

ATLANTIC PARTNERSHIP

NEWSLETTER



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Editorial

I am increasingly alarmed by the number of times I pick up the paper and read news of another trade fight between the USA and Europe. Over the summer it was Honeywell, then it was the airline's turn, followed by controversial WTO rulings on tax. Now it's the US decision to impose tariffs on steel imports.

Trade is the living volcano whose eruptions seem never to quite die down.

The relationship between Europe and North America is simply too important, especially in the midst of a highly sensitive and dangerous war against terrorism, to risk being distracted by the sourness of trans-Atlantic relations which these disagreements bring.

What can be done?

Put it in perspective first. Let's not forget that protectionism is an old solution and everyone has been guilty of it from time to time. The WTO is a rules based organisation. Let's use its rules to sort these disagreements out.

Second, let's remember what our priority is at the moment. That is in joining forces to defend the values we share - namely democracy founded on peace, freedom and the rule of law.

So, finally, let's work to find a solution with the USA. A legitimate disagreement on trade need not spread bitterness across the Atlantic.

Which brings me back to a recommendation previously made in this editorial. It seems to me that what is needed is a forum in order to help maintain a healthy dialogue and in which differences can be discussed. What I would like to see is a Standing Commission which could anticipate and help find solutions for points of friction - whether they be trade, environment, defence, or foreign policy issues.

Let's learn from our mistakes and try to avoid future antagonisms.

The Rt Hon Michael Howard QC MP
Chairman Atlantic Partnership

Whose is new in Atlantic Partnership

We are delighted that US Congressman Henry J Hyde has agreed to be the American Vice Chairman of Atlantic Partnership. As Chairman of the prestigious US House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee he is a key player on the international scene, and strategically placed to help promote good relations between Europe and America.

'When I ponder the world and America's role in it' began Mr Henry Hyde speech to the House of Representatives' Foreign Affairs Committee, 'there is indeed much to be thankful for, many accomplishments to take pride in, and much that inspires hope. But as pleasant as these thoughts may be, I confess that I also see much that concerns me.'

'I believe we are watching the beginnings of an unraveling of the Atlantic relationship. By the Atlantic relationship, I mean something more than just NATO. I mean the entire complex of connections between North America and Europe, the close identity of interests, that we and our allies have constructed out of the ashes of World War II. This relationship is the very foundation of the post-war international system, the irreplaceable centre on which the stability of the globe depends. It is from this core that the democratic and economic revolution now transforming the world has spread.'

'That relationship is fraying. Slowly, quietly, it is being hollowed out, even as the responsible officials solemnly reaffirm their commitment. There is no crisis to compel action, but I fear that should a crisis come, it will be too late.' (The Hon Henry Hyde, inauguration speech to the House of Representative's Foreign Affairs Committee, 7th March, 2001)

What the papers are saying

Guardian Interview with Charles Powell

Atlantic Partnership Vice Chairman, Charles Powell was interviewed by Julian Glover of the Guardian about the impact of September 11 on foreign policy (January 28, 2002).

JG: Has politics really changed? Aren't we seeing old interstate diplomacy return?

LP: Frankly the reason it has changed is the impact on the United States which has for so long felt invulnerable.

September 11 has seen the catalyst to persuade Russia that it needs to move more towards the West. Given the choice between other alliances or a decisive Peter the Great-like move to the West, I think

Putin has opted for the latter. The Chinese have also seen advantage in cooperating in a way people once thought just about unthinkable.

September 11 has not really been a change in the Middle East conflict or the India-Pakistan war, except that the existence of a war on terrorism has given those countries the extra moral justification for action.

We in the west think we are good moral judges but the Indians and the Israelis have rather different views on that: one law for the US and another for the rest of the world.

JG: Does Britain have a distinct role?

LP: I think Britain certainly has a continuing role. I don't see this change in gear that the Prime Minister sometimes talks about, it is sometimes as though he has only just discovered that Britain has a special international role, more active and higher profile than many other countries.

That was very clear to me in my time in diplomacy and later working for Margaret Thatcher and John Major at No 10. I'm glad he has discovered it and sustained it, I think he has done well, (and) acted in the traditions of British foreign policy. I don't think that there has been some new paradigm that he's discovered.

He has very successfully nurtured and used the special relationship with the US which is essential to our security, and he has very actively supported the war on terrorism with remarkable articulacy and by his energy and willingness to travel the world in a way that frankly an American president cannot do.

When an American president goes abroad several thousand people move and large aircraft fly, and the prime minister can go with a dozen people.

At the same time he has kept the balance with Europe, he is not distant from Europe, he has not made his very strong support for the special relationship a negative factor in a way that previous governments have.

JG: But has Britain made any difference?

LP: I don't think we can possibly say that we have made a decisive difference or taught America a lesson. That would greatly exaggerate our role and our influence.

What I think we have done is play a part in the Washington policy debate. It is using our influence there that counts, and I would say that - in a debate which began between those who wanted to build a coalition and sort out Afghanistan, and those who wanted to go out and bomb everything in sight, bomb Iraq and so on - there is no doubt

that our government supported the more gradualist route and that is the view that prevailed in Washington.

JG: Has there been a change in Britain's relations with America?

LP: I am mightily relieved that Mr Blair has made the effort to get on well with President Bush and I think he made the transition extremely skilfully.

What has happened since the 11 September has been a bit of a godsend - if one can call it that

JG: Has Britain's profile in America changed?

LP: Yes, everyone tells you of that the whole time. I am on the boards of American public companies where people come up to you quite spontaneously and tell you how marvellous it has been. I have seen several senior members of the American administration in the last few months and the welcome for it is very genuine.

There are occasions no doubt when it will get eroded - some of the recent criticism of al-Qaida prisoners will have irritated on the fringes but basically it has been a huge boost to our standing.

JG: What are the benefits to Britain of that standing?

LP: The benefits are a voice in shaping the world we have to live in.

I have never gone along with this view that the route to influence in Washington is through Brussels. Of course it is on trade policy but on many life and death issues it is not the case, the European Union does not have the forces.

I have no objection to European defence cooperation and clearly the Americans do want to see Europe do more in defence but until they do it rather than talk about it, Europe does not count for much and Britain does.

Sensible countries consult the US along the way, it ought to be manageable by wise governments. Europe needs an Atlantic dimension and that is absolutely core to all my political and foreign policy beliefs.

John Major addresses Atlantic Partnership breakfast

Atlantic Partnership Patron, *John Major* addressed the second Atlantic Partnership breakfast meeting for leading industrialists, businessmen, politicians and opinion formers.

With seven years experience as Prime Minister behind him, and a packed diary of international speaking engagements ahead, there are few men in Britain today in a better position to shed a light on the vital and sometimes tense relationship between North America and Europe.

The occasion marked the second of a series of Atlantic Partnership breakfasts (the first with Dr Kissinger) giving major figures the opportunity to present their views in front of a small select audience of opinion formers and decision makers.

What Thatcher Wrought , Charles Powell, a friend and former colleague of Baroness Thatcher argued in *The Wall Street Journal* that she is here to stay, despite her official retirement from public life. 'While her voice may be stilled, the ideas identified with Thatcherism are as much at the heart of political debate as ever'. Mr Powell goes on to say that 'her appetite for controversy and challenging convention is undiminished. Her latest book, ..."statecraft", identifies Europe as the main source of Britain's problems and strongly implies that Britain would be better off outside the European Union. In present day politics that is akin to cursing in church. But it shows there is no need yet to employ the past tense when writing about Lady Thatcher.'

'We must steel ourselves to strengthen transatlantic relations'

wrote Charles Powell in the *Wall Street Journal*

President Bush's decision to impose tariffs on steel imports is a blatantly protectionist step. It is a set-back for the cause of free trade and open markets. By increasing costs for American manufacturers, it will damage American consumers who have almost single-handedly kept the US economy, and thus the world economy from serious recession since 11 September. It will not save inefficient steel producers in America, only buy them more time to go on being inefficient. And it's not the right signal to give at a time when the world is supposed to be embarking on a new round of negotiations on free trade. The Government and the EU are fully within their rights to challenge the American measures in the World Trade Organisation.

But before we froth at the mouth too much, let's weigh a few other factors. First the US is not exactly alone in protecting its key industries: there are plenty of other examples world-wide, not least in

Europe. And our highest priority at present has to be maintaining the unity of the grand coalition against terrorism, which is already showing signs of strain with reports of dissension in our own Cabinet.

All these considerations give us a strong incentive to stop the fall-out from the steel dispute spreading.

This is not the first time that a major industrialised country has indulged in protectionism for short-term political purposes. The Japanese have notoriously practised protectionism for decades in parts of their economy in order to protect the interests of voters supporting the ruling Liberal Democratic Party. Europe practises protectionism including within its own internal European market when political interests are paramount: no one can claim that Germany's financial markets are open to competition even from its European partners. Nor is the Common Agricultural Policy a monument to free trade.

Moreover the steel industry is a notorious hot-bed of subsidy, market distortion and protection. It is an open secret that Europe has itself been contemplating safeguards against imports should they rise to the levels faced by the US. It currently imposes quotas against several steel-producing countries as well as measures to restrain imports from Eastern and Central Europe. The argument that Europe will face a flood of steel imports from developing countries, diverted from the US market by the American measures, hardly holds water since most of those countries have been explicitly exempted from the application of those measures.

The Americans have said they are following the WTO process. The American record of abiding by WTO judgments is good. There is every incentive to try to negotiate a solution there with either some amelioration of the American measures or compensation for the EU, rather than become enmeshed in a cycle of retaliation.

Terrorism with a global reach is a far greater and more direct threat to our civilisation than a dispute over steel. We cannot allow lesser issues drive the US and Europe apart. The Atlantic relationship has been under strain enough recently from sneering comments by *bien pensants* in Europe who set out to ridicule President Bush's Axis of Evil speech. But the President was right. There is a common thread linking the pernicious governments of Iraq, Iran and North Korea: the determination to acquire weapons of mass destruction with the nightmare they may one day either use them directly against our countries, or make nuclear or chemical or biological materials available to terrorists to do their dirty work for them. That is now the greatest risk facing us and there is only limited time available to prevent it materialising.

Tony Blair has begun to make the case in Britain for action against Iraq. Other European leaders are qualifying their knee-jerk ridicule of President Bush's speech, recognising that their own people are at risk. The Americans for their part need to consult far more intensively with their allies on all the options for preventing the nightmare scenario of nuclear-armed terrorists coming true. Although there will be intermediate steps involving UN weapons' inspectors, the likelihood must be that military action against Iraq will be necessary, given Saddam Hussein's record of deceit and evasion. Vice-President Cheney's very important visit to London next week is the best place to start the planning

Despite our justified anger at America's action on steel, we cannot afford a dispute across the Atlantic which puts at risk the coalition against terrorism. We should take the lawful course of appealing to the WTO to resolve the trade issue and keep our true steel for the fight against terror.'

Extracts from Charles Powell's article for the Wall Street Journal (Europe) - Monday 25th March



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Transatlantic News round-up

War against Terrorism

'As we gather tonight, our nation is at war, our economy is in recession and the civilized world faces unprecedented dangers. Yet the state of our union has never been stronger'. So said President George W Bush as he began his 2002 State of the Union address.

Later he turned to the war against terrorism: 'What we have found in Afghanistan confirms that, far from ending there, our war against terror is only beginning', he continued, 'our second goal is to prevent regimes that sponsor terror from threatening America or our friends and allies with weapons of mass destruction.'

It was these words, which sent ripples throughout the world.

'He cannot not be serious' protested European diplomats. 'By branding Iran, Iraq and North Korea an "axis of evil", Mr Bush was announcing a dramatic widening of the war against terrorism...It marked what the foreign policy establishment might call a "paradigm shift" and Europe

needs to sit up and take notice...The candidate derided by the European Left as a global village idiot is now a President with foreign policy doctrine. The "Bush Doctrine" - what those states that harbour terrorist should be treated in the same ways as terrorists' (*Daily Telegraph 7/02/02*)

France's foreign policy Minister Hubert Vedrine openly declared Washington's approach to terrorism as "simplistic" saying: "today we are threatened by a new simplistic approach that reduces all the problems in the world to the struggle against terrorism...this is not well thought out". Europeans will end up having to speak out more and more because they faced a United States that acted "unilaterally, without consulting others, making decisions based on its own view of the world and its own interests."

Mr Schroder said: 'the president has shown that the fight against terrorism is by no means over and that it is important to maintain the cohesion of the international alliance against terrorism. Those are positions I happily

subscribe to. What he did not do was define any new targets for attack in the future.... It is important that we bear in mind the cohesion of the international alliance against terrorism'. (*Newsweek*, 11th February)

The Bush doctrine begins to blur warns *the Washington Post* (3rd April 2002). The 'either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists' line 'has given way to a murkier reality in the Middle East' leading to sharp criticisms from abroad. "This is Leninism", said Zbigniew Brzezinski, who was President Jimmy Carter's national security adviser reminding one of the axioms "He who is not with us is against us". For the less conservative, the good-vs.-evil approach is too black and white

Amongst those commentators who were quick to defend America's stance was *Barbara Amiel*, writing for the *Daily Telegraph*: 'British and European criticism of the way America conducts its campaign should not be mistaken for a show of disunity. It is democracy in action...American will act unilaterally - a word the European split out as a term of abuse. This time America has been the victim of an act of war and will refuse to act as Europe's happy St Bernard' (18th February).

'Rather than criticise the US, EU states should improve defence capabilities for the sake of a more equal transatlantic

partnership', said *Peter Mandelson* writing in the *Financial Times*, (18th February). He went on to say that 'there is a hint of naivety entering the response made by some in Europe to US President George W. Bush's "axis of evil" State of the Union address. ... This does not mean the US should blunder around the world like a scary superpower..... But fighting a modern war against such an asymmetric threat is not a tea party.' He warned that (Nato) 'looks increasingly lost and uncertain as its role after the cold war diminishes and attempts are made to adapt to new circumstances and threats. It is the cornerstone of the transatlantic relationship, however, and cannot be allowed to collapse under the weight and potential contradictions of its burgeoning membership.'

Mr Mandelson argued that the US must heed new European trends too. 'Coming to terms with the internal dynamic of Europe's growing integration will be a key foreign policy challenge for the US.'

Are the Americans and Europeans growing apart? asked *Newsweek* warning that: 'tremors of fear (if not loathing)—of American power, American hubris and what is perceived as an American inclination to ignore its friends as it damns its enemies—are coursing through Europe these days. As Europeans listened last week to Bush proclaim his vision of a new and dangerous epoch—which, with its very own

“axis of evil,” sounded chillingly like world wars of the past— America’s traditional allies were left wondering where they fit into his scheme of things.Some feel as if they’re hooked to a superpower locomotive that’s about to go out of control, with an engineer who sees no reason to heed their warnings.

‘The prevailing sentiment seemed to be that Europe had been taken for granted at best, and at worst forgotten.Even NATO, forged by the great binding treaty that spans the Atlantic, didn’t seem to figure in the plans Bush described to Congress. Even in Britain, America’s most dependable European ally in times of trouble, anxieties are bubbling up.

Several specific issues divide the United States from much of Europe, argued *Newsweek*. ‘The cursory way the United States rejected the Kyoto treaty on greenhouse gases, its reluctance to pursue a campaign against offshore tax havens and its willingness to toss out the antiballistic-missile treaty are just some of the issues that set European nerves on edge even before September 11. Europe is a place where the death penalty isn’t allowed and where the environment is an issue that makes or breaks governments. Taxes are higher, but then people are less wasteful of gasoline... The welfare of society and the community is exalted over that of the individual. Diplomacy is favoured over force in almost every instance.’

And all this is taking place against a backdrop of Europeans who are trying to redefine exactly who they themselves are. ‘Europeans are searching for a better way to define it politically and socially. For want of another vision, many describe it as the “un-America,” like the “un-cola.” They cherish the notion that it’s kinder, gentler, safer, wiser, worldlier and (ahem) more civilized. (February 11th)

Blair and Bush at Crawford

“Blair’s not a Eurowimp”, explained a senior White House aid in anticipation of Prime Minister Blair’s visit to President George W Bush Crawford ranch. (*Time Magazine*, 3rd April). “He’s not ponderous or hand wringing. He gets to the bottom line, and that’s [George] Bush’s cup of tea”. As Bush contemplates military action over Iraq he is looking for support from Britain, but *Time magazine* warned: ‘while Blair will publicly back Bush he comes to the three-day visit far more tentative about replacing Saddam Hussein than he was about the Taliban; polling shows his domestic audience is even more nervous’. “The way to win international acceptance is to win”, a senior White House aide says bluntly. “That’s called diplomacy: winning”. ‘That is the kind of cowboy chatter that makes US allies so itchy. (*Time*, 3rd April 2002)

Stryker McGuire from *Newsweek* pointed out the similarities between the two leaders: 'As wildly different as they seem to be, they are both classic post-modern leaders – political pragmatists who are much less rooted in their party traditions than they seem to be from afar'....'if there's a dark cloud over the Crawford summit', says McGuire, 'it is Blair's slightly shaky political standing back at home. Rebel Labour MPs have rounded on Blair for his "poodle-like" obeisance to Bush' (*Newsweek* (3rd April 02). McGuire concludes that Blair is likely to press home the view that military action against Iraq must be linked to some progress in the Middle East.

Mr Blair threw his support behind US plans to oust Saddam Hussein, 'risking political fallout at home', reported the *Associated Press* (8th April). "The regime of Saddam is detestable", said Mr Blair, "to allow weapons of mass destruction to be developed by a state like Iraq...would be grossly to ignore the lessons of September 11 and we will not do it". Matthew d'Ancona of the *Sunday Telegraph* noted that 'the Prime minister stopped short of explicitly endorsing the President's call for Saddam Hussein's "removal". "Regime change sounds a lot more civil", noted the President (7th April)

Russia and Bush's new buddy

Mr Blair is not the only head of state to visit the US President at his ranch in Crawford. When Bush entertained Putin at his ranch in Crawford, Texas the two men enjoyed "a love fest of back-slapping". David Danger of the *New York Times* noted that only a few years back any president of Russia – the erstwhile "evil empire" – would have been treated with deep suspicion.

The *International Herald Tribune* agreed. George Bush's meetings with Vladimir Putin give the United States a 'second historic chance, after the squandered opportunity of the 1990s to establish a truly cooperative relationship with the post-Communist Russia. Such a relationship is essential for coping with today's real security dangers which exceed those of the Cold War and make America so vulnerable that it can no longer meaningfully be considered a superpower' (14th November)

Tightening Internal Security – a threat to liberty?

Attempts of American and European governments to tighten up on internal security following the war against terrorism, has met with some degree of consternation.

"Moments of crisis do not merely create emergencies," said Jack M Balkin in the *Los Angeles Times*. "They also create temptations". He referred to the growing authoritarianism of the US administration and to the "USA Patriot Act". Particularly controversial was the attempt to

set up a military tribunal system for non-US citizens accused of involvements in international terrorism.

Charles Lane in the *Washington Post* argued that compared with previous action in war time the Bush administration has not been excessive. 'President Abraham Lincoln suspended the right to habeas corpus during the Civil war; Woodrow Wilson drove antiwar newspapers out of business by denying them access to the postal system; FDT ordered the internment of 120,000 people of Japanese ancestry, many of the US citizens.' (quoted in *The Week*)

Newsweek noted that: 'Across Europe, governments are following American's lead: arresting suspects, freezing bank accounts, trying to break up terrorist networks. And as in America, they're rushing to enact a whole book of new laws as they say will help them to better do the job' (17th December). In the United States, Attorney General John Ashcroft is under fire for the plans to create secret military tribunals and, as many American see it, infringe of basic civil rights.'

And so it is in Europe. Take Tony Blair's anti-terror legislation as an example, which met was carpet-bombed in the House of Lords.

The general message to governments on both sides of the Atlantic is 'slow down, they say. Let us be more

discriminating and careful' (*Newsweek*, 17th December).

France

Is anti-Americanism France's favourite sport? According to Jean Birnbaum from *Le Monde*, anti-Americanism is one of the world's favourite sports, but no one is as good at it as the French. For a French intellectual, anti-Americanism is "almost a professional duty" (quoted in *The Week*).

Marc Roche's article in the *Daily Telegraph* (25th November 2001) extended 'le sport' to Britain and its 'special relationship': 'Mr Blair has gone out of his way to foster a special relationship - not with Europe, but with the United States. In courting America, he hasn't merely bypassed Europe's institutions; he has demonstrated ambivalence towards them. ...This two-faced policy is typically perfidious, and typically British. It is, however, impossible to sustain in the long run.'

'Some people think that Britain's reluctance to accept European integration means that the country should join a different club - Nafta for example. But do the US, Canada and Mexico really want such an unreliable partner? I wonder.'

Trade

Trade tensions have been mounting since the New Year and now look to be verging on a full-scale trans-Atlantic show down.

'Setting the scene' writes the *International Herald Tribune*, 'the World Trade Organisation ruled against a US tax break for exports and cleared the way for the European union to seek up to \$4 billion in retaliatory duties.' (15/01/02). Then came the European Union's victory at the World Trade Organisation over export subsidies which 'gives Europe a big stick to beat the United States with... Coming on top of the EU decision to block a merger between two giant American corporations, General Elective and Honeywell, the WTO ruling is likely to infuriate some elements in Congress' (16/1/02)

Then it was the airlines turn. 'The long standing plans by American Airlines and British Airways for a transatlantic alliance were dealt a fatal blow on Friday when US regulators demanded the airlines give up hundreds of landing slots at London's Heathrow airport in exchange for approval' (*Financial Times*, 27/1/02).

Finally a full scale trans-Atlantic row finally broke out with the American's decision to impose tariffs on steel. 'Everybody's going to increase protection of their own [steel] warned *Ben Goodrich of the Institute for International*

Economics, and was shortly proved right when the European Union retaliated by imposing its own import taxes (26th March).

Lord Powell, writing in the *Wall Street Journal*, declared the American decision to be a set-back for free trade, but warned against Europe's over-reacting. Leon Brittan was less forgiving in the *Financial Times*, writing that this 'is why the recent decision of the US to impose punitive tariffs on steel is not only illegal, hugely damaging and inexcusably protectionist, it also threatens wider EU-US co-operation' (*Financial Times*, 18th March)

The Detroit news declared it 'a terrible decision that will undermine the economy and America's relations with key trading partnership. Worse, it will raise the cost of most products made of steel, including automobiles. He deserves to be severely rebuked by Congress and consumers alike' (Detroit news, March 6th)

The environment

President Bush announced a "new environmental path for America", his alternative to the Kyoto protocol. This has been 'to the dismay and anger of European nations and other allies' said *The Daily Telegraph*, 15/2/02. Bush plan 'would mean a rise in emissions over the next decade, instead of the cut required by the Kyoto treaty'.

focus, focus". 'Maybe I should go into politics in England'.

The Middle East

'President Bush.... said for the first time that Israel must withdraw its forces "without delay". The European Union welcome President George W Bush's intervention in the conflict. " I warmly welcome the statement of President Bush", said Romano Prodi (*Financial Times*, 5th April), "it is an expression of determination and leadership". Bush and Blair agreed 'a framework for a new attempt to achieve a Middle East ceasefire' (*Financial Times*, 8th April) after a weekend spent together on the Crawford Ranch.

Le Monde's decision to publish a weekly supplement of articles from the New York Times in English has met with much comment and congratulations. The paper's editor, Jean-Marie Colombani, declared that English had become "the lingua franca of our day" (quoted in the *Daily Telegraph*, 5th April). A leader in the *Daily Telegraph* presented its 'felicitations' but declared that their contribution to multi-lingual journalism was unlikely to stray beyond the publication on American.

Snippets

Germany's front-runner for the next chancellor, *Edmund Stoiber* , proposed that Germany 'play a leadership role in binding Europe more closely to the United States' reported the *International Herald Tribune* (8th April). "Germany, right here in Europe, must work towards protecting tight cohesion within the trans-Atlantic alliance", said Stoiber.

'You know what I'm looking forward to most in London, apart from meeting the Queen?' Mayor Rudolph Guiliani asked Alice Thomson of *The Daily Telegraph* (10th February) on visiting London to receive his knighthood. 'Prime Minister's questions. I'd do anything to be on it. I don't even understand half the issues, but it's so dramatic. You have to focus,



ATLANTIC PARTNERSHIP - WHO WE ARE:

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The Rt Hon John Major MP - United Kingdom

The Hon Dr Henry Kissinger - United States of America

The Rt Hon Lord Gilbert - United Kingdom

Herr K Voigt - Germany

Pierre Lellouche MP - France (Deputie)

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The Rt Hon Michael Howard MP (Chairman)

The Hon Henry J Hyde, Congressman (Vice Chairman, USA)

Lord Powell of Bayswater (Vice Chairman, UK)

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