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OTAN

FOR AND AGAINST

DEBATING
EURO-ATLANTIC
SECURITY OPTIONS



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AND
AGAINST**

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INTRODUCTION

It is sometimes remarkable how much can change in so little time. At the turn of the 21st century, few analysts, if any, could have predicted either the course or the pace of events that have marked its first few years. These events have, however, had a profound impact on international politics in general as well as on transatlantic relations and NATO in particular. The period since the terrorist attacks against the United States of 11 September 2001 has been especially intense and fertile. Moreover, it has borne witness to unprecedented examples of both Alliance solidarity and intra-Alliance debate, as the Allies have sought to come to terms with the new strategic environment. A day after 9/11, NATO invoked, for the first time in its history, Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, the collective-defence clause of the Alliance's founding charter. Then in the run-up to the US-led Iraq campaign of March and April 2003, Allies grappled over the best strategy for dealing with Saddam Hussein. And in August 2003, in a renewed spirit of cooperation and refocused sense of priorities, the Alliance formally took responsibility for the International Security Assistance Force, the peacekeeping mission in and around Kabul in Afghanistan.

In the wake of 9/11, NATO faced tough decisions about its future. The Alliance responded by setting in motion a remarkable transformation process to ensure that it is as equipped to meet the security challenges of the 21st century as effectively as it was able to meet those of the last. Indeed, this reform programme is among the most ambitious ever undertaken by an international organisation. Today's strategic environment is, however, so complex that it is not always clear what policies best contribute to promoting stability and security or where NATO should be investing its resources. Hence the wide-ranging debate that continues within the Alliance, a debate that constitutes the lifeblood of the transatlantic partnership from which the Alliance is crafted, and one that is reflected in every issue of *NATO Review*.

One of the most popular features of *NATO Review* is the debate that appears in every issue in which two leading security analysts discuss in writing a topical theme related to security and Alliance policy. The format is simple and involves an exchange of letters between the two debaters. In this, the first debater makes an initial case, the second responds to the arguments contained in the first letter and then each debater is able to respond to the other's arguments twice more. While every debater is expected to make the best possible case for his views, the objective is not to find a winner or a loser but to promote an intelligent, stimulating and entertaining discussion of the issues involved and, above all, to generate ideas. The format is ideal for a publication whose mandate is to contribute to constructive discussion of Atlantic issues. Moreover, it has clearly struck a chord with readers as statistics indicate that the debate feature in *NATO Review* is among the most consulted parts of the NATO web site. What is especially pleasing is how well all the debates have stood the test of time and how relevant they remain today. Hence the enduring utility of this compilation of the eight debates that appeared in the course of 2002 and 2003.

The book is structured chronologically beginning with the most recent debate, from the winter 2003 issue of *NATO Review*, and ending with the earliest from the spring 2002 issue. For anyone with an interest in the strategic issues confronting NATO today, and the security issues impacting our societies today and tomorrow, these debates provide valuable insight.

ARE THE CHALLENGES NATO FACES TODAY AS GREAT AS THEY WERE IN THE COLD WAR?



Andrés Ortega

Andrés Ortega is a columnist for El País

NO



YES

Tomas Valasek

*Tomas Valasek is director of the
Center for Defense Information's Brussels office*



Dear Tomas,

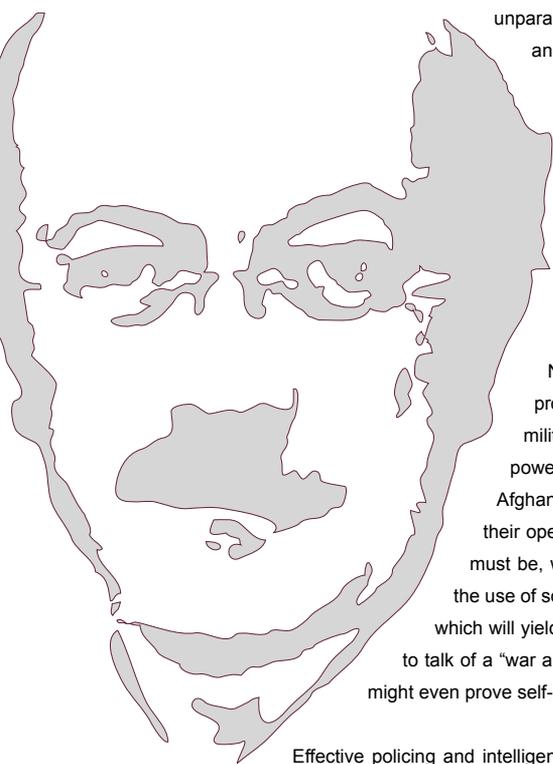
Can you remember the time when the threat that Europe faced was one of total war with the real possibility of such a conflict escalating to a nuclear confrontation? In the early years of the Cold War before *détente*, part of Europe was effectively hostage to the policy of deterrence, and much of the rest lived under the Soviet boot. Today, it seems all too easy to play down the danger of the unthinkable actually happening. But there were times - such as during the Berlin airlift and the Cuban missile crisis - when the threat of Armageddon appeared very real indeed. At the time, NATO's role could not have been clearer, namely in words attributed to its first Secretary General Lord Ismay "to keep the Americans in, the Russians out and the Germans down". The transatlantic Alliance was the heart of Europe's security architecture, critical to managing crises, both vis-à-vis the *other* side - presenting a united front - and within *our* side, cementing relations among Allies.

I think we have two issues to discuss. The first is whether that threat was greater than those we face today or may face in the foreseeable future. The second is whether NATO is equipped to address today's challenges and the most appropriate institution for the task. When most people talk of modern security threats, they think, above all, of that posed by terrorism, or rather terrorisms. I use the plural because there is no agreed definition of terrorism and clearly terrorism comes in many different forms, each of which must be treated in a different way.

Let's face it, terrorism has been around for a very long time and certainly pre-dates the end of the Cold War. But while terrorists have been responsible for many outrages, they have never posed an existential threat to the world. In its most sinister form, the terrorist threat must be viewed together with that posed by weapons of mass destruction (WMD), even though terrorists have never actually deployed such weapons. At least not yet. Clearly, the sinister combination of terrorism and WMD does pose a formidable threat. But the difference between it and the Cold War threat of mutually assured destruction is that the latter placed our very existence in question.

For the above reasons, I consider today's threats to be of a lesser magnitude both for Europe and for the United States than the threat we faced during the Cold War and especially in the 1950s and 1960s. With the demise of the Soviet Union, the threat of Armageddon disappeared,

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Armageddon appeared very real indeed***



the United States was the only super-power and Americans came to enjoy an almost unparalleled feeling of security. Europeans, by contrast, have never had that luxury and even in the wake of the Cold War remained conscious of their vulnerability as a result of the wars of Yugoslavia's dissolution and acts of terrorism in several countries. While the terrorist attacks of 9/11 came as a shock to the entire world, the shock was clearly that much greater in the United States. Hence today's feeling of insecurity. Even so, 9/11 did not pose an existential threat to Americans. Rather it exposed both their vulnerability and that of the rest of the Western world to asymmetric and unconventional threats.

Since the terrorist threat cannot be addressed primarily by military means, NATO, which is a political-military alliance, is not necessarily the most appropriate institution to coordinate responses. This is not to say that there is no military component to a comprehensive anti-terrorist strategy. Clearly, military power can be used effectively, for example, to intervene in failed states such as Afghanistan to prevent terrorist groups like *al Qaida* turning them into centres for their operations. But the only effective, long-term approach to combating terrorism must be, wherever possible, to seek to address the root causes. This must include the use of social, economic and political instruments, as well as effective policing, all of which will yield greater long-term results than the exclusive use of military force. Indeed, to talk of a "war against terrorism" or to militarise thinking about and responses to terrorism might even prove self-defeating.

Effective policing and intelligence sharing, including more international cooperation, are critical to combating terrorism. Here, countries like France, Italy and Spain may be better prepared than most, including the United States, as a result of the existence of *Gendarmerie*, *Carabinieri* and *Guardia Civil*, police units with a military dimension that operate throughout the country. In Spain, for example, we have developed effective anti-terrorist strategies as a result of our experience with ETA. That said, the threat posed by ETA is clearly very different from the suicidal terrorism we see on an almost daily basis in Israel and now in Iraq. Moreover, experience of these conflicts appears to indicate that the more military solutions are relied on, the greater the terrorist threat.

Today's security threats are certainly serious and should not be underestimated. As in the Cold War, they cannot be solved without effective transatlantic cooperation and NATO has an important role to play in this area. But our very existence is no longer in danger. The security challenge today is not, therefore, as great. But, as a consequence, the challenge of holding the Alliance together and building consensus on how to address today's threats is that much greater.

Yours,

Andrés

Dear Andrés,

You're right. Today's threat is not on a par with that of the Cold War. It doesn't hold the promise of the utter destruction of mankind, which the super-power rivalry of that era did. But so narrow a comparison is largely meaningless. Though the existential threat has gone, today's challenges may still be greater.

To the leader of any civilised country, the idea of terrorists setting off just one nuclear or biological device in a metropolis is as grotesquely unacceptable as a full-blown missile exchange. There is no such thing as tolerable nuclear damage. Ten, twenty or fifty thousand dead is just as absurdly wrong as 100 million.

These, on the high end, are the stakes today. What are the chances that terrorists may successfully use a weapon of mass destruction? Three factors determine the equation: enemy intentions, their offensive capabilities, and the defensive capabilities of the potential target - in this case NATO member states.

Intentions are the easiest to assess. Few would disagree that had *al Qaida* possessed a nuclear bomb on 9/11, it would have used it. The nature of the new terrorism is unprecedented in that it is essentially nihilistic. Extremists of the Osama-bin-Laden school of thought have no intention of embracing modern values and becoming part of the international system, and hence no incentive to curb their violence. "Traditional" terrorist groups such as ETA and the IRA always held their fire to some extent to preserve a measure of respectability and keep the door open to a future arrangement with the "enemy". The stewards of the old nuclear threat - Soviet *apparatchiks* - were wholly unwilling to die for the cause, and could thus be deterred from attacking with a credible threat of a nuclear response. But to terrorists bent on undermining the West's economic and political foundations, the more destructive the attack the better. Far from dreading the possibility, they view dying in the attack as a virtue. In the case of *al Qaida*, to cite former NATO Secretary General Javier Solana's draft EU security strategy, "deterrence would fail".

Concerning offensive capabilities, the greatest danger lies in a combination of suicide terrorism and weapons of mass destruction (WMD). A number of different types

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of WMD exist but arguably the most worrisome are tactical nuclear weapons, several thousand of which remain in Russia and the United States. Rumours of missing Russian tactical nuclear weapons have circulated in the past, only to be denied by the Kremlin. Most open-source reports agree that the weapons seem to be secure for the time being, but questionable safety standards at Russian nuclear installations point to a risk of theft in the future. By some accounts, suspected terrorists have already scouted Russian nuclear facilities, presumably to acquire bombs or bomb-making material. If obtained, how difficult would it be to transport tactical nuclear weapons to the West? No one knows for certain but the task seems worryingly within reach. Only about three per cent of all containers entering the United States are inspected at the port of entry, and the United States has the relative luxury vis-à-vis Europe of being separated from the likely source of WMD by an ocean.

The jury is still out on the effectiveness of our defences against the new threats. For all practical purposes, we only began to take measures to counter catastrophic terrorism after 11 September 2001. The first line of defence lies in places that NATO refers to as "out-of-area". Denying terrorists access to WMD is key to preventing future attacks, and most likely sources of such weapons lie in the neighbourhood of the former Soviet Union. But intercepting threats overseas is a policy born as much out of a lack of alternatives as of reasons of effectiveness. There is, frankly, only so much that Western societies can do to improve security domestically without destroying the free and open nature of their economies.

Today's terrorism is a potentially catastrophic threat by any definition of that word. Its probability and acuteness are devilishly hard to assess, partly for the sheer newness but also for the complexity of the challenge. However, it offers the distinctly bleak possibility of WMD being used against Western towns. Given the stakes, the campaign against terrorism calls for the same focus and unity of purpose that NATO countries exhibited during the Cold War (if not, thankfully, the same military and financial expenditure). By this measure, catastrophic terrorism is in the same league as the Soviet threat.

Yours,

Tomas

Dear Tomas,

I prefer not to enter into a discussion about whether "ten, twenty or fifty thousand dead is just as absurdly wrong as 100 million". That said, there remains a difference and that is existential.

You say "intentions are the easiest to assess"; that "few would disagree" that if *al Qaida* had possessed a nuclear bomb on 9/11, it would have used it; and that the nature of the "new terrorism" is "essentially nihilistic". I disagree with all three points. The debate on "intentions" or "capabilities" is as old as NATO itself, indeed much older. If we judge intentions, we will never feel sufficiently secure. As for capabilities, the most diabolic - not the more catastrophic - aspect of 9/11 is that the attackers did not use weapons in the traditional sense. Rather they used our own technology against us by turning passenger airliners into flying bombs. Had *al Qaida* possessed and used a nuclear bomb, much of Afghanistan would no doubt have been destroyed in retaliation.

It has become fashionable to describe these terrorists as nihilists. But this may not be the case. I've been impressed by the research of Professor Robert Pape of the University of Chicago who analysed all 188 suicide attacks between 1980 and 2001. He concluded that the use of terror in this way is extremely effective, not primarily linked to religious fervour, and does have a strategic aim. Nothing to do with nihilism.

While terrorists have been responsible for many outrages, they have never posed an existential threat to the world

In the future, the threat posed by WMD, whether in the hands of terrorist groups or states, will have to be addressed. This will require preventive action, but not in the way that Washington currently appears to understand it. Rather, it will be important to reproduce the kind of approach that the United States adopted after the disintegration of the Soviet

Union to persuade Ukraine and other post-Soviet states to give up their nuclear weapons, or even that which Europe is currently pursuing towards Iran. We will also have to reinforce international regimes. Refusing to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and similar international agreements is not setting a good example. And, to paraphrase UK Prime Minister Tony Blair in the wake of 9/11, we have to be tough on terrorism, but also on the causes of terrorism, the former in the short term, the latter in the longer term. Areas such as police cooperation, international development and even improving the way that immigrants are integrated into our societies are key to this task, none of which can be fully addressed by a political-military organisation. To militarise the struggle against terrorism may be a mistake. Indeed, one consequence of the Iraq campaign is that terrorism used not to be a serious problem there and now it is.

Yours,

Andrés

Dear Andrés,

You wrote that: "If we judge intentions, we will never feel sufficiently secure." I couldn't agree more, which is why in my initial piece I look carefully at *capabilities*, of both offensive and defensive types. Seen through these lenses, the combination of terrorism and WMD represents a classic low-probability, high-impact event. Its destructive potential is important, as much as you try to play it down. It elevates the possibility of a WMD strike against a Western city into the realm of the utterly unacceptable, a category previously occupied by Soviet nuclear weapons.

Concerning intentions, I'm afraid you ignore your own advice in citing Professor Pape's work as evidence of *al Qaida's* limited goals. We both agree that there are different types of terrorism. Having read the study, you should be aware that no more than six of the 188 bombings that Professor Pape analysed were carried out by *al Qaida*. The vast

majority were Palestinian attacks on Israeli targets and Tamil Tiger strikes against Indian forces during the Cold War, mostly in the 1980s. They say little to nothing about *al Qaida*'s intentions today. Very different goals, very different time period.

To terrorists bent on undermining the West's economic and political foundations, the more destructive the attack the better

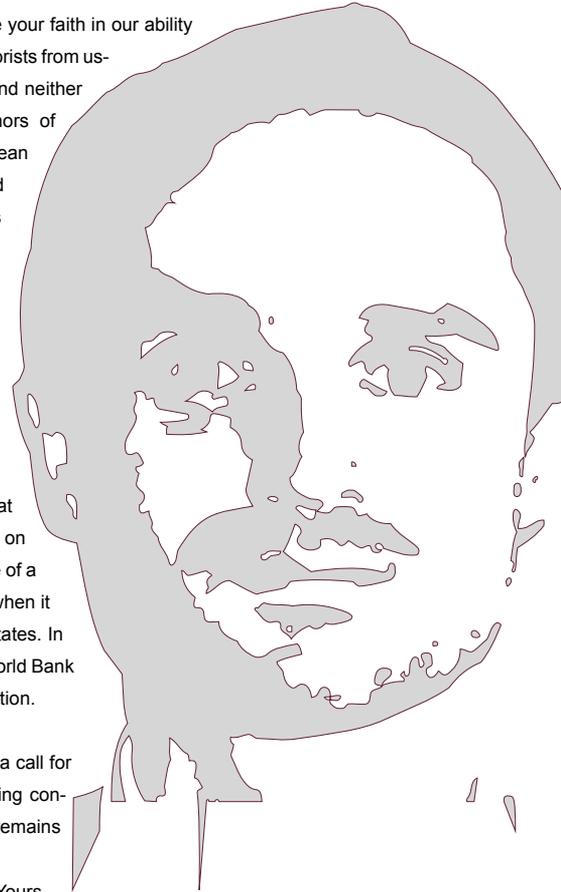
I don't share your faith in our ability to deter terrorists from using WMD, and neither do the authors of the European

Union's draft security strategy. Deterrence is a big, clumsy stick of limited use against non-state actors with a death wish. Fifteen of the 19 attackers on September 11 were Saudi nationals. Had they used WMD, would you propose that the United States attack Saudi Arabia with nuclear weapons? What about Pakistan, whose lawless eastern frontier may be the current base of operations for Osama bin Laden? You see the problem. More often than not, retaliation is a non-starter. Any threat of a devastating, possibly nuclear response will always be empty. You know it. I know it. The attackers know it, which is why deterrence is not likely to work.

This is not a call to arms, even though you seem to equate warnings of threat with a quest for a "military solution". I, too, think that we need to be tough on both terrorism and the causes of terrorism. But the transatlantic stereotype of a jingoistic Washington that you unfortunately employ does not hold water when it comes to addressing root causes of terrorism, such as rebuilding failed states. In the case of Afghanistan, for example, the United States is - according to World Bank figures - the single largest contributor to the country's post-war reconstruction.

The danger inherent in the combination of WMD and terrorism should be a call for unity of purpose. NATO's greatest strength has historically been in building converging security strategies. It worked against the Soviet menace. And it remains the key to defusing the threat of catastrophic terrorism.

Yours,



Tomas

Dear Tomas,

I feel that you are misrepresenting what I am trying to say. For example, I never talked about "deterrence" as far as terrorists are concerned, but about prevention. On that note, the term "preventive engagement" has replaced "pre-emptive action" - which is not only difficult to translate into other languages but is usually associated with the use of military force - in the EU strategy paper. This latest version has been revised in the light of the difficulties involved in trying to win the peace in Iraq and is already different to the document presented at the Thessaloniki Summit in the wake of military victory.

I certainly don't subscribe to a "stereotype of a jingoistic Washington" and firmly believe good transatlantic relations are essential to Europe and good global governance. I mention Pape's paper to illustrate that most suicidal terrorists - including that global terrorist franchise called *al Qaida* - have a strategic aim, not the "limited goals" you claim I attribute to them.

Capabilities? Anything can become a capability for these terrorists, like hijacked civilian aircraft on 9/11. This is one reason why the struggle against terrorism cannot be exclusively, or even primarily, a military affair. Wars have to be finished sooner rather than later. This struggle, I am afraid, will go on for a very long time.

In my view, prevention, stronger international regimes against WMD proliferation, and tackling the root causes of the violence are key to addressing the terrorist threat. But solutions can only be achieved on the basis of deep understanding - albeit with disagreement - between a more united Europe and the United States within a framework of "effective multilateralism" - to quote yet again from the draft EU strategy paper - and, ultimately, sensible policies. This is a challenge for the European Union, for NATO and for the United States.

Our very existence is no longer in danger

I feel you still haven't answered my initial questions, which should have been the meat of this debate. Are the threats that NATO and we face today greater than they were in the Cold War? And is the Alliance equipped to address today's challenges or even the most appropriate institution for the task? In both instances, my answer is a qualified no. That does not mean that NATO is not useful. It is. But its use today is very different to what it once was.

Yours,

Andrés

Dear Andrés,

I will let the readers decide whether I have misrepresented your views. But let it be said that the crux of the difference lies in whether *al Qaida*-type terrorism should be viewed as an old menace in a new guise or a new threat altogether. I maintain that it is different in both its goals and, more importantly, the destructive means potentially at its disposal. A recent report by the *al Qaida* and Taliban Sanctions Committee of the United Nations (an organisation not known for warmongering) warned that: "The risk of *al Qaida* acquiring and using weapons of mass destruction also continues to grow. They have already taken the decision to use chemical and bio-weapons in their forthcoming attacks. The only restraint they are facing is the technical complexity to operate them properly and effectively." I think those words speak for themselves.

That said, we probably see eye to eye on many more issues than it appears. I am particularly pleased to see that you believe that: "Good transatlantic relations are essential to Europe and good global governance."

Deterrence is a big, clumsy stick of limited use against non-state actors with a death wish

NATO is an expression of only one, albeit important, dimension of this relationship - military cooperation. I think you do the topic a disservice by asking whether the Alliance is the answer to terrorism. The effort must clearly be much broader than anything NATO has ever set out

to achieve. As we both pointed out earlier, action on multiple fronts such as intelligence, foreign policy and development aid is required. But NATO is better equipped than any alliance in history to organise joint military action against terrorism when needed. It has made remarkable progress in adapting its policies and capabilities to the new challenge, despite all the recent tensions and disagreements. That in itself is testimony to the gravity of the threat.

Yours,

Tomas

SHOULD THE EUROPEAN UNION BE ABLE TO DO EVERYTHING THAT NATO CAN?



Fraser Cameron

YES

Fraser Cameron is director of studies at the European Policy Centre in Brussels



Andrew Moravcsik is professor of government and director of the European Union Program at Harvard University's Center for European Studies

NO

Andrew
Moravcsik



Dear Andy,

A number of analysts, including yourself, argue for a new transatlantic bargain in which, essentially, the United States does the cooking and the European Union does the dishes. This *nouvelle cuisine* may look tempting in the short term, but in the long term it is a recipe for worsened not improved transatlantic relations. Europe has to look after its own security and, together with the United States whenever possible, play a larger role in regional and global security.

You will recall that the European Union always had a security dimension. The founding fathers chose coal and steel as the basis for their unique experiment in integration. But the driving motive behind integration was peace and security, first for Europe, later for the world. With the failure of plans for a European defence community in 1954, defence was off the integration agenda until the end of the Cold War. The collapse of Communism in 1989 transformed the geopolitical scene in Europe and opened the door for a renewed debate on defence at Maastricht.

The Maastricht Treaty also saw the birth of the European Union's common foreign and security policy (CFSP). Even though the CFSP could not have been launched at a worse time, with the wars of Yugoslav dissolution exposing European weakness and divisions, gradually the European Union began to get its act together. It agreed the so-called "Petersberg Tasks", which covered peacekeeping and peace-enforcement missions. It set up new institutions, notably the office of a CFSP High Representative, currently Javier Solana, and a political and security committee (akin to NATO's North Atlantic Council) to provide direction. Prompted by France and the United Kingdom, the European Union also agreed to establish a rapid reaction force and tackle some of the capability gaps that became apparent in the Kosovo crisis.

Most recently, and despite the divisions over Iraq, the European Union has started three peacekeeping missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia* and Congo. Others are in the pipeline. There are thousands of European peacekeepers deployed in the Balkans, Afghanistan and elsewhere. Furthermore, the European Union has agreed policy guidelines on weapons of mass destruction and proliferation and a new draft security policy doctrine has been formulated by Solana.

So, in little more than a decade, the European Union has come a long way in the security field. Where should it go from here? There are two main views. First, the "Blair" view is that the United States is so dominant in today's world that

Europe's only hope of influencing its behaviour is to be the loyal ally, never uttering a word of public criticism. Second, the "Chirac" view is that the European Union and the United States do not share the same vision of the world and therefore that Europe needs to pursue its own aims and develop its own comprehensive capabilities.

Smart development assistance and smart policies are as important as smart bombs

There is no question in my mind that in the long term Europe has to adopt the Chirac approach. Why? First, because the European Union and the United States do, indeed, have divergent views of the world, over how to deal with terrorism, "rogue states" such as Iran, the Arab/Israeli dispute, support for multilateral regimes and the like. Second, US troops have been in Europe for more than 50 years. No one can predict when they will go home, but at some stage they will. It is only prudent to start planning now for that eventuality in such a way that Europe takes on more responsibility for its own security and that of its neighbourhood. Third, the European Union is already a global actor in many areas. It needs to develop better military capabilities to become a more effective player.

What does this mean for the future of NATO? The Alliance has been struggling to reinvent itself since the collapse of the Soviet Union. As NATO enlarges to 26 next year, I'm reminded of the Monty Python's "dead parrot" sketch. I feel a number of new members will be asking themselves whether they have bought into a dead organisation. It seems clear that NATO will never fight another war. The Pentagon's experience in Kosovo was such that the idea of waging another campaign by a committee of 26 is out of the question. Moreover, Washington is unlikely to change its new doctrine whereby "the mission decides the coalition". NATO will not disappear overnight, but it is likely to continue withering away as it lacks both the glue to hold it together and an appropriate toolbox to tackle today's security threats.

Note that I talked of the European Union developing better capabilities. There is unlikely to be the political will to spend vastly increased resources on defence. What is required, therefore, is more effective spending on procurement and much more sharing of facilities. Some tough decisions will be needed. Why, for example, does the Czech Republic or Denmark need an airforce? I believe finance ministers will probably be as influential if not more influential than foreign or defence ministers in propelling Europe down this path. One final point on capabilities. It is not clear that spending on high-tech equipment is the most effective use of tax dollars or Euros. Smart development assistance and smart policies are as important as smart bombs.

The European Union, therefore, cannot avoid developing the full range of capabilities. It will never develop the same power-projection capabilities as the United States because it does not need to. But the European Union, not NATO, is the future.

Yours,

Fraser

Dear Fraser,

Like nearly everyone these days, we agree that Europe should move to rationalise military procurement and develop more robust peacekeeping capabilities. The real question is whether the European Union should develop - in addition to peacemaking, peacekeeping and policing powers - war-fighting capabilities akin to those deployed by NATO in Kosovo and the United States in Afghanistan and Iraq. You say yes. "There is no question in my mind that in the long term Europe... needs to pursue its own aims and develop its own comprehensive capabilities" - the

so-called "Chirac view". Why? To distance Europe from the United States. NATO, you say, is dead. America is going its own way on terrorism and rogue states, and will eventually leave Europe. If the European Union does not develop the "full range of capabilities", it will be forced to adopt what you term the "Blair view", namely that the "only hope of influencing [US] behaviour is to be the loyal ally, never uttering a word of public criticism."

I disagree for five reasons.

1 *Transatlantic conflict is the exception, not the rule.* Sure, Iraq is a problem. But NATO governments were unanimous in supporting actions in Kosovo, Afghanistan, and a dozen other post-Cold War crisis spots since the first Gulf War. NATO has been helpful in many of these out-of-area crises - and in the reintegration of Eastern Europe. European and US goals in the Middle East are similar. To declare NATO dead is to throw the baby out with the bath water.

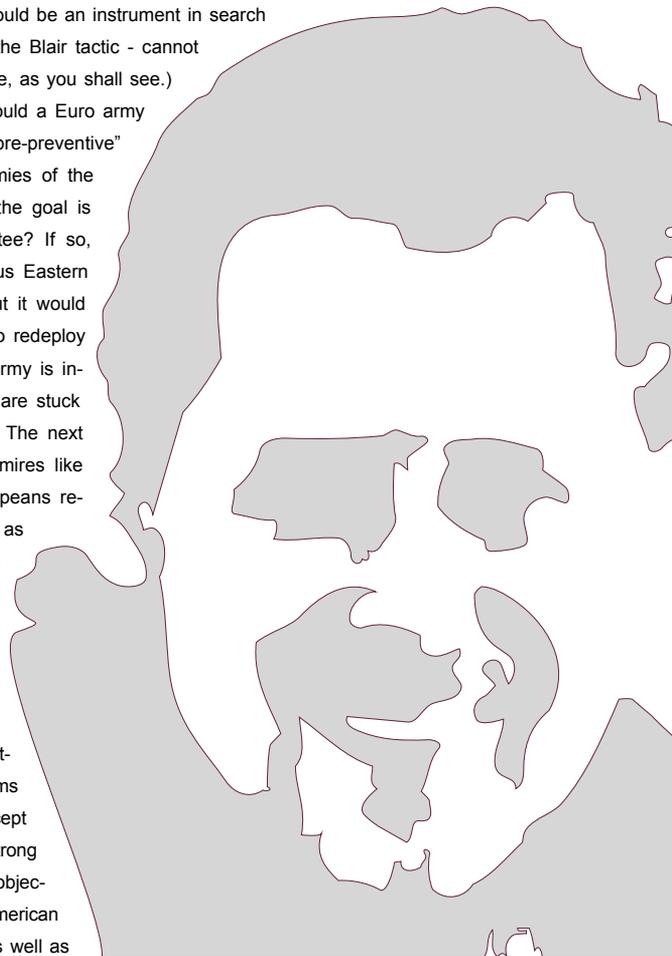
2 *European remilitarization won't happen.* Europeans, you concede, will not pay more for defence - let alone double their spending, as would be required to project power US-style (even regionally). More efficient use of current European spending can achieve only modest gains: a modest but well-equipped rapid reaction force perhaps, but not the sort of integrated force the United States deployed in Kosovo or Afghanistan, let alone Iraq.

An EU army would be an instrument in search of a mission

3 *The European army serves no purpose.* An EU army would be an instrument in search of a mission. You say allying with the United States - the Blair tactic - cannot change US policy, so Europe needs an army. (I disagree, as you shall see.)

Well, the Euro army won't change US policy either. Would a Euro army have deterred US action in Iraq? Hardly. European "pre-preventive" intervention to forestall US action or allying with enemies of the United States are utterly unrealistic options. Perhaps the goal is simply to reduce reliance on the US security guarantee? If so, reduced dependence might indeed swing a few nervous Eastern European UN votes into the Franco-German camp, but it would also give neo-conservatives *carte blanche* unilaterally to redeploy US forces elsewhere. Or perhaps the proposed Euro army is intended to handle the "next Kosovo"? If so, Europeans are stuck fighting the last war. The Balkans have been pacified. The next Kosovos will be - and already are - in far-flung quagmires like Chechnya, Iran, Kashmir, Algeria and Congo. Do Europeans really believe that military involvement in such places - not as peacekeepers but in a war-fighting mode, and without US technology or backup - is a cost-effective strategy?

4 *Remilitarization would run counter to deeply-held European political values.* EU governments compiled a compelling case that the essentially military US policy response to terrorism in Iraq was inappropriate and short-sighted. European intellectuals penned trenchant criticisms of Robert Kagan's anachronistically unidimensional concept of international power (i.e. military super-powers are strong Martians and all others are weak Venusians). European objections to Iraq are not just reasonable - which is why sober American conservatives like James Baker and Brent Scowcroft, as well as



many Democrats, share them - but they appeal to an admirable European idealism about the need for more effective use by Western governments of non-military foreign policy instruments. But now, after Washington has ignored European appeals and sent in the Marines, Europeans say: "We want an army, too." Kagan must be pleased. He seems to have converted a continent!

- 5 *There is a better option.* Europe has more and better alternatives to the two you mention: remilitarization and submissive silence. The best of these is to invest in civilian and low-intensity power. Today, Europe is a "quiet super-power", wielding influence over peace and war as great, perhaps greater, than that of the United States. Europe rather than the United States provides trade opportunities, foreign aid, peacekeepers, international monitoring, and multilateral legitimation. (For seemingly intractable domestic reasons, the United States has never been able to wield such instruments effectively.) Over the past decade, Europe has deployed these instruments to help democratise and pacify up to 25 countries on its Eastern periphery - a record US military power cannot match. Properly deployed, civilian and low-intensity military instruments could have a greater global impact as well. European political and fiscal capital would be much better spent on building such capabilities. Europe, the United States, the West, and the world as a whole would be better off if each side of the Atlantic did what it does best. Complementarity and comparative advantage, not conflict and competition, should be the watchwords.

The Iraq war shows how vital this is. For Americans, the lesson of the past three months is that it is harder to make peace than to wage war. And in peacemaking, the United States is critically dependent on Europe for civilian and low-intensity military power. War and reconstruction tie up one third of the US military, and will cost hundreds of billions of dollars and hundreds of casualties. Even so, it may fail. Europeans, ignored and humiliated in the run-up to the war, have been understandably reluctant to deploy their resources - in striking contrast to the first Gulf War and Kosovo.

The result has been a policy reversal. If the United States expects help after the fact, it must engage multilateral institutions, exhaust alternatives to war, and work out post-war arrangements before intervening. Accordingly, the United States is acting with prudence in Iran and Syria. And it is seeking to bring the United Nations into the Iraq and North Korean crises. In this context, NATO is emerging as one of several promising multilateral forums in which to organise peacekeeping and to develop common principles governing future intervention. The question today is whether Europeans are willing and able to engage constructively in this process. To cut off this process of reconciliation by renouncing NATO and constructing an EU army, as you are suggesting, would be a tragic victory of symbolic politics over pragmatism.

Yours,

Andy

Dear Andy,

Let us remember what the debate is about, namely the European Union and NATO and not the European Union and the United States. I am not proposing that the European Union develop an army. NATO has no army. I am not proposing the European Union as a counterweight to the United States, rather that it should have the capabilities for "robust intervention" as outlined in the recent Solana strategy paper. I am not arguing that the United States should leave Europe, but that the European Union needs to develop a greater defence capability, partly to prepare for the day when the United States goes home. I am not arguing that NATO is dead but that the Pentagon, post-Kosovo and post-9/11, has pronounced it dead as a result of the new US doctrine "the mission decides the coalition".

You seem quite content with the status quo despite the major geopolitical changes of recent years. OK, Europe might be allowed to be a new dishwasher to clean up after the United States, but I think this is a recipe for disaster. The European Union and the United States must be involved in common assessments of security threats and, when intervention is agreed - preferably with a UN mandate - then both should be involved at all stages of the operation. This means the United States has to do more on the peacekeeping and nation-building side and the European Union has to develop more high-end capabilities. What we need to work towards is a new transatlantic partnership based not on NATO but a revised EU-US relationship that covers security in all its dimensions. This is not for tomorrow, but it should be a serious medium-term aim.

What does NATO have that the European Union still needs to develop? First a mutual defence guarantee. I believe that this should be a fundamental part of the EU treaty. Sure, such an article is on the table in the new EU draft treaty but as open to all, not an obligation. Second, the European Union needs to develop its own command facilities. This became abundantly clear in the lead up to the Congo intervention when it was discovered that NATO had no plans for any such intervention in Africa.

The European Union and the United States must be involved in common assessments of security threats

Why should a greater EU defence capability lead to conflict and competition with the United States? Washington has been preaching to the European Union to do more for years. If the European Union

were to take over from NATO in Bosnia and Herzegovina next year there should be satisfaction all round.

Finally, I cannot see any political support, on either side of the Atlantic, for military intervention in any of the places you mention - Iran, Chechnya, Kashmir, etc.

Yours,

Fraser

Dear Fraser,

I welcome the softening in your position. Now you say NATO is important rather than, as you said initially, "dead" (or "pronounced" dead). The United States will remain active militarily in and with Europe rather than abandoning it. US (hence NATO) and EU threat assessments must be done cooperatively rather than diverging fundamentally. The European Union requires only a mutual defence pact and some command capacity rather than the "full range" of "comprehensive" capabilities. Operations should involve both the United States and Europe. And none of this will be achieved in the short term ("not for tomorrow").

Yet even this second, more conciliatory, position - on which we largely agree - raises some important concerns.

Europe, the United States, the West, and the world as a whole would be better off if each side of the Atlantic did what it does best

First, we need to be realistic. Sure, it would be great if, as you say, both the European Union and the United States "should be involved at all stages of all operations". We could all cook and clean together - and plan the menu, too - in a happy transatlantic household. But

alliances, like marriages, rarely actually work in this way. Why? Because in the real world fiscal capacity, legacies of past spending, domestic institutional processes and political values impose political constraints. Kagan is right that each side

has specialised, and each side feels comfortable with its choice. Partners should specialise - particularly when it costs \$100 billion to cook or to clean.

Second, I fear that Europeans will waste scarce political and fiscal capital building up a modest high-intensity military force that (you admit) Americans neither need nor want and which (I infer from your silence) has few if any plausible scenarios for autonomous use. An EU military role would make for great "feel-good" politics - everyone can compete for the job of EU "foreign minister" while mustering a multinational militia. Yet this threatens to neglect the real European comparative advantage, namely civilian power. Even modest progress on more difficult civilian tasks - like tightening ties with Turkey, developing EU flexibility on the Israel-Palestine question, establishing a multinational coercive inspection force for weapons of mass destruction, or cutting agricultural subsidies - would contribute far more to world peace and security.

Third, NATO provides a valuable instrument for structuring transatlantic cooperation - one more flexible and attractive to the United States than that of the European Union. Just four years ago, NATO played a critical role in drawing US attention to Kosovo. To the extent that the European Union took over such functions, or claimed to - even if it did not possess (and will not possess under your plan) the sort of capabilities deployed in Kosovo - it might give US policy-makers an excuse to look the other way. If we displace NATO, we will just have to reinvent it.

Fourth and finally, please drop the inflammatory and misleading metaphor of "cooking" and "cleaning". The relationship I propose would give Europeans equal initiative and input. At the very least, Europeans could use their superior civilian power resources to take greater initiative in pre-war crisis-prevention measures - so military intervention never takes place. Deployment of a more robust UN-European coercive inspection force six months before the Iraq War, for example, would have done far more to restrain the United States than would ten battalions of high-intensity Euro troops.

More importantly, the United States is coming to realise that it is harder to wage peace than war, and that it is deeply dependent on superior European civilian power - trade, aid, monitoring, multilateral legitimation and peacekeeping capabilities - for both pre-war crisis prevention and post-war reconstruction. And this will henceforth influence decisions about peace and war. Most Americans (perhaps even in the Bush administration) have concluded that cooks and cleaners have to plan the menu together before the fact - otherwise the dishes won't get washed. This sort of pre-conflict consultation, which both of us support, is most likely to occur if Europe focuses on its strong suit - civilian power - where the United States is truly dependent; and it is most likely to occur if military deliberation can happen through NATO - an organisation with which even US conservatives are comfortable.

Finally, from the narrow perspective of European integration, strengthening civilian power (where the European Union has an unquestioned authority) would do more to thrust the European Union into a leading role in transatlantic deliberations - something to which you have devoted your career and which I, too, would like to see.

Yours,

Andy

Dear Andy,

I think we are arguing about different time perspectives here. I am not suggesting that the European Union should develop a full range of capabilities tomorrow but rather that it should do so in the medium term. What many, particularly American, observers fail to grasp is the fundamental political ambitions of the integration process. Most Americans wrote off the single market, dismissed the Euro and now scorn the European Union's nascent military

ambitions. The European Union needs to develop these capabilities for various reasons: to play a role on the world stage commensurate with its economic power; to take care of its own interests when the United States (or NATO) does not wish to be involved; and to achieve savings in the long run. It is not true that the United States opposes these moves - on the contrary it has positively welcomed them at all recent summits.

Developing greater military capabilities would not be at the expense of civilian expertise where I agree that the European Union has a clear lead. Indeed, I argue that the United States should also do more on the civilian front because therein lies the key to resolving many disputes in the longer term. But the European Union should be able to prevent atrocities such as the shelling of Dubrovnik, be prepared to head off incipient genocide in African states and be equipped to back up its diplomacy vis-à-vis the likes of Slobodan Milosevic with a more credible military capability. A robust EU military force could also play a vital role in overseeing a Middle East peace settlement.

It is a fallacy to believe that under your reformed status quo there would be "equal initiative and input". Equality, in the eyes of most Americans and certainly those in power now, only comes from having a greater military input. The status quo you seem to support would mean that the European Union would be permanently beholden to the United States. Given the rapidly growing and unprecedented public disapproval of US foreign policy, such a policy would be unacceptable to the vast majority of Europeans.



We need a transformed Atlantic Alliance in which the European Union and the United States both bring greater equality to the table

European Union and the United States both bring a greater equality of military and civilian resources to the table. That is the best possible foundation for a genuine partnership.

Sure NATO is a more attractive proposition for the United States as it has always called the shots. But times change and we do need a transformed Atlantic Alliance; one in which the

Yours,

Fraser

Dear Fraser,

Throughout this exchange I have sought to inject a dose of realism - a pragmatic awareness of fiscal and political limits. Will the European Union really commit the manpower, money, and technology for Kosovo-style capabilities? Are there realistic scenarios for deploying them or, with the Balkans pacified, is the European Union fighting the last war? Might NATO be a more efficient institutional conduit for joint action than EU-US relations? Will the United States really (as you imply again in your last response) respect Europeans just because they posture with an army. Or would European

remilitarization instead breed US apathy (if Europeans succeed) or contempt (if Europeans fail) - or even the self-fulfilling prophecy of a US troop withdrawal? Wouldn't further developing the European Union's comparative advantage in "civilian power" (something that the US actually needs) lead to greater European influence? And so on.

Europeans could use their superior civilian power resources to take greater initiative in pre-war crisis-prevention measures

You have not addressed a single one of these pragmatic concerns. It troubles me that you seem so quick to privilege symbolism over substance. At best, policy analysis without fiscal or

political constraints is idealistic. At worst, it encourages parochial efforts to promote rhetorical goals for short-term political gain.

And what might be these symbolic goals? Your last letter suggests that the primary motivation of Europeans - and the real source of their differences with Americans - is to realise what you term "fundamental political ambitions of the integration process". In other words, the construction of a European force - regardless of whether it is practical and cost-effective - is a worthy end in itself because it promotes European integration. This aspiration is not uncommon among current and former EU officials, such as yourself.

I do not doubt that the European Union can achieve something that it can call an army, just as I never doubted - despite your effort to label Americans as Euro-sceptics - that it could achieve the single market or monetary union. However, I do doubt whether militarising the European Union would be sound policy - good for Europe, good for the West and, above all, good for citizens of countries like Iraq. I question this just as most objective observers today now question whether the European Union's "successful" but rigidly centralised monetary system is making good macro-economic policy for Europe.

This is the central issue between us. I believe that the transatlantic relationship will thrive only if pragmatic efforts to realise concrete ends triumph over ideological prejudices about procedural means - knee-jerk unilateralism on the part of some Americans, knee-jerk multilateralism on the part of some Europeans. I am confident that the United States is becoming more pragmatic. Policy-makers with big investments at stake are fast learners. The open-ended expenditure of hundreds of lives and hundreds of billions of dollars are teaching even the most rabid neo-conservatives some humility. The resulting shift in rhetorical tone and public opinion in the United States over the past three months is astounding.

The critical question is not, therefore, whether the United States will learn anything from Iraq. It is whether Europeans - with little invested in terms of money and lives, no sense of an imminent security threat, and public opinion more concerned with process than outcomes in world affairs - will learn anything. One lesson they should learn is that symbolic politics - like a "feel-good" force for Europe - is not the best way to address the serious global challenges of the 21st century.

Yours,

Andy

* Turkey recognises the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.

HOW EFFECTIVE A TOOL IS PRE-EMPTION IN ADDRESSING WMD PROLIFERATION?



Max Boot

Max Boot is Olin senior fellow for national security studies at The Council on Foreign Relations in New York



Harald Müller

Harald Müller is director of the Peace Research Institute Frankfurt



Dear Harald,

It's a pleasure to participate in this debate with you. The question of using pre-emption to stop the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is certainly a timely one - all the more so because the debate over Iraq has heated up. As of the time of this writing, not much evidence of Saddam Hussein's WMD programmes has been found, beyond two suspected bio-weapons trailers. This has, of course, led many to suggest that the Iraq War was a needless one and that the doctrine of pre-emption has been discredited.

I disagree. In my view, our inability so far to find WMD discredits not the pre-emptive war, but the policy of inspections that its opponents pushed as an alternative. If we can't find WMD in liberated Iraq what chance would 100, or even 1,000 inspectors, have had in a country still controlled by a totalitarian regime? Of course it's possible that there was nothing to find, that Saddam had genuinely destroyed all his WMD stockpiles - or, more alarmingly, moved them out of the country. But, to my mind, the state of his current stockpile is less important than his capabilities to manufacture more and his willingness to use what he created. On both scores, Saddam was a pretty scary fellow. We know that he used poison gas against the Iranians and Kurds. We know that he kept WMD after he was supposed to give them up under UN resolutions. There is no doubt that, even if he got rid of his stockpile at the last minute, he maintained a vast infrastructure that could manufacture more germs and gases on demand. And we know that he was working to acquire nuclear weapons, although it's still unclear how far along he was.

Given all that, I think toppling him from power was the right move, not only morally, but also strategically. We have removed someone with a long track record of criminality, who, if allowed to remain in power, would undoubtedly have committed far more heinous crimes in the future - not only against his own people but also against his neighbours. We tried other approaches to corralling Saddam, ranging from cooperating with him (prior to 1990) to weapons inspections (1992-1998, 2003) to deterrence/containment (1991-2003). You can argue that the latest coerced inspections, backed up by the threat of force, did contain Saddam temporarily, and this may be right, but there is little chance that the United Kingdom and the United States could have maintained hundreds of thousands of troops on Iraq's borders indefinitely. The pressure could not be kept up forever and Saddam could wait out the international community as he has in the past. That option has now been foreclosed by decisive military action, and I think the world is better off with him gone. Don't you?

The question now is how to deal with other tyrannical regimes that are acquiring weapons of mass destruction like Iran and North Korea. Once again we face the familiar options - negotiation or pre-emption. I would argue for pre-emption but pre-emption broadly defined to mean not just military options but all sorts of pressure - diplomatic, economic and moral - to change the nature of these regimes. I think the basic problem in all these cases is the type of regime not the possession of WMD per se. WMD in the hands of liberal democratic governments, like France or Israel, are not a big concern. The problem is when tyrants who are unaccountable to their own people get their hands on very powerful weapons.

I don't have a lot of confidence that regimes that abuse their own people will deal fairly with the outside world. Sure, they're happy to cut deals, but then they violate them. North Korea is Exhibit A: Pyongyang signed the Agreed Framework in 1993 but then went right on developing nuclear weapons anyway. I don't think there's anything we can offer Kim Jong Il that will make him stop this programme.

Toppling Saddam was the right move, not only morally, but also strategically

In the past, pretty much all the non-proliferation success has been due to regime change. When governments in places like Brazil, Argentina and South Africa became more liberal, they no longer saw the need for nuclear weapons programmes. You can argue that their willingness to give up nukes was due to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty but I think that was of incidental importance; what counted was the nature of the regime.

So I think our focus should be on helping the people of North Korea, the people of Iran and of other rogue regimes to overthrow their tyrants and install more accountable regimes. Safety for the West lies in spreading liberal democracy, not in signing more treaties like the NPT that aren't enforced.

I imagine you have a different view. I look forward to continuing our exchange.

Yours,

Max

Dear Max,

Thank you for your thoughtful letter. It seems that an American neo-conservative and a German peace researcher can agree on something quite fundamental, namely that the use of force is the ultimate sanction for the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. I have said so for at least a dozen years and the UN Security Council expressed the same principle in its declaration of 31 January 1992, defining the spread of WMD as "a threat to peace and security", the very formula that can trigger sanctions, including military action, under the UN Charter.

But here I depart from your position. The use of force must be bound by law. Where WMD are concerned, international law is already extensive. It includes the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention, as well as the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Contrary to what you appear to believe, the NPT is more than empty words. Of the 36 states that seriously considered or enacted nuclear weapons programmes, the vast majority did so before the NPT was negotiated, and of the 25 states that stopped such activities, the vast majority (21) did so *after* the NPT was opened for signature. The majority of those who stopped were democracies or countries in transition, but there were authoritarian countries as well, including Egypt, Indonesia and Yugoslavia, who terminated nuclear research for military purposes after the international norm was established. The NPT was thus quite successful

in persuading countries to renounce the military option, and it is an exaggeration to state that “all the non-proliferation success has been due to regime change”.

Legal norms and military enforcement should not be viewed as competing but as complementary policies. Enforcement should serve to uphold agreed norms but on the basis of due procedure. Pre-emption outside a recognised legal context breeds fear, resentment and resistance, and ultimately feeds the very anarchy it is meant to address.

Due procedure requires proper presentation of the available evidence, proper debate on its merits and thorough, collective decision-making concerning the most appropriate strategy to deal with the threat. In the case of Iraq, such requirements were not met. The process of collecting and evaluating evidence by UNMOVIC was interrupted. Secretary of State Colin Powell's presentation of evidence to the United Nations on 5 February was sketchy, based on dubious sources and not properly discussed or analysed. Moreover, given the Iraqi performance in the war, the lack of use of chemical or biological weapons, and the failure so far even to find traces of WMD, let alone evidence of large-scale WMD programmes, it seems increasingly clear that UNSCOM had done a good job. Indeed, it appears that even an absence of four years was not enough for Iraq to reconstitute its programmes. Containment and deterrence worked well and would likely have continued to work for some time in the future.

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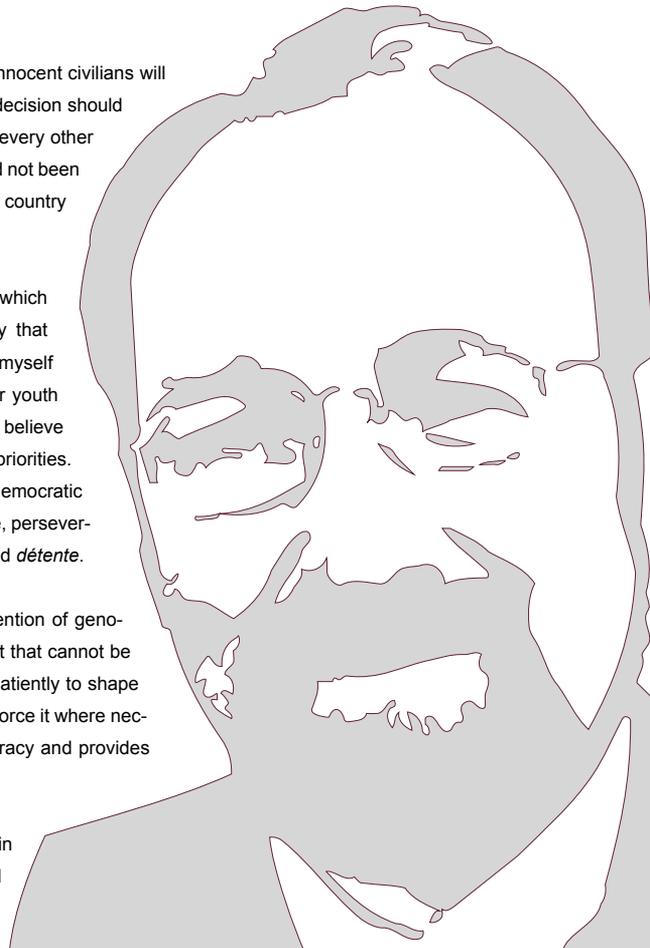
Secretary of State Colin Powell's presentation of evidence to the United Nations on 5 February was sketchy, based on dubious sources and not properly discussed or analysed. Moreover, given the Iraqi performance in the war, the lack of use of chemical or biological weapons, and the failure so far even to find traces of WMD, let alone evidence of large-scale WMD programmes, it seems increasingly clear that UNSCOM had done a good job. Indeed, it appears that even an absence of four years was not enough for Iraq to reconstitute its programmes. Containment and deterrence worked well and would likely have continued to work for some time in the future.

The decision to go to war should never be taken lightly since innocent civilians will always be killed - as they were in the Iraqi campaign. Such a decision should therefore only be made out of necessity, as a last resort when every other approach has been exhausted. In the case of Iraq, this point had not been reached. And it should not be left to the government of any one country to take such a decision.

The world is a mix of cultures and systems of government in which democratic rule is clearly preferable. Coming from a country that experienced two dictatorships in the last century, I count myself fortunate to have been spared membership of either the Hitler youth or the “young pioneers”, its communist alternative. However, I believe that pre-emption for the sake of regime change sets the wrong priorities. Dictators are susceptible to deterrence. Indeed, the greatest democratic triumph in history, the end of the Cold War, was won by patience, perseverance and a prudent combination of containment, deterrence and *détente*.

The use of force must be reserved for self-defence, the prevention of genocide and the pre-emption of a clear and imminent deadly threat that cannot be averted otherwise. Meanwhile, it should be the West's policy patiently to shape and expand international law and to marshal the strength to enforce it where necessary. The rule of law is one of the great strengths of democracy and provides the best international environment to help its spread.

One final remark. I am happy that Saddam Hussein is no longer in power. I am also happy that the Soviet Empire disintegrated and would have preferred it to disappear earlier. Yet I am equally happy that the US government chose not to follow the advice



of General Curtis LeMay, head of Strategic Air Command in the 1950s, namely to launch a pre-emptive attack on the Soviet Union before it developed the capability to destroy the United States with nuclear weapons. Had such advice been followed, I might have been one of the innocent victims of the ensuing war.

Yours,

Harald

Dear Harald,

I'm glad to see we agree in principle on the importance of using force to enforce international law. I agree with you that "Legal norms and military enforcement should not be viewed as competing but as complementary policies." My concern is that you - along with other Europeans - will never find an actual case where you conclude that diplomatic remedies have been exhausted.

"In the case of Iraq," you write, "such requirements were not met." Really??? What about the fact that Saddam Hussein had violated 17 UN resolutions? What about the fact that Hans Blix and the UN inspectors consistently reported that he never provided the full cooperation required by Resolution 1441? Saddam Hussein was one of the world's most brutal dictators with a long record of committing genocide, invading his neighbours and violating international laws. If this wasn't a case that justified military action, it's hard to imagine what would be.

The failure to find WMD so far makes my case even stronger. It means that the weapons inspectors would never have found Saddam's WMD stockpiles (which all Western intelligence agencies - including that of Germany - agree existed). Then they would have given him a clean bill of health, while leaving him with the capacity to manufacture more WMD in the future and probably to acquire nuclear weapons. (And don't forget - also leaving him free to rape, brutalise and murder thousands of his own citizens!) Thankfully, that danger has now been foreclosed by Anglo-American military action.

I am glad that you invoke the example of your own country that was ravaged by the twin dictatorships of Nazism and Communism.

Safety for the West lies in spreading liberal democracies, not in signing more treaties like the NPT

That, to my mind, is the most powerful argument in the world against deterrence and for regime change. The West tried to deter Hitler in the 1930s - and failed. The result was six million dead Jews and the worst war in history. The West tried to deter the Soviet Union after the Second World War - and succeeded. But at great cost. Leaving aside the millions who perished in wars of Communist aggression (Korea, Vietnam, Afghanistan, etc.), there is also the fact that the people of East Germany and Eastern Europe were kept under totalitarian oppression for more than 40 years. Is this really your optimal solution?

Granted, I don't think we had any choice in the case of the Soviet Union. It was so powerful that pre-emption wasn't an option - except in the non-military sense that we used all of our might to undermine the Soviet Empire from within (by backing movements like Solidarity and dissidents like Andrei Sakharov). Attacking the Soviet Union, as General LeMay advocated, would have been madness. But it's hardly madness to attack an evil - and much weaker - regime like Saddam Hussein's Iraq. In that case, we have brought freedom to more than 20 million people, at fairly low cost in lives on both sides.

War is not always the worst option - living with aggressive totalitarian dictatorships is often worse. I wish that France and the United Kingdom had waged a pre-emptive war on Hitler's Germany in the 1930s, instead of waiting to be attacked. Don't you?

Yours,

Max

Dear Max,

So Europeans will never go to war to enforce international law? Funny that, I was under the impression that German special forces deployed alongside Americans and Brits in Afghanistan and that France was the largest single contributor to the Afghan air campaign behind the United States.

Anyway, I find your claim that the absence of WMD in Iraq proved the futility of the inspection process unconvincing. To date, Washington has provided three explanations for the failure to uncover WMD. These are: (a) that Iraq destroyed the weapons immediately before the war; (b) that Iraq moved the weapons abroad; and (c) that the WMD have been looted. None is convincing and the last amounts to an admission of failure, if the objective was to prevent Iraq's WMD falling into the hands of terrorists. Moreover, the multiplicity of explanations will not enhance US credibility the next time Washington tries to make the case for pre-emption.

There is another possibility, namely that Iraq did not possess WMD to speak of, nor the means to produce them in relevant quantities. Much of the information concerning Iraq's bioweapons programme, which has been widely quoted, came from Iraqi defector Kemal Hussein who fled to Jordan in 1995. But another of Hussein's claims, one that did not receive much publicity, was that Iraq stopped producing such weapons in 1991 and destroyed them before UNSCOM began its work. We were never sure about this, but it may have been true.

The use of force must be reserved for self-defence, the prevention of genocide and the pre-emption of a clear and imminent deadly threat

What could extended and strengthened inspections have accomplished? Inspectors found some empty shells meant for chemical agents and they supervised the destruction of the Al Samoud missiles. They were frustrated by the level of co-operation, but reported that this was improving as the inspections proceeded. With more interrogations, rapid and timely inspections and the best Western intelligence, they would, in time, have found more remnants of the old programmes and, most likely, traces of major reconstitution efforts - if there were any. Moreover, UNMOVIC could have been followed up by a long-term, on-going supervision regime, accompanied by smart sanctions. Such instruments, combined with the threat of military action in case of non-compliance, would probably have contained Iraq for the foreseeable future.

What concerns me about your arguments is what I consider a cavalier attitude towards war. War takes innocent lives. That is its nature, no matter how great the efforts to minimise civilian casualties. The decision to go to war should not be taken simply on the certainty of victory. Rather, it should only be based on clear evidence of its inevitability, on the solid

expectation that the number of victims will be lower than they would have been had the war not been fought, and in the likelihood that the post-war situation will not be worse than it was before (which was very much the case in 1938!). I remain unconvinced that war was inevitable in the Iraqi case. Meanwhile, the jury is still out on the other two criteria, though I whole-heartedly hope that, with help, the Iraqi people can rebuild their country. That said, it is not easy to impose democracy from the outside. Conditions vary from country to country and the German and Japanese experiences after the Second World War are not necessarily models to be applied elsewhere. Only time will tell.

One final point. We are not talking about *pre-emption* (acting to forestall an imminent attack) here. We are talking about *prevention*, the destruction of a risk before it emerges into a threat that could turn into an attack. On prevention, until very recently, international lawyers were in agreement that it was patently unlawful.

Yours,

Harald

Dear Harald,

I think that when it comes to Iraqi WMD, we'll have to agree to disagree. I only note in passing that it wasn't just the US government that was convinced Saddam had WMD - so were all the other governments, including European governments, that had any intelligence operations in Iraq. So, for that matter, were UN inspectors.

I also take exception to your claim that a "long-term" inspections regime would have worked. I find it hard to see why Saddam wouldn't have stopped cooperating with inspectors as he did in 1998. Would France and Germany have volunteered to attack Iraq if he did? They didn't in 1998.

What really troubles me, however, is your cavalier attitude toward totalitarian regimes. You write: "War takes innocent lives." Well so do evil regimes. In fact during the 20th century totalitarian regimes probably claimed more lives than wars did. Add up the death toll from Hitler, Stalin, Mao, Pol Pot and, yes, Saddam Hussein. That's more than 100 million corpses. Saddam's own contribution was relatively modest - a few hundred thousand victims. But the war that topped him resulted in only a few thousand civilian casualties. It is certain that the war saved the lives of many Iraqis.

War is not always the worst option - living with aggressive totalitarian dictatorships is often worse

And the jury is *not* still out on whether Iraq is better off without Saddam. Even if Iraq doesn't become a perfect democracy, it has already ceased being a country where women are raped and children tortured as an instrument of politics. By any reasonable moral calculus, the war in Iraq was amply justified.

Regarding your final point: I don't place much faith in international lawyers and what they say. If I did, I would still be waiting for the 1928 Kellogg-Briand Pact (which outlawed war as an instrument of national policy) to be enforced. I place my trust in American power, which has delivered Europe and Asia from great evil in the 20th century and is now doing the same in the Middle East. "International law" didn't win the Second World War or the Cold War. America and its allies did.

Yours,

Max

Dear Max,

Situations may arise when we must take up weapons to defend against WMD threats - if, for example, Saddam had been found by the UN Security Council to be in severe breach of UNSCR 1441 - or to prevent genocide by ruthless dictators. No cavalier attitude on this matter from my side. But powerful countries must not have a monopoly on taking decisions of such magnitude. Working legal procedures are available for the international community to achieve this. Indeed, using them, the United Nations developed new principles of humanitarian intervention during the 1990s and, in 1998, established the norm that host governments are responsible for transnational terrorism on their territory. In this way in 2001, the UN Security Council conferred the right of self-defence for states attacked by terrorists against those states hosting them. Later, in UNSCR 1441, the Security Council opened up a promising approach to dealing with the WMD threat, which it was not given the time to develop.

You place your trust in American power, because you believe - as your government does - that America is (always?) right. Outside the United States, however, there is a growing impression that Washington has developed a feeling of infallibility and that it has no need to take account of the views of others - unless they echo US policy. Moreover, not everybody believes that Washington is the font of all wisdom. US peace-building in Iraq, for example, betrays a considerable ability to accumulate mistakes. For this reason, I am afraid, the jury is still out.

The world is becoming an ever smaller place. As a result, the consequences of decisions taken by Washington affect us all and it is extremely frustrating when they are taken outside of international legal procedures. Decisions that affect people but in which they have no say breed resentment, resistance and, ultimately, violence.

***The decision to go to war
should not be taken simply on
the certainty of victory***

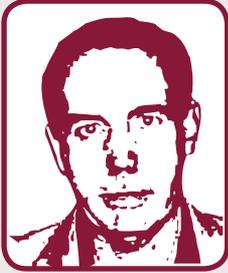
In the 18th century, King George III of England decided that he needed to tax his subjects on another continent. He thought that he had good grounds for such a policy since he was incurring costs to protect these same people against the "savages". These people were, however, upset, since they were never consulted on this decision, but were severely affected by its consequences. Americans know better than anyone the consequences that their wrath engendered.

Yours,

Harald

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HOW GLOBAL A ROLE CAN AND SHOULD NATO PLAY?



Steve Larrabee

Steve Larrabee is a senior staff member at RAND in Washington DC and holder of the RAND Corporate Chair in European Security



François Heisbourg is director of the Paris-based "Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique"



François
Heisbourg

Dear François,

As it enters the 21st century, NATO faces a new set of strategic challenges quite different from the ones it faced in the past. I welcome this opportunity to discuss this issue with you and hope our discussion will help clarify how these new challenges can best be addressed.

In recent years NATO has begun to move away from its original focus on Europe and recognise that the threats facing the Alliance are more diverse and geographically distant than during the Cold War. This shift in emphasis was explicitly acknowledged at the Prague Summit last November. The communiqué issued in Prague noted that NATO needed to have the capability to field forces that can move quickly "to wherever they are needed" and sustain operations over great distance, including in an environment where they might be faced with biological, chemical and nuclear weapons.

This change essentially ends the "out-of-area" debate that has raged within the Alliance in the last few years. However, some in Europe oppose what they see as an effort to "globalise" NATO. They argue that NATO should remain focused on threats in the European area and its periphery. Such a view, in my opinion, is anachronistic and wrong-headed. It fails to recognise the degree to which the nature and locus of the challenges facing Europe and the United States have changed since the end of the Cold War, and especially since the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001.

Today the main threats to Western security are no longer in Europe, but emanate from beyond Europe's borders. They are posed not by the threat of Soviet invasion or instability in the Balkans but by weapons of mass destruction, terrorism and outlaw states which may be tempted to use such weapons or pass them on to terrorists. If NATO is to remain relevant and retain support among Western publics, it must be capable of addressing those new threats and challenges.

The Prague Summit made a good start in this direction. The Prague Capabilities Commitment and the creation of the NATO Response Force (NRF) will enable the Alliance to better address these new threats. The initiatives represent the best chance - perhaps the last best chance - to narrow the divergence in strategic agendas and military capabilities between Europe and the United States that has grown over the last decade.

Unless the capabilities gap is narrowed, European and US forces will find it increasingly difficult to operate effectively together to meet new challenges, especially those beyond Europe. This will have two results - both of them negative. First, it will increase the trend, already evident, toward US unilateralism. If European and US forces cannot operate together, the United States will have little choice but to act alone. European Allies will be reduced to providing mop-up forces. Second, Europe's ability to influence US decisions and policy will further decline, creating even greater frustration and resentment in Europe, as Europe finds itself increasingly unable to affect decisions that impact on its own security. Both these developments would have a debilitating impact on transatlantic relations and the ability of Europe and the United States to address collectively the new threats and challenges they face today.

***Unless the capabilities gap is narrowed,
European and US forces will find it
increasingly difficult to operate effectively
together***

The real test will be whether the commitments made at Prague are actually implemented. This will require many European Allies to reorient their defence investment priorities. Many still have too many forces oriented toward Cold War missions. To meet the new challenges, these countries need smaller, lighter more mobile forces that can be sustained over long periods far from their homeland.

Some Europeans are worried that the NRF will weaken or undermine the European Union's Rapid Reaction Force. I don't see why this should be the case. The two forces have quite different purposes. The NRF is essentially a strike force for use in high-intensity combat operations beyond Europe whereas the European Union's RRF is primarily designed for peace and stability operations in and around Europe. Thus, the forces are basically complementary rather than conflictual.

Given the difficulty in achieving consensus on how and when to use force in confronting these new threats, most non-European operations are likely to be conducted by "coalitions of the willing" rather than NATO as an organisation. But European and US forces will be better able to operate together if they have trained together and have similar operational doctrines and procedures. The NRF and Prague Capabilities Initiative should help strengthen cooperation in this regard. Moreover, as recent developments in Afghanistan illustrate, NATO as an organisation may play an increasingly important role in post-conflict stability operations in areas beyond Europe.

I look forward to your response and continuing this debate.

Yours,

Steve

Dear Steve,

NATO is faced with two basic strategic challenges. The first is directly linked to the constantly shifting set of military contingencies that the Allies have had to face since the end of the Cold War. The second concerns the increasing disengagement of the United States.

The Gulf War, the Kosovo air campaign and operation *Enduring Freedom* in and around Afghanistan bear little resemblance to each other either in terms of the enemy or the ways in which the campaigns have been fought. The situation is best encapsulated by the Rumsfeld/Wolfowitz pithy and essentially accurate line that: "The mission determines the coalition."

This has a paradoxical effect on NATO. On the one hand, the focus on European contingencies ceases to make sense. This is especially the case since the situation in the former Yugoslavia has calmed down in large part as a result of NATO's interventions in 1995 and 1999. On the other hand, a "one-size-fits-all" approach is no longer appropriate. In this respect, the creation of the NATO Response Force (NRF) strikes me as being wrongheaded in terms of its strategic premise which might be summarised as: "The coalition determines the mission." In the real world, each contingency will involve a different set of political and military actors. You don't, for example, send the same people to respond to a crisis in the Ivory Coast, as you do to Iraq, irrespective of the broader issue that NATO as such has not been invited to participate in operations in either instance, no more than it was in the case of *Enduring Freedom* or *Desert Storm*.

Like you, I don't see the NRF as being in competition with the European Rapid Reaction Force. Double-hatting can work here as it does for other military forces such as the Eurocorps. However, I doubt that a 26-country force, with a rotating standing component, will in practice be able to respond in the way it is supposed to. Political inertia and military reality will see to that. When European and US nationals have to be evacuated in 48 hours from a place like Bouaké in the Ivory Coast, you don't call a 26-nation meeting and then order whichever nation currently forms the standing component of the NRF to take on the mission. It is no insult to Norway or Hungary or indeed to most NATO members to suggest that their response capability is not optimised for operations in sub-Saharan African. In practice, in the case of an NRF-style emergency, two or three countries possessing the political will and the military ability will send in forces possessing some knowledge and experience of the terrain. That is why French and US forces took the humanitarian intervention in Bouaké on themselves last September.

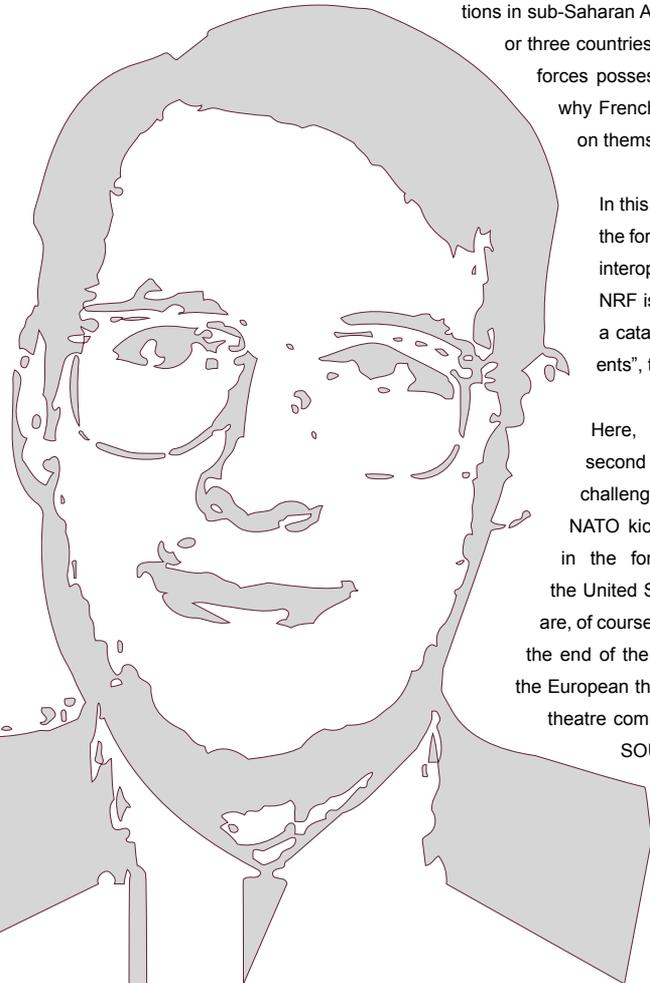
In this new strategic context, NATO has a major role to play in making the formation of meaningful coalitions possible. NATO as a producer of interoperability is absolutely indispensable in this respect. Indeed, if the NRF is to serve a useful purpose, it will be because of its function as a catalyst for improving interoperability among "first military respondents", to borrow a phrase from the language of counter-terrorism.

In this new strategic context, NATO has a major role to play in making the formation of meaningful coalitions possible

Here, the second basic challenge to NATO kicks in, in the form of

the United States' increasing disengagement from the organisation. There are, of course, a number of solid reasons for this development. These include the end of the Cold War and the corresponding relegation in importance of the European theatre of operations; the increasingly autonomous nature of US theatre commands, most of which - PACCOM, CENTCOM, NORTHCOM, SOUTHCOM - are not accustomed to NATO procedures, standards and norms; and, of course, the growing capabilities gap between Europe and the United States, with its growing impact on European militaries' ability to interface fully with their US counterparts.

With some 92 per cent of the US force structure outside NATO, what will be the future meaning of NATO interoper-



ability? In practice, NATO's main customer for this public good will increasingly be European forces. The creation of a transformation-related command in the place of SACLANT may help reduce the transatlantic interoperability gap. But it will not be easy to make NATO interoperability relevant to the United States' non-European theatre commands, as was demonstrated by some of the difficulties encountered during operation *Enduring Freedom*.

Europe, for its part, has to do its share, in the form of higher and better defence spending, notably in those areas relevant to force projection and to network-centric warfare. However, this is not taking place to anything like the necessary extent. Neither the benchmarking involved in NATO's Defence Capabilities Initiative nor the launching of the European Union's defence policy have generated any substantial change in this regard.

Yours,

François

Dear François,

I agree that in the new strategic environment the focus on European contingencies doesn't make sense. I also agree that a "one-size-fits-all" approach is not appropriate. As you point out, in the real world, each military contingency will involve a different set of political and military actors.

Finally, it's true that in a Bouaké-like contingency (rapid evacuation of citizens of NATO members), the NRF would not be much use. But that does not mean that the NRF is wrong-headed, as you suggest. The NRF is not designed for Bouaké-like contingencies. It is designed to be a strike force for highly demanding combat contingencies far from NATO territory. For lesser contingencies, such as Bouaké, other solutions will be required. However, NATO also needs to be able to deal with more demanding scenarios. And for these scenarios the NRF makes sense and can help to foster interoperability - a key requirement if European and US forces are going to be able to operate together in a coalition and address many of the new threats they will face in the future.

Regarding the second challenge, you are right. There is a danger of US disengagement from NATO - but less for the reasons you cite. The real driving force for US disengagement is the capabilities gap between European and US forces. Unless the European members of the Alliance restructure their forces away from their Cold War posture and acquire more expeditionary capabilities, the capabilities gap will grow and European and US forces will not be able to operate effectively in a coalition. The Europeans have to spend more - and spend differently - than in the past. The problem, as you note, is that this is not happening to the extent necessary. Unless this changes, the United States will have little choice but to operate on its own, whether it wants to or not.

To be sure, the United States deserves some blame as well. Some of the initial positions adopted by the Bush administration - on the Kyoto Agreement, the junking of the ABM treaty, and the International Criminal Court - gave the impression that the administration was not much interested in the opinion of its Allies and was disengaging from NATO. Its decision to sideline NATO in the Afghanistan crisis reinforced the impression that the Alliance was being downgraded as a vehicle for coordinating transatlantic security and defence policy.

The NRF is designed to be a strike force for highly demanding combat contingencies far from NATO territory

But the administration has also learned from its missteps. The NRF and the Prague Capabilities Commitment - both US initiatives - are designed to make NATO more capable of meeting new threats and offset the impression that the

administration was downgrading NATO in its strategic planning. Since Prague, the administration has pushed to give NATO a greater role in Afghanistan and in Iraq if military action is taken there. Ironically, however, as the administration has sought to transform and adapt NATO for a new era, some of the Europeans who criticised the administration most vocally for by-passing NATO in the Afghanistan crisis are now blocking efforts to get NATO to take on greater responsibilities in Afghanistan and Iraq. These tactics are shortsighted and only hinder the transformation needed to enable NATO to play a more important role in addressing new threats.

Yours,

Steve

Dear Steve,

The NRF is indeed conceived for contingencies larger than the evacuation of Bouaké. But the point I made applies at the higher end as well, for instance in case a non-permissive evacuation operation had to be organised at short notice for the 20,000 or so foreign nationals residing in Abidjan. How would the NRF fare militarily in its currently planned format? The NRF should not be the hybrid that is currently envisaged - Is it a "standing, non-standing force" or a "non-standing, standing force"? - but a toolbox force, with only headquarters functions being of a permanent nature.

What you say about the European-US capabilities gap is indeed correct, but I would add a reinforcing point along with a couple of nuances. The gap has entrenched a *de facto* division of labour, with the United States "kicking in the doors" and the Europeans "doing the dishes". This is difficult to sustain politically even at the best of times, that is when there is a high degree of agreement on aims and policies as has been the case in the Balkans since 1995. It becomes deeply corrosive when consensus doesn't prevail within the Alliance, as is the case in the Iraq crisis. A doorkicking operation involving Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States will not gracefully lead to a dishwashing "UN feeds - EU funds" peace-support operation.

The lead nation's actions have greater consequences than those of others

The first nuance I wish to underscore is that the capabilities gap between European NATO members is proportionally much greater than that between Europe and the United States. Whatever the measure of effort, the discrepancy between best European

practice (that in the first instance of the United Kingdom and then of France) and the laggards (who know who they are) is greater than the transatlantic divide. The other caveat: some US rhetoric about the gap is overwrought. I suspect that if by some miracle Europeans ramped up their defence spending to levels allowing them to acquire the whole suite of command, control, communications, computing, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (C4 ISR) capabilities required to conduct major force-projection operations on their own, the response would be to talk of "useless duplication". Indeed, this is already the case with the Galileo programme, the civilian-funded European equivalent of the United States' Global Positioning System.

Finally, you talk about the Bush administration learning from its missteps. I don't agree. The Bush administration does not view its actions on Kyoto or NATO as "missteps". This is policy. When a US Secretary of Defence compares Germany to Cuba and Libya 24 hours before joining the International Security Conference in Munich; when repeated and consistent attempts are made to split NATO (and not only the European Union) along "Old Europe/New Europe" lines, it is difficult to conclude that the Bush administration is making inadvertent mistakes.

Of course, the Americans haven't been the only ones to play such games during the Iraq crisis. But the lead nation's actions have greater consequences than those of others. Indeed, we have reached the point where it becomes difficult to imagine a single contingency that could draw a united military response from all 26 NATO nations and invitees. Even the post-9/11 invocation of Article 5 would be difficult to recreate, so great has been the growth of transatlantic disaffection.

This is as bad a situation as I can recall. Admittedly, I can't pretend to remember Suez.

Yours,

François

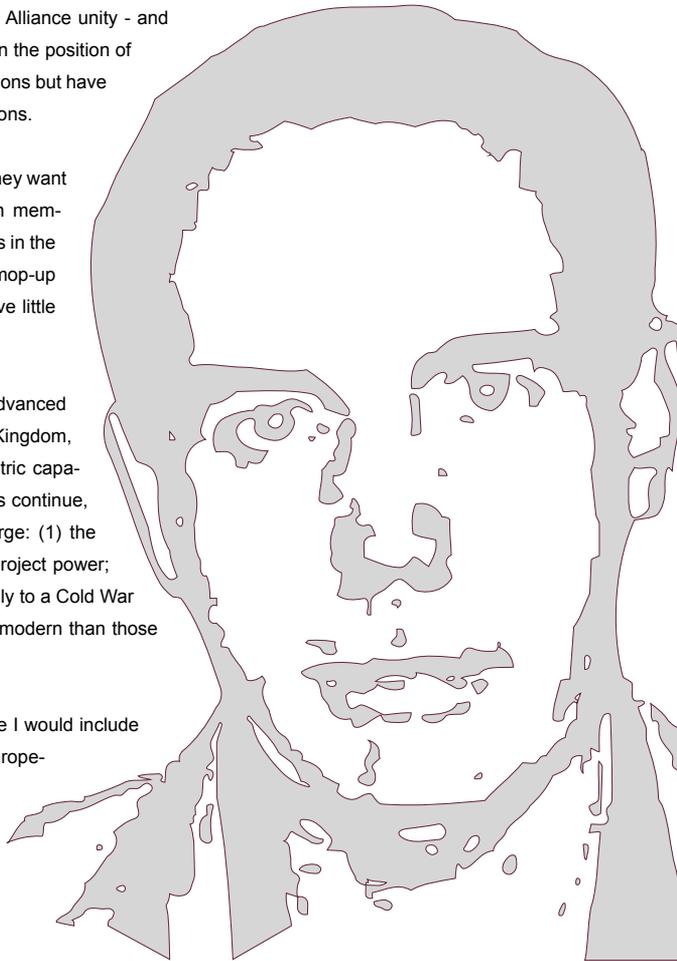
Dear François,

I agree that the capabilities gap is reinforcing a dangerous division of labour, with the United States acting, in effect, as a SWAT team kicking down the door and most Europeans relegated to the role of the "shovel brigade" (or dishwasher) which arrives at the tail end of an operation to clean up the rubble created by the United States. This division of labour is corrosive to Alliance unity - and military effectiveness. It also leaves Europeans essentially in the position of dependency. They have little influence on US military operations but have to pay the political and economic costs of these military actions.

This is why reducing the capabilities gap is so important. If they want leverage over US-led operations and decisions, European members of the Alliance need to be able to operate with US forces in the early stages of combat operations not just to participate in mop-up or post-combat stability operations. Otherwise, they will have little choice but to act as the shovel brigade.

I also agree that a capability gap exists between the more advanced members of the Alliance, such as France and the United Kingdom, who have been developing expeditionary and network-centric capabilities, and the rest of the Alliance. Indeed, if present trends continue, there is a real danger that a three-tier Alliance may emerge: (1) the United States and a few select NATO members who can project power; (2) the bulk of the Alliance, which remains wedded essentially to a Cold War posture; and (3) the new members, whose forces are less modern than those of the second group.

Some of the rhetoric on both sides of the Atlantic - and here I would include President Chirac's criticism at the EU summit of the East Europeans for siding with the United States in the Iraq crisis - has made an already bad situation worse. Politicians on both sides of the Atlantic need to "stop digging" and begin to act more responsibly to heal the emerging transatlantic rift.



But the main problem lies in the fact that there is no shared consensus in the United States and much of Europe on how to address the new strategic threats and challenges that the Alliance faces. Without such a consensus, it will be hard for NATO to use the military forces at its disposal effectively - with or without the NRF.

Politicians on both sides of the Atlantic need to act more responsibly to heal the emerging transatlantic rift

Creating the needed strategic consensus will require enlightened US global leadership and a willingness on Washington's part to treat its European Allies as genuine partners, not vassals who are expected to fall unflinchingly in line behind every new US policy initiative ("You are either for us or against us"). This is not just a question of the United States consulting more - though that would help - but of building the necessary strategic consensus within the Alliance for its actions. At the same time, the United States' European Allies need to begin taking the emerging new threats and transformation of their military forces more seriously than most have done to date.

Yours,

Steve

Dear Steve,

That Europeans should be investing more in defence is something we have no trouble in agreeing. This is pretty much what environmentalists would call a "no penalty" policy. We need to limit the transatlantic gap to help keep the Alliance together, and if the Alliance were to fall apart, Europeans would have to spend more on defence. Unfortunately, the fact that the two of us agree will presumably have little, if any, material impact.

The Alliance has to cope with two even more important problems. One is due to the changing nature of security threats. A political-military alliance designed to cope with a state-centred threat is not well geared to deal with non-state menaces such as *al Qaeda*. Police work, non-military intelligence sharing, financial monitoring, and social and economic initiatives are not core competencies of NATO. In the same vein, in a world of rapidly changing challenges, with geostrategic focus shifting from Afghanistan in 2001-2002 to Iraq in 2003-2004, the mission does indeed dictate the coalition. With or without a Response Force, NATO will struggle to "zap" from one conflict to another.

Care by both Americans and Europeans will be required if we are to save the Alliance

The biggest difficulty the Alliance now has to deal with is probably the sense among many of its members, and a sizeable fraction of their publics that the most important Alliance member has become a source of insecurity. This is a momentous, and ominous, shift away from the post-

9/11 unanimity. A security alliance that is seen as diminishing rather than increasing security would become an oxymoron. This may be a temporary phenomenon and dealing with North Korea's nukes may help pull us together again. However, we are all on notice that much more care by both Americans and Europeans will be required if we are to save the Alliance from the looming split of the West. Such care has not been conspicuous during the past few months.

Yours,

François

IS MILITARY POWER STILL THE KEY TO INTERNATIONAL SECURITY?



Steven Everts

NO

Steven Everts is a senior research fellow with the London-based Centre for European Reform and director of its transatlantic programme



Gary Schmitt is executive director of the Project for the New American Century in Washington DC

YES

Gary Schmitt



Dear Gary,

The question of the relative importance of military power in achieving foreign policy goals in today's world is crucial. Achieving transatlantic consensus on this strategic, overarching issue is perhaps even more important than getting agreement on policy towards Iraq, Israel-Palestine or the International Criminal Court.

It is clear that tackling the vast majority of today's global problems requires a careful mix of hard and soft security instruments. We can probably agree that the international security environment has moved on decisively from the bad old days of the Cold War, with its familiar lexicon of *détente* and deterrence. In this post-post Cold War era, we have moved from risks to threats: from the single risk of a thermo-nuclear exchange to the multiple threats of globalised insecurity. As a result, we have a much more diffuse security environment to contend with. Between black and white, there are now a thousands shades of grey. One of the consequences of this transition is that military power has become less important, because it is often ill-suited to solve the complex political and security problems we face.

Whether the issue is messianic terrorism, weapons proliferation, failed states, managing regional conflicts or whatever other international problem one may care to name, the conclusion is always the same. Solving these problems is hard. But states that can draw on the full spectrum of available instruments and which have a demonstrable desire to work with like-minded partners, stand a much greater chance of success. It is for this pragmatic reason that I am concerned with the current trend towards over-militarisation in the United States. Unlike some on the European left, I have no problem with US power. Constructive and multi-faceted US international engagement is clearly needed in a world beset by rising levels of international tension. But I do believe that the trend towards spending ever more on defence - now comfortably over \$1 billion a day - while allocating pitiful sums of money to non-military forms of international engagement is unhelpful, because it means that fewer resources are directed at actually resolving international problems. To illustrate: the percentage of the federal budget devoted to international affairs excluding defence spending - such as the excellent Nunn-Lugar programmes aimed at preventing Russian nuclear weapons and materials getting into the wrong hands - has fallen from four per cent in the 1960s, via two per cent in the 1970s, to just over one per cent today.

Of course, overwhelming military force can be necessary and effective in certain circumstances, as in the campaign against the Taliban in Afghanistan. But military force alone rarely works, even in the medium-term. Just consider

Afghanistan today. More broadly, I don't think that "full-spectrum dominance" alone will help the United States win its war on terror. Defeating terrorism is essentially a job for intelligence and police authorities and of winning hearts and minds, as Europeans have learned - usually the hard way. Nor will it help anchor Russia in a West-leaning direction, manage the integration of China into the global system, or promote a peace settlement in the Middle East.

The instruments states have at their disposal inevitably have a knock-on effect on their "world view". Increasingly, US behaviour reminds me of the saying: "If the only instrument you have is a hammer all your problems start looking like a nail." The rather Hobbesian worldview of the new National Security Strategy, with a doctrine of pre-emptive strike as its centre piece, has added ammunition to European fears that on the all-important question of global strategy Europe and the United States are drifting apart.

In response to European gripes about US unilateralism, Americans often point to Europe's pathetic levels of defence spending. Clearly, there is a strong case for Europe to improve its hard security capabilities. Thankfully, some countries - like France and the United Kingdom - are now increasing their defence spending. Like many analysts I subscribe to the mantra that without more, and smarter defence spending Europe will fail to realise its foreign policy ambitions. In debates among Europeans, I argue for boosting European military capabilities, not to "please" Americans but so that Europe can fulfil the tasks that it has set for itself - both in NATO and the European Union.

Military power is often ill-suited to solve the complex political and security problems we face

But there are three perfectly sensible reasons for Europe's reluctance to prioritise defence spending. First, US choices in these matters are leaving a security vacuum that Europe must fill. Put simply, if the United States is not doing conflict prevention or post-

conflict reconstruction, who will? Second, many Europeans are sceptical whether more defence capabilities will, as some analysts argue, get them more influence in Washington. The tendency in the United States, particularly with this administration, is first to decide strategy and then to push and cajole allies to support it. The phrase used in Europe - only partly tongue-in-cheek - is that the United States is not looking for coalitions of the willing and able but of the willing and compliant. Third, we come back to the question of effectiveness. If military force is only useful for a small and perhaps shrinking set of international problems - and often only for a short period of time - then what is the point, many Europeans wonder, in spending much more on defence?

Clearly we need a frank transatlantic debate over what counts as the most important global problems (the "mad men and loose nukes" agenda versus the dark side of globalisation), and over which strategies work best (unilateral military force and pre-emptive strikes or broad-based coalitions and a mix of hard and soft security).

These days it is almost mandatory in Washington to lambast Europeans for their failure to spend adequately on defence. But upon reflection it should be clear that the imbalance on the US side is greater and more troubling. I look forward to the day when the United States realises that it has got its spending priorities wrong. US-style military supremacy may make the country feel important - but it does little for solving the growing problems of a troubled world.

Yours,

Steven



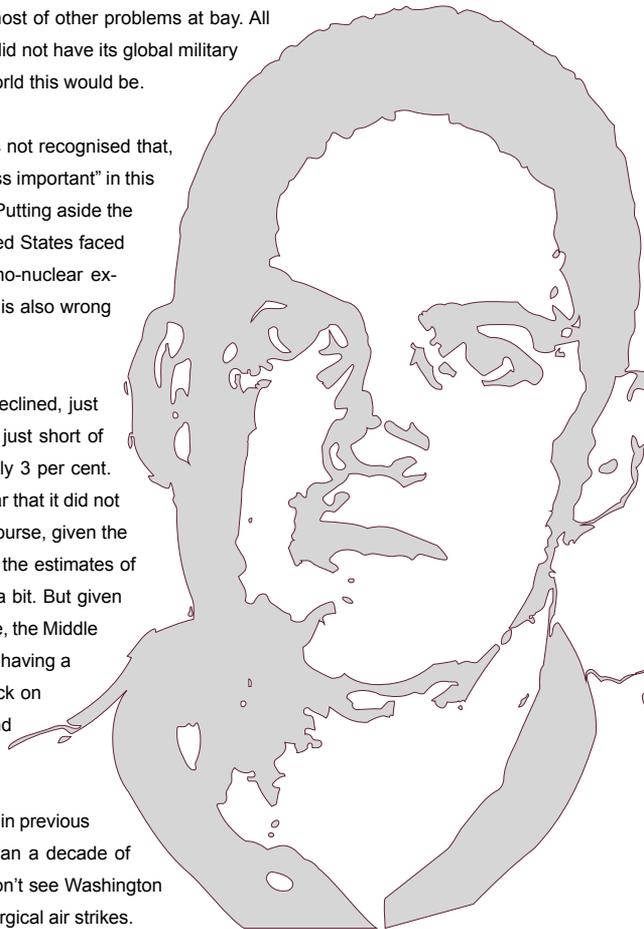
Dear Steven,

Before I respond to your comments, I should set out my answer to the specific question we've been asked to address: "Is military power still the key to international security?" The short answer is "no". The key, as it always has been, is the character of the regimes that make up the international order. And, in modern times, the key to international security is whether a state or states are liberal democracies. By far, the greatest advancement in international security theory has been the "discovery" that international peace and prosperity is directly proportional to the spread of liberal democratic governments throughout the globe.

That said, is military power the next most relevant key to international security? Here my answer is "yes". Is it the only key? No. Can it solve all problems? No. But it is the next best explanation of why most states behave the way they do, why they don't behave as they might, and why being superior in this element of statecraft paves the way for making other tools more effective. Indeed, the only reason we are having this debate is, ironically, because US military power is so omnipresent that the benefits it provides in terms of global stability get taken for granted. A good example of this is your remark that military force can't "help anchor Russia in a West-leaning direction, manage the integration of China into the global system, or promote a peace settlement in the Middle East". Military power can't "solve" these problems obviously but predominant military power in the hands of the United States or Israel does in fact preclude Russia, China and the Palestinian Authority from adopting policies that are more ambitious and disruptive of the international order. Military power, in short, matters not only because some problems are "nails" (Milosevic, Bin Laden, *et al.*), but also because having the upper hand militarily can keep a host of other problems at bay. All one has to do is imagine a situation in which the United States did not have its global military capabilities to see just how different (and more dangerous) a world this would be.

In contrast, your overarching point is that the United States has not recognised that, with the passing of the Cold War, "military power has become less important" in this supposedly more "complex political and security" environment. Putting aside the fact that your characterisation of the security problems the United States faced during the Cold War - "black and white", reducible to a "thermo-nuclear exchange" - is not accurate (and I might add very Euro-centric), it is also wrong to describe current US statecraft as one of "over-militarisation".

Since the end of the Cold War, America's military budget has declined, just as it has in Europe. A decade ago, US defence spending was just short of 5 per cent of GDP. When George Bush took office, it was barely 3 per cent. And, indeed, until 9-11, the Bush Administration had made it clear that it did not intend to increase defence spending in any significant way. Of course, given the size of the US economy, 3.4 or 3.3 per cent of GDP (which are the estimates of the defence burden for the next two years) still buys you quite a bit. But given the United States' global security responsibilities - in Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and now at home - it is arguably barely enough. Moreover, having a military-second-to-none has not led the United States to be quick on the draw. For example, there was no hurry to jump into Bosnia and Herzegovina or Kosovo. Nor did the United States take decisive military action against Bin Laden until after 9-11, despite the fact that *al Qaida* had killed hundreds in strikes on US targets in previous years. Even the looming conflict with Iraq comes after more than a decade of Baghdad's failure to live up to its cease-fire obligations. And I don't see Washington rushing off to address the crisis on the Korean Peninsula with surgical air strikes.



The key to international security is whether a state or states are liberal democracies

You continue with this cartoon version of American statecraft by stating that the new National Security Strategy is guided by a "Hobbesian worldview", and has "as its centre piece" the doctrine of pre-emptive strikes. First, if it were truly Hobbesian,

the strategy would not put such a heavy emphasis on the need to expand liberal political and economic principles around the globe. And, second, any fair reading of the document would conclude that the option of pre-emptive strikes is not central to the new strategy. Does it have increased relevance in a security era in which weapons' proliferation has got dangerously out of hand? Yes. Is it the defining element of the overall strategy? Hardly.

Finally, to support your claim about US statecraft being "over-militarised", you assert that Washington allocates "pitiful sums of money to non-military forms of international engagement". Now, one can argue about whether the United States allots enough money (\$12.7 billion in 2000) for foreign assistance or whether foreign assistance makes much difference at all, but to call the US levels of aid "pitiful" is simply hyperbole. Besides Japan, no other country spends as much on government foreign assistance as the United States and, next year, no one will be spending more. Even now, the aid provided by the United States is done on more generous terms. (Japan provides much of its assistance in the form of loans - over grants - and requires, like several European states, that its aid be spent on buying goods and services from it.) The fact is that the US government is the world's largest bilateral donor to the developing world: providing \$11 billion in official development assistance and over \$17 billion in all forms of assistance. It is also the world's leader in humanitarian assistance; the largest donor to the multilateral development banks; the leader in private charitable donations; and the greatest source of private capital to developing states. Indeed, well over \$30 billion in private remittances alone go from the United States to the developing world each year - a sum equal to or larger than the defence budget of every NATO state except France, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Europeans like to tell themselves that they have, as you argue, a more balanced and nuanced sense of what is required to handle today's security problems than those "cowboys" in America. But the facts indicate that the United States not only carries the biggest "hammer" in the world but also retains the most generous "pocket". It strikes me that this is far more in balance than, say, in Germany, where, when you add up the monies spent on foreign assistance and the military, the total still falls well short of 2 per cent of GDP. Frankly, this is not surprising since Germany and, more broadly, Europe relies on the United States to do most of the heavy lifting in managing the globe's biggest security concerns. Fine. But Europeans should stop trying to turn this point of weakness into some new insight into what is key to international security in the post-Cold War world.

Yours,

Gary

Dear Gary,

Let me make three points in response. They are about the nature of the transatlantic security agenda; the effectiveness of military force; and budgetary choices.

I am glad we agree that the key to international security is not whether states have abundant military power, but whether they are liberal democracies or not. The finding that liberal democracies don't fight each other is indeed the closest we have come to establishing an "empirical law" in international relations. The question now is: how can we expand the democratic peace? I suggest that building liberal democracies is best done through the kind of conflict

prevention and post-conflict reconstruction that Europeans (and others) so often do - and which Americans often reject or belittle. Higher defence spending is great if the United States wants to extend its military lead even further. But what will it do to prevent fragile or failing states from descending into anarchy? How will it help to prevent Afghanistan from becoming - yet again - a playground for warlords and fanatical Islamic groups?

Rebuilding war-torn societies is difficult and unglamorous. It is also much more expensive and time-consuming than the war-fighting phase. It would be great if the United States rethought its opposition to "nation building" and offered the necessary financial resources and political commitment. On the military side, the United States could join its European Allies in contributing more forces to UN missions. At the moment the United States has one - yes one - soldier involved in UN-run peace operations (out of a total of 36,000). Both the United States' international image and global security would benefit enormously if it did.

Clearly, using military force is sometimes necessary. Diplomacy not backed up by the threat of force can be ineffective, as we saw, for example, in the former Yugoslavia in the early 1990s. But military force without a diplomatic or political strategy is often worse and can create more problems than it solves. Take Somalia in 1991-92. Or consider the United

***Rebuilding war-torn societies
is much more
expensive and time-consuming
than war-fighting***

Kingdom and Northern Ireland, where violence declined after the start of peace negotiations not because of British military supremacy. Your point that predominant military power in the hands of Israel has precluded "the Palestinian Authority from adopting policies that are more ambitious and disruptive of the international order" is, at a minimum, debatable. Israel's (self-image of) military supremacy has led to a disastrous invasion of Lebanon in 1982 and is now feeding the illusion that if only its military crackdown were implemented more decisively all suicide bombings would stop. Regardless of where one stands on the Israel-Palestine question, only a tiny, extremist minority (on both sides) believes there is a military solution to this problem.

Finally, budgetary choices. You valiantly defend the US record on development aid and trot out some deceptively impressive figures. But they do not stand up to scrutiny. First, the term "pitiful" is not mine, nor is it European hyperbole. It is Joseph Nye's characterisation of the sums of money the United States is devoting to "soft security" today. Second, the \$11 billion the United States provides in overseas aid looks less impressive if you realise that more than \$5 billion of that money goes to Israel and Egypt alone. Of course the United States is often, but not always, the largest bilateral donor and of course it makes significant contributions to the budgets of the United Nations, IMF, World Bank and other international organisations. But if you group what Europeans are doing together, their contributions dwarf that of the United States - and relative figures bear this out. As Chris Patten never tires of saying: "The European Union and the member states account for 55 per cent of all international development assistance and some 66 per cent of all grant aid. They finance 50 per cent of all aid to the Palestinians, over 60 per cent of all aid to Russia and more than 85 per cent to the Balkans".

The point here is not to win a "foreign aid beauty contest", but to argue that changes in the global security agenda require a multi-faceted approach and a blending of hard and soft security instruments. Clearly, Europeans need to improve the coherence and effectiveness of their foreign policy performance. But global security governance probably requires more significant changes in the United States. The mindset of some of the administration's hawks and the instruments the United States has at its disposal, are often ill-suited to today's security agenda. The guiding principle of transatlantic debate on contributions to global security should be: first redefine, then rebalance.

Yours,

Steven

Dear Steven,

OK, we agree that the key to international peace and security is whether a state or states are liberal democracies. But your response to the question "how can we expand the democratic peace?" is telling. "Building liberal democracies," you write, "is best done through conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction that Europeans (and others) so often do - and which Americans often reject or belittle."

First, the democratic peace depends not only on expanding the number of democratic states in the world. It's also about preserving and protecting existing democracies. You argue as though the peace and security the world's democracies enjoy today is self-sustaining. But of course it isn't. In a multitude of ways, that peace rests on the kind of military capability you seem so eager to pass over. Do you really think that absent the United States' military power South Korea's democracy would be safe from North Korea's vast arsenal? Do you really think absent US aircraft carrier groups Taiwan's democracy would last for more than a week in the face of China's stated goal to acquire Taiwan by force? Do you really think absent US military superiority Iraq would not have gained control of the vast oil reserves Western democracies depend on? Do you really think that democratic Israel would exist today if its military were not vastly superior to that of Syria? Iraq? Would Egypt have ever signed a peace treaty with Israel if it had not been decisively defeated twice on the battlefield? For that matter, why is it the case that the first thing the new democracies of Europe strive for is NATO membership, and then membership in the European Union? Isn't it because they know the first order of business is establishing security? And security rests on being associated with the dominant military power?

Having the upper hand militarily can keep a host of other problems at bay

As for your other points, I never claimed that there is a military solution to the Israeli-Palestinian problem. However, it is obvious that if Israel's military capability were on the order of, say, Lebanon's, there would be even less chance of a "peace process",

since Arafat and his friends have only trimmed their goals - which has included the destruction of Israel - in the face of Israel's ability to defend itself. Along the same line, you seem to want to jump to "post-conflict reconstruction" without acknowledging the obvious: In case after case, until you get rid of the thugs in power - who, by the way, do not seem especially troubled by your "pre-conflict" admonitions - you can't expand the democratic peace. Whatever problems we face in bringing decent and stable self-rule to Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, the very possibility of establishing decent regimes in each exists because predominant military power was exercised first. Even your reference to the conflict in Northern Ireland proves this point. Although violence might have declined after peace negotiations began, it was the successful application of British military-intelligence-police power that forced the IRA to realise that it could not accomplish its goal through terrorism.

Finally, you continue with your cartoon version of US statecraft. Your latest fact: the United States has only "one - yes one - soldier involved in UN-run peace operations". What you omit is that the United States pays for more than a third of those operations (more than twice what any other power in the world contributes) and that, in addition to all its other global military responsibilities, the United States in 2001 remained the largest contributor to multilateral peace operations.

Now, it's true that Europe as a whole spends more on government-funded international development assistance than the United States. But there is also the question of effectiveness. US development assistance from the private sector totals \$36 billion a year. That figure far surpasses any comparable figure from the European Union and reflects a judgement in the United States that most assistance is more effective and more effectively managed in the hands of private non-governmental organisations. It's a tad ironic that Joe Nye, the guru of American "soft power", would be oblivious to that "soft power" fact. In the meantime, Europe, collectively and individually, has been the

overwhelming provider of development assistance to pre-9/11 Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, the Palestinian Authority and Syria. Maybe Chris Patten can explain how these hundreds of millions of dollars have made the world more peaceful and expanded the democratic peace. But I doubt it.

Yours,

Gary

Dear Gary,

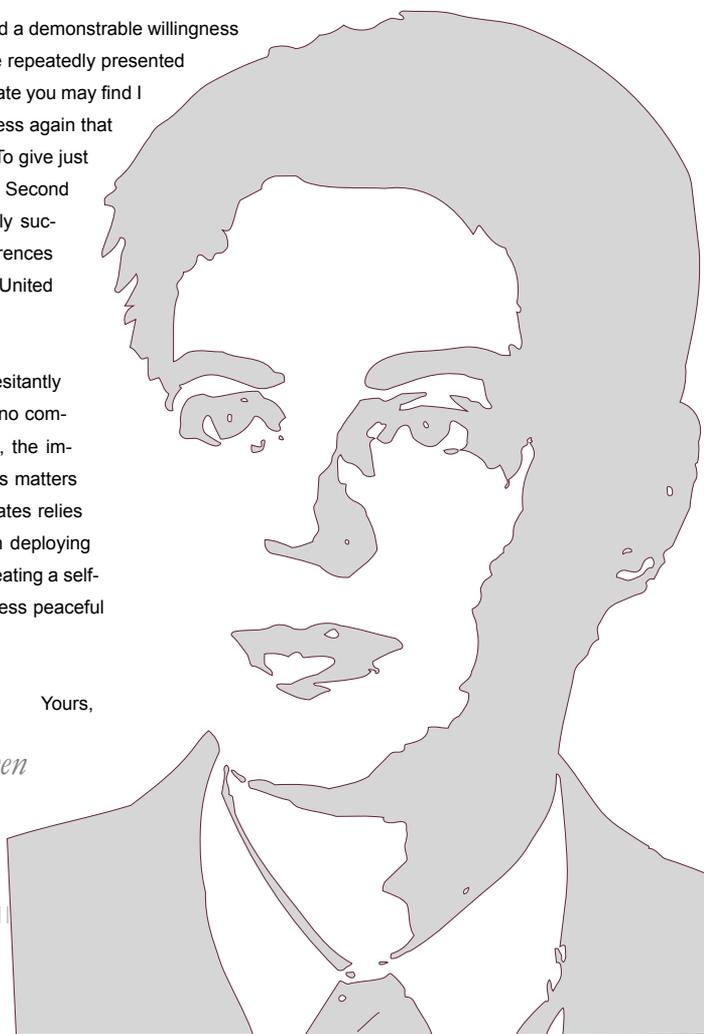
In bringing this debate to a close, let me reiterate my main argument: to solve the vast majority of today's security problems, countries, or rather groups of countries, need a multi-faceted approach - blending hard and soft security instruments - and a demonstrable willingness to stay the course. I will let others decide whether I have repeatedly presented a "cartoon version" of US policies - reading back the debate you may find I was a bit more subtle. At the risk of repetition, let me stress again that I strongly favour active US involvement in world affairs. To give just one example: US policies in the first decade after the Second World War were far-sighted, generous and spectacularly successful. And I recognise that there will always be differences in emphasis in the contributions that Europe and the United States will make to global security.

But what really concerns me is that while Europe is hesitantly and imperfectly trying to address its weaknesses, I see no comparable developments in the United States. If anything, the imbalances, in mindset and resources, are increasing. This matters because the painful truth is that the more the United States relies on hard power and coercion, the less successful it is in deploying soft power and persuasion. There is a huge danger of creating a self-fulfilling prophecy here. And the world is a less secure, less peaceful place as a result.

Yours,

Steven

The more the United States relies on hard power and coercion, the less successful it is in deploying soft power and persuasion



Dear Steven,

I also agree that international problems require a multi-faceted approach. That said, it is interesting that you think the policies adopted by the United States in the decade following the Second World War "were far-sighted, generous and spectacularly successful". I agree with that judgement, as well. But what were those policies? Principally, they consisted of the creation of an international economic and financial system, the establishment of a network of alliances with democratic states around the globe, aid to rebuild nations destroyed by war, and a massive re-armament programme. Allowing for changes in circumstances and, hence, how they are used, these remain the basic elements of US statecraft.

***Until you get rid of the thugs in power,
you can't expand the democratic peace***

Frankly, the real problem Europeans have with the United States today is not that Washington doesn't have a multi-faceted approach to world affairs, but that

the United States is not interested in expanding that approach to include a new set of multilateral institutions and treaties designed to tie power down. For a variety of reasons past and present, it appears that many in continental Europe have lost faith in the ability of liberal democratic states to hold power, and to use it wisely. That is not the case in the United States. We still believe that the world's peace and prosperity ultimately rests on the democrats of the world maintaining more firepower than the thugs of the globe.

Yours,

Gary



CAN AND SHOULD EUROPE BRIDGE THE CAPABILITIES GAP?



Yves Boyer

YES

Yves Boyer is deputy director of the Paris-based "Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique" and chairman of the "Société Française d'Etudes Militaires"



Burkard Schmitt is both a senior research fellow and the assistant director of the European Union Institute for Security Studies in Paris

NO

Burkard Schmitt



Dear Burkard,

With the United States spending 85 per cent more on defence than all the other NATO Allies combined last year and further increasing its defence spending this year, the difference between military capabilities on the two sides of the Atlantic has probably never been greater. But while it is critical for European countries to ensure that their militaries remain interoperable with those of the United States, so that they can continue to work and fight together, a line has to be drawn between this imperative and the political consequences of technological choices that would create dependency.

As you are well aware, Western Europeans are currently being urged to close the "gap" between the military capabilities of their armed forces and those of the United States. This exhortation is, of course, as old as the Atlantic Alliance itself. But now, in addition to the traditional arguments used to persuade Western Europeans to increase their defence spending, the war against terrorism is being invoked. However, the case for increasing military expenditure based on the war against terrorism has yet to be demonstrated.

The next NATO Summit in Prague will no doubt be another occasion to highlight the gulf in defence spending between the United States and its Allies and an opportunity for US leaders to point to lacklustre European efforts to correct it. Here, it is worth bearing in mind that the European Union's military capabilities largely exceed those of its immediate neighbours and, in international terms, stand second only to those of the United States.

The motives behind current US admonishments are perhaps more important than the capabilities gap itself. Among those motives, two are of particular significance: first the failure by the Atlantic Alliance fully to implement the Defence Capabilities Initiative (DCI), NATO's latest high-level programme to raise capabilities; and second, a growing European assertiveness in key high-tech areas, with the risks for the United States of the creation of competitors in fields where it currently holds a virtual monopoly.

Under the DCI, NATO's European Allies were effectively asked to transform their military posture according to visions elaborated by the US military. In this way, the Atlantic Alliance was to be transformed into a unified zone in strategic and defence affairs under US leadership. Indeed, technological progress effectively became a substitute for an identified threat to promote deeper military integration within the Atlantic area to a level not seen even during the era of the Soviet threat.

US views on future warfare have been strongly influenced by processing combat intelligence in a revolutionary manner and are epitomised in the notion of “network-centric warfare”. In the US vision, these were supposed to become the standard views in Europe as well. In emphasising technology as the main driver of military action, it was easy to highlight the significance of an apparent gap between the two sides of the Atlantic. Indeed, US expenditure on military R&D in 2001 alone was greater than Germany’s entire defence budget.

Closing the “gap” may of course also meet the expectation of key European defence companies eager to stabilise a declining domestic market and enter the US defence arena. But what would be earned in financial terms by Western Europe would be lost in political terms. Europe would become more dependent on the United States since Washington would be the sole holder of the “keys” of the “system of systems” which is the essence of “network-centric warfare”. Is this a coherent policy at a time when the European Union is trying to acquire a political role and influence on the international scene that goes beyond the economic and monetary realm?

US expenditure on military R&D in 2001 alone was greater than Germany’s entire defence budget

When the US model is followed, it can sometimes be damaging for Europe, as in the case of the Joint Strike Fighter programme. Here, three members of the European Union - Italy, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom - will divert almost \$4 billion from potential

European R&D resources in the coming years. This outlay, that will greatly benefit US companies, comes at the expense of European capacities when European research programmes, such as the European Technology Access Programme (ETAP), aimed at closing the gap in R&D, are crying out for greater investment. There does, nevertheless, appear to be much greater resolve among Europeans to invest in high-tech programmes, as, for example, with the decision to proceed with the Galileo project, a programme to create a commercially oriented satellite positioning system, despite US opposition and lobbying to kill it.

Instead of brooding over the issue of a capabilities “gap”, EU members would do better to reflect on the dynamic which surrounds the idea of a European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) and look at the military needs Europeans may require to give it teeth. The question of developing the military means and operational doctrines that may flesh out the ESDP is, however, seldom discussed. Europe needs enhanced military capabilities. But Europeans have to invent a model of warfare that is specifically tailored to the needs of the European Union, one which is “made in Europe” and which will probably have considerably less emphasis on technology than its US equivalent.

Yours,

Yves

Dear Yves,

It is generally accepted that European forces have important capability shortfalls. The problem is both military and political. First, interoperability with US forces becomes increasingly difficult; second, the ESDP risks remaining a paper tiger.

Capability shortfalls are, of course, linked to budget constraints. The main problem with defence spending in Europe, however, is quality rather than quantity. Many European countries maintain force structures that are simply not up to the new security challenges, and, even more important, all European countries consider armaments as a national *chasse gardée*. As a consequence, they continue to waste scarce resources on costly duplication - of

capabilities, acquisition agencies, defence regulations and so on. Given the degree of integration Europe has achieved in other fields, this practice is not only outdated, but from the taxpayers' point of view, outrageous. I would therefore argue that any defence budget increase should be linked to structural reforms, designed to promote a common European defence market and a common armaments policy.

As far as the DCI is concerned, I agree to a point. Of course the DCI is a bottom-up approach to implementing NATO's Strategic Concept, and of course it is inspired by the US force structure. On the other hand, I doubt that the DCI can really become a backdoor to a unified zone in strategic and defence affairs under US leadership. I would argue that there is already a specific European approach towards the use of military power, which is embedded within a broader security approach and based on a specific security culture. True, this culture has not yet led to a European Strategic Concept, but there is an almost instinctive reluctance in many European countries to emulate the US focus on military power. This, in turn, has a profound influence on European decisions to avoid agreeing to DCI commitments that reflect the US security approach too much.

There are, of course, areas that appear on the shortfall lists of both the DCI and the European Union Capability Action Plan. It goes without saying that Europeans should give priority to these areas. Whether these gaps are filled by US or European equipment remains a decision of the national government concerned. European countries without a significant arms industry have traditionally bought American. This might be regrettable, but in part at least, it is also the fault of the big arms-producing countries which have failed to integrate their partners into a common political project.

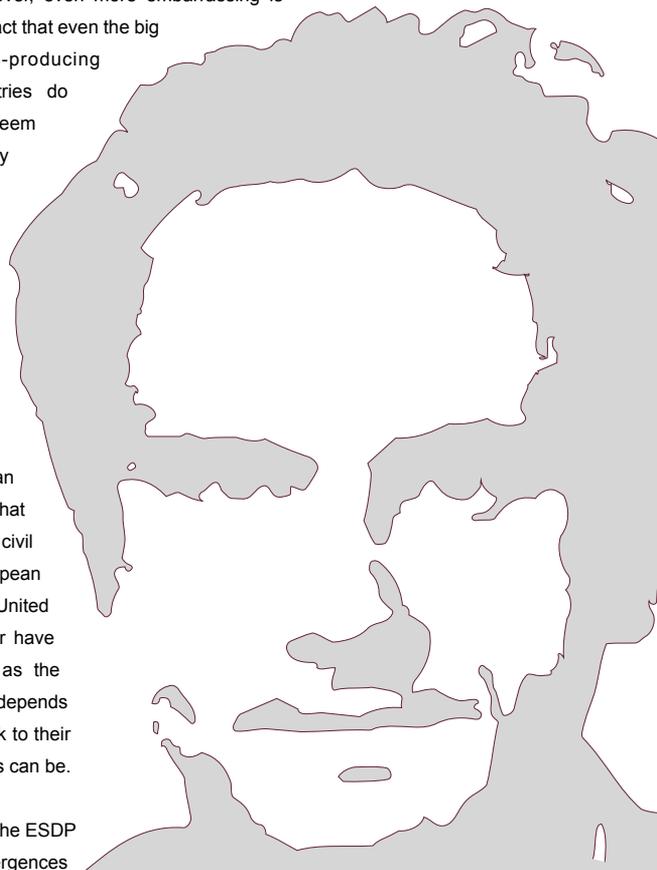
Many European countries maintain force structures that are simply not up to the new security challenges

However, even more embarrassing is the fact that even the big arms-producing countries do not seem

to have a clear European strategy for their procurement policy and their defence industries. The problem goes beyond the DCI. Whether you look at the failure to create European champions in naval shipbuilding and land armaments, the delaying of major cooperative projects, or the impossibility of setting up a European Armaments Agency - there is simply not the political will to come to common solutions. Once again, the real problem is Europe's weakness and lack of ambition rather than US strength and search for hegemony.

I am therefore less optimistic than you are about a European resolve to invest more in high-tech programmes. I am afraid that the example of Galileo is somewhat misleading. First, it is a civil project, which makes it politically much easier for certain European countries both to raise the funding and to compete with the United States. Second, I strongly doubt whether Galileo would ever have been launched without the European Commission acting as the driving force. As an intergovernmental programme, ETAP depends exclusively on the willingness of the countries involved to stick to their endeavour, and experience has demonstrated how difficult this can be.

The general problem, I would say, is the lack of clarity around the ESDP and its strategic and conceptual implications. Given the divergences



among EU member states, a certain constructive ambivalence was probably necessary at the beginning to get the project off the ground politically. But divergences cannot be ignored endlessly, and the lack of clarity makes it increasingly difficult to make the ESDP operational.

If the ESDP is to become a reality, two things seem indispensable. Firstly, the European Union cannot avoid defining and spelling out its own Strategic Concept as the basis for effective planning. This will only be possible if member states agree that the European Union does not need to cover the same high-intensity scenarios as the United States. It does not suggest, however, that the European Union can remain focused exclusively on handling low-intensity conflicts. Secondly, Europeans have to improve dramatically the cost-efficiency of their procurement policies. This can only be achieved, if the European Union gets involved in the armament acquisition process, with a certain role for the European Commission included.

So basically you're right to say that EU members should focus more on how to give teeth to the ESDP. This would not only improve European capabilities, it would also facilitate transatlantic dialogue in general. Far from aggravating divergence, spelling out differences provides a firm basis for open and concrete discussions, which the Americans have always preferred.

Yours,

Burkard

Dear Burkard,

I agree with you that the process of giving the European Union a military capability of its own is far from easy. It has, nevertheless, been definitely set in motion. This is the logical consequence of a political commitment by the European Union's heads of state and government. The legal framework was set up with the Maastricht Treaty of 1992 and the political countdown began at the Franco-British meeting in Saint Malo, France, in 1998. That said, it will probably require as many years as was necessary to create the Euro to bring this project to fruition. Indeed, we should not forget that when the idea of a common currency was first mooted it generated deep scepticism, if not outright hostility. Nevertheless, 20 years later, it has become reality and the consequences have not been cataclysmic.

The evolution of the Euro followed the traditional pattern of European construction. This was once described by former European Commission President Jacques Delors as a cycle in which years of stagnation are followed by swift advances which in turn lead to crisis and back to stagnation. The creation of a European defence policy seems to be following the same path.

Europeans have to invent a model of warfare that is specifically tailored to the needs of the European Union

Before Europeans achieve the goal of a common defence policy many complex issues will have to be resolved. Their resolution will probably be a far more painful process than any of us can even imagine. Two examples illustrate this. The first

concerns technology; the second the military posture of each EU country.

As you rightly point out, Galileo is strictly speaking a civil project. It is, however, far more than that, since it also encompasses a military dimension that Europeans cannot ignore. Among many potential military uses, Galileo can provide the necessary data for using long-range precision-guided weapons. This would pave the way for a

European targeting centre. It can also, at a tactical level, provide the necessary data for participating, for example, in de-mining activities where soldiers require millimetre precision. Moreover, this is a use of the US-developed GPS technology that the Americans have not always been willing to give to certain allies. Indeed, the military uses of Galileo are so extensive that Europeans will soon have to decide how to manage them. A logical solution would be to give the European Union's military staff a key role. This will no doubt generate a backlash in some European countries and precipitate a new crisis among Europeans. This may not be a bad thing, since it would oblige EU members collectively to deepen their understanding of what a common defence policy entails.

In the process, every EU country will have to reassess its military posture. Would it be rational, as you point out, for Europeans to improve the cost-efficiency of their procurement policies, while ignoring other aspects of EU defence? Creating a genuine common European defence policy will entail a structural and functional transformation of Copernican proportions. When the two of us recently participated in an international meeting of army cadets, most of whom were from Europe, many advocated the creation of a common European training school. While this seems to be a pragmatic approach, it also raises a host of problems, such as the potential for career progression in an EU context. Indeed, as a common defence policy is constructed, many issues that have hitherto been ignored will have to come on the agenda. This includes: doctrine, training, force specialisation and career progression, as well as defence industry consolidation and procurement. Getting it right will require vision, innovation and courage.

Yours,

Yves

Dear Yves,

I really hope that your comparison between ESDP and the Euro is right. However, sometimes I doubt whether the political will that underpins European defence is as strong as it was for the common currency. In any case, we should never forget that a European military capability is not an objective in itself, but an instrument to achieve political goals. In other words, building ESDP without strengthening the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) does not make sense.

However, developments since 11 September 2001 have shown how difficult it is for Europeans to resist the centrifugal forces that come from strong external pressure. When push comes to shove, traditional national reflexes and divergences about the role of the European Union reappear. Some EU countries prefer simply to stay out of world affairs. Others try to prevent the "hegemony" of bigger partners rather than to strengthen the common project. And the big member states still believe that they can play a more important international role if they act outside the European convoy. However, without a) the ambition to play an international role and b) the honest recognition that this role can only be played together, the technical, military and financial obstacles in the way of a common defence policy will not be overcome. If we fail, both the European Union as a whole and its member states individually will end up in international insignificance.

You are right to say that the transformation that is needed would be of Copernican proportions. I simply wonder who could be the driving force to push this transformation through. This is, by the way, why I pointed at the differences between Galileo and ETAP. Of course you are absolutely right when you say that Galileo has important potential military applications. However, so far, we talk about potential, not reality. My point here is that the European Commission could play a decisive role only because Galileo was launched as a civil project. I'm convinced that defence projects would greatly benefit if they also had a powerful, genuine *European* actor supporting them.

Spelling out differences provides a firm basis for open and concrete discussions, which the Americans have always preferred

This does not mean that a *communitarisation* of European defence would be a realistic option for the foreseeable future. However, I simply cannot imagine an efficient ESDP organised in a purely intergovernmental way. From my point of view, some sort of integration and a certain dose of supranationalism cannot be avoided, if we want to be serious about our ambitions. This is why I focus so much on procurement and defence markets. Budgetary pressures and the influence of commercial aspects make these the areas in which I see the most urgent necessity and the best chance to overcome the traditional intergovernmental approach.

The challenge is impressive, and the current international situation doesn't make things easier. A possible war against Iraq and its consequences, the ongoing economic crisis, EU enlargement - all these issues can put the European Union in general, and CFSP/ESDP in particular, under enormous pressure. But maybe Europeans need a crisis to force them into brave and innovative steps.

Yours,

Burkard

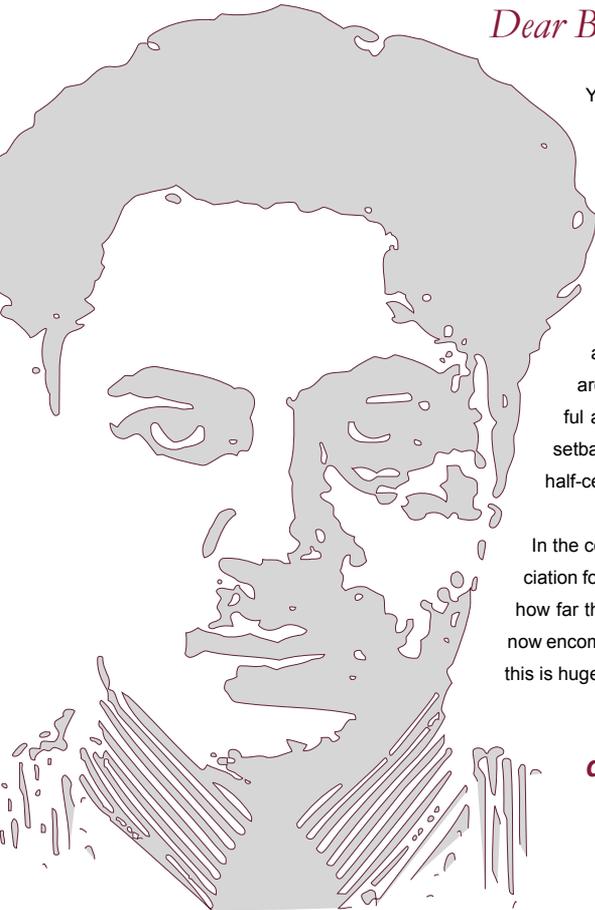
Dear Burkard,

You raised a crucial issue when you said that an efficient ESDP could not be organised in a purely intergovernmental way. However, we are obviously a long way from moving beyond such an approach. Indeed, in most EU countries, it would be almost impossible to discuss such an eventuality out loud. But the idea will surely surface sooner rather than later. Consider, for example, the evolution of our debate. We began by discussing the ways, means and structures needed to develop the ESDP and we agree these are serious, real and concrete issues. Moreover, politicians, bureaucrats and soldiers are now working on them every day. Their work is, however, long, painful and seldom rewarding. It is easy, therefore, to point to deadlock and setbacks, especially when compared with the achievements of the past half-century at NATO.

In the course of our debate, we have, nevertheless, reached a deeper appreciation for the ESDP. If we step back from the crises of the moment, we can see how far the ESDP has come. In most EU countries, the defence agenda does now encompass a European dimension. Given where things stood ten years ago, this is huge progress.

Creating a genuine common European defence policy will entail a transformation of Copernican proportions

Such progress is probably the result of seismic movements just below the surface. Indeed, ever since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the



geography of European security has been shifting. Whereas the Soviet threat effectively put national sovereignty in security matters on hold and created a virtually automated decision-making process at NATO, this ceased to be the case as soon as the Cold War ended. The new circumstances have not led to chaos but to a growing malaise within the Alliance, as witnessed during both the Kosovo and the Afghan crises, when NATO struggled to build political consensus.

Transatlantic relations remain dynamic as a result of shared values, common interests and historical experience. However, the complexity of international security today has revealed emerging differences in attitude and approach between the two sides of the Atlantic. The perception of threat in the European Union on the one hand and in the United States on the other is no longer necessarily the same, as in the recent past. This fact is slowly but surely leading EU countries to contemplate building a common defence policy. Indeed, it is noteworthy that the decision to launch an ESDP at Maastricht was taken at precisely the moment when NATO's automated decision-making process broke down. The incentive to take this process forward is more pressing than ever.

Yours,

Yves

Dear Yves,

I agree that transatlantic relations are going through a process of change that reflects a more fundamental transformation of the international system. In such a situation, it is not surprising that divergences between the United States and Europe exist and even grow. However, the problem is not so much divergence *per se*, but the way in which the two sides deal with it.

Both the United States and the European Union have an enormous responsibility for peace and stability in the world. Europeans often complain, for good reason, about US policy, but they undermine their arguments by refusing to assume their own responsibilities. Facing the challenges of the third millennium, it is almost a moral obligation for Europe to intervene in world affairs and to become a serious partner for the United States. In spite of all its deficiencies, the European Union remains the only possible framework within which its member states can achieve this objective.

This means, in turn, that the European Union needs efficient structures and the necessary political and military tools. Improving military capabilities is only one aspect among others, and may be not even the most important one. However, current capability shortfalls can and should be tackled. The more Europeans are willing to engage in serious structural reform, the less expensive this endeavour will become.

***Maybe Europeans need a crisis
to force them into brave and
innovative steps***

Having different perceptions, concepts and objectives, it is natural that Europe spends less than the United States on defence and has different budgetary priorities. Therefore, you are right to say that the benchmark for European efforts should not be set by comparisons with the United States, but according to the European Union's own ambitions. An efficient CFSP and ESDP would not only enhance Europe's role in the world, but also improve the transatlantic partnership. If, by contrast, EU member states fail to take the necessary steps to achieve that objective, they will be punished by irrelevance.

Yours,

Burkard

SHOULD NATO'S NEW FUNCTION BE COUNTER-TERRORISM?



Daniel S. Hamilton is director of the Center for Transatlantic Relations at Johns Hopkins University

Daniel
S. Hamilton
YES



Sir Timothy Garden is visiting professor at the Centre for Defence Studies at King's College London

NO

Sir Timothy
Garden



Dear Tim,

I look forward to our exchange, because I believe it is time for an open and honest debate about NATO's future roles and missions.

Our vision of a Europe whole, free and at peace with itself is within reach. Decisions this autumn by the European Union and NATO to extend further their respective memberships could help secure stability and democracy from the Baltics to the Black Sea. The NATO-Russia Council and broader Russian cooperation with the West offer tremendous new opportunities.

We will continue to face challenges to our security in Europe and US engagement on the continent remains essential. The Balkans are still problematic, although there is progress. Russia's integration into the West is a challenge for a generation or more. Improving the European Union's ability to act quickly and effectively in crises abroad while incorporating new democratic members is critical. NATO's door must remain open beyond the Prague Summit. But, on balance, we are on the right track.

We can be proud of these accomplishments. But we cannot be complacent. Today our greatest unmet strategic challenge lies beyond the European continent. The danger is not just terrorism, but anti-Western terrorism linked to weapons of mass destruction. It is an existential threat to both America and Europe.

The United States may be the primary target today, but *al Qaida* also planned major operations in Europe. In fact, as my friend Simon Serfaty has noted, this age of catastrophic terrorism is an assault on the very idea of Europe - that is, the efforts by survivors of war, in the aftermath of war, to work together to prevent such massive human tragedy from happening again. Failing to deal with this challenge would mean abdicating this historic vision and leaving Americans and Europeans at the mercy of ruthless extremists intent not on changing our societies but on destroying them.

There is a greater probability today that millions of Americans and Europeans could be killed by terrorist use of weapons of mass destruction than by new conflicts in the Balkans or a Russian invasion. The likelihood is also

higher today than during the Cold War. We are not yet equipped to deal with this challenge. Our Alliance is best prepared to deal with less likely threats and least prepared to deal with our greatest threats.

Addressing this threat is the strategic challenge of our time. It requires a multi-dimensional strategy that relies not just on military force but also on new forms of diplomatic, financial, economic, intelligence, customs and police cooperation. It means aligning national homeland-defence strategies with Alliance doctrine and civil-military emergency planning in defence of our "NATO homeland". It means new forms of cooperation between the European Union and NATO. It means strengthening international norms against terrorism. It means extending Nunn-Lugar programmes to safeguard mass-destruction weapons, materials and know-how. It means a determined transatlantic strategy to the vast region known as the Greater Middle East. It means working to develop economies and promote democracy to ameliorate conditions that create fertile ground for terrorists. It means increasing our foreign assistance. It means nation building.

This is a daunting set of challenges. Is it a bridge too far? Is this an exaggerated American response to what thus far has been a narrow, if horrific, set of attacks on the United States? My answer is no. The need for such a strategy existed on 10 September and in the last years of the Clinton Administration we sought to equip the Alliance with new tools to deal with weapons of mass destruction. But the sense of urgency among Allies was lacking.

The attacks of 11 September did not change our vulnerability to catastrophic terrorism, but rather our understanding of it

The attacks of 11 September did not change our vulnerability to catastrophic terrorism, but rather our understanding of it. It was a horrific wake-up call. How many more thousands or millions of Americans or Europeans will have to die before we get our act together?

This comprehensive strategy is not for NATO alone, but NATO must become an important component of a broader effort. Senator Richard Lugar has put it succinctly: "In a world in which terrorist 'Article 5' attacks on our countries can be planned in Germany, financed in Asia, and carried out in the United States, old distinctions between 'in' and 'out of area' become meaningless... If 'Article 5' threats to our security can come from beyond Europe, NATO must be able to act beyond Europe to meet them if it is going to fulfil its classic mission today."

If we fail to defend our societies from a major terrorist attack using weapons of mass destruction, the Alliance will have failed in its most fundamental task. It will be marginalised and our security will be further diminished. Such failure is certain to have negative consequences for NATO's role in Europe as well.

Meeting the challenge of terrorism joined to weapons of mass destruction must be a focal point of the Prague Summit. Invitations to new members and a revitalised NATO-Russia partnership will be important elements of the agenda. But a bigger NATO must also be a better NATO committed to the campaign against terrorism.

Yours,

Dan

Dear Dan,

I just wish that all you hope for were possible. Time has moved on since NATO members had a common view of a common threat. The end of the Cold War was a great victory for the Alliance; but nostalgic dreams of the old and new members working together with a common perspective are unfortunately bound to end in disappointment. NATO has done well to continue to find useful roles for itself through the turbulent decade of the 1990s.

The Balkans have been a success story for NATO after an uncertain start by the major players on either side of the Atlantic. However, the experience of the Kosovo air campaign has shaped both American and European thinking about the future. The US irritation at having to provide 80 per cent of the useful capability, but also needing to negotiate a consensus with 18 other nations on operational method, has coloured subsequent thinking. I am afraid that Kosovo will go down in history as NATO's first and last war.

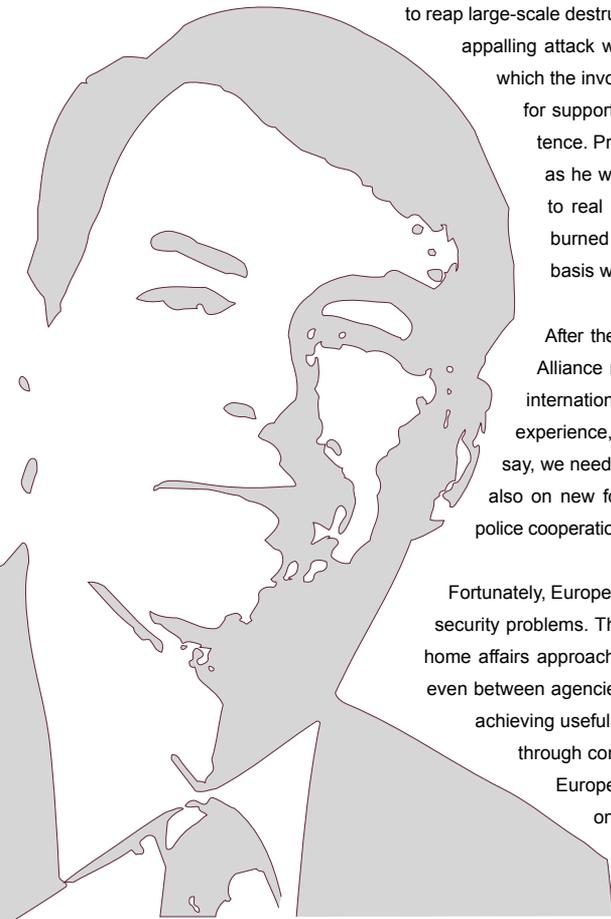
In the middle of the Kosovo campaign, the Alliance celebrated its 50th birthday, launched a new strategic concept and made lots of promises. The most important of these was the Defence Capabilities Initiative (DCI). The European NATO members recognised their capability shortcomings and promised to do better in very specific ways. Nothing much has happened apart from further cuts in capability in the subsequent three years. In another attempt to do better, France and the United Kingdom launched an initiative to provide a modest, deployable European force. This at first alarmed those who saw it as being done at the expense of NATO. Now it alarms virtually everyone because no new capabilities, which NATO might call upon, are in early prospect.

There is no common view among Alliance members about the best means to tackle the longer-term threat of international terrorism

The terrorist attacks on Washington and New York on 11 September 2001 were certainly a wake-up call to the Western world. Our modern societies provide new vulnerabilities that allow a small but dedicated enemy to reap large-scale destruction for low cost. The initial response by the US government to this appalling attack was measured and correct. NATO amazed itself by the speed with which the invocation of Article 5 was agreed. However, that speed and consensus for support was in retrospect another milestone in NATO's transition to impotence. President Bush was doubtless grateful for such unprecedented action, as he was when other friendly regions pledged support. But, when it came to real operations in Afghanistan, where was NATO? The United States, burned by the experience of Kosovo, chose to call on Allies on a bilateral basis where they had something useful to offer.

After the regime change in Afghanistan, there is no common view among Alliance members about the best means to tackle the longer-term threat of international terrorism. The Europeans, with considerable counter-terrorist experience, know that there are no simple short-term military answers. As you say, we need a multi-dimensional strategy that relies not just on military force but also on new forms of diplomatic, financial, economic, intelligence, customs and police cooperation. NATO is not the forum for such intricate and complex approaches.

Fortunately, Europe does have the beginnings of a supranational approach to these new security problems. The European Union provides the mechanism for shared justice and home affairs approaches. Despite the difficulties of pooling counter-terrorist intelligence, even between agencies within a nation, the European Union has much more prospect of achieving useful cooperation than NATO. Tackling the long-term causes of terrorism through conflict-prevention measures and overseas aid has been a strength of Europe, which currently spends three times as much as the United States on such activities. Only in the field of military capability does the European Union continue to fail, and NATO has had little success in moves to rectify this weakness.



If NATO decides to make the war on terrorism its focus, the transatlantic divide on both strategy and tactics will deepen. Better that we accept that NATO has a niche utility for some years to come. It makes it easier for military coalitions to form when needed. It provides reassurance to the new member nations, and a forum for grandiose gestures to old enemies. We are all comfortable with its continuing existence; but it would be foolish to think that its members would be prepared to sign a blank cheque to underwrite a US view of how to tackle terrorism. NATO was appropriate in an age of mutual deterrence. For today's global problems, which extend into many other areas than terrorism, the European Union and the United States need to cooperate and do so through a strengthened United Nations, rather than a regional military alliance.

Yours,

Tim

|||||

Dear Tim,

We agree that America and Europe, together with others and within many networks and institutions, must wage a broad multi-dimensional campaign against terrorism. Where we part company is that I believe that one of these institutions must be NATO. I am not saying that the campaign must be waged by NATO alone. I am saying that it should be waged by NATO as well. I am not saying that military force should be the first line of our defence. I am saying that military force and Alliance cooperation must be an integral part of that defence.

Your objection is not that this is undesirable, but that it is unachievable - mainly because unilateralist Americans don't like wars by committee and insular Europeans are incapable of fighting alongside their US Ally. Let me address those points.

We share frustration with the Bush Administration's initial rejection of Allied offers of assistance in Afghanistan. What a blunder! The broader benefits of joint participation would have been enormous and would have exceeded whatever mutual adjustments might have been necessary. The rejection also weakened NATO in the eyes of the American public and in the Congress. This could come back to haunt the Administration during Senate ratification of NATO enlargement. At least some in the Administration seem to have recognised this, and they have welcomed subsequent Allied assistance.

We also share frustration with European sluggishness in improving capabilities. But just because European forces cannot do everything doesn't mean they cannot do anything. Instead of rejigging old initiatives, we should seize the opportunity provided by 11 September to tailor European forces to new challenges. An elite NATO strike force capable of expeditionary missions and high-intensity conflict could be a priority of such an effort. One can start small but build over time.

Confronting the terrorist-WMD threat doesn't only mean projecting force. It also means better security at home. To my mind, Article 5 means we have a "NATO Homeland" and we should plan our respective homeland security efforts with the transatlantic dimension in mind. NATO is moving ahead with a minimalist effort; it could be much stronger. We both agree that any such effort must rely first and foremost on cooperation in a wide range of other areas.

We should seize the opportunity provided by 11 September to tailor European forces to new challenges

Historically, US defences have been built around power projection, not territorial security. European forces have been oriented the other way. In this new era, each of us must do more precisely in the area in which the other has capability and experience. This presents potential synergies.

You argue that we should be content to have NATO, including US forces, focus on sustaining the peace in Europe. I don't believe we can insulate our role in Europe from our role beyond Europe, particularly since European peace could be shattered by threats emanating from the Greater Middle East. If the US presence in Europe is not related to our most urgent unmet security challenge, and if our European Allies tell us they are now, through the European Union, able to manage European security, a growing number of Americans will ask why major US combat formations should be based on the European continent at all.

Our leaders face a simple choice at Prague. They can either refocus the greatest alliance in history on the strategic challenge of our time, or they can preside over its demise. You are right to wonder whether current governments are ready for - or even want - such a partnership. Our greatest difference is that I believe the first choice is still possible, whereas you believe the second choice has already been made.

Yours,

Dan

Dear Dan,

I am afraid that the way you characterise the debate shows how painful such a discussion would be within NATO, set as it always is on achieving consensus. It may be true that the United States doesn't like fighting wars by committee - who does? But it is not true that: "European Allies are incapable of fighting alongside their US Allies". Indeed the difference in view about the nature of the war on terrorism makes it much more difficult for the United States to accommodate the views of its NATO Allies. In Europe, this is not now seen as a question of "fighting alongside", but more one of being prepared to be subordinate to the wishes of the United States, and certainly not questioning the overall strategy.

The fact that we share frustration over the US Administration's failure to engage NATO from the start in its war on terrorism does not change the facts. NATO is both weaker and less relevant as a result. An elite NATO strike force may be seen as a priority in the United States, but who decides where and when it strikes? The United States can isolate Iran with Iraq and North Korea as part of an "Axis of Evil"; but has NATO analysed this concept and signed up to it? Many Europeans (and some Americans) think that there has been a major strategic error in rejecting Iran, which could be very helpful in a number of ways. Would this NATO strike force be available to help Israel put down Palestinians? These are just a couple of examples of the wide differences across the Atlantic on approaches to international relations.

Yes, countering terrorism is about taking measures to protect the homeland. Indeed, I would argue that the United States has taken this aspect of defence more seriously than European governments. On the other hand, there is much more to be done in North America after so long without a large-scale terrorist threat. But homeland security is about police work, intelligence gathering, border guards, emergency services and internal government coordination. Despite the use of NATO AWACs after 11 September, I doubt that the United States would welcome greater NATO involvement in these internal matters, any more than other national governments would. The military dimension is important, but relatively minor in this important security area.

An elite strike force may be seen as a priority in the United States, but who decides where and when it strikes?

I do not fully agree with your view that: "Historically, US defences have been built around power projection, not territorial security. European forces have been oriented

the other way.” It depends what period of history and which European nations you are looking at. But it is a fair assessment of the state of the military capabilities on each side of the Atlantic today. I see little hope for your aspiration for synergy: that the United States will look to Europe for help over territorial defence, while Europe follows America in the pursuit of high-cost, high-technology power projection, which it does not believe will solve the problems of the disenchanting have-nots of the world.

So what does this mean for Prague? The choices are not simple. Too great an effort at refocusing the Alliance in a new and divisive direction will put one more nail in the coffin. Doubtless, leaders will sign up to some grand statement that means different things to each of them. This will be a cause for more disappointments and further disillusionment on both sides of the Atlantic. Why not use Prague to celebrate the real post-Cold War achievements of NATO in the Balkans? Draw on this experience to show how NATO can use its military expertise to address some of the long-term causes of terrorism through stabilising anarchic regions. But, if NATO is to be a stick for the United States to beat the Europeans into submitting to an American view of the world, then the Alliance really is doomed.

Yours,

Tim

Dear Tim,

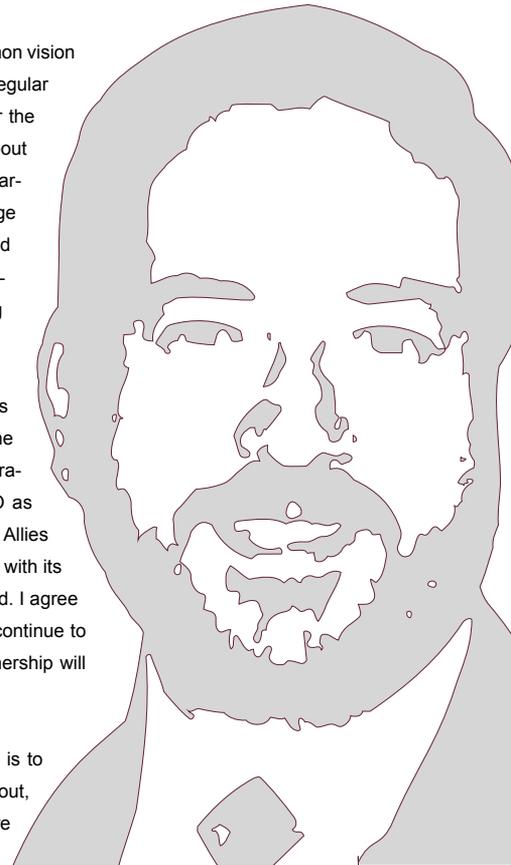
Transatlantic differences are nothing new. NATO's founders did not have a common vision of how to deal with the Soviet Union when the Alliance was born. Allies had regular rows over how to deal with Moscow during the Cold War, and differences over the Balkans nearly destroyed the Alliance after the Cold War. For those who worry about NATO in disarray, the old quip still applies: “When has NATO ever truly been in array?” The test of allies is not the absence of differences, but the ability to manage them in ways that pull our respective strengths and perspectives together and point them in a common direction. No one says this is easy. But neither was winning the Cold War, intervening in the wars of Yugoslav dissolution, or securing the peace thereafter.

The test of allies is not the absence of differences, but the ability to manage them in ways that pull our respective strengths and perspectives together and point them in a common direction

I agree that this will not work if the Bush Administration sees NATO as a stick to beat Allies into compliance with its view of the world. I agree

that some in the Administration have lost sight of this today. I agree that if we continue to talk past each other, then not only NATO but also our entire transatlantic partnership will be less effective.

But I do not agree that the way we get the Alliance relationship back on track is to celebrate a nostalgic view of NATO's past. If that is all the Prague Summit is about, then our leaders should just stay home. Prague must be about meeting future threats, not savouring past glories. Those threats are posed by weapons of



mass destruction in the hands of terrorists. Fortunately, I believe there is more common ground than you suggest. Ministers have already agreed that NATO must be ready to help deter, defend, disrupt and protect against terrorist attacks, or threat of attacks, directed from abroad against our populations, territory, infrastructure and forces, particularly where these involve chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear weapons. Perhaps most importantly, they have agreed that NATO should be ready to deploy its forces "as and where required" to carry out such missions.

These are important first steps. But we can, and must, do more - together. Tough? Yes. Impossible? No.

Yours,

Dan

Dear Dan,

Like NATO's members, we agree on so much, but arrive at such different conclusions. I said in our first exchange that nostalgic dreams were bound to end in disappointment. But that does not mean that we should ignore the Alliance's recent experience. From the Balkans, we know what NATO does well. Such stabilising tasks have not gone away. Indeed, they have assumed even greater importance. Failed states are the breeding grounds for terrorism. NATO can help to bring order and the rule of law.

There remains a different transatlantic appreciation of the nature of the threat. You reflect the degree of alarm about the long-term terrorist threat, which is felt so strongly in the United States. Europe is certainly concerned, as it has been for many years. But too narrow a focus on this one potential problem risks unbalancing our overall approach to security.

Failed states are the breeding grounds for terrorism. NATO can help to bring order and the rule of law

The current US Administration seems to be set on waging its war on terrorism by attacking distant countries in pre-emptive mode. A series of military adventures in Iraq, Iran and beyond may in the end increase the threat of terrorism, and at the same time damage

democracy in our own societies. Europe sees the current strategic situation as needing a much more complex approach. Making NATO act like Roman legions tasked with enforcing a Western empire will not appeal.

Perhaps we should not worry too much about the difficulties of Prague. Our diplomats will do their usual magnificent work. The next round of members will be reassured. Russia will feel important and wanted. The Europeans will feel that they have been able to put their moderating influence on the Americans. And most importantly, the United States will feel that it remains in charge of global security policy. Something for everyone: business as usual.

Yours,

Tim

CAN NATO REMAIN AN EFFECTIVE MILITARY AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE IF IT KEEPS GROWING?



Ronald D.
Asmus
YES

Ronald D. Asmus is a senior transatlantic fellow with the German Marshall Fund of the United States in Washington DC



NO

Charles Grant

Charles Grant is director of the London-based Centre for European Reform



Dear Charles,

I look forward to this exchange. As a proponent of both enlargement and an effective NATO, I have long felt that this issue must be addressed openly and honestly.

Of course NATO *can* remain effective as it gets larger. Whether it *will* is an issue I will turn to in a second. But first things first. Having pro-Atlanticist Allies is certainly in principle a good thing. Past enlargements have made NATO stronger, not weaker. And Central and Eastern European candidate countries are often even more enthusiastic about NATO than some existing members.

The strategic purpose behind NATO enlargement was to overcome Europe's Cold War divide, consolidate democracy in Central and Eastern Europe and make the Alliance a cornerstone of a new pan-European security structure. This implied that the Alliance would eventually embrace much, if not all, of the eastern half of the continent. Individual countries would remain outside because they failed to qualify or by choice for their own historical reasons. But NATO's final contours (like those of the European Union) will reflect today's Europe - and will therefore eventually include between 25 and 30 countries.

But that does not fully answer the question posed to us: whether today's NATO - as it currently exists and not in theory - will get stronger as it enlarges, especially if we embrace a large group of candidates at this year's Prague Summit. My answer is that an Alliance of this size can function effectively if we successfully tackle the following three challenges.

First, we need to discuss how to streamline a bigger NATO. The Alliance's way of doing business may have to be revamped - perhaps even radically. We should discuss this openly and without taboos. It is striking that the European Union is having a far-reaching debate about how it will function as it enlarges, yet there is hardly a murmur about this in NATO. I understand the sensitivities. But if we can't debate this within NATO officialdom, then perhaps we should gather a group of wise men to reflect on the issue - before Prague.

NATO's future effectiveness will depend first and foremost on the performance and capabilities of its members - both old and new

Second, NATO's future effectiveness will depend first and foremost on the performance and capabilities of its members - both new and old. The reality is that the performance of the first three new members has not been as good as we had hoped. And many current candidate

countries are smaller and weaker. We need a better system to help new members stay on track once they join the Alliance and the pressure to perform starts to recede. But let's be honest. We also need a better system of incentives for existing Allies to ensure that they perform as well. Most of NATO's current weaknesses are not due to new members, but the poor performance of old members in recent years.

Third, the key question for the future is, in my view, not NATO's numbers but its purpose. It is not roster but rationale. In the 1990s, NATO went from being an alliance between the United States and Western European countries designed to deter a residual Russian threat to one between the United States and Europe as a whole that reached out to its erstwhile Cold War foe, Russia, and reoriented itself to face new threats. Already at this time, several of us raised the question of how NATO would evolve if and when we succeeded in stabilising Central and Eastern Europe and putting relations with Russia on a new cooperative basis.

That day may have arrived. We are close to succeeding in consolidating peace and stability in the eastern half of the continent. The danger of Russia re-emerging as a threat to its neighbours continues to recede. While there are still sources of instability in the Euro-Atlantic area, they no longer constitute major or existential threats to our security. This is, of course, all good news. At the same time, 11 September has shown us that there are other existential threats to the security of NATO members - but they come from beyond Europe and are threats for which the Alliance is poorly prepared.

NATO therefore faces a fairly fundamental choice. It can continue to focus on the diminishing threats within the Euro-Atlantic area. Its mission would in essence be to continue to keep an already pretty stable continent stable. Alternatively, the Alliance could transform itself to confront the major security threats of the day - nearly all of which come from beyond Europe. In this case, NATO would remain a military alliance but would focus on the new military threats facing its members.

These are weighty issues. I look forward to debating them with you.

Yours,

Ron

Dear Ron,

I agree with you that NATO is a valuable organisation that badly needs reform. I also agree that the Alliance's enlargement into Central and Eastern Europe is desirable. NATO, like the European Union, is helping to spread peace, security and stability across the eastern half of the continent. However, I doubt that the new, post-enlargement NATO will be a strong military organisation.

When you talk of NATO being strong, you mean militarily strong. I think the Alliance will remain politically significant, but I think its military importance has diminished and will diminish further. Of course, the Alliance has always had both a military and a political purpose. And since the end of the Cold War, NATO has taken on a new military task,

that of peacekeeping in the Balkans. Overall, however, the Alliance's political role - as a pan-European security organisation - has become important. In 1997, the United States pushed its Allies to accept three new members, as it is pushing them to accept several at November's Prague Summit, in order to bind them into the Euro-Atlantic political space.

Yet, as you yourself acknowledge, the Czechs, Hungarians and Poles subtract more than they add to the Alliance's military effectiveness. The next round of enlargement, too, will weaken the coherence and efficiency of the military organisation. The current Bush administration, like the Clinton administration in which you served, believes that the political gain from enlargement is more important than the military loss. I agree.

What has happened since 11 September has surely reinforced the long-term trend for NATO to become a political organisation. The Bush administration did not want to use NATO to fight the war in Afghanistan. This was partly for the perfectly good reason that the Alliance did not have many of the military capabilities that would be useful in the fight against the Taliban and *al Qaida*. But it was also because many people in the Pentagon see NATO as a relatively marginal, European organisation. They used it to run the air campaign over Kosovo and Serbia in 1999, but they found its many committees - which enabled individual countries, such as France, to veto the bombing of certain targets - frustratingly slow to deal with.

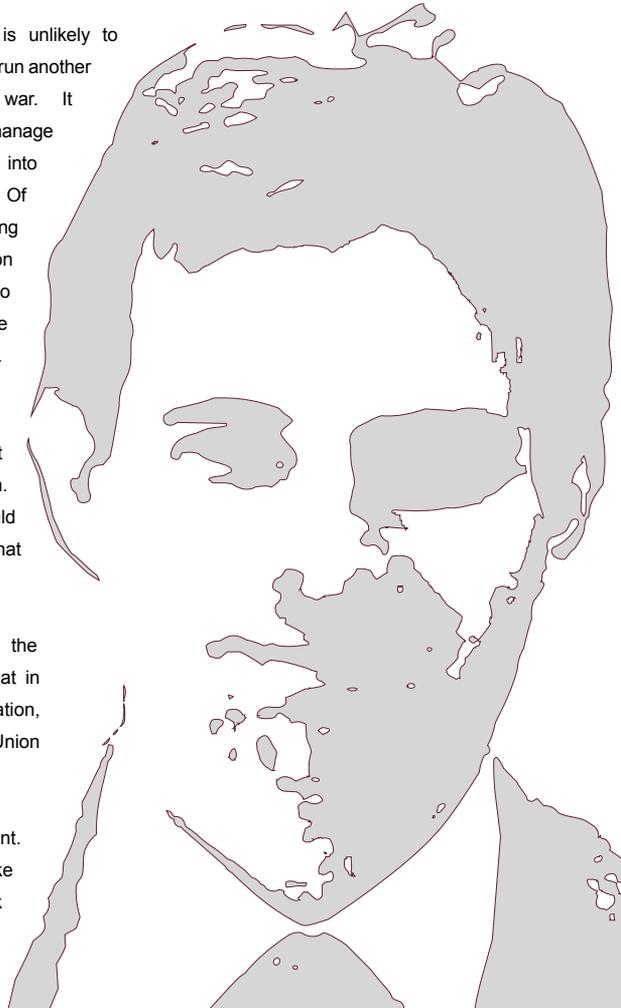
NATO's military tasks are surely less important than its political roles

The United States is unlikely to want to use NATO to run another serious shooting war. It would rather manage

a military operation itself, perhaps taking just a few close allies into the command just a few close allies into the command structure. Of course, the United States is happy for NATO to run peacekeeping missions in the Balkans. However, unless the European Union utterly fails to meet the target of its "headline goal" - the ability to deploy and sustain for a year a force of 60,000 troops by 2003 - the European Union will start to take over some of that peacekeeping role. Already there are plans for the European Union to replace NATO as the body in charge of the 1,000 (all European) troops in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*. If the European Union can meet that challenge successfully, it may later take over the Bosnia mission. The Bush administration has made it clear that Europeans should take on responsibility for looking after their own backyard, and that seems reasonable enough.

NATO may be left to run those peacekeeping missions which the European Union regards as too difficult to manage, such as that in Kosovo. Would NATO then be seen as a militarily strong organisation, compared to the NATO which defended Europe from the Soviet Union or fought the Kosovo air campaign?

I would certainly not argue that the peacekeeping role is unimportant. I also value the role NATO plays in encouraging its members to make their forces interoperable, so that they can communicate and work together on common missions. If the European Union is able to run a successful peacekeeping mission in the Balkans, it will be making use of the skills of NATO's operational planners,



and profiting from the habit of collaboration that NATO's integrated military structure has encouraged among its members (and also with the countries, which are not part of the integrated military structure but have taken part in NATO-led Balkan operations, namely France and the neutral EU countries).

However, NATO's military tasks - as a peacekeeping organisation and godfather to the European Union's embryonic military ambitions - are surely less important than its political roles: keeping the United States engaged in European security; helping to unify the two halves of the continent; and - in the future, I hope - giving Russia a formal place in the management of European security. UK Prime Minister Tony Blair's idea of a new council, consisting of the 19 members of NATO plus Russia, in which they could discuss topics of common concern, is promising. I am sad that conservative elements in the Pentagon have - at least for now - delayed the implementation of this concept.

I see NATO becoming a pan-European security organisation that would still have a military structure. That structure would be focused principally on Europe and its near abroad. You seem to want NATO to play an active, global role in the fight against terrorism. Is NATO well placed to take on that task? And how many people in the US defence establishment share your view?

Yours,

Charles

Dear Charles,

Whether a larger NATO remains militarily strong or becomes weaker depends on the policies we craft. There is no law of Alliance politics dictating that NATO has to get militarily weaker as it enlarges. New members have had a harder time integrating than we had hoped, but they have not weakened NATO. They are making a real contribution in the Balkans and elsewhere. That contribution will grow over time. Having struggled to gain their freedom, these countries understand the need to defend it.

But our real disagreement lies elsewhere. You suggest that NATO's role will become more political because the military threats in Europe are disappearing and because it is either not desirable or too hard for NATO to tackle the new threats from beyond Europe. I believe NATO must address these new threats. The "political" NATO you sketch would, in my view, quickly be reduced to a kind of housekeeping role on the continent. If NATO is not involved in the central strategic issues facing our countries, it will cease to be central in our policies. A "political" NATO is a halfway house for the Alliance's demise.

The administration I served was working toward a vision of NATO in which, having stabilised Central and Eastern Europe and locked in a new cooperative relationship with Russia, the Alliance's natural evolution was to embrace new missions further afield because that was where future threats would come from. We tried to lay a foundation for NATO to move in this direction in the run-up to the 1999 Washington Summit, but made limited progress because most European Allies preferred to restrict NATO's role to crisis-management operations in Europe's near abroad.

But hasn't 11 September demonstrated that we were not visionary enough? Article 5 threats to our

There is no law of Alliance politics dictating that NATO has to get militarily weaker as it enlarges

security do not come only or even primarily from Europe's near abroad. They can come from beyond Europe - from terrorism and countries with weapons of mass destruction. In a world where terrorist attacks are planned in Europe, financed in Asia and carried out in the United States, it hardly makes sense to talk about limiting NATO to Europe's near abroad. What will Europe do if and when terrorists strike at a major European city with weapons of mass destruction?

I hope 11 September was a wake-up call. Shortly after the terrorist attacks, I attended a dinner in Washington with a leading European foreign minister. He asked whether future historians would not criticise our leaders for their complacency in letting our defences atrophy at a time when a new totalitarian threat was emerging. He may have been right. At the Washington Summit, NATO heads of state and government committed themselves to building an Alliance as effective in dealing with the threats of the 21st century as it had been in winning the Cold War. If we are serious about that commitment, we must make NATO a better tool to deal with the threats of our time.

How many people in Washington share my view? More than supported NATO enlargement when others and I first advocated it. On a serious note, I remain hopeful that the Bush administration will build on the foundation it inherited and make new missions a central theme of the Prague Summit. It would be a mistake to abandon that policy precisely when Europeans are accepting its necessity. For decades, the United States has encouraged European Allies to play a more active out-of-area role. Our need for allies and alliances has increased, not decreased, since 11 September.

I believe the Bush administration missed an opportunity after 11 September to consolidate a consensus in NATO on new missions. But the problem is not only this administration's unilateralist instincts. It is Europe's repeated failure to invest in defence or to take new threats seriously. One depressing part of my State Department job was reading reports on how, year in year out, European Allies failed to achieve NATO force goals and how little European governments and publics cared. The more serious Europeans are about defence, the more seriously they will be taken in Washington.

Yours,

Ron

Dear Ron,

You want to give NATO a global military role in tackling the new threats to security. My difference with you is not, in the main, over the desirability of NATO evolving in the way you suggest. But I have strong doubts about the feasibility. Let's think first about NATO's geographical scope. You are right that modern security threats are global. Americans often accuse Europeans of being introverted and worrying only about their own backyard. It is true that many Europeans lack the global vision of the US foreign policy elite - and, let's be frank, the over-concentration on Europe's near abroad is a particular problem in some of the smaller EU countries.

Nevertheless the Europeans, but not the Americans, sent troops to East Timor. There are British and French soldiers in Africa, but no Americans. And even in Kabul, the

NATO may not need the extravagant Convention that the European Union has established to rethink its institutions, but a group of wise persons should consider the fundamentals of how NATO operates

International Security Assistance Force is largely European. So let's not exaggerate Europe's introspection. That said, the Europeans do have to prioritise when they plan for using their too-scarce military capabilities. When considering where

to use their "headline goal" forces, they think of the Balkans and Africa. Given the United States' lack of interest in Africa, and its desire to cut back involvement in the Balkans, those European priorities probably make sense. And since the Europeans lack the resources to develop separate forces and planning capabilities for EU and for NATO missions, there is not much sense in NATO - an organisation whose members, with two exceptions, are European - focusing its plans on flashpoints such as Kashmir, Korea or Taiwan.

Now, if the Bush administration was keen for NATO to engage in military operations in places such as Afghanistan, this argument would change. But, as far as I know, the administration wants NATO to "look after" Europe while unilateral operations, or coalitions of the willing, sort out the new security threats.

Divisions of labour are not only geographical. I share your frustration that European efforts to develop useful military capabilities are impaired by insufficient budgets and, importantly, inadequate military reform. This does mean that the United States finds it increasingly difficult to work with European forces in a high-intensity conflict. I agree with you that this damages Alliance cohesion, but the reality is that European capabilities are not going to improve dramatically in the foreseeable future. Perhaps we should accept that a great deal of division of labour is inevitable, and make the best of it. Each side of the Atlantic can do something that the other side does not want to do: the Europeans are happy to provide large numbers of peacekeepers, while the United States is happy to spend money on high-tech military equipment. Therefore they both need each other. That could be good for Alliance cohesion.

Finally, you want the Alliance to focus on the new security threats, like terrorism and weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Of course NATO should do what it can against such threats, but how well suited is it to play a leading role? The fight against terrorism surely requires the sharing of intelligence and speedy decision-taking. A large multinational bureaucracy with - soon, perhaps - 25 members may not be well suited to such a struggle. The same argument applies to WMD. Is not NATO too leaky and slow-moving to manage an offensive operation that would, for example, destroy biological weapons factories? I suspect that the Pentagon would rather fight terrorism and WMD on its own, or with a small group of allies that can be trusted to keep a secret, provide skilled forces and accept US command.

Yours,

Charles

Dear Charles,

If we agree that the United States and Europe should elevate dealing with the new threats to our common security - nearly all of which come from beyond Europe - to a centrepiece of future transatlantic strategic cooperation, then we have found important common ground. This need not mean that NATO has to "go global" (not even I see a NATO role in the Spratly Islands). But it does mean that NATO must have the capability to act in Central Asia, the Middle East and the Gulf. That is, after all, where the greatest threats to our future common security probably lie.

The strategic issue we face is whether the West can reorganise itself to confront a world in which terrorism and weapons of mass destruction pose a new, potentially existential threat

Is it feasible? I am not sure. But we must try. The questions you raise are legitimate and must be answered. But they are also the kind of issues that sceptics raised in 1949 when NATO

was being created, and in the early 1990s when NATO enlargement was first discussed. I am glad our leaders at the time ordered their aides to find a way to make this work and didn't follow the advice of the naysayers.

We need the same approach and level of commitment today. The strategic issue we face is whether the West can reorganise itself to confront a world in which terrorism and weapons of mass destruction pose a new, potentially existential threat. If the most advanced and wealthy countries of the transatlantic community cannot figure out how to do this, then something is surely wrong. I hope we don't have to wait until the next attacks, potentially killing far greater numbers of Americans or Europeans, before we decide to get our act together.

Let's also not give up on the Bush administration. Its policies are still evolving. On NATO enlargement and NATO-Russia, it has embraced continuity with its predecessor. It has yet to decide whether it wants to embrace new missions as a major NATO priority at the Prague Summit. I hope it does. Otherwise, it could preside over the marginalisation and eventual demise of the United States' most important alliance.

Yours,

Ron

Dear Ron,

You are certainly right that NATO should prepare to operate in Central Asia, the Middle East and the Gulf. I agree that NATO should develop its military organisation, as best it can, to cope with new missions. Even if the results are not brilliant, NATO will be a useful tool for its members if it tries hard to re-tool itself for new challenges in new areas. And you were right to signal, in your opening letter, that NATO needs institutional reform. NATO may not need the extravagant Convention that the European Union has established to rethink its institutions, but a group of wise persons should consider the fundamentals of how NATO operates.

However, my big worry is not whether NATO can evolve into an effective organisation. It is rather that political leaders on the two sides of the Atlantic are finding it increasingly difficult to find common

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ground in their views of the world. Europeans are concerned that the United States seems interested only in military solutions to terrorist threats; that it seems relatively oblivious to the economic, political and cultural roots of terrorism; that it spends so little on development assistance to the world's poorest countries; and that it appears to have a phobia of international treaties. Americans, for their part, are frustrated by Europe's inability to improve its military capabilities; by its slow-moving and often ineffective institutions; by its desire to trade with rather than isolate and threaten rogue states; and by its tendency to sanctify international treaties and organisations.

If American and European governments continue to talk past each other, as they seem to have done in the first two months of this year, NATO cannot be an effective organisation. But if they can make more of an effort to understand each others' concerns, and thus speak and act in a manner which takes those concerns into account, Americans and Europeans will be able to renew their common purpose. And then a new and transformed NATO has a future, as an instrument of that common purpose. I am sure you agree.

Yours,

Charles

* Turkey recognises the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.

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