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The Dynamics of Alliance Diplomacy Over Iraq

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Abstract

The transatlantic fight that erupted in late 2002 and early 2003 over the war in Iraq was no freak conjunction of unrelated dynamic systems that whirled out of control. The rupture was a real test of the new *Pax Americana* and the new hegemonic style of the United States—but that style itself was the biggest single variable in the schism. The scale of the confrontation was measured in the unusually wide spectrum of transatlantic quarrels, the vitriol in the polemics, and the ill will that went far beyond mere interests to offend the self-definition, self-identity, and self-importance of both sides of the Atlantic. Tracing the political developments in dealings between the United States and Europe since 9-11, this article assesses the current state of diplomatic affairs across the Atlantic and the implications of American actions in Iraq for the future of the transatlantic relationship. Had it not been for the catalyst of 9-11 and the subsequent American determination to attack Iraq, the diverging US and European political mentalities might conceivably have accommodated their growing differences without crisis.

Keywords: transatlantic relations, US foreign policy, NATO.

Introduction

Neither the BBC's 'perfect storm' simile nor structural determinism alone begins to capture the essence of the worst US-European clash in half a century. The transatlantic fight that erupted in late 2002 and early 2003 over war in Iraq was no freak conjunction of unrelated dynamic systems that whirled out of control. Nor was it some pre-programmed reflex of estrangement once the Berlin Wall fell and the pressure of the Soviet threat lifted.

The rupture was a real test of the new *Pax Americana* and the new hegemonic style of the United States—but that style itself was the biggest single variable in the schism. The neoconservative earthquake after 9/11 transformed the US from the guarantor of the status-quo of the twentieth century into a revolutionary power in the twenty-first century, and supplanted America's collaborative cold-war leadership with a more muscular, unilateral, and crusading exercise of hegemony.¹ And it set off a shock among continental Europeans that was hardly less traumatic than the shock the al Qaeda attacks of September 11, 2001 inflicted on Americans.²

The scale of the confrontation was measured in the unusually wide spectrum of transatlantic quarrels, the vitriol in the polemics, and the ill will that went far beyond mere interests to offend the self-definition, self-identity, and self-importance of both sides of the Atlantic.

Diverging World Views

The broad spectrum of the rows needs little elaboration. Even before their showdown over war in Iraq, Americans and Europeans argued about the Kyoto Protocol on curbing greenhouse gases; the International Criminal Court; an array of arms-control treaties banning or limiting land mines, nuclear tests, and chemical and biological weapons; genetically-foods; privacy; the death sentence; abortion; and numerous other issues. These disputes reinforced each other—and so did long-standing mutual disapproval of domestic social choices made on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean. Americans criticized what they viewed as Europe's bloated government, exorbitant social welfare, the cornucopia of labour benefits that deter entrepreneurs from generating jobs, and other impediments in listless European economies. Europeans, while they admired the openness and energy of American society, were disturbed by what they regarded as its ruthlessness toward life's losers—along with promiscuous violence, an addiction to guns, the world's highest per capita prison population, and a death penalty that targeted blacks disproportionately.

Similarly, the bad temper in the relationship needs little elaboration. Muscular Americans mocked craven Europeans³ and objected strenuously to what they saw as a surge in anti-Americanism, anti-Semitism, ingratitude, and disloyalty in Europe.⁴ Conversely, the European political class felt degraded by the sheer contempt for Europe it encountered in the Bush administration.⁵

And, of course, self-identification diverged sharply between the American 'city set on a hill' and 'post-modern' Europe. The United States viewed itself as uniquely righteous and wise in its policies because, having invented modern democracy, it clearly had the best democracy in the world and, not coincidentally, the best absorption of immigrants.⁶ American elites (though not yet the man in the street)⁷ scorned Europeans as spoiled, weak, cowardly free riders on the US supply of the public good of global security.

It followed that if the American system was the globe's best, then the policies selected by the American government too, ipso facto, must be the best policies for the globe.⁸ The US Congress had every moral right to insist on the extraterritorial reach of its legislation on Cuban sanctions or business accounting practices—and to be outraged at EU application of European cartel laws to block American mergers. Washington, which under an earlier administration had been a prime initiator of the International Criminal Court, had every duty, not only to withdraw its signature from the treaty, but to crusade against the court by stopping military aid to Central European or other states that signed on to it.

Moreover, Americans knew that they were uniquely dynamic in economic growth in the 1990s. Their productivity far outstripped Europe's.⁹ The US powered the 1990s' boom, and even after the bubble burst, the US continued to lead the world as the globe's most insatiable consumer. Willy-nilly, European stock markets followed Wall Street plunges and recoveries and did not initiate them.

Above all, Americans knew that they were the world's only remaining superpower. Their Revolution in Military Affairs, with its dazzling C4 (command, control, communications, and computing), precision weapons, and net-centric battlefield intelligence and management, so far surpassed both foes and allies that few Europeans could still fight at the side of US forces. Washington's annual dollar outlay for defence was double that of the combined defence expenditures of all European Union members.

A final source of America's flush of power was the extraordinary US prowess in setting the global political agenda. When the administration decided to go all out to develop a missile-defence system, then foreign opposition to this program collapsed. When the US decided to torpedo the International Criminal Court, on this, too, Europeans muted their voices.

The European sense of self was very different. After millennia of assuming that frequent bloodshed was normal, inevitable, and even (until World War I) heroic, the Europeans—under US leadership—finally rebelled against the habit of war in the wake of the carnage of World War II. Washington forced the Europeans to cooperate in joint planning in order to receive Marshall Plan aid in reconstruction. They duly banded together to form the European Coal and Steel Community and then the European Community; they inaugurated unprecedented transparency in opening their mid-term military planning to the scrutiny of neighbours in NATO; and in the process they created unprecedented peace on their continent.¹⁰ After 300 years of the nation-state and a balance of all against all, they rejected not only Hobbes, but also the inviolability of state sovereignty. French and Germans became reconciled to the point of wondering how they could ever have considered each other arch enemies. In conscious imitation, Germans and Dutch, Germans and Poles, and even Poles and Ukrainians too, in more rudimentary fashion, effected reconciliation.¹¹

Notably, despite widespread scepticism, this growing cooperation survived the demise of the common Russian enemy. Notably, it finally solved the old 'German question' of how to keep the vigorous, populous Teutons from overwhelming their neighbours, by embedding even a reunified Germany in a strong European structure and subsuming national German identity to a common European identity.¹² In this counterintuitive new system states meddle in unprecedented fashion in the internal affairs of their neighbours, and consensus is reached by exhaustion at marathon gabfests. The best scribe of this phenomenon, Robert Cooper, classifies European states as 'post-modern.' They know they are too small to cope alone with cross-border problems of pollution or capital flows or immigration and have therefore invented a new form of supranational governance by progressively 'pooling' their sovereignty to gain more control over their destinies. This novel mindset distinguishes them from 'modern' nationalist states like China, Russia, or the United States, say, or from the chaotic 'pre-modern' states like the Taliban's Afghanistan or Somalia.¹³

9/11 and the War in Afghanistan

But for the catalyst of 9/11 and the subsequent American determination to attack Iraq, the diverging US and European political mentalities might conceivably have accommodated their growing differences without crisis. Destruction of the World Trade Towers on September 11, 2001 by al Qaeda suicide militants, however—and the never-solved anthrax attacks that followed—shattered Americans' assumption of US invulnerability and left the superpower with volatile mixed feelings of omnipotence and special victimization, and with a sense of unbearable threat that Europeans did not share.¹⁴ Europeans, having suppressed their own domestic terrorists in the 1970s and 1980s, found US alarm exaggerated. Americans felt that Europeans wilfully downplayed the danger that rogue states might channel weapons of mass destruction (WMD) to suicide bombers—and were appeasing Islamic states in order to let the US be the lonely target of Islamist terrorism.

Immediately after 9/11 there was a groundswell of European sympathy for the United States. *Le Monde* proclaimed, 'Nous sommes tous américains.'¹⁵ NATO invoked its Article 5 for the first time ever to declare this attack on the US an attack on all alliance members. Some 200,000 Germans gathered spontaneously at the Brandenburg Gate for a pro-American rally. Chancellor Gerhard Schröder pledged 'unlimited solidarity' with America in the Bundestag, then risked his post on a vote of confidence to carry the war-averse Germans further than ever before in military engagement to send Special Forces to help the US operation in Afghanistan. The German Embassy in Washington established a fund to aid 9/11 victims, expecting to collect several tens of thousands of dollars—and was overwhelmed by the \$42 million that poured in. And the Bundesnachrichtendienst swiftly provided its counterpart Central Intelligence Agency with the clue that led to the arrest of the alleged 'twentieth hijacker,' Zacarias Moussaoui.¹⁶ Berlin's reaction was especially important, not only because today's Germans resemble Americans more than do any other Europeans, but also because Bonn/Berlin, for half a century, had been the quiet bridge-builder between the US and an often anti-American France.

Along with this wave of very human pro-American emotion, there was strong political support for the initial policy responses of the Bush administration. European governments viewed American pressure on Pakistan to be either for or against the US as necessary to force Islamabad to stop harbouring al Qaeda networks and Wahhabi madrasas that preached hatred of the West. They appreciated Washington's warding off of a nuclear confrontation between Pakistan and India over Kashmir. They welcomed too Bush's restraint in resisting both the notion of a Christian-Islamic clash of civilizations and the war on Saddam Hussein that administration hardliners were already promoting, if without any proof of Iraqi collusion with al Qaeda or possession of nuclear weapons.¹⁷ They were relieved by what they interpreted, despite Washington's rebuff to NATO's offers of help,¹⁸ as a return from unilateralism to multilateralism in efforts to build a large anti-terror coalition as President George H. W. Bush had done in his Gulf war a decade earlier. Their only objection to the American military campaign in Afghanistan was that they were allowed only a minor role in it.

Above all, at this fraught moment, Europeans accepted and even craved US leadership, as they had for the previous half century. If the US did not lead, no one did in the community of industrialized democracies. As the cold-war axiom had it, the Europeans loved to be led by the US—in the direction the Europeans wanted to go. In late 2001, they thought, Bush was taking them in the direction they wanted to go.

To be sure, Europeans already had misgivings about Bush's black-and-white views and certitude that he was sent by God to lead America in its time of need, about the almost exclusive reliance of the administration on military countermeasures, and about its zealous guardianship of Washington's monopoly on determining how to vanquish evil.¹⁹ More distressing to the Europeans, however, was their own disarray in the crisis. Instead of rallying to forge their much-vaunted Common Security and Foreign Policy (CFSP), British Prime Minister Tony Blair rejuvenated the old Anglo-Saxon special relationship, while other Europeans leaders elbowed each other to win their own individual invitations to Crawford, Texas.

The Long Road to Baghdad

It was at the beginning of 2002 that transatlantic relations deteriorated palpably. From the European point of view, the triggers of the quarrels were Bush's State of the Union address at the end of January and Under Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz's conduct at the blue-ribbon Munich Security Conference in early February. From the American point of view, the triggers were European dissent from American leadership and a surge of anti-Americanism and anti-Semitism in Europe, as North African immigrants in France in particular desecrated Jewish synagogues and memorials.

The most dismaying elements for America's allies in Bush's State of the Union address were its downgrading of Europeans as not even worthy of mention, and the lumping together of Iraq, North Korea, and Iran as an 'axis of evil.'²⁰ The speech presaged possible American attacks, not only on Iraq, but also on Iran, a country the Europeans had been cultivating in an effort to support its many

young would-be reformers, modernizers, and liberalizers. Treating Tehran as a pariah, they feared, would only strengthen the hard-line ayatollahs.

The most dismaying element for Europeans in Wolfowitz's performance in Munich was his emphatic repetition of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's admonition that from then on the mission would determine the coalition in any American military operation, not vice versa. The clear message, as the Deputy Secretary authoritatively lectured the NATO Defence Ministers above his rank, was that the transatlantic alliance they had come to think of as immutable was, for Washington, expendable. It could and now would be replaced by ad hoc assemblies of American subordinates.

On Iraq, Americans and Europeans agreed that President Saddam Hussein was a nasty oppressor of Iraqis and a would-be megalomaniac threat to his regional neighbours. Europeans thought, however, that in the dozen years since he had been pushed out of Kuwait, Hussein had been effectively contained by United Nations embargos and enforcement of Iraqi no-fly-zones by American and British planes, and prevented from acquiring nuclear weapons or again firing chemical weapons on enemies in a repetition of his nastiness in the 1980s. Nor, despite their pleas for such information, were the Europeans given any evidence by the US of a link between Iraq and terrorists. They therefore saw no urgency in running the high risks of unintended consequences in invading Iraq. Their own intelligence and what they saw of US intelligence, seemed to indicate that while Baghdad was working hard to acquire nuclear weapons, it was still several years away from getting the crucial fissile materials, and could be kept equally far away in the future.²¹ The one thing that might induce the rational Hussein to a desperate launch of the chemical weapons he was still thought to possess—perhaps against Israeli targets—would be an invasion that threatened his existence and made him think he had nothing left to lose, Europeans contended.

The political dangers, they continued, were that an attack on Iraq could break up this crucial Arab country, with Iran taking over parts of the south, Turkey the Kurdish territory to the north. Especially if an invasion were mounted with the Israeli-Palestinian confrontation still at a boil, they feared, the consequences could destabilize the entire Middle-East. They found naive the American expectation that defeat of Hussein would make Iraqis democratic and then spread democracy throughout the region. They found it far more likely that an occupied Iraq would be the best possible breeding ground for al Qaeda, would draw resources away from the more essential fight against terrorists, and perhaps even enable fundamentalists to get their hands on Pakistan's nuclear weapons. More basically, they had had the precept inculcated in them over two generations (not least by the Americans) that use of force in defence of stability and the status quo was moral, but use of force in a revolutionary gamble was not. They therefore found it alarming to hear their mentors increasingly singing the praises of democratizing the medieval Islamic world by the sword. Historical memories of the devastation of the Thirty Years War and of Napoleon's 'revolution in boots'—the very kind of bloodshed they had worked so assiduously to escape after 1945—returned.

A number of American generals and foreign-policy veterans from the administration of President Bush *père* shared these worries, it seemed; in summer of 2002 leaks about military planning in the US media and op-ed columns by former National Security Council adviser Brent Scowcroft, former Secretary of State James Baker III, and even the delphic former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger obliquely challenged administration assumptions about Iraq.²² George W. Bush's own Middle East envoy, General Anthony Zinni (who subsequently lost his pro bono post) was characteristic in the direction of his comments but uncharacteristic in his bluntness in saying, 'Attacking Iraq now will cause a lot of problems [...] It might be interesting to wonder why all the generals see it the same way, and all those that never fired a shot in anger and [are] really hell-bent to go to war see it a different way [...] The Middle East peace process, in my mind, has to be a higher priority. Winning the war on terrorism has to be a higher priority [...] Our relationships in the region are in major disrepair [and] we need to quit making enemies we don't need to make enemies out of [...] There's a deep chasm growing between that part of the world and our part of the world. And it's strange, about a month after 9/11, they were sympathetic and compassionate toward us.'²³

Cheney's Call for Regime Change in Iraq

At the end of August Vice President Dick Cheney silenced the doubters with a speech advocating a war on Iraq to pre-empt a potential future threat from Baghdad by effecting regime change.²⁴ At this point the new American strategy of 'pre-emption'—which Bush had adumbrated at his West Point graduation address in June and would shortly be enshrined in the new National Security Strategy—took on concrete form. In principle, European diplomats acknowledged the need to expand the leeway for pre-emption allowed under international law in an age when a single unblocked chemical or nuclear weapon could obliterate millions in an instant. In practice, however, they saw no imminent threat in the wily, secular Saddam Hussein and viewed the war Cheney was promoting as at best an optional war. On this point, as former British Foreign Minister Robin Cook's subsequent diaries and testimony about the suicide of British government scientist David Kelly revealed, there was far more consensus between the sceptical governments across the Channel and the pro-American British government than was publicly apparent at the time.²⁵ Europeans wondered how many other regimes Washington might now decide to topple, and whether the American voters' patience would last long enough to complete real reconstruction after such coups.

In late summer of 2002 Gerhard Schröder was in the run-up to an election the polls predicted he would lose. He had already picked up the anti-war theme on August 5—in violation of a promise to Bush not to touch the subject, US officials complained. After the Cheney speech Schröder's rejection of German military or financial participation in any 'adventure' in Iraq joined the down-home issue of coping with summer floods as the staples in his campaign. The chancellor advocated a 'German way', a vague phrase he never defined and seemed to apply interchangeably to domestic and foreign policy—but one that evoked in American listeners the historical ghosts of a German *sonderweg*, or 'special way', between East and West. Washington understood this as a summons to German defiance of American foreign policy. Moreover, unlike the more ambiguous French at the time, Schröder allies said categorically that Berlin would not join any war on Iraq even if the Security Council blessed it.²⁶ For a country that put so much stock on multilateralism in general and the United Nations in particular, this was an oddly unilateralist stance. It appealed to anti-war east German voters in particular, however. With their ballots, Schröder's Social Democratic-Green coalition narrowly won re-election, trouncing maverick extremist right candidates, as usual,²⁷ and, more unusually, wiping out the east German post-communist Party of Democratic Socialism after its decade as a party on the national level.

Washington censured Schröder for running against the United States for the first time in the electoral history of the Federal Republic. And after the German justice minister—talking with several dozen constituents three days before the election—said both Bush and Hitler resorted to foreign wars to divert attention from domestic problems, National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice accused the Germans of having 'poisoned' relations.²⁸ The White House demanded that the chancellor fire his minister within 24 hours, before the election—and when he did so only on the day after the election, Bush ostracized Schröder for the next year, refusing to congratulate him on his victory, to meet him, or to take his phone calls.²⁹ Reflecting administration anger, influential Pentagon adviser Richard Perle declared publicly that Schröder should resign.

After his September 22 re-election the chancellor followed the customary pendulum of politics. While still rejecting any German combat role in the impending war, he toned down his anti-war rhetoric and reemphasized Berlin's commitment to all NATO obligations, including full American use of German airspace and bases, logistical support, assumption by Bundeswehr soldiers of guard duty at US bases in Germany to free American troops for war, continued German participation in airborne AWACS surveillance flights, loan of Patriot anti-missile systems and armoured Fuchs biological and chemical weapons detectors and decontaminators to Israel, Turkey, and Kuwait (with the Patriots to Turkey detouring via the Netherlands and picking up Dutch crews in order to keep Schröder's campaign pledge of abstention from the war). In a notable shift for a country that on constitutional grounds had no combat troops abroad a decade earlier, the Germans now had almost 10,000 peacekeeping troops abroad—a

small number compared with US forces, but more than any other country. In Kabul they would further shortly assume co-command, with the Dutch, of the International Security Assistance Forces.³⁰

In the poisoned bilateral atmosphere, this contribution did not assuage Washington. As one German official put it, Bush made it clear that while he deemed Russia's Vladimir Putin a man he could trust, he deemed Gerhard Schröder a man he could not trust.

For Washington the central issue of the contretemps seemed to be German betrayal of America. The burden of proof was not on the US to demonstrate the imminent threat that would justify a drastic resort to war; a potential growing threat sufficed to require preventive war. The burden of proof fell instead on the Germans, to demonstrate their loyalty to the US they owed so much to, from 1945 on through reunification in 1990.

For several months after the Cheney speech, Europeans remained confused. On first hearing—even though they had been given no advance notice of the speech, as normal diplomatic practice would prescribe before a major foreign-policy announcement—they regarded the vice president's speech as a statement of official US policy and responded accordingly. They were reproached by administration contacts, however, for jumping to conclusions without giving Washington the benefit of the doubt. American policy was shaped in the rough and tumble of competing voices, the Europeans were told; no decisions about going to war had yet been made.³¹

The Europeans, adapting to this admonition, then shifted, underestimated the vice president's importance, and accepted the judgment of Bush's insider biographers, Bob Woodward and David Frum, that Cheney's role was just a subordinate one of saluting the president.³² They had not yet caught on to the policy-setting power of what Zbigniew Brzezinski later called Cheney's own parallel 'national security council'.³³ And anyway, if the vice president's drumbeat of war was the official American position, why had not the president himself proclaimed such a departure from previous policy? Why did US officials continue to maintain (as they would throughout the massive US troop build-up in the Gulf that began shortly right up to a few days before war started in March 2003) that the whole issue of Iraq was wide open and the administration had not yet made up its mind?³⁴ And since Bush, at Blair's urging, went to the UN in September to seek an imprimatur for enforcing UN prohibitions on Iraqi WMD programs, didn't this mean that the president was turning multilateral after all and would seek a diplomatic solution? Only half a year later would a senior White House official inform the Germans that a decision to go to war had already been made prior to Cheney's speech. Only then would Europeans learn that the US had already begun softening-up military strikes against Iraqi fibre-optics communications in June of 2002.³⁵

The Lull before the Storm

On November 8, after a two-month French-American minuet about the wording, the UN Security Council agreed unanimously on Resolution 1441 calling on Saddam Hussein to allow international inspections in Iraq to resume and threatening unspecified 'serious consequences' if Iraq was found to be in 'material breach' of longstanding UN bans on Iraqi WMD programs. UN teams under former head of the International Atomic Energy Agency Hans Blix immediately took up the task. In the deliberate ambiguity that usually attends such compromises, the US interpreted the French signature and lobbying for unanimous adoption of the resolution as a promise that Paris would eventually sign a second resolution as war approached that would specifically authorizing the threatened 'serious consequences'. And indeed, all the diplomatic signals seemed to indicate that France was simply playing hard to get in order to join the American action at the last minute at the highest political price it could extract from Washington. In mid-December 2002 a senior French general informed the Pentagon that if the Security Council approved, France would send 15,000 troops, 100 planes, and an aircraft carrier to join in the invasion.³⁶

At this point—even though Washington and Paris clearly had quite different scenarios in mind—the US-French schism was not irrevocable. In late November an upbeat NATO summit in Prague agreed amicably on two shifts to keep the alliance relevant to the new security threats. In a major departure from its 50-year precept that it was a defensive status-quo alliance that was non-interventionist outside NATO territory, the alliance approved out-of-area operations in principle. And to carry out intervention in future Afghanistan-like crises, it created a NATO Reaction Force. At first, some Europeans feared that the NRF might be a disguised American Foreign Legion. But eventually the view prevailed that this was a credible American offer to give NATO a role in the asymmetrical fight against terrorism and help strengthen the EU's projected reaction force.³⁷

Then on December 13—after a European Union summit promised Ankara serious consideration of Turkish EU membership by the end of 2004—a landmark agreement was reached between NATO and the European Union on coordinating their security efforts. In cases where NATO itself was not engaged, it would give planning, command, and logistical support to the European Rapid Reaction Force of 60,000. This would ensure that the ERRF did not take on operations it could not carry out, preserve NATO's 'escalation dominance', and avoid 'renationalization' of security to European countries acting on their own. The EU had been jolted into a 'strategic re-awakening', as veteran analyst Julian Lindley-French put it—a realization that it could not just tend its own garden of Eden and let America take care of global strategic threats. And the US was acknowledging that the EU could be helpful to it.³⁸

The lull did not last long. By January 2003 the (then) three-month-long US ostracism of Gerhard Schröder pushed him into the arms of a colleague he had previously shown no particular liking for, French President Jacques Chirac.³⁹ This unwonted embrace by the previously staunch Atlanticist Germans in turn tempted Chirac to go further in baiting Washington than he had hitherto done. Washington reacted by staging a showdown over the issue of NATO solidarity with Turkey. Tempers rose.

The stage was set in the razzamatazz leading up to the celebration in January of the fortieth anniversary of the Elysée Treaty of post-World War II French-German reconciliation. Chirac and Schröder hardened their opposition to the coming war, and to the second UN resolution that the US was seeking to declare that Iraq was in fact in 'material breach' of Resolution 1441. Washington held that it required no such finding to justify an invasion of Iraq, but it sought the second resolution at the urging of Tony Blair, who needed it to convince the sceptical British public of the war's legitimacy.

To the mounting frustration of Washington, Chirac now argued that all Resolution 1441 authorized at this stage was more intensive international inspections in Iraq. He threatened to veto any UN resolution that would help America and began mobilizing, successfully, a majority of other Security Council members against the US. And he began this campaign in a way that embarrassed and alienated even the moderate Secretary of State Colin Powell. The French insisted that Powell skip the important political appearances he was scheduled to make in the US on Martin Luther King Day, January 20, to come to the UN instead and discuss what was billed as a session on countering terrorism. French Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin used his press conference after the Security Council meeting, however, to make a pointed attack on Washington. If the US invaded Iraq, he said, this would be 'a victory for the law of the strongest'. Powell felt ambushed, by all accounts out of Washington, and thereafter pleaded the hard-line case for war in the UN with full passion.⁴⁰ Rumsfeld promptly scorned the 'old Europe' of France and Germany and welcomed the 'new Europe' of Poland and other enthusiastic American allies in Central Europe. Next, Britain, Spain, Italy, Portugal, and Denmark, along with Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, wrote a major opinion essay in the *Wall Street Journal* (without informing France and Germany beforehand) that implicitly backed the approaching US war in Iraq. Ten NATO and EU candidates followed with an American-drafted, somewhat more explicit pro-US declaration.⁴¹ Memorably, the angry Chirac told reporters that the Central European candidates for EU membership had missed a good opportunity to shut up and threatened to veto their entry into the Union.⁴²

The American government lauded the 18 courageous European signers of the statements, for the benefit of an American public that supported war, according to opinion polls, only if allies joined the US in the expedition. ‘France and Germany do not speak for Europe’, a bipartisan Sense of the Congress resolution stated and praised ‘the majority of Europe’s democracies’ that endorsed the war. Democratic Congressman Tom Lantos decried the ‘blind intransigence and utter ingratitude’ of the old Europeans for their rescue by Americans from Hitler and Stalin and asserted that the failure of Paris and Berlin to ‘honor their [NATO] commitments is beneath contempt.’ George F. Will wrote off NATO as ‘a thing of ridicule’ and asked why any American troops should remain ‘in an unsympathetic country such as Germany.’ The Congressional restaurant renamed French fries ‘freedom fries’; some Republicans sought a boycott of Perrier and French wines if the EU continued to ban imports of genetically-modified American foods. Rumsfeld savoured telling a Congressional hearing that some countries were not helping the US—like Cuba, Libya, and Germany.

To the dismay of his own foreign ministry and the editorial pages of the major German newspapers, on the left as well as on the right, Chancellor Schröder now declared flatly that Germany would not vote for any UN resolution that would be taken as justifying war.⁴³ This was no longer campaign rhetoric—or at least it had no positive impact on voters, who gave the Social Democrats their worst showing ever in regional elections in early February. Instead, the chancellor’s defiance of the US this time was a deliberate policy choice to magnify rather than minimize differences. US Ambassador to Germany Daniel Coats dismissed Germany as no longer relevant.⁴⁴

Berlin did indeed pay a huge price in loss of ‘relevance’ for Schröder’s Gaullist lurch and estrangement from the US. The chancellor forfeited yet again any chance of cutting the exorbitant EU farm subsidies that the Germans basically pay for and the French basically consume. He abandoned the traditional German championing of the smaller EU states’ interests to embrace the kind of big-state directorate the French had long sought—and he dropped Germany’s post-cold war tutoring of the new Central European democracies for the EU membership the French long tried to block. The isolated Schröder had to pay so much, he told confidantes, because he now needed Chirac and feared that Paris would side with the American war at the last minute, leaving Berlin utterly alone in its anti-war stance.⁴⁵ The precept that had governed German foreign policy ever since the signing of the Elysée treaty—that US-German relations must always take precedence even over the crucial French-German relationship—seemed to be at an end.⁴⁶ Schröder’s anti-war stance was certainly popular throughout Europe, even in Britain, Spain, Italy, and other countries whose governments supported America’s Iraq war. Public opinion opposed the war with majorities ranging from clear to overwhelming across Europe, while general public approval of the US across Europe plummeted correspondingly.⁴⁷ But this hardly compensated for Schröder’s constriction of Berlin’s room for diplomatic manoeuvre.

By the end of January Washington gave up trying for a second resolution.

Transatlantic Showdown

As if these pyrotechnics weren’t bad enough, NATO now embarked on one of the most bizarre confrontations in its history. The issue was alliance endorsement of advance military planning to help Turkey defend itself in case of war. Formal authorization was hardly needed; such contingency planning occurs continuously, and various Turkish scenarios were already under discussion in the planning staff, according to a senior officer at SHAPE headquarters.⁴⁸ But the US wanted to maximize the pressure on Iraq by recruiting the fledgling new Islamic government in Ankara to the cause of the war on Iraq. The Turkish parliament balked, with an eye to the 94 percent of Turks who opposed the war; Washington presented Ankara with carrots and sticks in promises of NATO and US military and financial assistance—but also in speculation about the reduced strategic importance of Turkey once the US had occupied Iraq.⁴⁹ France and Germany opposed formal NATO approval of allegedly defensive aid to Turkey—in clear preparation for an American and British invasion of Iraq—as a thinly disguised effort to get NATO sanction for the impending war itself, a point Washington seemed

to have in mind. Indeed, the US gave every sign that it wanted to make Schröder eat crow publicly. Personally, the chancellor assured the Turks that he would help them—but at the same time he was showing the 71 percent of Germans who opposed the war that he could say no to the US. Germany, France, and Belgium refused to go along with the required unanimous vote in the NATO Council. There must be no automatism, they argued, no NATO prejudgment that the looming war was justified.

Securing the imprimatur of the political North Atlantic Council of permanent ambassadors to the NATO headquarters quickly became a test of wills. The US kept threatening that NATO would be dead if a statement of solidarity with Turkey were not forthcoming. After a month of wrangling, language acceptable to Berlin about ‘defensive’ assistance for Turkey was found—and the decision was whisked out of the Council and into NATO’s Defence Planning Committee, a body Paris did not belong to, as a political but not military member of the alliance.

However ridiculous the issue, what was at stake was the survival of the alliance. After half a century of defending Europe against the twenty Soviet divisions in East Germany, instituting unprecedented confidence-building in open shared medium-term military planning, socializing American and German and Turkish and Greek officers to mutual trust, and helping the new Central European democracies to bring their armies under civilian control, NATO now faced possible extinction. Americans saw the French and Germans as the villains. Not a few Europeans saw the Americans as the villains in putting the world’s longest-lasting alliance at risk in their compulsion to invade Iraq. Americans thought the French were trying to declare Europe’s independence from the US. The French and Germans thought it was the US that was trying to declare independence from the fetters of alliance. Only the powerful hegemon that had once invented cooperative institutions to maximize American influence, they further thought, had the power to dissolve these institutions, on the presumption that the only remaining superpower was now strong enough to steer the globalized world alone. ‘The prospect of war has divided the United Nations Security Council, riven the most enduring military alliance of modern times, and split the European Union’, the *Financial Times* pronounced sombrely as war approached.⁵⁰ The US carried out ‘willful destruction of the international security system during the past few months’, concluded the paper’s columnist Philip Stephens shortly thereafter.⁵¹

‘The Iraq war is not legitimate self-defence. It is not humanitarian intervention. And it is not crisis control’, commented a representative German editorial in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*. ‘The war hollows out the international ban on violence; it leaves war to the whim of the stronger. The power of this negative model leads to geopolitical destruction; if it is legitimate for the US to conduct a preventive war, then it will be easy for other states to do so too.’⁵²

In the last few weeks before war began, there was further French-American sparring over the inconclusive UN inspections of Iraqi nuclear programs. The French wanted to prolong the inspections; the US, now that its military build-up in the Gulf was complete, did not want to relax the pressure on Saddam Hussein. Secretary of State Colin Powell and Prime Minister Tony Blair took their evidence about the threat of Iraqi WMD to the UN and Westminster respectively; their governments’ string of public presentations would soon turn out to have been riddled with forgeries, plagiarism from a student paper, misrepresentation of the use of some cylinders imported by the Iraqis, and hearsay reports from Iraqi exile groups close to the Pentagon hawks.⁵³ On March 7 the US and Britain gave Baghdad a deadline to disarm or be disarmed. On March 11, as Blair faced rebellious backbenchers, Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld set off a storm in Britain by remarking that even if Blair couldn’t get a majority, British forces didn’t really matter anyway, since the US could handle this task on its own.

Westminster, after the only serious debate about the war in any allied parliament, did give the prime minister his majority. In what was widely regarded as the best speech of his career, Tony Blair reviewed ‘Saddam’s lies, deception and obstruction’ in a decade of flouting UN bans on Iraqi development of WMD. He refuted the ‘absurd’ claim that it could be credible that Hussein had now destroyed these weapons. He reprimanded France for placating the Iraqi tyrant in the face of the ‘two begetters of chaos’ in the 21st century—‘tyrannical regimes with WMD and extreme terrorist groups

who profess a perverted and false view of Islam.’ The great ‘danger to the UN is inaction’ and loss of credibility in the next confrontation, he said. The current state of affairs was ‘the consequence of Europe and the United States dividing from each other.’ Failure of Europeans to stand by the US now, he warned, would ‘be the biggest impulse to unilateralism there could ever be.’⁵⁴

A third of the prime minister’s own Labour MPs defected on the vote. Their concern was voiced by Robin Cook, the former secretary of foreign affairs and one of two members of Blair’s government to resign over the war. In his emotional resignation speech, Cook declared, ‘A US administration visibly dominated by vice-president Richard Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld [...] scorns the multilateralism at the core of Mr Blair’s strategic vision [...] The shredding of international support for America’s stance over recent months has represented the biggest foreign policy defeat since the Vietnam War. Worse still, Messrs Cheney and Rumsfeld scarcely care [...] We are back [...] to the Hobbesian world in which right is measured only by might. That’s what frightens me.’⁵⁵

On March 19 war began; within three weeks Baghdad fell. American and British troops, constituting 99 percent of the expeditionary force, won on their own.⁵⁶ There was no contingent of 160,000 troops from 32 Arab, European, and Asian states as there had been in George H. W. Bush’s war. On the contrary, in mid-April Schröder and Chirac added insult to injury by enlisting Russia’s Vladimir Putin to join them in calling for international rather than unilateral US supervision of Iraq’s post-war reconstruction.⁵⁷ And in late April Schröder, Chirac, and their Belgian and Luxembourg counterparts ostentatiously met in what got nicknamed derisively ‘the chocolate summit’ to start a European defence *avant garde* that the US understood as a challenge to NATO and American leadership.⁵⁸ As the triumphant George Bush landed on an aircraft carrier on May 1 to declare the war over in front of a banner proclaiming ‘Mission Accomplished’, he had as yet little reason to seek reconciliation with the Germans and French.

On the battlefield, Rumsfeld’s gamble on a fast, light 21st-century cavalry with night-sight goggles, laser-guided munitions, and laptops paid off. The sceptics’ fears did not materialize. There were no blazing oilfields, no streams of refugees, no house-to-house fighting with high American casualties, no seizure of northern Kurdish territory by Turks or of eastern territory by Iranians, no eruptions on the Arab street, no worsening of Intifada violence. The biggest prize of all, a dishevelled, disoriented, and visibly aged Saddam Hussein who had survived the war by hiding ignominiously in tiny holes in the ground near his native Tikrit, was captured alive nine months after the war began.

Aftermath

In stabilizing post-war Iraq, however, Rumsfeld’s lean dream army performed less well. Reluctantly, the administration accepted that it was now responsible in Iraq for the nation-building it so detested. But the Defense Department, persuaded that the Iraqi population would welcome its American liberators as the Afghans had welcomed them, discarded the detailed State Department planning for reconstruction, relied on the assurances of the exiles that democracy would blossom once Saddam Hussein was gone, did not secure hospitals and museums and electricity infrastructure against the initial rampage of looting—and disbanded the Iraqi army. The British, with decades of imperialism behind them, counselled otherwise. So did the Germans, who on unification had peacefully integrated the hundreds of thousands of East German soldiers into the Bundeswehr overnight. By the end of 2003, public water and electricity had still not been restored to pre-war levels in the country, and popular complaints were mounting.⁵⁹ The US army turned out to be both undermanned and untrained for the job of civilian security and administration it was now responsible for. Soldiers’ repatriation home was repeatedly postponed; the call-up of reserves reached its highest level since the Korean War; uniformed officers worried that so much of their combat capability was being tied down in Iraq that they could not fulfil all their other global commitments.

Worst of all was the security situation, both for Iraqis and for foreigners. Reported murders and rapes and abductions of women rose.⁶⁰ Two key moderate Shiite clerics were murdered in the first months

after victory. GIs in tanks, with no knowledge of Arabic or local customs, proved to be poor urban policemen. The guerrilla war, as US Central Command General John P. Abizaid called it, soon claimed more lives from the US and its allies than the war itself had claimed. Suicide and stand-off attacks on the local UN headquarters, the Red Cross, Italian soldiers, the embassies of countries that backed the US, and Iraqi policemen cooperating with the US drove most of the international staff of the UN, Red Cross, and other non-governmental organizations out of the country. The attacks also drove American (rather more than British) soldiers behind barricades and made them act like occupiers rather than liberators. The presumed culprits were Hussein loyalists, fundamentalist Arabs from other countries drawn by the rich Western target opportunities in Iraq—and some of those hundreds of thousands of disbanded, unemployed Iraqi soldiers. Bombs also began exploding for the first time in Saudi Arabia.

Just before the war the ever-optimistic Blair set forth the hope that after the war the transatlantic community could put the bitter differences behind it and reunite in two common projects. The first would be rebuilding Iraq, with the Europeans joining the US wholeheartedly in the reconstruction, and with the US ceding a major political role to the international community, as represented by the UN. The second—following the pattern of President George H. W. Bush's action after defeating Iraq in the early 1990s—would be advancing the Israeli-Palestinian peace process toward a two-state solution as outlined in the 'roadmap' sketched out by the 'Quartet' of the US, Europe, the UN, and Russia.⁶¹

Unfortunately for Blair's vision of transatlantic reconciliation, both projects failed. In the view of Europeans, Bush, while stating his support for the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, never put his own representative on the ground to keep the process going, and did not give Secretary of State Powell full authority.⁶² The attempt had barely gotten underway when Intifada bombers once again derailed the peace process with violence.

Nor did any of the post-war Iraqi issues serve as a transatlantic unifier. The first major dispute arose from the embarrassing failure of elite US teams to find any weapons of mass destruction in Iraq—one of the main reasons cited for going to war—despite thousands of man hours of searching. The impression hardened that Hussein had probably not had any significant WMD weapons programs since international inspectors found and destroyed more weapons in the mid-1990s than those destroyed in the 1990/91 Iraq war. The absence of WMD—the strongest reason cited for going to war in the first place—confirmed the instincts of European critics of the US and put Tony Blair through his second domestic trial by fire. In Washington, a blame game for the fiasco of pre-war intelligence pitted the White House against the CIA, but did not have much impact on transatlantic relations.

Similarly, Iraqi reconstruction failed to become a uniting catalyst. In September the first face-to-face meeting between Bush and Schröder in over a year seemed like a good omen. But there was no meeting of minds. Germany and France both refused to send their troops to get killed in Bush's war in Iraq. (Poland was initially glad to jump into the breach, take over command of a military sector, get paid by Washington to do so, and enjoy a bit of one-upmanship over the Germans.) Berlin and Paris further refused to donate to reconstruction sums on the scale they had in underwriting the first American-Iraqi war a decade earlier. And they also declined to contribute substantially to the reconstruction effort under an American monopoly on political power. Instead, they pressed for a major role for the UN. This the United States was unwilling to grant—and after top members of the UN team in Iraq were blown up in the suicide bombing at UN headquarters in Iraq, Secretary-General Kofi Annan also became reluctant to take on that responsibility in any case. Again, various American columnists resented European disloyalty to Washington and unwillingness to pay up.⁶³

The next hope for transatlantic reconciliation by Javier Solana and other European officials rested on the EU's first-ever strategy paper that was approved by the EU summit in Brussels in December 2003; and on EU assumption soon of primary responsibility for security in Bosnia. The EU strategy statement went far in naming the same threats that the US strategy statement of a year earlier had identified in the mix of terrorism, WMD proliferation, failed states, and organized crime. It counselled Europe to extend its immediate zone of security to its nearest neighbours (including, so far as possible,

the Balkans, Middle-East, and Caucasus), to spend more on defence and spend it more intelligently—and to take unspecified preventive action when necessary.

In retrospect, the sorry tale of transatlantic estrangement in 2002/03 looked to some American realists like a predestined, if delayed, reflex after the disappearance of the common Soviet enemy. It's probably safe to say that to most Europeans, however, it looked more like a disastrous 'psychodrama'.⁶⁴ The American superpower, stung by the 9/11 attack, demanded fealty from allies in its global retaliation for the attack. France and Germany, while supporting Washington's war on terrorism with close police and intelligence coordination, resisted American efforts to turn the transatlantic alliance from a status-quo preserver of stability into a revolutionary warrior for the spread of democracy in the refractory Islamic world.

The transatlantic alliance survived. What kind of an alliance remained to be seen.⁶⁵

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Notes

- 1 See Ivo H. Daalder and James M. Lindsay, *America Unbound: The Bush Revolution in Foreign Policy* (Washington: Brookings, 2003); Robert J. Art, *A Grand Strategy for America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003); and Lawrence F. Kaplan and William Kristol, *The War Over Iraq: Saddam's Tyranny and America's Mission* (San Francisco: Encounter, 2003).
- 2 For a more detailed exploration of this, see my *Friendly Fire: The Near Death of the Transatlantic Alliance* (Washington: Brookings, 2003).
- 3 In his seminal essay on 'Power and Weakness' in *Policy Review*, no. 113 (June and July 2002, available on: <http://www.policyreview.org/JUN02/kagan.html>), Robert Kagan exulted in American strength and hegemony. Americans were from Mars, the Hobbesian hunters with guns who bravely sought out the bear to defeat it; Europeans were from Venus, the Kantians armed only with knives who did not even try to defend themselves against the bear.
- 4 Charles Krauthammer, 'Europe and 'Those People'', *Washington Post*, April 26, 2002, p. A29; George F. Will, 'Final Solution', Phase 2', *Washington Post*, May 2, 2002; Thomas L. Friedman, 'Nine Wars Too Many', *New York Times*, May 15, 2002; William Safire, 'The German Problem', *New York Times*, September 19, 2002; Michael Ledeen, 'A Theory/What If There's Method to the Franco-German Madness?' *National Review*, March 11, 2003; and Ralph Peters, 'Hitler War Wenigstens Ehrlich', (Hitler Was At Least Honest), *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, May 15, 2003, first page of the feuilleton section. Examples of refutation of the charges of anti-Semitism in particular may be found in Michael Lind, 'The Israel Lobby', *Prospect*, no. 73 (April 2002), pp. 22-29; Antony Lerman, 'Sense on Antisemitism', *Prospect*, no. 77, August 2002, pp. 34-39; John Lloyd, 'Rowing Alone', *Financial Times*, August 3, 2002, p. I and 'Sign of Life from the Past?' *Financial Times*, November 16, 2002, p. I; Linda Grant, 'America's Liberal Jews', *Prospect*, no. 84 (March 2003), pp. 53f.; Tony Judt, 'The Way We Live Now', *New York Review of Books*, March 27, 2003, pp. 6-10; Anatol Lieven, 'Speaking Up', *Prospect*, no. 86 (May 2003), pp. 24-27; and Michael Brenner, 'Juden und Normalität', (Jews and Normality), *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, August 14, 2003, p. 13.
- 5 Timothy Garton Ash, 'Anti-Europeanism in America', *New York Review of Books*, February 13, 2003, pp. 32-34; and Richard Lambert, 'Misunderstanding Each Other', *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 82, no. 2 (March-April 2003), pp. 62-74.
- 6 Seymour Martin Lipset, *American Exceptionalism* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1996); Walter Russell Mead, *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World* (New York: Century Foundation Book, 2002).
- 7 See the opinion polls by the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations/German Marshall Fund of the US, *Worldviews 2002*, released May 2002.
- 8 Francis Fukuyama, 'Has History Restarted Since September 11?' John Bonython Lecture at the Centre for Independent Studies, Melbourne, Australia, August 8, 2002.
- 9 This point generally went uncontested in Europe except by New Labour mavericks who contended that a two-decade comparison of the 1980s and 1990s and more analogous data showed far more US-European similarities in productivity than did the latter decade alone. Will Hutton, *The World We're In* (London: Little, Brown, 2002).
- 10 Michael Howard, *The Invention of Peace* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000); Michael Doyle, *Ways of War and Peace* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1997); Paul Johnson, 'World War II and the Path to Peace', *Wall Street Journal Europe*, May 8, 1995, p. 6; Pierre Hassner, 'Beyond the Three Traditions: The Philosophy of War and Peace in Historical Perspective', *International Affairs*, vol. 70, no. 4 (October 1994), pp. 737-756.
- 11 The literature on the post-World War II French-German reconciliation is vast. Far less has been written about the other, equally dramatic reconciliations. For the latest, incipient Polish-Ukrainian rapprochement, see the summer 2003 issue no. 64 of the Polish-German magazine published in Berlin, *Dialog*.
- 12 See my *Beyond the Wall: Germany's Road to Unification* (Washington: Brookings, 1993); and Philip Zelikow and Condoleezza Rice, *Germany Unified and Europe Transformed* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997). In his *In Europe's Name* (New York: Random House, 1993), Timothy Garton Ash contends that the rump West Germany constantly invoked Europe's name as a cover for its own national interests—but the other side of the coin is that the constant reference to Europe kept the self-definition of the Federal Republic's interests conspicuously pro-European.
- 13 Cooper was still a senior British diplomat when he when he first floated his ideas in *The Post-Modern State and the World Order* (London: Demos, 1996). Now, as the Director-General of the staff of Javier Solana, the EU's High Representative for Foreign Policy, he has developed his analysis further in *The Breaking of Nations: Order and Chaos in the Twenty-first Century* (London: Atlantic, 2003).
- 14 Pierre Hassner, 'The United States: The Empire of Force or the Force of Empire?' Chaillot Paper no. 54 (Paris: EU Institute for Security Studies, September 2002), www.iss-eu.org; and Pierre Hassner, 'Friendly Questions to America the Powerful', *In the National Interest*, vol. 1, no. 2 (Fall 2002), available on: www.inthenationalinterest.com/.

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- 15 September 13, 2001, p. 1.
- 16 The downside for bilateral relations was that Americans lost no time in blaming the Germans for not having routed the al Qaeda cell in Hamburg that many of the suicide hijackers came from. The German retort that it was the US that had allowed the inconspicuous Hamburg cell members to take very conspicuous and suspicious pilot training in the US hardly succeeded in deflecting the accusation.
- 17 News spread quickly that President Bush rebuked Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz for advocating war on Iraq out of turn at the first Camp David war council after 9/11. Bob Woodward, *Bush At War* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2002), pp. 84f.
- 18 The US did permit a NATO task force to monitor the Horn of Africa, let five NATO AWACS surveillance aircraft patrol American skies to free their US equivalents for duty in Asia, and also took on some allies' special forces and marines to join in Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. NATO allies wanted to do much more, but Washington, rating its allies' military capacities as far inferior to America's in any case, rebuffed them and further made it clear that no allied participation would ever win a policy voice for contributors.
- 19 Author's background interviews with senior German and other European officials.
- 20 George Bush, State of the Union address, January 29, 2002, available on: www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/01/20020129-11.html
- 21 Author's background interviews with senior German and other European officials.
- 22 James A. Baker III, 'The Right Way to Change a Regime', *New York Times*, August 25, 2002; Brent Scowcroft, 'Don't Attack Saddam', *Wall Street Journal*, August 15, 2002; Todd S. Purdum and Patrick E. Tyler, 'Top Republicans Break With Bush on Iraq Strategy', *New York Times*, August 16, 2002; and Nicholas Lemann, 'The War on What?' *The New Yorker*, September 16, 2002.
- 23 Comments of Gen. Anthony Zinni (ret.) during a speech before the Florida Economic Club, August 23, 2002, available on: <http://www.npr.org/programs/morning/zinni.html>.
- 24 'Vice President Speaks at VFW 103rd National Convention', available on: www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/08/20020826.html.
- 25 David Cracknell, 'Blair 'Knew Iraq Had No WMD'', *Sunday Times* (London), October 5, 2003, p. 1; and Philip Stephens, 'Bush and Blair's Differing Designs for a Secure World', *Financial Times*, March 21, 2003, p. 16. Many British commentators conclude, somewhat more cautiously, that while Blair considered the potential combination of terrorists and WMD a grave threat, his overriding motivation was to keep an America determined to invade Iraq from doing so alone. See, for example, Charles Grant's review of books about Blair by two British journalists, John Kampfner and Peter Riddell, 'Blair's Five Wars', in *Prospect*, no. 91 (October 2003), pp. 40-43. Blair's own speech to parliament on the eve of war, by contrast to earlier government statements, claimed neither that Iraq was on the verge of acquiring nuclear weapons nor that Hussein had links with al Qaeda. Instead, Blair stressed Hussein's defiance of 17 UN resolutions, the leader's repugnant repression of Iraqis, concern that if the US and Britain backed down after their military buildup in the Gulf, this would only embolden Hussein to commit worse deeds—and, of course, that Britain must stand by the US.
- 26 The most detailed account of this issue in English is Stephen Szabo, 'A Poisoned Victory? German-American Relations and the Election of 2002', manuscript chapter for David P. Conradt and others, ed., *A Precarious Victory: Schröder and the German Elections of 2002*.
- 27 Since its founding in 1949 the Federal Republic has never had any significant right populist movement of the sort led by Jean-Marie Le Pen, Jörg Haider, Pim Fortuyn, Christoph Blocher, and others in neighbouring countries.
- 28 It was permissible for Bush's campaign manager Karl Rove to compare the adulation for Bush by baseball fans with Nazi adulation for Hitler. It was not permissible for a German official to make any such comparison. See Bob Woodward, *Bush at War* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2002), p. 277.
- 29 Throughout that year this personal insult to the US president received as much as or even more stress than Schröder's opposition to the war by US officials in the author's interviews.
- 30 See, for example, Christian Wernicke and Christoph Schwennicke, 'Bundeswehr muss mit Grösserem Türkei-Einsatz rechnen', (Bundeswehr Must Count On Larger Operation in Turkey), *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, February 20, 2002, p. 1; and 'Awacs-Besatzungen Bleiben Vorläufig im Einsatz (AWACS Crews Remain in Operation for Now)', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, March 24, 2003, p. 1.
- 31 Author's interviews with German officials. See also reporting by Stephen Erlanger in 'Traces of Terror' in the *New York Times* of September 1, 2002, that the issue of war in Iraq was still wide open. He wrote, 'Senior officials in Washington are angry at his [Schröder's] presumption that the American debate over Iraq is finished and his failure to give his closest ally the benefit of the doubt.'
- 32 Woodward, *op. cit.*, p.38; and David Frum, *The Right Man* (New York: Random House, 2003), p. 62.
- 33 When George W. Bush took office in 2001, the US media widely assumed that the experienced Cheney would be the foreign-policy heavyweight in the administration. Administration spokesmen rejected this view, however, and by mid-

- 2002 had certainly convinced Europeans that the president himself determined foreign as well as domestic policy, and only his voice was authoritative. It was only as the Iraq war broke out in 2003 that the media consensus in Washington (and thus perceptions in Europe) shifted back to focus on Cheney as the driving force in administration foreign policy. One of the first columnists to pinpoint this was Jim Hoagland, 'How He Got Here', *Washington Post*, March 21, 2003, p. A37. See also Zbigniew Brzezinski, 'Where Do We Go from Here?' *Transatlantic Internationale Politik* 4, no. 3 (Fall 2003), p. 4.
- 34 Even as late as mid-January 2003, German officials could not tell whether the Bush administration had 'already decided that war with Iraq was inevitable', wrote James Kitfield in 'Damage Control', *National Journal*, July 19, 2003, as carried in the NATO Enlargement Daily Briefs, Op-Eds, July 18, archived at <http://yahoo.com/group/nedb/messages>. They 'felt they had to divine the answer using troop-deployment schedules like so many tea leaves—rather than accept Secretary of State Colin L. Powell's assurances that no such decision had been made.' Other summary narratives of the turbulent diplomatic run-up to the Iraq war in US media appeared in the *Wall Street Journal* of March 27, 2003 and the *New York Times* of March 17, 2003.
- 35 Author's interviews with German officials; Michael R. Gordon, 'U.S. Air Raids in '02 Prepared for War in Iraq', *New York Times*, July 20, 2003. Richard Haass, director of the State Department policy planning staff throughout this period, dated the decision to invade Iraq at July 2002, as cited in Nicholas Lemann, 'How It Came to War', *The New Yorker*, March 31, 2003, p. 9. Thomas L. Friedman, a vocal supporter of the war, agreed with the July date, writing in 'Chicken à la Iraq' in the *New York Times* on March 5, 2003 that the administration's 'small group of war hawks' had created a fait accompli by then by 'persuading Mr. Bush to begin a huge troop buildup in the Gulf back in July—without consulting Congress or the country—[and] knew it would create a situation where the U.S. could never back down without huge costs.'
- 36 According to Kitfield, *op. cit.*
- 37 For a European take on the summit, see 'Prager Nato-Gipfel: Meilenstein der Atlantischer Allianz', (Prague Nato Summit: Milestone of the Atlantic Alliance), *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, November 20, 2002, available on: www.nzz.ch/2002/11/20/20/al/page-article8J4VM.html. For a positive European view of the NRF, see Alyson J. K. Bailes, 'NATO's New Response Force', *Transatlantic Internationale Politik* 4, no. 1 (Spring 2003), pp. 25-29.
- 38 Julian Lindley-French, 'The Ties that Bind', *NATO Review*, Autumn 2003, available on: <http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2003/issue3/english/art2.html>
- 39 This interpretation comes both from German officials and from Wolfgang Schäuble, the deputy head of the conservative parliamentary caucus who is best known as a sharp critic of the chancellor. Author's interviews.
- 40 Serge Schmemmann, 'The Quarrel Over Iraq Gets Ugly', *New York Times*, January 26, 2003. Various observers speculated that Powell, reading the handwriting on the wall in Washington, was ready to yield to the juggernaut to war in any case, and chose the moment of French affront to do so.
- 41 'United We Stand', *Wall Street Journal*, January 30, 2003, by Jose Maria Aznar, Jose-Manuel Durao Barroso, Silvio Berlusconi, Tony Blair, Vaclav Havel, Peter Medgyessy, Leszek Miller and Anders Fogh Rasmussen; Alan Cowell, 'European Leaders Divide Between Hawks and Doves', *New York Times*, January 31, 2003; Glenn Frankel and Keith B. Richburg, '8 Leaders in Europe Back Bush On Iraq', *Washington Post*, January 31, 2003; William Safire, 'Surprising Germany', *New York Times*, February 10, 2003. For a Polish view that this alignment of Central Europeans with the US against Germany and France represents enduring interests, see Radek Sikorski, 'America's Friends in Europe, And What They Understand', *The National Review*, March 31, 2003. For a Polish view that Poland and Central Europe's longer-term interests will be aligned to Germany and France, see Adam Krzeminski, 'Poland's Home Is Europe', *Transatlantic Internationale Politik* 4, no. 3 (Fall 2003), pp. 65-68.
- 42 Craig S. Smith, 'Chirac Scolding Angers Nations That Back U.S.', *New York Times*, February 19, 2003.
- 43 German diplomats had widely assumed that the rhetoric of the autumn electoral campaign would be toned down as the real political manoeuvring began at the UN Security Council. Schröder put them on a tight leash in January 2003, however, and would not let them soften the edges of the German stance. Author's interviews. See also Stefan Kornelius, 'Joschka Fischer's Long Journey', *Transatlantic Internationale Politik* 4, no. 3 (Fall 2003), pp. 49-54.
- 44 Stephen Szabo, *op. cit.*. See also Thomas Hanke, 'Coats Rechnet mit Neubewertung der Beziehungen', *Financial Times Deutschland*, March 17, 2003, p. 16.
- 45 Author's background interviews.
- 46 For background on the bilateral relationship at this stage, see Robert Graham and Haig Simonian, 'After 40 Years Together, France and Germany May Be Struggling To Keep the Spark in Their Close Relationship', *Financial Times*, January 20, 2003; Thomas Klau, 'France and Germany: A Re-Marriage of Convenience', U.S.-France Analysis Series, the Brookings Institution, January 2003, available at: <http://www.brookings.edu/usfrance/analysis/index.htm>; and Karl Kaiser and others, 'Deutschland, Frankreich und Europa: Perspektiven' (Germany, France, and Europe: Perspectives), DGAP-Analyse No. 21 (German Council on Foreign Relations and the French Institute of Foreign Relations, January 2003).
- 47 Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, 'America's Image Further Erodes, Europeans Want Weaker Ties', opinion survey released March 18, 2003; and Views of a Changing World, June 2003, <http://people-press.org>.

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- 48 Conversation with author.
- 49 Dexter Filkins, 'In Defeat of U.S. Plan, Turks See a Victory for Democracy', *New York Times*, March 5, 2003; Layla Boulton, 'A Hopeful Picture Turned on Its Head', *Financial Times*, April 1, 2003, special section.
- 50 'Blix Speaks—and the Stakes Could Not Be Higher for the Transatlantic Allies Bitterly Divided over War with Iraq', *Financial Times*, February 14, 2003, p. 11.
- 51 Philip Stephens, 'The Transatlantic Alliance is Worse Off Than the Coalition', *Financial Times*, March 28, 2003, p. 15.
- 52 'Den Krieg Aufhalten' (Block the War), *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, February 14, 2003, p. 4.
- 53 See, for example, Seymour Hersh, 'The Stovepipe', *The New Yorker*, October 27, 2003, available on: www.newyorker.com/fact/content/?031027fa_fact; 'Intelligence on Iraq,' Carnegie Web Page, available on: <http://www.ceip.org/files/projects/npp/resources/iraqintell/home.htm>; and Walter Pincus, 'U.S.-British Differences Show Iraq Intelligence Gap', *Washington Post*, September 30, 2003, carried in NATO Enlargement Daily Brief of October 1, 2003, archived at: <http://yahoo.com/group/nedb/messages>.
- 54 Tony Blair, Speech in Parliament, March 18, 2003, available on: www.number-10.gov.uk/output/Page3294.asp.
- 55 Quoted in Philip Stephens, 'Bush and Blair's Differing Designs for a Secure World', *Financial Times*, March 21, 2003, p.16.
- 56 Ivo Daalder, 'Bush's Coalition Doesn't Add Up Where It Counts', *Newsday*, March 24, 2004.
- 57 Michael Wines, 'Three War Critics Want U.N. Effort to Rebuild', *New York Times*, April 12, 2003. Condoleezza Rice's tart riposte was that the US should 'punish France, ignore Germany, and forgive Russia.' Jim Hoagland, 'Three Miscreants', *Washington Post*, April 13, 2003.
- 58 Elaine Sciolino, '4-Nation Plan for Defense of Europe', *New York Times*, April 30, 2003. The French intent may well have been to emancipate Europe from NATO, but this was certainly not the German intent. Nor was the subsequent row over establishment of a small EU military planning unit interpreted by the British as an attempt to defy the US, as Washington understood it. See Jolyon Howorth, 'France, Britain and the Euro-Atlantic Crisis', *Survival* 45, no. 4 (Winter 2003/04), pp. 173-192; and Marc Champion and Christopher Cooper, 'Bush-Blair Alliance Faces New Strains/As U.S. President Prepares to Visit His Strongest Ally, Tensions Come to the Fore', *Wall Street Journal Europe*, November 10, 2003. NEDB, November 10, 2003, archived at <http://yahoo.com/group/nedb/messages>. Javier Solana too contended that there was no cause for American concern in this small team of 30, which would certainly not pre-empt the thousand officers on SHAPE's own planning staff. The real problem was American suspicion that behind this there might be a hidden agenda (by the French, he implied, but did not say) to separate an eventual EU defence union from NATO. Author's interview.
- 59 BBC World Service News Hour (radio), 17:00-18:00 GMT, Europe broadcast, November 14, 2003 cited official coalition figures as showing that only 80% of pre-war telephone and electricity services had been restored, while oil production had not yet been restored to the pre-war 2,500,000 barrels per day. The rate of reported attacks on US soldiers rose from 5-10 a day in April to 30-37 in November, with fatalities among coalition soldiers rising from 14 in August to 33 in October to 50 in the first half of November.
- 60 Jimmy Burns, 'US Told Stance May Spur Anarchy in Iraq', *Financial Times*, July 11, 2003, p. 1; 'Walking on Eggshells', *Economist*, July 5, 2003, p. 1.
- 61 Blair's speech in parliament, March 18, 2003, available on: www.number-10.gov.uk/output/Page3294.asp; 'Why Blair Fears America', *Economist*, March 22, 2003, p. 40; and author's background interviews.
- 62 EU High Representative for Foreign Policy Javier Solana made this point in an interview with the author in November 2003. Other European officials, less diplomatically, said on background that Bush undercut Powell and strongly backed Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's hard line—especially as the president's 2004 election campaign drew nearer. One EU official even denied that the Quartet was a quartet, and said sarcastically that it was more like three-to-one.
- 63 See, for example, the scathing put-down of old European ingrates by Karl Zinsmeister in the *Chicago Tribune* of October 28, 2003, 'It's Time for New Allies', available on: <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/opinion/oped/chi-0310280074oct28,1,6389123.story?coll=chi-newsopinioncommentary-hed>
- 64 Jolyon Howorth, *op. cit.*, p. 186.

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