

Prospects for EU-US relationship

The EU countries, together with USA, form a political alliance, which became a fundamental factor ensuring stability in international relations. The Gulf War was an example of bringing this alliance out of the frames of NATO.

This alliance is not solely the issue of common interests, but it is also a natural consequence of important historical experiences, which has also become quite widely and deeply rooted into the people's conscience. Those, who were building the United States two centuries ago were of European origin, and the participation in the Independence War of French, Dutch, Germans and Poles was significant. On the other hand the USA have been rescuing the Europe in its dreadful civil wars with Germany, twice in the XX century: they helped it to recover after World War II and successfully defended it against the communism. The American culture despite its disadvantages is attractive even for those Europeans, who are very much about strengthening the cultural independence. The common civilisation roots make the contacts easier, too.

The future of EU-US relationships will, however, depend on many factors, as for example:

- On the course of internal evolution in this two areas and on the way of solving of the most important social problems.
- On the changes in the external balance of powers and on the kind of threats for the stability in the world, which may arise in the future.

As to the first point, it is obvious that United States are remarkably advanced in the process of globalisation, they are most creative and efficient. The economical superiority of the USA, contrary to some prophecies made few years ago (e.g. L. Thurow), is growing. However, they pay their price for this success gained due to "new economy" – with progressive social stratification and the climate of social anxiety. Also the symptoms of the crisis in civil society are clearly visible (social passivity, political absenteeism).

The EU is facing the challenges of internal re-organisation and its enlargement. For the longer term, it will be economically

strengthened, becoming the biggest market in the world, but while defending its social pattern it can also suffer defeats. It is likely, that we will remain on the defensive posts for some time, and European stocks may still flow to America, weakening the Euro.

I think, however, that in the coming decades we will observe two social systems approaching. In both of them the remarkable progress in education will be made, in Europe transformations towards globalisation will be advanced. It will be taking place without resigning of social pattern (the principle of social cohesion), but along with animation of economical and social initiatives. Defending of the civil society and fighting against social marginalisation will be equally important as it is in the USA. It is likely, on the other hand, that in the United States the effort towards more sustainable development will have to be undertaken. Without this effort the USA will be threatened by a serious social conflict, which may lead to weakening its position in the world.

So, the communitarian tendency on the both sides of Atlantic Ocean may help us to approach to each other, however it is not evident.

As to the occurrences taking place out of our two regions – two alternative tendencies can be taken into account: In case of progressing political and economical stability throughout the world and probably strengthening of the EU we will be witnessing an advance towards multi-polar political world. Hence the EU will become more independent from political and military point of view.

There is, however, another possibility: the breakdowns of the financial markets and wider ethnical or international conflicts may seriously threaten stability and peace. In such a case the EU must decidedly support the United States, as up to now and in the nearest future only America with European support is capable of coping with such crises.

I must stress that we must always respect occurrences, which are difficult to foresee. Many events of important political consequences were expected, but they might not occur so fast (the fall of many dictatorships or oppressive systems, for example in South Africa, rapid development of world market). But others were completely surprising, such as: quick fall of the Soviet Empire, fast economical development of China, as well as economical

breakdown of incredibly dynamic and until then stable “young tigers” of South - Eastern Asia and Japan.

If USA and G7 will manage to create reasonable system of functioning and control of international financial markets ensuring safety, particularly for emerging countries, in case of serious breakdown – then stability and multipolarity, based on big and middle-size countries will be emerging faster and more peacefully. EU will be developing faster, too. If they fail, we will be witnessing many painful conflicts.

China will be a great unknown. According to rational premises it will presumably be co-operating with USA and Japan and soon will become a regional power. But we do not know what kind of emotions and ambitions may overweigh in a billion society, in which there is deeply rooted for hundred of years a conviction that it is a first country in the world and that it was abused by foreign barbarians for 150 years. Moreover, the same barbarians offer very attractive cultural proposals, which both in China, as well as in many Islamic countries evokes very controversial feelings.

The experiences of XX century taught us that enormous progress and achievements of humanity is accompanied by increasing dangers. Jean Fourastie, a French social philosopher and politician was writing 30 years ago: “the humanity has proved that it can survive on the vegetative level, on the edge of death of starvation, but yet it did not prove that it can survive on the level of scientific society”.

The year 1991 has clearly shown how far can we be surprised by the events. This time I was a Polish observer at the debates of Western European Union Parliamentary Assembly. During informal conversations we were discussing the issue of possible military threats. Together with few English and French generals and admirals we came to common conclusion: in ten to fifteen years we will be seriously threatened by the conflict with the Islamic world. Several weeks later the Gulf War began. Similar surprises may happen also in our European region.

It is clear, therefore, that Europe has to make a great effort towards creating its own foreign policy and, above all, to have its own military force to face the challenges and prevent conflicts. I am convinced that it will take place in a few years and that

United States ought to support Europe's efforts. The development of the European military force and its independence from NATO, however, ought to evolve proportionally to its military potential, and not on the basis of political manifestation.

Particularly the field of EU-USA common action should be the co-operation with Russia. The United States have played a significant role not only in breakdown of communist system, but also in transformation in post-communist countries. Both EU and USA are seriously interested in normalising of Russia: its political life, economy and relations with West. Above all, this is a task for Europeans, but also the participation of the USA must be seriously considered in this area. Perturbations in this region are not only a threat for Europe, but also for the very important Middle Asia and for relationships with Islamic countries.

A very difficult economical situation of Russia (despite the improvement of the balance of payments due to increase of the price of fuel) requires a long-distance effort of transformation of both ownership and production structures. As an author of the report on Russian and Ukrainian economy, which has been adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in 1999, I assume that until Russia will not come out of the trap of the raw-material country, its situation will be precarious. It is much bigger challenge for Europe, then the problems of the Islamic countries in the Mediterranean Sea region. France, Spain and Italy are very seriously approaching the projects of co-operation and help for this region. And the task is not easy—up to the year 2010 there must be ensured some 55-60 millions of jobs for the young people of this region.

In the Russian-Ukrainian area it will be more difficult, as Islamic countries, with some exceptions, are more stable. And Russia and Ukraine show a well-known to us in the Central Europe symptoms of frustration caused by transformation, but in much wider and deeper scale than in Visegrad Countries. According to the opinion of Russian sociologists a significant majority of young and middle-aged generation in the Russian Federation manifest a deep nihilism: it is against the reforms, but also against its own state, Orthodox Church and mostly against the communism. On such social background dangerous surprises are possible, particularly in case when the passive frustration will turn into an active revolt. It is rather certain that without help and intense EU-USA co-operation the good perspectives of further partnership

with Russia and Ukraine in the coming decade will not be very likely.

I think that closer relations between Europe and Russia are possible. Many Russians, even those frustrated do desire such a solution independently of historical stereotypes. But creating reasonable conditions for such closer relations will not be possible without the mentioned UE-US co-operation.