

NATO-EAPC FELLOWSHIPS PROGRAMM

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**U.S. CONGRESS AND THE FUTURE OF NATO: FORMULATION OF
THE U.S. APPROACH TOWARD EUROPEAN COMMON FOREIGN
AND SECURITY POLICY.**

Final report

Contents:

Introduction	3
I. Initial steps of CFSP and U.S. Congress reactions (1991 – 1998)	5
II. After Saint-Malo and Cologne: the peak of congressional debate over European security and defense integration process (1999 - 2000)	8
Conclusion: the reasons defined the development of congressional debate and its cessation.	29

Introduction.

One of the consequences of those fundamental geostrategic changes that took place after the end of the Cold War was the onset of international (or, more precisely, intra-western) discussion, concerning the role of transatlantic alliance in the world. One of quite radical views at the beginning of 90-ies was that NATO had outlived its usefulness because there was no longer any large-scale threat to the West. Eventually this position hadn't prevailed, and NATO members came to a common vision that the alliance should be preserved as "... the essential forum for consultation among its members and the venue for agreement on policies bearing on the security and defence commitments of Allies under the Washington Treaty".¹

However significance of the end of the Cold War had reflected in wide number of consequences, and the debate over the fate of NATO was only one of these. Another one was a very important step in the long process of the European entity formation: at the beginning of the 1990-ies these developments had exceeded the purely economic frames. As this new trend in the European process coincided with the discussion on the role and structure of transatlantic union in the new strategic setting, interplay between these two developments led to emergence and structuring of the idea of European Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) with European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) as its part. CFSP was officially proclaimed in the Maastricht Treaty of December 1991, simultaneously with transforming of European Community into the European Union (EU).

Title V of the Maastricht Treaty contains provisions on formulation and conduct of the EU's common foreign and security policy (CFSP). Moreover, point 1 of the Article J. 4 claims that "common foreign and security policy shall include all questions related to the security of the Union, including the eventual

¹Declaration on Peace and Cooperation, Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council, Rome, 7-8 November 1991.

framing of a common defence policy, which might in time lead to a common defence." Eventually this promise led to emergence and structuring of the idea of European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP).

Certainly, these developments couldn't but evoke some response in the U.S. in view of its historic involvement in European politics in the widest sense. This complex of issues provoked many questions, discussions and hesitations in the U.S. Surely this debate couldn't pass by the U.S. Congress. The congressional perception of this international challenge is particularly interesting in the framework of American politics, as this governmental body is one of the main centers of foreign policy discussions in the country. Moreover, concerning this sphere of politics, meanwhile Congress is not the most influential center, it offers the most representative range of opinions.

As well as discussion on the impact of CFSP on the American policy in Europe couldn't pass by Congress, the debate inside congressional walls couldn't pass by the issue of NATO's future. As NATO for decades has been the cornerstone of American policy in Europe, any significant politico-military change in the regional situation inevitably poses the question for the U.S. of whether this change has positive or negative impact on North Atlantic Treaty organization's status.

My research work aims to examine, in parallel to making of CFSP, the development of congressional debates and activities, undertaken in this regard, in order to investigate the motives and logic of formulation of approach towards this matter among wide range of American politicians.

I. Initial steps of CFSP and U.S. Congress reactions (1991 – 1998).

There is quite obvious correlation between the beginning of the European "common defence" formation, which was declared by the Title V of the Maastricht Treaty, and the end of the Cold War. Previously, in pre 90-ies time, large-scale Soviet military presence in Europe prevented the idea of any significant political modification of common western defense posture from actualization. From now, as even theoretical Soviet military threat had vanished unequivocally, European governments gained some opportunity to act independently in the sphere, where they had been so much adjective to the U.S. in Cold War time.

Some approaches in this way had already been undertaken before the Maastricht Treaty was signed. In October 1991 France and Germany put forward the plan to enlarge their already existed joint military brigade and thus to create the French - German Corps. It was announced on October 16, 1991, by President Francois Mitterrand and Chancellor Helmut Kohl in order to strengthen the WEU and place it under the control of the European Community via the Council of Ministers.

Western European Union (WEU) was by that time a structure with long history, as actually it had been established earlier than NATO, but little military record of service. In 1948 Belgium, France, Luxembourg, Netherlands and the UK signed Brussels Treaty, providing for collective self-defense. WEU as such was created in 1954 in accordance with additional protocols to Brussels Treaty. It was expected that WEU would be closely interlinked with NATO, but actually no kind of separate or competing with NATO viable structure of military cooperation was established.

Franco-German corps was regarded by these European leaders as a concrete step toward European security union and as a nucleus of future European army (which Belgium, Italy, Spain, and Luxembourg were thereat considering to join).

The plan stipulated that the Corps would be subordinated to WEU, which, in turn, was presumed to become the defense body of EC (which was renamed into EU by the Maastricht Treaty). The last idea was soon embodied in article J. 4 of the Maastricht Treaty.

It is noteworthy, that the phrase "common foreign and security policy" was, perhaps, first time mentioned in the course of debate around the French - German initiative in the autumn 1991.²

The response to this idea among American congressmen was quite emotional. What is interesting, the response was more anxious, than that to the Maastricht Treaty with its declaration of CFSP. Apparently, being much under the effect of historical experience, congressmen inclined to percept the project of Corps as another one effort of France to strengthen its influence in Europe by diminishing the regional authority of the U.S. As representative Douglas Bereuter (NE - R) said apropos of this issue: "... this effort to disconnect a European defense pillar from NATO is a part of a continuing French strategy to reduce American influence in Europe. However, the Franco-German proposal is admittedly also consistent with Paris' grand plan for creating a federalized Europe through a strong multifaceted European Community and their alleged objective to replace American defense leadership in Europe without retreating from their position of nonparticipation in the NATO integrated military command".³

The statement clearly shows, that even in the time, when Soviet Union still hadn't collapsed, congressmen (or at least some of them) were fully aware of danger that self-sufficient European defense moves could constitute a serious rivalry with NATO, as the basis of regional security structure in Europe.

As Douglas Bereuter was a republican, there is no wonder, that his opinion was shared by the president's George Bush (Sr.) administration, which paid a lot of attention to the issue of Franco-German corps in the following year.

² See, for example, "A Franco-German Army: A Threat to the North Atlantic Alliance?" -- (By Leslie H. Gelb), New York Times, October 20, 1991

³ Congressional Record: October 22, 1991 (Extension of Remarks) [Page E3498]

Administration's reservations about the Franco-German initiative and other moves toward a more independent Europe centered around concerns that the United States' role could be marginalized in Europe by these efforts and that the stable structures of security that had been build around this role would not be replaced with adequate substitutes. Moreover, as some of congressmen, administration apparently believed that the initiative was more striking example of such a European moves, than theoretical and quite vague project of CFSP stated in Maastricht Treaty.

Perhaps, exactly in order to govern the alleged French intention into constructive way, NATO at its summit at Rome in November 1991 welcomed the concept of "European defense identity" within the framework of alliance. The Rome declaration stated that: "The development of a European security identity and defence role, reflected in the further strengthening of the European pillar within the Alliance, will reinforce the integrity and effectiveness of the Atlantic Alliance. The enhancement of the role and responsibility of the European members is an important basis for the transformation of the Alliance. These two positive processes are mutually reinforcing." At the same time the declaration expressed reservations and outlined precautions in view of possible but undesirable development of the said defense identity in unconstructive way: "We are agreed, in parallel with the emergence and development of a European security identity and defence role, to enhance the essential transatlantic link that the Alliance guarantees and fully to maintain the strategic unity and indivisibility of security of all our members. ... We further agree that ... we will develop practical arrangements to ensure the necessary transparency and complementarity between the European security and defence identity as it emerges in the Twelve and the WEU, and the Alliance."⁴

As well as U.S. administration's approach towards European defense integration, republican position in Congress on the point wasn't unequivocal.

⁴ The Rome Declaration, 8 November 1991, point 6.

Some of congressmen expressed the views with quite apparent isolationist savor. Senator William Cohen (ME - R.), future Secretary of Defense in democratic Clinton administration, even argued in favor of European defense integration moves, as he considered these as the opportunity to reduce American military burden in the region. Addressing the question of reduction of U.S. deployments in Europe, Cohen observed, that in future "... we will be able to make additional significant reductions as the European integration process continues and Europeans are better able to assume defense responsibilities."⁵ Pronouncing for purposeful but gradual U.S. military presence reduction, Cohen opposed abrupt cuts, since "it could undermine confidence in the American commitment and thereby disrupt the European integration process".⁶ Thus, Cohen not only sympathized Europe's defense integration efforts, but also forewarned against the steps that could hamper the process.

The question of how to percept the Franco-German initiative had provoked controversy not only between U.S. and European governments, but also between republicans and democrats in U.S. Congress. Democrats regarded administration's attention to this issue as unnecessarily insistent and used it as an appropriate ground to criticize republican's approach towards European developments. Democratic position on that point can be summarized as "less heed to European initiatives – more attention to NATO". Senator Joseph Biden (De - D.) professed, for instance: "Unfortunately, for some months now, the Bush administration has allowed itself to be diverted by a comparatively petty concern - arising from the initiative of France and Germany to form a small Euro-force. Over time, military cooperation between these two historic rivals could conceivably provide the core for an independent all-European security force, no longer reliant upon the United States to provide the cement for collective defense.

But why the Bush administration regards this as an alarming specter can be explained only by postulating that the administration has little concept of historic

⁵ Congressional Record: June 11, 1992 (Senate) [Page S7968]

change. There are two possibilities: either the Franco-German initiative will fizzle, as have all previous attempts to breathe life into west European security cooperation; or such efforts will finally, in the post-cold war era, bear fruit". But, Biden argued, even in the case of success, "European defense cooperation ... will evolve only slowly - and only as West European leaders and publics reach a conclusion they are not yet even close to reaching: that Europe would be better off relying on Germany and France - without the United States - for leadership in collective defense".⁷

As this statement was made in summer 1992, in full play of election campaign, Biden's phrasings were very sharp and polemic. And his idea was clear: Bush administration didn't act in the right way and was too concentrated on the "petty" issue of European defense integration, which even potentially could hardly pose any problem to the U.S. The question, that was really worth to concern about, was NATO and its adapting to the new security environment: "Meanwhile, far more urgent and serious business lies in rendering NATO relevant to real needs in the immediate post-cold-war period. The United States remains the leader of the alliance and should act like it. A transformation is required, and the Bush administration has not yet supplied the leadership to accomplish it".⁸

To democratic opinion, NATO was the institution that was able both to preserve peace and stability in new Europe and to resolve the dilemma of the scope of American participation in the regional affairs. Also, the opportunity to settle the politico-military relations (which, actually, were considered by majority of congressmen as controversy) with France was regarded of no less importance. NATO as institution was viewed as appropriate resource to engage France and dissuade it from undertaking the efforts in defense sphere not coordinated with the U.S. But some significant changes in the division of roles inside NATO were

⁶ Ibidem.

⁷ Congressional Record: July 01, 1992 (Senate) [Page S9473]

⁸ Ibidem.

reckoned as necessary premise for such engagement. As senator, future democratic vice-presidential candidate Joseph Lieberman (CT-D.) put it: "Adapting to a new era also means that the Europeans should take on a greater role in the Alliance's decision-making processes. Such a transfer of responsibility could induce the French to play a greater role in the Alliance's military activities, thereby lightening the burden for the United States. Greater French participation in NATO could reduce Paris's attempts to set up a European defense structure outside of NATO."⁹ (It is noteworthy, that Lieberman repeated absolutely the same phrase during the Senate debate one year later, in regard of transatlantic division of labor in Bosnian crisis¹⁰).

It's interesting to note, that the kind of democratic position expressed by Joseph Lieberman was quite similar to the opinion of a republican William Cohen. Both senators argued for reducing of U.S. troops number in Europe (though Lieberman proposed more urgent cuts) and for more responsibility to be taken by Europeans in defense sphere. The difference between these positions consisted in the means of delegating of that responsibility: Cohen regarded European defense integration as quite acceptable way for the U.S., while Lieberman not only considered it disadvantageous, but insisted on ability of NATO as institution to make Europeans to act in concordance with Americans.

As congressmen regarded the project of Franco-German Corps as practical embodiment of the concept of self-sufficient European defense structure, principal attention of Congress in the sphere, which is being considered in this report, was paid to it. Nevertheless congressmen hadn't overlooked absolutely the significance of Maastricht innovations in the European integration process and namely of the formal adoption of CFSP idea. Senator Jesse Helms (NC-R.) characterized the Treaty as "an event, which could affect the interests of the American people ... vitally."¹¹ In line with his traditionally very conservative

⁹ Congressional record: June 11, 1992 (Senate) [Page S8001]

¹⁰ Congressional record: August 06, 1993 (Senate) [Page S10943]

¹¹ Congressional record: November 22, 1991 (Senate) [Page S17531]

position on foreign politics, Helms strongly criticized CFSP project, observing, that "the development of European defense arrangements which vitiate the sacrifices of American time, money, and blood must be fought."¹²

Although this statement was dedicated precisely to Maastricht Treaty, Helms' wording clearly indicated his strong opposition to any kind of separate European defense structure construction.

Thus, we cannot conclude, that on the early stage of ESDI formation Congress presented a single perception of it, but rather a number of approaches, though the majority of congressmen considered the new wave of integration initiatives as embodiment of the continuing French policy to gain more authority in Europe. Certainly, the general dividing line was between democrats and republicans. Such republicans as Douglas Bereuter and Jesse Helms presented rigidly oppositional views, without any idea of how to use or correct the new European trends, besides that these "must be fought".

Unlike this wing of republicans, democratic position was more neutral. Although democrats didn't sympathize the said European developments, they criticized republican administration for needless negativism in transatlantic debates and instead proposed that the U.S. should put forward some initiative of its own and not only oppose other's initiatives. Such U.S.' own initiative, according to democrats, could be a shift of responsibilities inside NATO that could both help to adapt the organization to the new security environment and to meet the French political ambitions.

But in the depicted dividing lines were some exclusions and, as following developments revealed, one of these was quite important. It was the view, expressed by William Cohen, who not only didn't oppose, but even supported and, so to say, lobbied for the European defense integration. Cohen wasn't alone among republicans. Senator John McCain (AZ-R.) in the course of his speech on the point of fiscal year 1994 defense budget, observed, that "... the United States

¹² Congressional record: November 22, 1991 (Senate) [Page S17532]

must steadily reduce its role in leading the European part of the Atlantic alliance, it must sharply reduce its forces for NATO, and it must concentrate on the broader mission of maintaining Western security outside Europe."¹³ McCain added, that " there is nothing to be gained by continuing the myth of American military leadership in Europe for a few more years, and there is a great deal to be lost. In the name of a now outdated concept of Atlanticism, we risk delaying European recognition of the fact that Europe must now be responsible for European security."¹⁴ The senator also said, that "we risk undercutting European efforts at creating largely European security alternatives, such as the efforts with the WEU", and that instead the U.S. needs "to openly encourage European security alternatives."¹⁵

Position of Cohen and McCain was rather similar to democratic one. The difference consisted in the fact, that democrats paid more attention to strengthening of NATO's role through restructuring of the organization, while the republicans stressed the need for reduction of U.S. role in Europe, particularly in view of unfolding Balkan conflicts. But whatever were the motives of the republican senators, their resulting opinion was much closer to democratic than to conservative republican one, and no wonder that later Cohen joined Clinton administration.

While the initial intensification of congressional debate around the said issue in the beginning of the 90-ies had been fostered, principally, by the Franco-German initiative of European corps, in the middle of the decade the discussion concentrated around the Bosnian crisis. Perhaps, the reason for that shift was not only the emergence of the crisis as such, but also some interim cease of defense integration activities in Europe. The notorious (from congressional point of few) Corps had finally been established in 1993, and eventually, besides France and

¹³ Congressional record: February 18, 1993 (Senate) [Page S1931]

¹⁴ Congressional record: February 18, 1993 (Senate) [Page S1933]

¹⁵ Ibidem.

Germany, it was joined by Belgium, Luxembourg and Spain. Hereafter European activities, not rhetoric, in the sphere were reduced.

Meanwhile, the development of concept of “European pillar” within NATO was gradually unfolding. As the result of the alliance’s summit in Brussels, in January 1994, the Brussels Declaration was issued, and ESDI/CFSP matters were one of the main topics of that:

“3. Today, we confirm and renew ... link between North America and a Europe developing a Common Foreign and Security Policy and taking on greater responsibility on defence matters. We welcome the entry into force of the Treaty of Maastricht and the launching of the European Union, which will strengthen the European pillar of the Alliance and allow it to make a more coherent contribution to the security of all the Allies ...

4. We give our full support to the development of a European Security and Defence Identity which, as called for in the Maastricht Treaty, in the longer term perspective of a common defence policy within the European Union, might in time lead to a common defence compatible with that of the Atlantic Alliance. The emergence of a European Security and Defence Identity will strengthen the European pillar of the Alliance while reinforcing the transatlantic link and will enable European Allies to take greater responsibility for their common security and defence. The Alliance and the European Union share common strategic interests.

5. We support strengthening the European pillar of the Alliance through the Western European Union, which is being developed as the defence component of the European Union. The Alliance's organisation and resources will be adjusted so as to facilitate this. We welcome the close and growing cooperation between NATO and the WEU that has been achieved on the basis of agreed principles of complementarity and transparency.”

One can make a conclusion out of this document that Europeans and Americans had achieved a full mutual understanding over the matters of ESDI –

NATO institutional interrelation, that ESDI structure had been developing steadily and at least was very close to full operability. But members of Congress were far from this optimism, and along with new developments in Europe it had become clear, that congressmen were more realistic in their assessments, than authors of the Brussels declaration.

With gradual emergence of Bosnian crisis as one of the most disturbing regional developments, the question of European defense identity was raised in Congress in the new context. While erenow the main subject of congressmen's concern had been European intentions to develop separate regional defense structure, now accents shifted in the course of the debate. Many congressmen now believed that in view of unfolding Balkan crisis time had come to use the European initiative to resolve the problem. And the principal motive for such approach was the unwillingness to see American troops being involved in the absolutely inconsistent with the U.S. interests war.

For example, in the very beginning of 1997 senator Carl Levin (MI-D.) during the nomination of William Cohen to be Secretary of Defense observed: "There is a new fortuitous development inside of NATO", which consisted in the fact, that "NATO is developing a European security and defense identity within the alliance which will permit European NATO nations, with NATO consent, to carry out operations under the political control and strategic direction of the western European Union, using NATO assets and NATO capabilities." In view of this, Levin proceeded, "U.S. combat forces should not remain on the ground in Bosnia for more than 18 more months" and "it is at least possible that this new European security and defense initiative would be the right follow-on force in Bosnia should an outside armed force continue to be necessary."¹⁶

It is difficult to explain accurately, why senator Levin considered the development of ESDI "fortuitous", as at that date this issue had been discussed in Congress for several years, but the main message of the senator's statement is

¹⁶ Congressional record: January 22, 1997 (Senate) [page S619]

quite clear: if Europeans, notwithstanding American skepticism, had insisted on necessity of self-sufficient regional defense structure, now they received a chance to justify their initiative and approve it a good remedy for resolving of international hardships instead of making the U.S. troops to do the Europeans' job.

This congressional opinion, expressed by senator Levin, was also represented in successive amendments to Defense Authorization Acts for FY 1998 and FY 1999 (Besides Levin, the amendments were sponsored by senators Jack Reed (RI-D.), Robert Byrd (WV-D.), John McCain (AZ-R.), James Inhofe (OK-R.) and Strom Thurmond (SC-R.)) The amendment to Defense Authorization Act for FY 1998 reads: "... It is the sense of Congress that:

(1) United States ground combat forces should not participate in a follow-on force in Bosnia and Herzegovina after June 1998;

(2) The European Security and Defense Identity, which ... enables the Western European Union, with the consent of the North Atlantic Alliance, to assume political control and strategic direction of NATO assets made available by the Alliance, is an ideal instrument for a follow-on force for Bosnia and Herzegovina;

(3) If the European Security and Defense Identity is not sufficiently developed or is otherwise deemed inappropriate for such a mission, a NATO-led force without the participation of United States ground combat forces in Bosnia, may be suitable for a follow-on force for Bosnia and Herzegovina;"¹⁷

The meaning of amendment to Defense Authorization Act for FY 1999 was almost the same.¹⁸ Both amendments clearly indicated that the main purpose of their sponsors was to encumber the further use of U.S. troops in Bosnia. Thereby the issue of ESDI was raised to facilitate the possible withdrawal of American units by entrusting the complete responsibility for the developments in the region to Europeans. So the implicit critic towards ESDI for inability to

¹⁷ Congressional record: July 11, 1997 (Senate) [page S7244]

resolve that local problem, wasn't the primary intention of the senators when they were initiating the amendments. Nevertheless, perhaps the first mentioning in U.S. Congress of ESDI in connection with real, not hypothetical, international crisis in such a distrustful manner meant that now senators not only were as skeptical towards separate European defense projects as they had been at the beginning of the 90-ies, but even quite irritated. This can be illustrated with the comment, made by senator Biden during debate over the defense authorization act for FY 1998: "Our allies talk ceaselessly in Brussels about a European security and defense identity and a European pillar within NATO, but when they get a chance to put their troops where their mouths are, they somehow change their tune."¹⁹

Congressmen's irritation can be better understood in the context of continued elaboration and adoption of NATO declarations, calling for strengthened ESDI/CFSP role in the sphere of European security and for constructive relationships between ESDI and North Atlantic Alliance. After the Brussels Declaration the next one was the Final Communiqué, issued after the ministerial meeting of the North Atlantic Council (NAC) in Berlin, June 3, 1996. As one of "fundamental objectives", set in order to improve NATO's capabilities, the Communiqué mentioned "the development of the ESDI within NATO by conducting at the request of and in coordination with the WEU, military planning and exercises for illustrative WEU missions identified by the WEU."²⁰ In view of such a statements continued unwillingness or inability of Europeans to assume more sufficient role in the Balkans and prove viability of defense integration projects was especially annoying.

Congressional debates revealed that congressmen, in view of their scepticism towards ESDI, still considered NATO as the only effective security structure in Europe. One can suggest that the only aim of points 1 and 2 of the

¹⁸ Congressional record: June 24, 1998 (Senate) [page S6935]

¹⁹ Congressional record: July 11, 1997 (Senate) [page S7240]

²⁰ Ministerial meeting of the North Atlantic Council, Berlin, June 3, 1996, point 7.

"Sense of Congress" was to make European leaders to acknowledge counter-productiveness of their respective efforts. And the obvious absence of any viable alternative would stress the importance of NATO and its ability to resolve the crisis, but, anyway, without the participation of American troops.

One of the results of this congressional attention to ESDI was inclusion (on initiative of senator Levin) into Defense Authorization Act for FY 1999 of requirement to Secretary of Defense to "submit to the congressional defense committees in accordance with this section reports on the development of the European Security and Defense Identity (ESDI)"²¹

However these congressional activities hadn't resulted in cessation of American military presence in Bosnia. (Though that critic apparently was at least partially the reason for more active and responsible European participation in Macedonian developments at the beginning of 21st century.) With the gradual stabilization of the internal situation in Bosnia and emergence of a number of other international challenges, congressional attention to the crisis had relaxed. But this can hardly be said about European defense integration process, which by the end of 90-ies was perceived in Congress as one of the most challenging international problems.

²¹ Congressional record: June 19, 1998 (Senate) [page S6716]

II. After Saint-Malo and Cologne: the peak of congressional debate over European security and defense integration process (1999 - 2000).

The end of 90-ies can be characterized as the period of the most intensive congressional discussion over the implications of defense integration developments in Europe for the U.S. and its international posture. This increase of activity was caused by number of proceedings in Europe, which seemingly evidenced the intention of European leaders to move from theoretic deliberations about the continent's defense identity to some practical actions.

This chain of events in Europe had begun with famous St-Malo British-French declaration supported by Germany. The declaration was the result of French-British summit, which took place in December 1998. The sense of the document was to give some new impetus to European defense integration process. Along with traditional reassurances about their intent to act "in conformity with our respective obligations in NATO" President of France and British Prime Minister had included into the text several new points, which differed in tone from previous documents concerning the issue. Namely, it was stated in Saint-Malo declaration:

"1. The European Union needs to be in a position to play its full role on the international stage. ...

2. To this end, the Union must have the capacity for autonomous action, backed up by credible military forces, the means to decide to use them, and a readiness to do so, in order to respond to international crises. ... Europeans will operate within the institutional framework of the European Union."

In a half-year another one, more representative, EU summit took place, on June 3 - 4, 1999, in Cologne. Actually, it concretised and developed the Saint-Malo agreement. One of its main results was establishment of the concept of "European policy on security and defence" or, as it was later re-stated "European Security and Defence Policy" (ESDP). The difference of ESDP from ESDI was

that the former implied defense integration in the framework of EU, and the latter implied European "pillar" in the framework of NATO. However, official documents only delicately hinted at such a distinction between the terms.

It can hardly be said that the majority of congressmen fully realized the subtle terminological difference between abbreviations "ESDI" and "ESDP". Anyway, congressmen had often been using "ESDI" for all kinds of European defense integration efforts, both within the framework of NATO and outside of it. Nevertheless they fully realized, that European leaders, by means of declarations in Saint-Malo and Cologne, indicated their intent to give a more separate from the U.S. stance to their efforts.

This fact became the reason for deep concern in Congress about the European developments in the sphere, as well as about transatlantic relations as a whole. In 1999 Congress organized a number of hearings, specially dedicated to ESDI/ESDP. It meant that for the first time congressmen drew attention precisely to the issue of European defense integration proper, but not as a part of some other problems: latent rivalry with France in Europe or Bosnian crisis. It is quite interesting to suppose, why these full-scale congressional debates, concerning the American policy toward these new developments, have started only in 1999, while the response of U.S. Administration to European defence initiatives was immediate and serious from the very beginning of the 90-ies. The fact of such a delay may be explained by a number of reasons. First of all it underscores once more, that Congress, as a governmental body, doesn't have responsibility of everyday conduct of foreign policy: that's why Congress mainly reacts upon the most impressive international challenges. And seemingly congressmen for long time hadn't perceived "ceaseless" theoretical deliberations of Europeans about ESDI as something very impressive. But by the end of 90-ies significant developments in Europe had compelled congressmen to take the European enterprise seriously.

The fact that Great Britain, for decades a sceptic on European approaches to defence, had considerably altered its position, caused a change of perception in Congress (as well as in Washington generally). Congressional reaction followed in several months and on March 24, 1999 the hearing was organised in the Senate Committee on Foreign relations dedicated to the theme: "European Union: Internal Reform, Enlargement, and the Common Foreign and Security Policy."²²

It is interesting to note that while those witnesses invited to the testimony, three scholars as well as Anthony Wayne, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of European Affairs, paid special attention to ESDI issue, congressmen didn't express much interest. Questions were asked only by the chairman of the Subcommittee on Europe, where the hearing was held, senator Gordon Smith (Or - R.), and he was much more interested in the prospects of EU enlargement and those of military campaign in Kosovo. Probably senators just were not fully informed about details in regard to ESDI, or their attention was too much arrested by the unfolding war against Milosevic.

However in the second half of 1999, after the Cologne meeting of EU members, Congress focused very seriously on European defence matters. Entirely in line with their regular consideration of NATO as a cornerstone of U.S. transatlantic policy, one of the first steps of congressmen was expression of their strong support to the Alliance in view of Cologne agreements. This support was reflected in the Senate resolution 175, which was passed on August 5, 1999. Though the resolution was called "The sense of the Senate regarding U.S. policy toward the NATO, in light of the Alliance's April 1999 Washington summit and the conflict in Kosovo", several of its points were dedicated to problem of correlation between recent European agreements and NATO:

²² "THE EUROPEAN UNION: INTERNAL REFORM, ENLARGEMENT, AND THE COMMON FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY", HEARING BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON EUROPEAN AFFAIRS OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS, UNITED STATES SENATE, MARCH 24, 1999.

“(6) improved European military capabilities, not new institutions, are the key to a vibrant and more influential European Security and Defense Identity within NATO;

(7) NATO should be the primary institution through which European and North American allies address security issues of transatlantic concern;

(8) the European Union must implement its Cologne Summit decisions concerning its Common Foreign and Security Policy in a manner that will ensure that non-WEU NATO allies, including Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Hungary, Iceland, Norway, Poland, Turkey, and the United States, will not be discriminated against, but will be fully involved when the European Union addresses issues affecting their security interests;

(9) the European Union's implementation of the Cologne summit decisions should not promote a strategic perspective on transatlantic security issues that conflicts with that promoted by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization;

(10) the European Union's implementation of its Cologne summit decisions should not promote unnecessary duplication of the resources and capabilities provided by NATO; and

(11) the European Union's implementation of its Cologne summit decisions should not promote a decline in the military resources that European allies contribute to NATO, but should instead promote the complete fulfilment of their respective force commitments to the Alliance.”²³

The message of the resolution was clear. First of all, resolution indicated that congressmen were quite alarmed by the results of Cologne summit. Perhaps, for first time members of Congress realized so distinctly that the negative result of European defense integration could be not so much a threat of decoupling of NATO from inside of the Alliance, as the danger of creation of some competitive to NATO European structure.

²³ Congressional Record: August 5, 1999 (Senate) [Page S10499]

All congressmen's fears and reservations about possible damage from ESDP to NATO were very sharply defined in resolution. And if all these cautions are summed up, one would receive an apparent warning not strive for supplanting of NATO in the European security policy affairs.

Furthermore, on November 2, 1999 House of Representatives passed a resolution (Res. 59), expressing its sense that the United States remained committed to the NATO. The resolution mainly was elaborated by republican representatives, members of Committee on International relations Benjamin Gilman (NY-R) (chairman of the Committee) and Douglas Bereuter (NE-R) (who had been among the first opponents in Congress of European defense identity (see above)).

According to representative Gilman, ESDI developments, along with unfolding process of NATO expansion, were one of the main reasons for putting forward of the resolution. In this document House expressed its vision of desirable direction of European defense integration development and its concerns about the stance it was taking in practice. As Gilman said, referring to ESDI and CFSP: "To the degree that these initiatives are about European allies contributing more to our common defense within NATO, we applaud them. ... But many of us are troubled by indications that these initiatives may be the first step toward a divorce between the European and North American pillars of NATO. Some of our European allies seem to long for an independent military capability, one that is not just separable from NATO, but that is separate."²⁴ And representative Bereuter added in a more frank way that, "there is the likelihood, the way things are proceeding, that the European pillar, the ESDI, would be created outside NATO within the European Union."²⁵

Moreover, Gilman characterized declarations, issued at Saint-Malo and Cologne summits, as "troubling sentiments". He supposed, that the European developments were likely to result in a "serious damage ...to the fabric of the

²⁴ Congressional Record: November 2, 1999 (House) [Page H11213]

transatlantic security bond”, and U.S. security commitments to Europe would be called into question.²⁶

In view of these dangers the representative repeated the request to Europeans, many times advanced by U.S. administration officials, to elaborate defense integration policy in a manner that didn't duplicate NATO, was not decoupled from NATO, and didn't discriminate against non-EU members of NATO.

Several paragraphs of the resolution were dedicated to ESDI concerning its impact on NATO. Point 6 insisted on necessity of "equitable sharing of contributions to the NATO common budgets and overall defence expenditure and capability-building". Paragraphs 7 and 9 clearly indicated desire of senators to stress that they would agree with the further development of European defence identity only as a mean to improve the said balance of "sharing of contributions to the NATO common budgets":

7. "The Alliance should welcome efforts by members of the European Union (EU) to strengthen their military capabilities and enhance their role within the Alliance through the European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI);

9. In order to preserve the solidarity and effectiveness that has been achieved within the Alliance over the last 50 years, it is essential that security arrangements elaborated under the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) complement, rather than duplicate NATO efforts and institutions, and be linked to, rather than decoupled from NATO structures, and provide for full and active involvement of all European Allies rather than discriminating against European Allies that are not members of the EU;"²⁷

As one can see, this resolution used milder expressions, than Res. 175 of the Senate. Nevertheless, Res. 59 clearly indicated that the House shared the opinion of senators.

²⁵ Congressional Record: November 2, 1999 (House) [Page H11216]

²⁶ Congressional Record: November 2, 1999 (House) [Page H11213]

²⁷ Congressional Record: November 2, 1999 (House) [Page H11212]

Although resolution met rather considerable opposition in the House, those representatives, who were not agree, were objecting mainly against too much support to NATO, from their point of view, stressed in the resolution rather than against that critical tone toward European defence initiatives. The opposition was bipartisan, and its motives regarded such an issues as fostering of "Russian paranoia" by the new wave of NATO enlargement (Roscoe Bartlett, MD-R, Jerrold Nadler, NY-D), or reinforcement of the tendency for the President to use NATO military forces overseas without respect to congressional "war-making authority" (Tom Campbell, CA-D). Some representatives argued against expansion of NATO, on the ground that it would involve American troops in more European conflicts, and for more prudent attitude to America's role in NATO. Thus Dana Rohrabacher (CA-R.), former speechwriter for President Ronald Reagan, even stated in the heat of discussion: "NATO is the European way of playing we Americans as suckers once again."²⁸ Anyway, motives of those representatives, who objected to the resolution, didn't concern the issue of ESDI/ESDP.

In several days after the adoption of Res. 59 the Senate passed similar document (Res.208) unanimously. Res. 208 was sponsored by bipartisan group of distinguished senators: William Roth (De-R.), Chuck Hagel (NE-R.), chairman of the Foreign Relations committee Jesse Helms (NC-R.), Jon Kyl (Az-R.), Richard Lugar (In-R.), Gordon Smith (Or-R.), leader of democratic minority in the Foreign Relations committee Joseph Biden (De-D.) and Joseph Lieberman (Ct-D.) Actually the resolution contained development of the views, already expressed in Res. 175. Indeed, about a half of the points of Res. 208 reiterated the such of Res. 175, but another half consisted of several new statements.

In the preamble to resolution senators noticed that "NATO is the only institution that promotes a uniquely transatlantic perspective and approach to issues concerning the security of North America and Europe" and noted "great

²⁸ Congressional Record: November 2, 1999 (House) [Page H11214]

efforts" of NATO "to facilitate the emergence of a stronger European pillar within NATO through the ESDI". Then, the resolution expressed the sense of the Senate that:

"(1) on matters of trans-Atlantic concern the European Union should make clear that it would undertake an autonomous mission through its European Security and Defense Identity only after the North Atlantic Treaty Organization had been offered the opportunity to undertake that mission but had referred it to the European Union for action;

(3) failure of the European allies of the United States to achieve the goals established through the Defense Capabilities Initiative would weaken support for the Alliance in the United States;

(4) the President, the Secretary of State, and the Secretary of Defense should fully use their offices to encourage the NATO allies of the United States to commit the resources necessary to upgrade their capabilities to rapidly deploy forces over long distances, sustain operations for extended periods of time, and operate jointly with the United States in high-intensity conflicts, thus making them effective partners of the United States in supporting mutual interests".

But, perhaps, the most eloquent was very short addition, when the point of Res. 175 stating "improved European military capabilities, not new institutions, are the key to a vibrant and more influential European Security and Defense Identity within NATO", was repeated with just one amendment: "not new institutions outside of the Alliance". Apparently, Res. 208 was the most accurately elaborated and frankly conveyed expression of congressional concerns over the development of ESDP, and forcible statement of congressmen's support to NATO.

During the debate over the Senate resolution senator Biden (De-D.) had formulated very accurately the nature of dilemma confronting congressmen in regard to ESDI. Biden's opinion was "that ESDI - if it is developed in proper coordination with NATO - can serve the national interest of the United States"

and "at long last create more equitable burden-sharing between our European NATO allies and the United States." Also "a rejuvenated European pillar of the alliance could free up forces of this country for possible action elsewhere." But at the same time there was "the biggest danger that ESDI could be constructed as an alternative to NATO for non-Article 5 missions. If this would happen, it could lead to an estrangement of the United States from its European allies."²⁹

On November 10, 1999, special hearing was held in the House on "European Common Foreign, Security, and Defence Policies—Implications for the United States and the Atlantic Alliance." The questions asked by representatives during the testimony, mainly by the chairman of Committee on International relations Benjamin Gilman (NY-R) and Douglas Bereuter (NE-R), originator of Res. 59, once again revealed their deep concerns about the ESDI.

This hearing had opened a series of congressional testimonies regarding the European security and defence initiatives. This issue had been raised actually in all hearings concerning transatlantic relations in the following year. The same period was the time of the most sceptical congressional attitude to the problem. Those congressmen, who opposed ESDP, were expressing the same concerns that had been enounced in respective resolutions of autumn 1999.

Meanwhile, some members of Congress, not so much republicans, as democrats, held more sympathetic attitude toward European defense integration. For example, some democratic representatives not only hailed the European initiatives, but also criticised the American scepticism towards it. As representative William Delahunt (MA-D) put it: "We should welcome that [ESDP], and yet it is interesting to note that there is a lot of schizophrenia about that. At the same time that we are questioning the role of American troops in the Balkans, simultaneously we express concern about the ESDP and its impact on NATO. I mean, I see an inherent inconsistency there. It just does not make sense

²⁹ Congressional Record: October 28, 1999 (Senate) [Page S13431]

to me".³⁰ Nevertheless such unconditional support was the opinion of absolute minority. Although several members of Congress from both parties did express, from time to time and in regard of different international issues, certain endorsement of the European initiative, they almost always preferred a precondition that ESDP wouldn't hamper efficiency of NATO. Still, republicans stressed the last reservation much more significantly. For example, in the course of hearing "NATO and the EU's European Security and Defense Policy", which was held on March 9, 2000 before the Senate's Foreign Relations committee, chairman of Subcommittee on European affairs Gordon Smith (Or-R.) observed, addressing the wide-spread argument of European politicians: " I was surprised to learn that Javier Solana, the EU's foreign and security policy czar, believes the United States suffers from schizophrenia on this subject. He and other European leaders mistakenly argue that the United States calls upon them to take more responsibility for European security and then complains bitterly when they attempt to do so.

I say to them and I assure them that I am not alone, that we encourage European efforts to increase defense capabilities and we welcome greater European participation in transatlantic security. However - and this is the important part - stronger, more effective European partners, not new European institutions, are the key to strengthening NATO and the transatlantic partnership."³¹

But gradually many of congressmen, even those, who had been in 1999 among the most concerned, has come to comprehension that ESDP development actually hasn't passed from the political planning phase to that of practical fulfilment. Hence, American concerns over ESDP were at least premature:

³⁰ "THE U.S.-EUROPEAN RELATIONSHIP: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES", HEARING BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON EUROPE OF THE COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, April 25, 2001, pp. 39-40.

³¹ "NATO and the EU's European Security and Defense Policy", hearing before the Subcommittee on European affairs of the Committee on Foreign relations, U.S. Senate, March 9, 2000, p.2.

speaking in images, European declarations on ESDP caused false (or perhaps, training) alarm among congressmen (as well as among many other American politicians). As senator Biden observed in 2001, in regard of notorious Bosnia problem: "no matter how much my neo-isolationist friends salivate at the idea of sitting on the sidelines while the European Union's European Security and Defense Policy rapid-reaction force takes care of things - they will be sorely disappointed, because for the foreseeable future ESDP will need massive American support to function."³² Thus, in accordance with this logic, the U.S. could hardly expect any danger from the initiative, completely dependent on American support. It was just the principal reason for decrease of congressmen's anxiety and interest toward the issue.

³² Congressional Record: May 23, 2001 (Senate) [Page S5531]

Conclusion: the reasons defined the development of congressional debate and its cessation.

One can come to a conclusion that Congress had been considering European defense integration process quite intently in the course of the whole decade beginning from 1991. Nevertheless, congressional attention to the issue hadn't been stable and varied from intensive discussions to infrequent mentioning of ESDI in wider context of some other international matters.

However, one can define some trends, which had been prevailing during the development of congressional discussions of European defense integration and to some extent determined them.

The first trend can be defined as gradual increasing of significance of ESDI concept in congressmen's opinion through the years of debate. At the beginning of the 90-ies congressional approach to the issue can be described as to a secondary factor among a wide number of other circumstances on European stage; and this factor couldn't be compared by its significance with more serious European developments.

For instance, by the end of 1991 many congressmen regarded European defense initiative as just another one device of France in its long-standing rivalry with the U.S. in order to attain some additional influence in European affairs.

But eventually ESDI concept had begun to take on more and more self-sufficient significance. In 1992 – 1993 some members of Congress already considered it as a very appropriate circumstance for reducing of American involvement and military presence in Europe that seemed to be the continent, which military significance after the collapse of the Soviet Union had dropped dramatically.

Furthermore, by the middle of the decade the argument about alleged "French origin" of ESDI was only marginal in congressional considerations of the issue, and almost nobody was criticizing the concept in the context of counteraction to "French intrigues". On the contrary, many congressmen

regarded ESDI as significant European process that theoretically could help to resolve the question of American troops withdrawal from the Balkans.

But as Europeans indicated no intention to undertake active steps in order to assume responsibility for settlement of Bosnia crisis and let Americans to leave the ground, irritation was growing among congressmen over “ceaseless” and quite unpleasant to the U.S., but unfruitful deliberations about more self-sufficient way of European conduct in international and defense spheres.

And finally, after Saint-Malo and Cologne summits members of Congress fully recognized that the matters of ESDI/ESDP were very important for the U.S. not only in junction with some other international issues and challenges, but as the all-sufficient process, fraught either with some dangers, or with possible benefits from the point of view of American position on the world stage.

The dilemma of the likely result of European defense integration was another one reason that had been defining the development of congressional debate over the issue. From the very beginning of the discussion the main dividing line was not so much between the republicans and the democrats, as between those members of Congress, who was inclined to believe that final result of ESDI process would be more equitable transatlantic burden-sharing, and those, who, on the contrary, thought that the result would be strategic decoupling of Europe from the U.S. with consequent irremediable damage to transatlantic link. Actually, precisely this contradiction was the core of debate at the beginning of the 90-ies between the opponents of ESDI, who regarded it as a French affair, and its supporters, who believed it would allow to bring many of American troops home.

During and immediately after the Bosnia crisis the situation in Congress was slightly different. It seems, that nobody of congressmen honestly believed in desire and ability of Europeans to assume full control over the developments in the crisis region. But in order at least to push Europeans in that direction and, perhaps, out of emotional desire to demonstrate to the partners from overseas

vanity of their “defense integration” rhetoric, congressmen indicated in respective legislative acts, that ESDI would be an ideal means for resolving of the Bosnian problem: after all members of Congress seemingly knew almost for sure, that Europeans wouldn’t make or wouldn’t be able to make the necessary steps.

Also during the peak of congressional debate over ESDI/ESDP issue, in 1999, senator Biden very accurately described the nature of alternative, which confronted members of Congress and U.S. foreign policy as a whole: either ESDI would “serve the national interest of the United States” and “create more equitable burden-sharing between European NATO allies and the United States”, or this institution would “be constructed as an alternative to NATO.”³³ Thus, ESDI, depending on the way of its implementation, could lead to diametrically opposite results. More equitable burden-sharing would neutralize much of American neo-isolationist argumentation and to strengthen NATO in that way. Meanwhile, if ESDI resulted in sufficient confronting of European vision of international affairs with that of the U.S., it inevitably would lead to gradual weakening and perhaps even dissolution of the North Atlantic Alliance.

As members of Congress fully recognized this alternative, all their legislative activity over this issue was aimed at the most possible strengthening of interlink between European defense integration and NATO, as principal institutional basis for American participation in European affairs. Resolutions 59 of the House and 208 of the Senate, issued in autumn 1999, clearly indicate that.

But as time has shown, these fears of congressmen were unfounded. And they were unfounded not for the reason that ESDI development has led to more equitable burden-sharing instead of transatlantic divorce, but because ESDI generally led to too small results. And these results simply couldn’t significantly affect European-American relations in practice, not in theory. As it turned out, resoluteness of intents declared in Saint-Malo and Cologne, which caused so

³³ Congressional Record: October 28, 1999 (Senate) [Page S13431]

much uneasiness in U.S. Congress, hasn't led to significant practical results, at least by now.

Perhaps, it was the main reason, why, after a year of intensive discussions in 1999 – 2000, congressional interest to the issue gradually abated. Since 2000 almost nothing new has been happening in practical field of European defense integration, meantime almost revolutionary changes has been taking place in other spheres of world politics. It is clear, that these changes attracted primary attention of Congress. The decrease of congressional interest towards ESDI/ESDP can be best illustrated with one of clauses of Foreign Affairs Authorization Act for FY2004 and 2005. Section 812 of the Act repealed the congressional requirement to Secretary of Defense, introduced in 1998 in accordance with Defense Authorization Act for FY 1999 (see above), to provide Congress with reports on the development of ESDI. As was stated in the comment to Sec. 812: “This report is obsolete and provides information of limited utility. The requested information is no longer relevant and does not reflect the shift in focus between the European Union and NATO.”³⁴

The discussion over the impact of ESDI on transatlantic affairs demonstrated, that until some practical steps are taken on the European side, ESDI is unable neither to strengthen, nor to damage European – American relations and integrity of NATO. Since without appropriate technical means (i.e. strategic airlift etc.) Europeans are neither able to maintain balanced burden-sharing in the framework of NATO, nor to undertake separate from the U.S. politico-military actions.

As recent developments indicate, what really could undermine NATO is not excess of European initiative confronted with the malcontent U.S., but a lot of American military initiative confronted with feeble, in this regard, Europe.

³⁴ Congressional Record: April 03, 2003 (Senate) [Page S4855]