

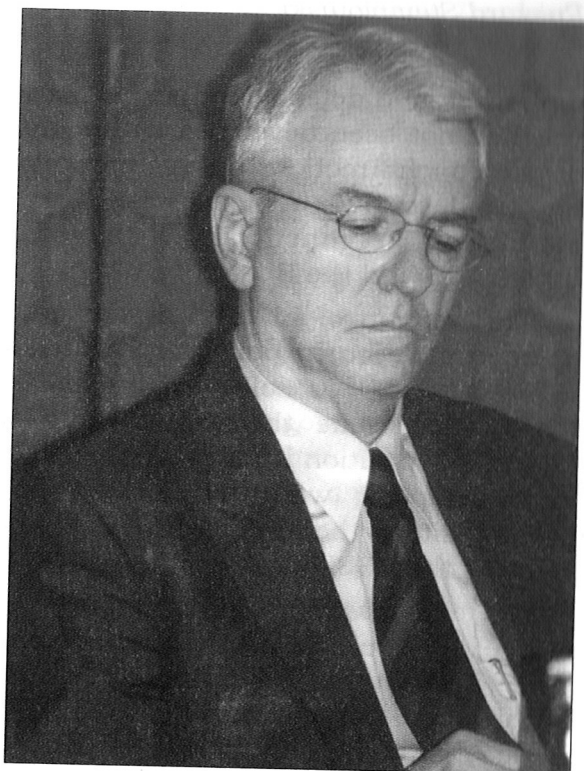
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# The EU-US Cooperation

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## **Towards the EU-US Hegemonic Tandem?**

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### **Intervention in Iraq as a Catalyst**

The international debate over the policy towards Iraq is primarily an expression of and a stimulus for processes of (a) creating a system of common foreign and defence policies within the EU, (b) building up the US Administration's strategy to counter transnational terrorism, (c) deepening an understanding of the political cultures in the EU and US, and looking for a common political denominator of the EU and USA.

The current situation within the EU is characterised by a very high degree of interstate cooperation and narrow cooperation in the domain of Community policy. Further integration of EU member states requires broadening the scope of Community policy. This applies primarily to the sphere of the EU which is the equivalent to the external function of a member state (including, in particular,

diplomacy and defence and security policies) and which, as yet, has not been developed within the EU. If the EU is to develop such functions as a community, a solution needs to be found to the problems resulting from the integrative parallelism, i.e. functioning of the integrating states within both NATO and the EU.

The creation of EU institutions responsible for foreign, defence and security policies is further stimulated by actions taken by the USA. Following the collapse of the USSR the USA has become the world's only superpower, but its hegemonic position is now questioned to an extent unknown in the bipolar world age, when its leadership was a prerequisite to the effectiveness of the policy of containment towards the USSR.

The tensions within the EU between Germany and France, on the one side, and the United Kingdom and many other EU states on the other, which has appeared most conspicuously in the issue of Iraqi intervention, do not in fact relate to the issue of Iraq but rather to the manner in which the EU member states are to establish their relations with the USA as a the hegemonic leader of the world system and the main force in NATO.

We should note however that there is no tension in disciplining or policing the world system, as can be seen in the Prague decision of the leaders of the NATO member states on the territorial enlargement of NATO influence and the potential theatres of action.

When President George W. Bush made specific demands on the Iraqi regime, he was actually not just after Iraq. What was at stake was the position of the USA in the world after September 11, and his own presidency, which was everything. When he says that the USA will not allow any state in the world to become more powerful than the USA, he does not reject the EU but invites the EU member states to join the US efforts, albeit as junior partners. On the other hand, when France and Germany refused to accept a resolution providing for a direct attack on Iraq, they were not rejecting the United States of America, but rather presenting their independent assessment of the threat and emphasizing the need for prior exhaustion of all other means to resolve the conflict. And along the way, which should be most strongly

emphasized, indicating their wish to participate in the world leadership-in-the-making.

France's imperialism did not end with decolonisation. Now France defines its position in relation to the hegemonic leader, which also requires it to emphasise its distance from the less developed EU candidate states, if only through, for instance, arrogant comments. France may aspire to present itself as the leader of such a Europe which understands the Arab world and constitutes for the Arabs an alternative to the USA. The current position of the French government is one of dissonance, but it matters a lot less than the decision of Charles de Gaulle's government on France's participation in NATO.

Germany is also defining its role by completing the construction of a new identity of the German state based on lessons drawn from history as much as on its economic strength. Critics of the German government's stance should ask themselves whether they would rather wish Germany to press for an international military intervention. Chancellor Schröder's response is rooted in the better part of the German Social Democrats' tradition, the new stance of "the greens", and the political philosophy of the Allies in 1945, expressing Germans' contemporary ambitions in an unexpected manner according to most foreign observers. By presenting itself as an opponent of military action, Germany, which is burdened with historical experiences, is building its new identity. If parliamentary elections in Germany were held now Mr Stoiber would probably win, but after the elections he would probably also assume a similar stance. Despite their disagreements Germany remains an ally of the USA. Germany has only recently assumed command of the peace-keeping forces in Afghanistan and Bundeswehr soldiers are on duty in Bosnia and Kosovo under the NATO flag. Germany will be an ally, but no longer a vassal.

In the absence of a common position of the Fifteen, the letter of the eight leaders and the later statement of the Vilnius Group in support of U.S. intervention signaled that the creation of a common foreign policy in the enlarged EU would not be driven solely by the established set-up, and it would be accommodation rather than competition with the USA that would grow stronger.

The debate in the Security Council also shows that the opinions of the government-signatories to the above letter can directly influence the decisions of the Security Council. This was most visible in the speech by the representative of Spain, the country which initiated the letter of "the Eight", but is burdened with the Basque problem, which is defined by Madrid, regrettably, in terms of terrorism.

Poland can play a constructive role in two ways. Firstly, as a future EU member Poland can actively make use of the Weimar Triangle by proposing joint efforts in enhanced cooperation (through institutions developed by the Nice Treaty) and initiating consultations more frequently to consider, i.a., implications for the EU-US relationship. Poland can also make use of its good relations with Britain and involve governments of other EU member states (and future member states), together with the British, in working out a formula for EU-USA relations (among other things through institutional limitations of the negative consequences of NATO/EU parallelism).

Secondly, our government can use its very good relations with America to explain in Washington that the US administration is not faced with a wave of anti-Americanism by ungrateful Europeans, but rather an increasingly strong aggregate economic strength of the EU states, and the philosophy of legitimacy, peace and stability which implies mutual accommodation rather than a permanent competition, let alone a conflict.

All countries, including France, Germany, China and Russia, need to consider their relations with the Muslim states. Security comes first. Some EU states are faced with fundamentalism among the increasing number of Muslims in their populations (currently 15 million). There is also the problem of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and in this regard one needs to prepare to confront many a government throughout Asia and the Middle East.

Human Rights are taking on characteristic of the world's first universal ideology. We are coming to accept that Human Rights are gradually changing the concept of sovereignty as sanctioned in international law. International law is not set in stone, it has kept evolving since its beginnings. Intervention in the event of their breach must not be confused with the

struggle against terrorism. If the Chinese government, which is faced with the Uighur ETIM (East Turkestan Islamic Movement), and the government of the Russian Federation, trying to solve the Chechnyan conflict, consider defence of their own human rights policies to constitute the most important element in their attitude to action against the Saddam Hussein regime, they will vote against any intervention like the one in Iraq, all the more so since they dislike the model of a unipolar world. China, however, is no longer intent on questioning the world order, but in trying to find its place in it. The division in the Security Council could be of secondary importance for China, unless it had to support the USA as the only permanent member thereof, which is probably unacceptable to the Chinese as yet.

War has always made a stronger impact on the social awareness of the Europeans than acts of terror. In addition war has always been associated with the state. Moreover, the fight against terrorists is not yet considered in Europe as a war against terrorism. Trans-national terrorism will change mass awareness, but this requires time. In every society there are critical degrees of (a) resistance to suffering, and (b) readiness for military struggle, and in western societies such degrees apparently vary. Mass demonstrations against war with Iraq were in part a consequence of the anti-globalist movements redirecting their attention. They did not translate into support for Saddam Hussein-like rulers, but they could represent the fear that such a war, especially if not sanctioned by the UN, could evoke a wave of terrorism and guerrilla worldwide. Above all, the demonstrators were probably convinced that peace was worth nearly any price. With the exception of most US citizens, people did not consider the Iraqi government as a real and direct threat on a large scale, while war was viewed as a general evil and the Bush Administration policy was widely criticised. The fact that U.S. Republicans are less liked in Europe (media, academe) than Democrats is also of relevance. Public opinion in Poland was initially divided or undecided, the Government's pro-US and anti-Saddam position ultimately winning the argument, the public debate being rather lukewarm. The Poles want both membership in the EU and close cooperation with the US, and it is rather the general consideration than the specifically Iraqi or "terrorist" aspect

of the debate that has prevailed with us. Only the first casualties among the Polish soldiers in Iraq will generate a serious debate.

The international debate over the policy towards Iraq did not clearly take into account the fact that this same region was burdened with the problem of relations between Israel and its Arab neighbours. If the intervention in Iraq leads to reconciliation of the rational interests of the main religious groups (Sunnites and Shiites) and ethnic groups (Arabs and Kurds), then the Iraqi catalyst will accelerate changes and improve Israel's situation by stimulating moderate forces and restraining radical ones in the region.

Things would look simpler on all fronts if the presentation of US policy itself was more convincing. Its weak points include the insufficient number of individual consultations between the USA and its NATO allies (and Mexico) prior to the adoption of Resolution 1441, lack of evidence to support the existence of a link between the organisation of trans-national terrorism and the Iraqi government (implications which involve the credibility of the accuser), the unclear vision of relations in Iraq and the entire region after the overthrow of Saddam Hussein, and, last but not least, the incomplete analysis of security on a broader scale. However, it should be kept in mind that US policy also has its own dynamics, and the last word about civil-military relations, including those between the President and the military, has not been spoken yet.

In the coming years the US administration will have to spend billions of dollars on the Iraqi venture. That money will go to someone, i.e. to companies to participate in Iraq's reconstruction, unless Iraq meets the same fate as Afghanistan in this regard. For many months the values of stock shares of the largest suppliers of the Defence Department have been going up faster than the average share value of the five hundred largest companies in the USA.

A strong NATO presence in Iraq through the introduction of an international contingent would turn the intervention in Iraq into a police operation in accordance with the assumptions adopted at the NATO summit in Prague but, admittedly, NATO must be first tested in its new role in Afghanistan. In the meantime, the US and many NATO member states are to be militarily present in Iraq. They are

going to stay there for a long time. An intervention is over only when the intervening force has left. The less ambitious their aim, the shorter their presence.

### **A Joint EU-US Hegemony?**

The indicators of the joint EU-US share in the world output (56%), trade (51%), official development assistance (73%), military expenditure (57%) and arms transfers (51%) are suggestive enough, but add the data on such fields like industrial patents, information technology, warfare technology, energy production and consumption, Nobel Prize winners in sciences and medicine, etc., and the picture will become more complete. All such data should be read as information on what results from the historic development of societal systems in the US and Europe. It includes also selection and refinement of the social values, institutions, etc., in short, the development of political culture and a market economy. And here we have both the similarities and differences between Europe and America, and more specifically, the EU countries and the USA. When one thinks of the EU-US cooperation, economy comes first. The EU did not start from cultural or political institutions, either.

First of all, the market economy implies competition. There is competition between the EU and US. Save for a major technological upheaval, European demographics look detrimental to EU economic development in the long run, unless EU immigration policies are changed radically, and such a change is a possibility. Even so, social integration, if it does materialize, will take time. Another detrimental factor is labour efficiency in the EU countries, lower than that in the US. Nevertheless, both hypothetical social integration and improvement of efficiency are not unsurmountable barriers of growth, and the EU economy—based on the common currency—may catch-up with the US economy, in the long run. Still, the competitive relationship may be turned into cooperative one, but not automatically so, as it would require a profound change of public policy philosophies on the two shores of the Atlantic. Anyway, the first step toward closer cooperation, a customs union, should not be beyond the leaders' imagination, provided that progress is made along



the parallel path towards better perception of the public mind on the two shores.

Alas the political cultures seem to be more different than the economies and economic interests are. No ink shed will suffice to picture the profundity of the difference in question, but not enough has been equally said about the exaggerations of the statements involved. Are these cultures really so disparate? In short, social communication is a problem to be tackled, if we do want to understand each other, the Europeans and the Americans alike. It is beyond me to envisage Tony Blair, George W. Bush, Jacques Chirac, Aleksander Kwaśniewski and Gerhard Schröder as members of a weekly seminar sweating to deconstruct notions of a theory of justice, categories of national interest or principles of international law. It is however for me easy to foresee an institutional link between the EU and the USA to systematically discuss, in private, the main issues of public policy, not just international affairs. What a pity that politicians from both sides of the Atlantic who do not spare words about the EU-US relationship do not nevertheless propose anything like this, as far as I know. Is it perhaps the experts' role to start the process and build a similar institution? Could our conference cycle send a germane signal? Could we involve the politicians? Cooperative efforts originating in Europe and/or America need not lead to forging a hegemonic tandem, not in the life of my generation, anyway, but why not ask the leaders to institutionalize their communication to talk systematically about common concerns?