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THE CHANGING NATURE OF THE U.S. ALLIANCE SYSTEM THROUGH MAJOR ARMED CONFLICTS IN THE POST-COLD WAR ERA WITH SPECIAL REGARD TO THE TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS

M.A. DISERTATION IN ADVANCED EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

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1. Introduction

Until the end of the bipolar world order, nation-states pursued their national security through competing military alliances. By the end of the Cold War, communism as a source of strategic threat has practically disappeared. In the absence of an immediate military menace, military alliances could afford to split, for they do not need the United States as much as they did in the past. However, nearly all traditional alliances have withstood the challenge of the disappearance of their major raison d'être and are trying to live up to recent security expectations and to address new global threats. Today, coalitions of the willing are becoming the rule rather than the exception in military affairs as well as in other new dimensions of international security. However, while they can demonstrate practical options for accomplishing short-term or perhaps purely military objectives, in the long run, when utilized at the expense of damaging traditional alliances, the costs seem to outweigh the benefits. Most analysts agree that coalitions cannot replace alliances, because the latter is based on strategic trust and common security interests over a period of time with large political and military investment.

The beginning of the 1990s saw the emergence of new visions and concepts with regard to the future structure of the international environment. One that particularly seemed to have shaped American foreign policy was the New World Order concept, introduced by former president George H. Bush after the end of the Cold War. The basic idea was to make the world safe for fundamental human rights, such as freedom, stability, security and welfare, but the most important goal was to preserve peace in the world, with the U.N making decisions and legitimizing and the United States executing collective actions. Today, though somewhat obsolete, the concept of the New World Order can sometimes still be traced back in the oratory of today's American policymakers, especially when justifying conflicts in the Middle East.

Through the experiences of the armed conflicts of the 1990s, the United States drew lessons about how to use its armed forces in these new types of wars, what they are good at, and how best to collaborate with other nations in such cases. These lessons in turn changed the American policy towards alliances. The most important among these were Gulf War I and Kosovo which clearly demonstrated potential advantages and also the limits of coalition warfare. Western armed forces demonstrated their superiority clearly during the Persian

Gulf War in 1991 when, after the extensive use of airpower, ground forces gained a decisive victory over Iraq within only 100 hours. At the same time it showed the overall U.S. superiority in terms of technology and combat power. It was also Gulf War I that showed U.S. policymakers the necessity of unified leadership in order to conduct successful operations. One of the reasons why UN Coalition did so well was that effective unity of command took place in the US Central Command. The other important lesson that was drawn by experts was that willingness and good intentions, are not enough to make an alliance or coalition warfare work. Kosovo, once again, showed the critical capability gap that was present between the Americans and their European allies, and the necessity to centralise military operations under a single command structure, since the cumbersome decision-making procedures inside NATO, especially the targeting process seemed very problematic in terms of operation efficiency.

The September 11 attacks and following U.S. military actions have led to a radical restructuring of U.S. defense priorities. Currently, the United States is trying to make its alliance partners accept the new threat priorities, where counterterror efforts will have a primacy. Although in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks Europeans and their supranational institutions also expressed their backing, help offered by many traditional allies was turned down with the motto "If we need collective action, we'll ask for it". Although Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan began with only few openly recognized coalition assistance, coalition forces became more and more acknowledged and important as the mission carried on. This indicates that while allies are seen by U.S. as rather burdensome when fighting real wars, it seems that they are very much in need when it comes to post-conflict peacebuilding.

While many NATO members hoped for a closer cooperation with the United States in its military response against Al Qaeda, it was eventually the Central Command (CENTCOM) that gained operational control in the Afghanistan and Iraq campaigns and, just like in Golf War I, with great military success. One of the reasons for this was Washington's unwillingness to repeat the unacceptable example of "war by committee" in Kosovo. Somewhat later, the U.S. decision to invade Iraq and overthrow Saddam's regime created a division within the North Atlantic Alliance. Not only did traditional allies, such as Germany and France oppose a resolution in the United Nations, but they refused to allow NATO to send early-warning aircraft and Patriot anti-missile batteries to protect Turkey from an Iraqi

attack as well. For some, this strong opposition has even forged new, slightly odd alliances, such as that of Russia, France, Germany and Belgium. However, what we see today is that, although in relatively small numbers, the Atlantic Alliance is present in Iraq and it is assisting U.S. forces in minor importance tasks.

As for NATO's future, experts strongly disagree whether the organisation should be further maintained, and if yes, what are the political and military tasks the alliance ought to be given. Some argue the alliance is still needed to serve as an opposing coalition against a rising Russia and to relieve Germans of the need to conduct an independent security policy. However, the organisation could address new political challenges as well, such as the support of reform and integration in Ukraine and provide a forum for transatlantic cooperation on international security.

Many experts agree that there is a growing gap between U.S. military needs and NATO capabilities - both those capabilities of the individual European members and the collective skills of the allies as a group which has become more and more apparent through the experiences made in major post-cold war conflicts, where military forces of the United States and its coalition partners were fighting side by side. The problem, for many, lies both with constrained European defense spendings and with differing visions of the European role in the world. Some argue that a concerted program of action should be able to close this gap without causing bigger problems in European budgets. On the other hand, many argue that the United States too could do much more by easing restrictions on technology transfer and industrial cooperation. Observers, who think about "the West" as one single entity, claim that the gap is not all that very important, because it is not necessary for Europe to multiply the military power of the United States.

Most analysts agree that recent differences within the transatlantic alliance have to some extent resulted from the unilateralism of the present Bush administration. The "cowboy diplomacy" of the Bush administration has caused many turbulences in the transatlantic relationship, however, there are already signs that this approach will change in his second term. On the other hand, the disputes also reflect strains resulting from longer term changes in the United States' attitude towards alliances and coalitions, and different evolution of perspectives in Europe and in the United States. When talking about Europe's relative weakness compared to the United States, many analysts state that it is actually a consequence

of the American protectorate established through NATO during the Cold War that led to Europe's relative lack of interest in developing military power.

2. Traditional alliances and Coalitions of the Willing

2.1. Historical background

During the decades of the Cold War, countries used to pursue their national security through competing military alliances. In the immediate phase after the end of World War II multilateral institutions were set up to help create a democratic and reasonable world order, based on collective security, under the strong influence of the economic, social, political and ideological antagonism between USA and former USSR. Today, the Cold War is over and the human race is no longer faced with two opposing military alliances with their massive nuclear arsenals in a state of high alert. The threat perceptions of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and Warsaw Pact forces as hard-hearted foes are a thing of the past (see Rühle 190-194)

The post-Cold War period of the 1990s has been a time of profound change in the international security environment. Unlike a simple global bipolar system now and again interrupted by the movements and plots of basically two major independent actors, today's world is a complex mélange of large and small sovereign states, varied economic interests, and religious and ethnic cleavages at the dawn of a new age of economic, social and political interdependence and globalisation. These diverse forces demand the attention of the world's only remaining superpower and its allies (see Flizmaier).

With the end of the Cold War, communism as a source of strategic threat has virtually disappeared, except from isolated countries like North Korea. Security threats have become more dispersed and harder to locate geographically. The nature of threats have also changed. Instead of nuclear showdowns, the world now experiences low-intensity conflicts and terrorism. This change in the nature of security threats had been ongoing since the end of the Cold War. Conflicts of the 1990s demonstrated in part, the nature of the threat to come, and prepared U.S. thinking about how to counter them. The changes that occurred in U.S. national security thinking, especially the alliance policy after 9.11

had in part been already formulated during the first Gulf War and conflicts in Somalia, Bosnia, and Kosovo. Experiences in these conflicts shaped U.S. thinking about how best to form war-time coalitions and how best to fight coalition warfare.

According to Oudraat, while the end of the Cold War brought about important changes in the security landscape; it did away with the Soviet threat in Europe, but it did not eradicate all security threats. He states that the United States and Europe continue to have strong interests to combat these threats jointly and that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and terrorism top the list of security concerns on both sides of the Atlantic, however many experts contradict him at this point (see Kagan's Power and Weakness, Krause 180-183). Although most of these threats have their origin outside of Europe, modern, wired, and open societies like the United States and Europe are particularly vulnerable to these types of global threats. The United States and Europe thus have strong common interests to combat these dangers (see Oudraat 2-5). In her article *War and Peace Building* published in the *Washington Quarterly*, Ekaterina Stepanova states that the September 11 events as well as the chain of post–September 11 high-profile terrorist attacks, such as those in Bali, Istanbul, and Madrid, demonstrated a "qualitative upgrade of traditional international terrorism to a new type of terrorism". She also argues that this new phenomenon, often referred to as superterrorism, should be defined "functionally rather than technically"; and unlike traditional international terrorism that merely extends terrorist activities to several countries, it is by definition global in its reach (Stepanova 131).

2.2. Traditional Alliances

Alliance analyst Bruno Tertrais states in his paper *The Changing Nature of Alliances* that the very term "alliance" may increasingly lead to "strategic misunderstandings". After policy-makers and strategist have often misused the word it is now becoming more and more unclear what it really means to be an ally in today's dynamic world without a single definitive threat. Without a doubt, bilateral strategic partnerships between some Western-oriented states are stronger and more solid than some more formal military alliances. Although today's decision makers and their strategists often refer to both as allies, it is evident that the United Kingdom and Uzbekistan don't belong to the same grouping. The former has been the strongest U.S. military ally for more than a century and a democratic nation-state that shares fundamental values with the United States, whereas the latter is a new, tactical partner of

Washington, a dictatorship whose strategic location makes it a partner needed for the war on terrorism (See Tertrais 148 – 149). It is interesting to note here that there is an expression in U.S. military circles "high end allies" which refers to those military forces that will not only provide political support in coalitions, but can be counted on to complement U.S. capabilities by providing "special skills or region-specific expertise, supplementing U.S. ships and aircraft, providing additional numbers, or being able to respond more quickly than U.S. forces" (See Gase; Lea 3-4)

Analysts agree that with the end of the Cold War, the rise of international terrorism, and - especially following the September 11 attacks - major threats to international security have essentially changed and concept of security for all states has been necessarily redefined. Once considered force multipliers, some now see these arrangements as burden that considerably "decelerate U.S. response time to pressing challenges and reduce U.S. freedom of movement in the international arena" in the post–September 11 environment. Alliance theorists such as Glenn Snyder and Stephen Walt argue that alliances in fact are nothing more than "marriages of convenience" and that they tend to "dissolve in the absence of a clearly recognised 'general purpose'". Thus, the question is today whether traditional alliances are able to withstand the serious security challenges and tackle the problems that confront them in this new strategic era (Snyder; Walt).

Since an alliance's legitimacy is based on its ability to provide collective defense for all its members, at international level, present conclusions about the existing importance of alliances can also be drawn if one observes to what extent they are able to counter common threats today. As stated by Tertrais, one could provide an effective framework for such analysis by examining the role of alliances in protecting against current threats, such as international terrorism, weapons of mass destruction proliferation, and rising states that have the potentialities to jeopardise the status quo in today's balance of powers, such as the People's Republic of China (Tertrais 140). The big problem with this is that, in the end, it is not easy to come to any kind of international agreement on the importance and legitimacy of alliances today because of differing national interests, threat perceptions, and concepts of collective security which has become quite apparent in the transatlantic debate over the war against Iraq (See. Krause's Multilateralism behind European Views 47-57, Kagan's Power and Weakness 1-7).

Alliance analyst, John Campbell, makes a distinction between three broad categories of traditional U.S. alliances: "the nuclear family", "the extended family", and "friends and acquaintances".

1. The nuclear-family states were integrated, formally or informally, under the U.S. nuclear umbrella; in quite a few cases, by treaty arrangement. Furthermore, an extended U.S. deterrence protected them from nuclear-armed aggression. Moreover, these states provided significant numbers of U.S. military forces with military bases, and both partners demonstrated a high degree of military cooperation, joint planning, joint training, and interoperability. In addition, these states obtained major military equipment from Washington. The nuclear family included the NATO members, Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, and Australia.

2. The extended family of the traditional U.S. alliance system included Israel, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia, Pakistan, Taiwan, Colombia, and South Africa. The extended family embodies a more dissimilar range of relationships that differed from each other in a large number of key respects. Israel, for example, is a major ally, even if not a formal one like Japan, South Korea or the NATO countries. Because of the levels of cooperation and commitment the United States has devoted to its defence one also could put it into the category of the nuclear family unlike any of the other extended-family states.

3. Countries without formal security engagements or regular interactions with the United States created the third Cold War group of friends and acquaintances. In order to match the expansionist power of the Soviet Union in a global context the United States developed a series of bilateral relationships with these other states in key regions. Some of these states included nondemocratic, authoritarian regimes in Latin America, such as Chile, that provided barricades against Communist move forwards. One of the reasons why it was very difficult for the United States to have these states as close allies at a state-to-state level was that they very often did not have the greatest respect for human rights, thus making a broad international acceptance of their relationship with the US extremely hard. Since the majority of these relationships were of transitory importance, the legacy for maintaining these associations has considerably weakened after the end of the Cold War (See Tertrais 139-142, Campbell 156-157).

Even during the Cold War, the relations of the United States to its allies were frequently put under pressure. Crises, such as regional conflicts and local wars, in the Middle East and in Asia, frequently tested solidarity. However, the capability to respond the threat of communism remained the toughest challenge to overcome, keeping thereby alive the key U.S. alliances in spite of the occurrence of relatively minor crises mentioned above. Bruno Tertrais wrote that today in the absence of an immediate military menace, "allies can afford to split, for they do not need the United States as much as they did in the past" (Tertrais 149-150). The reality, however, is different. Nearly all traditional alliances have withstood the challenge of the disappearance of their major raison d'être and are trying to live up to recent security expectations and to address the new global threats. Accordingly, it is pretty obvious that alliance partners still see common dangers and as long as states continue to perceive that external threats to their national security exist, alliances—the traditional means for states to ensure national security—will continue to matter (See Shen 165).

2.3. Coalitions of the Willing

According to Paul Dibb a coalition, by definition, is a "temporary combination of parties" that "retain distinctive principles". They are informal associations that can be assembled for ad hoc purposes rather than acting through highly structured and formal relationships that carry with them "historical baggage and cumbersome procedures" (Dibb 151). The significance of ad hoc coalitions is not an completely new trend. From 1950 to 1953 it was a coalition of the willing that intervened to repel North Korean aggression and defend South Korea under a so-called United Nations flag. What is new, however, is that coalitions of the willing are becoming the rule rather than the exception in military affairs as well as in other new dimensions of international security such as the Proliferation Security Initiative, intended to control the trade of weapons of mass destruction–related equipments, including intercepting ships at sea. The Pentagon's motto when preparing Operation Enduring Freedom remains the order of the day: "It's the mission that makes the coalition." (Tertrais 138).

The emergence of coalitions of the willing - looser, ad hoc groupings that tend not

be bound by treaty arrangements - is part of the quest for security, and these arrangements have their own advantages and conveniences, for they allow one state quickly to create temporary alliances for a particular goal. They can demonstrate practical options for accomplishing short-term or perhaps purely military objectives, but in the long run, when utilized at the expense of damaging traditional alliances, the costs appear to outweigh the benefits (See Kagan's "A Decent Regard", Gordon 27). The main reason for the divide that occurred within NATO was the forming of an independent coalition in the preparation for the war against Iraq, which later turned out to be politically and financially more costly for the United States. Finally, it appears as if the United States will be caught up in Iraq for some time to come, largely because of the lack of support from the UN and the international community. According to Dingli Shen, the point here was not so much the legitimacy or illegitimacy of the war per se, but that the use of this alliance justifiably did not prove successful in Iraq because "the very purpose of the alliance is to provide for defense, not because the alliance was irrelevant" (Shen 169). However, the case of Operation Allied Force to prevent ethnic cleansing in Kosovo indicates that even within an alliance it is possible to reach an agreement on the policy of pre-emption.

During the preparations to the war on Iraq U.S. policy statements made clear that whenever possible that U.S. forces will seek to respond to requirements for military force together with other countries. These responses may take the form of ad-hoc coalitions or bilateral actions with other countries, and may or may not have mandates or consent from the United Nations, NATO, or other international bodies. According to Campbell, the new U.S. approach, albeit still largely undefined, has allowed Washington to overcome some of the typical burdens of multilateral military alliances and enabled it to assemble coalitions rapidly as well as dictate the terms for members to complete urgent tasks. Evident risks and difficulties, however, come with this approach (Campbell 158). What most analysts agree on is that coalitions help combat current threats, but practically cannot replace alliances. Military alliances have their own features and utilities. They are based on strategic trust and common security interests over a period of time with large political and military investment. These readily available groupings enable members to deal with aggression against their territories or other fundamental interests. In this sense, alliances and coalitions can supplement each other, with coalitions serving more as one-time, issue specific arrangements (See Shen 177-178).

3. Conflicts after the Cold War: Lessons that shaped U.S. Alliance Policy – Increasing Tension between Military Logic and Political Logic

3.1. The New World Order

"This is an historic moment. We have before us the opportunity to forge for ourselves and for future generations a new world order, a world where the rule of law, not the law of the jungle, governs the conduct of nations."

President George H. Bush

Washington D.C. - Jan 16th 1991

The concept of the New World Order was introduced gradually in several interviews and speeches primarily those of the President of the United States. Brought in after the Cold War, the model has been regarded by many political scientists as the American alternative for a world order in the new era and has produced huge amount of debates and oratory. In order to better understand the U.S. foreign policy after the end of the bipolar system it is essentially important to get to know this visionary concept.

The principal objective of the New World Order was to make the world safe for fundamental human rights, such as freedom, stability, security and welfare, but the most important goal was to preserve peace in the world. The U.N. was given a decisive role: it should become the place for decision-making, legitimizing collective actions of the international community. The United States made clear that they intend to have a leading role in carrying out and initializing the new world order, since they are the only remaining superpower and, according to Bush, "among the nations of the world, only the United States of America has had the moral standing" and the USA „is the only nation on this earth that could assemble the forces of peace". On the other hand it was necessary for the world to tackle urgent problems in the conflict-prone and war-torn regions of the world like Somalia and Iraq. Great emphasis was put on the importance of sharing the burden of responsibility with other nations, the cooperation with the United Nations and other international institutions to enable a collective action of nation-states. Typical for the last months of the Bush administration was the fact that economic and domestic politics (recession, drugs, decline of

cities) began to take over thus taking off the concept of the New World Order the top of the agenda (See Münzing 140-141).

Reading through the Quadrennial Defense Review Report, which was written shortly after the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington DC one could definitely speak of a certain revival of the New World Order concept when it says that "America's goals are to promote peace, sustain freedom, and encourage prosperity. U.S. leadership is premised on sustaining an international system that is respectful of the rule of law. America's political, diplomatic, and economic leadership contributes directly to global peace, freedom, and prosperity. U.S. military strength is essential to achieving these goals, as it assures friends and allies of an unwavering U.S. commitment to common interests." (Quadrennial Defense Review Report, September 30, 2001).

3.2. Gulf War I

On November 8, 1990 President Bush announced a military build-up to make available an offensive option, "Operation Desert Storm," to force Iraq out of Kuwait. The preparation of the operation took two and a half months and it involved a massive air- and sea lift. Finally, in January 1991, the U. S. Congress voted to support Security Council resolution 660. It authorized using "all necessary means" if Iraq did not withdraw from Kuwait by January 15. In spite of this final warning, Saddam Hussein maintained the occupation of Kuwait and the international coalition had to begin with the operation. It is important to note that Gulf War I was one of the very few armed conflicts where none of the five veto powers of the U.N. Security Council totally rejected the use of force to put an end to Iraqi aggression. However, there are observers who claim that the U.N. was simply instrumentalized by Washington taking advantage of the weakness of a collapsing Soviet Union, a People's Republic of China yearning to end its international isolation after the bloodshed event on Tiananmen Square and the European Community not being able to find a common voice. It is often forgotten that there was fierce opposition in France to participation in the war, which resulted in the resignation of President Mitterand's defence minister, Jean-Pierre Chevenèment. Eventually, France committed 20,000 troops to Operation Desert Storm (see Münzing 142-149).

The Bush administration was aware that it was very important to maintain legitimacy through large international coalitions, and did pay the obligatory price to meet the political needs of the other coalition countries, including the Arab nations. The United States established a broad-based international coalition to confront Iraq militarily and diplomatically. The military coalition consisted of Afghanistan, Argentina, Australia, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Honduras, Italy, Kuwait, Morocco, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, South Korea, Spain, Syria, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The war also was financed by countries which were unable to send in troops, like Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, who were the main donors. More than $53 billion was promised and received (Hippler 89-93).

The fact that 38 nations participated in the Coalition that fought in the Gulf War was politically important, but few of these nations made a real contribution to coalition warfare. At the end of the day, only Britain, Egypt, France, Saudi Arabia, and the United States played any considerable role in war fighting and only two of these Coalition nations made decisive victory possible with Saudi Arabia providing the facilities, infrastructure, basing, and support needed for so called "theater-level high intensity conflict" and the US providing virtually all of the technology and "combat power"- flying over 90% of the "strike/attack and special purpose sorties", and providing the ground forces for all of the major offensive actions to liberate Kuwait. No other nation in the Coalition even remotely approached the US ability to project power in terms of so called "C4I/BM capability, overall technology, sustainability, air power, sea power, and armor" (see Cordesman and Wagner 1028-1031).

According to experts, experience made during Gulf War I shows us the necessity of unified leadership in order to conduct successful operations. The reason why UN Coalition did so well was because its military headship and forces were dominated by the US, and key national force components (Saudi Arabia, Britain, Egypt, and France) were willing to subordinate themselves to a US-led unity of command. National forces kept a high degree of autonomy because they were assigned specific tasks, areas, and responsibilities, but Coalition commanders supported in effect unit of command. Moreover, many of the smaller coalition military efforts in Desert Storm and Desert Shield were more costly in terms of war fighting than they were beneficial. They provided important political advantages, but their military contribution was unreasonably expensive in terms of "added training, burden of battle

management activity, and a lack of interoperability" (see Iwama 3-12). Anthony Cordesman and Abraham Wagner also state that in spite the formal Coalition command structure, effective unity of command took place in the US Central Command, which is located in Florida, thus the planning and operational control of all Coalition forces, regardless of service, were centrally coordinated to a large extent. The command and coordination of the operations and intelligence were also highly centralized in there structures. Just like Iwama, they also point out that while national forces preserved a high degree of autonomy because they were assigned "specific functions, areas, and responsibilities", Coalition commanders supported in effect a "centralised command", which was largely due to the assistance that Saudi Arabia, Britain, Egypt, and France were willing to give the United States. They also conclude that the level of unity of command, realized during the Gulf War was hardly ideal, but it was far more efficient than in earlier military conflicts.

Of course, according to Hippler, the political rhetoric of coalition building tended to obscure these realities about war fighting capability. What Gulf War I demonstrated was, however, that coalition warfare and cooperative security cannot be a replacement for American military power in the near or midterm. The American military superiority showed the world that a coalition's effectiveness will be dependent upon it in the next decades to come. Even in cases of so called low or mid-intensity conflicts, where regional states may play an equal or dominant role, such nations cannot deploy the kind of technology and "war fighting capabilities" the US used to win a quick and decisive victory over Iraq (see Hippler).

In order to better understand the special nature of the Gulf War it is important to point out the very fact that Iraq's actions united the world against it and gave the US unique freedom of action. However, the most important lesson that was drawn by experts was that a willingness and good intentions, are not enough to make an alliance or coalition warfare function. At the end of the day, there must be the convincing threat of force or its actual use as well. As Cordelsman and Wagner wrote in their famous book *The Lessons of Modern War*, which was published just a few years after Gulf War I "It is fine to talk about cooperative security, regional alliances, and the UN. It is fine to praise the limited contributions of other powers. There is no question that the forces of other powers like Britain, Egypt, France and Saudi Arabia played a major role in the fighting during the Gulf War. The fact is, however, that it was the US which did the critical war fighting and that it was only the US that could have performed mission after mission."(Cordesman and Wagner 1044).

3.3. The Kosovo Crisis with NATO involvement

On March 24, 1999, NATO started the second major offensive military action in its fifty-year history, which was originally planned to last only a few days, long enough to make Slobodan Milosevic stop the ethnic cleansing in Kosovo and withdraw his forces from the disputed province. Instead of instantly acting in accordance with NATO's demands, Milosevic chose to escalate the violence against the Kosovar Albanians, possibly hoping to create a split in the Alliance's consensus for action after a few days of bombing. Without a doubt the members of NATO did disagree about many aspects of the operation, beginning with the choice of targets to altitude restrictions and whether ground troops should be deployed or not. Regardless of these differences, the allies agreed that NATO's credibility was at stake and that they could not let Milosevic continue his escalated campaign of violence. Although for Washington the conflict represented only a derivative interest, even the United States were ready to intervene in Kosovo, to avoid humiliation as the "West's guarantor of last resort" and prevent the disintegration of NATO's core of future coalitions of the willing (see Pond 79-80). The Clinton administration ruled out the possibility of a unilateral U.S. operation because NATO allies had troops on the ground elsewhere in the region, so the operation had to be multinational in nature. Intra-alliance political consultations were therefore essential to produce any military action in Kosovo. NATO therefore found itself drawn into a major operation that lasted 78 days and involved more than 38,000 sorties (see Peters E. 9-52).

The United States and its NATO allies circumvented the UN entirely denying Beijing and Moscow the opportunity to veto Kosovo military operations by conducting the operation through North Atlantic Treaty Organization structures (Hawkins 13). The U.S. commander of the operation, Gen. Wesley Clark, stated in his book *Waging Modern War*: "We wanted to make clear and unchallengeable that NATO was in charge," otherwise "we would be as powerless as UNPROFOR [U.N. Protection Force]." Since Milosevic was aware of this, he was always trying to bring the U.N. back into the picture to upset American objectives. At the beginning the European allies generally felt that they could not carry out offensive operations against Yugoslavia without an clear mandate from the United Nations, whereas the United States argued against such a resolution stating that it was not only unfeasible—it was sure to

be vetoed by Russia or China—but also unnecessary (see Peters E. 12-13). Without a doubt, the United States and Europe debated bitterly about the grounds of Kosovo-style interventions. The Europeans remained sceptical until late September, when an exceptionally violent attack on the KLA drew their attention and political support for air strikes began to grow, as the Europeans became more and more sensitive to the cruelty in Kosovo. Finally, on September 24 and 25, 1998, NATO ministers agreed to threaten air strikes against Milosevic if he did not stop the violence in Kosovo.

According to Iwama the Americans took home again two lessons from this operation:

1. the negative memory of cumbersome decision-making procedures inside NATO, especially the very problematic targeting process. In his speech delivered at the National Defense University Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld made the following comments about the American experience in Kosovo: "Wars can benefit from the coalitions of the willing, to be sure. But they should not be fought by committee. The mission must determine the coalition, and the coalition must not determine the mission. If it does, the mission will be dumbed down to the lowest common denominator, and we can't afford that." (Rumsfeld)

2. the acute awareness of a critical capability gap that was present between the Americans and its European allies, which had been apparent for a long time, but after a decade of disarmament by the Europeans, the difference had become greater than ever. Some NATO partners were utterly unable to make meaningful military contributions. The French and the British were the most capable of the European allies, but even for them, the disparity was significant (see Iwama 12-16).

One of the number of difficulties that confronted the Alliance was the targeting procedure, where each target was subject to review by the nineteen member states. By the end of Operation Allied Force, the number of targets had grown to include more than 976 aims, enough to fill six volumes. Because NATO had not expected an extended war, the newly nominated targets had not been developed completely in advance. Each of the additional 807 targets had to be proposed, reviewed, and approved by NATO and national authorities before they were added to the master list (Iwama 5-7). The burdensome process revealed major divisions among the NATO allies and restricted the military efficiency of the operation.

Military officers and political leaders from each of NATO's 19 members prepared particular aim points, proposed munitions for each target, and calculated approximately the number of possible civilian casualties. Every member state had the right to veto any proposed target if it did not suit there interests, and an unanimous approval had to be received to include each target on the Air Tasking Order. All NATO members retained the right to veto targets, and the smaller countries occasionally exercised this right. France is said to have exercised its veto power most frequently, but smaller countries also often vetoed specific targets for political reasons. For example, the Netherlands repeatedly were against bombing the presidential palace in Belgrade, because a Rembrandt painting hung on the first floor (see Peters E. 24-29).

Another issue Operation Allied Force highlighted for the allies to address was the growing difference between the military capabilities of the United States and Europe, and the decisions that constrain Europe's ability to redress the problem in the near term. Although alliance and U.S. press releases and official rhetoric during and after the operation recognized the contributions of all participating air forces (see Report to Congress 2000), the truth was that the United States was bearing a disproportionately large share of the effort. According to statistics, the US flew over 60% of all the sorties in the air and missile campaign, flew over 80% of the strike-attack sorties, carried out over 90% of the advanced intelligence and reconnaissance missions, flew over 90% of the electronic warfare missions using dedicated aircraft, fired over 80% of the precision guided air weapons, and launched over 95% of the cruise missiles. In many cases, this level of U.S. commitment was a product of the fact that allied aircraft would have had serious problems in participating in U.S. air groups involving a mix of different aircraft with dedicated missions for communications and training reasons, because the allied aircraft had limited "strike-attack capabilities", or because of limitations in allied training and "precision guided munitions stocks" (see Cordesman 24-27).

To be sure, the Europeans did make some important contributions to combat operations: Germany and Italy played a key role in suppression of enemy air defenses, for example, and the British and French joined the United States in delivering precision-guided munitions. Even so, most of the European allies generally were short of capabilities that would let them operate efficiently within the scope of NATO's consensus. Probably the biggest problem for the Europeans was to carry out attacks effectively, because very often the European air forces lacked the munitions or other resources necessary to strike targets without

causing unacceptable levels of civilian casualties and damage (Pond 80-82). Even though future European aircraft will probably be more competent than the generation existing these days, there will probably be fewer of them, which would only nominally enhance the European ability to have a say militarily in any coalition operation (Marcus 82-84).

Accordingly, Kosovo draws attention to several important messages and issues concerning NATO and coalition warfare that undoubtedly need additional examination:

1. Major issues about the role of Europe and the need for reshuffling the Transatlantic Alliance. It poses serious questions about the degree of U.S. involvement in solving crises in or near Europe. Without doubt, there is an understandable demand for a U.S. role in NATO as such, and in propping up a post-Cold War security order. At the same time, the US serves Western interests by bearing most of the power projection burden in the Gulf, and helping to stabilize the military situation in Asia - which is now a vital part of Western economic interests (Cordesman). Thus the issue is not whether the United States should participate in NATO or remain in Europe, it is why the U.S. should have to bear so large a portion of the burden. It is whether a new Transatlantic bargain is needed in which European states assume most of the responsibility for any action in the Baltic, Central and Southern Europe and North Africa (Ponds 80-87).

? 2. Kosovo again had a stimulating effect on the European Union to talk about European security concepts and to create meaningful war fighting capabilities and taking significant action to create serious military capabilities. Because of the apparent U.S. military superiority in Kosovo many European countries were complaining about the obvious lack of a European ability to act together in a unified way, dependence on the U.S., and U.S. hegemony. Efforts were made to find some new way to create a feasible European security arrangement in NATO, the EC, or WEU; create an integrated European approach to examin the lessons of Kosovo and enable the fast integration of the WEU into the EC (see Ponds 86-89). For many American experts, however, such efforts seemed to be only good for starting painfully slow processes which were likely to end by discussing new European institutions and bureaucratic arrangements, without actually funding real improvements in "actual war fighting, deployment, and peace making capability" (see Oudraat 21). Germany, for example, cut its defense budget from 3% of its GDP in 1990 to 1.5% in 1998. Its procurement budget fell from 12 billion ($7.05 billion) in 1990 to DM5.3 billion in 1997, and dropped from 30%

to 23.7% of the entire defense budget. Despite the lessons made in Kosovo, the German government's budget for 2000 called for cuts of DM 30 billion, with similar cuts in 2001 and 2002.

3. For military analysts, Kosovo offered a further illustration of the military problems in coalition warfare and exploiting the revolution in military affairs. The political decision to rely on air and missile power meant that Europe could never exploit its potential advantage in land forces. Europe was way behind the United States in the revolution in military affairs, creating thereby two major problems that need to be addressed

(a) the need for a comprehensive force modernization program in major European states, and

(b) the need for realistic US planning to integrate the lower level technology forces of its allies into an effective capability for coalition warfare – rather than creating U.S. capabilities based on reliance on merely US forces for most key missions or keep apart partner forces and assigning them to less important missions (role specialisation) (see Cordesman 26-28).

The latest NATO strategic concept, Kosovo's lessons, and the fact that even after the negative lessons made in Kosovo there were only limited prospects for a substantial increase of European defense budgets led some experts suggest that future allied military operations will in all likelihood be coalitions of the willing. John E. Peters, Stuart Johnson, Nora Bensahel, Timothy Liston, Traci Williams predicted in their book *European Contributions to Operation Allied Force: Implications for Transatlantic Cooperation* that future coalitions probably will not only involve NATO countries, but others that are not formally allies as well, and occasionally countries from outside Europe because such operations provide greater political legitimacy. Moreover, the assistance of militaries from individual participating states will probably be modest in size, and the gap in military capabilities between the United States and the Europeans will continue to exist and probably widen, in the face of the serious efforts of many of the allies to acquire more capable forces and more effective weapons. According to the authors, the United States can "pursue a number of steps to minimize the negative aspects of such coalitions and maximize their military potential" (E. Peters 71-76).

The authors also conclude that the Europeans should expect continuing demands from the United States for more defense spending in the near term. They urged European governments to make larger investments to redress deficiencies. They predicted that the European allies will have to expect continued emphasis on the Defense Capabilities Initiative, a U.S. plan adopted by NATO in April 1999 that stresses the need for all NATO forces to be interoperable, deployable, and sustainable. Furthermore, they also prophesised that the will be put undder additional pressure from the United States to invest in proven U.S. programs rather than to fund new, unproven programs among themselves.

4. The Global War on Terrorism

"*Defending against terrorism and other emerging 21st century threats may well require that we take the war to the enemy. The best, and in some cases, the only defense, is a good offense*."

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld

The United States is now in the fourth year of the global war on terrorism. The war began as a fight against the organization that was responsible for the shocking attacks of September 11, 2001, but soon became a much more "ambitious project", including, among other things, an invasion and occupation of Iraq. As part of the war on terrorism, the United States has committed not only to ridding the world of terrorism as a means of violence but also to transforming Iraq into a prosperous democratic state, something for the majority of the non democratic and economically stagnant Middle East to follow (see Record 2-6). According to Paul Dibb, one that seems to be shaping the Bush administration's thinking, is to formulate policy based on the belief that the September 11 attacks were neither a historical turning point nor a tragedy of "transient significance", but instead a "momentous event" that has helped clarify national interests "long muddied by arcane speculation about the nature of the post–Cold War era" (Dibb 133-134). Moreover, the September 11 attacks and following U.S. military actions have led to a radical restructuring of U.S. defense priorities, including a possible revaluation of the U.S. alliance system – above all America's military ties with NATO. Yet, at the beginning of the war against terrorism it was not entirely clear where exactly the United States will place the emphasis in its relations with NATO. Countering

terrorism has been a relatively new mission for U.S. forces, and, as his recent visit to NATO and some European countries indicated, the Bush administration is still struggling to find the right mixture of armed operations and diplomatic measures (see Valasek 20-22). What is clear, however, is that the United States is trying to make its alliance partners accept the new threat priorities, where counterterror efforts will have a primacy. As the *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism* states: "We must use the full influence of the United States to delegitimize terrorism and make clear that all acts of terrorism will be viewed in the same light as slavery, piracy, or genocide: behavior that no responsible government can condone or support and all must oppose. In short, with our friends and allies, we aim to establish a new international norm regarding terrorism requiring nonsupport, non-tolerance, and active opposition to all terrorists."

The September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks against the World Trade Center and the Pentagon were widely interpreted in Europe as a broader attack on Western values, such as freedom, tolerance, and openness. Almost all leaders from states throughout the continent ensured the United States about their willingness to cooperate in the struggle against terrorism. For the first time in its 52-year history, NATO invoked its Article 5 collective defense provision, and other European supranational organizations also express their backing. The invocation of its self-defense clause of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation made many people think that NATO would have a decisive role in the military campaign against the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, since the very legitimacy of the Alliance was based on the principle that an attack on any of its members would be considered an attack on all. However, it soon became obvious that the United States would conduct military operations in Afghanistan without any explicit NATO role, preferring instead to incorporate European assistance on a bilateral basis (see Bensahel 5-9). When the military operations in Afghanistan began, the White House in effect told NATO to stay out of the conflict, despite its offers of help and the "chivalrous" gesture of evoking the mutual defense clause in its founding document, the 1949 Washington Treaty, for the first time ever. It was supposedly U.S. Deputy Secretary of Defense, Paul Wolfowitz who said "If we need collective action, we'll ask for it" (www.portal.telegraph.uk).

Against the background of the conclusions made in the previous chapters, it is clear that a military logic had been accumulating ever since the early nineties that the United States can best fight wars by coalitions of the willing which subordinate themselves to a U.S. central

command structure and that the capability gap does not allow deeper cooperation with the most traditional allies. The final push came from 9.11, which completed the shift towards a certain unilateralism in U.S. foreign policy. It was not only the new kind of U.S. foreign policy made by the neo-conservative Bush administration but also the gathered lessons of a decade of military experience that made the United States more inclined to take military actions with less consultation and coordination with the allies than was politically desirable.

Although Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan began with only few openly recognized coalition assistance, coalition forces became more and more acknowledged and important as the mission carried on. European countries provided a wide range of capabilities on a bilateral basis, including special forces, air forces, naval forces, ground forces, and specialized units (Bensahel 9-17). Yet, the United States accepted only a few contributions from NATO as a military alliance organization, and many European members were disappointed with the small role given to the multilateral alliance after its dramatic invocation of Article 5. Intense questions were raised over NATO's suitable role and mission as transatlantic tensions over Iraq grew, revealing some deep divides between the United States and the Europeans as well as among the Europeans themselves (Dibb 138-142).

While allies are seen by U.S. as rather burdensome when fighting real wars, it now seems that they will be very much in need when it comes to post-conflict peacebuilding. Allies with less mobility and interoperability will probably be asked to make available "niche capabilities", which include capabilities such as de-mining, ABC decontamination, chemical warfare, transportation and supply. They may also be asked to offer peacekeepers and civilian police after actual fighting phase is over, which has been termed "role specialization." Although for some allies, it would be the only practical way of maintaining the alliance, it could prove politically difficult in some cases because it would mean virtual subordination to U.S. political/strategic judgments and the allies will become the "tools in a tool-box", inevitably reinforcing divergent viewpoints (see Iwama 10-12, Asmus 21-22, Kissinger 12)

4.1. Afghanistan

Not only did the European states collectively promise to assist the United States through NATO in its efforts to combat terrorism, but they also contributed concrete military support to Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan on a bilateral basis. Finally, the

United States received so many offers of military support that policymakers struggled in September and October 2001 to determine the best ways to use them. In spite of this fact and that many European countries had promised unlimited team spirit to the United States immediately after September 11 attacks, the use of military force to overthrow the Taliban had engaged the passions of many Europeans. In his article *Mutual Incomprehension: U.S.-German Value Gaps beyond Iraq* published in *The Washington Quarterly,* Klaus Larres states that despite Germany's involvement in the wars in Kosovo and Afghanistan, Germany, along with much of the rest of Europe except Great Britain, views military force as a very last resort— only after all other alternatives have been exhausted and if there is a broad international endorsement (Larres 32-33).

According to observers, while the number of offers was considerable, their usefulness in actual war fighting was often questionable. Consequently, the United States eventually began to turn down most of the contributions of combat forces that it had been offered, because in many cases, the American military would have had to deploy and sustain the offered contingents, and U.S. policymakers were not willing to overburden U.S. transportation and logistics networks (Bensahel 13-14). According to the Pentagon, in some of the cases the offered contingents were not appropriate for the military plans being developed, leading some U.S. civilian and military personnel to speculate that the offers were made to gain the political benefits of supporting the United States without having to follow through by actually participating in military operations. Nevertheless, some offers of combat forces were accepted, enabling European militaries to participate among the American forces that operated in Afghanistan. It was the United Kingdom and France that contributed wide variety of types of military services to the operations, while most other countries made available smaller contingents, often with specialized capabilities and skills. More important, European countries in both the western and eastern parts of the continent provided crucial basing, access, and overflight rights. (Bensahel 9-17)

While many NATO members hoped that invoking Article 5 would lead the United States to conduct any military response against al Qaeda under the NATO flag, or at least coordinate its actions with the integrated military structure and political institutions, by early October, the U.S. decision makers made clear that the alliance would not be involved in any military actions against Afghanistan. This U.S. political decision came as no surprise many in the United States (see Rühle 3-5). Many U.S. policymakers believed that NATO's war in Kosovo was an unacceptable example of "war by committee," where political interference

from the alliance's 19 members prevented a quick and decisive campaign. The policymakers were determined to retain the one and only command power in Afghanistan, so that experience would not be repeated. Again, just like during Gulf War I, The Central Command (CENTCOM) gained operational control in the Afghanistan and Iraq campaigns and again with great military success. CENTCOM's headquarter in Tampa, Florida has grown into an "international village" with many countries sending liaison officers in order to gain information and coordinate their contribution to the campaigns. (Iwama 3)

However, many Europeans were dissatisfied with the small role that the alliance was given in the response to the September 11 attacks and attributed it to U.S. unilateralism and arrogance. To some extent, these annoyances came from the fact that the military operation did not correspond to the concept that had been widely expected during the Cold War— that an invocation of Article 5 would lead the alliance members to join together and defeat a common enemy. But these frustrations also reflected a fear that the U.S. decision to pursue the war on its own after invoking Article 5 would irrevocably weaken the core alliance principle of collective defense.

4.2. Transatlantic tensions over Iraq

As the U.S. decided to invade Iraq and overthrow Saddam's regime Washington created a division within the North Atlantic Alliance. Even its successive efforts to stabilize that country have caused great controversy in the alliance. From at least early 2002, some allies, particularly France and Germany, could not agree with the United States on the threat priorities of the alliance. Most Europeans felt that the nuclear programs of Iran and North Korea, and the instability in Pakistan and Afghanistan were posing a greater menace to world peace than did Saddam's regime at that time. The general European perspective was that Iraq could be contained through sanctions and, after the fall of 2002, U.N. WMD inspections. While both sides of the Atlantic agreed that the Iraqi regime formed a certain potential threat to international security, there was significant disagreement on what the world should do about it. Thus the major question which the transatlantic partners were divided on was whether to attack Iraq or not. Many experts share the view that French and German opposition at the U.N. was not just about their economic ties to Saddam Hussein, or even to their ancient difference of opinion with America over broader Middle East policy, but about their vision of

Europe's position in the world vis-à-vis the United States. Like the Russians and the Chinese, many Europeans see American "hegemony" as means to serve purely U.S. interests (see Hawkins, Kagan's Power an Weakness).

Not only did the French and the German oppose a resolution in the Security Council to allow the United States to go to war against Iraq but they refused to allow NATO to send early-warning aircraft and Patriot anti-missile batteries to protect Turkey from an Iraqi attack as well, which further deepened the split within the Atlantic Alliance. Eventually, the decision was made by Nato's defence policy committee, of which France is not a member and with Germany and Belgium dropping its objection, the weapons could ultimately be sent (Bensahel 20-21). Even Turkey, considered by the US as a vital Nato ally, refused to allow US troops to cross its territory to invade Iraq (Norton-Taylor).

In his article, published in *Foreign Affairs*, James P. Rubin states that international backing for the Bush administration's Iraq policy should not have been so hard to gain, because Baghdad had already violated a number of UN Security Council resolutions before. His predecessor, Bill Clinton, had also considered that Iraq poses a substantial threat to the international community, because of its apparent desire to acquire weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and because of its demonstrated willingness to use them, and, of course, Saddam's history of human rights violations and his refusal to act in accordance with the demands of the international community. As a result, the Clinton administration had also supported regime change in Iraq. Rubin argues that it was the series of shortcomings in the Bush administration's rhetoric that eventually led to the failure that the international community remained unconvinced: despite months of consequent international debate and diplomacy, Washington failed to muster a lot of cooperation for its policy before actually going to war. It was The United Kingdom, Spain and most states in central and eastern Europe who were backing the United States' foreign policy but these countries, like Australia, had been on the United States' side from the beginning (see Rubin 46-67).

In his work, *New Alliances for a New Century* David M. Huntwork even seemed to discover newly created alliances: an "oddball axis of Brussels, Paris, Berlin, and Moscow that opposed the United States led coalition in the Iraq war" which now is "developing into a permanent anti-U.S. political and military alliance". As he states, each of these countries are "bumbling actors on the world stage" with Germany searching for identity after causing two world wars and suffering territorial division during the Cold War, France searching for

international weight and a substitution of its lost territorial empire with an empire of influence and with Russia seeking to undermine the world's last remaining superpower and regain a part of its former power and prestige (Huntwork) . To be sure, the war in Iraq brought some strains to the point of crisis. Indeed, France and Germany organized resistance to the United States in the UN Security Council alongside Russia, historically NATO's chief adversary. The Bush administration, in turn, sought to separate these states from other members of the alliance and the European Union. According to the report by an independent task force chaired by former secretary of state and national security advisor Henry Kissinger, it was at this time when political rhetoric seemed to replace diplomacy as the primary instrument for taking positions, making criticisms, and shaping coalitions (see Report of an Independent Task Force).

The split that occurred in NATO was even further deepened by a decision by U.S., Spain and Great Britain to sign an open letter supporting a war together with other Eastern European EU and NATO members. On January 30, the *Times* of London and other newspapers printed the letter signed by the leaders of eight European nations — five of them EU members — supporting the U.S. demand that Iraq disarm. Jose Maria Aznar of Spain, Tony Blair of the UK, Silvio Berlusconi of Italy, José Manuel Barroso of Portugal, Péter Medgyessy of Hungary, Leszek Miller of Poland, Anders Fogh Rasmussen of Denmark, and Vaclav Havel of the Czech Republic argued, "the Iraqi regime and its weapons of mass destruction represent a clear threat to world security." The letter further stated that "we know that success in the day-to-day battle against terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction demands unwavering determination and firm international cohesion on the part of all countries for whom freedom is precious." These were the countries secretary of defense Rumsfeld referred to as "new Europe". French president Chirac and Germany's chancellor Schröder responded with their own letter. As a response Washington said it was planning to move some of its 80,000 troops in Germany further east, to bases in Romania and Bulgaria, the "new U.S. friends". The French reaction was to urge the EU to take a more independent line on defence and security policy, with its own military headquarters separate from NATO (Archives of the Neue Züricher Zeitung).

It is important to note that there was great disparity between views of policymakers and public opinion: according to polls, opposition to the Iraq war was way above 50% in many key European states of the "new Europe". Thus it was governing elites that ultimately determined the respective national course; at the same time they wanted, public confirmation. Germany and France, countries that were against the operations, were aligned with majority

opinion, while those supporting the campaign were not and tried to modify their positions to contain popular protest. For example, Spanish and Italian governments supported the Anglo-American position but did not take part militarily, because a participation would not have gone down too well with their public (see Wood).

Against all the odds, today the Atlantic Alliance is present in Iraq which, while small, aims to develop Iraq's military on a strategic level turning out 1,000 officers a year. The NATO effort includes efforts to set up military staff and officer colleges. Bush administration officials have also advocated the NATO mission as a way of pushing the alliance to transform into a more deployable, internationally involved force. Other NATO allies have refused to send trainers to Iraq but have offered equipment, money or training outside Iraqi borders (Report on Allied Contributions to Common Defense, CRS Report for Congress).

5. The Present and Future Role of NATO

"In broadening [the Alliance's] concept of security, in taking on new roles and missions, in carrying out wide adaptation, the NATO of today is no longer about defending against large-scale attack. It is about building security within societies, creating the conditions of stability in which respect for human rights, consolidation of democratic reforms and economic patterns of trade and investment can flourish..."

Javier Solana
October 15, 1997

Throughout history military alliances have been formed to counterbalance either a rival power or the perceived threat thereof and they have tended to collapse when the threat demands changed or disappeared as a result of either power crumbling or threat perceptions changing. While the main raison d'être of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) can be found in its members' perceived need to balance rising Soviet power in the aftermath of World War II, the collapse of the Soviet empire in the late 1980s and the early 1990s did not lead to NATO's fall. As a result, NATO is often referred to as the most successful military alliance in history. The transatlantic political and military alliance, which was highly institutionalized during the decades of the Cold War, has been a cornerstone of transatlantic security for more than fifty years. Its founding idea was originally, as the first NATO

Secretary-General, Lord Ismay, claimed, to 'keep the Russians out, the Germans down, and the Americans in'. Indeed, this gives us a summary of the three key objectives for NATO. First, to form a common and unified Western defence position against the Soviet Union. Secondly, to restructure the Western military landscape after the fall of Nazi Germany and thirdly, to encourage America, who since Jefferson's warning against 'entangling alliances' had traditionally remained suspicious of international associations and to be part of a security organisation which was codified by treaty (see Valasek 20-22).

Today, there are basically three schools of thought which dispute over the legacy of the Atlantic Alliance and the future of the transatlantic relations in general. The first school of thought argues that there are no fundamental problems in U.S.-European relations and they state that the main pillars of that relationship are strong. They claim that the U.S. and European governments have many common interests and they insist that NATO is and will continue to be the focus of U.S.- European relations. Understandably, these people tend to be Government and NATO representatives (see Asmus, Blinken, Clark, Task Force Report). The second school of thought argues that the United States and Europe are drifting apart and are on the way to split-up because the strategic landscape has changed and the United States and Europe no longer face a shared threat to their survival. As a result NATO has become irrelevant and they believe NATO will most likely disappear (see Matthews, Mearsheimer, Kagan's Power and Weakness etc.). The third school of thought is somewhere in the middle of the two, saying that the problems are not that grave after all and that NATO will somewhat lose of its relevance but will remain an important factor in the transatlantic relations (see Oudraat, Valasek).

A common criticism of NATO is that it was defined by Cold War boundaries, and has therefore a diminished relevance to the post-1990 world. The end of the cold war eliminated one of the main raison d'être for NATO and many predicted its demise. As Chantal de Jonge Oudraat put it, the last major multilateral military alliance is still searching for a mission, but, like ESDP, it is a "security 'product' that does not serve the threat 'market'." According to Oudraat, the four main reasons for this are as follows:

1. Although most of these threats have their origins outside of Europe, most European countries have insignificant power-projection capabilities

2. Europeans lack effective intelligence capabilities as well

3. Consultation and decision-making procedures within the Atlantic Alliance are burdensome and inflexible. NATO is not set up to make quick and rapid decisions.

4. Deterrence, which works well against nation-states, is not a useful tool in the war against terrorism.

As we can see, the first two points have their origins in the relative weakness of the European militaries, whereas the last two reasons stem from the very structure of the Transatlantic Alliance.

All in all, what we can see today is that most alliance members are actively working on keeping the alliance together. In November 2002, at the Prague summit, the allies made a commitment to build the capabilities necessary to go out of area. They decided to set up a NATO Response Force (NRF) of 20,000 troops for rapid "insertion" into a scene of operations. The NRF consist of highly trained combat units from member states, and could be used to fight terrorism. Additionally, the allies agreed to a reduced list of new capabilities, called the Prague Capabilities Commitment (PCC), that decreasing European defense budgets might be able to fund. Under the PCC, some allies have agreed to develop consortia to fund jointly such systems as strategic airlift and aerial refueling, meant to provide mobility for combat operations distant from Europe, or specialized "niche" capabilities, such as special forces or units to detect chemical or biological agents (Official NATO Homepage). Despite the transatlantic agreement on the new common threats, the NRF, and the PCC, there are significant differences between the United States and its allies over appropriate responses. In the face of all these efforts there is a big fear among experts that most allied governments will not be able to live up to these expectations because of other domestic budget priorities (such as pension plans) that compete with allocations for defense. For some observers the NATO Reaction Force is the last opportunity for the United States to share capabilities with allies, to permit the alliance to be at least a little bit interoperable. As a research fellow in European affairs at the Heritage Foundation's Davis Institute, John C. Hulsman, put it "if such an effort, a very modest and achievable goal, is not met, its time to strike the tents and acknowledge that the marriage is at last over".

5.1. Missions in Afghanistan and Iraq

According to the CRS Report to Congress, one of the alliance's primary missions these days is the stabilization of Afghanistan. There are two military operations in Afghanistan and NATO leads the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), and the other one is Operation Enduring Freedom, which is lead by the United States and which's mission is to eliminate Taliban and Al Qaeda remnants, primarily active in the eastern part of the country. The United States has proposed that these two missions be merged under NATO leadership, a move that some allies oppose. ISAF has 6,500 troops from 31 countries; overwhelmingly, however, the forces are from NATO's member states, above all from Germany, Canada, Britain, France, Spain, and the Netherlands. More recently, the Bush administration has gained a measure of NATO involvement in Iraq as well. Today, the alliance provides logistical and communications assistance to Poland, which will lead a multinational force of 8,500 troops in a stabilization effort in southern Iraq. NATO has also agreed to a training mission for Iraqi security forces. At the Istanbul summit in June 2004, the allies agreed in principle to train elements of Iraq's army, police, and national guard. NATO governments reached a detailed agreement on October 8, 2004 (see CRS Report to Congress).

5.2. NATO's Future Tasks

According to many experts, NATO now has a less important position in the transatlantic relations, for it increasingly has to compete with other institutions. Undoubtedly, after the September 11 attacks against the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the United States went first to the United Nations and not NATO to gather support for military action. In addition, it was the UN General Assembly and the UN Security Council that were mobilized to condemn the attacks in the strongest possible terms and to help track the financial movements of terrorist groups. This leads many to believe that now more than ever, smaller European powers find themselves at the periphery of transatlantic security relations (see Oudraat). According to the more optimistic school of thought, however, NATO's Brussels bureaucracy is gradually learning to accept an agenda reordered by terrorism. For example, former Secretary General Lord Robertson stressed the need for the allies to help America with its "nonterrorism responsibilities", which is almost certainly the most constructive assistance that NATO allies can make in the short term. This kind of allied contribution is not an entirely new phenomenon that came after September 11 attacks. In Bosnia in 1995, the United States

contributed a full third of all peacekeeping forces but four years later, in Kosovo the percentage of U.S. troops went down to 15 percent. Few years later in Macedonia, the United States contributed virtually nothing besides assigning troops already deployed in the country in support of the Kosovo mission. After the beginning of Operation Allied Force against Afghanistan, the White House made clear that the Pentagon would likely withdraw even more troops and equipment from the Balkans in order to strengthen its forces in Central Asia. Allied nations will demand a greater formal role in decision making if they are to risk the lives of their soldiers. The United States, for its part, will resist this effort because it found decision making by committee dangerously cumbersome in past NATO operations. The result will most likely be a two-tiered approach, with NATO's collective command structures overseeing peacekeeping and other missions unrelated to terrorism and the United States directing antiterrorist efforts unilaterally. (Valasek)

Many from the optimistic school of thought argue that it was apparent from the beginning that Europe would never match the military capabilities of the United States, or their ability to deploy their forces on a worldwide scale. Since the end of World War II Europeans have concentrated on economic reconstruction, integration, and strengthening the structure of the European cooperation in general. After the end of the Cold War, however, Europeans made a lot more contribution than the United States in providing aid to developing countries, taking over international peacekeeping responsibilities, and supporting international organizations. Thus, as the Task Force Report says "If the United States is the indispensable nation in terms of its military power, then surely the Europeans are indispensable allies in most of the other categories of power upon which statecraft depends". Contrary to other schools of thought they also state that even though there should be a mutual understanding of this complementarity, an absolute role specialisation is not feasible in the Atlantic Alliance, because if the European allies focus their attention on peacekeeping and nation-building while the United States takes over the more demanding military tasks it will lead to a further widening of the transatlantic division. The United States will sooner or later have hard feelings about the greater dangers they must face, while European allies will take a dim view of their secondary role. Moreover, the reducing of opportunities, where the NATO allies can share common tasks and experiences, would also lead to more mutual incomprehensions.

As we have seen, NATO currently is still seeking to redefine its role in trying to tackle existing and future challenges. Taking into consideration the suggestions and implications

made by the schools of thought concerning future political and military tasks of NATO, one could list the most important ones as follows:

1. NATO could continue to provide a forum for transatlantic cooperation on international security. Without doubt, the number of troops now needed on the European continent depends on the size of threat, which currently is not very significant and if all goes well, it will diminish further over time, which would allow the United States to bring troop levels down further. Some think that a best case scenario would be if no American troops would remain in Europe. In that case NATO would be remade to a simple guarantee pact, what it was intended to be in the first place, and only became an integrated military force on the European continent in response to the outbreak of the Korean War. There are others who do not subscribe to this point of view and argue that interoperability and the sense of collective purpose that arises from an integrated military structure should be kept up; even if the United States is reduces the number of its troops deployed on the continent, it should maintain a sufficient presence to ensure them. Moreover, it is important to ensure that there is enough domestic political support in the United States to sustain further NATO expansions, since already there is a criticism in the United States against the costs of an expanded NATO and those costs, in political and economic terms could call into question not just simply NATO expansion but the American commitment to NATO itself as well. In addition, some fear that the Alliance may become increasingly inefficient and indecisive, like a "a mini-United Nations for Europe" if NATO expands beyond its scopes (Warner). With the seven former communist Warsaw Pact countries that joined the organisation last year, NATO currently has 26 members. According to Richard Norton-Taylor the decisions taken by consensus, which is NATO' traditional method, will become even more difficult.

2. Smooth the progress of the consolidation of conflict-torn regions in Eastern and South-eastern Europe. Experience made during the last fifteen years showed the world that there are still places in Europe, like in the Balkans, where NATO forces are needed. Whilst the EU is more and more taking over peacekeeping responsibilities in Bosnia, Kosovo, and Macedonia, a NATO presence will be required there to prevent these regions from backsliding and to help resolve remaining political and territorial disputes.

3. Among the alliance's tasks should also be the support of reform and integration

in Ukraine, and Russia. Through the NATO-Russia Council the Atlantic Alliance has provided a forum for a new level of cooperation between Russia, Europe, and the United States. In addition, if things go wrong in Russia, the Atlantic alliance would form the basis of an opposing coalition, just as it did during the Cold War (see Mandelbaum).

4. Apart from the apparent symbolic importance of Europeans fighting terrorism alongside the Americans, NATO contributions can reduce a part of the pressure on U.S. troops and equipment. The longer the campaign continues, the more the United States will need replacements for units deployed in and around Afghanistan.

5. The alliance's role as international legitimizing organisation is also very important, but policymakers should be careful not to limit NATO to a "cheerleader role", which would be a political degradation to many alliance members. (Valasek)

6. Some specialists state that it is important to have an American commitment to Europe for some of the original reasons: "To keep the Americans in, to keep the Russians out and to keep the Germans down." For example, they think NATO should still relieve the Germans of the need to conduct an independent security policy, since Germans themselves are not keen on having their own.

Currently, the United States' military is undergoing a comprehensive reform, called military transformation, which might further increase the capability gap between America and its European allies if Europeans fail to catch up to meet future needs in terms of security. According to the former director of the National Security Council for defense policy and arms control and a special assistant to the President, Hans Binnendijk, however, even if American transformation is successful, it may raise certain risks. First, if the American military appears able to win victories at low cost, war might become a preferred instrument of diplomacy rather than an instrument of last option, which would lead to an "unhealthy militarization of American foreign policy". Second, there are some unforeseen events for which even a transformed military may be inadequate, including preventing a terrorist attack on U.S. interests, fighting in certain types of terrain, and sustaining conflict against a large enemy that is unwilling to capitulate despite battlefield losses. Third, America's capability might reduce the military need for allies and lead to a preference to go it alone, which could lead to diplomatic isolation. Fourth, U.S. military dominance could breed resentment abroad and

result in the accumulation of more enemies, and fifth, highly autonomous systems inbuilt in the new force increase the risk of the so called "friendly fire casualties". Nonetheless, Binnendijk states that none of these risks provides enough reason to slow down efforts to develop the best military possible, but dealing with those risks will require good sense on the part of America's political and diplomatic leadership, for "America cannot afford to overreach" (Binnendijk xvii-xxxi).

6. The Capability Gap

"Every effort at cooperative security, coalition warfare, peace enforcement, counter-proliferation and all the other politically correct euphemisms of the post-Cold War era must be judged by whether sufficient war fighting and killing capability exists to make it work."

Cordesman, Anthony and Wagner, Abraham.
The Lessons of Modern War

As already illustrated above, many experts agree that there is a growing gap between U.S. military needs and NATO capabilities - both those capabilities of the individual European members and the collective skills of the allies as a group which has become more and more apparent in the experiences made in major post-cold war conflicts where military forces of the United States and its coalition partners were fighting side by side. Over the last few years it was the very thing that defined Washington's approach to NATO and it is likely to be the major subject in the coming years. American delegates have been claiming that their European counterparts were spending too little on defense (or spending on the wrong things), which has been a regular feature of NATO meetings for years. Virtually every piece of legislation in the U.S. Congress involving NATO, such as bills on enlargement or missile defense, pass with at least an attempt by lawmakers to attach amendments mandating greater European contributions (see Hellman).

According to Hellman, before the terrorist attacks of 9.11, the imperative to "get things done" prevailed over those who promoted holding out for more robust European participation. With few exceptions, the collective military capability of the other NATO members in any given area is inferior to that of the United States. The United States spends

more than twice as much on its military as all other NATO allies combined ($343.2 billion in Fiscal Year 2002, vs. roughly $150 billion for the allies).2 The U.S. budget is also divided among a handful of producers overseen by one Defense Department, whereas much of the spending by the rest of the NATO allies is lost to redundancies inherent in arming and operating 18 separate military forces (Hellman). Moreover, according to experts, European NATO allies, all spend a far higher proportion of their defense budget on personnel, with Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Poland, Portugal, and Spain allocating from 60 percent to more than 80 percent on personnel. Great Britain spends about 40 percent, while the U.S. figure is about 36 percent. These percentages may be interpreted in many ways, but they certainly suggest greater attention to procurement, research and development, and deployment in the United States (Nelson).

An independent defense consultant working in the Washington D.C. area, Charles L. Barry, states also that the United States will probably fight future battles as part of an international coalition, based in large measure on the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies. But he also emphasises the fact that recent wars in the Persian Gulf, Kosovo, and Afghanistan have demonstrated that a significant gap exists between American and allied capabilities. The problem, for him, lies both with constrained European defense spendings and with differing visions of the European role in the world. Barry argues that this gap may be smaller than is normally believed and that a concerted program of action can close it without bankrupting European treasuries. Without such an effort, however, the gap will considerably damage the Alliance (see Barry 234-247).

In his book *Coordinating with NATO*, published in the book *Transforming America's Military*, Barry reviews the current status of Europe's militaries and concludes that their armies and navies have already modernized many of their so called legacy forces. What is really problematic, however, as we could see in the experience of the above examined conflicts, is airpower, secure communications, command and control, and logistics. Most European forces lack adequate equipment for night and poor weather warfare, and particularly for long range direct and indirect fire engagement, and cohesive, sustainable, large scale maneuver. Even airpower capabilities may get better as the Eurofighter and Joint Strike Fighter come on-line. However, the problem is that Europe's energies are focused on equipping the European Rapid Reaction Force, which is designed primarily for peace operations rather than high intensity conflict. There is no vision in Europe of how to

transform its militaries for major combat missions in cooperation with the United States. Barry proposes a set of initiatives aimed at correcting this situation. (see Barry 231-261, Nelson)

Other critics claim that while the gap in military capabilities across the Atlantic must clearly be narrowed it should not really matter in the transatlantic relationship. According to Ronald D. Asmus, NATO requires "modest expeditionary capabilities", but Europe does not have to become as powerful as the United States. It needs the capacity to intervene, together with U.S. combat forces in future coalition operations and in order to sustain long-term peacekeeping missions. Europe also needs to act on its own in smaller crises; however, the essence of "the West" is not military in nature. Since he thinks about "the West" as one single entity, following this logic, he argues that it is absolutely unnecessary to redouble the military strength of the transatlantic partners. Instead, they should develop together an effective transformation strategy that can help create a "democratic political alternative" in the Arab world, because "Europe potentially has as much to offer as the United States" when it comes to overcoming this challenge. The alliance needs a modern-day equivalent of the Harmel Report for the greater Middle East that combines an effective defense against terrorism and WMD with a political strategy to help transform and democratize the Islamic and Arab world. (Asmus 24-25)

When talking about the capability gap, one should not forget that there are two sides of the story. It may be true that many NATO member-countries' capabilities have fallen short of commitments because of shrunken national defense budgets in recent years. It is also true that those funds should be spent on things that are relevant, needed and important to the kinds of capabilities that NATO's going to need in the period ahead. It is true that NATO needs to create an agile, rapid-deployable response force, which could potentially address contingencies outside NATO's traditional European area of operations (see Glimore). Yet NATO officials claim that the United States must do much more too, in terms of facilitating the process of European defense modernization and by easing unnecessary restrictions on technology transfer and industrial cooperation. Washington could improve the quality of the capabilities available, and reduce the interoperability gap between the forces so there will be fewer impediments to military cooperation (see Lord Robertson's speech in NATO's Future).

7. Mutual Incomprehensions in the Transatlantic Relations

Recent differences within the transatlantic alliance resulted to some extent from the "unilateralism" of the present Bush administration, but it also reflects strains resulting from longer term changes in the United States' attitude towards alliances and coalitions, and different evolution of perspectives in Europe and in the United States. European and U.S. approaches to world order also diverge on the rules of behaviour that should govern state action. As I already indicated, the post–Cold War *Pax Americana* has rewritten those rules by promoting new rationales for intervention and the use of force (see chapter about The New World Order). The U.S. concept of "shape, respond, and prepare," the national military strategy that calls for the United States to "shape the international environment" and "respond to the full spectrum of crises" has increasingly stressed the multilateralization of global decision-making, particularly on issues involving the use of force. Explicitly rejected most forms of "preventive diplomacy," arguing that they most often obscure the hidden hand of great-power interests.

Most analysts and observers agree on the fact that transatlantic differences did not begin with the last war on Iraq, but there are deep historical and cultural roots of today's differences in perceptions and willingness to use military power (see Filzmaier, Gordon, Kagan, Krause, Leunig, Longworth). According to them, there are many reasons why American and European approaches toward power, sovereignty, and security differ, and why those differences seem very delicate today. One of the factors is the "power gap" recognized by Kagan. He states that it is only natural to expect that a country with the technological, military, and diplomatic resources of the United States is inclined to try to "fix" problems whether Balkan crises, missile threats, or rogue states, whereas countries with fewer resources at their disposal try to "manage" them. According to Gordon, the United States' enormous military power, technological competence, and history have "imbued Americans with a sense of "can-do" optimism about the world that contrasts starkly with the relative pessimism, known in Europe as "realism", that comes from the more complex and ambivalent historical experiences of Europe's much older nation-states". (Gordon 22-23).

Gordon, Kagan and Longworth argue that U.S. power is far more ready than Europeans to take risks and spend money to deal with threats such as missile proliferation and

Iraq, because Americans, in general, have a "lower tolerance for vulnerability" that originates from its geographical situation and friendly neighbours. They also note, however, that Europe's relative lack of military capabilities compared to that of the United States is as much the product as it is the cause of the two sides' "different strategic cultures". With a collective population of 377 million and a GDP of some $8.5 trillion, the member states of the European Union certainly have the potential to develop a great military power but have chosen not to. Interestingly, it was actually the very consequences of the American protectorate established by the United States through NATO during the Cold War that led to Europe's relative lack of interest in developing military power (Gordon, Kagan's Power an Weakness, Longworth).

In his article *Transatlantic Transmutations*, published in *Foreign Affairs*, Daniel N. Nelson states that today's Europe has not forgotten power and that even in Germany there are many movements to make the country more relevant on the international stage. However, cooperation and collaboration are much more present in the European international behaviour in our times than that of the United States. He goes on by stating that expecting multilateral action through institutions guided by shared norms describes European viewpoints on the world stage much more correctly than U.S. expectations of power. While most realists agree that power remains the principal modality of international action, for transatlantic relations, the nature, role, and U.S. use of power has become the central part of the disputes (Nelson). In his work *The Iraq War: Five European Roles*, Stephen Wood also states that a motivating characteristic and function of European integration was the "attempt to move balance of power politics from inside to outside Europe". The major reason for this was the aim to eliminate such politics altogether and to act as a "civilising influence". The EU is often referred to as 'different', and a 'civilian power': "a non-military entity with humanitarian, social, and democratisation goals, as well as other economic and security considerations of its own" (Wood). The CRS Report for Congress with the title *NATO and the European Union* states that in a broader historical context it was the legacy of two world wars in Europe that has remained a central factor in shaping governments' policies and that prevention of illegitimate violations of sovereignty was a principal reason for their backing of the establishment of supranational institutions such as the UN, the EU, and NATO. It is against this background that one can understand what lies behind the general European opposition to the Bush Administration's doctrine of "pre-emptive action" (CRS Report for Congress). This is why, as John O'Sullivan, the editor of the *National Interest*, wrote in his famous article *Gulliver's travails: The U.S. in the post-Cold-War world*, many Europeans, especially in

Germany, think that concepts such as preemption were "primitive ideas that a mature rule-driven Europe had left behind in its moral evolution" (O'Sullivan).

8. Bush's 2. Term

"All that we hope to achieve together requires that America and Europe remain close partners. We are the pillars of the free world. We face the same threats and share the same belief in freedom and the rights of every individual. In my second term, I will work to deepen our transatlantic ties with the nations of Europe. I intend to visit Europe as soon as possible after my inauguration. My government will continue to work through the NATO Alliance and with the European Union to strengthen cooperation between Europe and America."

<div align="right">

President George W. Bush

November 2004

</div>

Shortly after the terrorist attacks of 9.11., the U.S. president presented his "axis of evil" vision and the United States considered military action against states thought to be supporting and harboring terrorists and developing weapons of mass destruction, which was perceived by Europeans as. Only weeks before going to war against Iraq, in his State of the Union address, President Bush again pledged to lead a coalition to disarm Iraq, claiming that "the decision of others" would not prevent the U.S. from pursuing its own security interests. He went on by saying that every nation has the duty to protect its own people and interests using all the traditional methods of statecraft — diplomatic, economic, and military. Only a few days later an article appeared with the title *Post-Cold War Allies*, in which William R. Hawkins argued that "a stronger, more centralized EU is not good for the United States. American leaders need to be able to approach governments individually to build new alliances to meet new dangers." (Hawkins)

Political analyst Robert Kagan states in his article, *A Decent Regard*, that it was well before the Bush administration came to power that even America's closest allies had started to complain about America's hegemony in the world. Former post-Cold War administrations were confronted with increasing unease about growing U.S. dominance. He gives his readers examples from the 1990s, when Bill Clinton and Madeleine Albright were calling the United

States the "indispensable nation," and as a result French foreign ministers, together with their Russian and Chinese counterparts, were declaring the American hegemony to be unfair and unsafe. Even during the years of the much more multilateral Clinton administration before, during and after the Kosovo war in 1999, many Europeans expressed a growing concern about the inherent problems of the new structure, and especially the increasing loss of European control over American actions. Kagan concludes that the problem the United States faces today is a problem of legitimacy, which is not a product of the Bush administration foreign policy, but it is more the result of the emergence of a new unipolar world order since the end of the Cold War and the nervousness the new structural realities on the international stage can create even among America's traditionally close allies (see Kagan's A Decent Regard).

Even if one accepts Kagan's argumentation, one cannot deny that George W. Bush had strong unilateral impulses from the very beginning of his first term. In his article *Stumbling into War*, published in *Foreign Affairs*, James P. Rubin reviews how Bush promised to walk away from international treaties and conventions believed to restrict American freedom for action, such as the climate negotiations, the negotiations on a verification protocol for the Biological Weapons Convention, the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, and the treaty establishing the International Criminal Court. Moreover, Bush insisted on developing a national missile defense for the United States and the necessity of increasing the U.S. defense budget. His administration disapproved of the Clinton and European approaches to North Korea, Iraq, Iran, and the Middle East, and it continually accused European governments of not doing enough in terms of burden sharing, particularly in the Balkans.(Rubin 53-54)

However, Republican analysts and strategists, turn down criticisms of the Bush administration's unilateral approach in going to war against Iraq by arguing that Europeans themselves went to war in Kosovo in 1999 without authorization from the United Nations and that the Bush administration did not go to war "unilaterally" unless one defines "unilateralism" as a failure to win the backing of Paris and Berlin (see Kagan's A Decent Regard). In another article, Kagan argues that "contrary to fashionable wisdom, the debate today is not between multilateralism and unilateralism. It's between effective multilateralism and paralytic multilateralism"(see Kagan's Coalition of the Unwilling). He goes on by explaining that the model for effective multilateralism was the assembling of the Gulf War coalition a decade ago, because it was first, the United States that determined on its own the main strategic objective, namely to force to leave Iraqi forces from Kuwait, and only then did

Washington start assembling a coalition of nations able and willing to help. Considering the issue about the relevance of European support, however, even radical Republican strategists agree that whether in tracking down al-Qaeda, the Doha free trade round, Iran's efforts to develop weapons of mass destruction, the Arab–Israeli conflict, or Iraq, the United States simply cannot act effectively without the support of at least some European powers (see Hulsman and Gardiner).

At the beginning of Bush's second term, Director of International Security Studies at Yale University, Paul Kennedy, wrote that the world does not have to expect "an intensification of the arrogant, Rumsfeldian foreign and military policies of the past few years". On the contrary, Kennedy prophesised that President Bush "may surprise us by holding out olive branches to the international community". A few months after the appearance of this article, the newly elected Bush gave a press conference on the occasion of his friend's, Tony Blair's visit to the White House, in which among other things he said the following words: "It is to remind people that the world is better off, America is better off, Europe is better off when we work together. And there's a lot we can accomplish working together. There's a lot we have accomplished working together." According to Kennedy, one of the reasons for this is that politicians in their second term of office think a lot about their future place in history and act accordingly. Of course, Bush wishes to be known as a great statesman, just like his predecessors Roosevelt and Kennedy, not as someone who ruined the Transatlantic alliance. Moreover, the more the number of casualties mounts the more angry he becomes at the bad advice he received about the easiness of converting the Iraqi people into a pro-American ally that would transform the Middle East. The third reason is that Bush, now more than ever, needs international support, since without the United Nations, and the major states on the U.N. Security Council, the Bush administration will be unable to pass a resolution to ask the international community for help with avoiding escalation of the situation in post-war Iraq and, despite the recent elections, the lawlessness in large parts of Afghanistan. He goes on by adding that Bush also needs NATO help, from the Balkans to Central Asia, because he needs the help of the international community in the war against terrorism. The fourth reason is an economic one; because of its enormous trade and federal fiscal deficits the American economy requires the support of foreign finance ministries and foreign purchasers of U.S. bonds. Since the country's dept is reaching record levels American dependence upon Chinese and Japanese purchases to cover these deficits will further increase, thus making the United States increasingly vulnerable (see Kennedy's Bush as Bismarck?). Kennedy's arguments could be supported by the fact that even Defense secretary Donald

Rumsfeld, who had caused great annoyance in many European countries, when he called France and Germany the "Old Europe" out of touch with the "New Europe", puts nowadays a great emphasis on notice that the United States is serious about winning in this more fluid geopolitical environment (archives of the BBC homepage).

9.Conclusion

Traditional alliances, originally forged to counter Soviet expansionism, today face the challenge of finding a new raison d'être in a totally new security environment. While there is a seemingly increasing demand for ad hoc coalitions of the willing, they obviously cannot replace alliances, because the latter is based on strategic trust and common security interests over a longer period of time with large political and military investment.

Since the collapse of communism, the concept of the New World Order, introduced during the fall of the Iron Curtain, has facilitated the justification of U.S. armed interventions around the world. Today, one can even speak of a renaissance of this theory.

The lessons learned during the military conflicts of the 1990's has changed the American policy towards alliances. Gulf War I and Kosovo clearly demonstrated potential advantages and the limits of coalition warfare, since they made policymakers become aware of the widening capability gap between American military and that of the European allies, and confirmed the necessity to conduct operations under a single unity of command.

After the 9.11. attacks, European offers to assist collectively to Operation Enduring Freedom was refused and Americans relied on temporary coalitions of the willing in their hunt for Al Qaeda terrorists in Afghanistan. However, alliances that were seen by U.S. officials as rather burdensome in war fighting, seemed very much in need when it came to post-conflict peacebuilding.

The last Iraq war has caused a major divide in the transatlantic relationship. Main traditional allies, France and Germany, opposed U.N. resolutions and blocked NATO decision-making on the defence of Turkey against a possible Iraqi aggression. Today, against all odds, NATO troops are present in Iraq, working closely with American forces.

As for the Atlantic Alliance, there are many serious problems that confront the organisation today. Schools of thought dispute about the legacy of the alliance and the new tasks it should address in the future. However, most agree that it should be maintained.

The capability gap between the American and European militaries is a problem that affects U.S. policy toward its allies, especially when it comes to actual war fighting. Many think the gap can be bridged in the long run, but it will certainly need efforts from both sides of the Atlantic.

Today's differences of opinion in the transatlantic relations result partly from the powerful rhetoric of the present Bush administration and their unilateralist approach toward international institutions and alliances. There are signs, however, that this will be replaced by a more friendly attitude in Bush's second term.

Chart II-1
Defense Spending as a Percentage of GDP vs. Per Capita GDP
2002
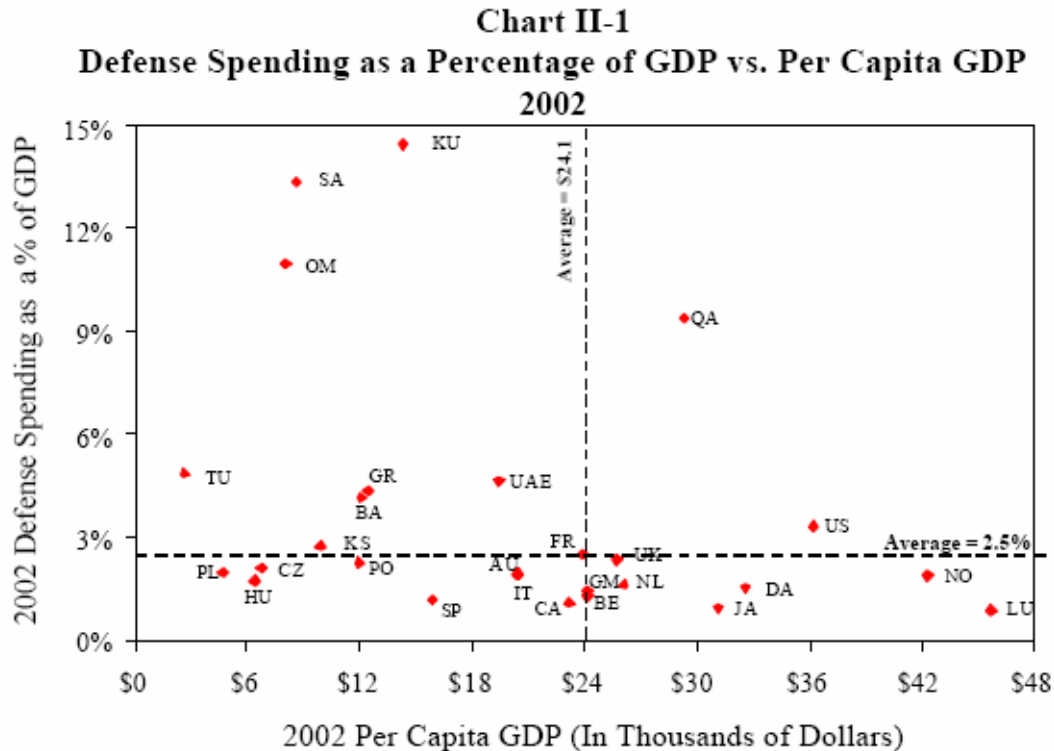
Defense spending is one of the most important indicators of allied responsibility sharing efforts, since it offers the clearest evidence of allied nations' willingness to commit resources to the common defense. Chart II-1 depicts the wide variations in 2002 per capita GDP (a

widely accepted indicator of prosperity and standard of living) among the nations addressed in this Report – from under $3,000 in Turkey to over $45,000 in Luxembourg.

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