviction that, in the precarious balance between the two elements of Iran's dual-rule system, maintaining contacts and engaging in permanent dialogue and cooperation will, over the long run, strengthen the hands of the reformers. This policy should be further pursued and indeed reinvigorated.

A special case: Iraq

Much has been written on Iraq's WMD capabilities recently. There is no need here to repeat the stories of WMD production before the Gulf War, the revelations by UNSCOM and the IAEA and the abrupt end of inspections in 1998. The focus here is an assessment of where Iraq possibly stands today, after the 27 January 2003 report by Hans Blix and Mohamed al-Baradei, what intentions and strategies the Iraqi leadership may have with regard to the weapons and materials at hand, and how this might pose risks and threats to Europe.

Iraq's nuclear programme was largely dismantled by the IAEA. What remained were some dual-use items and the skills of the scientific and engineering teams, including knowledge on the design of an implosive device. Since 1998, Iraq has tried to revive its programme. There have been a number of attempts to buy equipment and material needed for centrifuge enrichment.⁷² The uniform assessment of the various reports is that Iraq certainly does not yet have the means to set up a centrifuge enrichment facility large enough to enrich uranium to weapons grade, that it will face considerable difficulties in producing the necessary parts and equipment by itself, that the international embargo creates significant obstacles to procuring the equipment abroad, and that even with equipment in place Iraq may still face long delays before the task of arranging centrifuge cascades for high enrichment is mastered – if ever. As a consequence, all reports reviewed for this study set the date of an Iraqi nuclear weapon based on indigenously enriched

71. Ray Takeyh, 'Re-imagining US-Iranian Relations', *Survival*, vol. 44, no. 3, Autumn 2002, pp. 23-36.

72. British Government, *Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction - The Assessment of the British Government* (London: The Stationery Office, September 2002), p. 26, www.pm.gov.uk/output/Page6117.asp.

uranium at five years or more. Iraq has also reportedly tried to acquire a huge quantity of uranium abroad (in 'Africa').⁷³ This is a certain mystery, as Iraq is known to have domestic uranium resources that have been extracted before; it is unclear for what purpose Iraq would try to buy – with the risk of detection – natural uranium abroad rather than work through its own production line. The reason might be that Iraq no longer possesses viable purification and conversion facilities (which would extend the lead times even more).⁷⁴ The documents that inspectors seized in the home of a nuclear scientist reportedly date back to the 1980s and concern laser isotope enrichment. It had been known from previous inspection work that Iraq had worked on that technology but given it up because of its complexity. Since none of the countries with a more advanced nuclear establishment – military or civilian – has developed that technology to full technical maturity, it is more than unlikely that Iraq, in the difficult circumstances of the 1990s, could have made significant progress.

The situation is, of course, different if we assume that Iraq could acquire weapons-grade material directly from abroad. In that case, Iraq would still have to work this material into shape, and to arrange the (possibly prefabricated) conventional parts and the physics package into a viable device with sufficient precision. It should be noted that experience in the nuclear sector shows that Iraq has had great difficulties both with precision production and with complex engineering tasks, and was much better at the cruder technologies such as electromagnetic isotope separation (EMIS). The studies set the lead time for a bomb built with fissile material acquired abroad at 'several months',⁷⁵ 'a year'⁷⁶ and 'between one and two years'⁷⁷ (British intelligence). The difference, though it does not appear huge, is nevertheless interesting. It appears that British intelligence (whose report appears generally to be the most accurate and based on more recent human intelligence) foresees more technical difficulties and, consequently, more time needed to deal with flaws than its American counterparts or non-governmental experts.

The question, then, is how great is the probability that enough material can be acquired through direct purchase? While continuing difficulties in the nuclear sector of the former Soviet Union cannot be denied, reports on illegal trafficking of nuclear material have become fewer and fewer over the years, no significant quantities of weapons-grade material have been intercepted and no

73. *Ibid.*, p. 25.

74. 'Iraq's Weapons Of Mass Destruction: A Net Assessment', *Strategic Dossier* (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2002), pp. 25, 26; *op. cit.* in note 72, pp. 24-27.

75. IISS, *op. cit.* in note 74, p. 26; Joseph Cirincione with Jon B. Wolfsthal and Miriam Rajkumar, *Tracking Weapons of Mass Destruction*, Carnegie Endowment, *op. cit.* in note 61, p. 271.

76. *Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction Programs* (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 2002), p. 2; www.cia.gov/cia/publications/iraq_wmd/iraq_Oct.2002.htm.

77. British Government, *op. cit.* in note 72, p. 27.

indication that significant quantities of this material are missing has been made public. Efforts to improve physical security and material accountancy in the former Soviet Union have been made for a decade and have recently been accelerated and strengthened through the G-8's '10 plus 10 over 10' programme. The likelihood that Iraq might acquire material from this source is thus considered small.

Other suppliers could be Pakistan or North Korea. However, Pakistan possesses no large reserves of the precious material and is keen not to fall too far behind in terms of warhead numbers compared with more resourceful India. Pakistan is working with the United States on combating terrorism, has a US military presence at home and is thus unlikely to provide the most dangerous material to one of America's main enemies. North Korea appears to be in the course of developing enrichment and, probably, has too small quantities of the material to pose as an exporter. It is also remarkable that North Korea, a lavish distributor of missiles and missile technology, is not known to have sold samples from its sizeable chemical weapons stockpile to other countries. Again, it appears unlikely that Pyongyang would run the risk of driving the United States to the point where military action could well become a serious probability. The conclusion, then, is that it is unlikely that Iraq would be a nuclear weapon state in the next five years, and possibly much later.

The situation in the case of chemical weapons is quite different. Here, Iraq is very experienced in production, weaponisation and use. Iraq has never fully accounted for its stockpile of warfighting agents, precursors or weapons. Although its production and weaponisation infrastructure has been largely dismantled, the country could still either use clandestine stocks or produce new agents in widely available dual-use facilities that had a civilian mission at the time UNSCOM was checking the country. It is also noteworthy that Iraq has reconstructed several building complexes at former chemical weapon sites; how these facilities are actually used is not known.

As a consequence, it is highly likely that Iraq still possesses a stockpile of several hundred tonnes of deadly chemicals, including, at the more 'conventional' end, mustard gas, and at the more dangerous and lethal end of its capabilities, VX and sarin, two highly effective nerve agents. Indications that Iraq has recently tried to import huge quantities of atropin, the vaccine used to

counter the impact of these nerve agents, are an indication that this might indeed be the case.⁷⁸ Iraq would have to use artillery, aspirated delivery vehicles or short-range missiles for most of this stockpile, with very few missiles of medium range left (see below). Iraq could employ gravity bombs or spray canisters mounted on aircraft. Its missile warheads had impact fuses which would not be very effective in dispersing chemical agent over a wide area. This capability is likely to be of very limited use against well-prepared, trained troops and, while being a deadly threat to civilians in the area of impact, is not likely to cause mass casualties even if used against cities in the neighbourhood. It is not known whether Iraq has improved its warhead designs to overcome the flaws of fuse on impact, which tend to limit the area of lethality and to lose most of the agent before it can deploy its deadly effects.⁷⁹

As a conclusion, Iraq could use chemical weapons on the battlefield – with very limited impact – and as a terror weapon against civilians in neighbouring countries – with a somewhat larger but no real mass destruction effect.⁸⁰

By far the most significant use would be delivery by missile against Israel, with the strategic purpose of provoking a (nuclear) overreaction, with the consequence that Arab allies of the United States might be forced to change sides in an ongoing armed conflict.⁸¹

The most worrying part of Iraq's arsenal is its biological weapons. Iraq's BW programme was much further developed than expected by the allies in the Gulf War. Anthrax, aflatoxin and botulinum, had been weaponised (as with chemical weapons, into warheads, bombs, spray canisters and artillery shells) and were deployable and usable (though, because of their relatively primitive technology, their impact would have been most likely limited). BW remained the most opaque part of Baghdad's WMD programmes even after UNSCOM's best efforts to discover them. Huge stocks of growth material – several thousand litres – remained unaccounted for, and intensive deception activities by Iraqi authorities reinforced the suspicion that there was much more than met the eye. Since signatures of BW activities are also hard to identify, the uncertainties are enormous. Since the people behind the programme are still there, we must assume that activities have continued. Facilities are there to conduct work, even though dedicated BW sites have been dismantled. As in the case of CW, some reconstruction on sites formerly devoted to BW

78. *New York Times*, 12 November 2002.

79. IISS, *op. cit.* in note 74, p. 53; British Government, *op. cit.* in note 72, pp. 18-24; Anthony H. Cordesman, *If We Fight Iraq: Iraq and Its Weapons of Mass Destruction* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2002), p. 13.

80. IISS, *op. cit.* in note 74, p. 54.

81. Cordesman, *op. cit.* in note 79, p. 3.

activities has been observed.⁸² The estimates of present capabilities necessarily give a very broad range of existing BW assets. They reportedly contain material produced before UNSCOM's revelations and new agents possibly developed and produced after 1998.⁸³

Among the important uncertainties is whether Iraq managed to develop the skill of producing dry instead of wet agents after 1991. At the time of the Gulf War Iraqi weapon makers had mastered only the more primitive technique, which drastically reduces efficiency, survivability and lethality of BW agents. UNSCOM discovered, however, that Iraq had been working on drying technology, and during the period since inspections ended Iraqi scientists might have made progress, but this is unconfirmed speculation.⁸⁴

Among the innovations reported by intelligence since UNSCOM stopped operating are mobile BW laboratories, apparently capable of producing a certain amount of agent, though it is unclear if and how this might be weaponised. British intelligence appears to be convinced that such 'rolling facilities' – vans with laboratory equipment – exist in Iraq.⁸⁵ Such facilities could help Iraq to produce agents even during hostilities, moving the laboratories from place to place to escape destruction, in the expectation that their movements would be concealed by the 'background noise' of 'normal wartime traffic'.

Possibly the most ominous and threatening possibility is the possession by Iraq of smallpox agent. In contrast to the other BW assets Iraq is believed to have, smallpox is (highly) contagious and – when moved into foreign countries – could quickly cause the terrible spread of this highly lethal disease.⁸⁶

BW delivery would be along the same lines as CW. With conventional means of delivery, the possibility of causing mass fatalities appears to be very limited.⁸⁷ However, in contrast to CW, biological agents could be taken abroad, and applied with fairly lethal impact by individuals or small groups. In particular, an infectious agent such as smallpox, which spreads in the host population, offers the prospect of mass casualties. As a deterrent of last resort, or as an instrument of post-mortem revenge, this possibility must be taken seriously.⁸⁸

For a region like Europe that is at some distance from the source of risk, means of delivery are of as much interest as the weapons themselves.⁸⁹ Given the dismal state of Iraq's air force and its lack of long-range bombers, the most interesting question

82. CIA, *op. cit.* in note 76, p. 14.

83. For various assessments see IISS, *op. cit.* in note 74, pp. 39,40; British Government, *op. cit.* in note 72, pp. 21, 22; CIA, *op. cit.* in note 76, pp. 11-15.

84. IISS, *op. cit.* in note 74, p. 40; Cordesman, *op. cit.* in note 79, p. 13.

85. British Government, *op. cit.* in note 72, pp. 18, 22.

86. IISS, *op. cit.* in note 74, p. 39.

87. *Ibid.*, p. 29.

88. *Ibid.*, p. 40.

89. I assume that Iraq, having never tested a nuclear, boosted or thermonuclear device, is not capable of making small nuclear weapons ('suitcase bombs') that can be delivered clandestinely by individuals.

here is missile capabilities. Iraq's missile programme was among the most active in developing countries, its indigenous development and production capabilities were impressive, and the military leadership is very experienced in its use due to many launches in both the Iran-Iraq and Gulf Wars.

Iraq had managed to extend the range of the product of origin, the *Scud-D* missile it obtained from the former Soviet Union, from 300 to ca. 650 km – the renamed *Al-Hussein* missile, which was used in the Gulf War – with some drop in payload. It did not succeed in extending it further to around 950 km. The *Al-Abbas* was once flight-tested, but never deployed because of its poor performance. And even the *Al-Hussein* showed frame instability during flight, which led to the break-up of many of the missiles launched before impact but provided an unintentional method to escape anti-missile defence, as the spiralling flight paths of the missiles did not correspond to precisely calculable ballistic trajectories and made it very difficult for the guidance electronics of interceptors to accurately target the incoming device.

Since the Gulf War, Iraq is reported to have been working not only on extension of the range of its short-range missiles (a range of 150 km was permitted under Resolution 687), but also on an intermediate-range missile of ca. 1,200 km, which would be enough to reach Cyprus and possibly Crete. A new, larger test stand for engines has been installed;⁹⁰ however, this points to a relatively early stage in missile development and, of course, tells us nothing about whether the in-flight stability problem has in any way been successfully tackled. It is thus safe to conclude – as reports do – that Iraq will not in the near future have a missile with a range, payload and accuracy significantly better than the *Al-Hussein*. British intelligence puts 2007 as the earliest date (under UN sanctions) by which such a missile could be produced.⁹¹ US intelligence estimates deem it unlikely that Iraq could deploy a long-range missile before 2015 without significant external support and with UN sanctions in place.⁹²

There remains the need to estimate how many *Al-Husseins* might still be around. Estimates vary between one dozen,⁹³ twenty,⁹⁴ twenty-five⁹⁵ and three dozen. In addition to speculation on numbers, it is not at all clear how well they have been maintained (although Iraq does have maintenance skills) and whether any, and if so how many, are still usable. However, it would be imprudent to hope that all of the *Al-Husseins* are non-operational

90. British Government, op. cit. in note 72, p. 29; CIA, op. cit. in note 76, p. 17.

91. British Government, *ibid.*, p. 27.

92. IISS, op. cit. in note 74, p. 66; US National Intelligence Council, op. cit. in note 61, pp. 11, 12.

93. IISS, *ibid.*, p. 66.

94. British Government, op. cit. in note 72, p. 27.

95. Carnegie Endowment, op. cit. in note 61, p. 272.

and that some would fail to deliver their deadly payload on target. Iraq has also been developing unmanned aerial vehicles capable of spraying CW and BW agents, but because of constraints on range these appear to be less threatening to Europe.⁹⁶

An assessment of the threat to Europe from this sketchy analysis, which was confirmed without new insights by US Secretary of State Colin Powell's presentation to the UN Security Council on 27 January 2003, would look like this: Iraq is presently and for the foreseeable future not capable of posing a military WMD threat to the Union. The possible exception could be parts of Crete, but the question is whether Iraq would be capable of launching a successful and accurate WMD strike over this large distance, and whether its intermediate-range missile project will ever bear fruit. As time goes by, and if and when Iraq obtains consistent and continued foreign assistance in its missile project, it might be capable of extending the range of its means of delivery to finally reach major parts of Europe. That point is distant, possibly well into the next decade.

This conclusion provides no grounds for complacency. Saddam Hussein has proven many times over his determination not to give up on weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. The history of deception, intimidation, lies and physical harassment of UNSCOM and IAEA inspectors speaks for itself. On several occasions, only the threat of force made him concede.⁹⁷ His strategy was to hide as many elements of the programmes as possible, to keep the teams of experts together and employ them in related civilian or dual-use occupations in order to be ready to reconstitute prohibited activities whenever possible. While his recent agreement to admit new inspections with an even more intrusive mandate is welcome, we must expect him to play the old game again if and when he believes that international attention (that of the United States in particular) is diverted to other issues. Indeed, the inspectors' report of 27 January 2003 confirmed that Iraq, while more forthcoming than in 1998, still refrained from full and comprehensive cooperation. The timely 12,000-page report submitted in December 2002 failed to answer the questions left open when UNSCOM had to quit Iraq. While the inspectors, despite intelligence leads provided by the United States and the

96. CIA, *op. cit.* in note 76, p. 20.

97. IISS, *op. cit.* in note 74, pp. 5-9.

United Kingdom, did not find anything dramatic, Iraq remains in breach of Security Council Resolutions 687 and 715 of 1991, and 1441 of 2002, as long as these questions remain unanswered.

The Iraqi leader has not only shown a strong desire to have these weapons. He has also willingly used them when he had no reason to fear retaliation. His regional ambitions were revealed when he twice attacked a neighbour for territorial gain. His role in the Middle East conflict is unhelpful and is one among several factors that prevent the region from turning to peace, welfare and stability.

Even though some European countries, France in particular, have kept some relation with Iraq, in general there is no partnership and no reason to suppose that one might be formed as long as the present Iraqi regime persists. European countries were involved in the 1991 war and applied UN sanctions; Britain has been a continuous enforcer of the no-fly zone restrictions together with the United States. Relations between Europe as a whole and Iraq must thus be described as tense. Should Saddam Hussein acquire the means to reach Europe with weapons of mass destruction, this would no doubt enter his strategic calculus. He might be tempted to try to prevent Europeans from considering joining enforcement actions together with the United States, even under a UN Security Council mandate. Europe's freedom of action, as well as European security, would be compromised. In the short term – that is, during the next five to ten years – it is unlikely that Iraq will emerge as a direct threat to Europe, provided that transfers to the country are closely supervised and active assistance in WMD and missile programmes from the outside can be curbed. Beyond that date there are reasons for concern unless the international community acts upon available intelligence and enforces the prohibitions on Iraq's WMD and missile activities, if necessary by repeatedly destroying the related facilities using military force. Finally, the Bush administration is right in maintaining that the international community has to consider whether a regime that constantly defies the rules and breaches its commitments is not per se a threat to peace and international security and must therefore be removed. However, that is a decision for the UN Security Council to take, not for any national government alone.

Rogue states and terrorists: risks of WMD transfer

In the context of the discussion of Iraq, perhaps the most worrying and – on the surface – convincing argument for prompt military action was the possibility that Iraq might transfer WMD, especially chemical and/or biological agents, to al-Qaeda operatives. The analysis of the constraints on Iraq's present and future capability to deliver these weapons to far-away targets such as Europe would then be void, since more pedestrian instruments would be used. It is worth considering this possibility in some detail.

General considerations

In any conflict with the West, 'rogue states' would be in an inferior position. Means of asymmetric warfare would be needed for them to have any chance of prevailing and at least ensure survival at the end of the conflict. Collaboration with terrorists could offer viable means to do damage, thereby weakening the capacity of the superior enemy to start or continue fighting. It could also break his will to do so and lead to his conceding to the challenger on essential issues. Since terrorists are capable of hitting the (stronger) enemy's homeland, presently not something within reach of the challenger's military forces, such an option might appear quite attractive as well as strategically rational at first glance.

There are, however, several snags which a 'rogue' leader contemplating this option would take into account. The first is the issue of control. WMD are the most precious asset in the hands of the state, and a sensitive and dangerous one at that. Use of these devices must be precisely calibrated to achieve the desired effect. Political leaders (whatever the country concerned) therefore tend to wish to keep close control over the possession and use of WMD. Handing them over to terrorists would be a tremendous loss of control. Giving them to al-Qaeda, an organisation with a politico-religious agenda of almost apocalyptic dimensions, contains the very tangible risk that they will be used in accordance with that agenda, not with the strategic goals set by the transferring state. As long as survival remains the ultimate purpose of state strategy and WMD are meant to secure that objective, transferring WMD to religiously motivated terrorists appears to be a very bad idea, as the action committed abroad with the assistance of those WMD

might provoke retaliation that terminates the state, or at least the regime, and therefore defeats the object.

One could argue that using terrorists rather than missiles or agents of the state serves the purpose of allowing the author of their action to remain anonymous. This would mean that there was no way to trace the path back from the action through the weapon and the (terrorist) agent to the (state) source. For two reasons, this does not appear a convincing consideration. If the whole act is meant to be part of a strategy of deterrence and denial, then this objective has to be made clear to the target. If the West is to be deterred from intervention in a 'rogue' country and damage is done by terrorist means to demonstrate the capability of the state to be invaded to retaliate forcefully, then this has to be communicated, and anonymity is not then helpful.

If the purpose is to wreak destruction to such a degree that the targeted Western state (or the West as such) becomes unable to act in any way for a long while, then the terrorist act must be on a scale that is simply not technically feasible in the foreseeable future; in addition, the greater the damage done, the more determined the victim will be to reveal the source and to retaliate, with commensurate risks for the author.

There is the final possibility that the purpose is not of a strategic but of an emotional nature – simple revenge. States should be above that, of course, but it does happen: Lockerbie was Gaddafi's response to the 1986 bombing of Libya. The attack against the airliner was undertaken anonymously, just to give the Libyan leader satisfaction that the enemy that had hit his country, only just missed himself and killed a member of his family would suffer as well. In that case again, the risks run by empowering terrorists to use WMD will be weighed against the gain of revenge; and Lockerbie (like the case of the bombing of the Mykonos discothèque) the line of command was traced back to the author. In the post-11 September world and after a terrorist WMD attack, no dictator can hope to escape a counter-attack by the West; he knows he would be finished. Using terrorists instead of intelligence operatives reduces the chance of being traced. However, it is astonishing how much information even the hard-nosed al-Qaeda members revealed under the duress of a relentless, professional interrogation. A revengeful dictator could not be confident that he would get away with such an act.

Maybe the most powerful consideration that would advise a government possessing WMD not to transfer these weapons to al-Qaeda terrorists is the complete lack of certainty that these weapons would not be turned against the author of the transfer itself. Secular governments in the Muslim world have been identified as apostatic and as agents of the godless West. Indeed, initially they were the main target of fanatic Islamists, and only after attempts to gain power in Egypt and Syria had failed did they turn against the supposed protector of the hated regimes, the United States. However, this does not mean that the secular regimes are no longer possible targets. Bin Laden has made it plain, for example, that the overthrow of the Saudi regime remains a top priority.⁹⁸ If an opportunity arises to get rid of one of them and thereby to establish a base in the Muslim world, it would presumably be used. Thus 'rogue' regimes will possibly try to use terrorists against the West, they may even give them shelter and support, but they are fairly unlikely in normal circumstances to devolve to them the most dangerous weaponry that is in their possession.

Country-specific considerations

Iraq

There is no reason to assume any greater readiness to transfer WMD to terrorists in the case of Iraq. Attempts by the present Administration to establish links between al-Qaeda and Saddam Hussein remain unconvincing. The first connection was the alleged presence of a Kurdish radical Islamic group with connections to al-Qaeda and a chemical laboratory in northern Iraq. But the Administration conceded that this was not under Saddam Hussein's control but in the northern no-fly zone enforced by British and American aircraft (a hypothesis that begs the question why this site was not eliminated in a sortie by these forces). The second allegation was the training, in the mid-1990s, of some al-Qaeda members in the art of chemical warfare. Again, this immediately raises two questions. First, why have chemical agents not been used by this group since, and, second, why was this support confined to this period and not continued, resumed or expanded after 1998, when Iraq had apparently lost all hope of removing UN sanctions in a cooperative rather than confrontational way? The third connection, a meeting between 11 September gang leader Mohamed Atta and an Iraqi intelligence agent in Prague, turned

98. www.azzam.com/html/articlesdeclaration.htm.

out to be a hoax. In his 27 January 2003 presentation to the UN Security Council, Colin Powell, for the first time, made strong assertions about a connection between al-Qaeda and Saddam Hussein, claiming the existence of a terrorist cell in Baghdad and frequent contacts between Iraqi intelligence chiefs and al-Qaeda operative al-Zarqawi. If correct, this would present a grave threat indeed and change the calculus of the risks contained in Iraq's WMD programmes. However, other intelligence services which keep a close watch on al-Zarqawi because he is seen as a major threat to Europe doubt the validity of this assertion.⁹⁹

It thus appears likely that no real connection has existed between the two 'rogue' actors. This does not, however, settle the issue of whether Saddam Hussein could be motivated to cooperate with the enemies of his enemies, following one of the most time-honoured principles of strategy. By supporting al-Qaeda, he could annoy and weaken the United States, take revenge and inflict damage on the US homeland (and that of its allies, which makes it a European concern) that he currently has no means to achieve using the military instruments at his disposal.

Even so, all the concerns and inhibitions analysed above apply in the case of Iraq. Saddam Hussein wants to keep control of his WMD assets and to have them employed at a time and place of his own choosing. He does not want to put his regime's survival at risk – notably now that he is clearly trying to establish a dynasty with a view to devolving power, after his death, to one of his sons. His call for a jihad during the Gulf War and later was rightly interpreted in the Muslim world as a fake propaganda attempt by somebody who had not previously cared at all for Islam. The Iraqi dictator is far from enforcing the shariah as the law of the land, and has been harsh on religious opponents.¹⁰⁰ He may well become as likely a target for al-Qaeda as anybody else.

There is one exception to this consideration that is of some significance: if Saddam Hussein was certain that he would not survive and that his regime was condemned to the dust of history by a war against his regime, he might be tempted to inflict as much damage as he could on the hated enemies who had brought about his demise. It is this very situation that could induce him not only to use his own WMD as a last paroxysm in the war, but also to hand over some of them for revenge post-mortem. Knowing he was to die, all the precautionary strategic considerations that were identified above as prohibitive would no longer apply. The character of

99. Don van Natta, Jr. and David Johnston, 'A Terrorist With a Deadly Past', *New York Times*, 10 February 2003.

100. Peter Heine, *Terror in Allahs Namen. Extremistische Kräfte im Islam* (Freiburg: Verlag Herder, 2001), p. 73.

the man makes it not unlikely that he would prefer to exit not with a whimper but with a bang. This, however, leads to the assessment that as long as Saddam is optimistic that he will remain in power he has good reasons not to put his WMD assets at the disposal of al-Qaeda. The prospect that he might be forced out by military means, in contrast, would remove all cautionary inhibitions.

Other countries

These considerations apply even more so to the other proliferators in the Middle East. The governments of Egypt and Syria are both *bêtes noires* for radical Islamists because of their ruthless and successful crackdown on their movement in the 1980s. Neither has any interest in losing control over its chemical weapons and becoming targets of Western retaliation. This is also true for Libya, whose awkward return to the international community cannot afford the setback that would follow if Tripoli were implicated in a terrorist WMD attack.

As for Iran, the fundamental distrust and antagonism between Sunni (al-Qaeda) and Shia Islamism (Iran) would prevent such intimate cooperation. Even if it is true that the Iranian intelligence service, run by hard-line fanatics, let some al-Qaeda members slip through after the Afghan campaign, that is a far cry from running the risks that cooperation on WMD would entail. It would take extraordinary events to turn this relationship of mistrust around; if Iran were to become the object of military threats as the next member of the 'axis of evil', this might lead to the ascendancy of radicals in Iran. The strategic situation would then conform to that discussed in the case of Saddam Hussein facing a US war against his regime. In these circumstances, everything would be possible. Again, the conclusion is clear: if Western Europe keeps up a viable dialogue with Iran, opening the prospect for further cooperation and economic assistance in Iran, the very remote risk of an Iranian/al-Qaeda coalition can easily be averted.

Wild cards: North Korea, Pakistan

The wild cards in this game are North Korea and Pakistan. Concerning Pakistan, the accepted wisdom has for long been that the notion of an 'Islamic bomb' is a misnomer, and that the country's political and military élite see its nuclear weapons purely in national terms. Indications that Pakistan has been willing to share technology and hardware with anybody have been restricted to

unproven rumours (concerning, for example, collaboration with Iraq). However, recent indications about a deal with North Korea in which Pakistan transferred centrifuge technology in exchange for obtaining *Nodong* IRBM technology are a different matter: Pakistan might indeed be willing to trade its most sensitive commodity if the price is right. Another concern emerged during the Afghanistan campaign, when two scientists connected with Pakistan's nuclear weapons programme were temporarily detained on suspicion that they might be related to radical Islamist circles. These charges were dropped after a short time, but the concern remains that in this nuclear-armed country where the officer corps and the ubiquitous intelligence service, ISI, include a certain proportion of fundamentalists, the transfer of knowledge or even hardware to non-state actors is not to be excluded completely. It is up to the United States, now so intimately related and strongly present in that country, to ask the hard question and, if need be, to take measures to prevent the worst. Given the role of the present Pakistani leadership as a *bête noire* of radical Islamists, it can be expected that it, too, is interested in curbing this danger. European governments should therefore be prepared to assist the Americans as far as is practicable.

The other problem case is North Korea. Of course, the link between the Stalinist monarchy and al-Qaeda is anything but ideological. Rather, it is the desperate economic situation that could induce the North Korean leadership to consider a deal – more for chemical and biological agents than for the very scarce fissile material it might have diverted. In the recent past, North Korea has been the most prolific exporter of missile and related technology. Fortunately, there has been no mention of any transfer of WMD production itself. However, confronted with a really tempting offer – for which al-Qaeda presumably still possesses the necessary assets – Pyongyang might find it hard to resist.

This danger is mitigated by the obvious and visible desire of the leadership to overcome the country's isolation, terminate the perceived threat from the United States and slowly approach the world markets. The clumsy behaviour of a political class desperately sticking to power and not overly experienced in normal diplomatic intercourse tends to cloud this policy and lead to serious backlashes due to misinterpretations and concomitant reactions, notably by a US government that approaches North Korea with the utmost distrust and aversion and, until autumn 2002,

preferred confrontational to more accommodating diplomacy. The disastrous outcome of the visit of Assistant Secretary of State John Kelly in October 2002 speaks for itself.¹⁰¹

And this is exactly where the problem may lie: if the North Koreans conclude that they can strike a deal with the Americans, they will avoid suicidal moves that would put an end to American goodwill: trading with al-Qaeda would be such a move. However, should Pyongyang come round to the view that its attempts at reconciliation (hard to distinguish as they are) are not being reciprocated, and that they are taken advantage of – a view they are inclined to take given their notoriously paranoid state of mind – or that they are the next target in the American plan to eliminate the nuisance factors of the ‘axis of evil’ – this could tip the scales towards al-Qaeda, for economic reasons as well as, possibly, for revenge.

It is thus vitally important to keep the prospect of reconciliation with the North Koreans alive, whatever strange zigzags their path towards accommodation may take, and to help their economy at least to survive. The present hesitant attempts at reform must be supported, and the crisis over the enrichment programme – whether it exists or not – overcome. After all, the North Koreans have a point in objecting that their agreement with the United States called for American renouncement of a nuclear threat, and that this commitment has not really been implemented, and even explicitly ignored in the new Nuclear Posture Review. Europeans must stubbornly continue their line of developing political and economic relations with this very strange partner, and they may wish to exchange views with the North Koreans on the issue of combating terrorism and keeping terrorists at arm’s length from weapons of mass destruction.

To be watched: Russia, China

Russia and China both have a keen interest in preventing terrorists from acquiring WMD. Each country has repeatedly been the victim of terrorist attacks and each is struggling with separatist movements that are at least partially inspired by radical Islamism. However, in the past, Russia and China have not always been consistent and reliable in their WMD-related export behaviour. They have transferred technology and hardware with governmental approval to countries with doubtful records and may continue to do so (Russia to Iran, China to Pakistan). The government-private sector

101. Don Oberdorfer, ‘My Private Seat at Pyongyang’s Table’, *The Washington Post*, 10 November 2002.

relationship is still evolving, and this causes inevitable losses of efficiency in the introduction and application of physical and export controls. One has to realise that Western companies have made the most significant contributions to WMD programmes in third countries, including Iraq, even though the Western institutional structure is much more stable, experienced and effective than that in the countries transforming from centrally controlled economies to market systems. Elements of the old and new military industrial complexes look eagerly to making profits, and inexperienced and new control structures may fall short of effective and efficient supervision of their activities.

Both Russia and China have overhauled their export control laws, regulations and administrative systems several times in recent years. Physical control in WMD facilities in Russia has also been improved, mostly with Western (particularly US) assistance, but there is still much to do, as the G-8's '10 plus 10 over 10' programme indicates. Little is yet known about physical security in this sector in China. Traditions of central control contrast with the relative autonomy of provincial administrative structures and the increasing independence of business activities.

While we can assume that there is a keen interest in preventing WMD and their ingredients from falling into terrorists' hands, we cannot be sure that the necessary control structures are fully in place. We can also not be completely certain that the same strict interest applies to cross-border transfers. At any rate, it is advisable to keep a friendly and continuous dialogue with both governments on these subjects, at the top as well as at the operational level, and to be ready to assist technically and, if need be, financially wherever possible.

Remedies

On the basis of the above, we can conclude that a direct military threat to European territory only exists at its fringes – some Italian and Greek islands – and will probably only grow slowly in the coming decade. Once Cyprus accedes to the EU, however, its security will become a major concern. This is even truer for Turkey, which is within missile range of all its neighbours. When Turkey becomes a member of the EU, the whole security situation in the Middle East and the Persian Gulf will become a primary concern, not just

because of the issue of oil supply but because the very survival of a member state will be at stake. With regard to all threats and risks that concern single member states but not the totality of the Union's territory, a particular danger must be noted and properly addressed: the risk that hostile powers may try to split the Union by directing threats against those member(s) within their reach in order to extract concessions and break up Europe's united front in a given political conflict. It is absolutely essential that this problem be addressed in European foreign and security policy early on, and that common policies are drawn up for conflicts that could emerge and are implemented with perseverance and determination.

The instruments: diplomacy, deterrence, containment, enforcement

The first line of defence is always diplomacy. On close examination, it is also the most promising with regard to proliferating countries in all cases but Iraq. Diplomacy takes two approaches to the problems of proliferation and terrorism. First, it sounds out the interlocutor with a view to understanding the concerns that motivate him to seeking to acquire weapons of mass destruction. In other words, it is essential to comprehending the threat analysis and security problems as seen from the other side, and makes proposals on how to deal with them. (In thinking this line of argument through, what went wrong in Western relations with North Korea and Iran very quickly becomes obvious.) The second track is a carrot-and-stick approach that works mainly through incentives that are desired by the partner, but upholds the prospects of them being withdrawn if 'red lines' concerning European security are crossed.

Deterrence must be focused on the possibility that WMD might actually be used, whether against European territory or not. And it must relate to any support for terrorism of the al-Qaeda variety that involves WMD. States considering hosting or assisting al-Qaeda – or substate or regional rulers doing the same – must face the certain prospect that the international community, once aware of this policy, would take action against them. However, this generalised policy of deterrence – an absolute necessity in the present security environment – should not take the form of a unilateral, national policy, as conceived in the US National Security Strategy, but as a multilateral commitment. In order to curb incentives to procure WMD as a retaliatory capacity against the

possible use of WMD by enemies, the international community must agree on an unambiguous statement of policy that, unlike the case of Iraq's use of chemical weapons in the 1980s, the next employment of such weapons will be met with a strong and determined response, based on a UNSC mandate, that will end with the toppling of the regime responsible for their use. Political and military leaders involved in it will be brought to justice personally, should they survive. A UN Security Council resolution to this effect should be actively sought and supported both at NATO and European Council level to prove to the world that the most militarily capable groups of countries stand behind this policy. The EU, in addition, should make it clear that it will similarly act in self-defence under Article 51 of the UN Charter if one of its member states is attacked by WMD.

The whole utility of deterrence hinges, of course, on an assumption that the countries concerned are capable of being deterred. In general, it would appear that the mission of WMD in the military postures of these countries is to guarantee the survival of the regime and leadership, that is, they serve as an ultimate deterrent. They would be employed – initially on a small scale – in a conflict where the enemy was threatening the removal or extinction of the leadership or the state as such. In a war that each side understands as meant to be limited, by contrast, it is much more likely that 'rogue' states would restrict themselves to conventional weapons. The calculus would be that escalation to the WMD level might change the enemy's war aims: from limited concessions the objectives would move to unconditional surrender, with the intention of holding the WMD users personally responsible. Faced with this prospect, the leaders of states owning WMD would probably refrain from using their most lethal military assets.¹⁰² This will be discussed below for Iraq and Iran more specifically.

Containment relates to two contingencies. On the one hand, it is essential to inhibit WMD and missile programmes as much as possible with a view to keeping them at low technological levels as long as possible. Intelligence, export controls and sanctions policies all work in that direction. It is no well thought-out counter-argument that such measures 'only' buy time. Time is often all that is needed: to mitigate the security situation of a proliferator so that he voluntarily gives up his assets (e.g. South Africa, Argentina or Brazil); to assist in a transformation that leads to

102. See Peter R. Lavoy (ed.), *Planning the Unthinkable: How New Powers Will Use Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Weapons* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000).

regime change, with a new government turning to other priorities and a willingness to forego WMD; or simply a change of leadership by allowing nature to take its course where the problems are first and foremost personal. The second direction of containment is the prevention of the successful use of WMD threats as an umbrella for aggression, intimidation and expansion. This assumes a readiness to undertake military action on behalf of the security of third parties, as in 1991. By making this readiness quite clear in advance, the respective ambitions of proliferators can be held in check in the first place. It is here that containment and deterrence converge. Since Europe has a strong interest in seeing that WMD proliferation does not lead to distinct political and territorial advantages for those who proliferate, it must be more prepared than in the past to have a clear declaratory policy to that effect, and be capable of making good on it if need be.

Enforcement is the final instrument; enforcement, that is, of the non-proliferation regimes that have largely been so successful, but, as with all legislation, have been disregarded by a small number of signatories at some time. As systems based on law, these regimes need an enforcement mechanism, otherwise they will lose their capacity to reassure faithful members. Europe has a primary interest in the survival, growth and strengthening of these regimes, as was recently demonstrated once more in the BWC context. In all these regimes, certain procedures are prescribed where there is suspicion of a breach of the rules. The first decision, then, is whether to use these procedures or to seek other remedies. In the case of North Korea, for example, in 1994 the United States deemed it wiser to establish the 'Framework Agreement' that tolerated the breach for a certain period in the hope of a long-term solution to the problem. In other cases, it might be better to follow through the rules on consultation (all regimes) special inspections (NPT), on-challenge inspections (CWC) or investigations by the UN Secretary-General (BWC and Geneva Protocol).

If a breach is proven, or if the state under suspicion refuses to collaborate, thus preventing a due forensic clarification of the matter, strict enforcement measures must be taken, ranging from economic and diplomatic sanctions to military action. The latter takes us into the grey area of pre-emptive and preventive war. Pre-emption is considered on the basis of speculation about the target state's current capabilities and imminent intentions; prevention is considered speculation about the target's future capabilities

and intentions. The objective in either case is to prevent the unacceptable damage that a combination of intention and capability can bring. In addition, any military action must observe humanitarian law, must have a reasonable prospect of success and must not leave the situation worse than it was before. Pre-emption and prevention cannot be excluded as ultimate means if no other way of enforcing compliance can be found and not acting would most likely lead to the use of WMD. Weighing up the pros and cons is an agonising, painful and difficult process. It cannot be left to any single state alone lest a precedence be set that could lead directly to international anarchy. Instead, due procedure, which means decision-making by the Security Council, is imperative.¹⁰³

What combination of these various instruments is best suited to dealing with each proliferating state? The following discussion is confined to the three countries on President Bush's 'axis of evil'.

Coping with the 'axis of evil'

North Korea

North Korea is in a desperate situation: the economy has collapsed, the country has lost its allies and is confronted with an alliance of enemies that are superior many times over. Pyongyang has no chance of prevailing in war, only of doing damage before its demise. North Korea has sought, and to a degree obtained, assurances from the United States. These lost credibility already under the Clinton administration, as nuclear targeting doctrine shifted more and more to an 'anti-rogue' posture. The situation, from the North Korean perspective, became even more alarming under Bush, with the interruption of diplomatic exchanges, the naming of the 'axis of evil' and the Nuclear Posture Review, which listed North Korea as one among seven possible targets for US nuclear weapons. Confronted with this situation, North Korea was facing an acute dilemma. The leadership had meanwhile decided to open up incrementally, following the Chinese example. The defunct administrative food distribution system gave way to something approaching a market. Special economic zones are opening up. North Korea seeks access to international lending institutions which, in turn, requires the assent of the United States. At the same time, the extremely distrustful leadership fears that advantage might be taken of it. The conflicting signals from Washington only heighten this preoccupation. Thus, Kim Jong Il is unlikely to give up his WMD and mis-

103. Harald Müller, 'Compliance Politics: A Critical Analysis of Multilateral Arms Control', *Nonproliferation Review*, vol. 7, no. 2, Summer 2000, pp. 77-90.

sile potential once and for all until and unless the relationship with the United States assumes a more stable, cooperative character. Precisely this posture, however, will prevent the United States – notably during an Administration with the particular mindset of the Bush people – from accommodating.¹⁰⁴

Europeans should play an assertive role as go-between in this catch-22 situation. They should indicate to North Korea that they understand its security concerns and are willing to convey this understanding to Washington, helping to impress on their American allies the necessity to refrain from using force or threats. They should be ready to cooperate economically in the most efficient way to help Pyongyang in its transformation. At the same time they should make it clear that pushing ahead with WMD and missile programmes – rather than maintaining the ambiguous status quo – would immediately jeopardise Europe’s cooperation, as would its continuing technical assistance to Middle East missile programmes that impinge on European security, or any contacts with terrorist groups. By framing the European position in an incentive/disincentive structure, with strong emphasis on the cooperative side, North Korea’s concerns can be duly taken into account, and there is a real chance that the crisis might be defused.

Iran

As for Iran, it must be realised that in 1981 the country was attacked by a neighbour that was supported, despite an aggression that was in flagrant breach of international law, by the Western world as well as by the Soviet Union, and that Iraq used chemical weapons on a large scale without the international community protesting more than lamely. On the contrary, military support to Iraq continued, and Western companies assisted Saddam Hussein with his WMD programmes. In this war, the Iranian Navy was involved in exchanges of fire with the US Navy, and naval air defence brought down (unintentionally) a civilian Iranian airliner with a three-figure number of fatalities. Today, Iran is on the superpower’s ‘axis of evil’ and a declared potential target for US nuclear weapons. It borders another nuclear weapon state, Pakistan, with which relations have not always been smooth during the last decade because of Pakistan’s support of the Taliban. Iran hears about the unfettered pursuit of WMD by Saddam Hussein and does not know how long the Iraqi dictator will stay in power, or whether his successors will be any better with regards to the quar-

104. Op. cit. in note 101.

rels between Iran and Iraq over territory. Obviously, for all the ills of its internal dual-rule system and its support for terrorist groups trying to wreck the Middle East peace process, Iran has massive, existential security problems to which its supposed WMD and missile programmes are meant to respond.

The most important conclusion from this is that there is a need for serious, intense security dialogue with the Islamic Republic as part of the 'critical dialogue' that has been the prevailing EU policy towards that country, together with specific precautions when licensing dual-use transfers. Such a dialogue would greatly profit from a UN Security Council statement promising a sharp, quick and determined response to any first use of WMD, as proposed above. The Union could then make clear explicitly that it understands this assurance to apply, of course, to Iran. This statement should be accompanied with an equally clear expression of regret for the lacklustre response to Iraq's use of CW during the Iran-Iraq war. (It would be extremely useful if the United States were to decide to make a similar statement.) The prospect of enhanced economic relations as Iran opens up its (strongly bureaucratised) economy and freezes activities to acquire WMD-usable equipment could possibly be raised, together with the risk that all economic ties will be cut if plans for the Shahab-4, a real concern for the Europeans, go ahead. Thus, as in the case of North Korea, a shrewd combination of diplomacy and containment, with a residual grain of deterrence, appears to be the appropriate approach.

This begs the question whether the Islamic Republic, notably its more reactionary elements, can be deterred at all. Experience would suggest that it can. Significantly, even during the revolutionary phase of the regime of Ayatollah Khomeiny, Iran refrained from any open military aggression against its neighbours. To be sure, it tried to foment internal unrest and rebellion, and supported terrorism on a very large scale, but it never took the risk of going to war against countries allied with the United States (it came closest to such a move in the 'tankers war' in 1984, but even then no attacks were made on facilities or ships within the territorial waters of its Gulf neighbours. Confronted with the overwhelming combination of nerve gas, offensive Iraqi forces and the superpower's navy patrolling the Persian Gulf, Iran renounced its initial, far-reaching war objectives and agreed terms. Nowadays, Iran appears to have reduced its support for terrorism to groups operating in the Middle East conflict, and has tried not to overstep

the invisible line that would provoke Israel's retaliation. This speaks loudly for a very rational core of strategic calculus in Iranian thinking even under Khomeiny and even more so today.¹⁰⁵

Iraq

Analysis of the Iraqi problem does not, at the moment, indicate pre-emptive or preventive action on urgent security grounds. Rather, it is the history of defiance and undercutting of regimes that requires a determined effort to move Iraq towards compliance with its obligations.¹⁰⁶ What is needed, therefore, is a tailored combination of containment, enforcement and deterrence; enforcement would not work – as the last four, or indeed eleven, years have amply shown – without the prospect of force being used if the Iraqi leadership flouts its obligations.¹⁰⁷

Diplomacy, in comparison with the two other cases, has only a very moderate role to play. It serves mainly to clarify 'grey area' situations that may emerge during the course of inspections, and to reassure Iraq's neighbours and the broader Arab and Muslim public that their interests are being taken into account and that rules are being observed thoroughly. That is why going through the United Nations, contrary to President Bush's and Prime Minister Blair's apparent initial inclinations, was so essential and remains important as the inspections go ahead. The Security Council must remain master of the proceedings.

Nevertheless, the role of diplomacy cannot be overstated in this case. Saddam Hussein is a proven rule-breaker who is primarily concerned with his personal domination over his people, and would try to extend the reach of his power further if the international community let him. He regards WMD as absolutely indispensable for his regional and international standing (and possibly also as a symbol of personal achievement in internal power struggles). The spectre of him being forced out of power is no doubt a necessary 'stick' to ensure, if at all possible, his compliance.

For the European Union, the case of Iraq has been disastrous in that it has exposed the degree to which its major members are divided on the most crucial issues of world politics.¹⁰⁸ The United Kingdom sided first with a US position that was, to put it diplomatically, not exactly in line with mainstream international law, and modified its policies only after domestic criticism, ranging from public opinion to the cabinet, had been voiced. Germany said no to any role in armed enforcement, should it be deemed nec-

105. Shahram Chubin, *Iran's national security policy: capabilities, intentions and impact* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1994); Michael J. Eisenstadt, *The Deterrence Series. Case Study 4: Iran* (Washington, DC: Chemical and Biological Arms Control Institute, 1998).

106. For a thorough analysis, see Martin Ortega, 'Iraq: A European point of view', *Occasional Paper 40* (Paris: EU Institute for Security Studies, 2002).

107. IISS, op. cit. in note 74, pp. 5-9.

108. On the transatlantic debate, see Philip H. Gordon, 'Iraq: the transatlantic debate', *Occasional Paper 39* (Paris: EU Institute for Security Studies, 2002).

essary by the UN, defying not only common sense, which would suggest that Saddam Hussein has never reacted kindly to soft approaches, and deviating from its time-honoured policies of supporting the United Nations whole-heartedly. France, to its credit, fell into line, as its national interests (securing the crucial importance of its permanent seat on the UN Security Council) coincided with the general European interest (to avoid unilateralism in one of the most crucial tests of security policy during the last few years).

The Europeans must stop this self-denigrating demonstration of incapability. The Iraq issue – and possibly the whole area of WMD proliferation – is an area where the full spectrum of instruments of CFSP under the Treaty of Amsterdam, notably common positions and common strategies, must be urgently applied. And this includes in particular some criteria and procedures that would help heads of state and government to decide in which situations the use of force would be unavoidable.

Is Saddam Hussein able to be deterred? As in the case of Iran the answer appears to be yes. Iraq has used chemical weapons only in situations where no retaliation was foreseen, against Iran in the Iran-Iraq war and against Kurdish civilians. In 1990-91 against superior allied forces they were not employed – apparently because of an ambiguous US threat – nor did Saddam Hussein order the launching of BW- or CW-tipped missiles against Israel. The *Al-Hussein* missiles that struck Israeli cities were conventionally armed. And Saddam Hussein terminated resistance to allied force exactly at the moment when the war was clearly lost but before this defeat could turn into a serious threat to his own regime. While it is absolutely true that he is willing to take greater risks than the average Western head of state, it is equally clear that he calculates the odds and opts for an orderly retreat when the alternative is a risk to his person.¹⁰⁹ Within the limits of this very particular leader's risk calculus, therefore, deterrence can be assumed to work. By the same token, he is most likely to open his Pandora's box of WMD widest when he considers he has got nothing more to lose, i.e. precisely when his very existence, and that of his dynasty and regime, are facing extinction.¹¹⁰

109. James A. Baker III, *The Politics of Diplomacy* (New York: Putnam Books, 1995), p. 395; Anthony H. Cordesman, *The Deterrence Series. Case Study 3: Iraq* (Washington, DC: Chemical and Biological Arms Control Institute, 1998).

110. IISS, op. cit. in note 74, p. 73.

The post-11 September world and transatlantic relations

On the basis of the above analysis, it is now possible to put the security threat to Europe and the Western world in perspective. The situation is serious: blood will be shed in Western countries, as it will be impossible to prevent each and every attack. Some incidents will take the lives of as many people as the 11 September attacks did. Yet there is nothing in the threat environment that should force us to believe that the period of Western ascendancy is coming to an end. The terrorists are not a majority movement even within their own culture; their means, even if they may involve some deadly chemical and biological agents, are limited. Many of them will be caught and detained in the coming years. The survival of their leadership is all but granted. It will certainly be a long, hard struggle, but it will not be a fundamental, deadly challenge to the West.

In the case of 'rogue states', this is even more true. Their capabilities to threaten and to kill will remain limited and can be restricted even more by prudent, cooperative Western policies. A combination of diplomacy and cooperation, where appropriate, deterrence and containment, where needed, and mandated military action, where inescapable, will contain the threat to a manageable order of magnitude. Links between them and 'megaterrorists' are unlikely and can in any case be handled by a combination of diplomacy and deterrence.

The conclusion on threat analysis is thus that we have to keep our guard up and be extremely vigilant, but have no need to panic. What is imperative is to avoid remedies that make the situation worse. The most essential thing – and, unfortunately, it is a big challenge at the same time – is that the leader of the Western world, the United States, should understand this message.

11 September came as a great shock to the United States. That is, it was not anticipated by the broad public and those sections of the élite that had not thought through the implications of the 1993 abortive attack on the World Trade Center, the significance of the growing terrorist intrigue against US targets worldwide,

and the very clear pronouncements by Osama bin Laden in 1996 and 1998, with threats to take murderous action to the US homeland, and to kill civilians as well as military personnel indiscriminately. Those events have changed the American public's understanding of security and have created a window of opportunity for those sections of the US political and security elite that had a clear unilateralist and hegemonic agenda even before the attacks.¹¹¹ With this change in worldview, new requirements are put to America's allies to which we Europeans are forced to react.¹¹²

Terrorism and the threat to America's allies

The United States is the terrorist's prime target. It is not only the leader of the Western world, the signpost of a liberal, consumerist and largely secular culture (though one should note that Europe is more secular than the United States, where religion plays a much more significant part in public and even political life). The United States is also the leading military, political and economic power and attracts the feelings of resentment of those whose aspirations for a better life have been frustrated – as much by the poor performance of their own governments as by the repercussions of the international economic system promoted by the United States. On top of the grievances of those who fight the United States from politico-religious motivations, however, is America's role as the protector of Muslim regimes that are perceived as apostatic, and of Israel, which is seen by the fanatics as an imperial implant in holy Muslim land by the Jews/Crusaders.

Europe is only second in the line of fire, but it is in the line anyway. Al-Zuwahiri's threats to the United Kingdom and Germany, followed by later confirmation, apparently by Osama bin Laden himself, were a sobering reminder that the Europeans cannot escape the terrorist threat just by playing dead or acting as America's poodle. In that sense, American capabilities in the fight against transnational 'megaterrorism' remain an asset for European security. The same is true for the US capacity to serve as a stabiliser for regions in which Europe has a strong interest but is not capable by itself to pacify, such as the Persian Gulf. The Atlantic Alliance, then, remains an important asset for European security, even though close allegiance to the United States might attract more rather than less attention from terrorists. This is a short-

111. See the detailed considerations of Pierre Hassner, 'The United States: the empire of force or the force of empire?', *Chaillot Paper 54* (Paris: EU Institute for Security Studies, 2002).

112. An excellent, detailed analysis of the Euro-Atlantic dilemmas in security policy is given in Julian Lindley-French, 'Terms of engagement. The paradox of American power and the transatlantic dilemma post-11 September', *Chaillot Paper 52* (Paris: EU Institute for Security Studies, 2002).

term consideration that should not overshadow the long-term common interest that Europe and the United States have in fighting and eliminating the terrorist threat. This interest is based not only on a claim to preserve Western dominance, preserve the smooth functioning of a liberal world economic system or just fight off tremendous physical threats to the state and its citizens. It is also motivated by the defence of a free society against its complete opposite: a hopeless, totalitarian empire of bigotry in which the centuries-old achievements of equal human rights, the containment of state power and an independent judiciary would be eliminated. This is not just a 'Western civilisation' project but one in which the West shares a distinct, value-based interest. Whatever divisive elements persist, alas, in the transatlantic relationship, as is discussed below, this solid rock of commonality must not be forgotten.

At the same time, it must be realised that by demonstrating solidarity with America, Europe is consciously increasing the terrorist risk to itself. It is highly unlikely that, for example, Germany would have entered the al-Qaeda target screen were it not for the presence of German soldiers in Afghanistan. Likewise, Britain is attracting attention for its role as the staunchest ally of the United States. Bin Laden's November 2002 message is quite clear in that regard and not open to misinterpretation. It is all the more disturbing that leading US conservative intellectuals badly underrate the military contribution Europe is making to Western security, despite the gulf between European and US capabilities.¹¹³ Even more disturbing, people advising the US government, such as Richard Perle and members of the Administration itself, depict the Europeans as a pacifist bunch of wimps.¹¹⁴ Whether it is simple autism or a political ego swollen out of all proportion that explains this ignorance, the Atlantic Alliance will not survive if European blood is shed on America's behalf and yet this arrogant attitude within the US conservative elite persists.

US hegemonic objectives and the role of the Union

In this context, it would be naive to overlook the risks that the policies of the Bush administration present to the European project. If we turn our attention from the issue of the physical integrity of European territories and their populations and focus on the

113. Robert Kagan, 'Power and Weakness', *Policy Review*, June 2002, www.policyreview.org/Jun02/kagan; for an excellent summary of the European contribution, see *op. cit.* in previous note, ch. 4.

114. Even as German soldiers were operating in Afghanistan and bin Laden was threatening Germany, Perle spoke about Germany being sunk into 'morally seducing pacifism', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 14 November 2002.

integrity of European institutions and the continued development of European integration, the relationship loses some of its positive connotations. And beware: this is not simply a reflection of asymmetric power between the allies, as some would suggest. It has to do with conscious policy choices in Washington that deviate significantly and clearly, not just from what most Europeans prefer but also from what has been US mainstream policy since President Woodrow Wilson, and has formed the joint European-American platform and vision throughout the Cold War and beyond.

First, the Bush administration has continued the traditional US policy of trying to impede progress in European foreign and defence policies when such progress threatens to challenge American preponderance. The origins of this US stance go back a long way: from Henry Kissinger's claim to US representation in 'European Political Cooperation' to the harsh refusal of the 1981 Venice Declaration by the Council on the Middle East conflict and the virtual prohibition, a few years later, of consultation on SDI, the most important security issue at the time, within the WEU framework, to Madeleine Albright's 'three D's' in European defence policy (no duplication, no decoupling and no discrimination),¹¹⁵ notably a duplication of those capabilities, such as command and communications and satellite surveillance, that could give Europe a truly independent operational capability, there is a consistent strategy: to welcome European efforts as long as they are embedded in a framework that gives the ascendancy to US preferences, but to react with hostility if a common European political will or a capacity to act independently appears to be emerging.

The post-11 September policy betrays a clear language. The US accepted NATO's invocation of Art. 5 of the Washington Treaty but dealt with the military requirements not through the Atlantic Council but on a one-to-one basis with those allies who, in the American view, had something to offer. The campaign, as well as politico-military preparation for the follow-up confrontation with Iraq, was conducted in close cooperation with the United Kingdom, sidelining the rest of Europe from the beginning.

The build-up to the Iraq crisis was also, significantly, prepared by Washington with Britain, but without proper consultation within the North Atlantic Council or, more generally, on a broader basis. Germany was under pressure because of its previous imprudent decision to comply with US demands to put a BC defence unit and related equipment (Fuchs 'sniffer' light tanks) into

115. Stanley R. Sloan, 'The United States and European defence', *Chaillot Paper 39* (Paris: WEU Institute for Security Studies, 2000), p. 16.

Kuwait, where their only conceivable mission would be to serve as a back-up in a war against Iraq. When the discussion in Washington on a unilateral, anti-regime war took off without any consultation, Berlin felt it was being taken for granted and reacted sharply. Carried away by favourable public opinion, the Chancellor then took the decision not to participate in a campaign in any circumstances, even under a UN mandate and independent of any actions Saddam Hussein himself might take, thereby effectively forestalling a common European position. Prime Minister Blair, emulating the US position and turning to the UN only after strong objections reflected in public opinion polls and the media, in his party and even within his cabinet, prevented European unity from the other side. Almost by default, France alone pursued a position that should have been the European one. It is not as if the European countries were innocent of this imminent disaster for European common foreign and security policy. But it is equally true that Washington played a game, well and probably consciously, that would keep the Europeans divided, as it effectively did.

Second, The National Security Strategy has formulated its rationale in a way that leaves no room for misunderstanding:¹¹⁶ the United States must forestall the emergence of every serious contender for power. Measured in terms of population, GDP, financial capabilities, technological advancement and aggregated military power, the European Union comes closest to this state. Enlargement will bring this position only into sharper focus: with 450 million citizens, Europe will surpass the US population by more than fifty per cent. GDP will be within about 10 per cent of that of America. If the experience of previous accessions, namely a fairly rapid catching-up by the newcomers to average per-capita GDP, is repeated, EU GDP will surpass that of America within a decade or so after enlargement becomes effective. This will most likely also strengthen the position of the euro against the dollar, as the economic space supporting the euro will become larger and stronger.

Of course, Europe would not be a rival on a par with China (if China emerges into what some US security analysts fear it will). But a Europe that spoke with one voice on important world political issues and could field significant military power could not be taken for granted but would have to be taken seriously. Talking

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

with an adult, even one of smaller size than oneself, is definitely different from speaking to fifteen dwarfs.

Washington is trying to avoid this. It is for this reason that it tries to force its own priorities upon Europe. One of them is to spend more money of defence, an idea that understandably gets a sympathetic hearing in European defence circles. But again, looking at aggregate defence spending in the Union – and taking into account variations in exchange rates and therefore buying power – Europe spends somewhat less than half as much on defence as the United States, and that is after all still an enormous sum. Europe does not have the same needs. It does not need to maintain a four-figure number of nuclear warheads with corresponding means of delivery, and a much larger reserve force. It does not need twelve aircraft carrier groups, and would probably not in the next few years spend very large sums on a territorial missile defence system. It is quite probable that Europe can meet its security needs within the limits of its present and foreseeable aggregate defence spending. It will not meet these needs, however, with the present spending structure. With fifteen staffs and fifteen procurement processes, Europe's armed forces are too manpower-heavy in the most expensive personnel sector – staff officers and highly qualified civilian staff. The personnel:investment ratio in defence budgets is biased towards the first item, and while some countries (Britain and France in particular) have started streamlining, Europe as a whole has not. By depending on largely national procurement procedures, with the exception of some spectacular collaborative projects, they fail to benefit from possible economics of scale and spend more per defence item than they would in a unified market. Increasing defence expenditure nevertheless leaves these redundant structures intact, thereby keeping Europeans from integrating their defence policies.

Third, competing visions in Washington and Brussels on the Union's character and role correspond to their competing visions of world order. Washington has come to think in strictly hierarchical terms, with a strong emphasis on military power. The United States stands at the top of the order, enforcing stability, if need be by force, on the basis of a national decision. US freedom of action must not be constrained. As Pierre Hassner has succinctly put it: '... the absolute right that the United States currently

claims to make sovereign judgments over what is right and what is wrong, particularly in respect of the use of force, and to exempt itself with an absolutely clear conscience from all the rules that it proclaims and applies to others . . . The Americans are absolutely against any encroachment on their own sovereignty, but absolutely in favour of intervention against others.¹¹⁷ Seen from this particular standpoint on order, and with the exceptional place the United States has within it, the renunciation of multilateralism makes sense. The refusal to join the anti-personnel mine ban of the Ottawa Convention and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, the fight against amending the Biological Weapons Convention and against the International Criminal Court, the disinterest in negotiating rules of the road for the military use of outer space and the decision to withdraw from the ABM Treaty are a reflection of this view of the world.

American unilateralism and the European concept of world order

At the same time, US aversion against multilateralism goes beyond the strategic aim of preventing international rules from encroaching upon America's exceptional position of unbounded leadership and extends to the preservation of broader American preferences (notably explicitly conservative ones): US abstention from the Kyoto Protocol underwrites America's idiosyncratic from of energy consumption, the determination not to ratify the Biodiversity Convention secures the right of US pharmaceutical companies to exploit the South's bioresources while protecting their patents derived therefrom, and the lacklustre approach to any serious effort to tackle the roots of the abundance of small arms around the globe defends the unrestricted right of Americans to bear arms under the Second Amendment and pleases the National Rifle Association, a powerful domestic lobby organisation and staunch supporter of conservative Republicans. The US vision of world order, therefore, not only serves to maintain a given hegemonic hierarchy of international relations with a view to preserving stability and peace together with American dominance, but is also instrumental in pushing through idiosyncratic, substantial political positions that emerge from a certain narrow spectrum within the US polity.¹¹⁸

117. Op. cit. in note 111, pp. 46, 47.

118. For a strong US-based criticism, see Michael Hirsh, 'Bush and the World', *Foreign Affairs* September/October 2002, pp. 18-43; John G. Ikenberry, 'America's Imperial Ambition', *ibid.*, pp. 44-60.

This vision of the world thus comes into conflict with European preferences on two counts. The Europeans think more in terms of partnerships (however unequal), with a central role for international law, multilateralism and international organisations. They accept the inevitability of coming to arrangements with states that are not (yet) democracies and may have divergent – but not necessarily violently antagonistic – views and interests from the West. The Europeans are for the time being more prepared than their American partners to find ways to accommodate those interests and views in a culturally and politically heterogeneous world, rather than deal with them through isolation, confrontation, and unfettered power asymmetry. This is not a world without violence; Europeans have lived too long at the eye of the storm to be naive about this. But they wish the use of force to be subject to law, not to be the instrument of an unconstrained (however benign) hegemon. It is over this particular relationship between power and law that the evolution of US thinking and action over the last two decades has produced the major and most substantial rift between the approaches to world politics on either side of the Atlantic. Historically, this is an irony. The law/power approach was very much pushed forward by the United States as from the end of the First World War, while the Europeans were stubbornly continuing with nineteenth century power politics or (in the case of Germany) even worse. Now, the roles appear to be reversed, with the US exploiting the window of opportunity of the ‘unipolar moment’ for a return to classical power politics while the Europeans – however tentatively and timidly – push forward with extending the rule of law.

This view is clearly expressed in the Presidency Conclusions of the European Council in Helsinki (1999): ‘The Union will contribute to international peace and security in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter. The Union recognises the primary responsibility of the United Nations Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security.’¹¹⁹ The Union’s emerging security and defence policy is solidly embedded in the international legal and institutional environment, as it exists.

Europe’s different vision cannot be divorced from what the project of the European Union is in itself. After all, the Union links sovereign national entities in an ever denser multilateral, and, on some issues (Pillar 1) supranational framework. If the work of the

119. Reproduced in Maartje Rutten (comp.), ‘From St-Malo to Nice. European defence: core documents’, *Chaillot Paper 47* (Paris: Institute for Security Studies of WEU, 2001), p. 82.

Convention on the Future of Europe so far indicates anything, it augurs for more movement in that direction. For Europeans, it appears highly conducive for the security and stability of this endeavour to shape their environment in the same mode. The United States, in contrast, despite its membership of many international organisations, is much less entangled and bound by multilateral commitments. And the instincts of the present ruling élite, as discussed below, go exactly in the opposite direction, thereby clashing head-on with what the Europeans believe to be a benign environment for their own project.

As these traits of US policy did not start with, but have become much more pronounced, since 11 September, it is becoming increasingly harder to dodge the issue.¹²⁰ Since they are torn between the need to stick to their own project and identity and keep their viable and friendly relations with a highly valued ally, and since public demands, the personality of leaders, and national traditions vary, Europeans, facing this vexing dilemma, come up, nationally, with different answers (or still try to avoid it altogether). Consequently, the further development of their foreign and security policy is stagnating, and a vicious circle of stagnation or even roll-back of what has been achieved is looming.

The conclusion at this point comes as something of a shock. It is indisputable that, in the fight against terrorism and in the common endeavour to keep proliferators at bay, alliance with the United States is a clear and obvious net asset. On the one hand, there is no point in bemoaning the fact that being associated with the United States does increase the risk of becoming a target for terrorists. It is equally true that this risk would not be zero anyway even without this connection. On the other hand alignment with the United States is indispensable for fighting the terrorist menace, which will not go away by itself, and for containing the emerging threats stemming from proliferators, which will remain a concern for security planners for a long time to come. This is a dilemma Europe cannot escape.

If, however, we go beyond the yardstick of territorial security and broader geopolitical interests of Europe's nation states and look at the 'European' aspect – the identity, project, and institutional cohesion of the European Union – US policies appear in a very different light. Indeed, at the European rather than member-

120. Peter Rudolf, 'Wie der 11. September die amerikanische Aussenpolitik verändert hat. Bilanz nach einem Jahr', *SWP-Aktuell* 33 (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, 2002); Ernst-Otto Czempel, *Weltpolitik im Umbruch. Die Pax Americana, der Terrorismus und die Zukunft der internationalen Beziehungen* (München: Verlag C.H. Beck, 2002).

state level, they appear as a risk, even a threat. It does of course amount to breaching a taboo to talk about transatlantic relations in those terms. However, if we do not face the facts and continue to brush it under the carpet, as NATO communiqués tend to, the West will face the same sad fate as the Warsaw Treaty Organisation, whose considerations, deliberations and pronouncements became so detached from reality that reality bounced back with a vengeance. In order to devise a sober (if painful) European effort to rescue this endangered but immensely valuable relationship, reality must be confronted.

Washington's explicit, official ambition of unchallenged supremacy and Europe's aim of becoming a more cohesive political actor pursuing jointly chosen objectives with a broader perspective reaching beyond the European periphery and with some – however moderate – military muscle, appear incompatible. So do the American predilection for deciding unilaterally what is good for the world, and Europe's clear preference to work through multilateral settings that have a broad set of participants – notably through the United Nations – to take such decisions.

To counter the unilateral American momentum, the Europeans will just have to stick steadfastly to their chosen objectives and say no to the United States from time to time when US policies run counter to core elements of the European project, or when US demands and proposals are consciously devised to pre-empt, defuse or dismantle a step in integration that Europeans view as essential but Washington believes would – in the short or long term – challenge its hegemonic position. Not playing poodle but staying one's course instead tends to lead to grumbling in Washington DC in the short term, but in most instances to earn respect and to lead to reconsideration later on. UNSC Resolution 1441 is in many ways a case in point. Initially abhorred by American hardliners, it became inevitable under the combined assault of a shifting US public opinion, a Prime Minister Blair who was forced by his domestic political base to go that route, and shrewd French negotiating skills that produced a result that was more compatible with the European vision of international order than had appeared possible in the beginning. Nevertheless, the very need to risk tactical confrontation with the big ally on some issues considered important on either side of the Atlantic is in itself a divisive

element within the Union. Again, a vicious circle is beginning to emerge. Europeans may well, with the aid of the US ally, be successful in confronting the substantial and horrible physical threat posed by terrorism. Will they also be capable of confronting the possible risks emerging from Washington's policies themselves? The jury is still out, and will remain so for a while.

Transnational terrorism is a clear and imminent danger to European security. The fight against this threat will require a complex set of instruments, of which military power is only a tiny part. Besides armed force, intelligence and police, there are legal, financial, developmental, political, social and cultural measures to be employed, and employed in a way that does not sacrifice liberal democracy on the altar of the fight against terrorism. All these instruments need attention and, above all, adequate resources. The present struggle against terrorism as led by the United States tends to overemphasise the military tools to the detriment of the others. Europeans should strive to correct this imbalance.

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery presents a second, distinct danger. This danger, while incrementally increasing, does not yet appear to pose an immediate threat to the European Union. This assessment includes the case of Iraq. The risk that the two threats converge lies less in any premeditated collaboration between ‘rogue states’ – who have their own interests in keeping their distance from ‘megaterrorism’ as long as their back is not totally against the wall – and terrorists than in the possibility that terrorists produce their own (of necessity relatively unsophisticated) chemical, biological or radiological weapons or succeed in acquiring materials and expertise. Proliferation, in turn, can only be curbed and mitigated by a combination of diplomatic, economic, political, legal and, as ultima ratio, military means. Deterrence and compulsion play a legitimate role among the more forceful of these instruments, legitimate, that is, within the context of the multilateral regimes that have been established to assist in the fight against WMD proliferation.

The security situation differs from that in the past in that the risks and threats facing Europe combine traditional ones emerging from states and their particular policies with those originating in substate, transnational networks with an extraordinary, partic-

ularly strong and violent motivation, based on a perverted reading of a world religion's prescriptions for the faithful. A minority within that religion, the followers of this violent political theology, must be taken absolutely seriously, and the campaign against them seen as a long-haul challenge in which there are no easy victories just around the corner and no quick panacea can replace the prudent use of the complex mixture of instruments mentioned and, above all, perseverance.

Europe shares these security interests with the United States. And US resources are an asset for America's European allies. At the same time, the present US government is employing those resources – and the new threat environment – with a view to pursuing its own agenda for world order in the form of American hegemony. This comes at the cost of both the former Western, now European project of a law-based world order grounded in multi-lateral decision-making, and an independent, strong role of the European Union within that order. The present government is very evidently following a policy of 'divide and rule', regarding not only the world as a whole but in particular its European allies.

US policies thus challenge both the European vision of world order and the European identity as a political Union. In this sense it presents a challenge to European security as well, as the integrity of the integration process is at stake. For Europeans, this experience is not without bitterness, as the solidarity shown with America in the campaign against al-Qaeda has increased the acute physical risks that European countries are facing. Nevertheless there is little point in papering over the clear direction of American policy: NATO communiqués, steamrolling over all political realities and ignoring existing differences known to everybody should be no gospel.

For the Europeans, getting down to formulating Common Positions, Joint Strategies and Joint Actions, not on the secondary issues of world politics but on the central questions, is the first answer to the present challenge. Preparing the required instruments – in the sense of a comprehensive security policy – for the difficult security issues of the day is the second. And the third but still important challenge is to get the European defence act together. It is less an issue of higher spending and much more one of throwing out obsolete structures (not the least the overemphasis on manpower at the expense of investment). Stalin once asked, 'The Pope! How many divisions has *he* got', and, ironically, it is

now in the US capital that this question is posed first (slightly amended in terms of ‘*useful* divisions and air forces’). Rather than giggling about history’s jokes, Europeans should be prepared to come up with a good answer.¹²¹ Because it is that answer, and little else, that will get us a serious hearing in Washington, DC.

121. See, for example, François Heisbourg et al., ‘European defence: making it work’, *Chaillot Paper 42* (Paris: Institute for Security Studies of WEU, 2000); Christoph Bertram, Joachim Schild, François Heisbourg and Yves Boyer, ‘Starting Over. For a Franco-German Initiative in European Defence’, *SWP-Studie* (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, 2002).


Abbreviations

ABM	Anti-Ballistic Missile (Treaty)
BC	Biological and Chemical
BW	Biological Warfare/Weapons
BWC	Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CW	Chemical Warfare/Weapons
CWC	Chemical Weapons Convention
EMIS	Electromagnetic Isotope Separation
ETA	Euzkadi ta Azkatasuna (Basque: 'Basque Homeland and Liberty'), separatist organisation
EU	European Union
G-8	Group of 8 leading industrialised nations
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIA	Armed Islamic Group (Algeria)
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IDF	Israeli Defence Forces
IRA	Irish Republican Army
IRBM	Intermediate-Range Ballistic Missile
ISI	Inter-Services Intelligence (Pakistan)
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organisation
RAF	Rote Armee Fraktion (German: Red Army Faction)
SDI	Strategic Defense Initiative
SLV	Space Launch Vehicle
UN	United Nations
UNSC	UN Security Council
UNSCOM	UN Special Commission on elimination of Iraqi WMD
US	United States
WEU	Western European Union
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction

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Since 11 September, the security debate has been refocused. A brand of terrorism inspired by a militant political theology that sets no limits on the violence it employs, the spread of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their means of delivery to extremist governments, and the combination of both, have become the main security concerns within the Western world that influence the preventive, defensive, and responsive instruments with which states and societies try to preserve their security.

The countries of the European Union are affected by both security threats. The al-Qaeda network is present in Europe and, according to its own pronouncements and practices, is targeting European countries. It is essential to understand as well as possible, the ideology, strategy, and structure of this new type of organisation in order to adopt the best countermeasures available; for this organisation is by no means invulnerable. Broad cooperation among European countries is essential for an effective anti-terrorist policy. In the fight against terrorism, it is essential to bear in mind that democracy must be protected and preserved, and basic civil rights not encroached upon.

The proliferation of WMD is confined to a relatively small number of countries. Given the means of delivery available to them now and in the foreseeable future, they do not at present constitute an acute security risk for the countries of the European Union. In the long run, as technologies become more sophisticated and the range and accuracy of missiles are extended, the danger might grow. Europeans would be well advised to develop a broad spectrum of policies to deal with this risk, ranging from military preparations to a strengthening of non-proliferation regimes and a diplomatic approach to those proliferators whose WMD programmes signal acute security concerns rather than simply aggressive intent.

The terrorism/proliferation axis has become a very sensitive subject for the transatlantic partners, even though one might expect that their common interest in combating the risk would lead to a convergence of policies. The sharp unilateralist turn in recent US policies on arms control and non/counter-proliferation have divided the member states of the European Union. Strangely, an additional security risk emerges here to the European Union – not to the physical integrity of its member states but to the coherence of its institutions, and thereby to greater European integration.

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