THE FEDERAL TRUST
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Rethinking Nato:
a European declaration of independence

Stephen Haseler

European Essay No.26

A Definition of Federalism

Federalism is defined as 'a system of government in which central and regional authorities are linked in an interdependent political relationship, in which powers and functions are distributed to achieve a substantial degree of autonomy and integrity in the regional units. In theory, a federal system seeks to maintain a balance such that neither level of government becomes sufficiently dominant to dictate the decision of the other, unlike in a unitary system, in which the central authorities hold primacy to the extent even of redesigning or abolishing regional and local units of government at will.'
(*New Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought*)

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Enlightening the Debate on Good Governance

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Foreword

The Federal Trust has not published many *European Essays* more timely or thought-provoking than this one from Stephen Haseler. In it, Professor Haseler dissects with great authority and insight the current crisis in relations between Europe and the United States. He concludes that the bitter divisions of analysis and policy over Iraq are essentially a symptom and consequence of unresolved arguments over the role of the United States in Europe after the end of the Cold War. The attack on the World Trade Centre in 2001 and the radical nationalist attitudes of many who advise President Bush have given to these unresolved arguments an edge and acrimony unparalleled in dealings between Europe and America since 1945.

Professor Haseler's basic argument is that the existence of NATO as an American-dominated military alliance focussed on the defence of Western Europe was only sustainable in the particular circumstances of the Cold War. The removal of the Soviet threat has destroyed the equilibrium of interests on which NATO rested. Europe's peoples and politicians are now struggling to redefine the appropriate relationship between their continent and America, at a time when the vital glue provided by NATO has lost its potency. The most ambitious attempt at redefinition is, in Professor Haseler's view, that provided by France and Germany. A central theme of his essay is the growing willingness of those two countries to provide the vanguard for a new elaboration and advocacy of Europe's defence and security interests. These interests will not necessarily be inimical to, but they will certainly be distinct from, the interests of the United States of America.

It is clear that, if Stephen Haseler is right in his assessment of the will and capacity of France and Germany to act as a 'hard core' for a redefinition of European security interests, then this confronts Britain with

a difficult decision. This essay recognizes the emotional and practical arguments in favour of the 'special relationship,' that will no doubt weigh in the short term with British policy-makers. But its author believes that in a 'post-Blair' Britain the United Kingdom will eventually align itself with France and Germany. This is a strikingly bold prediction. As ever, those who live longest will know most.

Brendan Donnelly
Director of the Federal Trust
April 2003

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The acute crisis in the Atlantic Alliance over Iraq that burst upon the scene in early 2003 had been building for over a decade. And could have been predicted. The key to the current crisis is not to be found in the events of September 11th 2001; rather, it is the product of events some 12 years earlier when the collapse of the Soviet Union removed the Soviet threat to Western Europe. It was this threat which had cemented post war American-West European relations, had created and sustained Nato, and caused most Europeans willingly to acquiesce in American leadership of the alliance. If '9-11' 'changed everything' for Americans, then, some 12 years earlier, the end of the Berlin Wall had 'changed everything ' for Europeans. For, with the Soviet threat removed, the Cold War pattern of the European-American relationship was bound, sooner or later, to be re-assessed, and altered.

Even during the Cold War it was becoming clear that the geo-strategic situation in which the peoples of Western Europe, with their prosperous economies and larger population than the US were defended by another power 3,000 miles away, one with the same GDP and a smaller population, was, in the long run, simply not tenable. Yet, even well after the Cold War had ended, and even into the twenty-first century, there remained in parts of Western Europe a lingering, instinctive, dependency upon the United States. There remained a stubborn belief that without the

US – and American-led Nato – Europe would be unable to deal with threats to its security. For some European leaders, most notably Britain's Tony Blair, this Atlantic relationship was so important that it far outweighed the political costs of being depicted as 'Washington's poodle' or by Nelson Mandela as 'The US President's Secretary of State.'   British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw also believes the US alliance is utterly central – as he revealed when, in an extraordinary, undiplomatic outburst he publicly warned France and Germany to 'take care' in opposing the US at the UN lest they 'reap the whirlwind' of American unilateralism.' [Report in *The Guardian*, March 5, 2003]

The slow death of Atlanticism

In Britain this Atlanticist instinct was most evident amoungst the country's security establishment (its diplomats, intelligence officials and senior military.) This establishment was, to an extent, simply protecting a vested institutional interest – the intelligence sharing, the servicing of Britain's nuclear deterrent, and the diplomatic relationship around the world provided by the 'special relationship' with the United States. [For a history and analysis of this 'special relationship' see John Dickie, *Special No More*, London 1998] But there was also a deeper, psychological dependency on 'Uncle Sam' which was derived from the UK's relationship with the US during the Second World war, and particularly D-Day, and was reinforced by the American role as protector during the fifty years of Cold War.

By contrast, France, even during the Cold War, had taken a more independent stance – symbolised by De Gaulle's decision to remove France from the integrated military arm of Nato and Nato headquarters from Paris. However, during the Cold War, French 'independence' was always a somewhat ambiguous concept. De Gaulle certainly built a genuinely independent nuclear system (unlike the British); but, ultimately, French security, like that of Western Europe as a whole, was still largely dependent upon the US nuclear guarantee. Even at the height of 'Gaullisme' France remained with the political framework of Nato. As it became increasingly clear that only a unified European security system could establish independence from US leadership, instinctive Gaullists were in a genuine bind: for they willed the end (independence), but not the

means (a unified European security policy in which French national interest would need to be subordinated to a greater European interest.) But in the 1990's and first years of new millenium, as trans-Atlantic tensions rose (and disputes with the US reached their zenith over Iraq policy), the hold of 'Gaullisme' on French strategic thinking weakened, opening the way for France to place security policy in a more European context. The Franco-German strategic alliance, forged during the Iraq crisis, has further Europeanised French thinking.

As the Cold War and the Soviet threat receded from memory, it was not just the French who were becoming critical of continued European dependence upon American leadership – exercised as it was through Nato. Fundamental strategic questions were being raised throughout the continent. Was Nato in its Cold War form any longer relevant? What new threats existed that only Nato could deal with? And, if Nato was now redundant, did Europe need to accept American leadership in the new geo-strategic environment?

This fundamental re-assessment was, though, to be set aside almost as soon as it started. For the incipient post-Cold War Nato debate was submerged following the eruption of the Gulf war. All the leading European governments, as part of an impressive international coalition, supported the US in expelling Iraq from Kuwait – and the war amply displayed how American military leadership was highly beneficial to Europe when European and American interests coincided. In this environment few in Europe, outside of France, were prepared to question the underlying rationale for Nato. And Nato also received a last minute reprieve as the Yugoslav imbroglio seriously dented the claims of those who sought an independent European security policy. Germany's sudden recognition of Croatia, and the crumbling of the edifice of the Yugoslav federation, set European powers on differing sides – allowing Washington to intervene, lead a successful air war against Serbia, and claim that Europe could not even resolve a crisis in its own backyard. But even though this Balkans tragedy weakened the confidence of Europe, the main lesson drawn from the imbroglio was that Europe needed to be less dependent on American power – a lesson proclaimed by Tony Blair as part of the rationale for stronger Anglo-French defence links later announced at the Franco-British St. Malo summit in 1999.

The new US strategy

From Washington's perspective, Nato was seen in a totally different light. As long as it remained American-led, it remained highly worthwhile for the USA. During the Cold War years the alliance had often caused irritation in Washington. Powerful voices in the US Congress regularly argued that the US was spending too high a proportion of the US defence budget on 'Nato related' expenditure and that US tax-payers were bearing too much of the Nato burden. Successive US administrations became frustrated with the regular refusal of the European members of Nato to engage the alliance in 'out of area' (that is, out of Europe) operations. But such irritation was normally contained, as Nato remained the corner-stone of American foreign policy during the Cold War years. After the Cold War, the expected debate in Washington about Nato did not take place; for the alliance was to remain a key building bloc of US policy, certainly during the Clinton administration, but, surprisingly, for the incoming neo-conservatives around Bush as well.

During the 1990's, throughout their opposition years during the Clinton Presidency, strategic thinking in Republican, conservative and neo-conservative circles was attempting to redefine the role of the USA. In Washington think – tanks like the conservative Heritage Foundation, the neo-conservative American Enterprise Institute and foreign policy institutes like the Georgetown Centre For Strategic and International Studies, strategists were developing new geo-strategic ideas – and they were clustering around the over-all concept of 'US hegemony'. This stark idea took root in the belief that following the collapse of Soviet power the US had graduated from being the leader of the west in a bi-polar system to the world's only superpower – a notion given extra life when the French Foreign Minister, Hubert Vedrine, described the US as the world's 'hyper-power'. [See; Hubert Vedrine (and Dominique Moisi) *France In an Age Of Globalization* , New York, 2000*]*

Following the US military's performance in the Gulf War and the Serbian air campaign, a large portion of conservative opinion in Washington began to believe this uni-polar thesis. Washington was seized by the notion that US military predominance – particularly in smart weaponry, power projection and rapid reaction capabilities – could herald an age in which Washington could assert 'hegemony' through military

power virtually anywhere in the world, as a kind of 'world policeman.' This huge American lead in military power was seen as providing Washington for a decade or two with a 'window of opportunity' for the unchallenged assertion of American interests around the world. It was a strategic vision which saw power as based primarily on military preponderance, on what the American political scientist Joseph Nye called 'hard power'. And it discounted the declining 'soft' power realities of America – its small population by global standards, its declining relative economic strength, and the growing ideological opposition to US power (often dubbed 'anti-Americanism') around the world. [See: J. Nye *Bound To Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power*, New York, 1990. Also Samuel Huntingdon, *The Clash of Civilizations and The Re-Making Of World Order*, New York, 1996]

This developing new vision of the US as the world's policeman was still a minority interest, contained and held at the margins of Washington life, when the terrorists struck the Twin Towers in New York and the Pentagon on September 11th. And, then, in the now current usage, 'everything changed'. What in fact, though, had changed was the historic popular sense of the invulnerability of America. This new vulnerability to terrorism, together with the sensationalism of the powerful and pervasive US news media, increased anxieties. In this new domestic environment, many Americans were prepared to vest authority to deal with the crisis in the President; and the conservatives and neo-conservatives around George W. Bush were able to persuade him to adopt a radically new geo-strategic course.

This new course had two components. First, the idea of US 'hegemony', which would flow from the US as a 'sole super power,' was given new credibility. In the 2002 National Security Strategy document published by the President a year after the attack on the Twin Towers, a new global vision was unfurled in which it became White House policy to ensure that the US retained 'Full Spectrum Dominance' in the world, and was able to resist any challenge to this power from any other nation or grouping of nations. The new strategy also set out the case for the world's sole superpower to act, where and when 'necessary,' unilaterally.

Secondly, a new doctrine of 'pre-emption' was born. In the post 1945 era the US had prided itself upon never engaging in an unprovoked attack

(like the 'sneak' attack on Pearl Harbour in 1941.) But in Washington's view the new terrorism was so troublesome that the a new approach was needed – one that argued that the US should abandon its traditional deterrence and containment of 'rogue states' in favour of pre-emption (or unprovoked attack.) Under this new doctrine a state opened itself to pre-emptive attack from the US if it possessed two characteristics – first, if it had the capability to hurt the USA and its allies (through possessing weapons of mass destruction), and secondly, if it was malign or 'rogue' (that is if it opposed America ideologically and was unpredictable in its foreign policy). Initially, three states – comprising the famous 'axis of evil' outlined by President Bush in his 2001 state of the union message – came into view as candidates for pre-emption: Iraq, North Korea and Iran.

Iraq was soon to become the first test of this new doctrine of pre-emption. But it soon became clear that, according to President Bush, this particular act of 'pre-emption' was part of the wider vision of US 'hegemony,' of the US as a 'world policeman.' In a speech to the American Enterprise Institute on 27 February 2003, President Bush outlined a post Iraqi war scenario in which a 'democratic Iraq' would become the focal point for nothing less than the re-ordering the politics of the whole Middle East. Some of the neo-conservatives that had driven the Bush Iraqi policy had set out a similar bold new posture in 1996 in a plan entitled 'A Clean Break: A New Strategy for Securing The Realm' – the 'realm' in this case being Israel. In it, neo-conservative Richard Perle, strategist David Wurmser and Douglas Feith, deputy to Deputy Defence Secretary, Paul Wolfowitz, argued that many Middle East governments would need to change into 'democracies' and that only such a new Middle East could make a peace agreement with Israel possible and end Arab and Iranian-backed terrorism. In a revealing interview in The New Yorker Douglas Feith named some of the states which needed to be so re-structured. [See: *The New Yorker*, 17 February, 2003.] This bold and ambitious new American approach to the Middle East was received in Europe with varying degrees of alarm. Even those who supported a process of Middle East democratisation had reservations about installing democratic regimes at the end of the barrel of a gun. But majority opinion in Europe and the UN saw the plan – particularly if initiated by imposition of American military rule (administered by an American general) – as little more than a return to the old-fashioned imperialism, to a Pax Americana, which the United States had always publicly opposed.

This new Bush global mission – involving 'hegemony' and 'pre-emption' – was to be carried forward multilaterally if possible, but unilaterally if necessary. George W. Bush came into office with very definite unilateralist instincts – a 'go it alone' attitude which was confirmed with the US decision to abrogate the Kyoto Treaty and walk away from the International Criminal Court. American Iraqi policy was also a feature of this new unilateralism, for the Administration soon made clear that America, although prepared to give the UN a chance to resolve the Iraq question on America's terms, would, if necessary, act alone in its own interests without constraint from other powers or the UN Security Council. It was a posture which, perhaps more than any other aspect of the new US strategy, annoyed and worried European leaders. To many of them 'unilateral' action meant little more than the raw assertion of unconstrained American power. And in the process the trans-Atlantic debate (particularly between France and the US) became so heated that the dispute became one in which opposing or supporting US power was more important than the differences on specific questions (such as Iraqi policy.)

In fact, it was a suspicion that US Iraqi policy was all about an American power play, rather than about eliminating Iraqi weapons of mass destruction, that enabled France to isolate the US at the UN by assembling a powerful UN coalition (including Germany, Russia and China.) And it was this US policy of unilateralism over Iraq which led former US National Security Advisor, Zbigniew Brezinski, on the eve of the Iraq war, to warn his fellow Americans that the US was more alone in the world than at any time since 1945. [Interview on CNN, March 2 2003]

Some of the new strategists in Washington though had growing reservations about whether the US could carry out this new ambitious global mission without a measure of global support, particularly European. But they tended to want such support on their own terms – that is, without having to compromise key American policy goals. In sum, the strategy became one in which European support was sought, but only in order to enlist Europe into protecting American interests. In other words, Nato came to be seen in Washington not as an alliance and partnership of independent states but rather as a convenient adjunct to American foreign policy.

The US Quadrennial Defence Review of 2001 spelt this concept out clearly. It saw a world in which US forces would 'deter forward' by creating

expeditionary forces around the globe. And Europe, through Nato, would be a very useful launching pad. In early 2003, the US deployed about 108,000 troops in Europe (including 65,000 ground, 34,000 air and 10,000 naval personnel; with over half of them stationed in Germany.) And as Nato transformed itself from defence alliance to a 'global operations launching pad,' Pentagon planners were seeking to replace these largely traditional forces with more rapidly deployable troops, and were making plans for training and implementing a Nato response force. [Details cited by Hans Binnendijk of the National Defence University in Washington D.C. and quoted in *The International Herald Tribune*, Feb 27, 2003] This Washington-led Nato, acting in American interests around the world, was not, though, one which France and Germany were happy to welcome. Nor, in 2002-3, as tensions rose about American Iraqi policy, where they prepared to accept it. It was this fundamentally divergent view of the purposes of Nato that became the basis of the intra-European rift at the UN between London on the one hand and Paris and Berlin on the other.

The end of Nato

Europeans watched the unfurling of this new US global doctrine with varying degrees of unease. But following the Twin Towers attack, European governments were as one with the US Administration in prosecuting the 'war on terrorism.' It was the sudden decision of the US Administration – taken very shortly after the military success in Afghanistan in 2002 – to switch the focus from the 'war on terrorism' to the Iraqi regime, that caused some European governments to question Washington's judgement. Chancellor Schroeder was the first to break ranks and to announce that Germany would not be supporting the US in what he described as 'this adventure.'

    The Franco-German critique of US Iraqi policy centred around their joint view that Iraq was not central to the agreed war on terrorism, indeed that any attack might well be counterproductive (President Chirac argued that it would produce a host of mini Bin Laden's.) France and Germany, together with Russia and China, argued that disarmament could be achieved by peaceful means. But the underlying sub-text in the trans-Atlantic dispute was that France and Germany saw this American move

against Iraq as strategically eccentric, less about disarmament, and more about the need for America to improve its power position. The critics saw only two end-games – either an American controlled Iraq would lead to a domino effect throughout the region and beyond, leading to an American imperial system stretching right across the Middle East and into Iran and Afghanistan; or, the whole enterprise would fail, and the US would have to withdraw troops in a humiliating retreat.

But, although it was the trans-Atlantic dispute over Iraq that hit the headlines, the underlying reality was that many in Europe (elites and publics alike) were simply unable any longer to support American geo-strategic leadership. This loss of faith in American leadership was ostensibly about Iraq, but its antecedents could be found in a host of earlier disputes – disputes about trade, about the environment, about the International Criminal Court, and, also, about the preferred model of capitalism. For some time, certainly during the boom years of the 1990's, in what amounted to a growing ideological divide, continental Europe had witnessed an American critique of their social market economies (as being 'sclerotic', 'needing reform', 'inflexible' and the like) and a continental European rejoinder about the inequities of raw free-market capitalism. This ideological divide was not helped by an increasing cultural irritation on both sides of the Atlantic. The fundamentalist religious rhetoric in the Bush world view did grated on secular European ears; and what was seen as Europe's cynicism and disregard for the full extent of the trauma of 9/11 did not play well on American sensibilities.

So serious was this split across the Atlantic that during the Iraq debate in the UN, France and Germany not only opposed American policy, but, incredibly, organised against it. As the veteran American strategist and former Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, pointed out, such an attempt to thwart US policy by members of the Nato alliance was unprecedented. [Fox News, March 1st 2003] And when this Franco-German alliance at the UN surprisingly (to Washington) extended itself to include Russia, it appeared that more than a UN tactical alliance might be in the offing – indeed, it might foreshadow a shift in the geo-political tectonic plates, the beginnings of a new EU power with sufficient allies in the world to rival the US.

Who (needs) whom? A new strategic reality

The Iraq issue was the catalyst for creating a new European relationship with Washington. Whatever the outcome of the war – or the longer term American plan for Middle East 'reconstruction' – the US would end up with a much-reduced role in Europe. By February 2003, the US was already accelerating its planned reduction of US troops in Germany. US-French and US-German frictions were seriously weakening Nato, and the surprisingly strong French and German opposition to the US in the UN in the early months of 2003 may well amount to a strategic decision in Paris and Berlin to weaken the long-term American position in Europe (and, in the process, those governments supportive of the US, like Tony Blair's in Britain.) During the Cold War, it could fairly be said that Nato was all about a Europe in which: 'the US was in, Russia was out, and Germany was down.' Now it is all about a Europe in which ' the US is out, Russia is in, and Germany is up.'

The Iraq controversy also placed in high relief the obvious, though often repressed, fact that Europe's nations had different, often radically different, interests from the USA in the Middle East. What was in the USA's oil interests was not necessarily in Europe's. For Europe, good relations with both the Arab world and Islam would be furthered by even-handed approach to the Arab-Israeli issue.

But, although for some time it has been clear that Europe and America have different, often divergent, interests, there still remains a strong, residual belief (or instinct): that Europe needs America as its ultimate security guarantor. (This is an instinct still strongly held amongst the British elites, but also amongst other Europeans too.) This instinct remained even though the post-Cold War threats to Europe were completely different from those of the Soviet era. During the Cold War the overwhelming threat was from the Soviet Union; but in the post-Cold War environment the security threats are primarily terrorist threats and, potentially, threats from anti-western 'rogue states'. The major difference between these new threats and the Cold War threat is that a prosperous and increasingly united Europe has the resources and the ability to handle them itself. Indeed, we cannot, and should not, expect the US to handle them for us. Apart from the question of dignity, US tax-payers will simply not be prepared (with their coming serious deficits and their global mission) to add to their burdens by funding the security of equally prosperous Europe.

In this new strategic environment, Europe needs a close European-American relationship in a Trans-Atlantic Community in which equal partners ensure good trade relations, close intelligence sharing and anti-terrorist co-operation, and, when agreed, even military interventions abroad. Quite simply, Europe does not need America – any more than America needs Europe – for its fundamental defence and security. Indeed, because the US is pursuing a new global mission it may need Europe rather more than Europe needs the US, as Washington may want European resources to help out, and would certainly need Europe as a launching pad for global military operations.

The reality of this new post-Cold War European-American relationship was, though, not seriously put to the test by Europe's leaders until recently, even by the French. There remained a fear of the consequences of an independent European posture (a fear articulated most openly by Tony Blair in his domestic debate with the British people over Iraq policy during 2003.) Until, that is, the pivotal decision of the German Chancellor to say 'no' to American policy on Iraq in the autumn of 2002. The fact that a major, the major, European country then validated this decision in an election, made this assertion of independence complete. Although, in the aftermath of the German decision, all the standard fears were expressed about the consequences of 'rupturing' Atlantic relations, the fact was that the sky did not fall in on Germany, Germany was not any less secure the day after its election than the day before; and, it was clear that, after an initial souring of relations, German-American relations would probably be placed on a better, healthier, certainly more honest, basis.

Following the fateful German decision in 2002, the emergence of a Franco-German – Russian alliance in the Security Council over the Iraq issue in 2003 further underscored the reality of a new strategic environment. Franco-Germany, when allied to Russia, amounted to a real player in world politics equal to that of the United States. And, intriguingly, this re-alignment spelt out, for all those prepared to see it, a future in which a united EU with Russia as a close ally could re-draw the map of Eurasia.

Although, initially, the prospect of European unity may seem to have been set back by the new trans-Atlantic divisions, ultimately a strong Franco-German foreign and security policy core will attract others into its orbit, as

Franco-Germany did twice before – with the single market and the single currency. Italy and Spain are not natural Atlanticists like the British foreign policy elite, and can be expected to align themselves eventually with Franco-Germany. Over time, the Eastern Europeans will lose their sentimental attachment to America because of its role in freeing them from Soviet rule, and democratic Russia should pose less and less of a threat.

2008: A new European security system

With these seismic changes now under way within the Atlantic relationship it cannot be unrealistic to imagine that they may well create a dynamic which, say, five years from now, by 2008, will see an EU which will have in place its rapid reaction force, an agreed nuclear strategy (based upon the two nuclear powers), a beefed-up military committee and command in Brussels, its own satellite system (Gallileo), its own heavy air-lift (if need be, rented) and its own joint intelligence committee – and all of this being drawn together by a new European Security System which would replace the structures of the old American – dominated Nato.

We are already half way towards such a new security system. The major, and momentous, new development in Europe is that, in 2002, Germany essentially switched sides, abandoned her long held Atlanticist position, and aligned herself on security matters with Paris. Thus, Franco-Germany can now become the core of Europe's emerging independent foreign and security policy and system. And, as France and Germany (maybe in alliance with Russia) show that an independent European security system can exist outside the American sphere, and as American political influence in Europe decreases, then this core will expand, even to include Britain in the medium term. Such a security system, though, cannot proceed for too long simply on the basis of inter-governmental co-operation. Those EU members who seek a common security and foreign policy system will need, sooner or later, to move towards a supra-national structure.

The EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy framework set out in the Maastricht treaty (and amended at Amsterdam) is a beginning. At the moment majority voting on 'common positions' and 'joint actions' can only take place once a 'common strategy' is agreed (a process which is still subject to the veto.) So, majority voting will eventually need to be

extended to defence matters – perhaps with a proviso that on missions where a member states citizen's might be 'placed in harm's way' for a cause that its government does not deem in its national interest, then the state which objects will be exempt from sending troops but not from supporting the mission financially and diplomatically.

Ultimately, though, an EU foreign and security policy will only emerge when this framework can be given life by real political will and commitment. Even before the Iraq crisis, there were very definite signs of such resolve, even within the British government. At the St. Malo conference and, later at Le Touquet, Britain and France pushed forward serious ideas about creating a European Defence and Security System which, ultimately, would be 'autonomous', a code word for 'independent of Nato.' And Germany's new strategic alignment with Paris will, no doubt, give this autonomous defence policy crucial new ballast.

Any real European security system, however, will ultimately need some form of single executive authority. The Common Foreign Policy already has 'a face' in the EU's putative 'Foreign Secretary' – its 'High Representative', a post currently held by Javier Solana. But, it needs much more. It will ultimately need an executive which can both speak for it and act, on delegated authority from the Council, quickly and flexibly in the world. The new permanent President of the Council likely to be suggested by the Giscard D'Estaing constitutional convention report could become this foreign policy chief of the union. He or she would initiate, co-ordinate and express the foreign and security policy of the Council, and increasingly be seen around the world as the 'voice of Europe.' To be truly effective, of course, he or she would need some form of majority voting in the Council, at least for aspects of foreign policy that are not related to security, as proposed in the Constitutional Convention by the French and German foreign ministers. If the Giscard convention proposes two EU Presidents (the Commission President elected by the European Parliament, and the Council President selected by heads of government) then a French-style executive division becomes possible in which the President of the Council (supported by his 'Secretary of State', the present 'High Representative) assumes responsibility for the foreign and security relations of the union, and the President of the Commission, concerned mainly with domestic policy, becomes a kind of Prime Minister.

There is a strong case for at some point taking the radical decision to place the fledgling EU Military Committee under the chairmanship -and the Directorate General for military staff under the direction of – the new President of the Council, thus creating a single responsible official. It would also create a locus of strategic thinking around the President. Academics Paul Cornish and Geoffrey Edwards have argued that a 'strategic culture' is needed in Brussels (by which they mean the kind of understanding of power and power relationships and of the role of military power in the over-all global political process). [See: Paul Cornish and Geoffrey Edwards, 'Beyond the EU/Nato dichotomy: the beginnings of a European strategic culture' in *International Affairs*, 3 July, 2001.] Washington already has such a strategic culture deriving from its global role during the Cold War, whereas the EU, more provincial in its outlook during the post war years, now needs to develop one. This military secretariat, reporting directly to the President, could help such a 'strategic culture' forward.

A European security doctrine

The question, though, is: how much 'hard power' is needed to secure Europe's security? And the provisional answer may well be considerably less than that apparently needed by the US government and provided by the Pentagon. Most European leaders (with the exception of Tony Blair) do not see Europe needing to develop a global mission (as 'global policeman'), and the Union and its governments will not therefore need regularly to intervene militarily around the world with the highly expensive smart weaponry which Washington is already addicted to.

Europe's security will be based upon giving priority to domestic security within its borders – a posture which will need serious money spent on counter-terrorism and intelligence. 'Hard power' will, though, be needed for two particular functions. First, the EU cannot turn its back on military intervention completely. It may well need to be able to intervene on and around its borders in order to fulfil various humanitarian, peace-keeping, and, occasionally, peace-making, functions outlined at the Helsinki summit in 1999. The EU's rapid reaction force – in which the EU will be able to deploy within 60 days and sustain for one-year military forces of up to 60,000 soldiers – is already well advanced. Although the Nice Treaty wanted this

rapid reaction force to 'become operational quickly.' Britain's International Institute for Strategic Studies, in its 2001-2 Military Balance, argues that, on current trends, this European RRF will not have 'final operating capability' for some years yet. [See: *The Military Balance*, International Institute For Strategic Studies, 2001, p.291] When it does, this force could act as a focal point for the 'common policy' of the EU. The RRF is, after all, a 'common instrument,' and John Pinder has made the point that in the EU where actions depend upon 'common instruments,' and not upon instruments belonging to member states, 'majority decisions to act' are more likely be effectively applied. [See: John Pinder, *The European Union, A Very Short Introduction*, London, 2001, p. 118]

Europe will also need to defend itself against 'rogue states,' particularly if they have the ability to reach European cities and territories with weapons of mass destruction. If Europe's defence doctrine rejects pre-emptive, unprovoked attacks on foreign dictators, in favour of containment and deterrence, then Europe will not need the large and expensive US-style intervention forces; but, rather, will need a far less expensive strategic nuclear force based on missiles which can reach anywhere in the world.

Such a defence doctrine will not need the hugely over-blown, and arguably unsustainable, military budget of the Pentagon. As of 2003 the combined EU defence budget was just over a third of the US military budget – and the research and development budget of the EU 15 was about a quarter of that of the Pentagon. [Figures from *The Military Balance*, p. 35] Over the coming years, Europe's military budgets will obviously need to be increased. But through military specialisation amongst the member states and a proper European procurement policy, Europe can use existing levels of expenditure much more effectively; and the extra expenditure can go into the priority of counter-terrorism and intelligence.

A new Nato

A new independent European security system with its own doctrine will, obviously, mean that the current structure and purpose of Nato will need to be revised – from a military and political alliance into a primarily political alliance. The new alliance – say called the North Atlantic Community – would stress the underlying political, social and cultural unity of Europe and America, and retain the clause in which each signatory remains

committed to come to the defence of the others in case of attack. But the present joint military structures, which preclude either the USA or the European Union from acting on its own within a Nato context, would need to be disentangled.

This can be done in one of two ways. First, the existing structure – based around the Military Committee – could remain. But it could be re-ordered and refined. A first stab at a new arrangement, which would allow Europe to act independently when it wanted to, was made at the Nato meeting in Berlin in 1996 – in the Combined Joint Forces Project. However, the US insisted on retaining a veto over European (then WEU) operations in return for Europe's having access to certain Nato military capabilities it lacked (such as HQ's, intelligence, long-range military transports.) This veto needs to be removed if Europe is to have an 'autonomous' role. Also, Europe could negotiate with the US the winding up of some of the military commands within, say, a five-year period. For instance, the Supreme Allied Command, Europe (SACEUR, which is always commanded by an American general) could go. Nato could keep Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic (SACLANT) because of joint EU and US interest in the Atlantic, and the military infra-structure that Europe and America continued to hold in common in Nato could be held by a new body, or even by SACLANT, and called upon by either the US or the EU nations as of now, but without the US or the EU being able to use the veto.

Alternatively, a cleaner break could be made, and Nato's Military Committee, and its military structure beneath it, could simply be abandoned, and negotiations begin to divide up the infra-structure assets between the Pentagon and the EU nations (perhaps with the EU speaking 'as one' in these negotiations, and EU designated assets being placed under the control of the EU military committee in Brussels.)

A new international policy for Britain?

It now seems likely that with or without Britain, a new European security system, either as a refinement of Nato or a replacement for it, will eventually come into being. And as it emerges – rather like the euro – it will face Britain with a simple choice: to enter, and to help mould and determine its development, or to stand off from it, and make its own way in an uncertain world.

Britain's so called 'special relationship' with the US will, of course, continue to provide an excuse for staying out. But, in truth, this 'special relationship' gives the country very little say in Washington. Such a real say can only come when Britain is offered seats in the US Senate, votes for the electoral college that elects the President, and seats on the Federal Reserve Board in Washington. On the other hand, Britain can have a real say, through real membership, of the EU and considerable say in any EU security system. First, because it is one of the two leading EU security powers. Second, because it will make a real contribution to the developing EDSP, particularly to the RRF and to a European nuclear capability needed to enforce the doctrine of deterrence and containment – a doctrine which will offer an alternative to unprovoked war emanating out of Washington. And third because it will be able to act as a bridge – from within Europe – to Washington. In the coming global turbulence, such a bridge will remain a top EU priority.

But, in order to take full part in any EU security system, Britain's foreign policy establishment will need to finally lay to rest all its deeply held Atlanticist assumptions and instincts – particularly the ingrained view that Britain's security is dependent upon the United States. The end of the Cold War, and the Soviet threat, and the need no longer to rely on the USA for our security, has not yet taken hold. It has been my view for some time now that only a big new international crisis, or shock – an event which finally shows all those willing to see that the USA and the UK are different countries with divergent interests – will finally enable us to move on from Atlanticism. Now, with the crisis in Iraq and the Middle East, we may be in the middle of just such an event.

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