Transatlantic Book 2006
European Union
Institute for Security Studies

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Friends again ?

EU-US relations after the crisis

Nicole Gnesotto, James Dobbins, Federico Romero, David Frum, William Wallace, Ronald D. Asmus, István Gyarmati, Walter B. Slocombe, Gilles Andréani, Philip H. Gordon, Werner Weidenfeld, Felix Neugart, Geoffrey Kemp, Dov Lynch, Fiona Hill, Baudoin Bollaert, Joseph Quinlan, Marcin Zaborowski

Edited by Marcin Zaborowski

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ISSN 1633-7352
ISBN 92-9198-084-6
Published by the EU Institute for Security Studies and printed in Condé-sur-Noireau (France) by Corlet Imprimeur. Graphic design by Claire Mabille (Paris). Cover design by Corlet Imprimeur.

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The editor would like to acknowledge the contribution of **Antonio Missiroli**, who provided valuable input in the early stages regarding the content and structure of this book.

Introduction: the challenges ahead

Le challenge, c'est le réel

Nicole Gnesotto

Apparemment, tout va bien. Depuis la visite historique du président George Bush au Conseil européen à Bruxelles, en février 2005, les dirigeants américains et européens répètent à l'envi que la page de la discorde irakienne a été tournée et qu'un partenariat euro-américain, efficace et pragmatique, est leur objectif commun.

Et certes, la coopération a repris en bonne intelligence sur un certain nombre de dossiers difficiles : la préparation des négociations sur le statut final du Kosovo, les pressions communes sur le gouvernement syrien, le soutien américain aux efforts et à la démarche de l'Union européenne à l'égard du problème nucléaire iranien, la collaboration euro-américaine au sein du quartet pour la stabilisation de Gaza, le travail quotidien des deux parties en matière de lutte contre les réseaux terroristes sont autant de preuves d'une dynamique positive désormais retrouvée dans les relations euro-américaines. La nouvelle administration Bush, sous l'égide de Condoleezza Rice, a même repris à son compte nombre des principes de la stratégie de sécurité élaborée par Javier Solana et solennellement adoptée par le Conseil européen de décembre 2003 : sur les vertus de la diplomatie, la nécessité de cadres de coopération multilatérale, l'importance de l'Union comme acteur global et partenaire de sécurité des Etats-Unis, la nécessité de s'attaquer aux causes profondes qui peuvent nourrir le terrorisme international. Inversement, l'Union européenne a pris acte des préoccupations américaines sur la Chine et gelé à ce stade le projet de levée de l'embargo sur les ventes d'armes à ce pays, de même qu'elle a intensifié ses contributions financières et son soutien au processus politique irakien depuis les élections de janvier 2005.

Trois contraintes lourdes

Il n'en demeure pas moins que cette embellie se développe sur fond de trois contraintes lourdes :

- Le premier paradoxe vient de ce que cette relance de la coopération euro-américaine se déroule sur fond de crise chez chacun des deux partenaires. Du côté américain, la crise est globale dans la mesure où elle affecte tant l'image et la crédibilité du leadership américain dans le monde que la justesse et l'efficacité des choix stratégiques américains, après trois années d'enlisement ou d'échec en Irak. Du côté européen, ce n'est pas l'action extérieure de l'Union qui est remise en cause mais sa dynamique politique intérieure, après le rejet du projet de Constitution par deux pays et la panne de confiance qui s'épanouit depuis entre les 25. Autrement dit, Européens et Américains célèbrent les vertus du partenariat alors que leur puissance respective est à la baisse, leur introversion croissante, et leur capacité d'influence commune forcément amoindrie. Il y a quatre ans, l'administration américaine fustigeait le multilatéralisme comme le refuge des faibles et célébrait dans l'hubris la solitude d'une Amérique présumée omnipotente ; elle a redécouvert depuis les limites de sa puissance et donc les vertus d'une association plus structurée avec les Européens, alors que ceux-ci – faibles ou forts, divisés ou unis – n'ont jamais cessé de revendiquer, comme un principe de base de leur vision du monde, un partenariat fructueux avec l'Amérique. La question se pose donc de savoir si ce renouveau du partenariat est conçu à Washington comme une alliance de choix ou une alliance de nécessité, comme un projet politique commun et durable ou un épisode pragmatique et donc réversible.
- Le second paradoxe se situe dans le décalage de plus en plus visible entre la relance des coopérations gouvernementales et le désamour des opinions publiques. Dans l'Union européenne, tous les sondages d'opinion montrent en effet une dégradation profonde de l'image des Etats-Unis et une méfiance tenace à l'égard de la puissance américaine : même dans les pays membres de la coalition en Irak, la progression de l'anti-américanisme, ou de l'anti-bushisme dans une lecture moins radicale, reste spectaculaire, bien au-delà de la crise du printemps 2003. La récente livraison du désormais traditionnel sondage de la German Marshall Fund sur les « tendances transatlantiques » confirme cette érosion : 59% des Européens interrogés considèrent le leadership américain dans les affaires internationales comme indésirable, 72% désapprouvent la politique extérieure du président Bush, 55% pensent que l'Union devrait prendre une

approche indépendante des Etats-Unis dans les questions de sécurité internationale (en hausse de cinq points sur un an). Après Guantanamo, après les révélations sur la fausseté des arguments concernant les programmes nucléaires et chimiques irakiens, ou sur certaines interprétations laxistes des conventions internationales sur la torture, les récentes révélations sur les pratiques d'exfiltration et d'interrogatoires de la CIA ne risquent pas de combler ce fossé. Certes, les mêmes sondages d'opinion, qui témoignent d'une attente très forte à l'égard du rôle international que devrait jouer l'Union européenne, révèlent aussi une très grande frilosité des citoyens interrogés sur la nécessité de consentir des efforts financiers au bénéfice de cet acteur européen. Mais la question demeure de la solidité à terme d'une relation euro-américaine construite sur le seul pragmatisme des Etats, sans adhésion profonde des citoyens eux-mêmes.

- La troisième contrainte lourde réside dans le système international. Si la mondialisation est bien l'élément structurant du système économique, rien de tel n'existe du côté politique. Un système politique international est tout simplement inexistant. D'une part, parce qu'il n'existe plus aucun consensus entre les acteurs internationaux eux-mêmes pour identifier les fondements majeurs de ce système : est-ce l'affrontement entre le terrorisme international et les démocraties mondialisées, est-ce l'ascension de la puissance chinoise qui structurent désormais les relations internationales ? Est-on à l'inverse revenu à un système politique mondial où seuls comptent les poids relatifs des Etats et leurs stratégies de puissance ? D'autre part, parce que les bases institutionnelles du système international sont simultanément fragilisées : qu'il s'agisse de l'ONU, de l'OMC, du TNP, de l'OSCE, de l'OTAN, chacune des grandes organisations internationales postérieures à la Seconde Guerre mondiale connaît en effet un affaiblissement de sa valeur normative et/ou opérationnelle, alors que les nouveaux instruments possibles de gouvernance mondiale ne bénéficient pas d'une légitimité universelle : les Etats-Unis (et la Chine) ne reconnaissent par exemple ni le protocole de Kyoto, ni le Tribunal pénal international. Il est d'ailleurs frappant qu'Américains et Européens vantent les vertus du multilatéralisme au moment précis où les principaux instruments du système multilatéral traversent une des crises les plus profondes

de leur histoire. Or cette absence de lisibilité du système international pèse sur la relation euro-américaine : c'est en effet l'interprétation même du monde, de ses enjeux stratégiques majeurs et de ses modes de gouvernance souhaitables qui peut devenir l'objet de divergences, voire de désaccords entre les deux partenaires. Les coopérations transatlantiques de l'après-Irak peuvent donc être nombreuses, voire même fructueuses ; mais elles restent aléatoires, parce que fondées sur des convergences ponctuelles, davantage que sur une vision commune de ce que devrait être le système international de demain.

Le renouveau et ses limites

D'où l'étrange impression de ce retour au partenariat, caractéristique de la deuxième administration Bush : une série d'initiatives communes, sur fond de malentendus ou de divergences muettes. Un vent de renouveau, sur fond de réflexes antiques.

Depuis février 2005, la rhétorique et l'atmosphère nouvelles (jamais les rencontres bilatérales Etats-Unis/UE n'ont été aussi nombreuses), les actions concrètes (dans le conflit israélo-palestinien), les compromis réciproques (les Etats-Unis soutenant la position européenne sur l'Iran et l'Union modifiant ses positions initiales sur la Chine), ne parviennent pas à masquer le vide de cette réconciliation supposée. Sur la nature et l'impact de la puissance chinoise, sans doute l'une des questions majeures pour l'avenir de la mondialisation et du système international, les concertations sont aussi minimales que l'est le dialogue stratégique sur l'avenir de l'énergie pétrolière. A plus court terme, aucune discussion sérieuse sur l'avenir de l'Irak, sur les intentions américaines à l'égard de ce pays, sur les conséquences pour la région d'un éventuel démembrement irakien, n'a été engagée entre Américains et Européens. Aucune stratégie commune pour le monde arabo-musulman n'est en cours d'élaboration, au-delà des slogans récurrents sur la démocratisation et la réforme des uns et des autres. Les Américains ne le souhaitent pas, les Européens ne le demandent pas. Certes, l'Iran et l'Afghanistan échappent à cette superficialité des relations transatlantiques, et les deux partenaires ont développé dans ces deux cas une coopération approfondie : mais peut-on sérieusement parler de l'Iran et de l'Afghanistan indépendamment des bouleversements majeurs qui affectent les autres

dossiers du Moyen-Orient ? L'intention, affichée des deux côtés, d'oublier la crise transatlantique de 2003 pour reconstruire une relation fructueuse est on ne peut plus louable. Mais il existe une marge entre le pardon des offenses et la suppression de l'offense elle-même : or la décomposition de la société irakienne depuis l'intervention américaine est le fait stratégique majeur de cette décennie, et ce fait est devenu, pour mille raisons contradictoires des deux côtés, le tabou transatlantique moderne.

Quant aux réflexes traditionnels, ils prolifèrent d'autant plus facilement qu'ils sont des éléments de continuité rassurante, quand plus rien ne l'est. Du côté américain, c'est d'une part le thème du partage du fardeau et l'appel aux contributions européennes qui forment la base récurrente du discours aux Européens. Comme si ceux-ci n'étaient pas déjà profondément impliqués, financièrement, militairement, diplomatiquement dans la gestion des crises internationales : l'Union européenne est depuis longtemps le premier contributeur au budget de maintien de la paix des Nations unies (40% du budget contre 25% pour les Etats-Unis), premier donneur d'aide internationale pour le développement, en volume (55% du total de l'aide mondiale) comme en pourcentage du PNB (0,36% contre 0,16% pour les Etats-Unis) ; sa contribution au Fonds mondial de lutte contre le sida, la tuberculose et la malaria est le double de la contribution américaine. Plus récemment, après seulement six années de PESD et d'implication de l'Union sur le terrain des crises internationales, elle peut se targuer d'une contribution au partage du fardeau plus qu'honorable : l'Union fournit en effet 10 fois plus de personnel aux opérations des Nations unies que les Etats-Unis, elle contribue pour près de 90% des forces de stabilisation déployées dans l'ensemble des Balkans, qu'il s'agisse de la KFOR sous l'égide de l'OTAN ou d'Althea sous totale responsabilité européenne. En Afghanistan, les Européens fournissent 80% des forces de l'ISAF, sous commandement de l'OTAN : ils vont en 2006 renforcer cette contribution à l'OTAN, dans le but explicite de permettre un allègement du dispositif militaire américain en Afghanistan. Au total, entre 65 et 70 000 soldats européens sont ainsi déployés dans le monde dans le cadre de l'ONU, l'OTAN ou l'UE. Depuis novembre 2005, c'est l'Union européenne qui assume la responsabilité du contrôle de la frontière de Gaza. C'est elle qui est leader dans la difficile négociation avec les Iraniens sur le dossier nucléaire. C'est elle qui reprendra la mission de police de l'ONU au Kosovo, dans le

cadre des négociations sur le statut final de ce pays. Sont-ce là modestes contributions à la stabilisation internationale ? Un tel bilan justifie-t-il les permanentes admonestations américaines sur la faiblesse des capacités et des budgets militaires européens, comme du temps de la Guerre froide ? Il est vrai qu'en Irak, la contribution militaire des Européens est modeste, la plupart des pays engagés dans la coalition ayant même réduit ou annoncé leur retrait pour 2006. Mais l'Irak ne peut être le critère d'évaluation de la solidarité euro-américaine, puisqu'il en a été l'élément de rupture.

C'est d'autre part le thème de la primauté de l'OTAN qui connaît un retour en force dans le discours américain. Une primauté désormais conçue comme globale, pour le dialogue politique, les opérations militaires, la gestion civile des crises et même l'aide humanitaire aux victimes. Comme si l'on était revenu au temps des relations entre l'OTAN et le Marché commun des années 1960, comme si l'Union n'était pas depuis devenue un acteur diplomatique et politique majeur, comme si la PESC et la PESD étaient nulles et non avenues, comme si le leadership américain n'avait aucunement été remis en cause par l'affaire irakienne, comme si l'OTAN disposait de tout le potentiel et des capacités, financières et civiles, dont dispose en réalité l'Union, ou comme si enfin celle-ci devait avoir pour finalité de devenir une agence technique au service de l'OTAN. C'est à peine si on se souvient que le principe de non-duplication inutile entre l'OTAN et l'Union fut naguère inventé par l'OTAN elle-même. Les Etats-Unis pressent donc tous les jours les Européens de questions sur ce qu'ils peuvent faire au bénéfice de l'OTAN, alors que la question majeure concerne en réalité le degré d'implication des Etats-Unis eux-mêmes. Le paradoxe majeur de l'OTAN tient en effet à l'ambivalence de la position américaine : sur le plan politique, le plaidoyer pour une OTAN politique s'arrête là où commence la diplomatie nationale américaine (Irak, Israël-Palestine) ; sur le plan opérationnel, le renforcement des capacités militaires de l'OTAN est conçu hors participation américaine : c'est ainsi que les Etats-Unis ne participent pas à la NRF, et que leurs forces engagées sur les mêmes terrains que l'OTAN ne sont pas placées sous le commandement de l'Organisation mais sous contrôle national américain. Autrement dit, sans les contributions européennes (et canadiennes), on voit mal ce que serait aujourd'hui l'OTAN. Mais ce constat est passé sous silence et le réflexe institutionnel otanien est d'autant plus conservateur

que la réalité d'une communauté atlantique, incarnée par l'Alliance, devient elle-même plus hypothétique.

Du côté européen, le réflexe majeur est d'éviter la crise avec l'Amérique : parce que l'expérience de la guerre en Irak fut traumatisante pour tous les partenaires européens, qu'ils aient été ou non d'accord avec la stratégie américaine d'intervention ; parce que la crise interne de l'Union – après les « non » français et néerlandais au référendum sur la Constitution, après les péripéties douloureuses du budget européen – fragilise le sentiment de solidarité politique entre les Etats membres et transforme la perspective d'une détérioration des relations transatlantiques en ligne rouge à ne pas dépasser. Et certes, on voit mal ce qu'aurait de constructif pour l'Union une situation de crise transatlantique qui s'ajouterait à la crise intra-européenne actuelle. Autrement dit, la plupart des Européens veulent croire à cette résurrection du thème, et parfois de la réalité, d'un partenariat transatlantique qui enterrerait définitivement le souvenir de la crise de 2003 et rassurerait contre la somme des inquiétudes à venir : les Européens ne croient guère en effet à l'avenir radieux des dominos démocratiques, ils doutent sérieusement que le monde soit plus sûr aujourd'hui qu'il ne l'était avant la guerre en Irak, mais ils s'interrogent tout autant sur la fragilité de leur propre construction européenne. L'absence de leadership politique au sein de l'Union – alors que les institutions sont en panne, et qu'aucun des pays prétendant à un rôle moteur n'est en mesure de jouer ce rôle – conforte donc cette tendance à la préservation d'une réassurance américaine, fût-elle d'apparence.

L'avenir, sous bénéfice d'inventaire

Comment, sur la base d'un tel état des lieux, consolider une relation euro-américaine d'envergure et d'avenir ? La première condition suppose que soit mené un travail d'inventaire assez rigoureux des paramètres structurants les relations entre les Etats-Unis et l'Union. Or, en la matière, les bouleversements sont de taille. C'était la menace collective qui soudait le destin et la stratégie des alliés, c'est désormais l'appréciation même de la menace, et donc les options stratégiques possibles, qui peuvent faire l'objet de désaccords. C'était le leadership américain qui produisait du consensus atlantique, c'est aujourd'hui la politique américaine qui peut

diviser Américains et Européens. La fonction première de l'OTAN était de coupler de façon indivisible le destin et les forces armées des Etats-Unis et de l'Europe ; c'est le principe même de cette intégration qui est devenu optionnel, selon les enjeux et les choix plus ou moins unilatéralistes des Etats-Unis. L'inexistence stratégique de l'Europe était le corollaire d'un système de sécurité atlantique directement régi par les Etats-Unis ; l'Union européenne développe aujourd'hui sa propre politique étrangère et de sécurité commune et de nombreuses opérations de gestion de crises sont directement gérées par l'Union. Sur le plan des principes enfin, c'était la défense de la démocratie et des droits de l'homme qui fondait la communauté transatlantique ; qu'aujourd'hui un débat euro-américain puisse de nouveau se développer sur la définition de la torture ou l'interprétation des conventions de Genève en dit long sur la déstructuration des valeurs occidentales.

Un tel travail d'inventaire et de retour au réel aurait au moins le mérite d'écarter deux scénarios parfaitement illusoires, l'apologie du statu quo et la frénésie de la table rase. Le premier scénario consiste à nier les bouleversements intervenus depuis plus d'une décennie et à vouloir rétablir, déconnecté de toute réalité, le paradigme traditionnel des relations transatlantiques : autrement dit, la primauté de l'OTAN, le leadership américain, l'allégeance politique de l'Europe et la négation de l'Union. La seconde illusion consiste à l'inverse à exagérer l'impact de ces évolutions et à conclure à la déliquescence, voire à la mort programmée d'une communauté transatlantique structurée : autrement dit la fin de l'OTAN, l'illégitimité du leadership américain, l'institutionnalisation des divergences politiques, l'indépendance de l'Europe ou son éclatement au profit des nations.

Aucune de ces hypothèses, celle du statu quo comme celle de la table rase, n'a de chance de se concrétiser, parce que toutes deux sont en contradiction totale avec la réalité comme avec les intérêts de l'Amérique et de l'Union européenne. La formule adéquate d'une relation euro-américaine utile se trouve donc quelque part entre ces deux extrêmes. Les Américains sont sans doute moins omnipotents qu'ils ne le croient, les Européens sont certainement plus influents qu'ils ne le pensent, mais ni l'un ni l'autre ne détiennent la clé d'un système international aujourd'hui opaque, instable, imprévisible. On voit mal en tout cas comment un modèle atlantique daté des années soixante – « tout par et pour l'OTAN » – pourrait se greffer harmonieusement sur une réalité

datée de l'après-11 septembre et de l'après-Irak, pas plus qu'on ne voit comment un vote négatif sur la Constitution européenne pourrait suffire à ressusciter le modèle européen de l'avant-mondialisation. C'est pourtant pour façonner l'évolution du système international futur que les Etats-Unis et l'Union ont avant tout besoin l'un de l'autre, du principe de réalité des uns et du principe de responsabilité des autres ; c'est même dans leur capacité à forger ensemble l'ordre international de la mondialisation que se jugeront *in fine* la valeur, la pertinence et la solidité de leur alliance.

Friends again?

James Dobbins

In the course of 2005, a measure of civility was restored to relations between old Europe and the new world. Both sides were humbled, the United States by setbacks in Iraq, Europe by the failure of its constitution. Unilateralism and multi-polarity have fallen out of fashion. Yet the old transatlantic agenda, focused on issues of European security, remains largely played out. A new agenda, one directed towards global threats like terrorism and proliferation, or the stability of more far-flung regions, remains more an aspiration than a reality. Europe and America may be friends again, but are they still allies? Friends take tea together. Allies fight together. What are the prospects that the United States and Europe will confront tomorrow's conflicts shoulder to shoulder?

A shared concern for European security has always been at the heart of the Atlantic alliance. Over the past several years this concern has waned, reflecting both past joint successes and a common perception that Europe is increasingly able to cope with what problems remain without substantial American assistance. Peacekeeping in Bosnia has been turned over to the European Union. The United States would like to do the same for Kosovo once the final status of that territory is determined. American military presence on the continent has become but a shadow of its former self, drained both by the demands of Iraq and Defence Secretary Rumsfeld's decision to reposition units back to the United States. Quite soon a total of five 4 star American flag officers will preside over little more than a single brigade of stationed forces. It is Washington's intention to supplement this meagre permanent presence with frequent temporary deployments, but manpower and budgetary pressures may make that a difficult pledge to fulfil.

The health of the Atlantic alliance is less threatened, however, by inadequate attention to Europe, where by common agreement the threat has greatly diminished, than by insufficient commitment to common action elsewhere. Thus the United States does not count upon substantial European support in any of the actual

or potential major conflicts that preoccupy its defence planners. In Iraq, NATO is playing only a modest role helping to train Iraqi forces. With Iran, Europe is taking the lead on the diplomatic track, but envisages no regional security role. Europe aspires to no security role either with regard to China, except perhaps as a supplier of arms. There is no prospect that Europe would countenance military action against Iran, or participate meaningfully in the defence of Taiwan or South Korea. Only in Afghanistan is there transatlantic unity of purpose, and even there, Americans are still doing nearly all the fighting and dying.

It is a truism to note that Atlantic partnership requires that America share more authority and Europe share more of the burdens. To date, the will to consummate this bargain has seemed largely lacking on both sides. In Europe's case, this reflects a want of capacity as much as will. That is to say, there are certain tasks Europe has difficulty sharing even when it wants to.

Potential theatres of conflict

Over the past year, a want of will has been apparent on the American side as regards dealing with Iran's nuclear ambitions. Washington has become a silent partner in Europe's effort to negotiate limits on the Iranian nuclear programme. But the partnership remains a limited one. It may be more accurate to view Paris, London and Berlin as mediators between Washington and Tehran. This is not because Europe does not have interests of its own at stake, but because an acceptable deal can only be reached between the two parties that are still refusing to talk to each other.

It is by no means certain that Iran can be persuaded not to follow India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea down the nuclear path. To have any prospect of success, the Europeans will almost certainly need to be able to offer Iran the full normalisation of its relations with the United States, the lifting of all American sanctions, and the provision of American security assurances. Until such an offer has been put on the table, it will be hard to conclude that diplomacy has failed, and that economic sanctions, let alone military action, remain the only available remedy. So far, however, Washington has put very few cards on the table, preferring to let

Europe carry the burden both of the negotiation, and the cost of any agreement.

A want of will has been apparent on the European side as regards China. In general, European and American strategies for dealing with China are consonant. Both regard it as a rising power to be co-opted into the international system, not contained. But Washington feels a commitment to the security of Taiwan that Europe does not. China's oft-repeated threat to invade Taiwan presents a serious challenge for American defence planners. However much one may be inclined to discount Chinese sabre rattling, Chinese defence modernisation does seem largely driven by a desire to provide itself with a realistic option for conquering that island. By the same token, American force planning must be driven, in some more limited measure, by a desire to deny China that option and to thereby deter such a conflict. Under even the most benign prognosis of China's future behaviour, therefore, even modest European assistance to China's defence modernisation complicates the American problem by driving up the costs of sustaining deterrence in the Straits of Formosa.

The late and unlamented Franco-German initiative to lift the arms embargo on China came in the midst of the deepest trough in US-European relations for several decades. One might even be forgiven for suspecting that the move was made by the French and German leaders as much to disoblige Washington as to oblige Beijing. Certainly their initiative proved more successful in achieving the former than the latter. Only China's pointed reassertion, this time in the form of legislation, of its threat to invade Taiwan caused Europe to back away from a step that from an American perspective could only be regarded as unhelpful.

Want of will and capacity have both been apparent on the European side as regards Afghanistan. France, Germany and several smaller countries have balked at NATO's taking over counterinsurgency, counter-terrorism and counter-narcotics missions from the American-led coalition in the Southern half of the country. This hesitation reflects both a reluctance to take on tasks that are more dangerous and controversial than routine peacekeeping, and an incapacity to find sufficient forces to fully man the Afghan operation.

The limits of unilateralism

Yet, if the immediate prospects for a transatlantic security partnership are bleak, the arguments in favour of a common approach remain compelling. America's failure to stabilise Iraq, when contrasted with the Alliance's greater successes in the Balkans, and even Afghanistan, has underscored the limits of unilateralism. Across much of the globe, the continued fragmentation of nation states, the increase in ungoverned space, and the unwanted immigration, disease, crime and terrorism that these conditions breed, continue to compel attention. If the United States cannot count on European support to defend South Korea or Taiwan, neither is that support essential. In confronting the challenges of stabilisation, reconstruction and nation building, however, there is no alternative to collective action.

Much as Western armies would prefer to fight the sort of conventional wars for which their equipment and training are optimised, most potential adversaries have learned the futility of opposing Western armies at that level. For the foreseeable future, Western militaries will find the threats of subversion, terrorism and insurgency the most difficult security challenges they face.

In its current *Quadrennial Defense Review* the American defence establishment is finally coming to terms with the need to do more than fight and win the nation's conventional wars. The result is a Defense Department-wide directive establishing, for the first time, stability operations as a core mission of the American armed forces.

If stability operations have finally emerged as an essential function for the American armed forces, these missions are already the principal source of employment for Alliance forces. Indeed, stability operations, broadly defined to also include counterinsurgency, counter-terrorism and counter-narcotics, would seem to be the only sort of function likely to be assigned to NATO or European Union forces for the foreseeable future.

Both NATO and the European Union tend to spend much of their time and energy designing contingency forces for hypothetical circumstances, leaving the United Nations to cope with the many actual crises requiring a collective military response. In Afghanistan, however, Europe and the United States face an inescapable challenge. This was a conflict begun under Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty. The Alliance's late arrival was a product

not of European reluctance, but of an initial American refusal to see the need for a nationwide peacekeeping effort. That obstacle has since been overcome. The United States has asked NATO, and NATO has agreed in principle, to assume responsibility for peacekeeping throughout the country over the coming year. How fully NATO meets this goal will be the definitive test of Europe and America's willingness and capacity to act collectively beyond Europe.

With its just completed elections, Afghanistan has come to the end of the road laid out for it at the 2001 Bonn Conference. The country now has a popularly elected President, and parliament. It remains, however, desperately poor, highly dependent upon illegal drug production, and challenged by a fundamentalist insurgency operating out of sanctuaries in Pakistan. The country needs a new road map, and continued international support, as it embarks upon the next stage of its journey.

NATO's capacity to support Afghanistan in the next step of its reconstruction is limited, however. NATO is the world's strongest military alliance, but it is just that, a military alliance. Unlike the United Nations or the European Union, which also do peacekeeping, NATO is not equipped to undertake the myriad of civil functions, from police training to voter registration to economic development, which ultimately determine the worth of any military intervention.

In the Balkans NATO's limits were effectively offset by robust European Union and American leadership in the field of civil implementation. In Bosnia and Kosovo it has been European and American police, judges, engineers, election monitors, central bankers and development advisors who have promoted the economic and political transformation of those societies, without which NATO's military mission would ultimately have been wasted.

In Afghanistan this synergy between NATO and the European Union is largely missing. Individual European nations, including particularly the UK, France, and Germany, have mounted bilateral aid programmes. But it is the EU as an institution, rather than its member states, that disposes of the bulk of European resources for reconstruction and development. If Afghan reconstruction is to become a truly transatlantic project, then the EU should become more prominent on the civil side even as NATO takes over on the military side.

NATO and the EU

For nearly a decade the dialogue between NATO and the European Union has focused almost exclusively upon how NATO can help Europe conduct military operations. Yet of the two organisations, it is NATO that needs EU assistance to successfully perform such missions more than the reverse. It is, after all, quite possible to imagine an EU-led military operation brought to a successful conclusion without any NATO involvement. It is impossible to imagine the reverse. No nation-building endeavour can succeed without the application of civil as well as military resources, and NATO disposes only of the former.

Despite this decade of dialogue, relations between these two organisations, headquartered only a few miles apart in the heart of Europe, are strained by suspicions and petty jealousies. There are NATO stalwarts who regard the EU as an unwelcome (and incompetent) interloper in the field of military cooperation. There are EU champions who believe that their organisation can only develop over NATO's corpse. What is remarkable is that allied governments, whose vital interests are tied up in the success of both organisations, should allow such institutional parochialism to stifle badly needed cooperation between the two.

One option is for NATO to develop and field the necessary civil capabilities that the EU already possesses. But the European Allies, having poured so much effort into building up the EU's capacity in this sphere, are unlikely to invest in a similar effort in building up NATO's. NATO's success in Afghanistan will, therefore, require someone else to deploy and train police, build rule of law, promote the development of civil society, organise elections, and stimulate economic development.

It is time, therefore, to stop asking what NATO can do for the EU, and begin asking what the EU can do for NATO. And Afghanistan is the place to start. This might best be done in a triangular dialogue between NATO, the EU and the United States, with the purpose of ensuring that both European and American civil assets are deployed throughout Afghanistan in a manner which complements NATO's peacekeeping role, and takes advantage of the security that organisation will be providing to push forward the country's reconstruction.

To propose that NATO/EU arrangements for Afghanistan should build upon the Balkan model is not to suggest a permanent division of labour between those two organisations in which the former always does the military tasks, and the latter the civil. When Europe wishes to act autonomously, the EU can and should do both, as the United States does in similar circumstances. But where Europe and America chose to act together, a trilateral arrangement in which EU and US civil assets complement NATO's military efforts would seem to make the best sense.

Over the longer term, participation by both NATO and the European Union in the Peace Building Commission being established at the United Nations offers an ideal venue to link European and Atlantic efforts in this field with those of the UN. Perhaps the two Western organisations will prove capable of collaborating in the design of future peace missions more collegially in New York than they have to date in Brussels.

Conclusion

The main obstacles to transatlantic collaboration over the past several years have been substantive differences, not institutional conflicts. In the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, Washington chose passivity on Israel/Palestine and preemption in Iraq. These were policies that its principal continental partners could not support. Communication among the major Western leaders began to break down in the heat of the 2002 German election campaign, and deteriorated further in the run-up to the Iraq war. Intimate and confidential consultations among the major transatlantic powers of the sort that had set the Alliance's direction through decades of Cold War and Balkan peacemaking were discontinued and have yet to be fully reconstituted.

Setbacks in Iraq have chastened the American Administration and demonstrated the limits of unilateralism. French and Dutch rejection of the European constitution has similarly dimmed European aspirations toward multi-polarity. Afghanistan now stands as the definitive challenge for collective Alliance action beyond Europe. If, in these new circumstances, Washington and its principal European partners can agree on the broad lines of

Western strategy, then Europe can have a common foreign and security policy, NATO a purpose, and Afghanistan a meaningful international commitment. If these capitals cannot agree, if the core of the transatlantic alliance cannot be reconstituted, if the centre will not hold, then the Atlantic partnership may be finished, at least as a global concern.

What do we share?

What do we share?

Federico Romero

Transatlantic relations are plural. Their many facets translate into multiple, contradictory readings of the current crisis's causes and consequences. An international relations approach would stress the post-Cold War structural discord between the unipolar (im)balance of power and Europe's intrinsic multilateralism. Policy analyses would contrast the Bush Administration's pursuit of unilateralism with Europe's paralysing division between multipolar ambitions and Atlantic compliance. Diagnoses based on economics point more optimistically to the shared interest in managing the densest trade-and-finance link on the planet. Cultural and public opinion analyses cannot reconcile the evidence of shared values with equally conspicuous public animosities.

No single approach can make sense of the historical turn we are experiencing because the many facets of transatlantic relationships are, and were, interdependent. Even the post-1945 construction of an Atlantic world could not be explained solely in terms of security, or economics, or values. It was their synergic mix – and its careful management – that did the trick. The Soviet threat, the quest for prosperity, the desire for a sustainable democratic order, all shared a common thread. Policy-making elites, business circles, opinion-makers and large portions of the public on both sides of the Atlantic shared the expectation that a unified West could offer a solution to their multiple predicaments, and that a path of convergence between the two societies would provide the best way forward.

Even when implicit, an assumption of convergence cut across most of the pillars of Atlanticism, from the ideology of Western Civilisation to the concept of a continental European market. Most obviously, the all-encompassing ideology of liberal modernisation was a theory of historical convergence writ large. The desire for convergence and the obverse dread of Americanised uniformity defined the crucial divide between 'Americanisers' and anti-Americans in Western Europe. Internationalist elites in the

US worked on the assumption that the US embodied the highest stage of Western development, and that (Western) Europe could be reformed and brought into it. It was this expectation of convergence – 'You too can be like us' – that sustained Europe's public consensus on American leadership.

What is changing is not so much the balance between support for America and anti-Americanism in Europe, as the very nature of that dialectic. The 20th century tradition of anti-Americanism – articulated by conservative intellectuals in the inter-war period, and then refashioned on the left in the early Cold War – was premised on the pessimistic sense that Europe was being overrun, its society at risk of being changed beyond recognition by American capitalist modernity. This was the frightened anti-Americanism that posited a Europe without a future. Such doom-and-gloom anti-Americanism, however, no longer appears central or even important. America is once again resented for its awesome power, but such public feelings are no longer coupled with the impotent fear of Europe's historical decline.

Public opinion indicators suggest quite the opposite: a high degree of self-satisfied, even proud identification with 'European' values, often intertwined – at least in West European countries[1] – with the claim to some kind of moral superiority over the US. Nor do we see a generational conflict as in the 1950s and 1960s, when European baby-boomers adopted parts of American mass culture, moulded it into a specific language of their own, and used it as a vehicle for modernising many features of their own societies. The European youth of the new century are experiencing a different process of self-identification. They need not borrow their cultural icons from America in order to mobilise them against a local context of conservative traditionalism. Those icons – even when they originate in the US – are perceived as de-nationalised components of a fully global culture. Nor are European social structures and cultural patterns interpreted as suffocating legacies of a past to be overcome.

It is the author's hypothesis, then, that we are in the middle of a paradigm shift being experienced by many, indeed perhaps by most, Europeans. When people are questioned on the role of government, on relationships between collective solidarity and individual responsibility, and on moral and religious values, international polls reveal deep, growing differences. Prevailing European opinions not only diverge from American ones, but emphasize a

1. The new member states obviously bring into the EU a rather different set of approaches to transatlantic relations, and they have an influence on policy issues. However, the historical argument that the author is presenting here – on the transformation from the Atlantic Europe of the Cold War to the current, post-Atlantic one – necessarily calls for a narrow focus on the countries that used to define Western Europe.

stark contrast between two societal models. In particular, what springs out is the assumption of a more 'humane', communitarian, and morally commendable European society. Among younger people this Europe versus America attitude appears especially widespread. Whether this is a realistic assessment or pure wishful thinking (it is a mixture of both, in the author's view) is not the point. The fact is that this growing perception of societal and cultural differences, with strong ethical underpinnings, is eroding the sense of transatlantic commonality built up over half a century.

In the Cold War era the customary view of an undifferentiated 'West' was based on the East versus West polarity and on common ideological values (which are still very much alive today). But it derived its strength and diffusion from powerful social dynamics. From the 1950s to the 1980s convergence was plausible, often real. Western Europe was catching up with America in GDP levels, per capita income, standards and type of consumption, technological prowess. Accordingly, a single 'West' was the obvious view of the future, as our economies and societies were coming together in the undistinguishable prosperity of the 'industrialised nations'. Besides, European modernisers used the US as the yardstick to measure our march towards the future. Nowadays, however, when Europeans speculate on their prospects they appear to look to Europe itself – both the actual and the projected one – rather than to America.

Perhaps the most illuminating parameter of such a new attitude is to be found in the astounding gap that separates Americans from (West) Europeans on what had traditionally been, for millions of people, *the comparative issue* across the Atlantic: whether people who move to the US actually enjoy a better life. Americans overwhelmingly believe this to be the case – 88% of them. By contrast, just 14% of Germans, 24% of French people and 41% of Britons think that people who left their countries for the US have achieved a better life.[2]

Growing divergence

How do we explain this momentous change that built up in the late twentieth century and recently erupted into full view? A few indicators tell us that convergence gave way to actual divergence. A new

2. See Pew Global Attitudes Project, *A Year After Iraq War: Mistrust of America in Europe Ever Higher, Muslim Anger Persists* (March 16, 2004) in http://people-press.org/reports/print.php3?PageID=796.

technology gap began to appear and widen in the 1990s. Rates of economic growth also diverged. Perhaps more crucially, societal and cultural adaptation to the global imperatives of flexibility, innovation, mobility, and migration acquired different meanings – and took a different pace – on the two sides of the Atlantic. Even the ageing of our 'mature' societies and other demographics grew dissimilar.

These markers of divergence from the US are not uniform across Europe. Some of them might be short-lived. But what matters is that a widening perception of divergence has taken root in both societies, and crystallised in powerful political cultures. The onward march of American conservatism is also a reaffirmation of American exceptionalism, and an explicit rejection of 'European' practices, from the welfare state to secular liberalism. In the same time-period (the 1980s and 1990s) the dramatic advancements of European unification – economic, geographical, institutional – went hand in hand with the emerging public notion of a 'European model', often defined less by its positive content than by its difference from America. These divergent paths are the foundations of the crisis that erupted around Iraq, and the explanation for its depth.

In the run-up to the war in Iraq, the clash revolved around strategic attitudes, policy decisions, and conflicting views on international norms. But the crisis at the UN Security Council catalysed a much broader – but hitherto dormant – dissonance between Europeans and Americans based on diverging expectations and mutual perceptions. In the aftermath of the war, opinion polls revealed much more than disagreement on international policy choices. They registered a historical shift to an unfavourable overall opinion of the US for a majority of (West) Europeans. The image of the benign US hegemony that most Europeans had valued for 50 years was replaced by the perception of an overbearing imperial power. In particular, the war crystallised in many European minds a perception of US strategies and motivations as alien and illegitimate. Even those who favoured the invasion were subsequently forced onto the defensive by the mismanagement of the occupation, and then by Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo, and 'rendition'. Conspicuous anti-European sentiments emerged in the US as well, complementing the policy-making elite's view that Europe should no longer be a primary factor – and certainly not a restraint – in strategic decisions.

In this context, public perceptions of policy issues in Europe seem increasingly framed in ethical terms, in the ambitious urge to define the continent's identity and self-perception. Thus, a customary diplomatic reconciliation based on common values and mutual interests (and there are many) is not as uncomplicated as it might look. Comparisons with previous transatlantic crises are misleading rather than illuminating. As European and American societies follow divergent trends, and contemplate their future through different lenses, the public meaning of those interests is no longer a joint one. In particular, a large section of Europeans – probably the majority – attribute a distinct, often decisive value to Europe's ability to take an 'independent' stance, as evidenced by a public debate on Iraq and the Middle East centred on the degree of differentiation from the US much more than on Europe's specific interests and possibilities.

One of the consequences can best be outlined, again, by historical comparison. Rather than the typical dynamic that defined Western Europe's political regimes from 1947 to the 1980s – a virtuous circle between an 'Atlanticist' stance and the strengthening of domestic coalitions – we might now witness an inverse trend. Throughout the Cold War, the pursuit (or at least the proclamation) of autonomy from the US had some political effectiveness only in France, but a negative electoral impact elsewhere. Now it might have become an effective factor in several polities. The French exception will not turn overnight into a European norm, but the electoral appeal of 'anti-American' positions, whether garbed in nationalist or Europeanist clothes, will intermittently affect Europe's electoral cycle and political discourse.

A further consequence concerns Europe's own prospects. Surveys make it clear that most (West) Europeans want the EU to plot a more independent course in security and diplomatic affairs. Many go beyond such a stance and declare that 'it would be a good thing if the EU becomes as powerful as the US'. One might not be surprised that 90% of the French entertain such an aspiration, but the fact that it is also embraced by 70% of Germans and about 50% of Britons conveys the depth of the change that has reshaped the landscape of Europe's public opinion. It is also clear, however, that this ambition reflects less a strategic view, or a determined drive for power, than a nebulous desire for Europe's symbolic aggrandisement.[3]

3. Ibid.

The end of the transatlantic community?

This urge for a higher degree of detachment from Washington could propel the EU on to more strenuous efforts to devise new European foreign and security policies. Critics may point out that this has long been an unfulfilled fancy, hampered by institutional obstacles and an entrenched reluctance to face up to the costs involved in such a course. The rejection of the constitutional treaty confirms such scepticism. Grand new initiatives are clearly not around the corner. And yet it is hard to imagine that Europe will perpetually fail to construct a more cohesive foreign policy. Too many factors – structural as well as cultural – push for such a course, however slow and halting it may be.

More importantly, what had previously kept Europeans from seriously venturing onto a more independent course were not only inbuilt institutional obstacles or plain stinginess, but the apparent lack of its urgency. Even at the time of the 1990s wars in the ex-Yugoslavia, when a common European course of action was often praised as a most desirable option, it did not appear truly indispensable to large sections of public opinion. It is the shock of the American decision to invade Iraq that seems to have changed this, and altered what most people see as the basic priorities.

Surveys tell us that most Europeans believe that the US does not take into account the interests of other nations; that 'the war in Iraq hurt, rather than helped, the war on terrorism'; and that 'because of the war they have less confidence that the US is intent on promoting democracy around the world'.[4] Thus the war in Iraq has eroded the main pillars of the transatlantic trust that defined the post-World War II era: the perception that US international attitudes were, on balance, helpful for democracy and prosperity; and that European interests had a place in Washington's deliberations.

Of course the problem is that the Europeans' urge to become – or at least to feel – more independent from America is not a sufficient condition for an autonomous foreign policy. It might prod governments in that direction but cannot dissolve the various impediments that prevent the emergence of the EU as a global power. Since they are too big to accept a minor rank contentedly, but too uncertain and divided to pursue a truly great power role, Europeans might well have set their expectations on an unattainable goal. If a sufficient number of political forces find it expedient

4. Ibid.

to stir up these sentiments, or if another American venture exposes once again the practical irrelevance of multilateralism and of Europe's attitudes, the stage is set for a politics of resentment. A few seeds are already visible. Recriminations abound about America's alleged aim to keep Europe weak. They are a popular way of excusing Europe's marginality, and they can fuel a paranoid, Eurocentric way of thinking that might flare up once again and deepen the transatlantic gap.

The danger, in short, is not a sustained Euro-American rivalry, but a possible short-circuit. If public ambitions towards an independent European role on the global stage get repeatedly frustrated, and if Washington's policies appear once again to assert US unilateral dominance, European public opinion could easily turn towards a volatile mix of fervent anti-Americanism and a strident, embittered isolationism. This is not unavoidable, nor is it the most likely outcome. After all, US strategic dominance does not necessarily need to be managed by unilateral decrees. The Europeans' fears and misgivings do not have to be inflated by electoral ambitions. It is ultimately up to European and American elites to avoid such an ugly turn. In 2005 we have seen consistent progress in this respect. Deliberate efforts at building bridges over the chasm that opened up in 2003 are being made, with apparent success, in Washington as well as in Brussels (and Paris, Berlin etc).

But the paradigm shift that most Europeans are experiencing makes any prospect of a new, long-term Euro-American accord a delicate proposition. We seem to be proceeding along a road that might run parallel with America for some time – probably a long time on several issues of common interest - but it is no longer a common one, and it is ultimately more likely to (amicably) diverge than to converge. There will be – indeed there are – many instances of transatlantic cooperation, and they will likely prevail over frictions and conflicts, but we can no longer think in terms of a transatlantic community.

Thus, the anxieties and desires of Europeans should be openly addressed as such, in a public debate that spells out Europe's interests, resources, goals and limitations. The longer we persist in the anachronistic frame of mind that defines Europe by the place it occupies in Washington's horizon, the more we build up frustrations on both sides of the Atlantic, making policy issues less manageable. The transatlantic world of yesterday cannot be a matrix for the European-American relations of tomorrow.

A new Europe, a new anti-Americanism

David Frum

An American walks into a bookstore in a small town in Italy. What does he see at the front? Amidst the new novels and costly art books, there lie two books by Noam Chomsky attacking the foreign policy of his country, two by Michael Moore calling its leaders 'stupid white men', a scattering of books by anti-American radicals from France, Italy, and Great Britain, some propaganda on behalf of the Palestinian Authority, and ... a book on rock and roll.

I fear that too many of us who study and comment upon transatlantic affairs concentrate our attention in the wrong direction. We focus upon the relationships between governments. And the story there remains generally positive: despite frictions between some alliance members over Iraq, Western governments by and large work well together. There have been achievements in Lebanon and Ukraine, close cooperation on Iran and Libya, successful management of trade and currency issues – the list goes on.

But the Western alliance is not merely an alliance of governments. It has been throughout 60 years an alliance of peoples, an alliance based on values as well as interests, on the reasons of the heart as much as reasons of state: bonded by marriages and first jobs, by shared military service and business partnerships, by travel and study, by reciprocal delight in each other's food, music, and way of life.

In his poetic First Inaugural Address, Abraham Lincoln invoked the 'mystic chords of memory' – a pun on the 'chords' of music and the physical 'cords' that fasten objects together. Across the Atlantic, these cords have been fraying for some time; now they seem in true danger of snapping.

We are all familiar with the polls showing rising anti-American feeling in Europe since the 2000 election and the 9/11 attacks. Those with long memories can reassure themselves that the alliance has survived dark periods in the past: the protests over missile deployments in the early 1980s, Vietnam, and so on. Even the most virulent expressions of anti-Americanism – such as the

polls that find that 20% of Germans believe that the US government itself sponsored the 9/11 attacks – are not unprecedented: a generation ago, the European hard left persuaded itself that the United States military was planning to provoke a global nuclear war.

How anti-Americanism became respectable

But there is a huge difference between the anti-Americanism of the Cold War period and the anti-Americanism of the terrorism era in which we now live, and it is this: European anti-Americanism is migrating from the political fringe to the political centre. It is well-known that the thinkers and writers of the European far left and far right – Jean-Paul Sartre and Eric Hobsbawm, Enoch Powell and Martin Heidegger – despised the United States. These voices might make noise, but it was the practical Atlanticists of the centre-left and centre-right who won elections: the Harold Wilsons, the Helmut Schmidts, the Guiliano Andreottis and the Constantine Karamanlis.

But the Atlanticism of the past has given way to a new mistrust of the United States at the highest levels and most respectable places in European society. For a German Chancellor to twice seek re-election by campaigning against an American President is unheard of in postwar history. Even more amazingly, Gerhard Schröder's approach worked. Anti-Americanism re-elected him in 2003 despite 4 million unemployed, and nearly saved him in 2005 despite the fact that this figure had risen to 5 million. Presumably Schröder gained his votes from the one-fifth of all Germans surveyed by *Die Zeit* in July 2003 who agreed that the US government might have sponsored the 9/11 attacks – one-third of all Germans under the age of 30.

Anti-Americanism has also surged into respectability in Spain. Socialist party leader José Luis Zapatero declined to rise to honour the American flag at the 2003 Columbus Day parade in Madrid. His discourtesy may have helped him win the prime ministership the following year: fewer than half of Spaniards say they have a positive image of the United States.

In May 2002, Romano Prodi – President of the EU executive and a former prime minister of Italy – travelled to Oxford to

criticise Tony Blair for cooperating too closely with the United States in the global war on terror. Prodi also insisted that the EU refuse to extradite accused terrorists to the US if they might face the death penalty.

Iraq surely explains some of the disaffection of European voters. But the post-9/11 anti-American reaction extends so broadly, to such a wide range of issues and emotions, as to raise very serious questions that any single policy, however controversial, can adequately explain it. Let me propose two other explanations instead.

The first explanation begins with the radical changes for the better that have taken place in Europe's security environment over the past 15 years.

Throughout the postwar era, European voters who might be tempted by the diatribes of anti-American politicians had to recall that they needed the United States to guarantee their security against the Soviet Union. These voters might or might not admire the hustle and bustle of American society, its commercialism and demotic culture, its nationalism and its religion. But they recognised that it was American military power that protected them against the dangers to their east. The European pillar of the Atlantic alliance rested on a solid foundation of self-interest.

Then the Soviet threat vanished – and with it, the need for American protection. It is a sad fact of human nature that we like people a lot more when we need something from them than when we do not – and after 1991, Europe suddenly ceased to need the United States in the way it once had done.

Indeed, since 1991, many in Europe have begun to wonder whether their former protector might not be evolving into a threat to their own security. After 9/11, Americans talked of changing the Middle East, but many Europeans remain much more concerned about being changed by the Middle East – and they fear that American activism in the region may stir up trouble that will end up coming towards them first.

In the United States, the aversion of European elites to President Bush's activist Middle East policy is often interpreted as a 'pro-Arab' bias. In reality it is just the opposite. The Arab world is Europe's near neighbour: it is just across the Mediterranean – that is, when migration has not caused it to move just across the street. For many Europeans, the Arab world is an exceedingly uncomfortable neighbour.

Americans tend to interpret the Euro-Arab relationship through the prism of their own experience with Latin America. But while Latin America and the United States have since 1960 come closer and closer together culturally, economically, and demographically, Europe and the Middle East have moved further and further apart. Half a century ago, cities like Beirut, Alexandria, Tunis, and Algiers looked and lived much more like Marseilles, Naples, or Salonica than they do today. In 1960, Algeria had approximately the same per-capita income as Portugal, and few would have doubted that Syria and Egypt would catch up with the West long before, say, South Korea or Taiwan.

A symptom of European angst

Things look very different and much less auspicious today – and many in Europe blame the United States and its ally Israel for the deterioration.

Which brings us to a second explanation of the disparity between the attitudes of today and those of a generation or two ago. In 1968 and even still in 1982, Western Europeans had reason to feel keen optimism about their economic future. European economies were growing rapidly. Unemployment was low, in many countries lower than in the United States. European welfare states delivered valued benefits at an acceptable cost.

Today, the European economic model looks less successful. Many Europeans frankly doubt whether it can be sustained. Suddenly Europeans find themselves engaged in an intense and disturbing debate over the future of their societies.

Those who resist the need for change cannot simply pretend that everything is OK: that is obviously unconvincing. So they fall back on an ancient rhetorical device. In order to thwart (or at least minimize) the pressure for change, they need to find ways to present the consequences of change as worse even than the consequences of the status quo. To do that, they must conjure up a frightening image of what change will mean: and America's allegedly 'savage capitalism' does the job perfectly.

With the discrediting of socialism, the European left lost its Utopia. Since 1990 they have substituted, as a second-best political alternative, an anti-Utopia: a United States of death penalties and insecure employment, of economic inequality and gun vio-

lence, of religious zealotry and militarist nationalism. The fact that this anti-Utopian United States bears only a very casual resemblance to the real America matters little. The discourse is not really about the United States at all – it is about Europe and its anxieties about the future.

Europe's increasing geopolitical security and socio-economic insecurity are facts, and facts have consequences. European publics cannot be expected to feel about the United States the way they did when they needed America more – and doubted themselves less.

And in a modern democracy, how the public feels must sooner or later govern every public policy, including defence and security policy.

True, there are countervailing pressures against these trends. The first is the arrival of new member nations within the European community: central and eastern European states where public opinion is more favourable to America, notably Poland. Poland has become the third largest contributor to the mission in Iraq, after the United States and the United Kingdom, and a strong voice for NATO in the European institutions. Poland's abiding memory of Russian aggression may well preserve its pro-American attitudes for a long time to come. The same will likely prove true of the Baltic republics.

But the other central and eastern European states are coming to resemble western Europe more and more: low birthrates and ageing populations, unsustainable welfare states, and national identities defined less by what these nations *are* and more by what they are *not*. Their young people, born into the post-communist era, identify less with old national or ethnic identities and more with the larger possibilities of 'Europe' – a Europe that has been defined for them as different from and often diametrically opposed to America.

The second countervailing pressure is the recognition by some in Europe that they might after all face greater geopolitical danger than most Europeans wish to believe, both from regional powers like Iran and from disaffected minorities within their own borders. These threats, some argue, will surely draw the Atlantic democracies together in the future as they did in the past.

Most American policymakers believe that this will be the case, and virtually all hope it will. For the time being, however, the signs are not promising. Even in the face of the French riots and the Iran-

ian nuclear threat, European leaders seem (from an American perspective) to be working much harder to deny danger than to take action against it.

This is painful to see and painful to acknowledge. The democratic nations have endured and braved so much together, have built and achieved so much. The estrangement between our two continents that has grown since 1991 and especially since 2001 is a source of sharp and personal grief for almost all on the western shore of the Atlantic who concern ourselves with security issues. The Atlantic alliance may have begun as a security arrangement. It evolved into a passionate hope that the common cultural heritage we call 'Western civilisation' could evolve into something more – into something like a commonwealth that could transform the ideals of Western civilisation into a reality of liberal governance for our entire planet.

Finding a way forward

So what is to be done? Ironically enough, it is President Bush of all people who has pointed out the solution, even if he has not succeeded in accomplishing it. Like all democratic nations, the peoples of Europe respond to the language of idealism and values as much – and sometimes more – as to *Realpolitik* and the language of national interest.

African debt relief; global warming; tsunami aid; the struggles of aboriginal peoples – all of these have swayed European publics, oriented their politics in new directions, and created new political realities. Middle Eastern extremism and terrorism impinge more immediately and directly on European populations than any of these popular causes – and democratic change in the Middle East should command at least as much enthusiasm.

President Bush's version of this democratic mission has not always gained a very respectful hearing in Europe – although it must be said that when European publics hear him directly rather than through the filtering of their often highly ideological local media, as the British public did in his Whitehall speech in 2004, they often change their opinions. Unfair as this response is, it will by now take the passage of some time and indeed perhaps the perspective of history to alter it. So be it. Nations are more enduring than politicians, and so let us hope are alliances. And if this

alliance is to continue, it will have to do so on a new footing of values in place of the old basis of interests.

That new footing will test us all. It will test Americans: can they express their national interest in the spread of democracy in terms universalist enough to inspire non-American publics? And it will test Europe: can European publics in a time of uncertainty and insecurity rise above isolationism and the temptation to buy peace and quiet? The challenge for Europe is to join with Americans to find true security in the world the way Europeans and Americans once joined together to build security on the continent – through the construction of the institutions of democracy and the development of the habits of liberty.

A rational partnership in a post-Atlantic world

William Wallace

We cannot reconstruct the Atlantic Community of the 'golden age', of the 1950s and 1960s. The sense of shared values that held West Europeans and North Americans together flowed from the collective memory of the Second World War, and the shared sense of a common threat from the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact. Looking east across the Iron Curtain, it was clear that we shared common values. It was scarcely necessary for Western leaders to define what they meant by 'freedom', 'democracy', 'welfare' and 'markets' when the contrast between the societies we were building and the states of eastern Europe was so sharp. Now that state socialism has collapsed, we are unavoidably more aware of the subtle but important differences in our political and social preferences which limit recourse to a rhetoric of common transatlantic values.

Nor, thankfully, would anyone on either side of the Atlantic wish to return to the era in which central Europe was the focus for global security, with the greatest concentration of conventional forces in the world – and with rising numbers of tactical nuclear weapons targeted on Germany and its immediate neighbours. The weight of Soviet troops close to the inner German border provided the clearest of rationales for NATO as 'the Western Alliance'. Allies might differ sharply over nuclear strategy or arms control, but shared an overriding common interest in maintaining European stability. French governments resisted American dominance, while insisting that they nevertheless remained committed to the common defence. With the majority of former member states of the Warsaw Pact now members of the European Union, this powerful transatlantic tie has loosened. Residual uncertainties about Russia still underpin the post-Cold War Atlantic commitment of the EU's new member states; but there is no shared sense of any clear and present danger. NATO's continued position as the security framework for transatlantic relations must now be justified in different terms, linked to more potential threats beyond the European region.

It is, still, just possible to maintain the argument that the states on either side of the Atlantic constitute the central players in the global economy. It is, of course, no longer the case that transatlantic trade holds the global economy together: trans-Pacific trade is now significantly larger in volume, and trade between East Asia and Europe is rising fast. In terms of levels of mutual investment, however, of companies, banks, and service providers operating across North American and European markets within similar regulatory frameworks, the Atlantic economy is far more closely integrated than that of any other region in the world. Standards agreed between the EU and the US are most likely to become global standards; trade and financial negotiations still start from the need for a transatlantic consensus. Yet transatlantic consensus is not always achieved. The EU and the US have differed sharply on significant economic issues, from international accountancy standards to environmental regulation. Ambitious plans for a Transatlantic Free Trade Area (TAFTA) have been floated, and have sunk. European and American negotiators look also to other potential partners within the WTO and the IMF, following divergent interests in a changing world economy.

It is over 40 years since the Berlin crises of 1958-1961, and the Cuban missile crisis that followed – the high point of the Atlantic Community, in many ways, when President Kennedy found no difficulty in proclaiming himself a Berliner. The majority of today's citizens in Europe, the USA and Canada had not yet been born. Today's university students do not even remember the Cold War. Appeals to European or Atlantic solidarity in terms of the contribution this principle has made to our peace and prosperity rouse little sympathy in the mass public – as the failure of the 'Yes' campaign in the French and Dutch European constitutional referendums of June 2005 demonstrated. If we are to rebuild the transatlantic partnership, after the misunderstandings and mutual misperceptions of 2001-2003, it must be on a different basis from the past. It is the author's view that it is better to lower our expectations, moderate our rhetoric, and accept that in significant areas of policy our interests and our value preferences differ. We will do better to manage a relationship which starts from the assumption that we must manage our differences, rather than chase the illusion that our values and our interests are identical.

Shared values, but also distinctive values

The North Atlantic Treaty in August 1941 set out the values for which the Anglo-American alliance would be fighting in terms that would scarcely be understood today as 'Anglo-Saxon': these included 'the object of securing, for all, improved labour standards, economic advancement and social security'. 50 years later, the Rooseveltian settlement was under sustained attack within the United States. The social democratic compromise, a market economy whose impact on society is moderated through government regulation and the provision of tax-funded benefits, is no longer the accepted basis for policy across the United States. In spite of all the strains imposed by changing demography, however, and the painful process of reforming employment regulation and welfare transfers, political consensus across Europe rests upon the maintenance of a 'social' market. This is as true of Britain, so often caricatured in France as populated by freemarket neo-Liberals, as it is of the rest of the EU: welfare spending in the UK, indeed, has risen faster since 2000 than in any other European country, supported by a faster rate of economic growth.

There are deep cultural and geographical reasons for this Atlantic divide. American history and tradition has been about escaping from government, about individual self-reliance, about moving on and starting again in the pursuit of individual success: above all, about the possibility of every child making it from the bottom to the top, by his or her own efforts. The vast spaces of the continental United States, across which America's highly mobile population still shifts, reinforce this image, with distant Washington mistrusted by those who are building new communities in the West. The people of densely-populated Western Europe do not have the option of moving out and leaving the cities behind; these settled populations recognise that they need active government to maintain urban order, social peace, and environmental improvement.

Beyond this widening gap on socio-economic values there remains, of course, a fundamental transatlantic consensus on democratic values: on political and civil liberties and human rights, breached within different states from time to time under pressure of domestic emergency or perceived foreign threat, but

protested against and returned to once the emergency subsides. For both the US and its European allies, the spread of democratic values is the bedrock of foreign policy. The EU's strategic success over the past fifteen years in spreading democracy, security and prosperity across the former socialist states of eastern Europe has more than matched American efforts to foster democracy across central and southern America. European efforts to foster political and social development around the southern Mediterranean were under way long before the Bush Administration declared that it wanted to bring democracy to the Muslim world – a long-term task for patient diplomacy. Ill-tempered exchanges on competing economic models risk obscuring this underlying agreement: that the spread of open societies, democratic systems of government, and market economies is both in accordance with our fundamental values and in our shared interests.

Real differences of social choice and political preference, however, now need to be managed across the Atlantic, without the aggressive moralising or mutual condemnation that has so often blighted relations in recent years. American enterprise and individualism has its costs and benefits – in lower life expectancy, higher infant mortality, a wider gap between rich and poor, and a far higher prison population than in any European state, but also in higher rates of innovation and company formation. European socio-economic models have their distinctive costs and benefits – higher taxation and governmental regulation, resistance to economic change, but also ensuring greater leisure and (according to many surveys) greater happiness. Politicians and economists, commentators and experts, should recognise the trade-offs between different values that these political choices involve, and build them into economic negotiations and political debate.

Shared interests, but also divergent interests

The United States and its European allies share a common commitment to global order, mitigated by the pursuit of global justice. So long as the Soviet Union stationed its armies across central Europe, the overriding common interest of maintaining the security and freedom of Western Europe held the Atlantic Alliance together. Underneath this, however, interests (and perceptions of interests) had diverged from the 1960s onwards, as American

security concerns focused more on south-east Asia and the Persian Gulf, while European governments explored the possibilities of *détente* within their own region. Since 1990, different geopolitical positions have driven US and European interests apart. Different trends in energy dependence – and different understandings of climate change – have also shaped distinctive interests. Different levels of military capability in the projection of force have interacted with divergent understandings of the process of political, social and economic development, of the roots of terrorist movements and the pathology of aggressive state regimes. Widespread resistance within the USA to accepting the legitimacy of international law and of global institutions, rooted in the belief in the exceptional character of the US Constitution and the self-evident morality of American policy, as well as in the self-evident supremacy of US military power, has also widened the gap in interests and understandings across the Atlantic.

Geographical position, again, makes for unavoidably different perceptions and priorities. China is a distant state, an economic competitor and a promising market to European states, but not in any sense a security threat; but to the United States, with its historical commitment to Taiwan and to Japan, China looms as a major security risk and political challenger. Russia is a strategic partner for the USA – but a direct neighbour of the EU, the dominant supplier for European gas, and a major concern to European states in terms of cross-border crime, drug trafficking, and illegal migration. Venezuela, Colombia, the small states of the Caribbean and Central America, of little interest to European foreign and defence ministries, preoccupy Washington for similar reasons. The Muslim states around the southern and eastern Mediterranean relate to Western Europe almost as closely as Mexico does to the USA; more than 12 million first- and second-generation people of Turkish, Moroccan, Algerian, Tunisian, Kurdish, and even Palestinian origin live and work within the EU's borders. More will arrive, illegally as well as legally, within the next 10-20 years, however hard European governments attempt to keep them out; population pressures are powerful, economic opportunities enticing, and sea crossings easy to make.

Africa south of the Sahara is of much more direct concern to European states than to the USA, for which only energy-producing African states carry significant interest. Ex-colonial links and obligations, established patterns of migration, higher levels of

trade and investment, spillovers of disorder and disease, force Britain, France, Portugal and Spain, to pay close attention to political and economic developments, and to intervene in the last resort to forestall state collapse, or contain cross-border conflicts.

It is the Middle East, however, where American and European perceptions of interests diverge most sharply. The continuing rise in US oil consumption and imports, unchecked by active conservation or tax policies, has increased American dependence on access to global oil markets over the past 15 years. The USA has held a dominant position as external hegemon across the Middle East throughout that period, balancing precariously between close alliance with Israel and partnership with the puritanical Islamic state of Saudi Arabia, strategically opposed to Shi'ite Iran. European governments have argued for a different approach to relations between Israel and the Palestinians, arguing that only a two-state solution, with a territorially-viable Palestinian state, can provide the long-term security that Israel needs. European policymakers have been more open to dialogue with Iran, and less complacent about Saudi support for Wahhabi Sunnism, including within Western Europe. The transatlantic divide over military intervention in Iraq did not open up in previously clear ground: it widened existing gaps in understanding and in domestic and international interests.

It therefore seems unwise to attempt to reorient NATO to become the vehicle for projecting Western forces across the Greater Middle East and Eurasia. There is insufficient basis for shared interpretation and interests to support joint action. NATO risks becoming Washington's preferred vehicle for multilateral action, at the expense of other multilateral institutions, because it operates under clear US leadership and direction. European allies have provided some support for post-conflict operations in Afghanistan, and several have provided post-conflict military forces in Iraq; but these have been reluctant contributions, for the most part, to operations over which non-Americans had little or no influence. Joint operations can only be maintained on the basis of shared objectives. It is no longer clear that European and American elites share common objectives, or assessments of the issues at stake, across the broad sweep of unstable states and societies between Europe and south and east Asia.

Setting our expectations lower

American rhetoric on Atlantic cooperation is often still pitched in terms of common visions and values, contrasted with the irrational anti-Americanism of those who oppose American policies. On the European continent there is, against this, a temptation to define independence and social values against America, condemning the USA for pursuing political and economic hegemony through an explicit strategy of globalisation. Each side in this ideological battle demands that the other should yield to their superior morality. It would be much more constructive to recognise our differences of values, and of interests, and to set out to manage those differences within the very broad framework of interests we share in maintaining global order and prosperity. European governments should spell out to Washington enthusiasts for weakening the UN, and for resisting the spread of global regulation, how closely American interests are tied up in these imperfect but necessary structures. American policy-makers should spell out to European elites the necessity of developing greater military capabilities to match their claims to be a partner in maintaining global order.

There remain closer political and economic ties across the Atlantic than between any other two regions of the world. Cultural and human exchanges between the US and Europe are intense. The intensity of disagreements, in recent years, has partly reflected disappointment on both sides that the 'cousins' across the water could not see the self-evident superiority of the arguments each was advancing against the other. I have argued here for an acceptance of a greater degree of reasoned disagreement between American and European policy-makers and publics, reflecting their different geographical positions, cultural and historical traditions, and domestic pressures. That should, in turn, allow for a less impassioned transatlantic dialogue: a partnership between North America and Europe built not on a demand for others to accept contested 'common values' but on the solid foundations of intensive economic interdependence, social interaction, and a dispassionate debate on the best means available to promote a sustainable, open, well-regulated and prosperous global order.

A dissenting voice on the values and interests gap

Ronald D. Asmus

The editors of this volume have asked contributors to address several simple yet profound questions. They have posed the question whether there are still common values and interests across the Atlantic. That question is critical for the simple reason that common values and interests have long been the glue binding America and Europe together. If that glue no longer exists or is being weakened, then the conclusion is obvious – the underpinnings of the Atlantic relationship are falling apart.

We have been asked to address these questions at a time when there is a growing number of voices on both sides of the Atlantic who insist that a widening values gap has emerged across the Atlantic in recent years and that the United States and Europe are therefore increasingly incapable of cooperation on the grand strategic issues of the day. Furthermore, they also often insist that this values gap is matched or reinforced by diverging national interests. While America and Europe undoubtedly had a common interest in deterring the Soviet Union during the Cold War, those days are over. Instead, when we look at the challenges of the future – dealing with an unstable Middle East, managing the rise of Chinese power *et al* – we are now talking about issues and regions where our interests have historically diverged. Thus, it is only natural that each side should go its own way in the future. Close transatlantic cooperation was the result of a unique historical era that is now over.

In this article I would like to raise my hand and challenge this view. This is not to deny that there has been a real breakdown in transatlantic cooperation since the election of President Bush and the war in Iraq, or that the US and Europe have yet to find new common ground on some of the big issues facing both sides of the Atlantic. But to attribute this breakdown to an alleged values gap has always struck me as ahistoric. To suggest that Americans and Europeans can never develop common strategies in the future just because we have never tried in the past seems to be a tautological

and self-serving argument.

Put another way, I fear that this new thesis is more the result of intellectual fashion than hard analysis or facts. In different ways, the values gap has become intellectual chic on both sides of the Atlantic. It has also been politically convenient and an easy and somewhat opportunistic explanation that essentially absolves our respective leaders of political responsibility. After all, if the other side of the Atlantic has simply become so culturally different, then it is no wonder that we are not getting along! No political leader has to look in the mirror and think long and hard about what he/she might have done wrong that has helped to create the current transatlantic mess that we face. In a sense, therefore, no one is to blame.

In the pages that follow, I try to outline the reasons for my dissent and offer an alternative way of thinking about what went wrong and why.

The values gap – fact or fiction?

In recent years it has become conventional wisdom to talk about the values gap across the Atlantic as a new phenomenon. At times it seems as if one can hardly attend a seminar on either side of the Atlantic without finding some pundit talking about how the United States and Europe have become so different. Books arguing this thesis have become instant intellectual sensations. Journalists have embraced this thesis with glee and helped make it part of our vernacular and conventional thinking. More disturbing is the argument that this alleged gap in values makes it all but impossible for the US and Europe to remain strategic partners in the modern world.

But is it true? Does this gap exist? Has it actually grown so much in recent years? And does it really render us incapable of working together in strategic terms? Or is it simply an example of an intellectual fad and the kind of intellectual exuberance that becomes wildly popular but will look slightly foolish in a few years time?

I don't believe this thesis holds up for several reasons. First, I believe it is ahistoric. Does anyone really believe that American and European societies today are more different in terms of values

than they were in, say, the 1950s or 1960s – a period often seen as a heyday of transatlantic cooperation? It seems pretty obvious that the differences then were much greater than they are in an era of growing integration and globalisation. And that a much greater values gap at that time certainly did not prevent us from establishing and building one of the greatest alliances in history.

Second, I have yet to see the kind of empirical data that documents that such a gap exists let alone correlates it in any meaningful way with divergent strategic views and behavior. When people talk about the values gap today, they usually mention a host of issues that include the death penalty, GMOs, religion, etc. Without in any way minimizing the differences over these issues, I would suggest that they involve 'lifestyle' choices. They reflect the different ways in which how our societies have decided to confront different kinds of risks or make moral choices. While they undoubtedly generate passion and strong views, are such lifestyle choices really a guide or compass for strategic behavior? Do they make it impossible for us to be strategic partners?

Again, I don't think so. Indeed, I suspect that if the likes of a Harry Truman or a Jean Monnet were to come down from the heavens and observe this debate and we would tell them that the transatlantic discourse is in the doldrums due to differences over such issues, they would look at us with astonishment. Or, more likely, they would scold us and point out that in their time they simply couldn't afford to let such differences get in the way of confronting the grand strategic problems they faced. And they would be right.

Third, a final part of the values gap thesis is the belief that the terrorist attacks of September 11 have changed the United States in ways that would or could never happen in Europe. European newspapers are full of articles about how it has produced a perception of threat, led to a rollback in civil liberties and reinforced a unilateralist strain in foreign policy that many find incomprehensible and claim could never happen on the European continent. To be sure, the terrorist attacks of September 11 have had a profound impact on American society and American national security thinking. I would be among the first to argue that we, as a government and society, have not done a good job in managing the dilemmas of running an open society in an age of terror or waging the new kind struggle against this kind of terrorist threat. It will take

Americans many years to overcome the stain that scandals in Abu Grahib and Guantanamo Bay have left on their moral standing and national honour.

In terms of threats, however, a closer look at public opinion data shows that Americans and Europeans have surprisingly similar views of threats as they look out at the world today and that the so-called 'threat gap' is a misnomer. What do we think the reaction in Europe will be if they suffer a terrorist attack on the scale of September 11? Some Europeans insist that they are somehow 'used to' terrorism and would not 'overreact' as they believe many Americans have. One cannot but wonder about how true this is. And do we really believe that the commitment to civil liberties in Germany or France is stronger than in the United States and that these or other European countries would not experience their own societal backlash, curtailment of civil rights or xenophobic feelings if it were struck by Arab terrorists using weapons of mass destruction? Would Europe really be immune from the pressures that led to the Patriot Act or the prison in Guantanamo Bay? Does anyone doubt that in France or the United Kingdom there would be public pressure to retaliate, including militarily, in the wake of such an attack? Is all of this evidence of how America and Europe are different in terms of values? Or does it simply point to the huge challenges we are all likely to face as we come to terms with the realities of a new and more dangerous era?

Do we have common interests?

The debate across the Atlantic has of course not only focused on the real or imagined values gap. It has also centred on whether the United States and Europe have or could have common interests as they look out at the major strategic challenges they are likely to face in the years and decades ahead. There is actually a good deal of agreement on what those challenges are. If a group of leading American and European strategists were asked to define the major challenges facing the West, they would have few problems coming up with a common list – consolidating democracy on the Eurasian landmass, dealing with an increasingly unstable Middle East, managing the rise of China and developing a new Asian security system, curbing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and, last but not least, winning the war on terrorism.

Instead, the debate is over whether the United States and Europe have common interests that could serve as the foundation for working together in the future. It is certainly not an accident that many of the same pundits who argue the values gap thesis also argue that the two sides of the Atlantic have never had a common policy towards, for example, the Middle East or China. That may be true but, again, is this really *a priori* evidence that we have vastly different interests? Or is it simply a reflection of the fact that we never felt the need or made the effort to undertake a serious effort to develop such a strategy? Is it a reason to abandon the ship and go our separate ways or to work harder in order to come closer together?

Let us not forget that the real glue that held the transatlantic relationship together in the past was not some automatic or pre-existing agreement of interests. Instead, it was the political insight that we needed to have a common strategy in order to face a threat or challenge successfully. When the North Atlantic Treaty Organization was created in 1949, the founding members did not have the same views on how to deal with Moscow. Many members of this nascent Alliance actually had very different interests. But what those wise men understood was that they needed a common framework that would allow and at times compel them to harmonise those different interests into a single policy.

And the way they created those common interests is hardly rocket science. It is not as if Harry Truman or anyone else simply waved his magic wand or signed a decree and then suddenly there was consensus. That convergence was put together slowly and laboriously because there was a political will to do so. These leaders literally sent their aides into key meetings with orders not to come out or come home unless and until they had bridged the gap and come up with agreements. In recent years it has all too often appeared as if the opposite is starting to become the political norm as political leaders on both sides of the Atlantic opted to exploit those differences to prosper in terms of their domestic politics.

Of course there are at times differences in interest across the Atlantic. I suspect those differences pale in comparison to the gap between the Euro-Atlantic community and the rest of the world. And I suspect they are no greater than many of the differences we faced within the West in the late 1940s and 1950s. I am certainly convinced that if today we had leaders of the calibre we were

fortunate to enjoy then, we would never have seen the kind of breakdown in transatlantic cooperation that occurred over Iraq. I fear that both sides of the Alliance will end up paying a heavy price for the bout of anti-American and anti-European exuberance that has driven our policies in recent years and landed us in our current situation. We have missed and indeed are missing a window of opportunity after the end of the Cold War for the two great pillars of Western democratic power – the United States and Europe – to cooperate in shaping a freer, democratic and liberal world order.

Conclusion

In my view, the values gap explanation for the current transatlantic crisis has become an intellectually and politically facile way to evade responsibility for the breakdown that has occurred in transatlantic cooperation. I believe this breakdown could and should have been avoided. Attributing it to a values gap is an all-too-easy way of avoiding personal or political responsibility. The breakdown in transatlantic cooperation suddenly appears culturally predetermined and attributable to larger-than-life historical forces that no leader could alter or control.

While the definitive historical account of what went wrong across the Atlantic in recent years remains to be written, there is one thing of which I am confident. When historians eventually look into the archives and analyse cause and effect, I am pretty confident that the answers they will find will have little to do with the death penalty, GMOs, religion or some kind of values gap. Instead, they will have a lot to do with failures of leadership and diplomacy. And those historians will ask why one set of leaders in the early post-World War II period were able to overcome differences between former adversaries and put together a new and unprecedented Alliance to successfully shape a new era, but another set of leaders were unable to renew this Alliance between old allies to confront the grand strategic challenges of a new and very different era.

Forging that new and common framework is no less important than it was fifty years ago. The United States and Europe have a window of strategic opportunity to combine their energy, talent and resources to try to shape a new and more democratic, liberal and peaceful world order. Yet, there could be nothing more noble

and worthy and in the spirit of the Atlantic idea than that the two great democratic pillars of the world would come together around such a new strategy for the 21st century. But instead of investing our energies in finding new ways to bridge real differences or develop common strategies to make the world a better place, we have ended up preoccupied with and squabbling over theories on how and why we are culturally different and can't work together. It has hardly been our finest moment. Simply put, we need to do better. Otherwise I fear that both sides of the Atlantic will pay a heavy price down the road.

Crisis or convergence – whither the transatlantic relationship?

István Gyarmati

Relations between Europe[1] and America have been on a downward spiral ever since the beginning of the 21st century. Contrary to what many people think, this is not a direct result of George Bush's foreign policy or of the reaction of some Europeans to it. Given that this is the case, it seems likely that relations between Europe and the US will not significantly improve even after the current leaders have departed from the scene. It would therefore be misleading to think that the superficial and, in a few respects, real improvement in relations observable since the beginning of 2005 are a sign that the crisis in transatlantic relations is over. It is also self-deluding to fall back on arguments along the lines that 'we have been through many crises in the past, we mastered all of them, so we will master this one too', since this crisis has much deeper and more serious roots that reflect the changing and totally new realities of the world, which inevitably lead to disagreements between Europe and the United States. So the real questions are as follows:

1. What are the major changes in the world that have occurred at the beginning of the 21st century?
2. Why does Europe respond differently from America to the challenges posed by the changes?
3. Will this discrepancy persist or will the two attitudes of Europe and the US eventually converge?
4. What remains of the transatlantic relationship under these new circumstances? Can it be revived and if so how?

The security situation in the world has changed radically ever since the massive terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001. New, non-state actors – especially catastrophic international terrorism and organised crime – have appeared on the scene, possessing destructive power that rivals that of major states and thus posing

1. The author uses Europe as shorthand for a group of countries, mainly belonging to the European Union.

a huge threat not only to our security, but also to the economy and our way of life. The new, dramatically altered security landscape means that the instruments we have traditionally had at our disposal – such as international law and international institutions, armies, police etc – have become inappropriate or inadequate to handle those threats.

Salient discrepancies

It is to be expected in such a situation that different actors, who are desperately seeking solutions, will take different approaches, especially when they are as different as America and Europe in terms of military capabilities and attitudes to military power. We may be loath to admit this fact, but we need to: while Europe and America share all the basic values of liberal democracy and the market economy, there are significant and growing differences in how we interpret and, even more, how we implement these principles. This is true in general of most European countries. There are, however, some important exceptions. The United Kingdom, France and Poland and a few others do not, in principle, oppose the use of force, when they think their national interests are at stake, or when the use of force obviously helps to alleviate human suffering. Their attitude, and especially that of their citizens, is still different from that of the Americans: they see the use of force as the *ultima ratio* and very much prefer the United Nations as the umbrella for eventual conflicts.

Secondly, there is a material difference between the nature of the interests of the United States and Europe: the United States is the only superpower and will remain so for the foreseeable future. It is hard to overestimate the importance of this fact and of the effect that this superpower status has on the outlook of the American people. Their philosophy of and perspective on the world is becoming increasingly different from that of Europe.

Thirdly, there is a huge gap between the instruments at the disposal of the American superpower and those available to the (as yet only incipient) European power. Not only do the Americans possess the biggest and strongest army in the world, their military superiority is on such a scale that most probably the rest of the world together could not defeat them.

Fourthly, there is a very significant difference in attitudes in the two continents, stemming from different histories. America was built by small groups of immigrants, who took refuge in the most remote parts of the continent and in the first years and decades of their existence got no support from any central, state-like institution. Central Government was only created later and gradually took away responsibilities from the local communities, who were extremely reluctant to give them up. In Europe, however, the process was exactly the opposite: monarchs were all-powerful and it was only through revolutions that such absolute power was wrested from monarchs. Consequently, American instincts call for self-reliance, while European instincts are geared towards the state. Accordingly, Americans got used to 'self-made quick fixes' and value the result, not the process, while Europeans value the process – sometimes even more than the result.

Fifth, there is a salient difference between American and European legal philosophy. Europeans believe that international law is superior to internal law, while Americans think that American law is not only superior to international law, but also automatically applicable internationally. That is why there are unbridgeable differences between the US and Europe on the International Criminal Court, Guantanamo Bay, the 'CIA prisons' etc.

And last, but not least, America is a much more 'violent' society. Violence, from the right to possess firearms to the death penalty, is much more present and pervasive in American society than in Europe. Europe increasingly abhors violence due principally to the fact that the countries of Europe have suffered continuous conflicts and wars throughout their whole history – or at least history is perceived in this way in Europe.

Working towards an effective partnership

The question therefore is not how we can make our reactions identical, but how we can coordinate them and make them complementary to each other.

This is why, in the author's view, both the American and European attitudes were mistaken. America expects Europe to become more like America, and Europe expects America to become more like Europe. In other words, America expects Europe to build

similar military forces to its own and fails to recognise that Europe does not want this, due to its different history, societal structures etc. Europe, at the same time, wants America to put less emphasis on military power and rely more on soft power, which also fails to take account of America's distinctive characteristics and capabilities. This does not mean that I would recommend that America be an exclusively military power and Europe an exclusively soft power. Europe needs to develop a more effective military capability – but this will not and indeed should not be identical to the American military model. On the other hand, America needs to recognise the need for more soft power and develop more of such capabilities. But the truth is that America would not be very good at using soft power, since the notion is at some level alien to it: Americans are not sensitive enough and lack the historic background and awareness that Europeans have, while European societies deplore the use of force to such an extent that they would have to radically change their mindset in order to build an American-style military capability.

Consequently, we need to work towards better coordination and accept that our attitude and capabilities will remain different. The question is how do we achieve better coordination and cooperation? The 'division of labour' approach poses a real problem: if America possesses the military power, it can easily launch a military operation on its own and then expect, on the basis of the principle of the division of labour, that Europe will step in and support America with its soft power. It also raises the question of what happens if under certain circumstances Europe has a certain interest in using power, but America is not interested in participating in that particular operation. Does this mean that Europeans always have to help America, even if they disagree with the original operation and does it mean equally that Europe will be able and ready to help America, but America will not have this obligation in return?

Such a situation would, of course, be unacceptable – at least for Europe. The most important guarantee against such a situation arising would be a real coordination mechanism between America and Europe. This mechanism should be comprehensive, i.e. it should cover the whole range of relations. It also has to be pragmatic, i.e. action-oriented. These two requirements can only be fulfilled if the coordination happens between the two entities that represent America and Europe (or at least most of it) and are also able to act. Currently there is no forum for a possible institutional

coordination between the European Union and the United States, except the mostly rather formal Summit meetings. However, even such a forum could only be successful if the European Union authorises its negotiator to negotiate and accept obligations and his/her efforts are not undermined by bilateral talks between London, Paris, Berlin and Washington. A second guarantee would be a limited European military capability that will enable Europe – the European Union – to act in a situation where the United States does not wish to deploy military power.

That limited European military capability is not a real problem: in fact, we already have it. Nevertheless, it should be expanded and strengthened. We do need a small, high-power, high-tech, high-readiness military, essentially for two purposes. First, we might need it for exclusively European operations, when European interests are at stake and the Americans do not want to intervene. There could be a number of such cases, e.g. when European lives are in danger, or when a democratic regime needs help to fight a military *coup* etc. Secondly, we need it in order to be able to act in partnership with the Americans, when and if we both want to do so. This is a realistic scenario: an Iraq-type operation where Europeans also agree that military intervention is unavoidable. Only being in a position to deploy high-readiness forces that are able to fight alongside the American forces will enable us to demand the right to be part of the decision-making process in such operations. If it is true that there is 'no taxation without representation', then its opposite is equally true: there is 'no representation without taxation'.

The real issue at the heart of the matter is to create a credible European institution – and not only for this purpose – that can negotiate with the Americans. Lacking such an institution, Europe cannot expect the Americans to negotiate with Europe. While Europe lacks such an institution there will always be a temptation for the Americans to exploit divisions among Europeans and refer to their inability to decide and act, and use this as an excuse (or as a genuine reason) to act unilaterally.

The role of international law and international institutions also needs revision – on both sides. We must acknowledge that in times when international security situations are undergoing great change, the rules of the previous era do not always fully satisfy the needs of the new era. This, of course, raises several questions, questions we might not be able to answer within the foreseeable future:

when is it justified to step outside of the boundaries of international law, who decides, why should only a few be 'allowed' to do so and not others, etc. This is, however, not an unprecedented situation. In the past, when we had to deal with unprecedented and very dangerous situations, we always resorted to 'exceptions'. And, over time, these exceptions became the rule of how to deal with exceptions. The best example is nuclear weapons. The same questions can be raised – and still are being raised – regarding nuclear weapons: why are some countries allowed to possess and, potentially, unilaterally use them while others are not? But this exception (admittedly after 25 years) eventually became the rule: the Non-Proliferation Treaty codified this exception. The situation should be viewed similarly, when it comes to the exception of stepping outside of the boundaries of international law. Two of the three European nations who vehemently opposed the use of force against Saddam Hussein (France, Germany and Russia) supported the use of force against Yugoslavia on Kosovo, without international legitimisation and therefore formally violating international law. The same countries, however, professed outrage when the same principle and practice was applied against Saddam Hussein.

The important thing is to apply a few rules, when stepping outside of the rules:

1. The action must be morally justified and the justification must be real.
2. The widest possible international support must be sought, before stepping outside of the rules.
3. Non-confrontational policy is required towards those who oppose the action, including opening up to cooperation with them as soon as possible.
4. The violation of international law should be kept to a minimum: violating some rules does not justify the violation of others.
5. Most importantly: the exception should not be presented as a rule.

All this means that we have to accept that the transition to the new security situation – deliberately, I do not call it an order or a system – will take a long time. This should not be surprising. Moreover, a look at history tells us that the decades of the Cold War, when the security situation, at least in Europe and North

America, was characterised by a bipolar system, is the exception rather than the rule. In this respect we are simply returning to the normal state of affairs, when there is no coherent international security system. Should we simply accept this without attempting to create a better one? No: but we have to accept that the process will take time, that the situation that existed previously is gone forever and that we do not know what kind of a new security 'system' will replace it or if and when it will emerge. Until then, we have to rely on our moral principles. When moral right and legality conflict, we must vote for what is right. And act accordingly.

The context for the transatlantic relationship in the new century

Walter B. Slocombe

The post-1945 US-European partnership, the great international success story of the 20th Century, faces new strains in the new century. This may be thought surprising. The end of the Cold War was not merely the collapse of a corrupt Soviet system, but a victory for a common transatlantic ideal, opening the road to the spread of democratic, market systems – not just in the former Soviet empire, but internationally, with the US and Europe cooperating to safeguard security around the world. The situation today, however, seems far less promising. Differences over a host of issues seem to reflect real concern in Europe at perceived American arrogance and over-reliance on military force, and not only in the context of Iraq, but generally, while America reciprocates in its suspicion of what it sees as European weakness and obstruction. The issue today is whether historic elements of tension have now come to dominate the transatlantic relationship – and in particular, whether European and American views on how life, society, and the world should be ordered have grown so divergent as to preclude close cooperation.

The litany of contrasts is familiar – if not always accurate:

- America is patriotic, conservative, religious, capitalist, enterprising, individualistic, innovative, hard-headed and yet also hard-hearted, fear-obsessed, enamoured of technology, unilateralist, reckless about using military force – and good at it, and indifferent to international opinion and international law.
- Europe, by contrast, is progressive, secular, social if no longer recognisably socialist, and yet hidebound, ageing, culturally closed, vaguely Luddite, over-cautious about (and not terribly capable at) using military force, and committed (to the point of delusion) to multilateral decision-making.

It is, of course, impossible to speak precisely about 'American', much less 'European' values. Several European governments have been stalwart supporters of US policy, and many Central

Europeans outdo Americans in fearing a potential revived Russian threat. The disdain of some Europeans for effete elites and coddled masses would do a Texas oilman proud. There are Americans who in their devotion to soft power and distrust of American imperial pretensions outdo all but a few Europeans. And undoubtedly some Europeans wish their own leaders were more like George W. Bush, just as there are Americans who wish for a different kind of leadership.

Even on domestic issues Europe is far from being one huge blue state. On 'social' issues, like capital punishment, popular opinion in Europe may be closer to its US equivalent than to European elites, while at least a large chunk of American elite opinion has much in common with European elites. (Indeed, one basis for the apparent difference in 'values' is that European political systems have historically been more deferential to elite opinion than the American system – a pattern challenged by European referenda votes, which have rejected elite preferences, and by the rise of nationalist parties.)

Moreover, the differences in values are far from universal. Europe and America share (even if neither fully realizes the fact) ideals – like commitment to democratic government, an open economic system, the rule of law, and social justice – and interests like security and access to oil. Similarly, for all the differences of emphasis, both recognise that terrorism, radical Islam, and nuclear proliferation are threats – and that military force may sometimes be a necessary response, although it is seldom a preferred or even an appropriate one.

It is an oversimplification to see the transatlantic problems simply in terms of George W. Bush and Iraq. When Clinton was president, there were deep transatlantic divisions over the Balkans, as well as Iran, the International Criminal Court, the Kyoto protocol, and land mines. And even though specific disputes might in isolation be dismissed as tactical differences, at a deeper level they reflect fundamental issues. The differences are not all about security, at least in the traditional sense. European restrictions on imports of American foods containing genetically modified organisms serve both traditional agricultural protectionism and trendy ecological correctness, but they also reflect scepticism about technology in general. But security is at the centre.

The key differences may be summed up as follows.

Defining the threat:

The US, genuinely changed by September 11, is deeply (if not necessarily very efficiently or confidently) committed to preventing a repetition of such events and rooting out the terrorists. Europe – even though it is also directly targeted – sees terrorism as a less urgent problem if only because America is the central terrorist target, and as one to be met, not only by force, but also by addressing root causes. Similarly, the US is far more inclined to see the acquisition of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons by irresponsible regimes as a fundamental challenge justifying extreme measures, while European governments are more inclined to see the problem in a political and country-unique context, and to favour restraint in any response.

Global versus regional focus:

The US regards itself as having global interests and responsibilities, in which Europe is important, but the Asia-Pacific region is at least equally demanding of strategic, political and economic attention. For the US, the possibility of conflict with China, although remote, is real, if only because, apart from Russia, China is America's only plausible 'near peer' military and strategic competitor. Moreover, the hard-to-delimit 'Greater Middle East' (spanning the region from, say, Morocco to India) is probably of greater US strategic concern than either Europe or Asia. By contrast, for most European countries, international affairs – apart from strictly commercial matters – overwhelmingly means the affairs of Europe and countries that are very close to Europe geographically. Partly this focus reflects most European countries' limited capability to affect events far afield by diplomacy, much less by force. But the narrower European perspective has other roots: Europe has been absorbed in its own process of integration – and it is for reasons of geography naturally focused on the rest of the Eurasian continent and the Mediterranean littoral, while the US is more nearly equidistant from other regions. (Paradoxically, the US is most in danger of neglecting Latin America, the region closest to it.)

Reliance on military instruments:

The United States is far more willing to threaten to use and indeed use military force as an instrument of international policy, while

European nations stress the primacy of instruments of 'soft power'. In part, this difference reflects the gap in military capabilities and different security priorities. Europe is arguably less affected by global terrorism and WMD proliferation, and can, in the end, count on the US to help meet truly serious security problems. Moreover, Europe has comparative advantages in non-military areas – political, economic, diplomatic, and cultural – and rightly and rationally focuses on them. In the course of the 20th century, Europe and the United States virtually exchanged positions on the role of military force in international affairs. Not so long ago, it was Europe that was seen as over-militarised and the home of power politics, while the United States stood for neutrality and avoidance of conflict. Now the roles are, largely, reversed. Europeans, with their concern for sophistication, stress the need to deal with root causes, not symptoms. The United States argues, to paraphrase a very sophisticated European, that if we wait for the long-term cures, we could all be dead from the symptoms.

The realism/idealism balance:

With regard to the role of values and principles in international affairs policy, relative to power and economic importance, the transatlantic difference is real but far from straightforward. To Europeans, American policy seems to be both moralistic, even 'faith-based', and yet also driven by crass national strategic and economic interest. Talk of an 'axis of evil' and whether 'you are with us or against us' – or even calling for democratic reform in the Middle East – rings in European ears as not just ignoring complexities, but applying rigid (and usually self-serving) moral standards that have more to do with American religiosity and self-interest than universal principles. To some Americans, European views of international problems seem to combine a cynical indifference to values with the naive assumption that Europe's remarkable success at healing ancient enmities is applicable worldwide, coupled with romanticism about the power of moral suasion and a blind infatuation with every Third World cause (except those that – like immigration – impinge directly on European interests).

Iran illustrates the problem. US policy treats Iran as both a potentially serious military and ideological threat to stability in its region and an exemplification of a morally evil regime that promotes terrorism, undermines the prospects for regional peace, clandestinely builds nuclear weapons, and frustrates domestic

democratic forces – a regime to be isolated and resolutely opposed, pending fundamental changes in its internal and external practices. Europe, by contrast, is far more inclined to see Iran's regime, however repellent internally and even dangerous internationally, as the product of its particular and difficult history, whose admittedly reprehensible conduct is better dealt with by dialogue and engagement, meanwhile treating Iran as a legitimate commercial partner.

When it comes to Israel, transatlantic differences over the morality of the conduct of nations cut the other way, with European opinion stressing issues of rights and values and the United States those of power relationships and interest. Perhaps no important international issue – certainly not Iraq – more separates European and American outlook than that of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It is still true that to most Americans, and certainly to most American policy-makers, Israel is a beleaguered state, under constant assault by terrorists and confronting a continued threat to its very existence. By contrast many Europeans – and almost universally European intellectual and media circles – while not condoning suicide bombings, view the problem as arising almost entirely from Israel's heavy-handed use of military force, its continued occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, its promotion of Jewish settlements and the conditions it imposes for an agreement on Palestinian statehood. From this perspective, America shares in Israel's culpability because it fails to apply sufficient pressure to change Israel's policies.

Significance and character of international law:

With regard to international law, the transatlantic difference is less over abstract propositions about a nation's international actions being subject to international law, but over the sources of that law and the power to define that law. The US position is, broadly, that the interpretation and application of international law is ultimately a matter for each nation, except where that nation has voluntarily accepted some international authority and then only strictly subject to that nation's limitations and reservations (including the right of withdrawal of consent). Moreover, the US has generally insisted that international agreements bind only those nations that are parties to them and that 'customary' – and therefore unavoidably binding – international law can legitimately be derived only from well-established actual practice of states, not

by a generalised 'international opinion', much less from academic consensus, or even the adherence of a majority of states. The US argues also that to a dangerous degree international law-making has degenerated into in a politicised effort to impose restrictions that uniquely impact on the United States, disregarding its special international role and responsibilities. European official opinion (like the bulk of American academic and NGO opinion) is much more sympathetic to an expansive reading of the sources and application of international law, whereby a broad, but not universal and very recent, international consensus can be binding upon nations – and even individuals – regardless of their governments' refusal to accept the new norm.

This seemingly academic debate over sources, authority, and compliance in international law is linked to distinctly practical issues: over the last decade, highly specific substantive objections by the United States to the Kyoto Agreement, the International Criminal Court, and a series of other agreements which most European nations support have provided a vehicle for broader mutual recriminations about America's right to autonomy and Europe's dedication to international law and international institutions.

National or multinational authority:

Some in the United States (including some who are in senior government positions) prefer, or affect to prefer, unilateral action as a matter of both principle and expediency, claiming that involving other nations in decisions about American use of force risks diluting the clarity of American purposes, while involving them in actual operations merely complicates action while adding nothing significant to American capabilities.

Conversely, there is a sharply contrary view – widely held in Europe – that decisions on use of military force must always be made multilaterally and by international institutions (preferably, and perhaps exclusively, by the United Nations). Those who hold this view insist, or affect to insist, that only formal Security Council approval can legitimate military force, except perhaps for immediate self-defence by a certifiably innocent victim against direct military attack across a recognised international border by acknowledged forces of a foreign state.

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What does this long, but still only partial, list of differences portend for the transatlantic relationship?

One view is that Europe and America will inevitably grow apart. Their close earlier relationship was imposed by necessity, and depended on a series of common threats. With those gone, the rationale for cooperation must fade. Moreover, the relationship was inherently unequal, founded on military security issues in which the United States had a hugely greater relative weight. But the inequality went deeper: the United States was essential to European security; Europe was only one of many regions whose security was important to the United States. For Europe, the Soviet collapse solved its military security problems for the indefinite future. American military power is only marginally relevant to those security problems that Europe has today, like terrorism and pressures from the disparity in wealth between Europe and its Mediterranean and Middle Eastern neighbours. Of course, for the US the end of the Soviet confrontation also removed a uniquely mortal threat, but it left other security issues in non-European parts of the world. Europe is (rightly or wrongly) largely not interested in those problems and can, in any case, do little to help deal with them.

Moreover, as the US becomes more diverse ethnically, it becomes less of a European civilisation transplanted to North America. Not just time, but very different historical and social experiences have made American and European cultures increasingly divergent. And, of course, their economies are directly competitive. Without a security challenge to drive them together, Europe and America may not become rivals (except in economics), but there is no particular reason for the transatlantic relationship to be any stronger than other important American (or indeed European) regional links.

The contrary and, on the whole, more convincing, view is that Europe and America face real problems of maturing and adapting to change, but fundamentally the relationship is strong. Their societies remain linked by history and culture, by increased communication, by popular culture with many common (and not solely American) elements, and by Europe as well as the US growing more diverse ethnically, so not all trends are towards greater differences. Economically, Europe and America are rivals, but they are also, as developed market economies, among each others' best customers and partners in investment.

Moreover, it is simply wrong to conclude that there is no longer a common security concern to link American and Europeans. For both the US and Europe, the focus has shifted – but in broadly compatible directions. Neither the traditional European focus on territorial defence nor America's attention to projecting massive conventional power remains the top priority. Rather, the key task will be adapting our security apparatus, including the military, to 'homeland defence' not against traditional invasion by armies but against non-state terrorists and quasi-terrorist rogue states, countering proliferation, and dealing with the collapse of order inside deeply foreign societies. And in that effort, straight military power, where the US dominates, remains necessary but is only effective if linked to other instruments where Europe has much to offer.

Expectations should be realistic and the past not romanticised. Most transatlantic problems are either differences over particular issues masquerading as issues of principle or reflections of a variant approach and tone that have long existed. The years before the fall of the Berlin Wall were hardly always marked by eager European acceptance of American leadership, or willing American accommodation to European cautions. There is reason for confidence that with consultation and compromise a consensus will emerge to permit common action taken with a firmness and determination that will be all the greater for being the product of working through honest differences together.

Europe has largely recognised that its security requires a more active role outside Europe's frontiers, and it is adapting its military to the corresponding new requirements. America, for its part, realizes that non-military instruments are critical to security, and that Europe can bring a great deal to the effort. The Iraq experience has chastened all but the most fanatical American unilateralists. Both cooperation on counter-terrorism and Afghanistan, where France and Germany play leading security roles and NATO is assuming new responsibilities, show that Europe can help tackle the most urgent, and the most difficult problems, and that the US can accept aid.

And Iraq should be a diminishing source of tension. For all the past differences, there is a good deal of support in Europe for the proposition that success in helping Iraqis create a reasonably secure, stable, and democratic state is important to international stability. Conversely, the difficulties of the Occupation, and the

intelligence failures over WMD, have sharply reduced American enthusiasm for similar future military ventures.

In this connection, it is important not to overstate the difference in public attitudes toward military force. American opinion is, in general, far from unilateralist and many Europeans recognize that military force is sometimes essential. On many issues, US and European public attitudes are remarkably similar: there is real concern about proliferation, deep suspicion of Iran, and support for the use of military force if other options fail, but with a strong preference for trying other means patiently and for acting together.

Some one has said that America's task is to remind Europe that the world is still dangerous, and Europe's is to remind America that it is still complicated. Those relative roles are not new, however much the specific circumstances have changed, and both sides will, from both natural inclination and common interest, continue to work together in a relationship that has always had differences, but has also always both risen to crisis and proved enduring.

What do we do?

L'Europe et le problème de la puissance américaine

Gilles Andréani

La puissance, celle des Etats-Unis et celle de l'Europe, mais aussi le rôle de la puissance dans les relations internationales en général, font l'objet à travers l'Atlantique d'un dialogue aussi ancien que confus. Cela tient à l'histoire, qui a vu les relations de puissance de l'Europe et de l'Amérique s'inverser au cours du XX^{ème} siècle, aux relations changeantes et contradictoires que chacune des deux parties au débat entretient avec la puissance et, enfin, à la complexité même du concept de puissance.

Ces trois arrière-plans successivement éclairés, l'on cherchera à définir comment l'Europe peut aujourd'hui se définir par rapport à ce qu'il est convenu d'appeler l'hyperpuissance américaine : entre une stratégie d'opposition vouée à l'échec, et une attitude d'alignement qui scellerait la fin des ambitions de l'Europe à rester un acteur historique autonome, y a-t-il une solution européenne au problème de la puissance américaine ?

Grand basculement et infortunes de la puissance

Historiquement, la migration de l'épicentre de la puissance mondiale de l'Europe vers les Etats-Unis est la grande affaire géostratégique du XX^{ème} siècle. Cette histoire est d'abord celle des dissensions européennes, des deux guerres mondiales, qui sont pour l'Europe une guerre fratricide de trente ans où sombrent sa prépondérance historique, ses empires et sa position dominante au centre du système international. Les Etats-Unis et la Russie lui succèdent comme principales puissances mondiales, dans un affrontement planétaire, la Guerre froide, dont l'Amérique et ses alliés sortent vainqueurs à la fin des années 1980.

L'Europe, à l'Ouest, s'est réhabilitée et unifiée dans la deuxième moitié du XX^{ème} siècle ; elle a pris sa part, dans l'alliance atlantique, au dénouement heureux de la Guerre froide; elle a procédé, dans l'intégration européenne, à un redressement exceptionnel, et a

peut-être développé un nouveau modèle de puissance. Mais c'est à l'ombre de la protection américaine que les Européens ont obtenu ces résultats. Ils ne rachètent pas l'effusion de sang suicidaire de la première moitié du siècle qui a mis fin à la prépondérance de l'Europe.

Les Etats-Unis, s'ils se retournent sur le XX^{ème} siècle pour en faire le bilan en termes de puissance ne peuvent qu'éprouver de la satisfaction, celle que donne un progrès continu, en phase avec l'optimisme historique qu'ils ont hérité des lumières, et pour beaucoup d'Américains, de la vocation exceptionnelle qu'ils pensent être celle de leur pays.

S'ils font un bilan plus cynique de la montée de leur puissance au XX^{ème} siècle, ils peuvent se réjouir du coût modeste auquel elle a été accomplie. Les Etats-Unis sont intervenus tardivement dans les deux conflits mondiaux, en subissant des pertes humaines modérées. Leur intervention, grâce à une mobilisation formidable de leur potentiel industriel a néanmoins été décisive et les a laissés en position d'arbitres de la paix. Vue sous cet angle, leur gestion de la Guerre froide, elle aussi, a été un modèle : ils ont opté pour une stratégie défensive, le *containment*, organisé un jeu d'alliances mondial contre l'URSS, tout en limitant les frictions et les risques d'affrontement avec elle. Le temps et les contradictions du système soviétique ont été au bout du compte les acteurs décisifs d'une victoire, dont les Etats-Unis sont néanmoins apparus comme les grands bénéficiaires, et qu'ils ont d'ailleurs revendiquée hautement.

Pourtant, cette économie dans l'exercice de la puissance, cette gestion opportuniste d'une montée sans parallèle dans l'histoire, la plupart des Américains ne s'y reconnaîtraient pas. C'est que si la puissance migre de l'Europe vers l'Amérique au cours du XX^{ème} siècle, l'imaginaire américain a longtemps continué à en répudier l'idée : pour lui, il est naturel que l'Amérique soit puissante, mais les jeux de puissance, l'attrait qu'ils suscitent et l'expertise qui les règle restent l'apanage des Européens ; l'engagement américain dans le monde obéit à des motifs plus hauts.

Désaveu américain, désamour européen

Les Etats-Unis ont réussi ce tour de force de devenir la première puissance mondiale en se défendant de l'avoir voulu et, de fait, les erreurs des autres y ont été pour beaucoup. Mais les Américains ont

voulu dès leur premier engagement décisif dans les affaires mondiales, en 1917, placer celui-ci sous la double inspiration de la défense du droit et de la défense de la morale, en se défendant de toute considération d'intérêt ou de puissance.

C'est, depuis, un thème constant du débat de politique étrangère américain, que de dénoncer les excès de cet esprit « juridique-moralisateur », qui pousse les Etats-Unis à une alternance d'abstention et d'intransigeance dans l'action, les aveugle aux intérêts légitimes des autres pays ou à la réalité des contraintes de la vie internationale. Cette critique est faite par l'Europe au nom d'une conception traditionnelle de celle-ci ; en Amérique même elle est d'abord le fait de réalistes, qui sont aussi des « Européens » de formation ou d'inspiration, Morgenthau, Kennan, Kissinger : ils revendiquent pour les Etats-Unis l'exercice de la diplomatie, conçue au sens traditionnel comme la coexistence de puissances rivales, la composition des intérêts et la limitation des conflits, plutôt que comme la défense du droit ou de la morale. Elle est aussi le fait de critiques des excès de la puissance américaine, comme Stanley Hoffmann, ou Robert Tucker, qui dénoncent, derrière la défense du droit ou de la morale par les Etats-Unis, la réalité des ambitions et des calculs d'intérêts, voire l'hypocrisie de la puissance américaine.

Ce débat se reflète en politique : il y a des cycles où une diplomatie américaine plus traditionnelle succède aux phases d'interventionnisme idéaliste. Mais la répudiation explicite de la puissance a dominé historiquement dans le style diplomatique et le débat politique américains, du moins jusqu'à la fin de la Guerre froide. Les vertus d'un nouvel équilibre multipolaire, calqué sur le concert européen classique, la « désidéologisation » de la Guerre froide, ont été prônées en vain par Kissinger et Nixon. La politique étrangère américaine reste une projection sur le monde des valeurs et des processus politiques des Etats-Unis.

En Europe, la relation avec la puissance est également complexe : l'entreprise européenne est une façon d'inhiber le retour aux rivalités et aux jeux d'équilibre qui ont mené l'Europe à sa perte ; elle est une répudiation explicite des formes traditionnelles de la puissance, avec la revendication, allemande au départ, et progressivement assez largement répandue, d'une identité de « puissance civile » pour la nouvelle Europe en voie d'unification.

En face, il y a une vision européenne traditionnelle, « réaliste »

des relations internationales, qui s'afflige de la naïveté ou de l'hypocrisie des dénis américains à l'égard de la puissance, tout comme de l'aspiration chimérique à la dépasser dans l'intégration européenne.

Enfin, entre les deux, il y a l'idée que l'unité européenne est aussi le moyen pour l'Europe de retrouver le chemin d'une influence à l'échelle planétaire. La France aspire à voir se constituer une « Europe-puissance », et cette ambition n'est pas seulement le fait d'une France gaulliste ou soucieuse de voir l'Europe se poser en rivale des Etats-Unis. C'était la conviction de Jean Monnet qu'une Europe forte était indispensable à l'équilibre mondial.

Si l'Europe est, comme l'Amérique ambivalente sur la puissance, les tendances à l'œuvre des deux côtés de l'Atlantique semblent néanmoins jouer en sens contraire depuis la fin de la Guerre froide.

Du côté américain, l'on assiste à une célébration explicite et largement partagée de la puissance américaine. En même temps, la continuité traditionnelle entre la défense de la morale et celle du droit et des institutions internationales, est rompue. Pour la droite néo-conservatrice, celle-là, toujours nécessaire, ne doit pas s'incarner dans la défense d'institutions à la moralité douteuse ou de règles hypocrites et paralysantes, mais dans une puissance américaine libre d'agir pour le bien, et enfin émancipée des contraintes internationales du passé.

Cette rupture permet, après le 11 septembre, de cristalliser une coalition d'attitudes où fusionnent un nationalisme américain classique, l'*hubris* de la victoire dans la Guerre froide, un désir de revanche compréhensible sur les auteurs des attaques du 11 septembre, et l'idéalisme interventionniste des néo-conservateurs, autour d'une revendication de puissance quasiment sans précédent depuis l'ère impériale de Théodore Roosevelt. Ce qui reste des réalistes modérés, adeptes d'une pratique classique de la diplomatie, est marginalisé.

Pour les Européens, l'espoir d'une Europe-puissance recule au même moment, avec les vicissitudes croissantes de la construction européenne, mais aussi avec la prise de conscience d'un différentiel de puissance quasiment infranchissable avec les Etats-Unis. Pour l'Europe, la question de la puissance devient de plus en plus celle de la puissance américaine. Elle procède à la rationalisation et la valorisation de ce qui l'en distingue, son identité de puissance

civile, tout en accroissant marginalement sur le plan des concepts et des moyens son aptitude à projeter sa puissance au dehors, le plus souvent de concert avec les Etats-Unis. L'Europe continue par ailleurs d'identifier sa vocation de politique étrangère à la consolidation du droit et des institutions internationales, entreprise qui lui permet d'affirmer, parfois contre les Etats-Unis, un style diplomatique propre.

Dans cette évolution en sens opposé des attitudes, les Américains sont-ils devenus des réalistes adeptes de la politique de puissance, et les Européens des Wilsoniens, dans un mouvement exactement contraire à l'évolution séculaire de leur puissance respective ? Pas tout à fait : du Wilsonisme, les Américains n'ont pas renié l'inspiration moralisante, l'ambition de transformation démocratique du monde, que les Européens pour leur part continuent à regarder avec circonspection ; du réalisme à l'européenne, les Américains retiennent une relation positive avec la puissance, beaucoup plus que l'idée de composition par la diplomatie entre puissances rivales et systèmes de valeurs distincts.

Les transformations de la puissance

La confusion du débat euro-américain sur la puissance s'accroît de celle qui entoure le concept même de puissance et ses évolutions récentes. Chez Max Weber, un individu a de la puissance, dans une relation sociale, dès lors qu'il a une chance d'imposer sa volonté à un autre ou à des autres, même contre la résistance de celui ou de ceux-ci, quelle que soit la raison de cette chance. La puissance est au sens le plus large, selon Raymond Aron, la capacité d'influer sur la conduite des autres[1].

La puissance est une relation asymétrique, que l'un exerce et que l'autre subit, mais pas nécessairement dans tout le spectre de leurs relations. Chez Weber et Aron, les mots « chance » et « capacité », dans les deux extraits précités, renvoient au caractère éventuel plutôt qu'actuel de la puissance (la puissance institutionnalisée et effectivement mise en jeu étant définie par Aron comme « le pouvoir »).

La puissance réclame la mobilisation de ressources (dont les principales sont la force et la légitimité), et leur organisation dans le cadre d'une stratégie. Pour être asymétrique, la puissance n'est

1. Raymond Aron, « Macht, power, puissance. Prose démocratique ou poésie démoniaque?», in *Etudes politiques*, Gallimard 1972, p.171.

pas pour autant une relation de domination : elle suppose, jusqu'à un certain point, l'assentiment de celui qui la subit.

Jusque là, la définition vaut pour toutes les relations sociales, internes et internationales. La continuité de nature des unes et des autres est d'ailleurs soulignée dans la formule célèbre de Morgenthau, où il dit que « *international politics, like all politics, is a struggle for power* »[2].

Mais les évolutions récentes de la société internationale tendent à renforcer sur plusieurs points le contraste entre le pouvoir interne et la puissance internationale.

Dans l'ordre international, la puissance est faiblement institutionnalisée et peu légitime. En outre, les relations de puissance heurtent l'*ethos* démocratique égalitaire, comme la volonté d'indépendance des peuples, c'est-à-dire le nationalisme. Or démocratie et nationalisme ne donnent aucun signe de recul, bien au contraire : ces deux forces jumelles ont scellé le sort de l'URSS ; elles sont globalement en progrès.

La diffusion de la démocratie dans le monde renforce, dans les relations entre Etats, l'aspiration à l'égalité des conditions et la haine des distinctions. Il en résulte une moindre acceptabilité des relations de puissance, surtout si elles sont explicites ou institutionnalisées : l'évolution du débat européen montre le rejet croissant, par les Etats les plus petits, de toute forme de distinction institutionnelle au profit des grands, ou de toute forme un peu explicite de *leadership* (cf. la dénonciation, devenue courante, du rôle *leader* de la France et de l'Allemagne sous l'appellation dévoyée, et historiquement scandaleuse, « d'axe » franco-allemand). La méfiance instinctive des opinions démocratiques à l'égard du recours à la force va dans le même sens.

Le nationalisme et la démocratie n'interdisent pas les limitations de souveraineté ou l'intégration ; ils demandent qu'elles s'opèrent selon des formes de réciprocité et d'égalité entre Etats.

L'ordre international est dépourvu des modes de légitimation comme l'élection, ou la souveraineté populaire, qui font dire dans l'ordre interne que le pouvoir appartient à la loi, c'est à dire à chacun. Les procédures internationales de légitimation de la puissance sont de faibles substituts aux procédures démocratiques internes. Elles laissent la puissance entre Etats nue, parce que c'est toujours d'autrui qu'elle procède et qu'aucune fiction juridique ne peut dissimuler cette évidence.

Lorsque de virtuelle elle devient actuelle, en particulier lorsque

2. Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics among nations*, Knopf, New York, 1949, p.13.

la puissance doit vaincre une résistance effective en recourant à cet *ultima ratio* qu'est la force, ce recours est d'abord un aveu d'impuissance. Ce n'est pas seulement l'« impuissance de la force » dont parlait Hegel à propos de Napoléon en Espagne. C'est la fonction d'un coût croissant du recours à la force, contraire à l'esprit du temps, qui répudie la violence comme mode de règlement des différends, et n'accepte la puissance que si elle est peu explicite. On rejoint ici la pensée stratégique de la Chine ancienne, pour laquelle la puissance la plus vraie est celle qui n'a pas à user de la force, ni même à la montrer.

La puissance est, dans l'ordre international, faiblement légitime, et traditionnellement dépendante de la force. Or le recours à la force, toujours hasardeux, est de plus en plus coûteux en terme de légitimité. Ce que produit cette évolution, c'est une discontinuité de plus en plus marquée entre les différents registres de la puissance : la supériorité militaire peine à se traduire en influence politique, comme celle-ci en avantage économique ou en aura morale.

Au total, on peut penser qu'il y a, dans le système international, moins de puissance disponible, au sens le plus général de capacité d'influer sur la conduite des autres, ou, en tout cas de moins en moins de pouvoir, c'est-à-dire de manifestation actuelle et explicite de cette capacité, surtout exercée ouvertement et contre l'aveu de celui auquel elle s'adresse. Les Américains sont une puissance sans rivale sur la scène internationale, mais dans un contexte où la puissance est de plus en plus difficile à exercer. Elle n'a plus la force de l'évidence, elle est davantage fragmentée, et tout porte à croire que dans son acception la plus générale, la faculté pour un Etat d'influer sur la conduite des autres, elle est plutôt en diminution dans le monde d'aujourd'hui.

Méfaits et bienfaits de la puissance américaine

Cela ne veut pas dire que la puissance est un jeu à somme nulle, où toute quantité de puissance gagnée par quelqu'un est en même temps perdue par quelqu'un d'autre.

Historiquement, de nombreux pays ont gagné à se joindre à la puissance dominante, plutôt que de s'y opposer. Cet instinct consistant à se mettre à la remorque du plus fort, le « *band-wagoning* », est au moins aussi répandu que l'aspiration à l'équilibre qui porte historiquement à la formation de coalitions contre la puissance

dominante du moment.

L'instinct majoritaire dans l'Europe d'aujourd'hui est plutôt au *band-wagoning*. Si les Européens ont globalement la perception de leur recul et de la montée de l'Amérique au XX^{ème} siècle, le souvenir des combats menés à leurs côtés pour la défense de la liberté leur a fait historiquement attacher un caractère bénéfique à la puissance américaine ; après tout, c'est elle qui a rendu possible la reconstruction et la réhabilitation de l'Europe pendant la Guerre froide et, jusqu'à un certain point, son retour à la puissance.

C'est un argument que ne manquent pas de faire jouer les Américains vis-à-vis des Européens, en leur faisant valoir que leur puissance a historiquement servi la cause de la liberté de l'Europe, donc ils ne doivent pas la craindre. L'argument se prolonge dans deux directions : la puissance américaine, émanant d'un pays démocratique, est « bénigne » ; étant au service du camp de la liberté, aujourd'hui comme hier, s'inquiéter de cette puissance, refuser de s'en accommoder, c'est diviser ce camp et affaiblir la cause de la liberté elle-même.

On trouve un raccourci saisissant de ces deux arguments dans le discours prononcé par Condoleeza Rice à l'International Institute for Strategic Studies le 26 juin 2003: « *Why should anyone who shares the values of freedom seek to put a check on those values? Democratic institutions are themselves a check on the excesses of power. Why should we seek to divide our capacities for good, when they can be so much more effective united? Only the enemies of freedom could cheer this division.* »[3].

Ce propos en forme de déni du problème de la puissance, est en porte-à-faux par rapport à ce qu'il y a de plus constant et de plus honorable dans la tradition politique américaine, qui est la méfiance à l'égard du pouvoir, tradition qui remonte à Locke et à Montesquieu. Dans cette tradition, le problème politique central est celui de l'arbitraire et de l'abus de pouvoir. Un pouvoir limité par des procédures démocratiques internes n'en restera pas moins porté à en abuser vis-à-vis des autres Etats dans la sphère internationale. Problème qui n'est pas justiciable des remèdes à l'excès de pouvoir dans l'ordre interne, comme le gouvernement limité, la séparation des pouvoirs, ou le règne de la loi.

Problème à vrai dire sans solution institutionnelle, mais dont Montesquieu du moins espère qu'il ira en s'atténuant : difficulté croissante des conquêtes, progrès de l'esprit d'indépendance des peuples et de l'interdépendance des Etats de l'Europe moderne, précarité des hiérarchies entre Etats, adoucissement des mœurs

3. Discours de Condoleezza Rice à l'IISS, 26 juin 2003, p. 5.

par le commerce[4]. Dans ces analyses, on reconnaît à la fois la discontinuité entre la politique interne et la politique internationale, et la continuité des attitudes, entre l'anti-absolutisme à l'intérieur et l'anti-hégémonisme à l'extérieur.

C'est évidemment ignorer l'une et l'autre que de dire que l'on n'a rien à craindre de la politique extérieure d'un pays dès lors qu'il est démocratique. Mais le propos de Condoleezza Rice n'est pas aussi naïvement défensif. Il vise un autre objet, qui est sans la nommer, la France de Jacques Chirac, et sa défense de la multipolarité, concept dont elle dit : « *multipolarity is a theory of rivalry, of competing interests – and at its worst, of competing values. We have tried this before. It led to the Great War, which cascaded into the Good War, which gave way to the Cold War* »[5].

Ennemis de la liberté et fauteurs de guerre, voilà pour les adeptes de la multipolarité !

Mais au-delà de la caricature, le piège pour les Européens est redoutable, car ce discours les enferme dans une fausse alternative vis-à-vis des Etats-Unis : le *band-wagoning*, option qui n'est ni honorable, ni une politique, mais que justifierait l'imminence des menaces contre la liberté ; la multipolarité, comprise comme la tentative d'organiser une coalition de puissances contre les Etats-Unis, option qui serait évidemment vouée à l'échec si elle était concevable.

La multipolarité n'est sans doute pas une politique souhaitable pour l'Europe, mais elle mérite un examen impartial, car elle soulève des questions réelles.

La multipolarité, réponse au problème de la puissance américaine ?

La multipolarité est un concept ambigu. D'abord, on ne sait pas s'il est une description de l'état des choses, marqué par l'ascension de puissances qui sont déjà des centres de pouvoir distincts face aux Etats-Unis, ou s'il est une revendication, susceptible d'inspirer une politique visant à favoriser l'émergence de ces puissances. Lorsque les Etats-Unis, dans leur Stratégie nationale de sécurité de septembre 2002, consacrent un chapitre à leurs relations avec les autres centres de puissance, « *other main centers of global power* », ne décrivent-ils pas la réalité actuelle d'un monde multipolaire ?

Au-delà de la description, la multipolarité trahit une insatis-

4. Montesquieu, *Réflexions sur la monarchie universelle*, Librairie Droz, Genève, 2000.

5. Condoleezza Rice, op. cit. p.5.

faction sur le déséquilibre actuel du système international et l'excès de la puissance américaine. Elle ne propose pas de contrebalancer celle-ci par une coalition d'intérêt des autres, contrairement à ce que feignent parfois de croire les Américains, mais considère comme a priori préférable un monde plus équilibré, où la puissance serait mieux distribuée.

En première analyse, rien de plus naturel que cette préférence pour un ordre international pluraliste. On peut y voir la nostalgie du concert, un sens de l'équilibre qui fait juger dangereux qu'un Etat soit, par la concentration de ses ressources militaires, politiques et économiques, surpuissant et seul dans sa catégorie. Le danger de l'arbitraire, de l'erreur de jugement, d'une moindre faculté pour les autres de peser sur des décisions qui sont susceptibles de les affecter, est réel dans une telle situation, et la guerre d'Irak en a apporté des illustrations frappantes.

Il y a pourtant deux problèmes avec le concept de multipolarité, qui expliquent la réserve dont font preuve à son égard les grandes démocraties développées, dont aucune ne l'a endossé, y compris en Europe.

Le premier est le parfum de *realpolitik* qui s'attache au concept. Forgé à la fin des années soixante par Kissinger, qui plaidait, au nom des limites de l'équilibre bipolaire, pour une dévolution de responsabilités accrues à de grands pays-relais, il considère les grandes puissances comme les seuls acteurs dignes d'intérêt du système international.

Le second est le message subliminal négatif qu'il adresse aux Etats-Unis. Alors que les Européens seraient en général prêts à adhérer à un objectif de rééquilibrage de l'Alliance atlantique, ou à ce que l'Europe s'affirme comme un acteur majeur face aux Etats-Unis, la revendication « multipolaire » reste indéterminée et ne dit pas qui elle souhaite voir s'affirmer comme un pôle. D'où l'impression qu'elle donne de viser d'abord l'excès de puissance des Américains, et de souhaiter que n'importe qui s'affirme demain comme un pôle du système international, pourvu que ce ne soit pas eux. Or un monde où des pays comme la Chine, l'Inde et la Russie seraient devenus plus puissants relativement aux Etats-Unis, ne serait pas nécessairement préférable si l'on se place, non seulement du point de vue des Etats-Unis, mais de celui du Japon ou de l'Europe.

A ces deux titres, le concept de multipolarité est vulnérable à la critique, voire à la caricature.

Pourtant, il reste dans ce concept l'expression d'une insatisfaction et d'une aspiration, l'une et l'autre légitimes. Insatisfaction devant le risque d'arbitraire que comporte une concentration excessive de la puissance. Aspiration à une société internationale où ce risque serait diminué, comme il l'est à l'intérieur des sociétés démocratiques, même si c'est, par la force des choses, par des voies différentes : le concert, la modération des ambitions, la transparence des intentions, le multilatéralisme ; tous développements assez proches de ceux que Montesquieu voyait à l'œuvre dans l'Europe du XVIII^{ème} siècle, et qu'il n'est pas interdit de chercher à promouvoir dans le monde d'aujourd'hui.

Or une telle société internationale ne peut exister qu'à condition qu'il y ait une pluralité de centres de décision autonomes. Il n'y a pas de multilatéralisme sans une certaine mesure de multipolarité. Celle-ci n'est pas la réponse au problème de la puissance américaine mais, sans elle, il n'y a pas de réponse possible.

A cette condition essentielle, s'en ajoute une autre, qui est que le plus puissant appartienne à cette société ; que les Etats-Unis s'estiment engagés par ses normes, impliqués dans ses institutions, tenus à sa défense. Or, pour un pays-continent, qui a toujours éprouvé la tentation de se tenir à part et, il faut bien le dire, un peu au-dessus des autres nations, cela ne va pas de soi.

La réponse à la question de la puissance américaine se situe ainsi pour les Européens sur deux registres différents et en partie contradictoires : créer un contexte politique et institutionnel propre à réguler et à modérer les rapports de puissance ; y engager la puissance américaine elle-même. Sur le premier registre, l'Europe doit affirmer sa personnalité et ses idées, et créer un rapport de forces politiques qui lui permette de les promouvoir, y compris en dépit de l'opposition américaine. Sur le second, elle doit laisser agir sa convergence d'intérêts avec les Etats-Unis, ainsi que sa compréhension pour les responsabilités particulières qui sont les siennes dans le monde.

Un « multilatéralisme efficace » vis-à-vis des Etats-Unis

Publiée à l'automne 2003, la stratégie européenne de sécurité se voulait, après le 11 septembre et la Stratégie nationale de sécurité américaine de septembre 2002, un geste vis-à-vis des Américains : il s'agissait de faire, comme eux, un bilan sans complaisance des

problèmes de sécurité dans le monde d'aujourd'hui, tout en exprimant une façon proprement européenne de les aborder. Au premier titre, elle décrit les menaces d'aujourd'hui, terrorisme et prolifération notamment, d'une façon proche des conceptions américaines. Au second titre, elle met sur le même plan que la réponse aux menaces, la défense d'« un ordre international fondé sur un multilatéralisme efficace ».

Ce chapitre de la Stratégie européenne de sécurité est un manifeste de l'Union européenne vis-à-vis des Etats-Unis : l'ordre international actuel qui, en gros, satisfait les deux côtés de l'Atlantique, doit être consolidé, institutionnalisé, élargi, rendu plus légitime. Au fond conservateurs, les pays occidentaux développés ne doivent pas compter que la distribution actuelle de la puissance se perpétuera indéfiniment. Ils doivent profiter de cet intervalle, où les menaces directes contre eux sont réduites, pour renforcer les règles et les institutions du monde de demain.

Les Européens, instruits par l'Histoire, sont à cet égard plus lucides que les Américains. Plongés par l'aventure européenne dans une société d'Etats pluraliste et égalitaire, ils comprennent mieux que les Etats-Unis les exigences d'un ordre international légitime, et sont mieux qu'eux, en mesure de les formuler et, peut-être de les faire progresser.

Citons trois d'entre elles, empruntées à Pierre Hassner[6], qu'une Amérique dominante et indifférente aux exigences de l'ordre risque de mettre à mal (et a déjà, sur certains points, dangereusement ignorés).

Il y a, d'abord, **le concert**. La première guerre du Golfe, celle de 1991, fait à cet égard figure d'exemple: menée de bout en bout par les Etats-Unis, mais en utilisant le cadre de l'ONU, en montrant déférence aux opinions des autres pays, dans la région et ailleurs, en donnant les formes d'une action de sécurité collective à ce qui était d'abord une action de légitime défense. Tout ici contraste avec la guerre d'Irak de 2003, la tentative de passage en force au Conseil de sécurité, la diplomatie vindicative de George Bush, son ignorance des intérêts et des sensibilités de la région, la maigre part faite à ses partenaires dans la coalition. Les choses, il est vrai, auraient été encore pires si les Etats-Unis n'avaient fait l'effort de passer par l'ONU, et d'y rechercher le consensus jusqu'en janvier 2003. Le concert n'est pas le partage de la décision ; c'est l'effort

6. « Des dilemmes de l'action aux contradictions de l'ordre », in *Justifier la guerre ?*, Presses de Sciences Po, 2005, p. 355.

visible pour parvenir à une décision collective. C'est en partie une affaire de forme : Coral Bell l'avait compris en plaidant qu'il était dans l'intérêt des Etats-Unis d'afficher une apparence de concert, « *the pretense of concert* »[7].

La réciprocité, qui est, au fond l'inverse des relations de puissance : aux engagements contractés, et aux contraintes subies par les uns, répondent engagements et contraintes des autres. Or les Etats-Unis raisonnent de moins en moins en ces termes. Lorsqu'ils théorisent, dans la Stratégie nationale de sécurité de 2002, une doctrine de légitime défense préemptive (qui est en fait une légitimation de la guerre préventive dans le contexte de la lutte contre le terrorisme), ils ne semblent pas envisager que d'autres (la Russie vis-à-vis de la Géorgie, par exemple) puissent se réclamer des mêmes options. Là encore, beaucoup est affaire de forme : chacun savait qu'après le 11 septembre, les Etats-Unis se réserveraient ce type d'options pour prévenir une nouvelle attaque. Mais le proclamer à l'avance est une autre affaire.

L'égalité. L'attachement des Etats-Unis au régime de non-prolifération nucléaire est partagé par les Européens. Leur action conjuguée a permis la reconduction indéfinie du TNP en 1995, résultat qui serait certainement hors de portée aujourd'hui. Mais cet attachement pour un régime asymétrique en faveur des puissances nucléaires contraste avec l'empressement des Américains à échapper aux contraintes de contrôle des armements hérités du passé, et leur rejet du Traité d'interdiction complet des essais nucléaires. Intrinsèquement fragile, parce qu'il est inégalitaire, le TNP demande à être géré avec une déférence d'autant plus marquée pour le principe d'égalité des droits et le respect des obligations des puissances nucléaires, en particulier en matière de désarmement.

Concert, réciprocité et égalité sont trois conditions d'un ordre international légitime et donc de la stabilité de l'ordre mondial. Les Européens, que leur situation historique et la construction européenne rend plus sensibles à ces principes, ne doivent pas hésiter à les opposer, quand c'est nécessaire, aux excès de la puissance américaine : non parce que l'affaiblissement de l'Amérique est un agenda caché du multilatéralisme pour les Européens, mais parce qu'il est dans leur intérêt de ne pas laisser les Etats-Unis délégitimer un ordre international qui globalement sert l'Europe.

7. Coral Bell, « The Pretense of Concert », *The National Interest*, automne 1999.

Puissance et responsabilités

Bien entendu, ce ne sont pas seulement les normes, les institutions et les principes, qui font l'ordre international, ce sont aussi les rapports de puissance. L'ordre doit être à l'occasion soutenu par la force, et cette fonction repose de façon singulière sur les Etats-Unis, à la fois parce qu'ils sont les plus puissants et qu'ils sont dotés de capacités militaires hors pair.

Cependant, l'Amérique perçoit cette responsabilité particulière, de garant en dernier ressort du système, comme lui conférant des droits particuliers. Depuis la fin de la Guerre froide, elle réclame, et d'ailleurs s'octroie, davantage de marge de manœuvre, d'options stratégiques, de liberté par rapport aux contraintes du système, l'ONU, les accords de désarmement, le droit international, ses alliances. L'Amérique protège ainsi l'ordre international, tout en réclamant de s'affranchir de ses contraintes. Dedans et dehors à la fois, elle le défend et elle l'affaiblit.

Dans cette situation, la priorité des Européens devrait être de s'offrir à un meilleur partage des responsabilités avec les Américains, tout en leur montrant que les règles et les institutions internationales servent leurs intérêts. On en citera deux exemples : la contribution européenne substantielle à l'Afghanistan, où les instances multilatérales ont joué un rôle essentiel ; la fermeté de la diplomatie européenne face à l'Iran dans le dossier nucléaire, où le recours à la négociation, le soutien de l'AIEA, et la recherche du consensus ont beaucoup plus fait pour affaiblir la position iranienne que l'intransigeance et les menaces impuissantes des Américains.

C'est ce type d'entreprises communes qui pourra ramener l'Europe vers l'Amérique, et l'Amérique à plus de considération des bénéfices que lui procure l'ordre international existant, et des risques qui pèsent sur la légitimité de la puissance dans un monde de nationalisme et de démocratie.

Il y a cependant des limites à la force de conviction des arguments ou même des exemples que les Européens peuvent fournir aux Américains. Ces limites tiennent aux Européens, à leur désunion et à leur faiblesse structurelle face aux Etats-Unis. Elles tiennent aussi aux Etats-Unis, dont la puissance tend alternativement à se mobiliser dans l'esprit de croisade ou à se replier dans l'isolement, les deux attitudes les mieux en phase avec le moralisme dont elle est teintée depuis l'origine.

Après le 11 septembre, c'est l'esprit de croisade qui a dominé ; il touche à ses limites en Irak où l'on voit ce que sont les véritables contrepoids à la puissance américaine : non pas la coalition de puissances rivales rassemblées dans un imaginaire front multipolaire ; ni les ennemis communs de l'Occident que les Américains prétendaient forcer dans leurs retranchements en Irak, le jihadisme et le terrorisme mondialisé, qui restent des forces sur la défensive, et qui ne peuvent pas l'emporter ; mais simplement la réalité d'un monde où l'aspiration à l'autonomie, le nationalisme et les passions identitaires rendent plus incertain que jamais le recours à la force.

Le rôle des Européens, dans ce contexte d'ajustement à la réalité de la puissance américaine, est de faire percevoir aux Etats-Unis ce mélange de capacité d'action, de fermeté sur leurs principes, de proximité d'intérêts, et d'empathie sur les valeurs, qui peut les convaincre qu'ils ont un réel partenaire. En sont-ils capables ? Ce qui est sûr, c'est que la capacité d'influence de l'Europe sur les Etats-Unis est historiquement à un point bas, et que le rôle des Etats-Unis dans le monde se décidera d'abord à Washington.

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Après l'Irak, nul ne peut dire où les Etats-Unis s'arrêteront entre la croisade et l'isolement. Un nouveau 11 septembre pourrait relancer chez eux l'esprit de croisade ; un échec cuisant en Irak les pousser à une nouvelle phase d'isolement. Deux hypothèses qui seraient dommageables pour les intérêts des Européens, mais qu'il n'est guère en leur pouvoir d'influencer.

Un retour en douceur des Etats-Unis à la réalité, et de leur diplomatie à un réalisme modéré, serait pour l'Europe la meilleure des hypothèses. Une Amérique qui aurait éprouvé les limites de sa puissance sans se heurter à l'Europe, qui serait devenue plus sensible aux exigences de la diplomatie et aux bénéfices pour elle de l'ordre mondial existant, plus demandeuse de partenaires, à commencer par l'Europe.

Disons, en guise de conclusion, qu'on peut débattre de la probabilité de ce scénario, mais que les Européens seraient bien avisés de se préparer aux autres, avec, en facteurs communs, une Amérique plus dure, plus distante de l'Europe, et moins portée à

identifier la défense de l'ordre international avec celle de l'Amérique. C'est dire qu'en toute hypothèse l'Europe risque d'être confrontée à davantage de responsabilités, plus sans doute que ce à quoi l'état de la construction européenne et des débats publics dans les principaux pays européens l'auront preparée.

America's role in the world: searching for balance

Philip H. Gordon

Since the very founding of the Republic, American foreign policy has gone through cycles of extroversion and introversion. Periods of great optimism and idealism that lead the country to take on an expansive world role are followed by other periods of self-doubt and consequent retrenchment. Throughout the twentieth century, certainly, one of the greatest challenges for American leaders was to strike the right balance between these two extremes.

To focus only on the post World War II period, consider how an initial desire to quickly bring the troops home from Europe ('to go to the movies and drink coke', as Averell Harriman put it), was followed immediately by the Truman Doctrine, the formation of NATO, and the Korean War that brought US defence spending above 10% of GDP. By 1952, however, the Americans were ready to pull back again even without victory in that war, and the Eisenhower era was marked by an emphasis on balanced budgets and fighting the Cold War 'on the cheap.' It was not that Eisenhower did not want to get involved abroad, but his administration much preferred inexpensive *coups* or limited military operations to major plans to roll back Communism or expand US military forces in order to transform the world.

Eisenhower's 'realism', however, left him vulnerable to criticism – from the Democrat John F. Kennedy – that he had let America's guard down and that a new generation of American leaders should 'pay any price' and 'bear any burden' in the name of promoting liberty around the world. This optimism and idealism led at least indirectly to an immensely costly war in Southeast Asia that helped produce a return yet again to a more conservative approach, one masterminded during the period of Nixon-Kissinger 'realism' that not only ended that war but sought to accommodate, rather than defeat, America's great Communist adversaries in Russia and China. One oil crisis later (and after the election of a southern governor with little foreign policy experience) America was retrenching even more, and was hardly recog-

nisable as the country that had been brimming with vigour and optimism just over a decade before, as the Soviet Union extended its influence in areas where the United States was not inclined to resist.

But with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan the cycle turned again, and Ronald Reagan appeared on the scene with plans to massively increase US defence spending and determined to relegate Communism to the 'dustbin of history'. Reagan worried the Europeans with his harsh rhetoric, his confident determination to build a missile defence shield, and his willingness to risk conflict in his clash with the Soviet Union. In the wake of the Reagan years, the Soviet Union did in fact peacefully disappear, but by the time it did America was buried in deficits and debt and the new team, led by George H. W. Bush, concluded that it was time for a more modest approach. A challenge from Saddam Hussein's Iraq did lead the first Bush Administration to launch a major war in the Persian Gulf (and even to indulge in expansive rhetoric about a 'New World Order'), but as soon as that war was over 'realism' again prevailed and American troops were quickly brought home.

Like Eisenhower before him, Bush's caution in the field of foreign policy left him vulnerable to the charge that he was failing to lead (by refusing to intervene to stop the Balkan wars and 'coddling dictators in China', for example), but the incoming Clinton Administration initially did little that was different. The same deficits that had led Bush to retrench in the first place constrained Clinton, who was obliged to focus on the economy – until economic growth in his first term made possible a much more expansive foreign policy, which included military interventions in Bosnia and Kosovo, in the second. Then George W. Bush campaigned on a platform of avoiding American overextension, before finally responding to the 9/11 attacks with one of the most idealistic, expansionist, and interventionist foreign policies in American history.

Under these circumstances, Europeans could be forgiven for wondering what might be next. Did 9/11 produce a fundamental shift in US foreign policy that will lead the country to assertively throw its weight around the globe until 'tyranny is ended', as President Bush has put it? Or have the past few years been just one more cycle, certain to be followed in the not too distant future by a return to a more 'realistic' approach? If the latter, will US retrenchment yield the sort of balanced, engaged but not hyperactive

foreign policy Europeans claim to want? Or will America inevitably overcompensate, concluding that if it cannot positively transform the world it would be better off protecting itself from it?

The consequences of America going in any of these directions are significant, because the responsible wielding of American power is still an essential feature of the international system today. An America that is too assertive, too self-confident and too idealistic can easily overreach itself, launching unnecessary wars and threatening stability in a variety regions throughout the world, extending commitments that exceed its resources, and losing the legitimacy necessary for its role as regional stabiliser in potential hotspots such as the Middle East, East Asia, and even Europe. But an America that is not self-confident enough could also be dangerous for the world. Hard as it might be to imagine today, an America that disengaged from the world – giving up on Iraq, refusing to play a balancing role in the Middle East, and focusing instead on the security of the US homeland – could leave a global power vacuum that would allow international problems to fester and could even destabilise critical regions throughout the world. The fundamental challenge for the remaining years of the Bush Administration (and for whatever administration follows it) will be to find this elusive balance.

Bush's foreign policy of idealism

It is no small irony that the foreign policy of George W. Bush ended up on the idealist extreme of the American political spectrum. Indeed, contrary to the common notion that the Bush team was from the start distinctly hawkish, unilateralist and idealistic, the Administration was initially deeply divided on these questions, and if anything leaned toward the realist view. In his campaign, Bush himself had promised a 'humble' foreign policy in contrast to the interventionism of the Clinton years, and promised to focus on 'enduring national interests' rather than idealistic humanitarian goals. Bush warned against the notion that 'our military is the answer to every difficult foreign policy situation – a substitute for strategy.'[1]

To be sure, the Administration also included key players from the neoconservative camp such as Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, Undersecretary of State John Bolton, and Under-

1. Cited in George W. Bush, 'A Distinctively American Internationalism', Ronald Reagan Presidential Library, Simi Valley, Ca, November 19, 1999. www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/news/usa/1999/991119bushforeignpolicy.htm.

secretary of Defense Douglas Feith, but the more important players appeared to be closer in spirit to the realism of the Bush I years. Vice-President Dick Cheney was a key player in that Administration who had opposed 'regime change' in Baghdad after the first Gulf War and lobbied against sanctions on Iran as President of Halliburton in the late 1990s. Secretary of State Colin Powell was extremely cautious about the use of force to pursue foreign policy goals and recognised the value of allies. National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice, who famously insisted that the role of the 82nd airborne division was not to 'escort kids to kindergarten', was a protégé of the realist icon Brent Scowcroft. In her Republican party foreign policy manifesto published in *Foreign Affairs* in January 2000, Rice wrote that regimes like those in Iraq and North Korea were 'living on borrowed time so there need be no sense of panic about them.' She called for the first line of defence to 'be a clear and classical statement of deterrence – if they do acquire WMDs, their weapons will be unusable because any attempt to use them will bring national obliteration.'[2] Powell had also questioned whether Iraq posed a serious threat, and suggested in his January 2001 confirmation hearings that US policy would be to 'keep them in the rather broken condition they are in now.'[3]

How did we go within a few years from this cautious realism to the US invasion of Iraq and a foreign policy focused on supporting the 'growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture, with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world', as Bush put it in his 2005 inauguration? And how lasting is this change likely to be?

Two factors seem to have been crucial in bringing about this fundamental change, the first of which was the sudden sense of vulnerability Americans felt following the September 11, 2001 attacks. Not only did these attacks affect the American psyche more than that of nations around the world because they took place on US soil, but they had a particular effect because of the low American tolerance for threats. Not since the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962 did Americans feel anything remotely as threatening to their homeland as this, and that feeling made the US public highly receptive to calls to 'do something about it.' When anthrax attacks killed five Americans and terrorised the general population later in the autumn, it seemed as if the world had been turned upside down, and only a dramatic change in US foreign policy – even if that meant military action to transform the world, starting with

2. Condoleezza Rice, 'Promoting the National Interest', *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 79, no. 1, January/February 2000, pp. 45-62.

3. Confirmation Hearing of General Colin Powell to be Secretary of State, US Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Washington DC, January 17, 2001.

the Middle East – could restore it. Europeans and others might be resolved to living with the dangers of terrorism, but Americans, so long protected by oceans and friendly neighbours, refused to do so.

The second factor that led to the transformation of US foreign policy after 9/11 was a feeling of tremendous relative power. The sense of vulnerability discovered after the attacks in New York and Washington may have convinced Americans that they *had to* intervene to change the world, but it was the sense of unprecedented power – military, economic, cultural and diplomatic – that convinced them that they *could*. After a period of self-doubt and preoccupation with American 'decline' in the deficit-ridden late 1980s, a decade of fantastic economic growth, technological progress, and military successes led Americans to conclude by 2001 that it was actually possible to transform the world if only our leaders committed to that goal. Naysayers at home and abroad might be warning about overreaching, but that was because they did not appreciate what a determined American President could accomplish. Relative power, after all, was a determining factor in all the other cycles of foreign policy in the postwar period – economic growth under Truman, Kennedy, Reagan and the second Clinton Administration tended to push America towards confidence and expansionism, whereas concerns about deficits and stagnation sent it in the opposite direction under Eisenhower, Nixon, and George H. W. Bush.

The result of these two factors – vulnerability and power – tipped the balance within the Administration in favour of the idealists, and most importantly put the President and Vice President firmly in that camp. Gone was the aversion to interventionism and gone was the caution, and in their place was an unwavering determination to make America safe first by eliminating threats like Saddam Hussein with American military power and then by gradually spreading freedom and democracy around the world. The logic was that it was the frustration and even humiliation of living under dictatorship that led young Muslim men to turn to terrorism, and that only by advancing freedom in the Middle East could the scourge of Islamic extremism finally be eliminated. As Bush put it in November 2003, 'sixty years of Western nations excusing and accommodating the lack of freedom in the Middle East did nothing to make us safe ... As long as the Middle East remains a place where freedom does not flourish, it will remain a place of

stagnation, resentment, and violence ready for export. And with the spread of weapons that can bring catastrophic harm to our country and our friends, it would be reckless to accept the *status quo*.'[4]

Whether or not the European allies, or anyone else for that matter, accepted this logic and were willing to support it, was largely immaterial. An American success in Iraq, which few in the Administration doubted, would have a positive spillover effect elsewhere in the Middle East, and at that point the allies would start to come on board. American leadership consisted not in endlessly consulting pessimistic allies to see what they had to say, but in setting out a clear course, decisively following that course, and winning over friends and allies as a function of success.

The aftermath of Iraq

Needless to say everything has not turned out as planned. Far from producing the rapid liberation, stabilisation and democratisation of Iraq, the US invasion has led to a protracted insurgency, significant US casualties and a high risk of civil war. Whereas at the time of the fall of Baghdad in spring 2003 nearly 80% of Americans supported the war, by late 2005 a majority of Americans were concluding that the war was a mistake and wanted to bring the troops home. The allied support that success was supposed to bring in its wake also failed to materialise. Whereas the Administration was initially at least modestly successful in persuading a number of allies to send troops to Iraq (despite opposition from public opinion in most countries), by 2005 most of those allies had left Iraq and the United States was carrying an overwhelming proportion of the military burden alone. The failure to find the weapons of mass destruction that provide the official pretext for the war, and the widespread impression that the Administration had exaggerated the threat in order to sell the war to the public and that it had violated international law by waging the war, raised real questions about the legitimacy of US foreign policy not only in Iraq but elsewhere.

The consequences of Iraq – plus other 'unilateral' US policies on areas ranging from the Middle East to climate change to the International Criminal Court – took their toll on America's popularity in the world, and consequently on its ability to win over

4. George W. Bush, 'Freedom in Iraq and the Middle East', remarks at the 20th Anniversary of the National Endowment for Democracy, US Chamber of Commerce, Washington DC, November 6, 2003.

allies. Far from producing a 'bandwagon' effect through its successes, the exercise of unilateral American power led to widespread hostility towards the Bush Administration if not towards America itself. According to the Pew Global Attitudes Project, between 2002 and 2005 the percentage of world populations with a 'favourable opinion' of the United States had fallen from 72% to 59% in Canada, 75% to 55% in Britain, 63% to 43% in France, 61% to 41% in Germany, 79% to 62% in Poland, 61% to 52% in Russia, 61% to 38% in Indonesia, 30% to 23% in Turkey, and 25% to 21% in Jordan. According to the same polls, the percentage of those who believed that the United States took their country's interests into account was 19% in Canada, 32% in Britain, 18% in France, 38% in Germany, 19% in Spain, 20% in the Netherlands, 21% in Russia, 13% in Poland, 14% in Turkey, 59% in Indonesia and 17% in Jordan. As already suggested, global support for American policies was never a prerequisite for American activism, but it would certainly have made it a lot easier.

On top of the constraints of failure in Iraq and the decline in US legitimacy and popularity, the feeling and reality of relative power so necessary in making possible a foreign policy of transforming the world was also disappearing. When Bush had taken office in 2001, he inherited a budgetary surplus of over $200 billion and projected surpluses as far as the eye could see. Under those circumstances, it was not surprising that Americans would regain confidence in their ability to change the world for the better, even if that meant supporting military interventions abroad and vastly expanding the defence budget. After the costs of the terrorist attacks, a recession, two major wars abroad, and a massive tax cut, however, the sense that the United States can afford 'whatever' it takes is gone. By 2005, the $200 billion surplus had turned into a greater than $400 billion deficit, and the confidence that America's vast resources could help it accomplish any goal was deeply shaken.

These developments have inevitably had a major impact on the Bush Administration's view of the world, or at least on its ability to pursue the transformative foreign policy that became its hallmark in the first term. The President's rhetoric, of course, has not changed, and he still insists that America will stay in Iraq as long as it takes and that the United States will use its power to spread freedom around the world. But already it is clear that the realities of a difficult world and the constraints on American power are sinking in.

The modified approach to foreign policy became immediately apparent in the new tone and style adopted at the start of Bush's second term. New Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice stated in her confirmation hearing that 'the time for diplomacy is now' and immediately set off on a fence-mending trip to Europe. A few months later the President himself made the first foreign trip of his second term to Europe, where he called for a strong European Union and reached out to allies in a way that contrasted sharply with the unilateralism of the first term. The new tone and style was also reflected in the foreign policy team Bush and Rice put together. Gone from the halls of power were the neoconservatives like Paul Wolfowitz, Douglas Feith and John Bolton (who was appointed to the UN in New York in an important but not policy-making job), and the new team instead featured multilateralists like Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick and Undersecretary of State Nicholas Burns and North Korea negotiator Christopher Hill. The President, Vice President and Secretary of Defense were obviously still in place and in charge, but many of those most associated with the ideology of the first term were not.

More important than the new tone or personnel, policies during the second Bush Administration also started to shift, at least to a degree. After criticising European 'appeasement' of Iran for years and insisting that the United States would not 'reward bad behaviour,' the President returned from his February 2005 trip and announced that the United States would support the 'EU-3' negotiations and even throw some of its own 'carrots' – spare parts for airplanes and support for World Trade Organisation accession negotiations – into the mix. Talk of regime change for this leg of the 'axis of evil' effectively ceased. On North Korea, having denounced the Clinton Administration's 1994 'Agreed Framework' and insisted it would never agree to anything similar, the Bush Administration in September 2005 agreed to a deal with Pyongyang that would provide North Korea with energy aid, security guarantees and the gradual normalisation of relations in exchange for North Korea abandoning its nuclear weapons programmes. Most experts believe that such a deal could have been reached years before, but it was anathema to the first Bush team.

The second Bush Administration also made significant changes to its stances on foreign aid and climate change in a renewed effort to reverse America's negative image in the world. In the run-up to the G8 summit in Gleneagles, Scotland, in July 2005,

Bush announced his intention to double US aid to Africa by 2010 and to commit $1.2 billion for a five-year plan to combat malaria in Sub-Saharan Africa. At the summit itself, Bush acknowledged that global climate change was a serious, urgent and largely man-made problem and agreed to join other countries in discussions of what to do about it. Critics naturally wanted the Administration to go much further on both issues, but there was no doubt that Bush was at least trying to take a step in the direction of world opinion – in a way that the first Bush Administration never deemed necessary. The new Administration even modified its stance towards the International Criminal Court – to which it had displayed only unlimited hostility in the first term – by allowing in April 2005 the passage of a UN resolution that would refer war crimes suspects from Sudan's Darfur region to the ICC. Finally, the Administration seemed to significantly back away from a core pillar of the foreign policy of the first term by announcing in July 2005 that the Global War on Terror (GWOT) would henceforth be known as the Struggle Against Violent Extremism (SAVE). The President himself let it be known that he still believed America was fighting a 'war' and refused to adopt the new rhetoric, but the fact that the Administration was even pondering such a change – and that even the Secretary of Defense was going out of his way to use the new language – was a sure sign that they were backing away from the peaks of American expansionism of the first Bush term.

None of these developments constituted a revolution in US foreign policy or even mark the definitive return to 'realism'. The President's rhetoric was as expansive as ever, 150,000 US troops remained in Iraq, threats were being issued toward Syria and Iran, and democracy promotion remained an articulated US policy goal. But there was little doubt that both the style and the substance of US foreign policy were changing.

The trend for the rest of the Bush presidency is likely to move in the same direction. The acute sense of American vulnerability that helped produce Bush's expansionist foreign policy still exists, even if it has somewhat diminished since 9/11. But the overwhelming confidence in US power to change the world for the better is gone. Perhaps another major terrorist attack on US soil would give a new boost to support for American determination to transform the world and end tyranny, but even that is not so certain. With Iraq proving far more challenging that the Administration initially believed, the US military overextended, waning support for Amer-

ican policies around the world, and budget deficits expanding, the conditions for a new wave of American idealism and expansionism do not seem to be in place. Certainly the summer and autumn of 2005 – with the Bush Administration rocked by its failure to respond adequately to Hurricane Katrina, domestic political difficulties, and falling public support – did nothing to increase the President's readiness to take on major new challenges around the world.

Soft landing or overcompensation?

Critics of the Bush Administration may take some satisfaction in the apparent failure of – and waning domestic support for – its grand design. While it may be early to pass judgment on a generational project, certainly the neoconservative vision of a victory in Iraq leading to a wave of democracy that would transform the Middle East, deter and undermine dictatorships, help bring about Arab-Israeli peace and establish a new 'American Century' seems a long way from coming about. The conditions that created support for such a vision in 2001 and the few years that followed it no longer seem to be in place and even the Administration that launched the transformational project seems in many ways to be backing away from it. It is of course possible that President Bush could seek to distract attention from his domestic political troubles by assertively tackling some new foreign policy challenge. Or maybe a new crisis – such as another major terrorist attack in the United States or a nuclear confrontation with Iran – could renew American support for a bold policy initiative abroad, whatever the cost or risk. But both of those outcomes seem unlikely. For the foreseeable future, Iraq is likely to remain the overwhelming priority and preoccupation of an Administration whose political capital has been significantly depleted.

The more serious question about American foreign policy over the coming years is not whether Washington is likely to launch new foreign policy adventures but whether it will retreat into introversion and drift. The US foreign policy bureaucracy is large and talented, and many important issues can be managed successfully even without the attention of a White House that may be distracted by other matters. Indeed, as already suggested, the waning of American confidence and assertiveness – which in some cases

took the form of arrogance and self-righteousness – may have had a salutary effect. It has obliged the Administration to work more closely with allies, to pay as much attention to effectiveness as to ideology and to think more carefully about the potential costs of action as well as the potential costs of inaction.

But those who rejoice in the recent setbacks for the United States should be careful what they wish for. Because just as the pendulum that is American foreign policy swung far in the direction of extroversion and activism over the past few years, there is a risk today that it could swing just as far in the other direction. The American reaction to difficulties abroad, diminishing resources at home and waning international support for US policies will not necessarily take the form of the pragmatic multilateralism that Europeans support, but could instead produce parochialism and inattention. The most important global challenges (ranging from regional crises to global warming to humanitarian disasters to financial globalisation) cannot be met without American involvement and even leadership. And the necessary resources, political capital, and presidential attention necessary to meet those challenges will simply not be available if the United States is distracted, paralysed or resentful about an ungrateful world's lack of sympathy for its unique position in the world. America's partners may not have liked the way America went to war in its determination to transform the world as a response to the horrific 9/11 attacks on its homeland. But those partners have a strong interest in helping to make sure that the United States, if it decides that such an agenda is too costly and ambitious, does not now move too far in the other direction.

9

The EU's role in the world: efficiency and relevance in times of crisis

Werner Weidenfeld

With the postponement of a final decision on how to handle the constitutional process in the wake of the French and Dutch referendum results and the failure of the European Council in June 2005, the EU has reached a state of severe crisis. Given the current internal situation of the Union, it might be asked therefore whether this is an appropriate time to look at the EU's role as a global player. The simple answer is yes. Especially in these circumstances, it would be dangerous to just focus on the weaknesses of the European integration process. On the contrary, if we examine the EU's global role, a more differentiated picture becomes visible.

First of all, the extent to which the EU is already playing a significant role in international relations must be highlighted. Second, there is a need to describe the characteristics of today's world and the challenges which the EU has to face as an international actor. Third, actual challenges originating from within the Union and the respective consequences for its role in the world must be outlined. Last but not least, the responsibility of Europe as a security provider has to be taken into account, and strategies on how to improve the EU's performance in this regard have to be assessed.

We are currently experiencing an outstanding situation of change both in international relations and within the EU. Europe has to cope with a world order which is still emerging and with new security threats. Furthermore, the Union has to cope with internal changes. Decision-making procedures, internal leadership and external representation have to be adapted to the needs of the enlarged EU. To be efficient as an international actor, the Union has to develop first and most importantly a common strategic understanding which responds to these internal and external challenges. Only if Europe dares to change, will it have a chance to endure as a global player in today's world.

The EU as an international actor

From the early days of the European Coal and Steel Community and the development of the European Community, economic integration was increasingly accompanied by political cooperation and this finally led to the creation of a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). The development of the integration process, which has led to the enlargement of the original Community of six to a Union of twenty five, has been a remarkable achievement. But is the integration process of this newly enlarged Union still dynamic? The results of the French and Dutch referenda on the EU constitution have called the future of the whole process into question. Shortly after the successful integration of ten new member states, the EU is thus experiencing a situation of internal blockade.

Even though the constitutional process has come to a standstill, several basic characteristics of the Union cannot be written off. The EU is a zone of such strong economic, geographic and political importance that it cannot now be regarded as anything other than a powerful actor with a global reach. The Union is the biggest internal market on the international stage and the euro as a common currency has gained global importance. The Union's GDP is comparable with that of the United States and its share in the world economy represents more than 20%. The EU's most important trading partners are the United States, Japan, China and Russia. Taking all these aspects into account, it is clear therefore that the EU has a vested interest in monitoring and supporting regional stability especially in those areas in which it has such a substantial economic stake.

Besides economic considerations, in its relations with third countries the Union pursues a strategy of conditionalising cooperation. Political principles like respect for human rights or the rule of law are often written into agreements signed with such countries. Disrespect for these principles can lead to restrictions or even to the termination of the cooperation. Conditionality has become an important instrument of the Union in promoting its goals and values in other parts of the world. Furthermore, in order to promote stability, another major European concern is the reduction of poverty. In the European Security Strategy (ESS), poverty is explicitly identified as one of the main challenges of the 21st century. Therefore, development programmes and humani-

tarian aid – nearly 30% of the global humanitarian aid comes from the EU – are substantial elements of European foreign policy.

In demographical terms, the EU is also a heavyweight. Currently more than 450 million people live in the EU. If in the future the EU further enlarges to include Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia, Macedonia and Turkey, it will have a population of about 550 million people – twice the population of the USA. Against such a background and bearing in mind the fact that the military dimension of European foreign policy is gaining strength, it can be argued that the EU has a clear potential to play an important role in the world. Jeremy Rifkin has even talked about a 'European Dream' – as a counterpoint and positive alternative to the 'American Dream'. In contrast to the aggressive individualism which he attributes to the United States, Rifkin sees the openness towards dialogue and cooperation as a main strength of the EU.[1] In this respect, the internal heterogeneity of the EU is not necessarily a disadvantage, contrary to what is often claimed. The differences in languages, lifestyles and political systems can be seen as a source of the richness of the European spirit. However, this spirit has to be translated into politics and the necessary instruments need to be further developed.

Major characteristics and challenges of today's world

The transatlantic 'clash of threat perceptions'

The relationship between Europe and the United States was always characterised by a mixture of closeness and distance. But a deep erosion in the relationship has become obvious, and not only in the context of the major disagreement that occurred between several EU member states and Washington over Iraq. Since the mid-1990s, altered foreign policy strategies, mutual disinterest in what is happening on the other side of the Atlantic, changing political actors and a generational shift, the end of close personal relationships and networks, a new focus on internal politics and, at times, surprising policy initiatives have all taken their toll. In short, after fifty years of relatively stable transatlantic relations, the relationship between Europe and the United States has entered a new, uncertain phase.

1. See Jeremy Rifkin, *The European Dream: How Europe's vision of the future is quietly eclipsing the American Dream* (New York: Tarcher/Penguin, 2004).

The European integration process proceeded for decades under a supportive American umbrella. Europe was an embedded power and was regarded in Washington as a relevant regional security actor. This situation of asymmetrical dependency has irrevocably changed: On the one hand, the United States can no longer be seen as the invulnerable and invincible superpower. The shock of 9/11 and subsequent events have dramatically altered America's threat perception. And, as became obvious in the aftermath of 9/11, the United States needs strategic support, most notably from the European Union which is one of the few security providers in the world. However, several European states expressed their reluctance to continue transatlantic relations in the role of a 'junior partner' of Washington. The EU itself is trying to find its own specific answers to the challenges of today. Even though the definition of threats seems to be quite similar on both sides of the Atlantic, the actual perceptions and the strategies that are considered as appropriate to react to these challenges differ widely.

While the United States seem to be reluctant, at times, to coordinate American foreign policy with third partners or within the framework of the UN Security Council, Europeans, in contrast, are expressing severe doubts concerning the legitimacy of certain American military missions. From a European point of view, a UN mandate is still considered as a necessary precondition for the use of force.

In allusion to a well-known phrase coined by Samuel P. Huntington, these fundamental differences between the EU and the US can be described as a 'clash of threat perceptions'. The acknowledgement of this clash must be the first step towards a more efficient transatlantic partnership. Issues like Iran's nuclear policy, the arms embargo on China, the reform of the UN, or the question of how to address global climate change urgently, all need a transatlantic understanding. Europe and the USA depend on each other and they will not be able to tackle the multitude of challenges facing them on their own. However, nostalgia for the old days of the transatlantic relationship is of little use. A realistic approach is required, including a pragmatic assessment of the way and the context in which transatlantic cooperation needs to function.

Urgent geostrategic aspects for the EU

Partly, although not only, due to its eastern enlargement, the Union is moving closer to regions with a high crisis potential. Hot spots surrounding the EU include the Balkans, the Caucasus and Northern Africa. Against this background, the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) has acquired a new importance and urgency. The cooperation which it seeks to promote must be tailored to the specific needs of the region and should be understood as an important incentive for transformation. At the same time, membership of the EU can certainly not be seen as an automatic result of the ENP.

Furthermore, Sub-Saharan Africa will be one of the most important strategic regions in the long-term. Strong links with Europe already exist due to the history of several member states' involvement in the region. While being a region of high interest for the EU, Africa is not to be found on the top of the American security agenda. The European engagement in Africa can thus be seen as an example of an efficient and reasonable division of work between the EU and the US. Furthermore, Africa is a perfect arena in which to apply the specific European approach of using a mixture of civilian and military instruments for conflict management.

Another strategically important region for the EU is Asia. The EU intends to build up strategic partnerships with China, Japan and India. In this context, it should be recalled that both India and China are participating in the European satellite programme Galileo, which contains a significant strategic dimension. China is currently trying to reduce American influence in the region by including the EU in a multipolar foreign policy concept. It remains to be seen how far the Europeans will or can develop an autonomous Asia policy, while maintaining close cooperation with the United States, which is of course unavoidable. As, for example, the recent debate about lifting the arms embargo against China demonstrated, the more the EU becomes engaged in Asia, the more the transatlantic relationship becomes affected.

Overarching these broader developments is the question of how to handle the challenges of international terrorism. The latter has supplanted East-West antagonism as the most prominent determining factor in world politics. This has resulted in a

re-evaluation of security policy as it is traditionally understood. In parallel, the number of actors in international relations is growing and the sources of conflict are increasing. Power structures of the past have lost their relevance and need to be reviewed in the light of a new global insecurity. The globalisation of international relations through the media including 'on the spot' reports have, of course, a specific influence in such a situation.

Challenges from within the Union

The Constitutional Treaty

When the heads of states and governments were signing the Constitutional Treaty during the European Council in June 2004, a common constitution – unthinkable a decade ago – seemed set to become reality. But a year later this historical achievement was forestalled when a majority of French and Dutch voters rejected the treaty.

The constitutional referenda dramatically showed that the political elites lack the necessary powers of persuasion. Public assent to progress in the European integration process can no longer be seen as a something that happens in a mostly uncritical way. Ambitious goals have to be explained to the public – otherwise people will no longer be willing to back the European project. This would appear to indicate that a constitutional treaty should generally be as clear and as simple as possible. The draft European Constitutional Treaty, however, is complex and abstruse. For the European public it became hard to understand what the real content of the constitution actually is and this made it easy for demagogues to interpret the text in whatever way they chose. The opacity and incomprehensibility of the treaty was like an invitation to voters to dump all kinds of domestic frustrations on the European project.

But it would be inappropriate to treat the failure of the ratification process as a failure of the whole European project. The French and Dutch No votes have to be seen in their national contexts, e.g reflecting criticism of the government or suspicion towards the opening up of markets and economic liberalisation. A shock like this can also be seen as a wake-up call, as happened in

the case of the earlier unsuccessful efforts to give the Union a more political profile. In the 1950s, the ambitious plan to create a European Defence Community failed. Together with the European Coal and Steel Community, the idea was that the European Defence Community would be framed by a European Political Community on the base of a common constitution. All documents were signed by the heads of states and governments, but the ratification process came to an end when the French national assembly rejected the European Defence Community. Nevertheless, the integration process was not paralysed: the European Economic Community and EURATOM were created. The signing of the Treaties of Rome in 1957 eclipsed the failure of 1954. In the 1960s, another effort was made to create a political framework for Europe. However, the Fouchet Plan failed. Again, the response was not desperate perplexity but a strong willingness to act: in 1963 Konrad Adenauer and Charles de Gaulle signed the Franco-German Treaty. An 'engine' for further European integration had been created. In the 1980s, the European Parliament elaborated an ambitious European constitution. But this attempt was not successful either. However in 1986, under the guidance of the then president of the Commission, Jacques Delors, an outstanding new treaty was signed: The Single European Act.

In the current difficult situation, rather than give way to despair, it should be borne in mind that opportunities can evolve out of a crisis and that this might create a new dynamic momentum for the European integration process. It is important to 'dedramatise' the failure of the ratification process. The first step should be to drop the inappropriate title 'Constitution' and go back to the more modest formulation 'Treaty'. In addition to these questions of wording, the content should be assessed once again. The controversies in the member states focused almost exclusively on details of the EU's economic and social policies. In contrast, the important reforms regarding an improvement of procedural efficiency and coherence were not contested. It would be reasonable therefore, to implement those reforms in the framework of several separate treaties. Apart from the creation of a European Foreign Minister or an elected presidency, the instruments of enhanced cooperation and open coordination or the Charter of Human Rights should be given a legally binding ground.

Enlargement and the question of identity

A further important challenge the EU has to face is the process of enlargement and its ramifications. The accession of ten new member states in May 2004 was a unique event in the history of European integration. The debate about the latest enlargement is, however, not very balanced, with the old member states often focusing largely on the financial aspects. The total population of the Union increased from 371 to 450 million, and the territory of the EU by 23%. The magnitude of the challenges which this enlargement involves, and the scale of the new cultural, political, social and economic diversity that it brings in its wake, can only be partly surmised from the data. Although the accession process reached its grand climax on 1 May 2004, convergence in the real sense of the word still continues. EU expansion (a term often used by the US, although not actually with as belligerent an intent as some Europeans would like to believe) emphasises the imperial dimension of Europe as a regional power, which is certainly tangible and evident. However, this overlooks the tough negotiations for the new arrangements in the EU-25. The new shape of the balance of power within Europe and the incorporation of diversity can be disguised neither by means of the mathematics of seat distribution nor by symbolic gestures.

The momentousness of the decision to start accession negotiations with Turkey is comparable to the end of the Cold War. Turkey would be both the most populous country and, at the same time, the poorest area of the EU. The accession of Turkey would substantially change the power structure within the EU: the net payers would not be a blocking minority anymore and a regrouping of investments in favour of the receiving states is foreseeable. In the enlargement debate, the anxieties of the European population with regard to the accession of Turkey should not be ignored: the question of Turkey's membership in the EU played an important role in the No-campaign before the French referendum and was finally one of the main reasons for the rejection of the proposed constitution. If Turkey were to accede, there would be no grounds for arguing that Turkey is European, but that Ukraine or Morocco are not. European identity has always been a fragile construction and an EU without agreed parameters and frontiers would remain highly disputed in the context of the quest to establish European identity.

After World War II, there were two major sources of motivation for European integration: first, the need for security facing a common threat from the East and, second, the expectation of increased economic welfare through the Common Market. Both aims have been achieved and the European integration area has become a model for peace and prosperity. The challenge of today is not to forget the added value of integration on the one hand, and on the other hand to assess realistically the pros and cons of stabilising Europe by enlarging the Union.

Strategies of leadership

European power has to be organised efficiently in order to play an important role in world politics. Leadership is essential in the enlarged Union, but hard to find. The increasingly diverging interests of member states and the complex structures of the decision-making process make it hard to guide and lead in CFSP. The Franco-German engine has fulfilled a leadership role for quite a long time, but it is questionable if it will be able to do so in future. The position of France and Germany in the Iraq crisis, their close cooperation during the negotiations leading to the Constitutional Treaty, or their common strategy concerning the Stability Pact could be interpreted as proof of a vital 'France-German couple' acting as a lynchpin. But at the same time, amongst the other member states of the Union, there has been growing scepticism about whether French-German cooperation is for the sake of the European project or whether the two countries have not become an exclusive 'club'.

In the EU-25 political leadership is necessary and a growing number of members means that the existing decision-making structures need to be altered, allowing more flexibility for groups to act. It will be a difficult balancing act to find an acceptable equilibrium amongst all member states, acknowledging simultaneously that the demand to find consensus – especially in the area of foreign, security and defence policy – can lead to a paralysis hindering effective output and action.

Political leadership does not mean an inflexible group of the most powerful states which dictate EU policy to the others. This is certainly not desirable. But on the other hand, without strong leadership – which must of course be flexible, rational and open-

minded – the enlarged Union will hardly be able to play its role in the world according to its full potential.

The EU's responsibility as a security provider

The 'big powers' of Europe have all lost their world political components: France, Great Britain and Spain through the loss of their empires, and Germany through its traumatic political trajectory in the twentieth century. None of these states have developed the ambition for a new form of leadership in a new Europe that would allow them to develop full global influence.

This is not a plea for a core Europe. In a globalised world, the term 'national sovereignty' sounds both nostalgic and naive. The challenges facing European states today have, for some time already now, reached a dimension which cannot be dealt with by limited state power and instruments. However, it would also be naive to consider the EU as an already perfectly developed mechanism. In this context (and this is one important lesson to be drawn from the referenda), national governments should no longer ignore the fact that they are facing serious difficulties in convincing the people to trust in the capabilities of elected politicians – this is true of both domestic and external politics.

The enlarged Union will only be able to act as a global player in the field of foreign, security and defence policy if the conceptual scheme is made more sophisticated, and is accompanied by a continuous improvement of European civil and military capabilities.[2] To be effective as a security provider, the EU definitely needs to further develop its strategic profile. A lack of strategic thinking forms the Achilles' heel of European foreign and security policy. A mental breakthrough is needed, which could generate a common security culture not only regarding regional issues but also global conflicts.

Conclusion

Clearly, it is urgent to find answers on how to overcome the crisis of the EU. One necessary step is to define how to adapt the existing provisions of the Nice Treaty, which has implications for the functioning of the Union and consequently its external performance as well.[3] A pragmatic option would be to integrate a substantial part

2. See Bertelsmann Foundation (ed.), *A European Defence Strategy* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Foundation, 2004).

3. For a more detailed explanation see Bertelsmann Stiftung and Centre for Applied Policy Research, *Ein Vertrag zur Reform des Vertrags von Nizza* (Gütersloh and Munich: June 2005).

of the Constitutional Treaty into the existing legal framework. This would mean identifying the main reforms of the Constitution and altering the EU-Treaty and the EC-Treaty accordingly. In the tradition of the Single European Act, Maastricht, Amsterdam and Nice reform measures these changes would need to be agreed upon in an intergovernmental conference and ratified in the member states according to their national demands. The following areas would be concerned: (1) the reform of the institutional system of the EU; (2) the development of the decision-making and voting procedures; (3) the reform and extension of the instruments concerning differentiated integration; (4) several structural provisions.

(1) Reform of the institutional system: the main institutional reforms of the constitution should be incorporated into the existing treaties. This would primarily involve the elected President of the European Council, the Foreign Minister of the Union and the European External Action Service, the introduction of a team presidency for the Council, a permanent Chair of the Euro Group, and the reduction of the European Commission's size and the strengthening of its president.

(2) Development of decision-making and voting procedures: the introduction of double majority voting would signify a major breakthrough. As this procedure will ensure that any decision taken will require the support of a majority of member states as well as a majority of the EU's population, the Union's two principal sources of legitimation will be reflected. Blocking coalitions will become more difficult to be formed and constructive abstention will be strengthened. Extending the cases where majority voting can be applied will be essential for the EU's capacity to solve problems.

(3) Reform and extension of the instruments concerning differentiated integration: inevitably, in the enlarged EU, heterogeneity of interests is increasing. Strategies for differentiated integration are thus needed. Already in the past, differentiation has become a useful tool in the areas of currency policy, internal policy and social policy. Modifying the existing treaties should include the existing instruments that create flexibility (enhanced cooperation) as well as the introduction of new

instruments, especially in the field of security and defence policy (e.g. permanent structured cooperation, cooperation in the framework of the defence agency).

(4) Structural provisions: amongst the structural provisions that should be implemented is the integration of the solidarity clause, which is intended to be applied in the event of a terrorist attack, natural disaster or man-made disaster. The commitment of the member states to aid and assist a member state in the case of an armed aggression on its territory will constitute a necessary improvement undertaken in the course of reforming the treaties.

If a revision of the existing treaties along these lines could be agreed at an intergovernmental conference, then the Union's capacity to act and its democratic legitimation would be sustainably strengthened. This would immeasurably enhance the powers and status of the EU as a global player.

Iraq and the Middle East

The EU, the Middle East and Iraq

Felix Neugart

Twelve years after the fall of the Berlin Wall heralded the end of the Cold War, the collapsing twin towers in New York marked the beginning of a new era in international politics, which put the Middle East region firmly at the centre of transatlantic relations.[1] The United States reacted by developing a new doctrine which is based on assertive unilateralism and pre-emptive action against future asymmetrical threats. The most dramatic manifestation of this new approach has been the US war against Iraq, which led to the downfall of Saddam Hussein's regime in 2003. In this unfolding environment, the European Union is searching for its role. Although the engagement of the EU with its southern neighbouring region goes well back into the 1960s, it has been slow to develop and has featured a number of asymmetries and contradictions. At present, the Union has launched a number of cooperative policies in the region based on the European model of constructive engagement and regional integration. In what follows, the author discusses these policy fields and offers a number of recommendations for improvement.

The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership: promoting stability and reform

Reform has emerged as a key catchword across the region, one that no government can afford to ignore. The intensive debate on reform in the Middle East that has taken place over the last couple of years has put the issue on the regional agenda for some time to come; it is promoted in particular by influential pan-Arab media such as the widely-watched television channel Al-Jazeera. However, the path towards reform chosen by regional actors remains quite selective and carefully controlled.[2] Most countries have managed to achieve macroeconomic stabilisation by controlling inflation, balancing budgets and reducing debt. More complex structural

1. This paper is partly based on the strategy paper 'Europe and the Middle East – Perspectives for Engagement and Cooperation' prepared for the IX. Kronberg Talks organised by the Bertelsmann Foundation.

2. See Bertelsmann Foundation (ed.), *The Bertelsmann Transformation Index 2006*, (Guetersloh: Bertelsmann Foundation Publishers, 2006) (in print).

reform measures, however, such as privatising state-owned enterprises, extending the rule of law and creating market systems of regulation, have proceeded only slowly. Nonetheless, there is a growing consensus that the introduction of selective and carefully chosen steps towards reform is no longer sufficient and that successfully addressing the region's problems would require a more comprehensive approach. Political reform has returned to the agenda since the late 1990s, but initiatives in this area remain carefully controlled, the goal being the reconstruction of authoritarian systems rather than their transformation. Well-publicised reform measures are quite frequently contradicted by the introduction of new, less visible restrictions.

The EU has promoted reform within the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) which aims at establishing both a zone of peace and stability and a free trade area in the Mediterranean. To this end, the EU has concluded association agreements with all the Mediterranean partner countries (except Syria) providing for free trade for industrial goods after a transition period. However, an analysis of the achievements of the Partnership at its tenth anniversary is rather sobering. In spite of the establishment of a considerable institutional apparatus, the Partnership has neither succeeded in stimulating a regional security structure nor in sparking a political reform process in the partner states. The lack of success can be traced on the one hand to the insufficient implementation of agreements by partner countries and the impact of regional conflicts, and, on the other hand, the dual competence structure and the deficient 'actorness' of the EU itself.

The EMP is complemented by European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), which aims at establishing a ring of stable and prosperous neighbouring countries around the Union.[3] The partner countries are offered a privileged partnership on the basis of action plans, which include detailed obligations and objectives in the cooperation with the respective partner. On this basis, progress in different areas is to be evaluated on a regular basis and will be subject to positive conditionality. The benchmarking envisaged in this context promises a much more differentiated and flexible practice than the previous approach.

However, the creation of the neighbourhood policy seems to stem rather from the combined impact of the Eastern enlargement and the internal balance of the EU, than from a genuine

3. On the ENP see Raffaella A. Del Sarto and Tobias Schumacher, 'From EMP to ENP: What's at Stake with the European Neighbourhood Policy towards the Southern Mediterranean?', *European Foreign Affairs Review*, vol. 10 (2005), pp. 17-38.

analysis of problems and alternatives to partnership. The heterogeneous character of the EU's neighbouring regions may well impede the development of effective instruments. The implementation of the EU *acquis* as a precondition for participation in the single market constitutes a tough challenge for partner countries. It will lead to greater structural dependence on the EU without representation in its institutions. In the long run, the ENP is bound to lead to an increased stratification among partner countries, with some moving much faster than others.

The action plans which the partner countries have agreed upon list a large range of cooperative activities in different areas which include next to general guidelines very concrete measures to be implemented by the partners. As the simultaneous implementation of the whole agenda would be a huge challenge for any partner, establishing priorities will be inevitable. However, the incentives offered by the EU in exchange for the implementation of the working programme remain rather unspecific. The individual demands of the plan should be directly connected to attractive EU incentives to ensure positive conditionality.

The promotion of democratic participation and good governance in the Mediterranean partners – despite numerous rhetorical commitments – has proven to be a difficult terrain. The necessity of reforms has emerged as an essential element of public discourse, but the implementation of reforms in politically sensitive areas excludes the hard core of autocratic power structures. Therefore the EU should increase its engagement in this area. Beyond the creation of a separate democracy budget, as proposed by the Commission, another possibility is the establishment of sophisticated linkage between classical development aid and support for democratisation, e.g. by linking targeted project assistance to accountable management by local civil society representatives.

One of the main obstacles to the creation of democratic institutions in the Middle East is the search for the 'democratic subject'. Liberals of a western spirit cannot count on the support of the people, while technocrats having a place in the government are unlikely to be tempted to support fundamental changes in a system which is advantageous to them. Moderate Islamists however are committed to fundamental democratic principles and have broad public support. This has been shown by a debate between the moderate thinkers of the Islamistic groups in recent years.[4] Not only do they advocate an interpretation of religious dogmas

4. See Amr Hamzawy, 'Contemporary Tendencies within the Islamist Spectrum: The Search for a Democratic Understanding of the State-Society Relationship', paper presented at the workshop 'Best Practice and Potential Field of Action for Revitalising the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership' organised by the Bertelsmann Foundation (Berlin, November 17, 2003).

based on a renunciation of violence but they also advocate participation in a pluralistic political process. The EU should try to get a dialogue going with carefully selected groups not engaged in terrorist activities.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict: reviving the road map

The EU's engagement in the Israeli-Palestinian arena has been mainly restricted to financial and technical support for the Palestinian Authority and the occupied territories. From the mid-1990s it aimed increasingly at playing a political role in the negotiations process, although – despite frequent common declarations on the topic – the degree of 'Europeanisation' of the policies of individual member countries varies. The High Representative of its Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana, participated in the so-called 'Mitchell Commission' set up at the Sharm al-Shaikh summit in 2000 that set the stage for the formation of the Quartet of international mediators (the US, the EU, Russia and the UN) established in 2002.

The Quartet presented its peace plan (road map) in November 2002, which envisages a three-step framework including a security-oriented approach, a comprehensive political perspective, and the reform of Palestinian institutions. The document clearly bears the stamp of the European Union, which has consistently championed the approach of combining the Palestinian right of self-determination and the right of Israel to exist within secure borders. The implementation of the road map, however, did not proceed beyond its initial stage due to the continuing violence on the ground and the original timetable has become completely obsolete. Attempts at achieving political progress soon became bogged down in the vicious cycle of violence and counter-violence. In contrast, the scene became dominated by two genuinely unilateral projects championed by the now incapacitated Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, the construction of a separation barrier in the West Bank and unilateral disengagement plan.[5]

The idea of a physical barrier to separate Israel and the occupied territories was originally developed by disillusioned members of the Israeli security establishment close to the Barak government. After initial resistance the idea was adopted by Sharon, but against the intention of its creators, the projected route did not

5. Yossi Alpher, 'Israeli Unilateral Withdrawal from Gaza and the Northern West Bank: Origins, Modalities, Prospects and Ramifications', in Christian-Peter Hanelt and Felix Neugart (eds.), *The Israeli-Palestinian Track after the US Presidential Elections: Closer to Peace?* (Guetersloh/Munich: Centre for Applied Policy Research/Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2005), pp. 31-49.

run close to the 1967 border, but cut deeply into the West Bank. Not only does the barrier have a negative impact on the living conditions of many Palestinians, but it will create territorial conditions that render a two-state solution more difficult to achieve.

The disengagement plan which led to an Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and four settlements in the Northern West Bank has evoked mixed reactions. While its supporters hail it as a bold idea to move on the ground without a credible negotiating partner on the Palestinian side, its opponents believe it is part of a strategy to delude the international community and to annex large parts of the West Bank indefinitely. True, the disengagement plan has both changed the local realities and modified the dynamics of the conflict. For the first time since 1967, Israel has abandoned settlements on the territory of mandatory Palestine and handed over a large area to Palestinian self-administration. However, the result fits neatly with Sharon's vision of an indefinite interim solution denying the Palestinians a viable and contiguous state. The candid remarks of Dov Weissglas, Sharon's former bureau chief, seem to point in this direction.

The EU has welcomed the disengagement plan cautiously as a potentially significant step, but insisted the withdrawal should: (1) take place in the context of the road map; (2) be a step towards a two-state solution; (3) not involve the transfer of settlement activity to the West Bank; (4) be implemented as an organised and negotiated handover of responsibility to the Palestinian Authority and (5) include Israeli facilitation of rehabilitation and reconstruction in Gaza. However, despite selective attempts at cooperation and coordination with the Palestinians, the withdrawal was implemented as a unilateral Israeli action and not as the result of a negotiation process and is therefore not directly deducible from the road map.

Sharon's removal from the political stage following the massive stroke he suffered in early January 2006 has added to the fragility of Israeli-Palestinian relations, which is compounded by the upcoming elections in both Israel and the Palestinian territories. While in Israel the course of the new Kadima party founded by Sharon remains to be defined, the creeping anarchy and the precarious economic situation in the Palestinian territories put serious obstacles in the way of a successful democratic process. One year after the death of the Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat his successor has very little to show. Although Abu Mazen managed to

organise a comparatively smooth transfer of power, he neither succeeded in controlling the creeping anarchy in the autonomy areas nor achieved a major breakthrough in the negotiations with Israel. His position seems to have been considerably weakened as security in the autonomy areas remains largely privatised and Israel does next to nothing to back him politically.

Against this backdrop, the security services of the Palestinian Authority have to be enabled to establish the monopoly of power over Islamist groups like Hamas and various offshoots of Fatah. Therefore the EU and other external donors should provide targeted support for the reorganisation and the strengthening of institutions, especially the security forces. The EU Council has decided to launch a police mission in the ESDP framework to help to improve the capacity of Palestinian police, thereby upgrading the existing EU Co-ordinating Office for Palestinian Police Support (EU COPPS). This should be complemented by a democratic political process to integrate the Islamist movements and bestow the authorities with the legitimacy required to pacify the instable situation.

The economic situation in the occupied territories has dramatically deteriorated since the beginning of the peace process due to frequent blockades, the suspension of financial transfers and the destruction of infrastructure. Although Israel refuses to accept responsibility for the future of the Gaza Strip, the Israeli army continues to control its land, air and water connections with the outside world. The amelioration of the individual well-being of Palestinians is indispensable to ensure the support necessary to achieve a negotiated solution with Israel. The EU should aim at improving the general conditions for a quick economic recovery, especially by facilitating the movement of goods and persons to and from Gaza. The recent agreement brokered by US Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice on the opening of a border post between Egypt and Gaza could prove a major breakthrough in this respect. The EU has responded positively to the request to send customs officers to the Palestinian-Egyptian border near Rafah to control the traffic of goods and persons. Furthermore, the EU should aim at improving the general conditions for investments in the Palestinian autonomy areas by supporting infrastructure projects and by attempts at revising legal regulations.

Israelis and Palestinians need a clear political perspective for a permanent solution of the conflict which would be guaranteed by the international community. The road map remains the key reference document for progress in Israeli-Palestinian peacemaking because it is accepted by all regional and international players and has been enshrined in UN Security Council resolution 1515 (2003). The Quartet should exert determined high-level diplomatic pressure to prod the conflict parties into implementing the first phase of confidence building as specified in the road map, thereby strengthening the peace camp on both sides. To this end, a significant presence on the ground should be established to prove the sustainable commitment to the implementation of the road map and to function as an effective supervision mechanism that closely monitors the progress of both parties. As prospects for final status negotiations between the two sides seem rather dim in the foreseeable future, the Quartet should develop the road map approach to allow for the inclusion of future Israeli withdrawals on the West Bank in the overall perspective.

Iran: engaging an uneasy partner

The Islamic Republic of Iran is in the middle of a complex process of internal change which, from the point of view of outsiders at least, includes irritating and inconsistent elements. The Islamic regime was generally able to consolidate its rule, but proved less successful when it came to solving the mounting social, political and economic problems which were the root causes of the revolution. These tensions translated into the conflict between two broad coalitions, respectively dubbed 'reformists' and 'conservatives', which was structured by the multi-polar institutional make-up of the Islamic Republic. The conservatives, enjoying the support of the Supreme Leader and safely entrenched in their positions of power in the judiciary and the security apparatus, managed to retake control of the *majlis* in February 2004 and of the presidency in June 2005. The reformists were disillusioned with their lack of achievement in government as well as with their rather weak leadership which was unwilling to challenge the legitimacy of the system itself. While there seems to be a significant level of apathy and

disillusion within Iranian society which will prove its impact only in the longer run, a broad popular revolution against the regime is certainly not in the offing.

The election of Ahmadinejad – which was subject to a number of manipulations – does reflect a genuine desire among significant parts of the population for economic improvement, redistribution of resources and a clampdown on corruption. While most other candidates seemed to project a liberal image open to political reform, Ahmadinejad combined radical religious rhetoric reminiscent of the early days of the revolution with a demand for 'economic justice'. His election underlines the advent of a new group of leaders socialised in the ranks of the Revolutionary Guard during the war against Iraq in key positions of power. His ideas on foreign policy seem to be rather general at best, but definitely mark a sharp break with the soft rhetoric of his predecessor Khatami. He should be expected to work to prevent the establishment of a Western-dominated regional order by intensifying Iran's efforts to find partners in Asia (China, India) and by continuing to extend its influence in the region, particularly among its Shi'i and Persian communities.

Iran's new President has incensed the international community by repeated remarks denying the right of existence of the State of Israel as well as questioning the historical reality of the Holocaust. While the remarks do not necessarily mirror an operative policy approach, they have dramatically damaged Iran's international credibility and further poisoned the atmosphere at a critical juncture in the crisis over the country's nuclear ambitions.

Iran's nuclear programme has emerged as a growing source of concern both in the region and the West. These concerns have led to direct negotiations between the three largest member countries of the EU (the United Kingdom, France and Germany) and Iran; as a result of these negotiations, in October 2003 Iran agreed to sign an additional protocol to the Non-Proliferation Treaty allowing for closer supervision of Iranian activities. The negotiations led to a second understanding in November 2004 (the Paris Agreement), in which Iran undertook a voluntary suspension of its enrichment activities while the EU offered negotiations for a long-term agreement acceptable to both sides. After intensive negotiations and under considerable pressure from the Iranians, in August 2005 the EU-3 presented a hastily composed proposal for a long-term framework agreement. However, Iran rejected this offer as com-

pletely inadequate and resumed its enrichment-related activities at the Isfahan plant. The Europeans, for their part, sponsored an IAEA resolution that threatens to refer the issue to the UN Security Council. Separate negotiations between Iran and Russia based on a proposal to undertake the enrichment part of the nuclear fuel cycle on Russian soil equally failed to produce an agreement. In early 2006, the situation escalated further as Iran broke the IAEA seals of the nuclear facility at Natanz.

However, alternatives to a carefully crafted and clearly conditioned bargaining process with Iran are not very encouraging. Military action with its rather weak promise of postponing the programme would impose enormous costs and should remain an option of last resort only. Air strikes modelled on the Israeli attack on the Osiraq reactor in 1981 are not only rather difficult to execute given the decentralised nature of the Iranian programme, but would almost certainly lead to an asymmetrical reaction on the part of Iran with potentially disastrous consequences.

Establishing a monitoring system that will ensure the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme will require a long and difficult negotiations process with the Islamic Republic. Iran's multipolar institutional structure will complicate negotiations; dealing with Iran is different from dealing with Libya (or North Korea, for that matter). It seems to be insufficient to simply refer the issue to the Security Council without having worked out a feasible strategy of how to proceed once it gets there. Sanctions in and of themselves never constitute a sufficient strategy, they have to be complemented by a bargaining strategy with a long-term perspective. In the past, the US approach has operated mainly with threats and sanctions aimed at forcing Iran to change its policies. In contrast, the EU has offered mainly incentives with only very weak conditions attached. Embarking on an enlarged negotiation track to create mutual trust is important, but the process must not be prioritised over results. A fresh approach would have to combine a sensible mixture of incentives and disincentives which would alter the cost-benefit analysis of Iranian decision-makers. The range of issues on the table would have to be broad, and should not be confined to the nuclear issue.

A new approach should be genuinely transatlantic and aim at developing a detailed grid of rewards and sanctions closely tied to particular actions on the part of Iran. An attractive offer to Iran would not amount to 'rewarding' Iran for its violations of the NPT

safeguards agreement, but rather hold out the prospect of 'normalising' its relations with the international community by giving security guarantees, lifting sanctions, offering WTO membership etc. The EU, which has not even discussed formally the possibility of imposing sanctions on Iran, would emphasize its determination by outlining concrete steps endorsed by all 25 member countries. The United States, for its part, would have to include the prospect of a substantial change in US policies towards the Islamic Republic. In principle, the US has declared its support for the negotiation approach of the EU-3, but its capacities have been largely distracted by its problems in Iraq. Although Washington has indeed moved considerably, future progress has been made much more difficult by Iran's violation of the Paris Agreement.

A successful approach would require the progressive cooperation of other relevant international actors, most importantly Russia and China, as well as Japan and India. The inclusion of additional key countries of the developing world would be an additional asset since Iran has been partially successful in framing its conflict with the IAEA as a struggle between a self-styled champion of the South, with the industrialised countries denying it the ultimate achievement of modernity, i.e. nuclear energy.

Iraq: stabilising a weak polity

Iraq will remain a weak state for the foreseeable future and a net importer of security. Despite frequent military operations involving both coalition troops and newly recruited Iraqi forces, terrorist attacks have continued at a staggering pace and insurgents have kept control of substantial areas of the country. State institutions outside the Kurdish North will remain weak for some time to come, giving the emerging Iraqi polity a local face with a broad range of local strongmen and militias. Rising tensions between ethno-confessional groups could spark civil war that may well suck neighbouring countries into a proxy confrontation. A weak and impoverished Iraq would easily become a breeding ground for terrorist groups with dangerous consequences for the whole region.

The constitutional process seems to have failed to create the broad national consensus required to establish a viable platform for reconciliation. It was characterised by a tight and rather unrealistic schedule, which did not allow for the broad consultation and negotiation process that would be necessary to create real

ownership within large swathes of the Iraqi population. Significant efforts were made to include those who boycotted the January 2005 elections and are not represented in parliament; however, the mandate of the representatives of the Sunni Arab minority coopted into the ranks of the constitutional committee remained weak and was frequently challenged. The referendum held in October 2005 resulted in the predicted large overall support for the constitutional draft. The Sunni Arab minority, however, rejected the draft overwhelmingly, but failed to achieve the two-thirds majority in three provinces required by the Transitional Administrative Law to block the document. While the obvious sectarian distribution of preferences regarding the constitution may reinforce feelings of group exclusion, the huge turnout among Sunni Arabs who mostly boycotted the parliamentary elections of January 2005 points to an encouraging trend towards prioritising political participation over armed resistance.

Stabilising Iraq and rebuilding its shattered economy will be a formidable task and may require many more years. It will have to be addressed first and foremost by the Iraqis themselves who are currently striving to rebuild institutions from an impoverished society atomised by decades of totalitarian repression. Clearly, the single most pressing problem is the general lack of security and the rise of the insurgency. This problem can only be addressed properly if capable Iraqi security forces are rebuilt coupled with an inclusive political process which is perceived by the overwhelming majority of Iraqis as being legitimate. Constitutional issues which are controversial and rather vaguely defined in the present text need to be open to re-negotiation.

The war in Iraq led to a major rift within the European Union as a number of countries, notably Britain and Spain, supported the US-led invasion, while others, such as France and Germany, voiced strong reservations about its legality.[6] The differences that prevented a cohesive EU position in the run-up to the war softened considerably in its aftermath, but the issue remained sensitive. The Commission prepared a comprehensive report that discussed the implications of an EU engagement in Iraq and called for a strong and vital role of the UN in the transition process, a 'realistic' schedule for handing over political responsibility to the Iraqis and the setting up of a transparent multilateral donor fund to channel support from the international community. At the first reconstruction conference in Madrid in October 2003, the

6. For an extended version of the argument put forward here, see Toby Dodge, Giacomo Luciani and Felix Neugart, 'The European Union and Iraq: Present Dilemmas and Recommendations for Future Action', Working Paper, Bertelsmann Foundation, July 2004.

European Union as a whole pledged €1.25 billion, including €200 million from the Commission, but excluding humanitarian assistance. A medium-term strategy presented in June 2004 demanded the development of a stable and democratic political system, the establishment of a sustainable and diversified market economy and region and international integration envisaging in the medium term Iraq's inclusion into the EU's Mediterranean Partnership framework.

In spite of these efforts and those of individual member countries, the EU engagement has remained rather limited on the whole and lacks visibility. The lion's share of assistance will be channelled through the UN and World Bank administered International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq (IRFFI), while some €15 million has been reserved for bilateral assistance in fields like trade facilitation and energy regulation in anticipation of a future cooperation agreement. Regarding the constitutional process, the Commission has provided financial support for outreach efforts through the UN and a limited number of individual experts to work with the UN. A joint action in the CFSP framework is focused on strengthening the rule of law in Iraq by training Iraqi officials from the judiciary, police and penitentiary sectors. On 21-22 June 2005, the EU co-hosted in Brussels a major political conference which was attended by 88 countries and organisations, including a strong Iraqi delegation headed by Prime Minister Ja'fari. Although this event did not come up with any major policy recommendations, it served to symbolise the international consensus that has been emerging on the Iraq crisis.

Despite the various problems, the EU could and should make a meaningful contribution to improving stability in Iraq in institution-building and the rule of law. In spite of the formal adoption of the constitutional draft, negotiations over basic constitutional principles are bound to continue. The EU should offer to share European experience with regard to designing new political institutions and making them work. In particular, a number of different models of devolution, regional autonomy and federalism aimed at accommodating minorities and decentralising decision-making could well be of tremendous value for Iraqi constitutional engineers. Establishing the principles of the rule of law with its various agencies (police, judicial system, prison system) will be of crucial importance with regard to popular support in the interim period. The EU should continue and expand its support for the

training of police, border police and other internal security agencies as well as judicial training and penal reform and training for lawyers.

Second, there is a distinct need for civil society and active citizenship. The EU should promote the reconstruction of Iraqi civil society by supporting non-governmental organisations and offering fieldwork in democratisation, human rights, and civil conflict management. Given the lack of security in many areas of the country, setting up initiatives in the comparatively stable Kurdish region aimed at expanding into Central and Southern Iraq, if circumstances allow, is an attractive initial option. The EU should promote the international integration of Iraqi society by establishing study and exchange programmes for students, teachers, journalists, lawyers and other professionals in order to overcome the effects of a decade of isolation. Special attention needs to be given to addressing the legacy of the crimes of the former regime. EU member states, especially those from central and eastern Europe, have a great deal of experience when it comes to dealing with the crimes of earlier regimes and forging a national consensus on a democratic future.

A third field for EU engagement is the regional environment where various EU policies are already in place. The cooperation of Iraq's neighbours is crucial to any effort to stabilise the situation in the country. The EU should establish an intensive dialogue on the future of Iraq with Iran, Turkey, Syria, Jordan and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. This would include issues such as non-interference in Iraq's domestic affairs and the appropriate policing of borders, as well as commercial and economic cooperation.

Conclusion: towards a European role in the Gulf?

In spite of geographic proximity and close historical ties, relations between the European Union and the Gulf region have not developed until recently. Although individual member countries have historically had a very substantial presence in the region, a common European approach is only slowly emerging. Europe does not face a direct military threat from the Gulf (at least until Iran goes nuclear), but it would risk high opportunity costs if it chose not to become involved. Protracted instability in the Gulf would not only

threaten its energy supplies and its substantial trade and investment in the region, but also entail a potential spillover in terms of terrorism and refugee flows.

Increasing European interest in developing a more ambitious approach to the Gulf has been shaped by the geo-political repercussions of 9/11 and the Iraq war as well as the prospect of Turkey's accession which would turn Iran and Iraq into direct EU neighbours. The EU has emphasised in several policy declarations issued in the framework of its Common Foreign and Security Policy the increasing importance of the Gulf region for its external relations. European engagement, however, has been hampered by the need to invest considerable energy in negotiating compromise positions between the divergent interests of member countries at the expense of translating declarations into operative action.

In the past, the EU has developed a network of relations with all relevant actors in the broader region. Relations with the GCC, which as a regional organisation is a somewhat 'natural partner', have remained below expectations although they harbour considerable potential in terms of political and economic cooperation beneficial to both partners. The impact of the cooperation agreement the Union concluded with the GCC in 1988 has been very modest. Negotiations towards a free trade agreement between the two regions have been dragging on for over a decade and are presently nearing completion. The EU has developed a substantial non-contractual *sui generis* partnership with Iran combining a dialogue in sensitive fields with a thriving economic relationship. Europeans have taken the lead in the negotiations between the EU-3 and Iran over the latter's nuclear programme. Among the neighbouring countries, Jordan and Syria are partners in the Barcelona process and the EU has a cooperation agreement with Yemen.

Any European engagement in the Hobbesian Gulf environment will definitely be limited by its lack of integrated military power. While a European Security and Defence Policy has been established, it will take many more years to imagine the projection of European military power into the Gulf region. However, Europe's experience in developing multilateral structures and in building mutually beneficial partnerships should not be underestimated. The EU certainly cannot provide an alternative to the US

security umbrella in the region; nevertheless it could play a complementary role building on its good relations with all actors on the regional level.

A more intensive approach towards the Gulf would need to progressively increase European presence in the region on the political, economic and cultural planes. A case in point is the field of higher education in the GCC, where a genuine demand for collaboration and networking with European institutions to make use of European expertise is emerging.

The EU is certainly present as an important actor in the larger Middle East region, but its economic strength has not translated into an equally powerful political role. While the EU is in the process of developing tools to make it a more capable foreign policy actor, an integrated and coherent policy strategy based on shared objectives supported by all member countries has yet to be developed.

High Noon: America's moment in the Middle East

Geoffrey Kemp

Introduction

In many ways this is America's moment in the Middle East. It has a huge military presence that stretches from the Mediterranean to the Hindu Kuch. No power in the world can challenge the sheer firepower and logistical superiority of America's military forces. As the historian Paul Kennedy, who once derided America's imperial pretensions, wrote in 2002, 'nothing has ever existed like this disparity of power'.[1] Between October 2001 and May 2003 the US went to war with Afghanistan and Iraq. Because of the swiftness and relative ease with which the regimes of the Taliban and Saddam Hussein were toppled, it was reasonable to believe that an age of assertive US unilateral interventionism had arrived.

Since 11 September 2001 the Bush Administration has adopted a bold political agenda that combines a war against terrorism with a grandiose vision of reforming corrupt and autocratic regimes in the Muslim world and bringing more transparency and democracy to the region. The belief is that with reform will come more responsibility and a curtailment of terrorism and its anarchical by-products. But in the best circumstances this vision will take many years to succeed and in the meantime the patience of the American public will be severely tested especially if casualties increase and the financial costs of such an imperial presence have a negative impact on the daily lives of Americans.

The military dimensions of American power contrast with the initial American experience in the Middle East during the late 19th and early 20th centuries when the predominant face of America was to be found in the missionaries, biblical scholars and educators who descended on the Holy Land, and eventually the American oilmen who came to the Arabian peninsula. In comparison with the French, British, and Italians who were the imperial powers in the Middle East and North Africa, Americans, by and large, were respected and liked by the indigenous population. Signifi-

1. Paul Kennedy, 'The Eagle has Landed', *Financial Times*, February 22, 2002.

cant legacies of the period are the American universities in Cairo and Beirut, which still operate today, and the huge oil company Aramco, which is now controlled by Saudi Arabia but for many years was owned by American companies. America's power in the Middle East grew slowly through its oil interests and its military activities during World War II and the subsequent Cold War. However it was not until the 1970s that the US replaced Britain as the predominant military power in the region. In parallel, the US became increasingly committed to Israel, to the point where Israel's security today is highly dependent on American financial and technical support and the political relationship has become so close that Israel's survival has become a vital American interest.

Future historians will likely agree that the US invasion of Iraq in March of 2003 was a watershed event for the region. But it is too soon to judge if there will be a consensus as to the impact of the war on America's power and prestige, both in the region and globally. Supporters of the Bush policy hope that the historical record will show that 2003 was a positive turning point in Middle East history and that the collapse of the Saddam Hussein regime was a key factor in ushering in a new Middle East with new institutions supporting democracy, human rights, and free markets and an end to decades of brutal dictatorships and religious and nationalist wars that caused chaos and mayhem. The harshest critics of the Bush policy may be comforted if the historical consensus suggests that the Iraq war witnessed the peak of unilateral American power, but that the burdens and troubles of Iraq, coupled with fiscal overstretch, forced the US to reassess and reappraise its relations with the greater Middle East and abandon its dreams of re-making the Middle East in its image. Other historians may record a messier outcome than these two extremes. The Iraq War may well see the beginnings of a new, reformed Middle East but it will witness a decline of American unilateral power. In other words, the Iraq war will not mark the end of America as a global superpower, but it may herald the end of America's unique period of global dominance that lasted for a decade and a half, between approximately 1989 and 2003.

In looking for ways to support arguments about America's legacy, Middle East analysts inevitably turn to historical analogies. Those who regard the overthrow of Saddam Hussein as the precursor to bringing reform to the Middle East allude to the aftershock of Napoleon's invasion of Egypt in 1798 and the decisive impact

this had in bringing modernity to the region. It matters little that Napoleon and his empire went from glory to disaster in Europe; the impact on the Middle East was lasting and, in many ways, positive. Thus, irrespective of the global impact of American power in the coming decade, the fact that Saddam Hussein is gone and America's goals are embraced in terms of serious political reforms is evidence enough of the benefits of the American-led war.

Some critics of the Bush Administration are increasingly drawn to the war in Vietnam as an analogy, despite many obvious differences between the two conflicts. The US lost the war in Vietnam despite overwhelming military superiority, especially in the air. It lost because American public opinion turned against the war and the South Vietnamese army was unable to withstand the military onslaught of the North Vietnamese and their southern allies. It took the US years to get out of Vietnam even though the war was seen as unwinnable in the late 1960s. The credibility of the US government, especially the White House and the Department of Defense, plummeted to new depths of public disdain.Today there is talk of quagmire in Iraq, as there was in Vietnam, and the credibility of the Bush Administration has been called into question, even by some of its closest supporters.

A more nuanced analogy might be the Korean War, 1950-1953, or the 'forgotten war', as it is referred to by some Americans. The war itself was ugly, and did not resolve its fundamental causes, namely the arbitrary division of the country along the 38th parallel at the end of World War II. The Korean War ended with an armistice: there is still no peace between the two Koreas. For two decades America's ally South Korea wallowed in corrupt and authoritarian governments, but eventually emerged as one of the 'Asian Tigers' and today is regarded as a remarkable success story of America's commitment and perseverance in nurturing and supporting reform in Asia. The inference is that a new Iraq, after many false starts, will eventually blossom and be a credit to America's foresight and commitment to reform.

Another apt analogy can be drawn from Britain's experience as a global superpower and its encounter with its own hubris in a faraway place. In 1897 Queen Victoria celebrated her Diamond Jubilee. It was an event of momentous significance. Thousands of loyal subjects from around the world came and paid tributes to the sovereign who presided over an empire over which 'the sun never set'. The Royal Navy mounted a display of maritime power at Spit-

shead which demonstrated Britain's unrivalled superiority as the world's only global superpower with a navy capable of projecting British power into literally every corner of the world. Britain's empire was at its peak. It ruled its empire in 'splendid isolation', not believing in being encumbered by messy alliances, particularly with the Europeans. Britain was dominant and it remained the world's number one trading nation even though it had strong emerging competition, particularly from Germany and the United States. Two years after the Diamond Jubilee Britain became embroiled in a small war in South Africa.

The Boer War tested the will of the British Empire and Britain was much reviled by other great powers, especially France, Germany, Russia and the United States. The Boers fought the conflict much more vigorously and with much more staying power than anyone had imagined. The Boer war did not end Britain's mastery of the seas and its dominant role in global finance, but it shook the complacency of the late Victorian period to the core. It ended the era of 'splendid isolation' and committed future British governments to an alliance system with old enemies, (France) and new emerging powers (Japan). These were seen now as necessary partners in an international power equation that was being challenged by the rise of Germany and the determination of its leaders to make Germany a world power. It was paralleled by the rise of the US as a global economic power with a huge potential to influence world events. Some would argue that today China looms as a future power with both military and economic assets liable to upset the current American dominance in Asia and beyond.

The current challenges for the United States

Speculations about the future and allusions to historical analogies are useful tools for putting the current Middle East agenda into perspective. Yet it is how the real-time challenges play out that will determine which predictions about the future are to have any credibility. In this essay five themes that currently preoccupy American Middle East policy will be addressed: the war in Iraq; US relations with Iran; US relations with the key Arab states, including Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the small Gulf countries; the Arab-Israeli conflict; and the growing dependency of the industrial world on Persian Gulf energy supplies.

The war with Iraq

The early stages of the war in Iraq witnessed an easy victory for coalition forces. Drawing upon the successful operations in Afghanistan that routed the Taliban, American defence planners hoped that they could quickly topple Saddam Hussein's military forces by relying on air superiority and small, highly mobile ground forces. They were proved correct in their assumptions; that is, until the day after tactical victory. The major combat operation in Iraq was a textbook example of how to fight a third-world army. However, the postwar management of Iraq is a prime example of how not to occupy a large country.

The deficiencies of US postwar for Iraq planning are well documented. While some elements of the occupation were successful – there was no food crisis, the oilfields were not destroyed, and the thousands of refugees who were predicted did not materialise – the list of errors is much greater. Clearly the two most contentious issues were the failure to have sufficient coalition forces for stability operations immediately following major combat and the decision, taken in the summer of 2003 by the Pentagon and implemented by the chief US representative in the field J. Paul Bremer, to disband the Iraqi army. From the earliest days of the occupation it was clear that without adequate security on the ground none of the other essential requirements for stability could be met. This is especially true for economic reconstruction and the building of democratic institutions for effective and fair government. The allied coalition did not calculate on a successful insurgency that could be mounted by a trio consisting of former Baathists loyal to Saddam Hussein, foreign jihadists willing to use suicide attacks as an instrument of warfare, and numerous criminal elements who saw the chaos of post-Saddam Iraq as a golden opportunity to create mayhem and make money.

Thus nearly three years after the war began Iraq remains a divided, violent country. There is relative calm over large areas of the country, including the Kurdish north and large parts of the Shiite areas to the south. But Baghdad and the Sunni regions to the west of Baghdad remain violent. There have been some memorable steps forward, such as the capture of Saddam Hussein (on December 13, 2003) the appointment of the transitional Iraqi government (on June 28, 2004), national elections (on January 30 2005), the formation of an interim Iraqi government and the vote on a draft constitution (August 2005), and elections for a new parliament (December 2005).

At the time of writing (late December 2005), Iraq is at a turning point. The Bush Administration's handling of Iraq has been under increasing criticism from the American public and US Congress and Bush has had to launch a counteroffensive to regain public confidence. Although pressure to 'cut and run', as experienced by the US in Lebanon in 1984, will be unsuccessful, it is inevitable that the cost of the war, both in financial and human terms, is going to rise and Americans are becoming impatient about the future, especially given new priorities at home, highlighted by Hurricane Katrina in August 2005 and the subsequent flooding of New Orleans.

The debate about America's 'exit strategy' from Iraq has begun, and it now seems inevitable that the definition of American victory in Iraq will be defined 'downwards'. That is to say the Bush Administration will have to accept a political outcome well below the hopes for a modern, pro-western democracy so eagerly promoted by the war's most avid supporters. That is not to say that eventually a new Iraq is impossible, one that has a better government than its predecessor and is less a threat to its neighbours and has a profitable economy. This could happen if the dire scenarios of an Iraqi civil war, or Iraq becoming an Iranian puppet, or Iraq breaking into three separate entities do not happen. However it is clear that for the foreseeable future that no one in the US government will embark on a major 'war of choice' in the Greater Middle East unless some dramatic change occurs in the regional balance of power. America's priority will be to work more closely with allies and learn the lessons of its less than satisfactory adventure in Iraq.

America's relations with Iran

The unexpected election of Mahmoud Ahmedinejad to the Iranian presidency in June 2005 has caused the US and its allies to rethink their strategies for dealing with Iran. Iran for many years has been a source of angst for American presidents. The presidency of Jimmy Carter was, in part, brought down by his failure to handle the Iranian hostage crisis towards the end of his term in office. Ronald Reagan very nearly lost his presidency because of the Iran-Contra scandal in 1986. George H. W. Bush's Administration was tainted by Bush's involvement in the Iran Contra scandal. President Bill Clinton sought to toughen American policy towards Iran, only to offer an olive branch when in 1997 the so-called moderate Mohamed

Khatami was elected president.

The Bush Administration's approach to Iran has been equally mixed. In the early days of the Administration there was no formal contact with Tehran: Iran was not a priority item. After the invasion of Afghanistan the US and Iran cooperated successfully at the Bonn conference that set up the interim Afghani government under Hamid Karzai. But within a matter of weeks Iran was placed on an 'Axis of Evil' because of its support of terrorists, its provision of arms to Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Authority, and its continued activities in the field of weapons of mass destruction. Although Iran did not interfere with the US invasion of Iraq, its activities since the fall of Saddam Hussein have highlighted its growing influence with the Shia-dominated Iraqi government

The big question mark concerning future US-Iranian relations concerns the attitudes of the new president Ahmadinejad. His performance at the UN General assembly in September 2005 was not encouraging, since he vowed to continue Iranian efforts to develop a fully-fledged nuclear fuel cycle. Since his New York visit, Ahmadinejad's public utterances have become more and more outrageous and can no longer be excused on the grounds that he is a novice in the international arena. While all Iran's revolutionary leaders have extreme anti-Israeli and anti-Zionist views, Ahmadinejad's outburst about destroying Israel and, in effect, denying the Holocaust have had disastrous consequences for Iran internationally. Europe and the United States are more determined than ever to keep up the pressure on Iran's nuclear activities and Iran's potential backers – Russia and China – have been put on the defensive. Iran remains determined to get the nuclear technology to which it believes it is entitled as a member of the NPT. On this issue Iran has the support of not only its own people but of some countries in the Third World who believe that there have been double standards when it comes to proliferation and provision of military technologies to Third World states. The problem is that while the Iranians may have a legitimate argument that they have a right to develop a nuclear fuel cycle, if they succeed in doing this they will be weeks, if not days, away from getting a nuclear weapon. Iranian nuclear weapons will change the balance of power in the region, most markedly in terms of the impact on the Arab states who, so far, have resisted the temptation to go the nuclear route.

The reality is that with the Iraq war unresolved and the US over-

stretched in terms of its capabilities both fiscally and militarily, there is no military option against Iran unless Iran does something truly unwise which goads the UN Security Council into offering support for actions against Iran (in this regard Ahmadinejad's behaviour could be a factor). Any unilateral US or, for that matter, Israeli use of force against Iran would probably not be supported by the European countries despite the fact that their negotiations with the Iranians on the nuclear issue appear to have reached a dead end. Iran has the world's second-largest supply of natural gas and remains a major oil producer. With a population of over 70 million and a proud history both pre-Islam and Islamic, no Iranian government will be easy to deal with, and least of all a government that is still revolutionary in its outlook. But the US must learn to live with Iran while taking whatever steps are necessary to deter it from using its military, political and financial power to extend hegemony over the Gulf region. This invariably means closer ties between the United States and the small Arab Gulf States.

The Arab States

One of the biggest shocks to the American political system was the knowledge that the 19 men who committed the atrocities on 11 September 2001 were from Saudi Arabia and Egypt, with the majority coming from Saudi Arabia. This reality has a done a great deal to promote the view in the US that there has to be major reform of the key Arab states, particularly those that have condoned extremist Islam, provided it was practised outside their own countries. While the history of Al Qaeda and its evolution on the battlefields of Afghanistan remains murky there is no doubt that Saudi Arabia has been responsible for funding much of the activities of extremist groups throughout the Middle East, primarily by providing blank cheques to religious schools (madrassas) who in turn promote extremism. Until recently, when it suffered its own terrorist attacks, Saudi Arabia had little incentive to crack down on extremists in its own country. Egypt, in contrast, has been much more repressive against its own Islamic extremists, but this repression itself has become a source for concern among Arab reformers who seek more democratic, pluralistic societies. It was on this basis that the US launched an initiative to spread democracy in the Arab world. The initiative generated much criticism from the Arabs

themselves and was not fully embraced by allies in Europe since it was seen to be an ideological rather than a practical initiative. Both Arabs and Europeans accused the US of 'double standards' given continued US support for authoritarian Arab regimes and its seeming condonement of Israel's settlement policies.

Nevertheless, there have been some positive developments in the Arab and Muslim world in the period since the war in Iraq. There have been free elections in Afghanistan, Palestine, Iraq and Lebanon. For many Americans the fact that Iraqi women were able to vote and Afghan women can now have access to education is seen as progress. Furthermore such actions have dealt a blow to authoritarian forces in Saudi Arabia and Egypt who used Islamic arguments to deny basic human rights to their citizens. In the case of Saudi Arabia, the continued denial of the right to vote to women or the ban on them driving cars by citing Islam is seen by many reformers as an example of blatant misogyny and hypocrisy. Recent political developments in the smaller Gulf states of Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, and the UAE suggest that reform is happening, albeit far more slowly than some would like.

The US dilemma in dealing with Egypt and Saudi Arabia is that both countries remain critical of the US for security and economic reasons. Without the support of the conservative Arab states the US could not have invaded, let alone occupied, Iraq. Although the US has called for reform in both Saudi Arabia and Egypt, it has not used any real leverage against these countries because it knows that in the short run the help of the authoritarian states is essential. Reformers also point to the irony that the US, in order to fight the war in Afghanistan, had to rely on Pervez Musharraf, the dictator-president of Pakistan, and Islam Karimov the dictator of Uzbekistan. While the US has drawn down its presence in Uzbekistan because of the violent oppression of the Karimov regime, its relations with the Musharraf government are very cordial and it has withdrawn all sanctions from Pakistan and has agreed to provide Pakistan with modern fighter aircraft for the first time in over 20 years. This highlights the challenge for the US throughout the Middle East. In the long run it seeks democratic reform, in the short run it has to work with authoritarian rulers to fight the war on terror. Whether these contradictory positions can be resolved is one of the most complicated dilemmas for US-Middle East diplomacy. It's a problem not unique to the United States, but given the high priority the Bush Administration has given to the ideological

component of its war on terrorism, the irony commands much attention.

The Arab-Israeli conflict

The US has a unique relationship with Israel. US support was a critical factor in the recognition of the Jewish state in 1948, but did not become a security partner with Israel until after the 1967 war. Before that time France, not the US, had been the primary supplier of weapons to Israel and was its closest strategic ally. It was French support that first helped develop the Israeli nuclear facility at Dimona; it was French aircraft that destroyed Egypt and Syria's Soviet-made jets on the ground and in the air in the early days of the Six Day War leading to the Israeli military victory. It was Israel's highly effective use of French weapons that persuaded General De Gaulle that the time had come to end the close relationship with the Jewish state.

Today America and Israel are umbilically tied politically, strategically, and economically and therefore irrespective of what happens in the rest of the region, America's commitment to Israel's right to exist remains a vital US national interest. Yet Israel, as a result of other developments in the Middle East, faces far fewer threats from conventional warfare than was the case in the past. Today Israeli security is most threatened by WMD, terrorism, and perhaps most saliently of all, the demography of the Palestinian population. In coping with these threats the US has a key role to play, but not nearly as important as when Israel faced direct conventional threats from Arab armies. Nevertheless, it is very much in the American national interest to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict and to take it off the Middle East agenda.

While few people believe that a final settlement of Israel's relationship with its Palestinian and Arab neighbours will end conflict in the Middle East, it would certainly be a step in the right direction and make other conflicts more manageable. The unresolved Palestinian question must be a priority for American policy and indeed it is on this issue that the Bush Administration has shown some of its more radical policies. George Bush has done more to support a Palestinian state than any other American leader. But it was also George Bush who, in June 2002, ruled out any negotiations with Yasser Arafat, whom he regarded as the problem not the solution to the Palestinian crisis. With Arafat's

timely death on 11 November 2004, a Palestinian- Israeli dialogue resumed and the successful withdrawal of Israeli settlers and military forces from Gaza in the summer of 2005 is seen as am important step forward. Nevertheless huge obstacles remain. What can be said with certainty is that resolving the Arab-Israel conflict will continue to be a priority for American diplomacy and that without a settlement of the Palestinian problem US objectives in the Greater Middle East will be difficult to achieve. Once the Palestinian problem is removed from the crisis agenda, other questions such as the future of Lebanon and democracy in Saudi Arabia and Syria will be easier for the United States to help resolve.

Energy security and growing dependency on Middle East fossil fuels

In the absence of a global recession, demand for Middle Eastern oil and natural gas will grow in the coming decades. The primary reason will be the continued prosperity of the OECD countries and the emergence of the new economic giants, China and India. Neither of the latter countries can meet their burgeoning demands from domestic production; both are therefore going to become more dependent on foreign sources in the years to come. Most of the world's economically-feasible fossil fuel reserves are located in the greater Middle East, the majority being within the Persian Gulf countries.

Historically the Western powers, especially Britain, France, and the United States, have argued that dependency on foreign fuel sources requires a military presence to ensure fuel supplies in war and crises. Britain and France went to war with Egypt in 1956 in part to secure continued access for oil through the Suez Canal. The US led a worldwide coalition to evict Saddam Hussein from Kuwait in 1991 in part because the Iraqi military occupation directly threatened Saudi Arabia, the world's most important oil exporter. Although access to oil is not the reason the US invaded Iraq in 2003, the future stability of Iraq has important implications for the security of Persian Gulf energy which is a key determinant of American strategic policy in the region.

However the Persian Gulf energy security is no longer a matter of concern to only the Western countries, and the oil producers. The new question is whether India and China will follow in the footsteps of the Western powers and seek their own military

means to shore up their energy needs. America's undisputed control of the world's oceans has been a bonus for the Western powers since the end of World War II. One only has to imagine what might happen if the US Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh fleets were removed from the Persian Gulf, the Indian Ocean, the Mediterranean, and the Eastern Pacific to make the point. But will India and China, as emerging great powers, be willing to accept continued American maritime hegemony? The answer is probably no. India will be motivated by its own concerns about the rise of Chinese maritime power and the activities of the Chinese government in securing contract agreements with energy suppliers in Central Asia, the Persian Gulf, and Africa. As China expands its maritime reach and develops a 'blue water' navy it can be confidently predicted that India will follow suit and be especially motivated if China establishes a permanent presence on the Indian Ocean littoral and signs defence and cooperation agreements with Persian Gulf and African countries. These developments will have important implications for US strategy planners.

Asia's presence in the Middle East is already overwhelming, particularly in the Gulf. Any visitor to the smaller Gulf States or to Saudi Arabia is impressed by the fact that virtually every professional they come into contact with in hotels, banks and commerce is South Asian. Eighty percent of the population of the United Arab Emirates consists of expatriates, of which the majority come from South Asia. With a population of one billion, South Asia is already in the Middle East.

Conclusion

Asia's growing involvement and dependency in the Middle East could cause the US to re-examine its long term commitment in the region. If US policy in the Middle East encounters failure, pressures to reassess America's role could become the equivalent of Britain's seminal 'east of Suez' debate in the 1960s when it was clear that Britain could no longer afford to be the policeman of the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean.

Unless such a failure occurs, America will probably remain the dominant foreign player in the greater Middle East for the foreseeable future, but like former great powers its moment of hegemony will pass. The outcome of the current crises in the region and the

long-term need to secure alternative energy sources will help determine the nature and extent of America's future greater Middle East policy. A precipitous withdrawal from the region is unlikely, in part because no local or foreign force presently poses a decisive threat to the continued American presence, but also because of the strong American commitment to Israel's survival and the continued need for vigilance concerning terrorism and its Middle East sources. America's Middle East future will also be influenced by the war within Islam and whether radical, violent Islamists can be contained and defeated by mainstream moderates.

Perhaps the most important variable is American domestic politics and the related question of America's economic strengths and weaknesses. Two recent domestic traumas, the terrorist attacks on 11 September 2001, and Hurricane Katrina in August 2005, have had a profound impact on the American psyche. The aftermath of 9/11 witnessed a surge of national unity and a determination to punish the perpetrators. Katrina, on the other hand, has opened up wounds in American society that will reinvigorate the debate about the 'two Americas' and the need to spend more resources on the domestic agenda. The impact of Katrina on American politics may be more lasting than the physical destruction of the storm. If one effect is to burst the bubble of imperial exuberance that followed the initial successes in the Afghan and Iraqi wars, then a more sober America will emerge, still committed to Middle East stability and reform but less inclined to flaunt its exceptionalism and uniqueness.

Russia

Same view, different realities: EU and US policy towards Russia

Dov Lynch

The European Union and the United States share a similar analysis of developments in Russia. By the start of Vladimir Putin's second presidency, EU member states and the US were beginning to view trends in Russian politics and foreign policy with concern. Domestically, in recent years Russian politics has become more centralised and less accountable. Russian foreign policy, especially in the former Soviet Union, seems increasingly surly and defensive. In all, the Russian Federation contemplated by Europeans and Americans in 2005 was not the Russia that had been hoped for in 1995 – a Russia that would be more like us, a 'normal' Russia, to use a term employed by Russia's first Foreign Minister, Andrei Kozyrev.

While the starting points of American and European thinking are similar, policies are different. Differences lie at three levels. First, European 'reality' in dealing with Russia is different from US 'reality.' Geographically, the EU is much closer to Russia than the US, a fact that raises a host of questions of proximity, which the US does not have to address. Historical realities are also different. Whereas the US government under George W. Bush has sought to relegate 'history' to the past and bring down the final curtain on the Cold War, 'history' is woven through current European relations with Russia, as demonstrated by the acrimonious exchanges surrounding the May 9th VE Day celebrations in Moscow in 2005.

US and European economic realities are also different. Most foreign investment in Russia originates from Europe. With EU enlargement, 52 percent of Russia's external trade is directed to the EU.[1] Trade in energy resources is vital to both Moscow and Brussels: in 1999, 21 percent of the EU's oil came from Russia (representing 16 percent of consumption by EU member states) while 41 percent of the EU's gas was supplied by Russia (representing 19 percent of consumption). The European market is equally significant for Russia: in 1999, 53 percent of Russia's oil exports went to the EU; in 2000, 63 percent of Russia's natural gas exports were supplied to European markets. In terms of overall trade, according

1. 'The EU's Relations with Russia: EU-Russian Trade,' available at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/russia/intro/eco_trade.htm#trade.

to EU calculations, member countries accounted for nearly 25 percent (close to 20 billion euros) of Russia's imports and some 35 percent (45 billion euros) of Russia's exports. Russia-US economic relations pale in comparison with the depth and complexity of the situation in Europe.

Second, the EU and the US have different degrees of interaction with Russia. The United States entertains relations with Russia through the United Nations Security Council and various multilateral forums, from the G8 to the NATO-Russia Council. Washington also has strong bilateral relations with Moscow. These relations bring together states that have long experience of dealing with each other. EU-Russia relations are more complex, comprising EU-level relations, contacts at the level of member states, and myriad combinations of bilateral and multilateral forms of interaction. Some EU member states have long experience of relations with Russia, others very little. The complexity of the EU itself as an actor also affects relations. If the US-Russia relationship may be likened to that of two planets affecting various degrees of push and pull forces on each other, then EU-Russia relations resemble a shattered universe of confusing and complex forces of influence.

Third, EU and US policy agendas differ. Since the election of George W. Bush, the US agenda with Russia has been significantly thinned out. The United States has retreated from the transformationist agenda pursued by Bill Clinton throughout the 1990s that engaged deeply with Russia to lead it on the path to joining – *eventually* – the Euro-Atlantic community. The current US agenda is 'thin,' focussing on a limited number of areas of relevance to US interests. The focus has been guided mostly by strategic concerns, with the aim of transforming Russia largely left aside. By contrast, the EU agenda with Russia remains 'thick,' starting with deep energy ties and economic relations to various forms of political interaction. The EU approach, while less transformationist than it was, retains a strong focus on values and not only strategic interests. Moreover, whereas Russia only matters episodically for the United States, Russia matters almost across the board for the EU.

This chapter explores EU policy to Russia, with a view to highlighting differences in transatlantic approaches. The chapter is divided into three parts. The first section outlines the background

of EU policy as it has evolved since 1999. The second part examines the complexity of EU interaction with Russia. The last section compares EU and US approaches in more depth.

EU policy since 1999

Trends

EU policy towards Russia has featured three principal trends. First, EU interaction with Russia has consistently gained in urgency, especially after enlargement. New proximity in the wake of enlargement raised questions with regard to cross-border cooperation and exchanges. Enlargement also created a shared region between Russia and the EU, in Moldova, Ukraine and Belarus and also the South Caucasus, where Brussels and Moscow are called to work together. With greater urgency, tensions have risen to the forefront of relations on a number of issues.

Second, EU policy has become driven by a sharper realism. In the 1990s, policy reflected the expectation that Russia was transforming along positive lines. By 2005, EU policy was founded on a less optimistic view of Russia's transformation. At the same time, EU policy remains insistent on promoting shared values with Russia. Values have not been relegated to a secondary place in the EU as a result of its turn towards greater realism. As a result, relations, especially at the political level, have become more conflictual than they were in the 1990s.

Third, between 1999 and 2005, EU policy underwent adaptation as member states sought a more effective framework for approaching Russia. Negotiations on the four 'common spaces' reflected the EU search for a more fitting frame for the partnership.[2] On a lower level, the EU has always linked counter-terrorism with the protection of human rights and international law, especially with regard to Russian policy in Chechnya. For several years, the EU sought to use the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva as a forum in which to raise such questions – each time, its attempts met with failure. In 2004, the EU decided on a new approach and raised the question directly with Russia through the launch of Human Rights Consultations in 2005.

2. See 'Conclusions – Four Common Spaces,' available at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/russia/summit_05_05/index.htm.

Initial approaches

In the late 1990s, EU policy towards Russia was framed by two documents: the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) and the EU Common Strategy on Russia (CSR).[3] The PCA (1997) reflected a wide range of ambitions, from increasing economic ties, supporting Russia's democratic and market transition to the eventual creation of a free trade area.[4] The PCA also set the objective of developing a 'political dialogue' to 'bring about an increasing convergence of positions on international issues of mutual concern.' The agreement also launched institutions for dialogue: bi-annual presidential summits, annual meetings of a Cooperation Council (at the ministerial level), bi-annual meetings of a Cooperation Committee (at the level of senior officials) and the annual Parliamentary Cooperation Committee. The CSR of June 1999 was a more limited exercise that remained underpinned by the PCA.[5] Still, the CSR sought to assist 'Russia's return to its rightful place in the European family in a spirit of friendship, cooperation, fair accommodation of interests and on the foundations of shared values.' The assumption was that for Russia to return to the 'European family' it had to become more like the EU. The Strategy sought Russia's transformation along European lines.[6]

Overall, the assumption was that Russia was undergoing a transition towards a democratic system and a market economy and that the EU could play a role in supporting the process. At the same time, EU policy featured a tension between the comprehensive demands placed on Russia and the limited endgame envisaged for relations, as Russia was not on a membership track. EU policy also contained a tension between values and interests. On the one hand, the CSR stated that the EU had a 'strategic interest' in Russia. At the same time, the CSR declared that a reinforced relationship between the EU and Russia was to be based on 'shared democratic values.' The CSR thus put forth two yardsticks for considering a partnership: the 'strategic' and the 'democratic.'

What were the results of this approach? Institutionally, the dialogue became more frequent than with any other third party. Since 1999, the political dialogue developed over a wide range of questions. Russia and the EU have coordinated positions on the Balkans and the Middle East. Brussels and Moscow also exchanged views on crisis management. Most notably, Russia sent four officers to participate in the EU's first Police Mission

3. The following discussion draws on the author's 'Russia faces Europe' (Paris: EU ISS *Chaillot Paper* No. 60, 2003).

4. See: http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/ceeca/pca/pca_russia.pdf

5. 'Common Strategy of the EU on Russia of 4 June 1999,' 1999/414/CFSP, *Official Journal of the European Communities* (24.6.99).

6. See discussion in Hiski Haukkala, 'The Making of the EU Common Strategy on Russia' (Finnish Institute of International Affairs *Working Paper* 28: Helsinki, 2000).

launched in January 2003. The 11 September attacks brought counter-terrorism to the table. The EU and Russia agreed to exchange information on terrorist activities and networks, not to allow such groups on their territories and to block terrorist groups' financial sources.[7] In 2005, the EU and Russia also launched Human Rights Consultations, where counter-terrorism and the war in Chechnya feature on the agenda. Meetings between the Russian and EU Justice and Home Affairs Ministers are becoming routine. Russia and the EU also cooperated in the spheres of nuclear safety and disarmament.[8] Moreover, Brussels and Moscow launched an energy dialogue to craft principles for greater cooperation.

For all the progress, problems arose. The security dialogue remained largely declaratory. Despite similar views on many international questions, the dialogue produced few meaningful joint positions. After enlargement, the shared neighbourhood became a point of contention. The EU sought to influence Russian policy towards the conflicts in Moldova and the South Caucasus and in Belarus, but to little avail. Moreover, the dialogue on counter-terrorism was held up by differences over defining the Chechen conflict.

Policy reassessment

In December 2003, member states decided to reassess policy. A debate occurred within the EU in early 2004, until a new framework was agreed in late February.

The European Parliament and the Commission were first to contribute. The Parliament issued a report on 2 February 2004 that stated: 'Russia has not gone through a transition of the kind foreseen when the international community, including the EU, formulated its basic response to developments there a decade ago.'[9] The Parliament declared that the objectives set forth in 1999 were not invalid, but EU divisions were sending mixed signals and undermining EU interests. The Commission followed with a Communication on 9 February.[10] This document noted European concerns with policies in Chechnya and other areas 'that raise doubts about Russia's commitment and ability to uphold core universal and European values.' Again, in response, the Commission laid emphasis on internal EU coherence.

Closing the debate, on 17 February, the COEST working group in the Council drafted an internal document called *Relations with*

7. *Statement on International Terrorism*, EU-Russia Summit Press Release 342Nr 12423/01, Brussels October, 3, 2001.

8. For more on EU programmes in this area, see Kathrin Höhl, Harald Müller and Annette Schaper, 'European Union,' in *Protecting Against the Spread of Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Weapons: An Action Agenda for the Global Partnership, vol. 3: International Responses*, ed. Burkard Schmitt (Washington, D.C.: Centre for Strategic and International Studies, January 2003).

9. *European Parliament Report with Proposals for European Parliament Recommendations to the Council on EU-Russia Relations* (Final A5-0053-2004, PE 329.339, 2 February 2004).

10. *Communication of the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on Relations with Russia* (COM 2004 106, 9 February 2004, Brussels).

Russia – Assessment Report. The report was similar but the analysis was sharper. A number of mechanisms were proposed to enhance internal coordination. Member states also called for a more comprehensive dialogue with Russia that would include the possibility of linking policy issues. EU engagement throughout the common neighbourhood was seen as vital for EU interest and relations with Russia.

The assumptions underlying EU policy have changed since the 1990s. Member states broadly agree that Russia was not transforming along the lines hoped for earlier and that Russian foreign policy was posing an increasing challenge. The tone of EU policy has also changed. The EU is now intent on developing a pragmatic, issue-focused relationship, in which Moscow can expect Brussels to promote its interests more actively. Finally, values remain at the core of relations, but their role has changed. Values are now both a standard by which to assess the dialogue and a criterion to follow.

The new approach was manifested on several occasions. First, most dramatically, there was the Orange Revolution in Ukraine. The interview given by Putin's advisor on EU affairs, Sergei Yastrzhembsky, on 27 November 2004 revealed the gap that opened between Russia and the rest of Europe.[11] 'There was Belgrade,' Yastrzhembsky declared, 'there was Tbilisi; we can see the same hand, probably the same resources, the same puppet masters and the scenarios are very similar.' The statement was issued while the EU and member states were mediating in Kyiv. The revolution in Ukraine highlighted a new EU willing to challenge Moscow on an issue of vital importance.

Negotiations on the four common spaces with Russia were also revealing. These comprise a common economic space, a common space of freedom, security and justice, a common space of external security, and a common space on research, education and culture. Negotiations quickly ran into trouble. Russia sought agreement on those spaces where it was possible, whereas the EU was determined to pursue a package approach of 'all or nothing.'[12] EU thinking was straightforward: movement on all four spaces at once would allow the EU to coordinate policy on different areas and across pillars, and also to use linkages to protect EU interests.

Russia and the EU also differed on substance. With regard to freedom, security and justice, the EU sought to include reference to a dialogue on human rights questions. In 2004, the Dutch presidency also raised the importance of promoting human rights

11. Interview on RTR, Russia TV, Moscow, 27 November 2004.

12. See, for example, the GAERC Conclusions of 2 November 2004 (13589/04 Press 296) that stated: 'The presidency noted that the four spaces were part of a single package.'

standards in the struggle with international terrorism.[13] In reply, Moscow drew attention to the need to promote the rights of Russian-speaking communities in Estonia and Latvia. Discussions on external security also featured divergence. Russia sought cooperation with ESDP beyond the Union's desire and capacity. The EU insisted on including the principle of cooperation in the common neighbourhood, especially with regard to conflict settlement in Moldova and the South Caucasus – all of which, Russia resisted.

After failing to reach agreement at The Hague, Russia and the EU endorsed the four common spaces in Moscow in May 2005.[14] In the Conclusions of the EU-Russia Summit, some fifty-three pages long, the common spaces were agreed as a package in the end. The result is mixed. *The Road map for the Common Space on External Security* should be praised for its honesty in admitting implicitly that little cooperation has occurred over the last five years. The road map also reveals progress in thinking about cooperation in the shared neighbourhood – or, as the document puts it, 'the regions adjacent to the EU and Russian borders.' The road map contains important first principles. For a start, attention will be given to enhancing cooperation primarily in this region. Joint initiatives in support of efforts in agreed formats are put forward, which opens room for flexibility in approaching conflict settlement in the neighbourhood. Moreover, the EU and Russia agree to consult before putting forward unilateral initiatives (to avoid a repeat of 2003 over Moldova).

Questions remain. How will the road maps be developed? How will they be assessed? How can the EU ensure progress across the board? All of the hard work lies ahead.

EU interaction with Russia

Designing and applying policy towards Russia is a challenge for the EU. The enlarged Union brings together twenty-five states with different geographies, histories and interests.

First, Russia means different things to different member states. Geography matters. For Finland, Russia represents 1,300 kilometres of shared border across which an average of six million crossings occur annually. Estonia has still not reached agreement with Russia on their shared border. For Lithuania, the only member state that borders Russia to the west, Russia consists largely of

13. See discussion in report by *Agence Europe* (Brussels: 21 October 2004).

14. See 'Conclusions – Four Common Spaces,' available at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/russia/summit_05_05/index.htm.

the enclave of Kaliningrad, which is the first direction for Lithuanian investment and a concern in terms of soft security. The situation could not be more different for France and Spain, situated at a comfortable distance across Europe. As a result, the very texture of relations with Russia varies. Member states live on the same continent but in different worlds.

History also divides member states. The celebrations in Moscow on May 9th illustrated the point. For some member states, the celebrations commemorated a moment of unity in Europe in the struggle against Nazi fascism. For Estonia and Latvia, however, the issue was more complicated: participating in these celebrations could not be separated from their annexation by the Soviet Union.

States are also divided on the nature of the challenge posed by Russia. Member states agree that it is important to bring Russia closer to European positions on a number of international questions, such as the Kyoto treaty, non-proliferation, ensuring stability in the Balkans and the Middle East. However, for member states on the eastern border of the EU, Russia also represents a potential challenge, ranging from communicable diseases in Kaliningrad to environmental accidents in the North. European reliance on Russian energy supplies also divides rather than unites. Overall EU policy seeks to diversify sources of energy, including away from Russia. In practice, some member states have launched policies that will only increase their reliance on Russian supplies – in contrast with new member states that are concerned with this dependence.

EU member states also interpret the opportunities presented by Russia differently. The international context since 1999 has increased Russia's importance in the foreign policies of major member states, and this has created scope for divergences. Major old member states have long had special ties with Russia. New member states also have particular policies with regard to Russia as well as to the former Soviet Union. With enlargement, the EU inherited the question of the Russian-speaking minorities in Estonia and Latvia, which have always been a sore point in these states' relations with Russia. These factors mean that the Russian question has varying degrees of importance for different member states. For some European states, Russia is a distant and low priority, while for others it is urgent for either geographic or strategic reasons (sometimes both).

Member states also interact with Russia differently and at different levels. France and Great Britain share permanent seats in the Security Council with Russia, and are members with Germany of the G8 that includes Russia. These countries have also strong bilateral relations with Russia, with well-developed cooperation across the full horizon of policy areas. Some member states entertain diplomatic relations with Russia and little else. By contrast, several member states have very poor bilateral contacts with Russia and only restricted access to Moscow at the multilateral level. Within the EU, the playing field with Russia is not even and by no means the same for different member states.

As a result of these differences, the EU has difficulty developing coordinated and consistent policies. And all the more so as Vladimir Putin has sought to align member states against agreed EU policy on specific questions. The EU-Russia summit in Rome in November 2003 illustrated differences between the position of a member state holding the presidency and agreed policy lines. EU policy towards Russia is thus the product of tug and pull between varying interests and influences, the result of which is often the lowest common denominator.

Nonetheless, as the evolution of EU policy discussed above indicates, member states have reached agreement on basic principles with regard to Russia. First, all states concede that Russia matters for the EU and European security. Russia may matter for different reasons, but the EU still has a strategic interest in forging a genuine partnership with Russia. A second principle is the need to fill with content the 'strategic partnership'; that was declared in 1999. All member states agree that the EU should seek a cooperative and comprehensive relationship with Moscow. This includes the third principle, which concerns the importance of values at the foundation of relations. All states agree that EU relations Russia are not value-free and cannot be solely strategic.

Similarities and differences across the Atlantic

US and EU approaches are similar at three levels.

First, and this is always an important factor in transatlantic relations, their analysis of Russia is similar. Both the US and the EU recognise that a new Russia is emerging. The internal changes launched by Vladimir Putin in his first term are crystallising to

produce a new regime, with the consolidation of new elites and the writing of new rules of the game in politics and economics. Putin's pledge to consolidate the Russian state is taking on worrying features, whether it be in the conflict in Chechnya, developments in business or the weakening of checks and balances in politics. While Putin's first term was promising in the sphere of economics, the deep reform that Russia requires has become stalled. The range of potential interlocutors inside Russia is also seen to be shrinking. The EU and the US agree also that Russian foreign policy has become more unilateral and problematic. Differences with Russia have increased on a range of policy issues, such as fulfilling the Istanbul commitments and the role of the OSCE. The change of leadership in Ukraine is viewed by all as a watershed moment that showed the limits of Russia's willingness to align with the Euro-Atlantic community. Russia's reactions to Ukraine were seen as all the more worrying as they seemed to blend defensiveness, hostility and error.

Second, both the EU and the US agree that they have little leverage over Russia. Throughout the 1990s, the Euro-Atlantic community engaged heavily inside Russia, deploying carrots and sticks to prod on Russia's transition. Those days are over. Putin's Russia is politically more confident and more defensive about its sovereignty; it is also stronger economically thanks to years of high oil prices. Both Brussels and Washington agree that there is little that an external actor can do to change Russia.

Nonetheless, despite admitting weak leverage, neither the EU nor the US have put aside the importance of values. Their importance has changed relative to the 1990s and Putin's Russia has become far more prickly on this point. However, Brussels and Washington continue to stress both in public and private their concerns with developments inside Russia. After the start of the second Chechen war in 1999, the EU was very critical of Russian military actions and applied six months of quasi-sanctions against Moscow. To no avail. Neither the EU nor the US will try to place Russia in a box for the sake of values because Russia matters in myriad other ways also. Nonetheless, values remain important in American and European approaches. Both seek to encourage as much as possible the strengthening of democracy and the rule of law in Russia. This does not mean that the EU and the US assign the same weight to this objective.

One should note also that the EU and the US have similar objectives in the former Soviet Union. Especially as the EU has gained a higher profile in the region, Brussels has developed a high degree of policy coordination with Washington. This coordination ranges from encouraging Russia to fulfil the commitment that it agreed at the OSCE Istanbul summit in 1999 to undertaking joint actions, such as sanctioning the separatist leaders in Transnistria.

Nonetheless, differences loom large. First, the EU and the US are different kinds of actors. The US is a sovereign state, with a unified political, economic and military system, an elected leadership dedicated to advancing its interests and institutions for coordinating means to desired ends. The EU has unclear sovereignty, an often weak sense of common interests, and few institutions in the political area yet able to achieve its declared ends. Differences in 'actorness' affect relations with Russia. The Russian government stresses the strategic importance of its partnership with the US and acknowledges similarities between the Russian and American approach to the struggle with terrorism. Moscow also prefers to do business with Washington over Brussels because the EU is a difficult partner. The Union has several heads, twenty-five masters and a presidency that rotates every six months.

The EU and US have different agendas. George W. Bush came to power with a minimalist approach, based on the premise that Russia was more a problem to be managed than an opportunity to be seized. Before the September 11 attacks, policy was limited to securing Russian acquiescence to US demands in the field of arms control. If the Cold War was *really* over, as Bush declared, then the arms control structure built up during that period could be revised, in some areas even discarded. Hence, the importance of rethinking approaches to anti-ballistic missile defence and strategic arms reductions.

September 11 opened new areas for cooperation. Since 2001, the US policy agenda has centred around seven themes.[15] The first has been cooperation in the 'war on terror.' This item stands at the top of the agenda and has come to include cooperation in intelligence, law enforcement and border security as well as support to US objectives in Afghanistan. Second, the US has sought to advance its non-proliferation agenda with Russia. This has included measures to strengthen international regimes to prevent

15. The following discussion is the result of interviews in Washington in January 2005 with officials from the US government.

the spread of WMD materials and proliferation to states and non-state actors, securing Russia agreement to the Proliferation Security Initiative, and support to the Cooperative Threat Reduction programme. Third, the US has been keen to develop an energy dialogue with Russia. Launched at the Crawford summit between the two presidents, energy was declared to be a strategic element in relations. Fourth, regional questions such as Iran and North Korea have been items on the US agenda. Fifth, the US has insisted on a range of questions linked with Russia's neighbourhood, especially after the revolutions in Georgia and Ukraine. Sixth, the US has pushed for cooperation on wider security issues, ranging from the struggle against organised crime, the trafficking of illegal narcotics to the question of United Nations reform. Finally, Russia's democratic development is a matter of US concern.

In terms of priority, those items related to new security concerns, such as counter-terrorism and non-proliferation, have often acted to trump other policy areas.[16] Certainly, Russia's internal development has become less important that it was in the 1990s. Events in the former Soviet Union led to the 'neighbourhood' emerging at the forefront of relations. This item has also become a source of tension between Washington and Moscow. Moreover, despite the fanfare accompanying its launch, the US-Russia energy dialogue has remained symbolic.

US policy towards Russia has been heavily presidential. This has meant that only decisions agreed at the highest level were recognised as being important by Moscow. This did allow the White House to 'use' Secretary Powell – in the words of one US official – as a 'bad cop' on a number of occasions in 2004, but it did not always provide for the best result.[17] As developments inside Russia and in Russian foreign policy became more worrying, the US Administration faced the difficulty of seeking to revise policy in some areas while maintaining others, all the while avoiding the image of a radical shift in relations. The appointment of Condoleezza Rice as Secretary of State in 2005 led to a discreet reassessment of US policy. The priorities remain firm on counter-terrorism and non-proliferation. However, the spread of democracy in Russia's neighbourhood has risen to the forefront, and the Administration has become more vocal in expressing its concerns about democracy and the rule of law inside Russia. Still, US policy remains largely strategically-driven and its thrust is still minimalist in terms of seeking Russia's transformation. Russia matters for

16. Interviews with officials and experts in Washington in January 2005.

17. Interview with an anonymous US official in Washington in January 2005.

the US less for itself and more in terms of how it can affect US interests in other policy areas.

Compared to a thin US agenda, EU relations with Russia are 'thick'. Russia poses both positive and negative challenges to Europe.[18] At the positive level, Russia is a major source of energy, and especially natural gas. Russia also represents an important market for EU goods. Moreover, Russia has provided added value to European diplomacy. Often, as with the Quartet for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Russia's presence is important because its participation contributes to creating an image of international consensus. Since 1999, Russia has played an important supportive role to EU policy in the Western Balkans. As noted by the Dutch Foreign Minister, Bernard Bot: 'Like Russia, the EU believes in an effective multilateral system with a strong United Nations at its core in which political conduct is subject to the rule of law. One might argue that, despite a relationship that is at times uneasy, Russia and the EU share a world view.'[19]

Russia is also a source of challenges. Russia poses a spectrum of risks that stretch from humanitarian spillover from Chechnya to the activities on Russian territory of transnational criminal organisations. As noted by the European Commission Country Strategy Paper 2000-2006, 'soft security threats from Russia are a serious concern for the EU and require continued engagement – nuclear safety, the fight against crime, including drug trafficking and illegal immigration, the spread of disease and environmental pollution.'[20] Ensuring effective control over materials related to weapons of mass destruction in Russia is another vital challenge. Finally, the common neighbourhood has raised the challenge of cooperating with Russia in its self-declared 'sphere of vital interest.'

The stakes for the EU in Russia are strategic. The European policy agenda spans the entire spectrum from Human Rights consultations with Moscow, intense economic relations and energy ties, to political dialogue on the full range of international questions. The EU has more ties with Russia than with any other third party. Moreover, the assumptions underlying EU thinking are different to those of the US. While less so than in the 1990s, the European agenda remains transformationist. EU policy approaches have become more realist, and EU intent is strategically driven on a number of questions. Yet, promoting shared values remains central to EU policy. The aim of supporting democracy and the rule of

18. This discussion draws from the author's 'Russia faces Europe' (Paris: EU ISS *Chaillot Paper* No. 60, 2003) and 'Russia's Strategic Partnership with Europe', *Washington Quarterly* (Spring 2004), pp. 99-118.

19. Bernard Bot, 'Why Russia and the EU need one another,' *Izvestiya*, 19 October 2004.

20. *Country Strategy Paper 2000-2006, National Indicative Programme, 2002-2003, Russian Federation*, European Commission, 27 December 2001, Brussels.

law still stands at the heart of EU thinking, based upon the recognition that developments inside Russia matter at the international level.

Conclusion

Transatlantic coordination is crucial for ensuring that Russia remains a positive player on the world stage, an inclusive player in its neighbourhood and a state led by the rule of law. Whether the agenda is thick or thin, internal developments cannot be divorced for long from external behaviour. What happens inside Russia impacts on the nature of Russia as a partner for the EU and the US. At a time when Europe and America have less leverage over Russia's domestic development than they had, transatlantic cooperation becomes all the more vital. In this, the EU and US should build on areas of overlap in their agendas, such as regional security questions in the Balkans and the Middle East, ensuring positive momentum in the former Soviet Union and raising concerns with domestic developments in Russia.

Managing the Russian dilemma

Fiona Hill

Russia in 2005 presents a very different set of challenges for the United States and Europe than at other junctures over the last 20 years. Looking back to 1985, Russia is no longer – as it was then – the main threat to European security; nor is it the main global strategic competitor of the United States. The emergence of Mikhail Gorbachev in 1985 and the eventual collapse of the USSR in 1991 effected a dramatic transformation of the European and broader geopolitical landscape. And, in contrast to 1985, Russia is no longer a shared 'project' of the US and Europe, when Washington and European capitals encouraged and promoted Russia's market economic and democratic transformation and its entry into a 'common European home' and transatlantic partnerships. Disillusionment with Western-inspired reforms is widespread among the Russian population: the rise of President Vladimir Putin in 1999-2000 with a more inwardly-focused, strong state policy, the reversal by Putin's government of many of the political advances of the 1990s, as well as strained relations with Euro-Atlantic institutions, have put Russia on another, more uncertain trajectory.

In 2005, the United States and Europe share the view that although Russia has retreated as a global security problem it remains a potential spoiler in regional affairs. Indeed, the areas of tension in both the US-Russian and European-Russian relationships are now focused in Russia's immediate neighborhood – particularly in Ukraine, Belarus and the South Caucasus – which is now also Europe's neighbourhood. However, especially since 2001, there has been something of a mutual misperception of significant differences in each other's policies on the part of the United States and Europe. European commentary has depicted the US and the Administration of President George W. Bush as ranking security issues higher than democratic values and essentially turning a blind eye to Russian human rights abuses in

Chechnya and its increasing authoritarianism in return for support in the American war on terror. Likewise, the US has seen Europe as turning a blind eye to problems within Russia and the broader region of Eurasia, either because of the European Union's preoccupation with internal issues related to its enlargement, or because of individual European states' increasing dependency on Russian energy.

Perceptions of difference over Russia in the period from 2001-2005 have been much greater than actual differences – and more the result of US and European disagreements on the general conduct of the 'war on terror' and the war in Iraq up until 2005. These perceptions are also the result of the complexities of policymaking in both the United States and Europe, and the fact neither the US nor Europe are unitary actors. There are many contradictions and inconsistencies in both sets of policies – with different agencies and actors in the United States, and individual countries and political figures in Europe often diverging in their approaches towards President Putin and Russia.

In particular, for the United States, the simple fact that Russia no longer poses a major strategic threat – which tends to bring policy into clearer focus – has created a great deal of potential for misunderstanding. In current US policymaking, Russia is no longer the stand-alone issue it was under President George H.W.Bush and President Clinton. Indeed, Russia had already lost its primary position in US policymaking by the end of the Clinton Administration, becoming instead, in 1998-1999, largely derivative of other strategic considerations. In the period from 2000-2005, under George W. Bush, a mixture of old and new security priorities, including nuclear non-proliferation, the war on terror, energy security, and dealing with the long-term problems of the Middle East have all shaped policy responses to developments in Russia. As a result, US policy towards Russia has been constantly wracked by tensions between the desire of many actors within the United States to maintain America's watchdog role over Russia's political and economic development, and the obvious imperative for the US government to keep the policy spotlight firmly on the more pressing issues of the day.

A strong and a weak power

In short, in this first decade of the 21st Century, Russia is now a very different state from the Russia of the 1980s and 1990s. It is not a threat, not an opportunity, but still very much a dilemma for the United States and Europe. Part of this dilemma lies in the fact that Russia is simultaneously a strong and a weak power in international affairs. Thanks to its role in World War II, its subsequent Cold War position, its sheer size – as the world's largest country spanning multiple strategic regions – and its virtually unsurpassed natural resource endowment, Russia's international weight is considerable. But Russia's external profile is completely out of step with its domestic capacity. Strategically and politically, Russia may have retained its nuclear parity with the United States, and may be a leading member of prestige international institutions, including the United Nations (UN) Security Council and the G8; but, economically, Russia is far from the top tier. As American scholars Daniel Triesman and Andrei Shleifer have argued,[1] Russia bears all the hallmarks of a 'normal', middle-income country. On most major indices it is more on a par with a Brazil or Mexico than with its European neighbours and the United States.

The fact that Russia has once more assumed its Soviet-era role as the world's main oil producer and exporter, along with Saudi Arabia, and as the global leader in gas, is also a double-edged sword. Russia may now be a critical factor in the energy security calculations of Europe, Asia, and the United States, but the fact that Russia's primary interaction with global markets is through oil and gas is a source of weakness. Commodities dominate Russian exports, and few of its manufactured goods beyond armaments are internationally competitive. Russia's economic revival and gross domestic product (GDP) growth after the financial crisis of 1998 can be traced directly to a combination of high energy prices, oil and gas production growth rates, rising energy export volumes, and associated revenues. The future of the Russian economy is now entwined with the future of the world energy market. And the Russian economy is thus more vulnerable to exogenous shocks than at any other period in its recent history.[2]

1. 'A Normal Country,' *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2004.

2. Fiona Hill, *Energy Empire: Oil, Gas and Russia's Revival*, (London: The Foreign Policy Centre, 2004).

Furthermore, the energy export revenues that have boosted the Russian economy and state budget since 1999 have not been uniformly distributed. Industries with ties to the oil and gas sector in energy-producing regions have benefited, while those with no special relationships or considerations have fared more poorly. Discrepancies in living standards across Russia have increased. Moscow far outstrips every other Russian region in terms of economic growth, per capita incomes, educational and employment opportunities, new housing development, health care and life expectancy (especially for men). And the richest regions beyond Moscow in terms of per capita gross regional product are all oil, gas or other key commodity-producing regions with relatively small populations. Old industrial and manufacturing areas, including parts of the Urals region and large swathes of Siberia and the Russian Far East, continue to decline economically; while places like conflict-ravaged Chechnya and Ingushetia in the densely-populated North Caucasus region of southern Russia display poverty levels more akin to Sub-Saharan Africa than the rest of Russia. In terms of its demographic and health profile, Russia actually fares much worse than a 'normal' middle-income country. Russia's mortality rates and male life expectancy resemble more those of a country in wartime than one experiencing an economic revival. Russia's once large and fast growing population is now a dwindling asset. According to some of the more pessimistic prognoses from the World Bank and the United States Census Bureau, the population could decline by 2050 to levels it last reached in 1900.[3]

Russia's economic and domestic weaknesses shape its foreign policy posture. Russia does not want to be seen as a weak or impoverished state, whose sole international role is as energy supplier to half the globe. Indeed, an important element in Russia's imperial – and later Soviet – identity was offering an alternative cultural and political model to the rest of Europe. Imperial Russia saw itself as the leading Slavic and Orthodox power with its own civilising mission to the East, and Soviet Russia offered Communism as a counterpoint to the Capitalism of the West. From the perspective of the Russian political class, the failure of Communism and the USSR was, in essence, the failure of Russia and its civilising missions. And the collapse of the Soviet state marked the final loss of empire that had been staved off after the Russian Revolution.

3. Nicholas Eberstadt, 'The Russian Federation at the Dawn of the Twenty-First Century: Trapped in a Demographic Straitjacket', *NBR Analysis*, vol. 15, no. 2 (Seattle: National Bureau of Asian Research, September 2004).

The rapid decline of Russia's conventional military prowess after 1991, the entry of former satellites into NATO, the generally poor image of Russia abroad and the seeming absence of any close ally apart from Belarus[4] have all compounded a deep sense of humiliation. The idea that Russia is friendless, or generally viewed as an 'Upper Volta with missiles'[5] or 'Upper Volta with oil' does not sit well with the Russian political and foreign policy elite and the Kremlin.

Russian foreign policy preoccupations

As a result, Russia has become something of a paranoid power in the international arena – increasingly concerned about the further erosion of its regional and global position, and seeking ways to burnish its tarnished reputation. There is a clear preoccupation in current Russian foreign policy with trying to prevent the expansion of the European Union, and the penetration of US and other Western companies and interests, from shutting Russia out of Eastern European and Eurasian markets. Moscow has pursued the creation of its own single economic space in Eurasia focused on its major regional trading partners like Ukraine and Kazakhstan and with Russia at the centre. And Moscow has also taken steps to counter regional alliances with perceived anti-Russian tendencies – from NATO to GUAM and the OSCE – by insisting on special arrangements (like the NATO-Russian Council), promoting its own alternative structures, or deliberately undermining institutions (through, for example, its efforts to block the budget of the OSCE in 2005). Against this backdrop, a particularly old-style, 'zero-sum' approach tends to dominate Moscow's thinking about relations with its Eurasian neighbors. Moscow seems, in general, only interested in Russia's benefits and not in its neighbours' prosperity, nor in mutually beneficial development. Moscow wants to have a decisive say in its neighbours' foreign policy decisions as well as in their economic investment decisions (a new form of the Soviet-era 'Finlandisation'), but is not quite so keen on resolving regional problems, like, for example, territorial conflicts in Moldova and the South Caucasus.

In many respects, the 19th and early 20th Century idea of a Darwinian struggle for survival of the fittest in international politics

4. According to a May 2005 poll by Russia's Yuri Levada, as recounted in RIA Novosti on June 9, 2005.

5. A phrase variously attributed to German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, and Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev.

still dominates Russian political thought. President Putin has frequently asserted in public presentations that only a strong state can beat back geopolitical predators who seek to 'slice off a juicy morsel' from Russia – as, for example, in his September 4, 2004 televised address to the nation after the Beslan terrorist attack. And Putin and other members of the Russian political elite have evoked the idea of a new Cold War, expressing the belief that the West's decades-long struggle against Communism was really a struggle against Russia itself as a state and a 'civilisational' idea – a struggle that continues.

Russia's contemporary international view of itself is also still shaped by its Cold War relationship and strategic parity with the United States. While Washington has downgraded Russia in its policy priorities, Moscow continues to place the United States at the top of its hierarchy of international interlocutors. Although, historically, Russia always defined itself as one of the European Great Powers, it was the Cold War that marked the zenith of Russia's greatness as it emerged in the form of the USSR as one of the World's two superpowers. And the United States, Russia's superpower rival, remains the mirror in which Russia seeks its reflection.

Drivers of United States policy towards Russia

For the United States, as already noted, the picture is somewhat different. In the late 1990s, new security issues began to displace Russia at the forefront of Washington's concerns, and from the very beginning of the Administration of George W. Bush in 2000, the President's foreign policy team was determined to put the relationship on a different footing.[6] The principal goal in establishing a new relationship was to wrest Washington free of its Cold War treaty entanglements with Russia to enable the US to withdraw from the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) treaty and pursue the creation of a national missile defence system. At this juncture, the Bush team saw the United States' security threats as emanating from rising powers and potentially hostile states like China, and 'rogue regimes' in states like North Korea, Iraq, and Iran. Russia – as a declining power – featured in Washington's security calculations in more of a supporting role, through the risk of an accidental nuclear launch as a result of Moscow's deteriorating command

6. Condoleezza Rice, 'Campaign 2000: Promoting the National Interest,' *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 79, no. 1, January/February 2000, pp.45-62.

and control over its missile systems; and through the worst-case, nightmare scenario of a 'rogue regime' or terrorist group acquiring a Russian nuclear weapon to use against the United States.

With Russia now off centre stage, beginning in 2000 the avowed intention of the Bush Administration was to deal with Moscow only on the surface level in international interactions and not to delve into Russian domestic issues in the same fashion as President Clinton. Washington moved decisively away from the 1990s idea that the United States could reform Russia – a decision encouraged by the fact that with the rise in world oil prices after 1999 Russia suddenly became financially solvent and in theory had the financial wherewithal to 'reform itself'. Moscow's oil-fuelled windfall eased its dependence on the United States and international financial institutions for loans – and consequently removed America's (admittedly limited) leverage over Russian affairs. In sum, after facilitating the creation of a US missile defence system, the Bush Administration's primary priorities with Russia were ensuring the security of its nuclear arsenal and strengthening non-proliferation mechanisms.

September 11 and the war on terror

The September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States, however, were a major turning point in the Bush Administration's and the United States' relations with Russia. The 2001 attacks brought Russia back into the security spotlight as they drew US attention to the arc of unstable states immediately to Russia's south – from Iraq through Iran to Afghanistan and Pakistan – harbouring existing and potential terrorist threats to the United States. The US suddenly needed Russia's complicity in its subsequent military assault on Al-Qaeda bases in Afghanistan, a country where Russia had its own considerable military experience. Furthermore, the attacks coincided with a major policy decision by President Putin to avoid confrontations and improve the bilateral relationship with the US – specifically to secure a breathing space in foreign policy that would allow him to concentrate on domestic consolidation and economic growth.

Virtually overnight, Moscow was transformed from a problem on national missile defence and non-proliferation issues to a partner in America's new war on terror – especially when President

Putin became the first foreign leader to telephone President Bush after the attacks to offer Russia's condolences and support for an American response. Moscow's support was extended to Putin acquiescing in the establishment of US bases in Central Asia to back up the military campaign in Afghanistan, in spite of considerable opposition within the Russian armed forces.

Russia and the war on terror: shifting US positions on Chechnya

Russia's new position in US strategic calculations had some notable effects on the bilateral relationship – Washington's policy stance on Russia's war in Chechnya being the issue most frequently pointed to by European and domestic critics of the Bush Administration. As a presidential candidate, George Bush strongly condemned the second Russian assault on Chechnya in 1999; and members of his Administration continued the criticism of the brutality of Russia's military campaign and the high civilian casualties in 2000-2001. This criticism was more muted after September 11, 2001, when events shifted Washington's perspective on the role of foreign Islamist militants among Chechen rebel forces. Although the Bush Administration continued to voice concerns about egregious human rights abuses by Russian troops in Chechnya, the Chechen terrorist attack on Moscow's Dubrovka Theatre in October 2002, and escalating terrorist attacks in 2003-2004, took the edge off these expressions of concern.

The seeming shift in the US position on Chechnya, however, was also rooted in broader political realities. In many respects, the Bush Administration inherited its policy on Chechnya from its predecessor. The Clinton Administration had made very little headway with Russia on Chechnya in the 1990s. In fact, senior Clinton Administration officials had failed to recognise either the scale of the problem or the extremely negative impact that the war was having on domestic Russian political developments until it was too late.[7] At the height of the first Chechen war in 1994-1996, the Clinton Administration was preoccupied with ensuring then Russian President Yeltsin's success in his struggle against the remnants of the Communist Party and new right-wing nationalist forces. For its part, the Bush Administration's capacity to deal with the second war in Chechnya was reduced in 2000 by its preoccupation with other security issues in the relationship with Russia, like the dispute over the US withdrawal from the ABM Treaty;

7. James M. Goldgeier and Michael McFaul, *Power and Purpose: US Policy Toward Russia After the Cold War* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2003).

and then with the response to the events of September 11, 2001, and the subsequent international political drama around the decision to invade Iraq in 2003.

After 2003, the United States' ability to press Russia on Chechnya was eroded even further as a result of the Abu Ghraib prisoner abuse scandals, and the devastating assault on Fallujah and other tactics the US military had to adopt in fighting a growing Iraq insurgency. Washington's moral authority was diminished as Moscow essentially saw the US as tackling the Iraq insurgency in roughly the same way that Russia had dealt with the rebel forces in Chechnya. The Bush Administration found it increasingly difficult to convince Moscow that Russia was making the situation in Chechnya worse for itself by allowing continued human rights abuses to fuel the population's support for opposition forces and sympathy for terrorist attacks; and by not expanding the political process in Chechnya to negotiate with moderate rebel forces.

Russia and US energy security

After September 11, 2001, energy security became an additional dimension in US relations with Russia, in the context of the war on terror, as domestic pressure built up to relieve American oil import dependency on a volatile and hostile Middle East. In 2002-2003, Russia became the new great hope of American policymakers seeking to diversify US and global oil supplies away from the Persian Gulf. American commentators and energy analysts went so far as to suggest that Russia might even be able to displace Saudi Arabia and OPEC in oil markets in the US, Europe, and Asia;[8] and in late May 2002, at a summit in Moscow, the US and Russia announced a strategic energy dialogue that would focus on bringing more Russian oil to world markets as well as increasing bilateral commercial cooperation in the energy sector. Russian oil majors like its leading private company, Yukos, claimed that, with anticipated production increases, Russia could eventually supply as much as 10% of total US oil imports.

Unfortunately, hype tended to get ahead of reality in discussions about Russia's energy potential in the United States in this period. Even with projected production increases over time, Russia could not hope to displace the Middle East in global oil supply calculations; and major changes in the Russian energy industry in 2003-2004 also provided pause for thought. These included the

8. Edward L. Morse and James Richard, 'The Battle for Energy Dominance,' *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 81, no.2, March/April 2002, pp.16-31.

arrest, imprisonment, and trial of Yukos head Mikhail Khodorkovsky on tax evasion, and the subsequent break-up of the company.

Faced with these problems, and the questionable future of the private sector in the energy industry, the US-Russian energy dialogue faded into the background at the end of 2004. Energy remained a factor in Washington's relations with Moscow in 2005, but more in terms of the US encouraging Russia to increase its production and exports to Europe and Asia – to increase the general supply to world markets and take the edge off growing energy demand in Asia and possible competition between major consumers like China, Japan, and India. American fears of the emergence of a potentially ruinous geopolitical competition over oil, especially in Asia, were heightened by continued instability in the Middle East, and the increasing risk of a major supply disruption in Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf from a catastrophic terrorist attack.

US security concerns in Eurasia

Beyond Russia, post-September 11, 2001 United States security concerns also became a primary driver of American policy in Russia's neighbourhood, in the rest of Eurasia. Again, after 2001, there was a great deal of European and regional misperception about US intentions and policy in Eurasia, especially in 2003-2005, when Washington lent its support to the so-called 'coloured' or 'democratic revolutions' that overthrew Georgia's President Eduard Shevardnadze in November 2003, Ukraine's Leonid Kuchma in December 2004, and Kyrgyzstan's Askar Akayev in March 2005. However, there is a great deal of continuity – rather than a radical or even 'revolutionary' break – between the policy of the Bush Administration and the Clinton Administration in Eurasia.

In the 1990s, Clinton's foreign policy team was anxious to avoid the emergence of a security vacuum, or a major conflict and instability in sensitive areas of Eurasia, like the South Caucasus and Central Asia, that might lead to the penetration of states with interests inimical to those of the United States (like Iran); or to a new monopoly by Russia or another major power (like China) over regional countries' policy options. Likewise, after NATO enlargement became a prominent feature of the Clinton Administra-

tion's European security policy, anchoring the western regions of Eurasia – including the Baltic States and Ukraine – within European institutions became a US priority. The entry of Eurasian states into organisations like the OSCE, the Council of Europe, and NATO's Partnership for Peace Program was heavily promoted by the Clinton Administration in the 1990s as a mechanism for promoting their transformations into independent, democratic and viable states. All of these policies generated a great deal of tension in the US-Russian relationship and raised fears in Moscow of a new American containment strategy against Russia.

After 2001, the Bush Administration's interest in the development of the vulnerable South Caucasus and Central Asian states increased. Their geopolitical location (bordering Iran and Afghanistan), porous borders, and propensity for weapons and drugs smuggling and militant incursions, drew US attention. Furthermore state weakness, economic decline, and government illegitimacy created considerable security headaches across Eurasia. In Georgia, for example, the government of former President Eduard Shevardnadze lost the capacity to protect its own borders, with Georgia's Pankisi Gorge region becoming a haven for Chechen fighters and foreign militants with links to international *jihadi* networks – provoking repeated confrontations with Russia. In Ukraine, the government of former President Leonid Kuchma was implicated in selling radar installations to Iraq as well as providing conventional weapons to civil conflicts across the globe. And Uzbekistan, the host to a US base in support of the ongoing military campaign in Afghanistan, became a clear liability rather than a strategic asset for the United States after a series of increasingly brutal crackdowns by President Karimov on opposition forces and protestors. Furthermore, old Soviet nuclear, chemical and biological weapons sites in Central Asia heightened non-proliferation concerns, as did mounting evidence of fissile material being smuggled across the Caucasus. In US intelligence circles, Central Asia and the South Caucasus rapidly became a likely source of origin for radioactive material for a 'dirty bomb' that might be used against an American target. All of these issues raised the importance of individual Eurasian states in US security calculations – entirely separate from the states' bilateral and collective relationships with Russia.

2005: A new US emphasis on democratisation in Russia and Eurasia

2005 now marks another significant change in US regional policy – both towards Russia and the rest of Eurasia. For most of 1990s and the reign of the first Bush Administration, it was not clear if security trumped democratisation and economic reform for US interests in Russia and Eurasia. But that question seems to have been answered in the second Bush Administration as a holistic sense of security has emerged from the United States' post-September 11, 2001 experiences in Iraq and the Middle East. Democratisation and economic reform have been directly linked by the Administration to ensuring the stability and viability of states. Authoritarian regimes in the Middle East, in states like Saudi Arabia and Egypt, are no longer seen by Washington as guarantors of regional stability, but, instead over the longer-term, as the instigators of failed states; and as regimes that in the short to medium-term generate dissent targeted against the United States (which is blamed by extremist opposition forces for supporting and propping up abusive governments).

The Bush Administration's new policy of promoting democracy and reform in the Middle East was conveyed in President Bush's second Inaugural Address in January 2005, and further outlined in his February 2005 State of the Union speech. By extension, this policy in the Middle East has shifted Washington's attention back onto Russian domestic affairs. Washington-based groups with an earlier stake in Russia's 1990s political and economic transformations – from former members of the Clinton Administration, to members of the US Congress, to major US non-governmental organisations like Freedom House and the National Endowment for Democracy, and international bodies like Human Rights Watch – that have pressed the Bush Administration to take action in response to political backsliding and the emergence of a 'soft authoritarian' power structure in Russia, have had their voices amplified by the Administration's policy focus in the Middle East. These groups have made the case that after 15 years of US democracy and reform promotion in Russia, if Russia continues down the path towards a harder authoritarian system this will undercut the Administration's new efforts in the Middle East.

The United States, Europe and Russia

In sum, from the Middle East to Eurasia, the Bush Administration is now emphasising political reform instead of propping up tyrants and disreputable leaders in the name of security and stability. And in many respects, with the Bush Administration's new holistic view of democracy and security, the United States and Europe are very much back on the same page when it comes to Russia.

Perspectives on developments in Russia, in 2005, are remarkably similar in Washington and in European capitals – including common concerns over Moscow's political direction, fears of a wider conflict in the North Caucasus in the wake of the horrific Chechen terrorist attack on the school in Beslan in September 2004, and recognition of the regional and global importance of Russia's energy sector as well as the paradox of its persistent domestic weakness. The United States and Europe face the same challenges in their relationships with Russia, including how to delink the different aspects of their regional policies when misperceptions and suspicions about US and European intentions are all-pervasive in Russia.

Moscow sees every US and European action in Eurasia as somehow aimed at Russia. Joint US and European support for free and fair elections – for example, in Ukraine in Winter 2004-2005 – is seen as a determination to pull Russia's allies away from it by installing 'Western' friends and allies (like Mikheil Saakashvili in Georgia and Viktor Yushchenko in Ukraine) as new regional presidents. American and European calls on Russia to continue to develop politically and not turn back the clock on the democratisation efforts of the 1990s are seen as attempts to undercut Moscow. Both the United States and Europe must now find ways to persuade Moscow that the initiatives they adopt and pursue in Russia's neighbourhood are not directed at thwarting Russian interests; and that criticisms of Putin's domestic political initiatives are not meant to weaken the Russian state.

In finding ways to influence Russian behaviour, the US and Europe are also in the same bind. In contrast with the 1990s, when American and European funding and advisors were heavily involved in Russian reform efforts, neither the US nor Europe now have many levers to encourage changes in areas they are most concerned about. Having paid off most of its international debt (most notably to the IMF in 2004), Russia is no longer the supplicant

state of the 1990s. On the contrary, it is on the road to becoming a donor state rather than a debtor. Foreign investment – one of the other incentives for a closer Russian relationship with the US and Europe in the 1990s – is also no longer so enticing for Moscow. Buoyed by the huge budget surplus the state has accumulated from energy export revenues over the last 5 years, most Russian leaders do not think they need foreign investment to develop the economy.

On the other hand, punitive measures to tackle Moscow's infractions, such as targeting Russian membership in the prestige organisations it values so highly like the G8 (in line with a 2005 US congressional initiative to have Russia expelled from the G8 in advance of its scheduled turn to host the G8 summit meeting in 2006) also seem to be of limited utility. Such steps would likely simply convince Russian policymakers that the US and Europe are trying to contain it, and also encourage reciprocal punitive responses by Moscow against neighbours 'favoured' by the US and Europe in Eurasia.

Conclusion: towards a common response

A common response to the challenge of dealing with Russia thus requires more creativity and coordination on the part of the United States and Europe. Policy differences are overblown and not an impediment to a joint approach. Even the different drivers of policy are not much of an issue, as both parties essentially want a Russia that is a predictable interlocutor in international affairs and not an unpredictable spoiler in areas on Europe's borders that harbour potential security threats for the United States. And while the devil is in the details of finding appropriate carrots to engage with Russia, rather than brandishing the more obvious sticks, the United States still has 'relational capital' from the Cold War superpower relationship and the high value Russia places on its international interactions with the US, while European states have some economic influence with Russia given Europe's role as the largest global importer of Russian energy and Russia's most significant trading partner. Both of these aspects could be pulled together in a future US-European strategy for engagement with Russia if the United States and Europe are able to overcome the general muddle in their own bilateral sets of relationships to present a united front.

Economics: still a glue?

14

Lien transatlantique et solidarité économique : le test de la mondialisation

Baudoin Bollaert

L'économie s'apparente-t-elle de plus en plus à la poursuite de la guerre par d'autres moyens ? Depuis la chute du mur de Berlin et les bouleversements de l'après-guerre froide, les politiques menées par les Etats-Unis et l'Union européenne obéissent à des stratégies différentes. Et, à l'heure de la mondialisation, les liens économiques solides qui unissent les deux continents se distendent parfois de façon spectaculaire. La sage notion de coopération dans la compétition appartiendrait-elle à un passé révolu ?

L'économie n'échappe pas un environnement politique, social et culturel plutôt tendu de part et d'autre de l'Atlantique. Comment oublier les 35 millions de personnes qui ont défilé entre janvier et avril 2003 contre la guerre en Irak dans les rues européennes ? Et comment passer sous silence ces sujets de désaccord dont la liste s'allonge sans cesse ? Peine de mort, armes à feu, homosexualité, protocole de Kyoto, OGM, clonage, religion, Cour pénale internationale, Guantanamo, désarmement, etc. Tout cela influe inévitablement sur le climat des affaires. Mais jusqu'où ?

Les pays européens sont les principaux clients, fournisseurs et investisseurs des Etats-Unis et réciproquement. Plus d'un milliard d'euros de biens et de services s'échangent chaque jour entre eux. Pour chacun des deux partenaires, le commerce avec l'autre représente 20% des échanges totaux de marchandises, un tiers des échanges de services, 60% des investissements étrangers. Au total, plus de 12 millions d'emplois en dépendent. Et la crise irakienne n'a pas réellement affecté le commerce transatlantique malgré les appels au boycott lancés, notamment, contre certains produits français par des dirigeants américains.

La France, pour ne parler que d'elle, compte 3 000 entreprises aux Etats-Unis qui génèrent environ 700 000 emplois directs. Les Etats-Unis en comptent autant sur le sol français. Pour Clara Gaymard, présidente de l'Agence française pour les investissements internationaux (AFII), les différends politico-diplomatiques,

aussi profonds soient-ils, ne doivent donc pas faire oublier « un accroissement permanent, durable et impressionnant des relations franco-américaines sur le plan économique »[1].

D'ailleurs, ces désaccords n'appartiennent-ils pas à la vie normale des nations ? Bien avant l'Irak, l'expédition de Suez et la guerre du Vietnam – pour ne prendre que ces deux exemples – avaient déjà causé de profondes divisions entre Européens et Américains. « L'Alliance atlantique a navigué sur une forte houle au fil des années », rappelle le Secrétaire à la Défense Donald Rumsfeld[2], « mais nous avons toujours su résoudre les questions les plus difficiles. Parce que nous sommes fortement unis : par nos valeurs partagées, par notre histoire commune et par notre foi indéfectible dans la démocratie ».

Pourtant, au-delà des discours et déclarations qui ressassent le « mantra » des valeurs communes entre l'Europe et l'Amérique, il y a des « indices sérieux de divergences croissantes sur les questions politiques, économiques et sociales », estime Fraser Cameron, directeur du Centre d'études de politiques européennes à Bruxelles[3].

Le député français Axel Poniatovski, président du groupe d'amitié France-Etats-Unis à l'Assemblée nationale, parle d'une « dérive des deux continents »[4]. Quant à l'historien et journaliste Jacques Julliard, il considère, au terme d'un long voyage aux Etats-Unis accompli pendant la dernière campagne présidentielle, que « malgré les apparences, l'Amérique et l'Europe continuent de s'éloigner l'une de l'autre à vitesse accélérée. C'est là », dit-il, « l'événement mondial le plus important depuis la chute du mur de Berlin »[5].

Spécialiste de l'opinion publique européenne, professeur à Sciences Po, Dominique Reynié résume bien ce sentiment lorsqu'il écrit : « Aujourd'hui, après l'effondrement du communisme, les conflits d'intérêts entre l'Europe et les Etats-Unis ressurgissent et se donnent libre cours, inévitablement, dans nombre de domaines hautement stratégiques : l'espace, les transports aériens, le commerce, les télécommunications, la recherche scientifique, la monnaie, l'environnement et, plus largement, la manière de conduire les affaires du monde»[6].

1. Colloque du 20 janvier 2005 à l'Assemblée nationale sur le thème « Quelles relations transatlantiques pour la deuxième administration Bush ? ».

2. *Le Figaro* du 22 février 2005.

3. *Le Banquet*, revue n°21, octobre 2004.

4. Op. cit. dans note 1.

5. *Le Nouvel Observateur*, 24-30 mars 2005.

6. *La fracture occidentale*, La Table ronde, 2004.

L'effondrement du « Mur »

Cette « dérive » remonte à l'éclatement du bloc soviétique, bien plus qu'au 11 septembre 2001 ou à l'intervention américaine en Irak pour abattre le régime de Saddam Hussein. Certes, depuis le 11 septembre, l'Amérique est devenue « plus individualiste, plus patriote, plus conservatrice et plus religieuse que l'Europe »[7]. Le traumatisme lié aux attentats contre les tours jumelles du World Trade Center ne se dissipera pas facilement. Il n'empêche que, dès le début des années 1990, la transformation radicale des rapports de force dans le monde conduit les dirigeants des Etats-Unis à s'interroger en profondeur sur la place et le rôle de leur pays pour mieux répondre aux nouveaux défis de la concurrence internationale. A travers la disparition de l'URSS, la montée en puissance de l'Asie et la révolution de l'information, ils comprennent vite que « les règles du jeu » ont complètement changé. Et il en résulte « un véritable redéploiement de puissance, dont nous mesurons, chaque jour, les effets »[8], affirment deux spécialistes français de l'intelligence économique, Eric Denécé et Claude Revel.

Les Européens restent-ils inactifs ? Non, puisque Jacques Delors, en 1993, au nom de la Commission européenne qu'il préside encore, publie un rapport à bien des égards prémonitoires intitulé « Livre blanc sur la compétition, l'emploi et la compétitivité ». Il y tient compte de deux « éléments-chocs » : d'une part, « la nouvelle révolution technologique, celle de la société de l'information » et, d'autre part, « l'accélération des phénomènes d'interdépendance dans le mouvement de mondialisation »[9].

Ce Livre blanc, sévère et stimulant, montre en particulier que l'avenir des systèmes de protection sociale européens est doublement menacé : à court terme par l'insuffisance de la croissance, à long terme par la détérioration préoccupante du rapport entre actifs et inactifs. S'il est applaudi sur le moment par les chefs d'Etat et de gouvernement européens qui ne sont alors que douze, il restera pratiquement lettre morte. La « stratégie de Lisbonne », adoptée sept ans plus tard en 2000, n'en est que l'héritière chétive. La modestie des moyens mis en œuvre pour donner à l'UE l'« économie de la connaissance la plus compétitive du monde en 2010 » en apporte la preuve.

7. Op. cit. dans note 3.

8. Eric Denécé et Claude Revel, *L'autre guerre des Etats-Unis*, Robert Laffont, 2005.

9. Jacques Delors, *Mémoires*, Plon, 2004.

Bill Clinton, lui, dès son élection à la Maison blanche, prendra la mesure des changements nécessaires, dans le prolongement de ce qu'avait initié George Bush père. Et, quatre ans plus tard, en 1997, le président démocrate, économiste de formation, déclarera la main sur la Bible dans le discours d'inauguration de son second mandat : « l'Amérique est devenue la seule nation indispensable (...). La plus grande démocratie du monde doit prendre la tête des démocraties (...) afin de poursuivre la mission éternelle de l'Amérique ».

Sur le moment, ce discours flatte un sentiment bien ancré outre-Atlantique selon lequel la destinée des Américains est de libérer le monde. Mais il marque aussi la volonté des Etats-Unis de poursuivre le processus de reconquête économique amorcé au début des années 1990 après une longue période de déficit d'efficacité collective. C'est Gulliver débarrassé de ses chaînes, l'affirmation de l'« hyper-puissance » décrite un jour par Hubert Védrine. L'ancien ministre français des Affaires étrangères – souverainiste de gauche brillant et introverti – n'a pas de mots assez durs, parallèlement, pour fustiger une « Europe évanescente, bavarde et bien intentionnée, absorbée par sa mue problématique en Europe politique » et restant « sourde et aveugle » aux orages qui couvent, « persuadée de vivre dans un monde post-tragique régi par le droit »[10].

L'objectif des Américains est simple : primo, implanter durablement l'économie de marché et le système libéral dans le monde; secundo, assurer la sécurité économique des Etats-Unis et la conquête des marchés extérieurs face aux concurrents européens, chinois ou japonais. Et cela, en accord avec cette idée de leadership bien enracinée outre-Atlantique selon laquelle tout ce qui est bon pour l'Amérique est bon pour les autres.

«Les Etats-Unis ne veulent pas tant conquérir le monde qu'asseoir leur prospérité en s'assurant des marchés pour longtemps, observent Eric Denécé et Claude Revel. C'est pour cela qu'ils souhaitent maîtriser l'évolution des règles du jeu mondiales en les formatant à leurs normes et leur droit ». L'absence de concurrent à leur taille leur permet de jouer ce jeu et ils doivent le faire tant qu'ils restent « la puissance unique ». D'où leurs efforts pour « ralentir la constitution d'une autre puissance qui pourrait un jour avoir les mêmes objectifs, comme l'Union européenne ». D'où également leur volonté de consolider leurs acquis face à « l'autre puissance inéluctablement montante qu'est dans leur esprit la Chine »[11].

10. Hubert Védrine, *Face à l'hyper-puissance, textes et discours 1995-2003*, Fayard, 2003.

11. Op. cit. dans note 8.

Les Etats-Unis s'efforcent de maîtriser la mondialisation grâce à une stratégie multiforme d'influence et de réseaux. Ils gardent à l'esprit l'idée selon laquelle le passé de l'Europe égale l'avenir de l'Asie. Leur évolution démographique et culturelle les y pousse puisqu'elle fait d'eux, selon l'essayiste Alain Minc, un « pays monde » sur le point de réussir sur leur territoire « le syncrétisme de la planète entière »[12].

Que l'on partage ou non les intuitions d'Alain Minc, les courbes de population parlent d'elles-mêmes : vitalité en Amérique, déclin en Europe qui n'aura jamais mieux mérité son nom de « vieux continent ». L'indicateur clé pour la croissance future d'une économie, note ainsi Jacques de la Rosière[13], ancien président du FMI et de la BERD, est le « ratio de dépendance moyen », autrement dit la proportion entre les personnes de 60 ans ou plus et celles de 18 à 59 ans en âge de travailler. De 1960 à 2000, le ratio est passé en Europe de 26 à 35. Aux Etats-Unis, il est resté stable autour de 25. Et, selon les statistiques des Nations unies, le ratio européen de dépendance pourrait atteindre 47 en 2020 et 70 en 2050. Une évolution que M. de la Rosière juge « préoccupante » et qui jouera « un rôle décisif dans la croissance comparée des deux continents ».

En 2050, en outre, 50% de la population américaine sera d'origine non européenne. Pour Axel Poniatovski, « cette évolution aura un impact sur les relations transatlantiques dans la mesure où la seule civilisation judéo-chrétienne qui unissait les deux rives de l'Atlantique vole peu à peu en éclats »[14]. Henry Kissinger avait coutume de dire aux Européens : «Vous avez affaire à la dernière génération d'Américains au pouvoir ayant un penchant affectif pour l'Europe ». C'était il y a vingt-cinq ans... Aujourd'hui, les Américains d'origine chinoise, indienne ou mexicaine n'ont évidemment pas la même sensibilité que les descendants des immigrants irlandais, italiens ou juifs d'Europe de l'Est.

Une nouvelle histoire

« Pays-monde » ou pas, l'Amérique est-elle bien armée pour affronter ou surmonter les défis économiques du XXIème siècle ? A lire un historien et démographe comme Emmanuel Todd[15], la réponse est non. Pour lui, elle est devenue pour l'économie mondiale une sorte de « trou noir » absorbant marchandises et capitaux, mais

12. Alain Minc, *Ce monde qui vient*, Grasset, 2004.

13. Jacques de la Rosière, *Commentaire*, été 2005.

14. Op. cit. dans note 1.

15. Emmanuel Todd, *Après l'Empire*, essai sur la décomposition du système américain, Gallimard, 2002.

« incapable de fournir en retour des biens équivalents ». Et il ajoute : « La stricte logique mathématique suggère qu'à travers ses interactions de continuité géographique, la mondialisation dans ses effets les plus profonds déplace vers l'Eurasie le centre de gravité économique du monde, et tend à isoler l'Amérique ».

Oui, l'Amérique est lourdement déficitaire et se développe en grande partie grâce aux capitaux étrangers. Mais c'est aussi parce que la flexibilité et le dynamisme de son marché du travail, des biens et des services les attirent. L'essayiste Guy Sorman relève que depuis 25 ans « les Etats-Unis produisent invariablement un tiers de la richesse mondiale. Leur économie résiste donc à toutes les concurrences de l'Europe, du Japon ou de la Chine ». Dans la recherche et l'innovation, dit-il, la domination américaine reste absolue : la moitié des brevets déposés chaque année auprès de l'Organisation mondiale de la propriété industrielle sont américains. Sur ces vingt dernières années, la croissance moyenne annuelle a atteint 3,2% aux Etats-Unis, contre 2,2% en Europe et 1,1% au Japon.

« Ramenée au sort de chacun d'entre nous, poursuit Sorman, il en résulte qu'un Américain moyen dispose d'un revenu supérieur de 30% à celui d'un Européen ; nous avons décroché. Pendant la même période, les Américains n'ont souffert ni de l'inflation ni du chômage de masse : le travail est ce qui manque le moins aux Etats-Unis ». Si le dollar et la consommation ne font pas forcément le bonheur et si les sociétés ne sont pas toujours comparables, « les économies, en revanche, peuvent se décrire et se comparer. Celle des Etats-Unis court plus vite que la nôtre ; ce n'est pas niable »[16].

La supériorité du modèle américain sur le modèle européen tient-elle, entre autres raisons, au concept de « destruction créatrice » inventé en 1930 par l'économiste autrichien Joseph Schumpeter ? Chaque année, aux Etats-Unis, des millions d'emplois sont supprimés et autant d'entreprises ferment leurs portes. Mais, dans le même temps, il se crée un nombre équivalent ou supérieur d'emplois dans des entreprises nouvelles.

Par contraste, son nombre élevé de chômeurs et son taux modeste de croissance ne plaident pas en faveur de l'Europe. Pourtant, d'après Jeremy Rifkin, les experts qui critiquent les résultats médiocres de l'économie européenne ignorent fort commodément le « prix exorbitant » de la récente croissance économique

16. Guy Sorman, *Made in USA*, Fayard, 2004.

américaine[17]. Celle-ci s'est traduite, dit-il, par une « dette record des ménages et du gouvernement ». Le déficit gouvernemental est passé à 500 milliards de dollars pour la seule année 2004 tandis que le taux d'épargne des ménages américains tournait autour de 2% seulement. « En un sens, l'Amérique paye, au moins en partie, l'amélioration de ses résultats économiques à court terme en hypothéquant l'avenir », estime le président de la Foundation on Economic Trends à Washington.

Jeremy Rifkin ajoute que le rêve américain se focalise beaucoup trop sur le progrès matériel individuel et ne se préoccupe que trop peu du « bien-être général pour s'adapter à un monde où le risque, la diversité et l'interdépendance ne cessent de grandir ». A l'inverse, dit-il, le rêve européen fait passer les relations communautaires avant l'autonomie individuelle, la qualité de la vie avant l'accumulation de richesses, « les droits universels de l'homme et les droits de la nature avant les droits de propriété, et la coopération mondiale avant l'exercice unilatéral du pouvoir ».

Bref, pour Rifkin, le rêve européen est « puissant » parce qu'il a l'audace de suggérer une « nouvelle histoire », et pas la « fin de l'histoire » théorisée par Francis Fukuyama. Une nouvelle histoire qui se soucie de la paix, de l'harmonie, de la qualité de la vie et de la durabilité. Le but d'une économie globale durable, souligne-t-il, est de perpétuer « un état présent de grande qualité en adaptant la production et la consommation humaines à la capacité de recyclage des déchets et de reconstitution des ressources naturelles ». Et l'Europe possède dans ce secteur, affirme-t-il, une bonne longueur d'avance.

Les Européens en sont-ils conscients ? La vision de Jeremy Rifkin n'est-elle pas trop angélique ? Dans le domaine économique, les Etats-Unis sont à la fois maîtres et mendiants. S'ils exercent une domination incontestée dans la finance et ont le quasi-monopole de la haute technologie, leur fragilité sur d'autres plans n'est plus à démontrer et leur volonté de contrôler – seuls ou presque – les programmes clés du XXIème siècle (télécommunication, aéronautique, spatial, médecine de pointe, etc.) se heurte à des résistances qui, à la longue, peuvent éroder le ciment d'intérêts croisés qui soude Américains et Européens depuis plus de cinquante ans.

17. Jeremy Rifkin, *Le rêve européen*, Fayard, 2005.

Dollar et euro

Premier exemple : la dépendance des Etats-Unis par rapport au marché asiatique en général et chinois en particulier. Vu le déficit colossal de leur balance des paiements et la faiblesse de leur épargne nationale, les Américains doivent attirer les capitaux étrangers pour financer leur économie dans un contexte où le dollar a tout de même perdu, depuis 2002, 38% de sa valeur face à l'euro et 23% face au yen.

Ils y parviennent car la croissance asiatique est alimentée par les exportations aux Etats-Unis et que la Chine et autres « dragons » investissent leurs excédents en bons du trésor américains. Du coup, les pays asiatiques maintiennent les taux d'intérêt aux Etats-Unis à un niveau peu élevé et le consommateur texan ou californien peut continuer à emprunter et à acheter des produits fabriqués en Asie ! Chacun y trouve son compte. Mais jusqu'à quand ?

Deuxième exemple : la dépendance des Etats-Unis par rapport au pétrole. La réduction des réserves mondiales et la hausse du prix du baril – due en bonne partie aux besoins chinois – deviennent un vrai sujet de préoccupation pour l'Amérique qui importe 63% de son or noir. D'autant que, loin de baisser, sa consommation pétrolière devrait, selon l'Energy Information Administration, passer de 20 millions de barils en 2003 à 27,9 millions en 2025.

Les Européens constatent avec effarement que les Américains continuent de consommer un tiers d'énergie de plus qu'eux alors qu'ils sont 273 millions contre 450 millions d'habitants. Et que fait le Congrès ? Il autorise en mars dernier, au grand dam des écologistes, des forages dans une réserve de l'Alaska, sanctuaire protégé de l'Arctique...

La politique américaine en matière d'hydrocarbures ne se borne certes pas à cette mesure. Les Etats-Unis investissent beaucoup dans la mise au point de nouvelles technologies énergétiques. Mais, en attendant, ils font jouer la loi du plus fort. James Schlesinger, ancien secrétaire à l'énergie dans l'administration Carter, l'avait pointé de façon ironique et cynique dans une communication présentée, en 1992, au 15ème Congrès du Conseil mondial de l'énergie à Madrid : « Ce que le peuple américain a retenu de la guerre du Golfe, c'est qu'il est extrêmement plus facile et plus drôle d'aller botter les fesses des gens au Moyen-Orient que de faire des sacrifices pour limiter la dépendance de l'Amérique vis-à-vis du pétrole importé ».

Troisième exemple qui combine les deux premiers : la rivalité entre le dollar et l'euro pour devenir la devise de référence des transactions pétrolières. Pour Fadhil Chalabi, directeur exécutif du Centre for Global Energy Studies (CGES) de Londres et ancien secrétaire général adjoint de l'OPEP, l'intensification des échanges commerciaux entre le Moyen-Orient et l'Union européenne peut conduire à détrôner le billet vert au profit de l'euro.

Ce bouleversement, dit-il, « offrirait à l'OPEP une marge de manœuvre inespérée par rapport aux Etats-Unis » et serait « conforme aux intérêts des groupes pétroliers européens comme Total, BP ou Shell »[18]. Cela pourrait, ajoute-t-il, inciter le Royaume-Uni et la Norvège, pays européens producteurs de pétrole, à adopter la monnaie unique, « non pour un quelconque idéal européen fédéraliste, mais au contraire pour défendre leurs intérêts économiques nationaux bien compris ».

Mis bout à bout, ces trois exemples ne peuvent qu'attiser la rivalité transatlantique. Les liens économiques entre l'UE et l'Amérique se briseront-ils pour autant ? Dans son dernier rapport paru en mars, le National Intelligence Council dépendant du directeur de la CIA brosse des scénarios et présente son évaluation de la planète dans quinze ans. Qu'y lit-on ? « L'émergence probable de l'Inde et de la Chine comme nouveaux acteurs globaux – phénomène similaire à l'ascension de l'Allemagne unifiée au XIX^{ème} siècle et à la puissance des Etats-Unis dans la première moitié du XX^{ème} siècle – bouleversera le paysage géopolitique, avec des effets aussi importants que ces précédents historiques ».

La première mondialisation

Rien de très original, dira-t-on. Si ce n'est que la comparaison ébauchée avec la première mondialisation – celle de 1870-1914 interrompue par la Première Guerre mondiale – mérite qu'on s'y attarde un peu. A l'époque, observe Suzanne Berger, professeur au Massachusetts Institute of Technology de Cambridge, les Européens – en particulier les Français, objets de son étude – avaient établi des « liens » entre « les mécanismes de la mondialisation et leur impact sociétal qui rappellent étrangement ceux d'aujourd'hui »[19].

Pour elle, l'amélioration des transports, les performances de l'internet, la progression des capacités de production des pays

18. Fadhil Chalabi, *Géopolitique du pétrole*, Technip, 2005.

19. Suzanne Berger, *Notre première mondialisation*, Seuil, 2003.

émergents et la libéralisation du commerce font apparaître la Chine « comme un épouvantail » alimentant « la peur que la mondialisation n'induise un effondrement des salaires, une dégradation des conditions de travail, de la protection sociale et une catastrophe environnementale ». Or, en 1900, la montée en puissance du Japon, les investissements étrangers en Chine et le raccourcissement rapide des distances avaient nourri exactement « le même genre de peurs ».

La très large victoire du « non » au référendum sur le projet de constitution européenne, tant en France qu'aux Pays-Bas, fait écho au constat de Suzanne Berger. On peut y déceler, en effet, parmi bien d'autres signaux, le refus d'une Europe trop libérale, trop ouverte, qui échoue à protéger les peuples de la mondialisation. Une Europe élargie à 25, en attendant la Turquie, qui en serait même le cheval de Troie. Bien sûr, tous les pays de l'UE ne partagent pas l'antilibéralisme français et sont loin de vénérer son fameux modèle social. En outre, beaucoup d'entre eux, et pas seulement la Grande-Bretagne, pensent avoir noué une relation privilégiée avec les Etats-Unis. Quitte à être le vassal de quelqu'un, autant que ce soit des Américains... Mais le vent est mauvais.

A l'indifférence et au désintérêt d'une bonne partie des citoyens pour la construction européenne s'ajoute aujourd'hui le désamour. Le spectacle pathétique offert par l'Euroland n'arrange rien. Les pays qui devraient donner l'exemple – France, Allemagne, Italie – sont les moins vertueux, la BCE s'enferme dans un pilotage déflationniste pour le moins contestable et quelques experts en viennent même à s'interroger sur la survie de l'euro !

Avec une certaine prescience, l'ex-commissaire européen et nouveau directeur de l'OMC, Pascal Lamy, écrivait l'an passé : « L'Europe a développé une technologie de gouvernance innovante qui a dépassé radicalement le paradigme de l'Etat nation (...). Le modèle recherché est bien démocratique. Mais celui-ci n'est pas encore vécu et ressenti comme tel par ses citoyens malgré d'irréfutables avancées »[20].

Certes, personne en Europe n'a intérêt à démanteler le marché intérieur et à torpiller la monnaie unique. Les Etats-Unis, eux, n'auraient rien à gagner à voir se propager des idées protectionnistes ou hostiles à l'économie de marché sur un vieux continent en crise. Il n'empêche : pour Félix Rohatyn, ancien ambassadeur des Etats-Unis à Paris, « cette crise est un coup porté à la vision de l'Europe comme acteur global »[21]. Or, sauf nouvelle guerre plané-

20. Pascal Lamy, *La Démocratie-monde*, Seuil, 2004.

21. *Le Point*, n°1707.

taire, ce que nul ne souhaite, on ne bloquera pas le train de la mondialisation.

Une nouvelle « gouvernance mondiale » capable de conjuguer « l'efficacité que les Etats n'ont plus et la légitimité que les organisations internationales n'ont pas encore » pourra-t-elle, selon le vœu de Pascal Lamy, se mettre en place ? Une enquête réalisée par le Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, dans le cadre du programme « The Pew Global Attitudes Project » en 2002 et 2003, brosse le tableau d'un monde assez largement favorable à la mondialisation du commerce et de l'économie. Mais, comme le relève Dominique Reynié, les bouleversements et inégalités sociales qui en découlent inquiètent les opinions nationales. Celles-ci semblent moins enclines à « s'y opposer qu'à rechercher des contre-pouvoirs et des mécanismes de régulation susceptibles d'en maîtriser le cours »[22].

En attendant de les trouver, on peut penser avec Alain Minc que l'irruption de la Chine et de l'Inde dans le jeu mondial aura le même impact que l'existence de l'Union soviétique autrefois sur le plan stratégique : elle rendra « solidaire le vieux monde atlantique » en matière économique[23]. Les réflexes anciens joueront et chacun cherchera à s'appuyer sur les certitudes d'autrefois – celles du New Deal, du plan Marshall ou du système de Bretton Woods – et sur les outils d'aujourd'hui, comme l'OMC. On bataillera ferme sur Airbus, Boeing, Microsoft, la banane ou le maïs transgénique, mais dans un cadre ad hoc, entre « partenaires rivaux ».

Grand écart

Aujourd'hui, face à la Chine et aux nations émergentes, la solidarité économique s'impose en effet aux Etats-Unis et à l'Union européenne. Seule une grave crise monétaire ou pétrolière pourrait la faire voler en éclats. Une solidarité largement déconnectée, cependant, des valeurs et références des sociétés civiles. Une étude conduite pour Transatlantic Trends en juin 2003 le montre bien. A la question de savoir si Européens et Américains ont des valeurs sociales et culturelles différentes, la réponse est oui à 79% pour les premiers et oui à 83% pour les seconds (en additionnant les « tout à fait » et les « plutôt d'accord »). A l'inverse, le total des « pas d'accord » est de 17% pour les Européens et de 14% pour les Américains, le nombre des indécis étant dérisoire.

22. Op. cit. dans note 6.

23. Félix Rohatyn, *Le Point*, n°1707.

On peut en conclure qu'entre la raison d'Etat et l'*affectio societatis*, la solidarité transatlantique fera le grand écart, mais que – sans tomber dans l' « illusion pisarienne » – les intérêts économiques sont trop intimement mêlés pour permettre une « dérive » des deux continents dans un monde de plus en plus globalisé. On se prend même à rêver d'un rééquilibrage dans la relation Etats-Unis-Europe : moins d'unilatéralisme d'un côté, plus de cohésion de l'autre. Mais c'est un rêve. L'affaiblissement – momentané ou non – de l'UE l'a brisé. Un « pacte de non-agression » économique n'en est que plus indispensable. Et sans doute plus facile à conclure, pourvu que Washington n'abuse pas des déficiences européennes actuelles.

The primacy of the transatlantic economy

Joseph Quinlan

With the end of the Cold War, and the receding threat of the Soviet Union, many parties on both sides of the Atlantic came to the conclusion that the United States and Europe were no longer strategic partners in need, and were now free to disengage from each other and to pursue divergent interests. This view gained even more credence in the post-September 11 environment, when US foreign policy shifted towards more pre-emptive strategies and unilateral initiatives, culminating in the US-led war in Iraq.

The bitter division over the war in Iraq shook the transatlantic foundation to its core. US relations with long-standing European allies, France and Germany, plunged to new post World War II lows. The war in the Middle East fanned the flames of anti-Americanism across Europe, which, in turn, only served to stoke anti-European sentiment in the United States. Public opinion on both sides of the ocean turned decisively sour, if not hostile, in 2003 and 2004. Against this backdrop, many observers began to think the unthinkable –the collapse of the transatlantic alliance following decades of cooperation and partnership. Transatlantic solidarity was poised to give way to separation.

Transatlantic differences remain today. Both the United States and Europe have diverging views and opinions in the fields of global trade, international security and the Middle East. The scars from the war in Iraq are still evident on both sides of the Atlantic. That said, however, the transatlantic discord of the past few years has produced an unexpected silver lining: both the United States and Europe, amid all the turbulence, have come to realize just how interdependent and intertwined their respective economies have become over the past few decades. As part of this dynamic, policy makers have awakened to the fact that a rupture in the transatlantic partnership would leave both parties less prosperous, less secure, and less able to advance each other's interests in the world at large.

While during the Cold War era it was trade disputes that threatened to undermine political and security ties, today it is the reverse – the primary concern is whether or not foreign policy disputes will weaken or undermine transatlantic commercial ties. This reversal reflects the overriding fact that in the post-Cold War, post-9/11, post-Iraq era, it is the depth of transatlantic economic ties that bind or 'glue' the United States and Europe together.

Drifting together, not apart

For all that has been written about the transatlantic divide and the widening gulf that separates the United States from Europe, there has been comparatively little analysis or recognition of the economic glue that binds the two parties together. What is misunderstood by the policy makers, politicians and the media on both sides of the Atlantic is this: the transatlantic economy is tightly bound together by foreign investment (the deepest form of cross-border integration) as opposed to trade (a shallow, underdeveloped form of integration). While exports and imports are the most common measure of cross-border activity between two countries, foreign direct investment and the activities of foreign affiliates are the backbone of transatlantic commercial activity.

When the economic history of the late 20th century is written, globalisation will undoubtedly be invoked as the defining economic precept of the time. Like the initial period of globalisation in the second half of the 19th century, the 1990s and beyond have been a time of robust and unfettered global capital flows, market liberalisation measures and buoyant global trade. Global trade expanded by an average annual rate of 6.1% (in volume) over the 1990s, roughly double the rate of world GDP growth, and by a similar annual rate over the first half of this decade. As a result, the share of world trade in global output rose from around 19.3% in 1990 to roughly 24% by 2000 and 27.2% by 2004.[1]

Notwithstanding the vigour of global trade over the past decade and a half, global foreign direct investment (FDI) flows have expanded at an even faster pace, boosting the level of global inward FDI stock from $1.9 trillion in 1990, to $6.3 billion in 2000, and to an estimated $8.2 trillion in 2003. In line with the surge in investment, the global assets of foreign affiliates nearly quadrupled in the period 1990-2000, from $5.9 trillion at the start

1. These and other statistics given in this article come from various sources including the US Treasury Department, the US Department of Commerce, and the United Nations.

of the decade to over $21 trillion by 2000. Total affiliate assets amounted to $30.4 trillion in 2003. At the start of the decade, there were over 60,000 transnationals with more than 820,000 affiliates spread around the world. From this global production base, the gross product of foreign affiliates totalled $3.7 trillion in 2003, with foreign affiliates employing over 54,000 workers. Sales of foreign affiliates topped $17.6 trillion in 2003, versus $5.7 trillion in 1990, and were well above global exports of goods and services in 2003 ($9.2 billion).

Globalisation's return has opened the untapped markets of central Europe, Latin America, and the Indian subcontinent. Free market reform has been the mantra of Poland, Brazil, India and a host of emerging markets for more than a decade, with these new markets providing new consumers, new resources to leverage and new opportunities to grow sales and revenues for the world's leading multinationals.

Yet despite all the hype associated with globalisation, and notwithstanding all the excitement surrounding the emerging markets, notably China, one of the defining features of the global economic landscape over the past decade has been the increasing integration and cohesion of the transatlantic economy. The latter has remained as the most powerful global economic entity in the world due in large part to the transatlantic convergence in such key areas as industry deregulation (media, energy and telecommunications), technology usage, and financial market liberalisation. These variables, among others, have been at the cutting edge of aligning the macro and micro policies of the United States and Europe, helping to fuel the massive surge of transatlantic cross-border investment of the past fifteen years.

American companies invested more capital overseas in the 1990s (in excess of $750 billion) than in the prior four decades combined. But the surge in US foreign investment did not flow to the new and untapped markets of the developing nations. Rather, the majority of US foreign direct investment in the 1990s, and the first half of this decade, has been directed at Europe.

By country, the bulk of US overseas investment in the 1990s was concentrated in the European market most similar to the United States – the United Kingdom. The UK accounted for nearly 22% of total US FDI outflows (on a cumulative basis) in the 1990s. To put that figure into perspective, the amount of US investment in the United Kingdom in the 1990-99 period ($175 billion) was

nearly 50% larger than the total invested in the entire Asia-Pacific region. Additionally, despite all the talk about US investment flows to Mexico courtesy of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), US firms ploughed nearly twice as much capital into the Netherlands in the 1990s as they sank in Mexico. Of the top ten destinations of US investments in the 1990s, five countries were in Europe – the United Kingdom (ranked No. 1), the Netherlands (3), Switzerland (6), Germany (7) and France (8). Rounding out the top ten were Canada (2), Brazil (4), Mexico (5), Australia (9) and Japan (10).

In the first half of this decade (2000-04), six countries in Europe were among the top ten destinations of US foreign investment. The United Kingdom ranked first again, followed by Canada (2), the Netherlands (3), Switzerland (4), Mexico (5), Ireland (6), Germany (7), Singapore (8), Japan (9) and Italy (10). US investment stakes in Europe have expanded sharply this decade, with Europe attracting nearly 56% of total US foreign direct investment in the first half of the decade. The bias towards Europe runs counter to all the hype and angst associated with US outsourcing to such low-cost locales as China and India, and the common belief that it is the low-cost destinations of East Asia that have attracted the bulk of US investment.

To be sure, US foreign direct investment to China and India has jumped dramatically this decade, notably US investment to China. Total US investment in China, for instance, surged to nearly $11 billion (on a cumulative basis) in the first half of this decade, nearly double the US investment flows to China of $5.9 billion over the second half of the 1990s. That represents a dramatic rise, although on a comparative basis, US investment in Ireland over the same period ($36 billion) was three times larger.

By the same token, while US foreign investment to India doubled in the first half of this decade, from just $1 billion over the 1995-99 period to $2.5 billion, US firms ploughed more capital into such smaller European economies as Norway ($3 billion), Denmark ($5 billion) and Belgium ($6 billion) over the same period. At the end of the day, it would seem that the motivations of multinationals to invest overseas are less about cheap labour and more about access to wealthy markets, access to skilled labour and access to the innovative capabilities of the host nation.

The premium placed on these assets goes a long way towards explaining why the US and Europe remain each other's most

important foreign investors. Global foreign direct investment has long been more North-North, or developed nation to developed nation, as opposed to North-South, or from the developed nations to the developing nations.

While more than half of total US investment outflows were directed to Europe in the first half of this decade, Europe accounted for three-quarters of US total foreign direct investment inflows. Robust bilateral investment flows are the glue that binds the transatlantic economy together.

Commerce trumps diplomacy

Robert Kagan's quip that Americans are from Mars and Europeans are from Venus was reinforced by the transatlantic disputes over Iraq in 2003 and 2004. However, a related tale of the past two years is that both Mars and Venus should take greater heed of Mercury, the god of commerce.

For the transatlantic partnership, the last few years have been years of political bust and economic boom. Even as diplomatic relations between the US and Europe reached new lows, the economic ties that bind the two parties only grew stronger in 2003 and 2004. Indeed, in the past few years, transatlantic business has never been better.

Transatlantic trade, foreign direct investment, portfolio flows and affiliate profits have all rebounded robustly from the cyclical economic downturn of 2001-02. In 2004, for instance, total transatlantic trade in goods rose to a record $482 billion, up 22% from the prior year. Notwithstanding the strength of the euro against the US dollar, US imports from the European Union jumped to a record $283 billion, helping to drive America's trade deficit with the European Union to an all-time high of $110 billion.

In 2004, the US posted record imports from Germany ($77.2 billion), Italy ($28 billion), France ($31.8 billion), Italy ($28.1 billion) and a host of other European nations. On account of surging imports from Europe, the US posted record trade deficits with a number of European nations last year, including Germany ($46 billion).

Strong trade flows have been complemented by robust levels of foreign direct investment. Despite Washington's war-related frus-

trations with Europe, corporate America ploughed nearly $82 billion into the European Union in 2003 and another $97 billion in 2004. As is customary, US investment flows to the United Kingdom dominated total EU investments, with US firms sinking over $23 billion into the UK in 2004, roughly 24% of the EU total.

Yet even after adjusting for massive flows to the UK, US foreign investment to the rest of Europe approached $70 billion in 2004, or near-record highs. Interestingly, and despite the diplomatic ill will between Washington and Paris, US investment flows to France soared to a record $6.8 billion in 2004, some 45% higher than US investment to China in the same year. US investment flows to Italy last year ($4.2 billion) were four times as large as US flows to India ($1 billion). Greece, Russia and the Czech Republic all received record annual inflows of US foreign direct investment last year.

In the aggregate, Europe remains the number one geographic location for US overseas investment. In 2004, the region accounted for 41% of the global total, while over the first half of this decade, Europe accounted for nearly 56% of total US foreign direct investment.

Meanwhile, while many in Europe were staunchly opposed to the policies of the Bush Administration, that did not prevent European firms from investing nearly $53 billion in the United States in 2004, up from just $6.6 billion the year before. French investment surged to nearly $9 billion in 2004, up from $5.1 billion the year before. German firms invested some $6.8 billion in the United States in 2004, up sharply from investment flows of just $407 million the year before. As a key source of foreign capital for the United States, corporate Europe accounted for 75% of total US foreign direct investment inflows over the 2000-2004 period. Over this period, the United Kingdom accounted for 19.8% of total global investment inflows to the United States, followed by France (13.1% of the total), the Netherlands (10.8%) and Germany (9.2%).

European investors have also remained important foreign investors in US dollar-denominated securities over the past few years. Indeed, European net purchases of US government agency bonds totalled a record $84.4 billion in 2004. In the US corporate bond market, net purchases of US corporate bonds by French investors hit an all-time high last year, totalling $7.4 billion. German net purchases of US corporate bonds also hit a record last

year: $11.7 billion. In total, eurozone investors (which excludes the United Kingdom) were net purchasers of $55 billion in US securities last year, a capital infusion that helped the debt-stretched United States cover its massive savings shortfall. Over the 2003-04 period, European investors ploughed over $100 billion into US securities (US treasuries, government agency bonds, corporate bonds and US stocks).

Going in the other direction, portfolio flows from the US to Europe were also robust in 2004, with US net purchases of European securities (bonds and equities) reaching a record of $125 billion. In 2004, US investors purchased some $85 billion in foreign equities, but the bulk of these purchases were not in the high-flying markets of China, India or other emerging markets. Rather, a majority of US purchases – just over 60% of the total – were in Europe.

The past few years have also been record years for transatlantic profits as measured by foreign affiliate income. Remarkably, despite all the talk of a transatlantic boycott or a consumer backlash on both sides of the ocean, business has never been better for US and European multinationals.

Over the past two years, US foreign affiliates in Europe have registered record profits courtesy of the steep decline of the US dollar against the euro. The weaker the dollar, the more inflated dollar-based earnings of US foreign affiliates have become. The result: US affiliates earned a record $100 billion in Europe last year, which followed record earnings of $82 billion the year before. In 2003, US affiliate earnings in twelve European markets reached record highs. Last year, US affiliates booked record profits in seventeen European markets, with record earnings reported in such traditional markets as Germany, France, and Italy, in addition to the newly opened markets of Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic. This broadly based profits surge from Europe helped boost total US pretax corporate profits to record levels in 2004.

Last year was also a record year for profits of European affiliates operating in the United States. Notwithstanding the strength of the euro – a significant drag on European earnings – European affiliate earnings surged to a record $65.7 billion last year, easily beating record affiliate earnings of $44 billion in 2003. Since the US recession in 2001, earnings of European affiliates in the US have increased more than fourfold. The earnings recovery has been driven by robust US final demand, which has offset the nega-

tive effect of the appreciation of the euro and the British pound, as well as weak European growth of the past few years. In that corporate profits have increased sharply over the past two years in Europe, a great deal of this rise has been due to rising US final demand.

On balance, Europe and the United States remain each other's most important foreign commercial markets, a fact lost on policy makers on both sides of the Atlantic over the past few years. No other commercial artery in the world is as integrated and fused together by foreign investment, with more than 12 million workers on both sides of the ocean dependent on the transatlantic economy for employment. Hundreds of European firms are intertwined in the US economy, just as hundreds of US firms are embedded in the European Union. The depth and breadth of this economic relationship helped to mitigate and absorb the diplomatic strains of the past few years. Indeed, without the economic glue that binds the transatlantic partnership together, the transatlantic alliance might well have crumbled. It did not, but a great deal of work needs to be done to strengthen the partnership.

The transatlantic partnership – too important to fail

Given a number of issues, like the acrimony between the United States and Europe over the past few years, the rise of the economic powerhouses of China and India, and the economic gulf that increasingly divides the US and Europe, it is all too tempting to make the case that the transatlantic economy has entered its twilight. That the decade of intense economic integration in the 1990s was more an historical anomaly than a continuing trend; that the next decade will be a time of stagnation – or worse, decline – for the transatlantic economy. The future, as part of this logic, invariably lies with Asia, the global economy's new source of growth and demand.

Proponents of this view believe Europe's future lies to the east, in central Europe, through the formal process of enlargement. While stalled by the French and Dutch No vote regarding the EU constitution, the enlargement process, according to many, represents Europe's most logical counterweight to the US economy. Others have argued that the euro and the financial deepening of Europe will put the region on an equal footing with the United

States and allow Europe to emerge as a legitimate and political alternative to the US. Elsewhere, given anti-US sentiment in the Middle East and other parts of the world, many have urged the European Union to ignore US interests and forge ahead with its own economic and political designs, independent of the United States. Finally, many in Europe claim that the region's future is increasingly tied to China, requiring an attendant shift in transatlantic resources towards Asia.

In the United States, meanwhile, there is mounting feeling that Europe will always lag behind the US economy, and that Europe needs America more than America needs Europe. Europe's anaemic economic record and plodding decision-making process only serves to fuel American apathy towards Europe. In terms of global security, meanwhile, there are louder voices in the US nowadays arguing that Europe is less of a partner today and more of a prop. On both sides of the Atlantic, in other words, there appears to be an unwinding of mutual respect across a host of issues ranging from economics and defence to human rights and global warming.

Given the considerable list of current transatlantic differences, why don't Europeans and Americans just part company? The answer is that both parties simply can't afford it. A weaker transatlantic bond would render both the United States and Europe less safe, less prosperous, less free and less able to advance either their ideals or their interests in the wider world.

Europeans who believe that the end of the Cold War means that they are no longer dependent on American success could not be more wrong. Europe cannot afford a transatlantic divorce. European economies have never been as exposed to the North American market as they are today. Healthy transatlantic commerce has literally become the economic lifeline of some European companies, countries and regions.

Dense transatlantic networks of production and innovation are critical for Europeans jobs and for Europe's ability to remain competitive in the global knowledge economy. As part of this dynamic, in 2002, the last year of available data, over 4 million workers in Europe were employed by US foreign affiliates. Such is the economic presence and power of US foreign affiliates that in Ireland, among the most robust economies of Europe of late, US foreign affiliates accounted for almost 20% of the nation's gross domestic product in 2002. US affiliates accounted for 6.7% of the

UK's aggregate output in the same year and 5.5% of Belgium's total output.

By the same token, the economic prosperity and security of the United States is increasingly tied to Europe. The transatlantic partnership is vital to US self interest, a fact lost in all the hype about the emergence of China and India. By a wide but underappreciated margin, Europe is the most important commercial market in the world for corporate America. The region is not only a critical source of revenue for many large US firms, but also a key source of capital for the United States, the largest debtor nation in the world.

Helping to underwrite US economic prosperity, European affiliates in the United States are major economic producers in their own right, notably British firms, whose US output totalled nearly $90 billion in 2002. Output from German affiliates operating in the US totalled $57 billion, while output from French affiliates was nearly $41 billion in 2002. In the aggregate, output from European affiliates totalled $291 billion, or 64% of the total attributable to foreign affiliates. As a sizeable source of employment, European affiliates (majority-owned) employed roughly 3.8 million American workers in 2002.

None of these figures should be lost on US policy makers or those who argue that America's interests are better served by turning away from Europe and towards Asia. Nothing could be further from the truth.

In the end, neither party can afford a transatlantic split. Nor can the rest of the world. Should the United States and Europe become regional antagonists rather than global collaborators, the global economy would suffer as a consequence. Given that the US and Europe combined account for roughly 40% of world gross domestic product and over one third of global trade, transatlantic disputes invariably take on global dimensions. Without US-European cooperation, the new global trade round launched at Doha could fail. Aid and assistance to the developing nations will flounder. Without US and European cooperation, Africa will remain an economic backwater and the Arab world will remain mired in poverty and disenfranchised from the rest of the world. In the end, the threat of a transatlantic divorce would impair development prospects among the developing nations and seriously jeopardise the well-being of the global economy.

In addition, the significance of a transatlantic split goes beyond the global economy. A serious rift would compromise and undermine bilateral cooperation in other areas that require US-European collaboration, rather than competition. The range of global issues that require US-European leadership ranges from the war on terrorism, talks on global climatic change, peace in the Middle East, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and rising nuclear tensions on the Korean peninsula.

Addressing these issues, and many more, requires that America and Europe renew and revitalise their commitment to the transatlantic partnership. Much work needs to be done to maintain and secure the primacy of the transatlantic economy. The latter can only be accomplished by the continuous pursuit of common standards, norms and regulations on both sides of the Atlantic.

Deepening the transatlantic bonds requires more integration and cooperation across various sectors and subsectors, ranging from aerospace to financial services to pharmaceuticals. High priority should be given to the liberalisation of transatlantic services, a strategy that would help boost bilateral trade and investment between the two partners, and boost the economic growth and efficiency of the US and Europe.

Towards this end, regulatory bodies on both sides of the Atlantic should give more credence and pay more attention to the transatlantic dimensions of domestic policy making. That means eliminating regulations intended to protect local interests; streamlining and reducing technical standards and regulations across various sectors; and promoting regulatory transparency, thereby creating a level playing field for companies on both sides of the Atlantic. Government procurement programmes should become more open, while both parties should work to increase collaborative efforts in research and development in such cutting edge areas as nanotechnology and hydrogen fuel cell technology.

In addition to the above, greater 'out of area' economic cooperation is required of the transatlantic partnership. More cooperation, for instance, is required to promote economic growth and political stability in the Middle East and Africa, with the overriding recognition that more economic growth and a more liberal political backdrop in these two volatile regions would be a huge asset in the war against terrorism and a means to end ethnic violence.

On other fronts, the US and Europe should consider joint energy and environmental strategies to reduce the industrialised nations' dependence on fossil fuels and curtail greenhouse gas emissions. In helping to integrate more developing nations in the world economy, ensuring a successful conclusion of the Doha Round on global trade should be a key priority of both parties. A worst-case scenario would be a transatlantic trade dispute over aerospace (Boeing versus Airbus) that either scuttles the Doha round or postpones its completion. Another transatlantic priority should be the enforcement and protection of intellectual property rights. Homeland security procedures need to be continuously updated and refined on both sides of the ocean.

These initiatives and many others are required to preserve the primacy of the transatlantic economy. Both parties need to renew and reaffirm their commitment to one of the most successful partnerships in the world.

Friends reunited?

Friends reunited? Recalibrating transatlantic relations in the 21st century

Marcin Zaborowski

Since the re-election of President Bush in November 2004, transatlantic relations appear to have improved. Progress has been achieved in co-operating over Iran and the former Soviet area, especially in Ukraine and the Caucasus. Some transatlantic differences remain regarding relations with Russia but they are relatively minor and are not ideological. Relations with Asia have been far more problematic, with the issue of the arms embargo on sales to China dogging transatlantic co-operation during the year. Still, even here some progress has been achieved, with the EU delaying its decision to lift the embargo and embarking on the 'strategic dialogue' with the US over their policies towards the region. On the other hand, despite greater pragmatism on both sides of the Atlantic, it is becoming clear that the ideological gap between the allies is widening. Most importantly, attitudes towards international institutions, multilateralism and, more recently, the treatment of terror suspects sets Europeans and Americans apart.

It remains unclear, therefore, whether the current *rapprochement* represents a breakthrough and a lasting trend. What are the prospects for maintaining a viable and strong transatlantic relationship in the decades to come? Perhaps it is time to accept the fact that the intimate relationship that we experienced during the Cold War and in the first decade after it is in remission. It was a product of particular and unique circumstances – the existence of the Soviet threat – which no longer apply. Whilst the developments in 2005 suggest that there is enough will on both sides of the Atlantic to keep the relationship going, its ambivalent condition suggests that we may be moving towards a new and a much looser formula for transatlantic co-operation.

The purpose of this chapter is to synthesise the arguments raised throughout the volume as well as to assess the prospects for the future evolution of transatlantic relations. To this end, the chapter provides a survey of US-EU relations in some key areas and it considers the impact of domestic factors on the co-operation.

The final section of the chapter takes a look at future prospects and puts forward an argument in favour of redefining the relationship towards a more modest but also more pragmatic framework.

Rapprochement or détente?

Are the allies really getting on better with each other than they did during President Bush's first term? Certainly, efforts to bridge over past differences have been apparent both in the European capitals and in Washington. After pursuing the policy of splitting the EU during Bush's first term, Washington has ceased attempting to divide the allies and it has argued in favour of a stronger EU.[1]

Also the EU appears keen to improve transatlantic relations. While the Europeans have not changed their views about the war in Iraq, they have stopped bashing the US over the issue. Instead, the EU has supported the development of democracy and the rule of law in Iraq, for example, by training Iraqi judges, police and other law enforcement officers. In an unprecedented step, the EU and the US also co-hosted a conference of over 80 countries and international organisations on building stability and prosperity in Iraq, which was held in Brussels in June 2005. There is also no doubt that the transatlantic dialogue has significantly intensified throughout 2005 with George Bush travelling to Europe three times during the first six months of his presidency and becoming the first ever US President to officially visit the EU. These efforts were also reciprocated by the Europeans and in June 2005 the EU-US summit in Washington DC was attended by a high-level delegation from the EU including President of the Commission Jose Barosso, President of the Council Jean-Claude Juncker and High Representative for CFSP Javier Solana.[2]

Since 2005 there has been a new mood in the transatlantic relationship but the question remains as to whether substantive policy changes or new postures will follow. In order to address this question, it is helpful to assess the current state of transatlantic co-operation in some core areas, most of which have been discussed in this volume. Except for Iraq, which, despite the improvements mentioned above, remains a thorny issue in the relationship, it appears that the four areas that figured prominently in the foreign policies of the EU and the US in 2005 were: Iran, Russia, Asia and the general posture towards multilateralism.

1. During his visit to the EU in February 2005, President Bush said the following: 'The United States wants the European project to succeed. It's in our interests that Europe be strong. It's in our interests that the EU work out whatever differences there are and become a continued, viable, strong partner'; see: http://europa.eu.int/comm/press_room/presspacks/us20050222/transcript.pdf

2 See: 'Transatlantic Relations', *Euroactiv.com*, 26. 06.2005.

Iran

Dealing with Tehran became a major issue in transatlantic relations following the discovery of nuclear facilities in Iran in summer 2003. Clearly, the EU could not ignore the fact that Iran's activities were in breach of the IAEA and NPT agreements, according to which Tehran was obliged to report the existence of all its nuclear facilities. Iran's reassurances that its nuclear programme was being developed for peaceful purposes only were hardly convincing, particularly in the light of the fact that it was difficult to see why the world's second largest oil and gas producer would need to invest in the development of nuclear energy. On the other hand, in the Middle Eastern context Iran appeared to be a key actor and the EU was keen to foster Tehran's progress towards modernity by keeping it internationally engaged.

The subsequent EU strategy was therefore aimed at preventing Iran from moving towards the enrichment of the uranium produced in its nuclear facilities (which is seen as a major step towards the development of a nuclear bomb) whilst maintaining a co-operative relationship. Consequently, the EU – represented by the Foreign Ministers of the UK, France and Germany as well as High Representative for CFSP Javier Solana – set out to negotiate a deal by offering the 'carrots' of economic co-operation and aiming to obtain Iran's suspension of the enrichment. A deal based on those principles was agreed during the three ministers' visit to Tehran in October 2003 and an E3/EU-Iran agreement was signed in Paris in November 2004.[3]

At this point the European approach was received with scepticism in Washington, which was convinced that the European mission would fail and that Iran was only gaining ground and credibility in the process. Indeed, Iran failed to live up to the agreement and in August 2005 it announced to the IAEA that it was resuming enrichment activities in the Esfahan facilities. However, the European reaction to this development was not to bend and offer more carrots – as Washington suspected would be the case – but to reassert the EU's non-acceptance of any form of enrichment. This European assertiveness has surprised and impressed Washington. To quote the words of one of the American conservative observers, 'what Europe has done in the recent months over Iran has surprised many eurosceptics here. Members of the Administration expected the Europeans to go "soft" on Iran – but in fact quite the opposite happened'[4].

3. For further details of the EU approach see: Walter Posch, 'The EU and Iran: Creating and Losing Confidence', *Gulf Research Centre – GCC-EU Research Bulletin*, Issue 3, October 2005.

4. Confidential interview, Washington DC, September 2005.

As argued earlier by Geoffrey Kemp and Felix Neugart, the other factor that brought further convergence of the EU and US approaches was the radicalisation of Iran's foreign policy following the election of President Ahmadinejad. The subsequent breaking up of the terms of the Paris Agreement and the evidently anti-Israeli as well as anti-Semitic stance of the new president have been considered unacceptable both in Washington and in European capitals. Hence, as things stood at the end of 2005, there were no significant differences between the EU and US on the Iran question. An official view shared by both the US and the EU regarding further steps to be taken in case Iran continues its enrichment activities is to report or refer Tehran to the UN Security Council. Once the issue is brought before the UN, the US and the Europeans would like the Security Council to adopt a statement calling on Iran to comply with its IAEA obligations. The statement should also list a number of punitive steps to be taken in case Iran refuses to comply.

Russia

As argued here earlier by Dov Lynch and Fiona Hill, the EU and the US broadly share a similar view and assessment of Russia. Both seek predictability and stability; neither expects a swift and broad transformation of the country.

EU policy towards Russia represents a paradox. On the one hand, the EU has developed and signed a fairly comprehensive action plan for the development of 'four common spaces' with Russia. On the other hand, considerable differences on dealing with Russia continue to divide member states. Whilst most of the 'older' member states would like to establish closer relations with Russia, some new member states from Central and Eastern Europe remain suspicious of their eastern neighbour. Russia's energy policy, its promotion of authoritarian regimes in the former Soviet republics and inability to address difficult questions of its Soviet past have all contributed to an enduring perception in Central and Eastern Europe of Russia as a potential threat.

American policy towards Russia entered a new phase after the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001. Whilst Russia's post-Cold War transformation is seen in the US as having faltered, Moscow became Washington's ally in the 'war on terror.' After a period of supporting pro-democratic and pro-market reforms in Russia

(especially during the Clinton years), Washington's approach towards the Kremlin now tends to steer clear of attempting to influence domestic developments and to focus more on securing Russia's international co-operation.

Russian policy towards the former Soviet republics continues to be driven by (misplaced) great-power considerations and a desire to re-establish Russian influence. Consequently, European or American activities in the region (especially in Ukraine, Georgia, Belarus and Central Asia) are often perceived in Russia as threatening to its security and as meddling in an area of its 'legitimate' interests. In other words, in the minds of Russian policymakers, dealing with these countries presents a 'zero-sum' game. Russia's energy policy is perceived as being driven more by political than commercial considerations. For example, the project to develop a pipeline under the Baltic Sea that would deliver gas to Germany – bypassing the Baltic States and Poland – represents the most expensive of options under consideration.[5] The Russian state remains a major shareholder in most Russian energy companies and, following the Yukos affair, the Kremlin has sought to further strengthen its grip over the sector.

There is significant scope for US-EU co-operation over Russia. The EU has the advantage of having developed an array of institutions and policy tools to support the relationship, whilst US relations with Russia are more *ad hoc* and less institutionalised. Twinned with the need for more transatlantic cooperation, greater coherence should be brought to the work of the EU Council and the Commission on Russia. In short, the EU needs to develop a genuinely *common* foreign policy approach towards its main Eastern neighbour.

Far-East Asia

There is less to say about transatlantic cooperation towards Far-East Asia than there is on specific US and European strategies towards the region. Inevitably, discussion on this theme is overshadowed by disputes over China and the question of the arms embargo. When Bush first came to office, he had two key principles regarding Asia. First, to maintain and strengthen traditional alliances in the region, which, he maintained, were neglected by his predecessor – especially with Japan, South Korea, the Philippines and Australia. Second, to deal with China from a position of

5. Agata Loskot, 'Security of Russian Gas Supplies to the EU - the Question of Infrastructural Connections', Policy Briefs – Centre for Eastern Studies, Warsaw, February 2005. (http://www.osw.waw.pl/en/epub/epunkt/2005/02/gas.htm)

strength that also took into account the US's traditional alliances in Asia. In other words, the US China policy was to be anchored in the framework of a broader Asia policy and not the other way around as, according to some Republicans, had been the case during the Clinton era.

Adopting these principles at the beginning of Bush's first presidency did indeed produce some policy changes. Most famously, China was defined as a 'strategic competitor' rather than a 'strategic partner,' (the latter description was used during the Clinton years) and the American commitment to the defence of Taiwan was strengthened.[6] At the same time the US's alliance with Japan was reinforced and Tokyo was pushed towards playing a more active international role, including its military contributions to the operation in Iraq. Finally, a tougher stance on North Korea was taken and the country was branded by Bush as a part of the 'axis of evil.' The new Administration believed that the 1993 framework agreement negotiated with North Korea by Clinton was a bad deal. Also, Clinton's 'last minute' attempt to strike a deal on missiles was judged by Republicans as not worth pursuing and was dropped when Bush assumed office.

However, few of these policy changes produced enduring results and following 9/11 China again came to occupy a central position in Washington's Asia policy. Whilst relations with Taiwan became more intimate than during the Clinton era, Washington stuck to its 'one China' policy and it continued to pressurise Taipei against its declaration of independence. After the period of ignoring North Korea and taking a hardline stance the second Bush Administration returned to six-party talks, which led to an agreement not dissimilar to the one negotiated by the Clinton team.[7] Yet, despite the return of 'realism' and continuity in the US's policy towards the region, it is clear that Bush's Administration is at the same time more hawkish and more concerned about China than was the case with its predecessor. It is also clear that such a perception is not shared by the EU and it has been a source of friction in transatlantic relations.

The EU's policy towards the Far East is not really comparable with the position of the US. Unlike the US, the EU is not an Asian power and it does not have military commitments in the area. Although the EU is an important economic actor in the region, it is only beginning to develop its political profile and its diplomatic connections in the Far East remain tenuous. However, there is no

6. In May 2001, Bush declared that the US would undertake whatever policy necessary to help Taiwan to defend itself.

7. See: 'Bush welcomes North Korea nuclear accord', *Financial Times,* 20.09.2005.

doubt that the region's importance for the EU is increasing. For example, China's growing activity in the Middle East (e.g. Iran) is as much, if not more, important for the EU as it is for the US. The same is the case for Beijing's rather ambivalent position vis-à-vis non-proliferation and disarmament regimes (such as the NPT). Finally, should China-US relations worsen, for example over the competition for access to energy resources or the situation in the Taiwanese strait, the negative consequences would be felt by the EU. They could potentially include a breakdown of co-operation in the UN, NPT and IAEA frameworks, Chinese support for anti-western forces in the Middle East and Africa and galloping energy prices.

In other words, despite their different positions in the Far East there is a considerable commonality of interest between the US and the EU in dealing with the regional powers and in developing a more advanced transatlantic dialogue on the issue. However, so far both sides of the Atlantic have been divided over the EU's declared, yet delayed, intention to lift its embargo on arms exports to China. This issue reveals an innate difference of perception in how to deal with Beijing. Whilst the US has become deeply concerned with the increase in China's military might, Europeans argue that the rise of the Chinese defence budget and its increasing international ambitions are a natural reflection of the country's growing economy.[8]

Multilateralism

Whilst differences persist across the Atlantic with regard to the value and purpose attached to multilateralism, it is also clear that the US is itself divided over the issue. The experts close to the Republican Party maintain that under the current Administration the US has remained a committed multilateralist, as demonstrated in its policy towards Iran, North Korea and even Iraq.[9] It is argued in this context that if Washington has not always pursued a multilateral route, this was because international institutions were seen as flaccid and unable to deliver. A converse view is that Bush's support for multilateralism is at best rhetorical, as seen in the Administration's refusal to sign up to a number of international agreements (Kyoto, the ICC), its seeming disregard of international institutions and, more recently, even the Geneva Convention addressing treatment of prisoners of war.

8. For more on the China question's importance for transatlantic relations see: M.Zaborowski, 'US China Policy: Implications for the EU', *Analysis EU-ISS*, October 2005 (http://www.iss-eu.org/new/analysis/analy125.pdf)

9. Charles Krauthammer, 'Democratic Realism. An American Foreign Policy for a Unipolar World', a speech posted by the American Enterprise Institute. Posted: 14.02.2004.

There are no divisions within the EU as regards the ICC, Kyoto and other agreements, which are broadly seen as conducive to the maintenance of international security and stability. Whilst there is a concern that international institutions can be slow and therefore frustrating to operate within, member states agree that multilateralism promotes consensus in international relations and represents a value in itself that should not be pursued selectively or on a case-by-case basis. A situation in which states choose a multilateral route only when it suits their interests (multilateralism *à la carte*) is generally seen by the Europeans as creating dangerous precedents and rendering international politics less predictable and less stable.

With the revitalisation of transatlantic relations and multilateralism an official priority of the second Bush term, it would seem to follow that international institutions would prosper from renewed US interest and input. Reality depicts a less optimistic state of affairs. Despite an overall congruence between the EU and US on a range of issues, international institutions remain in rather poor shape. Crucially, the much-heralded reform of the UN Security Council has so far not materialised and the organisation remains enfeebled by the lack of willingness from member states to contribute troops to UN peacekeeping or appropriate financial resources. Meanwhile, the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) conference ended in failure amidst growing fears that a rising number of states are preparing to 'go nuclear.' The Kyoto accord and International Criminal Court continue to be undermined by the abstention of the US government.

Finally, there is the question of what does multilateralism mean in the current transatlantic context? Two views that have emerged on this issue are articulated in this book. For some, the answer is 'NATO', while for others, it is the 'US-EU' framework. The centrality of NATO in transatlantic relations has been diluted by two developments: firstly, the diminishing importance of the Alliance for the US, as demonstrated during the operation in Afghanistan and the decreasing level of American military participation in NATO missions. Secondly, the growth of the EU's willingness and ability to engage in peacekeeping and peace-enforcing missions abroad, together with the development of the EU's diplomatic profile.

Whilst the consensus still holds that NATO should remain the central framework for operations involving the US militarily, for issues that are manifestly non-military in nature, such as dealing with Iran, it is direct US-EU co-operation that is increasingly seen as better suited to facilitate transatlantic co-operation. Given that the US is increasingly intent on partnership with Europeans on a range of soft security issues, the importance of the US-EU framework is likely to grow.

A mixed and evolving picture

The balance of transatlantic co-operation in the four areas discussed here represents a mixed and evolving picture. On the one hand, there is no doubt that both the EU and US continue to attach a considerable value to transatlantic co-operation as evident in the fact that much effort has been put into narrowing the gap and reaching compromises. For example, there is no doubt that one of the main reasons why the EU delayed its decision to lift its embargo on arms exports to China was because of Washington's strong objections to this policy. Whilst relations with Russia cause controversies within the EU itself, it is not a divisive issue within the transatlantic context. Finaly, the transatlantic co-operation over Iran has become very good and the views of the allies have converged.

On the other hand, it is clear that the greater congruence of policies between both sides of the Atlantic was not followed by the convergence of principles and ideologies. Most importantly, the EU and the US continue to have fundamentally different views on the role and importance of international institutions and agreements. The legacy of this disagreement is not just ideological but it affects transatlantic co-operation in some specific policy fields, most prominently in the Middle East. For example, there is no doubt that despite all the gestures concerning Iraq, the issue remains a major dividing factor in transatlantic relations. The disagreement over the role of the UN was at the origin of the problem and the ideological gap was further aggravated by America's own interpretation of the Geneva Convention in its treatment of terror suspects.

However, despite these caveats it is clear that transatlantic relations did indeed improve in 2005 and that they have been markedly better than at any time since President Bush moved into the White House in 2000. Whether this trend proves sustainable depends to a large extent on the reasons that convinced the US and the EU to work towards rescuing the relationship.

Rapprochement and domestic malaise

Why have the allies decided to bridge over their differences and move towards revitalising their relationship? It is usually argued that the reasons for the current *rapprochement* are no different than those that have made the existence of transatlantic co-operation possible. They include first and foremost shared values and interests. It is argued in this context that despite some growing divergences (for example, regarding the role of religion) America and Europe are still very much alike: we have similar lifestyles and we are afraid of the same things.[10] In this context, the fall-out over Iraq is not seen as demonstrating a deep crisis in the relationship but rather as an incident which we have now managed to put behind us. After all, this is not the first time that Europe and America disagreed over military intervention, with former examples including the Suez crisis and the Vietnam War.

Reinforcing this perception is the fact that there has indeed never been much cheering in Europe over the falling out with the US. It is true that most Europeans objected to the war in Iraq, but it is also true that only a tiny minority of them were anti-American and would have preferred to end the transatlantic relationship. In the midst of falling out over Iraq it was often forgotten that all the European governments, including the French, the Germans and the British, have expressed their solidarity with the US in reaction to the tragic events of 9/11. Moreover, these were not just declarations of political support but of concrete military assistance in fighting Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan. The subsequent transatlantic disputes and the split in the EU over Iraq were not motivated by the instinctive anti-Americanism of some European nations or by their reluctance to engage militarily.[11] It was a matter of disagreeing over what was the best strategy for fighting terrorism and dealing with WMDs. In other words, there has never been an unbridgeable difference of objectives between the two sides of the Atlantic

10. See: 'Transatlantic Trends 2005', German Marshall Fund of the United States.

11. For example France, who opposed the war, is one of the keenest interventionists in the EU context.

and most Europeans looked forward to the earliest opportunity to reconcile with America.

However, whilst the attachment to transatlantic relations played a considerable role in fostering the 2005 *rapprochement*, there is also no denying that to a considerable extent the process has also been motivated by difficulties on both sides of the Atlantic. As regards the US, three types of developments have contributed to this process: Iraq, Katrina and a crisis of confidence.

Clearly, the campaign in Iraq is going badly – the death toll is mounting, the costs are growing and the public's view of all aspects of Bush's presidency, including the fight against terrorism, is increasingly critical. The deteriorating internal situation in Iraq presents major challenges – insurgency, the loss of the US's credibility and continuing political instability. In these circumstances, the EU's involvement, particularly in the civilian aspects of stabilising Iraq, has come to be seen in the US as desirable. Washington would welcome a greater EU role in Iraq but it recognises that this is unlikely. However, it counts on the Europeans to relieve the US's military presence in other parts of the world and in particular in Afghanistan and in the Balkans.

America's overstretch has also changed its attitude towards the EU-3 diplomatic efforts in Iran. The initial reluctance with which the US viewed the EU-3 mission ('let them try and fail so we can tell them "we told you so"') has given way to wholehearted acceptance and support. Recently it became clear that in fact the US has come to rely on the EU-3's success and, despite the aggressive noises made by some neo-conservatives, it does not really propose any other viable option.

Whilst the troubles in Iraq have led to an alteration in Washington's foreign policy posture, the impact of the Katrina disaster only deepened this tendency. It is difficult to overestimate the effect the disaster has had on American politics and on America's perception of itself as well as on the role of the US in the world. For one thing, it has certainly weakened the prestige of the armed forces and the President – the inadequacy of the federal response and especially the failure to evacuate early the 20,000 people trapped in the Louisiana Superdome have damaged the myth of the invincibility of American armed forces and of the President himself. As a consequence, the President's approval ratings fell to 40% – down from 90% in the aftermath of 9/11.[12]

12. 'Katrina Aftermath: Storm upheaves Bush's second-term agenda', USA Today, 7.9.2005.

Moreover, the President's troubles did not end with Katrina and were further aggravated by self-inflicted damage and a series of controversies surrounding members of his Administration. In October 2005 President picked Harriet Miers as his candidate for the Supreme Court. The nomination failed amidst strong opposition from the conservative base within the Republican Party, exposing deep divisions within the President's own camp.[13] The Miers debacle was followed by the probe into the involvement of White House officials in leaking to the press the identity of a CIA undercover operative, Valerie Plame, whose husband was one of the most prominent critics of the war in Iraq. The probe led to the indictment of Vice-President Dick Cheney's chief of staff Lewis Libby and a widespread suspicion that the President's own top aide Carl Rove, while escaping indictment, was also involved in the process.[14]

The impact of the mishandling of the Katrina relief efforts and other domestic predicaments remain largely unpredictable for the course of foreign policy and it is likely that their direct implications will be minimal. But it is already clear that Washington is suffering from a crisis of confidence, which spills into its conduct of international relations. For example, in the aftermath of Katrina, the Administration scaled down on ambitious projects and shifted the focus towards dealing with more immediate concerns. One of the first responses was to delay or abandon the administration's two flagship initiatives: social security reform and making the 2001 tax cuts permanent. For the first time, there have also been calls from prominent Congressmen with serious military records to reduce or even completely withdraw US troops from Iraq.[15]

But it is not just the US that is experiencing a crisis of confidence. A similar process, albeit one that has come about for different reasons, has also dogged the other side of the Atlantic with troubled economies, the crisis of European integration and immigration dominating the EU agenda. Most of the economies in 'old' member states are either stagnant or are growing too slowly to provide new jobs, while unemployment remains at historically high levels in the EU. This poor economic performance affects the general mood and attitudes towards the EU, which is too often perceived as a remote yet powerful bureaucracy. Public views towards the EU are also affected by attitudes towards globalisa-

13. The charges brought against the nomination included cronyism – Miers had no experience as a judge but she was a personal friend of Bush's – and her ambivalent past position on abortion. See: 'Will cracks in the conservative coalition stop a lasting realignment of US politics?', *Financial Times*, 13.10.2005.

14. See: 'Cheney's top aide is charged with perjury', *International Herald Tribune*, 29-30.10.2005.

15. Paul Krugman, 'Time to leave', *The New York Times*, 21.10.2005.

tion, which are often negative, in particular in those parts of Europe that are experiencing economic difficulties.

All these factors fed into the public discontent that led to the failure of the European Constitution following the referenda in France and the Netherlands. In both cases the voters chose the insular option and rejected the vision of a more integrated and externally active EU. Whilst foreign policy was not among the reasons motivating the No vote, it is clear that for the time being the lack of a ratified constitution inhibits the development of the EU as a global actor.[16] In addition, the constitutional crisis opened up the debate in the EU on the future of its economic policy and its spending priorities.

Finally, the terrorist attacks in London in July 2005 and the riots in France in November 2005 exposed drawbacks and weaknesses in national immigration and integration policies and led to an increased sense of insecurity in western Europe. The terrorist attacks in London were committed by young men who, although of non-European ethnic origin, were mostly born and educated in the UK. In France, the riots were carried out by French youths of African and Maghreb origin. In the British case, religious fundamentalism and Britain's role in Iraq were important factors motivating the terrorists while no such factors appear to have played a role in France. However, despite the differences between the events in France and Britain, they made it apparent that the issue of migration and integration represents one of the most serious challenges for the EU.

It is therefore clear that the ongoing *rapprochement* in transatlantic relations is happening against a background of domestic difficulties on both sides of the Atlantic. In fact, arguably, problems at home and in Iraq are amongst the main reasons behind the pro-European turn in Washington. No comparable dynamic has developed in the EU, where domestic malaise has not produced a more pro-US attitude but, as argued earlier, the Europeans have remained open to the prospect of reconciliation with the US. Moreover, what the developments on both sides of the Atlantic have in common is that they reflect the growing tendency to look inward rather than contemplate ways of expanding international presence.

It is questionable whether domestic weakness provides a sound basis for a lasting improvement in the transatlantic relationship.

16. Giovanni Grevi, 'Reflections after the No vote. What makes the EU an international actor?', *Analysis EU-ISS*, 2 November 2005 (http:// www.iss-eu.org/new/analysis/analy129.pdf).

It also seems clear that a *rapprochement* built on weaker confidence means that the relationship is less effective than it might have been. For example, it is significant that although the US and the EU have largely reconciled their differences over dealing with Iran, their policies have been just as ineffective as when they diverged. Also, closer transatlantic co-operation was not sufficient to ensure success at the NPT review conference in May 2005. It seems increasingly apparent that in order to achieve a truly workable relationship, a considerable redefinition of its formula is needed.

Friends reunited?

In 2005 the US and the EU agreed that they needed each other because they could not achieve their objectives by acting alone. But, this consensus of views may change. For example, in 2003-4 the views of those who believed that the US could 'do it alone' prevailed in the White House leading to the war in Iraq and anticipating further challenges to the *status quo* in the Middle East. Since then things haven't gone exactly as the hawks within the Administration planned. But it is not impossible to imagine that should the situation in Iraq improve dramatically and the US recovers from its confidence crisis, it may be tempting for Washington to harden its policy stance towards Iran to the point which may cause new tensions in transatlantic relations. Subsequently, the belief that the two sides of the Atlantic would always need each other may prove to provide a shaky basis for an enduring partnership. But what is the alternative?

First of all it is important to be honest about the current state of and the prospects for transatlantic co-operation. It is true that the allies are more or less 'getting on with each other' since President Bush was re-elected. Nonetheless, the current *rapprochement* appears rather shallow: for example, opinion polls indicate the widening rather than the narrowing of the transatlantic gap. It is also important to look beyond the contemporary perspective and consider the likely evolution of the relationship in the future, for example, towards the end of the next decade. Where will the transatlantic relationship be in 2020 – will it exist at all? Should the trends we have witnessed in the last few years endure and indicate the likely future path of the relationship, it seems fair to presume that we are heading towards a much looser formula of

cooperation in the future. In particular, the three following types of developments seem to suggest such an evolution.

1) **Structural reasons.** The US's interest in Europe is waning. With Washington's centre of attention being now the Far East and the Middle East, dealing with Europe is becoming an issue of secondary importance for Washington. The US has already reduced its military presence in Germany and Italy and the day when there will be no American troops in Europe beyond tiny logistical bases in Romania and Bulgaria (with the purpose being security in the Middle East, not Europe) is approaching fast. For example, it already seems very likely that, should we be faced with another European conflict of the same type as Kosovo, the current US Administration would have not intervened in the same way as the Clinton Administration did.

2) **Different powers.** In traditional military terms the transatlantic relationship has been inherently unequal. During the Cold War it was essentially based on the protector-protégé type of relationship. After the end of the Cold War the EU continued to rely on America's military engagement in the Balkans and it lagged behind in the process of military modernisation. The war in Kosovo demonstrated an enormous gap between the military capacities of the US and those of EU member states. Whilst the experience of the war in Kosovo led to the emergence of ESDP and some major developments in EU foreign policy, there is no doubt that the EU still has a long way to go before it becomes a 'hard' military power and a coherent global actor. On the other hand, the EU has developed a sophisticated array of 'soft' power instruments and it is widely considered to be better suited to leading stabilising and civilian aspect of the operations than the US. While the US's 'hard' power and EU's 'soft power' may be and often are complementary, the persisting (and growing) inequality of their military potentials dogs the relationship, breeding discontent on the both sides.

3) **Critical attitude towards the US in Europe.** Opinion polls suggest that Europeans have an increasingly critical attitude towards America's values and its system of governance. More importantly, some European leaders have identified 'US-bashing' as a vote-winning tactic.

None of the three factors are likely to go away; in fact, by all accounts they will only grew in strength and importance. As time goes by, America's interests will focus more strongly on other parts of the world, especially on the Asia-Pacific area. The generation of Americans with an intimate knowledge and interest in Europe will grow thinner whilst the non-European ethnic groups will gain in prominence. The inequality between the US and EU in their military potentials and ability to act internationally will not disappear anytime soon, causing further tensions across the Atlantic. Finally, as long as the use of US-sceptic rhetoric is likely to attract votes, and by all indications it will, US-bashing will become only more common in European politics.

Does this mean that the transatlantic relationship is bound to disintegrate? A danger of a transatlantic separation or even a divorce is real and it should not be ignored. On the other hand, the value of the relationship is just too strong to let it go and many EU member states continue to see it as essential to their security. But, while it would be premature to announce the death of cross-Atlantic co-operation, there is a real danger that this relationship is becoming dysfunctional and ineffective. Can anything be done to prevent this happening? The allies have to reconcile themselves to the fact that the intimate transatlantic relationship we have known for the latter half of the last century is fading. It was a product of unique political and historical circumstances that are simply not there any more. But a looser yet functional relationship of like-minded polities is still attainable. Such a relationship would need to rest on the following principles:

- Supporting each other in need, which is what is being done in the Balkans and in Afghanistan.
- Co-operating when we have joint interests – as the US and EU have done in the case of Iran.
- Agreeing to disagree when we think differently – as we failed to do in the case of Iraq.

Is it possible to have divergent opinions or even interests and still have a functional relationship? It is of course very hard but by no means impossible. It would have helped if the expectations on both sides were less grand. The more we refer to the 'intimate' relationship as we knew it during the Cold War, the more we are dis-

appointed when we disagree. After all, with their divergent power potentials, the different natures of their polities and extent of global outreach as well as their different degrees of engagement in the Middle East, it should not be that surprising that most of the EU disagreed with the US's Iraq policy. It is unavoidable that such divergences will occur in the future and it is time to learn to live with that.

Secondly, perhaps paradoxically, in order to sustain the transatlantic relationship the EU has first and foremost to help itself by becoming a stronger and a more coherent international force. As long as the EU remains internally divided and internationally weak, its contribution to the transatlantic relationship will be questionable. It seems that Bush's second Administration has arrived at the same view, hence its manifest support for a 'stronger EU'. It is not only that there is no contradiction between stronger CFSP and ESDP and the well-being of transatlantic relations, but the former is in fact conditional on the latter.

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In 2005 transatlantic relations were healthier than during Bush's first term despite a number of outstanding EU-US disputes. The relationship remained based on three key pillars: economic interdependence, core values and common interests and threat perceptions. There remained, however, important concerns that are likely to divide the allies for some time to come. These include China policy, UN reform and policy towards the Middle East. Dealing with Iran remains a key concern for both the EU and US. There is no division of purpose in approaching this issue and the US supports EU diplomatic efforts there. However, the EU feels that the US could have/should have done much more to strengthen the European position vis-à-vis Tehran.

In his second term, President Bush has shown a greater inclination to work more closely with the Europeans. This was apparent during his trip to Brussels and the following EU-US summit was largely viewed as a success. Washington also supported the EU Constitutional Treaty and has not welcomed the crisis into which the Union has plummeted following the failure of the referen-

dums in France and the Netherlands. Whilst NATO has remained a central instrument in US thinking about transatlantic relations, a growing number of issues are being addressed through a direct US-EU framework. This is likely to become a continuing trend, which, in turn, means that NATO's purpose and role may have to be redefined.

Whilst the relationship improved during 2005, it is increasingly apparent that the intimate Cold War-style transatlantic co-operation is coming to its end and differences among the allies are only likely to grow in the future. This does not mean that a permanent crisis of the relationship is inevitable as long as the US and the EU agree that a less ambitious, more functional co-operation is possible. The US desires first and foremost to be helped and relieved from some of its international responsibilities. Whether the EU will be able to take up such a role depends on its ability to evolve into a more united and coherent international actor.

Annexes

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Abbreviations

ABM	Anti-Ballistic Missile.
AIEA	Agence internationale de l'émergie atomique
BCE	Banque centrale européenne
BERD	Banque européenne de reconstruction et de développement
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
EC	European Community
EMP	Euro-Mediterranean Partnership
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
ESDP	European Security and Defence Policy
ESS	European Security Strategy
EU	European Union
EURATOM	European Atomic Energy Community
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FMI	Fonds monétaire international
G8	Group of Eight Industrialised Nations
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GMO	Genetically-modified organism
GUAM	Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova
GWOT	Global War on Terror
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
ICC	International Criminal Court
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IRFFI	International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
KFOR	Kosovo Force
NAFTA	North America Free Trade Agreement
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NPT	Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty
NRF	NATO Response Force
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OGM	Organisme génétiquement modifié
OMC	Organisation mondiale du Commerce
ONU	Organisation des Nations unies
OPEC	Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
OPEP	Organisation des Pays Producteurs de Pétrole
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe

OTAN	Organisation du Traité de l'Atlantique Nord
PESC	Politique étrangère et de Sécurité commune
PESD	Politique européenne de Sécurité et de Défense
TNP	Traité de Non-Prolifération
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UE	Union européenne
UN	United Nations
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction
WTO	World Trade Organisation

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published by
the European Union
Institute for Security Studies
43 avenue du
Président Wilson
F-75775 Paris cedex 16
phone: +33 (0) 1 56 89 19 30
fax: +33 (0) 1 56 89 19 31
e-mail: institute@iss-eu.org
www.iss-eu.org
€ 10

ISSN 1633-7352
ISBN 92-9198-084-6