

# **ATLANTIC PARTNERSHIP**

## **NEWSLETTER**



**Autumn 2002**

**Issue No.5**

**[www.atlanticpartnership.com](http://www.atlanticpartnership.com)**

## **Editorial**

In the aftermath of September 11<sup>th</sup> those of us who have long been expressing concerns at the drifting apart of Europe and the United States wondered for a moment whether we had got it all wrong. As millions of Europeans took to the streets and even French newspapers carried headlines reading “We are all Americans now” it began to look as though that basic common outlook and our much vaunted shared values had, at last, reasserted themselves.

Just over a year later the old concerns are back with a vengeance. The UN Security Council has, at last, agreed a resolution on Iraq. But it has followed weeks of wrangling during which France has led the opposition to the UN. The German Chancellor has won re-election apparently a platform of naked anti-Americanism. The Atlantic Ocean seems wider than ever; the rift seems to grow by the day.

The list of issues on which Europe and America now hold seriously different views is longer than it has been for a generation. There is discord on defence. On the Middle East a difference in emphasis has become a yawning gulf. Trade disputes fester. Differences on the future of global environmental policy are acute with the United States in the dock over its refusal to sign the Kyoto accord. As though these problems were not enough, deeper cultural divisions have become more intense. European cannot understand American use of capital punishment – Americans ascribe what they regard as a lack of total commitment to its anti-terrorism cause to latent European anti-Semitism.

And now, notwithstanding the Security Council Resolution, we are holding our breath on Iraq.

The truth is that transatlantic differences have existed for along time but during the Cold War they were largely suppressed in the face of the Soviet threat and European recognition of their need of America to defend it.

Europe and North America do retain a fundamental common outlook. And if they work together more progress can be made in tackling the world's problems than if they see each global flashpoint as an opportunity to seek advantage at the expense of the other. In short the Atlantic Partnership is of great value not only to the partners but to the world as a whole. If that partnership disintegrates into rivalry or, more, hostility the world will become a more dangerous place.

The truth is that if the political will is there, the partnership can be preserved. What is needed is a determination to manage the various differences that have arisen, and will continue to arise, in such a way as to minimise their impact on the relationship as a whole.

**The Rt Hon Michael Howard QC MP  
Chairman, Atlantic Partnership**

**Henry Kissinger launches Atlantic Partnership in France**  
Henry Kissinger launched Atlantic Partnership in France this September in the presence of many of our key supporters there such as former Foreign Minister Jean FrancoisPoncet and the Director of the Institute for Foreign Relations, Dominic Moisi. France plays a crucial role in the relationship between Europe and North America.

**The British Ambassador acted as host, and guests included:**

- **Ministre Francois d'Aubert, Vice President, Democratie Libérale**
- **Nicolas Bazire, Directeur Général, LVMH**
- **Ministre délégué Renaud Donnedieu de Vabre**  
**Ministre délégué aux Affaires européennes**
- **Bernard Duc, Deputy Chairman, Rolls Royce European Advisory Board**
- **Député Louis Giscard d'Estaing DéputéPuy-de-Dôme**
- **François Heisbourg, DirecteurFondation de Recherche Stratégique**
- **Marc Lambron, Membre du Conseil d'Etat**
- **Jérôme Monod, Conseiller du Président de la République**
- **Bernard Rétat, Vice PrésidentThalès**
- **l'Ambassadeur François de la Rose**

### **Autumn Series of Atlantic Partnership Breakfasts**

**It has been a busy Autumn of Atlantic Partnership breakfasts in London. In the face of mounting pressure over Iraq, difficult relations between Germany and the US, we could not have asked for a more interesting and topical series of speakers, including:**

- **the Defence Secretary Geoff Hoon and USGerman coordinator Karsten Voigt in October;**
- **General Sir Mike Jackson, Commander in Chief Land in November, and,**
- **The Foreign Secretary, the RtHon Jack Straw in December.**

**Guests included both the US and the German Ambassadors to London as well as Robert Thomson, Editor of The Times.**

### **Dossier on Iraq launched at Atlantic Partnership Breakfast**

**The Foreign Secretary launched a new dossier on human rights abuses in Iraq at the Atlantic Partnership breakfast in December in front of guests and the media. The Foreign Office pinned the responsibility squarely on the shoulders of the Iraqi leader. The document- titled Saddam Hussein: Crimes and Human Rights Abuses - said: "Iraq is a terrifying place to live. People are in contact fear of being denounced as opponents of the regime."**

## **People in Atlantic Partnership**

### **New European Patrons**

**As evidence of our growing reach we now have two new Atlantic Partnership Patrons from Europe. Senator Antonio Martino from Italy is the Defence Minister in the present Italian government. Eduardo Serre from Spain is a former Defence Minister and currently the Chairman of UBS Warburg Spain. Both will play an important role in developing our work throughout Europe.**

### **Atlantic Partnership Panels Launched**

**The Atlantic Partnership panel was launched in October. We are delighted to have such a distinguished set of people from both side of the Atlantic to promote our cause. Despite their different backgrounds, and varying political persuasions each panellist shares one thing in common. We all believe that the partnership between Europe and North America is of inestimable value to the partners themselves and the world as a whole. We also believe that the growing number of differences between Europe and North America should be managed in such a way that the partnership is not damaged and that friction does not lead to fracture.**

**The Panel consists of a cross section of leading academics, directors of leading policy forums from Germany, France, the US and UK. It also includes two former UK foreign secretaries, a former French foreign minister; prominent academics; journalists, including Germany's Joseph Joffe, Editor of "Die Zeit"; as well as Congressman Doug Bereuter and former Chief of Defence Staff, Lord Inge.**

### **The Panel**

**Matthew d'Ancona**

**Deputy Editor and commentator  
The Sunday Telegraph**

**Ed Heathcoat Amory**

**Political columnist, the Daily Mail**

**Dr. Christoph Bertram**

**Head of the Stiftung  
Wissenschaft und Politik  
(German Institute for  
International Politics and  
Security)**

**Representative Douglas Bereuter**

**U.S. Congress, R- Nebraska  
House International Relations  
Committee Subcommittee on  
Europe**

**Prof Malcolm Chalmers:**

**Bradford University**

<b>Prof. Michael Clark</b>	<b>King's College, London</b>
<b>Jean de Courcel</b>	<b>former directeur adjoint to the Prime Minister</b>
<b>The Rt Hon Frank Field MP</b>	<b>Labour MP</b>
<b>Mr. Klaus-Dieter Frankenberger</b>	<b>Foreign Editor "Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung"</b>
<b>Dr Jeffrey Gedmin</b>	<b>Director, Aspen Institute</b>
<b>Lord Howell</b>	<b>Conservative Front Bench spokesman on Foreign Affairs House of Lords</b>
<b>Lord Inge</b>	<b>former Chief of the Defence Staff</b>
<b>Mr. Josef Joffe</b>	<b>Editor, "Die Zeit"</b>
<b>Prof. Sir John Keegan</b>	<b>Historian and Daily Telegraph Defence columnist</b>
<b>Mr. Friedrich Merz</b>	<b>Head of the CDU/CSU Parliamentary Group in the German Bundestag</b>
<b>Nicolas de la Moriniere</b>	<b>Chairman and Chief Executive of ODIOT</b>
<b>M. Dominique Moisi</b>	<b>Director, Institute of Foreign Relations (FRI) - Paris</b>
<b>Lord Owen</b>	<b>Cross-bench peer, former Foreign Secretary</b>
<b>Senator Jean Francois Poncet</b>	<b>Former French Foreign Secretary</b>
<b>Lord Renwick</b>	<b>Labour peer, former Ambassador to USA</b>
<b>Sir Malcolm Rifkind</b>	<b>Former Foreign Secretary Former Defence Secretary</b>
<b>Andrew Roberts</b>	<b>Author and journalist</b>
<b>Radek Sikorski</b>	<b>Executive Director, New Atlantic Initiative Resident Fellow,</b>

	<b>American Enterprise Institute. Former Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, Poland. Former Deputy Minister for Defence, Poland</b>
<b>Angela Stent</b>	<b>Director, Centre for Eurasian, Russian and East European Studies - Georgetown University</b>
<b>John O'Sullivan:</b>	<b>Editor, United Press Inc. Washington D.C. former Editor of National Review former speech write to Mrs Thatcher</b>
<b>Barbara Thomas</b>	<b>Deputy chairman, Friends Provident</b>
<b>Dr. Norbert Walter</b>	<b>Chief Economist, Deutsche Bank Research GmbH</b>
<b>Sir John Weston:</b>	<b>former Ambassador to NATO and to the UN</b>
<b>Daniel Yergin</b>	<b>Director, Cambridge Energy Research Pulitzer prize winning author of 'The prize' and other books including 'Commanding Heights'</b>
<b>Monsieur Jean Daniel Tordjman</b>	<b>former Ministre Plénipotentiaire in charge of <b>Economic and Commercial Affairs</b> - French Embassy- Washington DC 1985-1992</b>
	<b>former Ambassador-at-Large, Special Representative of France for International Investment 1992- 1999</b>
	<b>Executive Vice President , Trader.com , a Media and Internet Group.</b>

## **What the papers are saying**

**Atlantic Partnership Vice Chairman, Charles Powell, wrote for the *Daily Telegraph* (25/9/2002)**

**'Why Blair and Bush must have our fullest support' for the Daily Telegraph**

**The Prime Minister yesterday showed the same mettle as his predecessors at turning points in the Second World War, the launch of the Falklands campaign and the Gulf war. Britain's interests are directly threatened by Saddam Hussein's ruthless determination to acquire weapons of mass destruction. So is the standing and authority of the United Nations.**

**When we went to war with Iraq in 1991 we had clear intelligence that Saddam was worryingly close to acquiring nuclear weapons. Although sanctions and inspections have since hampered his efforts, they have not slackened. Even if he is not yet able to construct a full nuclear weapon, the risk of his acquiring the material to make radioactive dispersal devices remains high. The danger is greater than most of us imagine, as Downing Street's dossier makes clear, even though it could not be too explicit and detailed: it is vital to protect intelligence sources and not let Saddam know exactly what we know. Otherwise he will simply take further steps to conceal his activities.**

**President Bush is moving with deliberation. First, he is seeking the return of the weapons inspectors, though only if they have full access and all weapons of mass destruction and the materials to make them will be destroyed. That is what Saddam promised 11 years ago but has consistently thwarted and evaded. Second, he is working through the UN Security Council, even though further UN endorsement of military action is not strictly necessary, because earlier Security Council resolutions still apply and the use of force was only "suspended" in 1991.**

**Third, he is working to build an international coalition to support military action. He should not pay a price for that support by wavering over the elimination of the threat to our security and that of the Middle East from Saddam. The UN's choice is between enforcing its own decisions or showing that it has no more teeth than the League of Nations had.**

**Iraq's offer to allow the unconditional return of the inspectors is Saddam's last attempt to divide the emerging consensus against Iraq at the UN and head off military action. All experience of Saddam teaches us that "unconditional" means the opposite: nothing will start, once inspectors get to Iraq, with the aim of hampering their**

work. The worst response to his tactics would be to relax pressure on Iraq. The right course is a tough Security Council resolution leaving Saddam no wriggle room and making military enforcement inevitable in the event of any backsliding. The past week shows that the more determined Mr Bush grows, the more support he gets, with the Saudis and the Arab League turning back towards America, and Congressional and popular American backing growing.

Russia and China will not actively support American military action against Iraq, but they will probably acquiesce. They have no conceivable interest in seeing rogue states prevail. Old guard Communists and friends of Iraq will have to swallow hard. But new leaders know that they can no longer afford the luxury of gesture politics. They have discreetly used September 11 to align their relations with America and shed their earlier "any enemy of the US is a friend of ours" approach.

Despite support for America after September 11, the backbone of most European governments with the exception of Britain subsequently jellified when faced with an attack on Iraq. The transatlantic relationship was left looking ragged and insecure. France and most other European allies are now scrambling back on side, recognising that in the threatened conflict Europe's place is at America's side. They will want to be on the winning team. The exception is Germany, where Gerhard Schroder's electoral opportunism opposing military action has damaged German-American relations.

Arab countries can justifiably ask why the UN is being asked to endorse war against Iraq to enforce UN resolutions while older resolutions to stop Israeli settlement activity in the West Bank and demand the surrender of occupied territory are ignored. The best way to counter this is for Mr Bush to implement those parts of his recent Middle East speech offering hope to the Palestinians of their own state if they give up terrorism. George Bush Snr's commitment to a renewed American push for Middle East peace was critical in building the coalition against Saddam last time. In their hearts, Arab governments want Saddam's fall because he is also a risk to them. But they must be able to show their people that the US and the UN are equally determined to resolve the Palestine problem.

Saddam's record of duplicity leaves little doubt that military action is required. The most likely timing is early in the New Year. It will not be without risks, but the dangers need to be kept in proportion. America is far stronger and more advanced in military technology than in 1991, and Iraq significantly weaker: by some estimates it is only at 30 per cent of Gulf war strength. The certainty of military defeat may persuade Saddam's generals to depose him to save themselves from war crimes tribunals and worse. We would be imprudent to count on

**it - his enforcement of loyalty through terror shows no sign of diminishing.**

**Saddam could in desperation use some of his weapons of mass destruction, but the warning from America and Britain in 1991 about the devastating consequences for Iraq of such use still stands. They are likely to deter him again. More probably, he will try again to suck Israel into the conflict to ignite popular support: Ariel Sharon will not show the same restraint as Yitzhak Rabin in the Gulf war. But Iraq's capacity to strike militarily at Israel is much reduced and attempted Iraqi use of chemical or biological weapons would deserve the response it would undoubtedly receive.**

**Britain has shown steadfastness, and the Prime Minister political courage, in facing up to the threat from Iraq to international peace and security and to hopes of a world order in which the UN's voice is heard and obeyed.**

***Charles Powell is a former adviser to Margaret Thatcher and John Major***

**Henry Kissinger argued in *The Washington Post* (October 30<sup>th</sup>) that 'Germany's rift with the United States goes deeper than American unilateralism and disagreement over Iraq policy'.**

**The article is published below in the newsletter, but is not available to be read electronically.**

***Henry Kissinger is an Atlantic Partnership Patron***

## **Speech by Lord Powell for the House of Lords Debate on Iraq: 28<sup>th</sup> November**

**Lord Powell of Bayswater:** My Lords, I begin by apologising to your Lordships, as I already have to the Minister, that, because of a long-standing engagement overseas late tonight, I shall probably not be present for the closing speeches.

Like others speaking in this debate, I welcome Security Council Resolution 1441. It helpfully tightens the screw on Saddam Hussein to compel him to disarm. Like other noble Lords, I also hope that Saddam will give a full accounting of his weapons of mass destruction, as well as the materials and facilities for manufacturing them, so the inspectors can find and destroy them and we will not have to go to war on Iraq.

But, my Lords, I am not holding my breath. Experience suggests that such hopes are likely to be vain. Saddam Hussein will hang on to his weapons of mass destruction so long as he believes he can deceive us and so long as he thinks he can rely on some UN members continuing to want to stave off military action at all costs. It also seems all too likely, I fear, that he will be able to outsmart the inspectors on the ground.

The lessons about this that I draw from my personal experience of the Gulf War are that with hindsight we made a mistake by not insisting on Saddam's personal surrender and subsequent removal in 1991; that Iraq will never renounce weapons of mass destruction permanently, so long as Saddam and his associates remain in power—to believe otherwise is wishful thinking—and that half measures will never solve the problem; at best they will only defer it.

So I have very little doubt that force will have to be used, and probably sooner rather than later. That is the prospect to which I shall address my remarks. I shall make four points.

### **28 Nov 2002 : Column 892**

First, we should not be floppy about identifying what constitutes a material breach of the UN resolution. An untrue declaration by Saddam would be a material breach, to add to many earlier ones. It may be that we shall want to wait for an even more concrete breach before initiating military action, but let us call a spade a spade from the beginning.

Secondly, once a clear material breach is detected and exposed, there will be a great outcry demanding another Security Council resolution before force is used. Indeed, we have heard it already. However, as others have said, there is no legal requirement for that and there is no commitment to it in the earlier resolution; only to further discussion. President Bush has said clearly that such discussion cannot and must not jeopardise America's freedom of action. I hope Britain will stand with him on this rather than make a misguided attempt to appease opinion by actively canvassing and expressing a preference for a second resolution. That will only encourage Saddam to believe that he still has a chance of escaping the serious consequences that the Security Council resolution threatened. You cannot make and then remake decisions without losing credibility.

Of course, in an ideal world it would be desirable to have every member of the Security Council signed up to military action, but in the real world the chances are very slim. It is easy enough to predict here and now the course that a further Security Council discussion will take. After all, plainly several UN Security Council members voted for Resolution 1441 precisely because it did not threaten the use of force. Those countries that for years have been trying to help Saddam Hussein get off the hook of sanctions will temporise and argue for more time, for more evidence, for one more

chance. To quote a renowned speech in another place, "No, no, no"—no more time; no more breaches; no more chances; and no vetoes.

Thirdly, what about the reaction of Muslim countries and their governments to the use of force to disarm Saddam Hussein? There is a certain amount of hyperventilation on the subject, including in this House. The fact is that Saddam Hussein represents even more of a threat to his neighbours than to us. He invaded Kuwait. There was little doubt then that his ambition extended beyond that to the Saudi oil fields and even to those of the lower Gulf. The Saudi Government certainly thought so at the time. Saddam also holds the unchallenged world record for slaughtering his fellow Muslims—over 1 million in the Iran-Iraq war. Whatever Arab governments feel it necessary to say publicly now, I cannot believe that most of them will not be mightily relieved to see him go, provided military action is swift and successful and does not involve Israel. That will do far more for their own security than appeasing the anger of the so-called Arab street—a threat that is often wheeled out, but which has constantly proved exaggerated.

The attitude of the Muslim world would certainly be improved if the United States would galvanise itself to rekindle negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority. All that needs to be said was said in President Bush's excellent speech last June,

**28 Nov 2002 : Column 893**

spelling out the elements of a settlement. Of course a full-blown solution cannot be delivered just like that, but a start needs to be made and made now. It is worth recalling that in the previous Gulf War, President Bush—the 41st president—promised a peace conference as soon as the task of ejecting Iraq from Kuwait was completed.

Lastly, as we reflect on the further steps at the United Nations, let us remember that disarming Iraq will not be the end of the story. Beyond that there is the emerging risk of a nuclear-capable and terrorist-supporting Iran and there is North Korea's cynical admission after years of blatant lies that it is developing nuclear weapons—and, indeed, probably has them. There is no single strategy that can disarm North Korea and deter other rogue states that may be trying to acquire weapons of mass destruction. In the case of North Korea, there will need to be intense and co-ordinated pressure on the regime, not just from the United States, but from China, Japan, Russia and South Korea.

One thing is surely indisputable: swift, resolute and successful action to disarm Saddam Hussein will send an unmistakable signal to others with similar ambitions that their game is up.

## **Power and Weakness**

**The article (below) was written by Robert Kagan for 'Policy Review' and then reprinted in the August edition of 'Prospect'. It offers an extremely incisive analysis of the present divide between Europe and America. This is an edited version by kind permission of 'Policy Review'.**

## *POLICY Review*

# Power and Weakness

*By Robert Kagan*

IT IS TIME to stop pretending that Europeans and Americans share a common view of the world, or even that they occupy the same world. On the all-important question of power American and European perspectives are diverging. Europe is turning away from power, or to put it a little differently, it is moving beyond power into a self-contained world of laws and rules and transnational negotiation and cooperation. It is entering a post-historical paradise of peace and relative prosperity, the realization of Kant's "Perpetual Peace." The United States, meanwhile, remains mired in history, exercising power in the anarchic Hobbesian world where international laws and rules are unreliable and where true security and the defence and promotion of a liberal order still depend on the possession and use of military might. That is why on major strategic and international questions today, Americans are from Mars and Europeans are from Venus: They agree on little and understand one another less and less. And this state of affairs is not transitory — the product of one American election or one catastrophic event. The reasons for the transatlantic divide are deep, long in development, and likely to endure. When it comes to setting national priorities, determining threats, defining challenges, and fashioning and implementing foreign and defence policies, the United States and Europe have parted ways.

The European caricature at its most extreme depicts an America dominated by a "culture of death," its warlike temperament the natural product of a violent society where every man has a gun and the death penalty reigns. But even those who do not make this crude link agree there are profound differences in the way the United States and Europe conduct foreign policy. The United States, they argue, resorts to force more quickly and, compared with Europe, is less patient with diplomacy. Americans generally see the world divided between good and evil.

When confronting real or potential adversaries, Americans generally favour policies of coercion rather than persuasion, emphasizing punitive sanctions over inducements to better behaviour, the stick over the carrot. Americans tend to seek finality in international affairs: They want problems solved, threats eliminated. And, of course, Americans increasingly tend toward unilateralism in international affairs. They are less inclined to act through international institutions such as the United Nations, less inclined to work cooperatively with other nations to pursue common goals, more sceptical about international law, and more willing to operate outside its strictures.<sup>1</sup>

Europeans insist they approach problems with greater nuance and sophistication. They try

to influence others through subtlety and indirection. They are more tolerant of failure, more patient when solutions don't come quickly. They generally favour peaceful responses to problems, preferring negotiation, diplomacy, and persuasion to coercion. They are quicker to appeal to international law, international conventions, and international opinion to adjudicate disputes. They try to use commercial and economic ties to bind nations together. They often emphasize process over result, believing that ultimately process can become substance.

This European dual portrait is a caricature, of course, with its share of exaggerations and oversimplifications. One cannot generalize about Europeans: Britons may have a more "American" view of power than many of their fellow Europeans on the continent. And there are differing perspectives within nations on both sides of the Atlantic. In the U.S., Democrats often seem more "European" than Republicans; Secretary of State Colin Powell may appear more "European" than Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld. Many Americans, especially among the intellectual elite, are as uncomfortable with the "hard" quality of American foreign policy as any European; and some Europeans value power as much as any American.

Nevertheless, the caricatures do capture an essential truth: The United States and Europe are fundamentally different today. Powell and Rumsfeld have more in common than do Powell and Hubert Védrine or even Jack Straw. When it comes to the use of force, mainstream American Democrats have more in common with Republicans than they do with most European Socialists and Social Democrats. During the 1990s even American liberals were more willing to resort to force and were more Manichean in their perception of the world than most of their European counterparts. The Clinton administration bombed Iraq, as well as Afghanistan and Sudan. European governments, it is safe to say, would not have done so. Whether they would have bombed even Belgrade in 1999, had the U.S. not forced their hand, is an interesting question.<sup>2</sup>

What is the source of these differing strategic perspectives? It does not lie in the national characters of Americans and Europeans. After all, what Europeans now consider their more peaceful strategic culture is quite new. It is an evolutionary shift from the culture which dominated Europe for hundred of years.

As for the United States, there is nothing timeless about the present heavy reliance on force as a tool of international relations, nor about the tilt toward unilateralism and away from a devotion to international law. Americans are children of the Enlightenment, too, and in the early years of the republic were more faithful apostles of its creed. America's eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century statesmen sounded much like the European statesmen of today, extolling the virtues of commerce as the soothing balm of international strife and appealing to international law and international opinion over brute force. The young United States wielded power against weaker peoples on the North American continent, but when it came to dealing with the European giants, it claimed to abjure power and assailed as atavistic the power politics of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century European empires.

Two centuries later, Americans and Europeans have traded places — and perspectives. Partly this is because in those 200 years, but especially in recent decades, the power equation has shifted dramatically: When the United States was weak, it practiced the strategies of indirection, the strategies of weakness; now that the United States is powerful,

it behaves as powerful nations do.

EUROPE HAS BEEN militarily weak for a long time, but until fairly recently its weakness had been obscured. World War II all but destroyed European nations as global powers, and their postwar inability to project sufficient force overseas to maintain colonial empires in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East forced them to retreat on a massive scale after more than five centuries of imperial dominance — perhaps the most significant retrenchment of global influence in human history. For a half-century after World War II, however, this weakness was masked by the unique geopolitical circumstances of the Cold War. Dwarfed by the two superpowers on its flanks, a weakened Europe nevertheless served as the central strategic theatre of the worldwide struggle between communism and democratic capitalism. Its sole but vital strategic mission was to defend its own territory against any Soviet offensive, at least until the Americans arrived. Although shorn of most traditional measures of great-power status, Europe remained the geopolitical pivot, and this, along with lingering habits of world leadership, allowed Europeans to retain international influence well beyond what their sheer military capabilities might have afforded.

Europe lost this strategic centrality after the Cold War ended, but it took a few more years for the lingering mirage of European global power to fade. During the 1990s, war in the Balkans kept both Europeans and Americans focused on the strategic importance of the continent and on the continuing relevance of NATO. The enlargement of NATO to include former Warsaw Pact nations and the consolidation of the Cold War victory kept Europe in the forefront of the strategic discussion.

Then there was the early promise of the “new Europe.” By bonding together into a single political and economic unit — the historic accomplishment of the Maastricht treaty in 1992 — many hoped to recapture Europe’s old greatness but in a new political form. “Europe” would be the next superpower, not only economically and politically, but also militarily. It would handle crises on the European continent, such as the ethnic conflicts in the Balkans, and it would re-emerge as a global player. In the 1990s Europeans could confidently assert that the power of a unified Europe would restore, finally, the global “multipolarity” that had been destroyed by the Cold War and its aftermath. And most Americans, with mixed emotions, agreed that superpower Europe was the future.

But European pretensions and American apprehensions proved unfounded. The 1990s witnessed not the rise of a European superpower but the decline of Europe into relative weakness. The Balkan conflict at the beginning of the decade revealed European military incapacity and political disarray; the Kosovo conflict at decade’s end exposed a transatlantic gap in military technology and the ability to wage modern warfare that would only widen in subsequent years. Outside of Europe, the disparity by the close of the 1990s was even more starkly apparent as it became clear that the ability of European powers, individually or collectively, to project decisive force into regions of conflict beyond the continent was negligible. Europeans could provide peacekeeping forces in the Balkans — indeed, they could and eventually did provide the vast bulk of those forces in Bosnia and Kosovo. But they lacked the wherewithal to introduce and sustain a fighting force in potentially hostile territory, even in Europe. Under the best of circumstances, the European role was limited to filling out peacekeeping forces after the United States had, largely on its own, carried out the decisive phases of a military mission and stabilized the situation. As some Europeans put it, the real division of labour consisted of the United States “making the dinner” and the

Europeans “doing the dishes.”

This inadequacy should have come as no surprise, since these were the limitations that had forced Europe to retract its global influence in the first place. Those Americans and Europeans who proposed that Europe expand its strategic role beyond the continent set an unreasonable goal. During the Cold War, Europe’s strategic role had been to defend itself. It was unrealistic to expect a return to international great-power status, unless European peoples were willing to shift significant resources from social programs to military programs.

Clearly they were not. Not only were Europeans unwilling to pay to project force beyond Europe. After the Cold War, they would not pay for sufficient force to conduct even minor military actions on the continent without American help. Nor did it seem to matter whether European publics were being asked to spend money to strengthen NATO or an independent European foreign and defence policy. Their answer was the same. Rather than viewing the collapse of the Soviet Union as an opportunity to flex global muscles, Europeans took it as an opportunity to cash in on a sizable peace dividend. Average European defence budgets gradually fell below 2 percent of GDP. Despite talk of establishing Europe as a global superpower, therefore, European military capabilities steadily fell behind those of the United States throughout the 1990s.

The end of the Cold War had a very different effect on the other side of the Atlantic. For although Americans looked for a peace dividend, too, and defence budgets declined or remained flat during most of the 1990s, defence spending still remained above 3 percent of GDP. Fast on the heels of the Soviet empire’s demise came Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait and the largest American military action in a quarter-century. Thereafter American administrations cut the Cold War force, but not as dramatically as might have been expected. By historical standards, America’s military power and particularly its ability to project that power to all corners of the globe remained unprecedented.

Meanwhile, the very fact of the Soviet empire’s collapse vastly increased America’s strength relative to the rest of the world. The sizable American military arsenal, once barely sufficient to balance Soviet power, was now deployed in a world without a single formidable adversary. This “unipolar moment” had an entirely natural and predictable consequence: It made the United States more willing to use force abroad. With the check of Soviet power removed, the United States was free to intervene practically wherever and whenever it chose — a fact reflected in the proliferation of overseas military interventions that began during the first Bush administration with the invasion of Panama in 1989, the Persian Gulf War in 1991, and the humanitarian intervention in Somalia in 1992, continuing during the Clinton years with interventions in Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo. While American politicians talked of pulling back from the world, the reality was an America intervening abroad more frequently than it had throughout most of the Cold War. Thanks to new technologies, the United States was also freer to use force around the world in more limited ways through air and missile strikes.

How could this growing transatlantic power gap fail to create a difference in strategic perceptions? Even during the Cold War, American military predominance and Europe’s relative weakness had produced important and sometimes serious disagreements. Gaullism, *Ostpolitik*, and the various movements for European independence and unity were manifestations not only of a European desire for honour and freedom of action. They also

reflected a European conviction that America's approach to the Cold War was too confrontational, too militaristic, and too dangerous. Europeans believed they knew better how to deal with the Soviets: through engagement and seduction, through commercial and political ties, through patience and forbearance. It was a legitimate view, shared by many Americans. But it also reflected Europe's weakness relative to the United States, the fewer military options at Europe's disposal, and its greater vulnerability to a powerful Soviet Union. It may have reflected, too, Europe's memory of continental war. Americans, when they were not themselves engaged in the subtleties of *détente*, viewed the European approach as a form of appeasement, a return to the fearful mentality of the 1930s.

The end of the Cold War, by widening the power gap, exacerbated the disagreements. Although transatlantic tensions are now widely assumed to have begun with the inauguration of George W. Bush in January 2001, they were already evident during the Clinton administration and may even be traced back to the administration of George H.W. Bush. By 1992, mutual recriminations were rife over Bosnia, where the United States refused to act and Europe could not act. It was during the Clinton years that Europeans began complaining about being lectured by the "hectoring hegemon." This was also the period in which Védérine coined the term *hyperpuissance* to describe an American behemoth too worryingly powerful to be designated merely a superpower. (Perhaps he was responding to then-Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's insistence that the United States was the world's "indispensable nation.") It was also during the 1990s that the transatlantic disagreement over American plans for missile defence emerged and many Europeans began grumbling about the American propensity to choose force and punishment over diplomacy and persuasion.

The Clinton administration, meanwhile, though relatively timid and restrained itself, grew angry and impatient with European timidity, especially the unwillingness to confront Saddam Hussein. The split in the alliance over Iraq didn't begin with the 2000 election but in 1997, when the Clinton administration tried to increase the pressure on Baghdad and found itself at odds with France and (to a lesser extent) Great Britain in the United Nations Security Council. Even the war in Kosovo was marked by nervousness among some allies — especially Italy, Greece, and Germany — that the United States was too uncompromisingly militaristic in its approach. And while Europeans and Americans ultimately stood together in the confrontation with Belgrade, the Kosovo war produced in Europe less satisfaction at the successful prosecution of the war than unease at America's apparent omnipotence. That apprehension would only increase in the wake of American military action after September 11, 2001.

TODAY'S TRANSATLANTIC problem, in short, is not a George Bush problem. It is a power problem. American military strength has produced a propensity to use that strength. Europe's military weakness has produced a perfectly understandable aversion to the exercise of military power. Indeed, it has produced a powerful European interest in inhabiting a world where strength doesn't matter, where international law and international institutions predominate, where unilateral action by powerful nations is forbidden, where all nations regardless of their strength have equal rights and are equally protected by commonly agreed-upon international rules.

This is no reproach. It is what weaker powers have wanted from time immemorial. It was what Americans wanted in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, when the brutality of a European system of power politics run by the global giants of France, Britain, and

Russia left Americans constantly vulnerable to imperial thrashing. It was what the other small powers of Europe wanted in those years, too, only to be sneered at by Bourbon kings and other powerful monarchs, who spoke instead of *raison d'état*. The great proponent of international law on the high seas in the eighteenth century was the United States; the great opponent was Britain's navy, the "Mistress of the Seas." In an anarchic world, small powers always fear they will be victims. Great powers, on the other hand, often fear rules that may constrain them more than they fear the anarchy in which their power brings security and prosperity.

This natural and historic disagreement between the stronger and the weaker manifests itself in today's transatlantic dispute over the question of unilateralism. Europeans generally believe their objection to American unilateralism is proof of their greater commitment to certain ideals concerning world order. They are less willing to acknowledge that their hostility to unilateralism is also self-interested. Europeans fear American unilateralism. They fear it perpetuates a Hobbesian world in which they may become increasingly vulnerable. The United States may be a relatively benign hegemon, but insofar as its actions delay the arrival of a world order more conducive to the safety of weaker powers, it is objectively dangerous.

This is one reason why in recent years a principal objective of European foreign policy has become, as one European observer puts it, the "multilateralising" of the United States.<sup>4</sup> It is not that Europeans are teaming up against the American hegemon, as Huntington and many realist theorists would have it, by creating a countervailing power. After all, Europeans are not increasing their power. Their tactics, like their goal, are the tactics of the weak. They hope to constrain American power without wielding power themselves. In what may be the ultimate feat of subtlety and indirection, they want to control the behemoth by appealing to its conscience.

The psychology of weakness is easy enough to understand. A man armed only with a knife may decide that a bear prowling the forest is a tolerable danger, inasmuch as the alternative — hunting the bear armed only with a knife — is actually riskier than lying low and hoping the bear never attacks. The same man armed with a rifle, however, will likely make a different calculation of what constitutes a tolerable risk. Why should he risk being mauled to death if he doesn't need to?

This perfectly normal human psychology is helping to drive a wedge between the United States and Europe today. Europeans have concluded, reasonably enough, that the threat posed by Saddam Hussein is more tolerable for them than the risk of removing him. But Americans, being stronger, have reasonably enough developed a lower threshold of tolerance for Saddam and his weapons of mass destruction, especially after September 11. Europeans like to say that Americans are obsessed with fixing problems, but it is generally true that those with a greater capacity to fix problems are more likely to try to fix them than those who have no such capability. Americans can imagine successfully invading Iraq and toppling Saddam, and therefore more than 70 percent of Americans apparently favour such action.

The differing threat perceptions in the United States and Europe are not just matters of psychology, however. They are also grounded in a practical reality that is another product of the disparity of power. For Iraq and other "rogue" states objectively do *not* pose the same level of threat to Europeans as they do to the United States. There is, first of all, the

American security guarantee that Europeans enjoy and have enjoyed for six decades, ever since the United States took upon itself the burden of maintaining order in far-flung regions of the world — from the Korean Peninsula to the Persian Gulf — from which European power had largely withdrawn. Europeans generally believe, whether or not they admit it to themselves, that were Iraq ever to emerge as a real and present danger, as opposed to merely a potential danger, then the United States would do something about it — as it did in 1991. If during the Cold War Europe by necessity made a major contribution to its own defence, today Europeans enjoy an unparalleled measure of “free security” because most of the likely threats are in regions outside Europe, where only the United States can project effective force. In a very practical sense — that is, when it comes to actual strategic planning — neither Iraq nor Iran nor North Korea nor any other “rogue” state in the world is primarily a European problem. Nor, certainly, is China.

This is why Saddam Hussein is not as great a threat to Europe as he is to the United States. He would be a greater threat to the United States even were the Americans and Europeans in complete agreement on Iraq policy, because it is the logical consequence of the transatlantic disparity of power. The task of containing Saddam Hussein belongs primarily to the United States, not to Europe, and everyone agrees on this<sup>6</sup> — including Saddam, which is why he considers the United States, not Europe, his principal adversary. In the Persian Gulf, in the Middle East, and in most other regions of the world (including Europe), the United States plays the role of ultimate enforcer. “You are so powerful,” Europeans often say to Americans. “So why do you feel so threatened?” But it is precisely America’s great power that makes it the primary target, and often the only target.

Americans are “cowboys,” Europeans love to say. And there is truth in this. The United States does act as an international sheriff, self-appointed perhaps but widely welcomed nevertheless, trying to enforce some peace and justice in what Americans see as a lawless world where outlaws need to be deterred or destroyed, and often through the muzzle of a gun. Europe, by this old West analogy, is more like a saloonkeeper. Outlaws shoot she riffs, not saloonkeepers. In fact, from the saloonkeeper’s point of view, the sheriff trying to impose order by force can sometimes be more threatening than the outlaws who, at least for the time being, may just want a drink.

When Europeans took to the streets by the millions after September 11, most Americans believed it was out of a sense of shared danger and common interest: The Europeans knew they could be next. But Europeans by and large did not feel that way and still don’t. Europeans do not really believe they are next. They may be secondary targets — because they are allied with the U.S. — but they are not the primary target, because they no longer play the imperial role in the Middle East that might have engendered the same antagonism against them as is aimed at the United States. When Europeans wept and waved American flags after September 11, it was out of genuine human sympathy, sorrow, and affection for Americans. For better or for worse, European displays of solidarity were a product more of fellow-feeling than self-interest.

IMPORTANT AS THE power gap may be in shaping the respective strategic cultures of the United States and Europe, it is only one part of the story. Europe in the past half-century has developed a genuinely different perspective on the role of power in international relations, a perspective that springs directly from its unique historical experience since the end of World War II. It is a perspective that Americans do not share and cannot share, inasmuch as

the formative historical experiences on their side of the Atlantic have not been the same.

Consider again the qualities that make up the European strategic culture: the emphasis on negotiation, diplomacy, and commercial ties, on international law over the use of force, on seduction over coercion, on multilateralism over unilateralism. It is true that these are not traditionally European approaches to international relations when viewed from a long historical perspective. But they are a product of more recent European history. The modern European strategic culture represents a conscious rejection of the European past, a rejection of the evils of European *machtpolitik*. It is a reflection of Europeans' ardent and understandable desire never to return to that past. Who knows better than Europeans the dangers that arise from unbridled power politics, from an excessive reliance on military force, from policies produced by national egoism and ambition, even from balance of power and *raison d'état*?

It is, of course, the integration and taming of Germany that is the great accomplishment of Europe — viewed historically, perhaps the greatest feat of international politics ever achieved. Some Europeans recall, as Fischer does, the central role played by the United States in solving the “German problem.” Fewer like to recall that the military destruction of Nazi Germany was the prerequisite for the European peace that followed. Most Europeans believe that it was the transformation of European politics, the deliberate abandonment and rejection of centuries of *machtpolitik*, that in the end made possible the “new order.” The Europeans, who invented power politics, turned themselves into born-again idealists by an act of will, leaving behind them what Fischer called “the old system of balance with its continued national orientation, constraints of coalition, traditional interest-led politics and the permanent danger of nationalist ideologies and confrontations.”

Fischer stands near one end of the spectrum of European idealism. But this is not really a right-left issue in Europe. Fischer's principal contention — that Europe has moved beyond the old system of power politics and discovered a new system for preserving peace in international relations — is widely shared across Europe. As senior British diplomat Robert Cooper recently wrote in the *Observer* (April 7, 2002), Europe today lives in a “postmodern system” that does not rest on a balance of power but on “the rejection of force” and on “self-enforced rules of behaviour.” In the “postmodern world,” writes Cooper, “*raison d'état* and the amorality of Machiavelli's theories of statecraft . . . have been replaced by a moral consciousness” in international affairs.

American realists might scoff at this idealism. George F. Kennan assumed only his naïve fellow Americans succumbed to such “Wilsonian” legalistic and moralistic fancies, not those war-tested, historically minded European Machiavels. But, really, why shouldn't Europeans be idealistic about international affairs, at least as they are conducted in Europe's “postmodern system”? Within the confines of Europe, the age-old laws of international relations have been repealed. Europeans have stepped out of the Hobbesian world of anarchy into the Kantian world of perpetual peace. European life during the more than five decades since the end of World War II has been shaped not by the brutal laws of power politics but by the unfolding of a geopolitical fantasy, a miracle of world-historical importance: The German lion has laid down with the French lamb. The conflict that ravaged Europe ever since the violent birth of Germany in the nineteenth century has been put to rest.

The means by which this miracle has been achieved have understandably acquired

something of a sacred mystique for Europeans, especially since the end of the Cold War. Diplomacy, negotiations, patience, the forging of economic ties, political engagement, the use of inducements rather than sanctions, the taking of small steps and tempering ambitions for success — these were the tools of Franco-German rapprochement and hence the tools that made European integration possible. Integration was not to be based on military deterrence or the balance of power. Quite the contrary. The miracle came from the rejection of military power and of its utility as an instrument of international affairs — at least within the confines of Europe. During the Cold War, few Europeans doubted the need for military power to deter the Soviet Union. But within Europe the rules were different.

Collective security was provided from without, meanwhile, by the *deus ex machina* of the United States operating through the military structures of NATO. Within this wall of security, Europeans pursued their new order, freed from the brutal laws and even the mentality of power politics. This evolution from the old to the new began in Europe during the Cold War. But the end of the Cold War, by removing even the external danger of the Soviet Union, allowed Europe's new order, and its new idealism, to blossom fully. Freed from the requirements of any military deterrence, internal or external, Europeans became still more confident that their way of settling international problems now had universal application. The "essence" of the European Union, writes Everts, is "all about subjecting inter-state relations to the rule of law," and Europe's experience of successful multilateral governance has in turn produced an ambition to convert the world. Europe "has a role to play in world 'governance,'" says Prodi, a role based on replicating the European experience on a global scale. In Europe "the rule of law has replaced the crude interplay of power . . . power politics have lost their influence."

No doubt there are Britons, Germans, French, and others who would frown on such exuberant idealism. But many Europeans, including many in positions of power, routinely apply Europe's experience to the rest of the world. For is not the general European critique of the American approach to "rogue" regimes based on this special European insight? Iraq, Iran, North Korea, Libya — these states may be dangerous and unpleasant, even evil. But might not an "indirect approach" work again, as it did in Europe? Might it not be possible once more to move from confrontation to rapprochement, beginning with cooperation in the economic sphere and then moving on to peaceful integration? Could not the formula that worked in Europe work again with Iran or even Iraq?

Just as Americans have always believed that they had discovered the secret to human happiness and wished to export it to the rest of the world, so the Europeans have a new mission born of their own discovery of perpetual peace. Thus we arrive at what may be the most important reason for the divergence in views between Europe and the United States. America's power, and its willingness to exercise that power — unilaterally if necessary — represents a threat to Europe's new sense of mission. American policymakers find it hard to believe, but leading officials and politicians in Europe worry more about how the United States might handle or mishandle the problem of Iraq — by undertaking unilateral and extralegal military action — than they worry about Iraq itself.

Turning Europe into a global superpower capable of balancing the power of the United States may have been one of the original selling points of the European Union — an independent European foreign and defence policy was supposed to be one of the most important by-products of European integration. But, in truth, the ambition for European "power" is something of an anachronism. It is an atavistic impulse, inconsistent with the

ideals of post-modern Europe, whose very existence depends on the rejection of power politics. Whatever its architects may have intended, European integration has proved to be the enemy of European military power and, indeed, of an important European global role.

This phenomenon has manifested itself not only in flat or declining European defence budgets, but in other ways, too, even in the realm of “soft” power. European leaders talk of Europe’s essential role in the world. Prodi yearns “to make our voice heard, to make our actions count.” And it is true that Europeans spend a great deal of money on foreign aid — more per capita, they like to point out, than does the United States. Europeans engage in overseas military missions, so long as the missions are mostly limited to peacekeeping. But while the EU periodically dips its fingers into troubled international waters in the Middle East or the Korean Peninsula, the truth is that EU foreign policy is probably the most anaemic of all the products of European integration.

It is obvious, moreover, that issues outside of Europe don’t attract nearly as much interest among Europeans as purely European issues do. This has surprised and frustrated Americans on all sides of the political and strategic debate: But given the enormous and difficult agenda of integration, this European tendency to look inward is understandable. EU enlargement, the revision of the common economic and agricultural policies, the question of national sovereignty versus supranational governance, the so-called democracy deficit, the jostling of the large European powers, the dissatisfaction of the smaller powers, the establishment of a new European constitution — all of these present serious and unavoidable challenges.

American policies that are unwelcome on substance — on a missile defence system and the ABM treaty, belligerence toward Iraq, support for Israel — are all the more unwelcome because for Europe, they are a distraction. Europeans often point to American insularity and parochialism. But Europeans themselves have turned intensely introspective. As Dominique Moisi noted in the *Financial Times* (March 11, 2002), the recent French presidential campaign saw “no reference . . . to the events of September 11 and their far-reaching consequences.” No one asked, “What should be the role of France and Europe in the new configuration of forces created after September 11? The Middle East conflict became an issue in the campaign because of France’s large Arab and Muslim population, as the high vote for Le Pen demonstrated. But Le Pen is not a foreign policy hawk.

Can Europe change course and assume a larger role on the world stage? There has been no shortage of European leaders urging it to do so. Nor is the weakness of EU foreign policy today necessarily proof that it must be weak tomorrow, given the EU’s record of overcoming weaknesses in other areas. And yet the political will to demand more power for Europe appears to be lacking, and for the very good reason that Europe does not see a mission for itself that requires power. Its mission is to oppose power.

Even Védrine has stopped talking about counterbalancing the United States. Now he shrugs and declares there “is no reason for the Europeans to match a country that can fight four wars at once.” It was one thing for Europe in the 1990s to increase its collective expenditures on defence from \$150 billion per year to \$180 billion when the United States was spending \$280 billion per year. But now the United States is heading toward spending as much as \$500 billion per year, and Europe has not the slightest intention of keeping up.

IN THINKING ABOUT the divergence of their own views and Europeans’, Americans

must not lose sight of the main point: The new Europe is indeed a blessed miracle and a reason for enormous celebration — on both sides of the Atlantic. The United States solved the Kantian paradox for the Europeans. Kant had argued that the only solution to the immoral horrors of the Hobbesian world was the creation of a world government. But he also feared that the “state of universal peace” made possible by world government would be an even greater threat to human freedom than the Hobbesian international order, inasmuch as such a government, with its monopoly of power, would become “the most horrible despotism.”<sup>11</sup> How nations could achieve perpetual peace without destroying human freedom was a problem Kant could not solve. But for Europe the problem was solved by the United States. By providing security from outside, the United States has rendered it unnecessary for Europe’s supranational government to provide it.

American power made it possible for Europeans to believe that power was no longer important. And now, in the final irony, the fact that United States military power has solved the European problem, especially the “German problem,” allows Europeans today to believe that American military power, and the “strategic culture” that has created and sustained it, are outmoded and dangerous.

Most Europeans do not see the great paradox: that their passage into post-history has depended on the United States not making the same passage. Because Europe has neither the will nor the ability to guard its own paradise and keep it from being overrun, spiritually as well as physically, by a world that has yet to accept the rule of “moral consciousness,” it has become dependent on America’s willingness to use its military might to deter or defeat those around the world who still believe in power politics.

Some Europeans do understand the conundrum. Some Britons, not surprisingly, understand it best. Thus Robert Cooper writes of the need to address the hard truth that although “within the postmodern world [i.e., the Europe of today], there are no security threats in the traditional sense,” nevertheless, throughout the rest of the world — what Cooper calls the “modern and pre-modern zones” — threats abound. If the postmodern world does not protect itself, it can be destroyed. But how does Europe protect itself without discarding the very ideals and principles that undergird its pacific system?

“The challenge to the postmodern world,” Cooper argues, “is to get used to the idea of double standards.” Among themselves, Europeans may “operate on the basis of laws and open cooperative security.” But when dealing with the world outside Europe, “we need to revert to the rougher methods of an earlier era — force, preemptive attack, deception, whatever is necessary.” This is Cooper’s principle for safeguarding society: “Among ourselves, we keep the law but when we are operating in the jungle, we must also use the laws of the jungle.”

Cooper’s argument is directed at Europe, and it is appropriately coupled with a call for Europeans to cease neglecting their defences, “both physical and psychological.” But what Cooper really describes is not Europe’s future but America’s present. For it is the United States that has had the difficult task of navigating between these two worlds, trying to abide by, defend, and further the laws of advanced civilized society while simultaneously employing military force against those who refuse to abide by those rules. The United States The United States, with all its vast power, remains stuck in history, left to deal with the Saddams and the ayatollahs, the Kim Jong IIs and the Jiang Zemins, leaving the happy

benefits to others.

IS THIS SITUATION tolerable for the United States? In many ways, it is. Contrary to what many believe, the United States can shoulder the burden of maintaining global security without much help from Europe. The United States spends a little over 3 percent of its GDP on defence today. Were Americans to increase that to 4 percent — meaning a defence budget in excess of \$500 billion per year — it would still represent a smaller percentage of national wealth than Americans spent on defence throughout most of the past half-century. Even Paul Kennedy, who invented the term “imperial overstretch” in the late 1980s (when the United States was spending around 7 percent of its GDP on defence), believes the United States can sustain its current military spending levels and its current global dominance far into the future. Can the United States handle the rest of the world without much help from Europe? The answer is that it already does. The United States has maintained strategic stability in Asia with no help from Europe. In the Gulf War, European help was token; so it has been more recently in Afghanistan, where Europeans are once again “doing the dishes”; and so it would be in an invasion of Iraq.

The American people seem willing to continue shouldering this global burden, even more so after September 11. Americans apparently feel no resentment at not being able to enter a “postmodern” utopia. There is no evidence most Americans desire to. Partly because they are so powerful, they take pride in their nation’s military power and their nation’s special role in the world. Americans have no experience that would lead them to embrace fully the ideals and principles that now animate Europe. Indeed, Americans derive their understanding of the world from a very different set of experiences. In the first half of the twentieth century, Americans had a flirtation with a certain kind of internationalist idealism. Wilson’s “war to end all wars” was followed a decade later by an American secretary of state putting his signature to a treaty outlawing war. FDR in the 1930s put his faith in non-aggression pacts and asked merely that Hitler promise not to attack a list of countries Roosevelt presented to him. But then came Munich and Pearl Harbor, and then, after a fleeting moment of renewed idealism, the plunge into the Cold War. The “lesson of Munich” came to dominate American strategic thought, and although it was supplanted for a time by the “lesson of Vietnam,” today it remains the dominant paradigm. For younger generations of Americans who do not remember Munich or Pearl Harbor, there is now September 11. After September 11, even many American globalizers demand blood.

Americans are idealists, but they have no experience of promoting ideals successfully without power. Certainly, they have no experience of successful supranational governance; little to make them place their faith in international law and international institutions, much as they might wish to; and even less to let them travel, with the Europeans, beyond power.

The United States must sometimes play by the rules of a Hobbesian world, even though in doing so it violates European norms. It must refuse to abide by certain international conventions that may constrain its ability to fight effectively in Robert Cooper’s jungle. It must support arms control, but not always for itself. It must live by a double standard.

Few Europeans admit, as Cooper does implicitly, that such American behaviour may redound to the greater benefit of the civilized world, that American power, even employed under a double standard, may be the best means of advancing human progress — and perhaps the only means. Instead, many Europeans today have come to consider the United States itself to be the outlaw, a rogue colossus. Europeans have complained about President

Bush's "unilateralism," but they are coming to the deeper realization that the problem is not Bush or any American president. It is systemic. And it is incurable.

Given that the United States is unlikely to reduce its power and that Europe is unlikely to increase more than marginally its own power or the will to use what power it has, the future seems certain to be one of increased transatlantic tension. The danger — if it is a danger — is that the United States and Europe will become positively estranged. Europeans will become more shrill in their attacks on the United States. The United States will become less inclined to listen, or perhaps even to care. The day could come, if it has not already, when Americans will no more heed the pronouncements of the EU than they do the pronouncements of ASEAN or the Andean Pact.

To those of us who came of age in the Cold War, the strategic decoupling of Europe and the United States seems frightening. If Americans were to decide that Europe was no more than an irritating irrelevancy, would American society gradually become unmoored from what we now call the West? It is not a risk to be taken lightly, on either side of the Atlantic.

So what is to be done? The obvious answer is that Europe should follow the course that Cooper, Ash, Robertson, and others recommend and build up its military capabilities, even if only marginally. There is not much ground for hope that this will happen. But, then, who knows? Maybe concern about America's overweening power really will create some energy in Europe. Perhaps the atavistic impulses that still swirl in the hearts of Germans, Britons, and Frenchmen — the memory of power, international influence, and national ambition — can still be played upon.

Americans can help. It is true that the Bush administration came into office with a chip on its shoulder. It was hostile to the new Europe — as to a lesser extent was the Clinton administration — seeing it not so much as an ally but as an albatross. Even after September 11, when the Europeans offered their very limited military capabilities in the fight in Afghanistan, the United States resisted, fearing that European cooperation was a ruse to tie America down. The Bush administration viewed NATO's historic decision to aid the United States under Article V less as a boon than as a booby trap. An opportunity to draw Europe into common battle out in the Hobbesian world, even in a minor role, was thereby unnecessarily lost.

Americans are powerful enough that they need not fear Europeans, even when bearing gifts. Rather than viewing the United States as a Gulliver tied down by Lilliputian threads, American leaders should realize that they are hardly constrained at all, that Europe is not really capable of constraining the United States. If the United States could move past the anxiety engendered by this inaccurate sense of constraint, it could begin to show more understanding for the sensibilities of others, a little generosity of spirit. It could pay its respects to multilateralism and the rule of law and try to build some international political capital for those moments when multilateralism is impossible and unilateral action unavoidable. It could, in short, take more care to show what the founders called a "decent respect for the opinion of mankind."

These are small steps, and they will not address the deep problems that beset the transatlantic relationship today. But, after all, it is more than a cliché that the United States and Europe share a set of common Western beliefs. Their aspirations for humanity are much the same, even if their vast disparity of power has now put them in very different places.

Perhaps it is not too naïvely optimistic to believe that a little common understanding could still go a long way.



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