

**SUMMARY OF THE  
SECOND ROUNDTABLE ON  
REINVENTING THE  
TRANSATLANTIC PARTNERSHIP**

**Sponsored by the  
NATIONAL COMMITTEE  
ON AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY**



**JUNE 4-6, 2003  
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# FOREWORD

The June 2003 Roundtable on Reinventing the Transatlantic Partnership was the second in a proposed long-term series of meetings sponsored by the National Committee on American Foreign Policy. The roundtable includes policy analysts, academics, and former government officials from both the United States and Europe.

Planning for the roundtables began in May 2002 when three members of the National Committee conducted a fact-finding mission to the European Union and NATO, both based in Brussels. The delegation also met with five European researchers who agreed to participate in the roundtables. The group set an agenda for the first meeting, focusing on the theme "The National Interest Versus the Common Interest." The first roundtable met in New York in October 2002. For a description and summary of the planning session, see Bernard E. Brown, Michael Curtis, and George D. Schwab, "Journey to Brussels: A Report and Policy Recommendations," *American Foreign Policy Interests*, vol. 23, no. 5 (October 2002): 379-386, also available in pamphlet form. A summary of and report on the first roundtable has been published as a pamphlet. The accounts of the preliminary session in Brussels and the first roundtable in New York are both available on our Web site ([www.NCAFP.org](http://www.NCAFP.org)).

Participants in the October 2002 roundtable decided to hold the next roundtable in Geneva and to consider possible common or parallel responses to common challenges. Preparations for the Geneva roundtable were overtaken by the events in Iraq and the subsequent rift in transatlantic relations and within Europe. The American and European coordinators of the roundtable (Bernard E. Brown and Julian Lindley-French) agreed to make the crisis a focal point of discussion, placing emphasis on underlying factors and trends rather than on the war itself.

Special thanks go to Dr. Julian Lindley-French, faculty member of the Geneva Center for Security Policy (GCSP), who coordinated efforts on the European side; also to France Menétrey who graciously supervised arrangements for our meetings and luncheons at the GCSP. Thanks also to Professor Bernard E. Brown, the National Committee's project director on transatlantic relations and the author of this report.

The National Committee on American Foreign Policy is grateful to the European Commission and to Mutual of America Life Insurance Company for their generous support of this project.

In order to encourage a free exchange of views, individual participants are not quoted. The policy recommendations in this report are those only of the National Committee on American Foreign Policy.

**George D. Schwab, President  
National Committee on American Foreign Policy**

# **SUMMARY OF THE SECOND ROUNDTABLE ON REINVENTING THE TRANSATLANTIC PARTNERSHIP June 4-6, 2003**

Bernard E. Brown

**T**he second National Committee on American Foreign Policy roundtable on Reinventing the Transatlantic Partnership met June 4-6, 2003, at the height of the most serious crisis in transatlantic relations since World War II. Differences over policy toward Iraq pitted allies against one another and inflamed public opinion. The French foreign minister personally led a campaign to persuade members of the UN Security Council to oppose a draft resolution put forward by the United States and the United Kingdom; the German chancellor announced he would not support the use of force against Iraq even if mandated by the UN; leaders of five members of the European Union along with three about to enter issued a public declaration of support for U.S. policy; and leaders of East and Central European states issuing a similar declaration were publicly chastised by the French president. The UN Security Council as a result was unable to act; NATO was paralyzed when three states (France, Germany, and Belgium) opposed for a time a Turkish request for planning in the event of an attack from Iraq; and the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union was shattered. The time was out of joint. Despite the divergent views among them, participants in the roundtable went to Geneva because they believed that understanding and cooperation between the United States and Europe are essential in order to manage pressing global problems.

## **AN OVERVIEW**

Some of the European participants supported the war in Iraq; most did not. But all believed that the United States was principally at fault for causing or unnecessarily deepening the transatlantic rift. "You are losing us, including those who consider themselves Atlanticist and pro-American," said one European participant. For Europeans, they argued, the role of international law and of the United Nations is central. No one state, especially, perhaps, the only superpower, is entitled to go to war without having the approval of the Security Council or at least not until there is full consideration by allies. Many Europeans see the issue as legitimacy (which can only be conferred by a pluralistic multilateral organization) versus the exercise of sheer power. They complained that the United States flouts or disregards international law, mentioning specifically its

opposition to treaties banning land mines (Ottawa), controlling the emission of greenhouse gasses (Kyoto), and establishing an Independent Criminal Court (Rome). They deplore the U.S. tendency to treat as enemies those who disagree (“you are either with us or against us”) and to claim the right to take “preemptive action.” Some people in Europe are more afraid of the United States, one participant said, than of so-called rogue states. The solution for many Europeans at the roundtable is to create a truly effective Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and thus compel the United States to deal with the EU as an equal partner.

The American participants did not accept the identification of legitimacy and morality with Europe and sheer power with the United States. They argued that the United States does in fact respect international law and works within the UN. However, the United States (like all other states) is not bound by treaties it declines to sign and must take into account the shortcomings of the UN (over half of whose members have authoritarian regimes). Nor does the United States exercise power for its own sake. All states embody and seek to advance a constellation of values. American participants emphasized the changing nature of international issues, especially the emergence of threats from terrorist organizations, and the possibility of support for them from rogue states capable of producing weapons of mass destruction. For American participants, European rhetoric about U.S. “unilateralism” is excessive. All states have interests, which they defend in negotiations. Responsibility for failure to compromise during arduous negotiations must be shared by all parties. Americans see little likelihood that a coherent European Common Foreign and Security Policy will emerge in the foreseeable future (a point granted by some European participants). Responsible political leaders cannot entrust vital national interests to organizations that can be easily paralyzed (by means of a veto in the Security Council, for example) or that do not now and may never exist (like a meaningful CFSP of the European Union).

This Euro-American dialogue reflects a change in the structure of international power and of the perceptions that political leaders have of national interests. With the end of the cold war, the immediate common danger confronting the West disappeared. All states now enjoy greater autonomy and can indulge in nationalist rhetoric without immediately endangering vital interests. The increasing integration of Europe creates a greater sense of identity and self-confidence and a spirit of independence from the United States. But the EU is a hybrid (integrated economically, with politically sovereign states remaining the power centers for foreign and security policy). Europe is becoming strong enough to say “No” to the United States. But it is not capable of formulating and carrying out an alternative policy.

What can be done to repair the breach in transatlantic relations? American and European participants at the Geneva roundtable agreed on the need for increased and intensive dialogue more structured than the existing Transatlantic Agenda and annual one-day summits. One American participant proposed the creation of a “clubhouse” wherein the democracies could exchange analyses and

views on major common challenges; he went on to suggest that a transformed NATO could serve this function. Most of the European participants also favored the creation of a structure where specialists could prepare and compare analyses as a basis for decision making, but they believed that NATO would not be the appropriate agency. American and European participants concluded that we should continue to hold the roundtables. The next step would be to focus attention on one or two substantive issues, such as counterterrorism and nonproliferation. Analysts would try to identify common transatlantic interests and make suggestions on managing the inevitable divergence.

## **MIGHT, RIGHT, AND INTERESTS**

### *European Perspectives*

1. One European analyst said that the character of the transatlantic partnership is more of a divorce than a relationship. Old notions about shared interests and values no longer suffice as glue. It is hard to believe sometimes that we are allies. The transatlantic relationship is complex and multifaceted. It goes far beyond bilateral relations between America and its allies; it involves the future of Europe, European defense, the Middle East, and other key regions. At the same time recent disputes have caused that go far deeper than the immediate question at hand. Each power is involved in a latter-day version of the great game. Acts mask deeper purposes. Thus Bosnia was not just about Bosnia but rather about Europe's pretensions and America's disdain for them. Kosovo showed the limits of European ambitions and an inability of Americans to learn how "to do" the more arcane aspects of security, such as engaged, practical nation building. 9/11 reinforced American power and American vulnerability, while much of Europe either did not feel threatened or chose to distance itself from America even as it expressed solidarity. And now Iraq, where disagreements between America and some allies over how to "do" security, broke surface in a spectacular and damaging manner.

If there is a single point of disagreement between Americans and Europeans, continued this European analyst, it is over the balance to be struck between legitimacy and effectiveness *and* whether power can be effective if it is not legitimized by a pluralistic third organism such as the UN, whatever its many failings. America's "with us or against us" creed is matched by France's determination to use transatlantic crises to further its ambition to lead Europe (primarily at the expense of Britain). The rest of the West is caught between an America that sees itself as first among unequals and a France that concedes an America only first among equals. But this would be a false choice between a French-led Europe and an American-led view of the world. The result of this balance of power play is that people believe less and less in value-based political constructs such as the West and, indeed, Europe. The game is becoming inexorably more about power. This game is being played out not just in the United States but also among Europeans. The formulation of interests outside the United States is becoming difficult because Europeans

have no clear strategic concept around which to coalesce. This European analyst sees a conflict between the victors of the cold war over the organization of power, the battle for the West no less. Until that basic question is resolved, we cannot tell where transatlantic relations are heading.

This same analyst sees roughly four “camps” within the West. The preeminent camp is led by the United States and is committed, where necessary, to strategic preemption. This camp includes Britain and some of the Central and Eastern European states only partially and occasionally. But it is hugely influential because of American power. The second camp supports the French belief in extended strategic reflection, that is, no action without full consideration. Led by France, it has strong supporters in Britain, Germany, and Canada. This camp has a lessened sense of threat and of power than is the case in America. For this camp the political aspects of security governance demand a legitimacy that can only be afforded by the UN. A third camp is increasingly neoisolationist and on occasion pacifist. Loosely grouped around Germany, this camp includes several European countries and not a few others. A fourth camp would rather not engage at all in security. Made up of many of Europe’s small and medium-sized countries, they believe that America’s very power has made it a target and they had best maintain a distance. For this European analyst, the mistake of too many Europeans is to believe they will be permitted the luxury of strategic isolation. The mistake of too many Americans is to believe they can afford security alone through an excessive emphasis on military solutions.

This European analyst concluded that the manner in which the United States has proceeded, with its disregard for the views (and indeed the option) of allies, will undermine NATO. Washington is at fault for suggesting that everyone and everything it dislikes may be subject to military action. But France and Germany are also at fault because of their subagendas over Europe. We are entering a period of very real discord in transatlantic relations that will adversely affect both NATO and the EU and will make it difficult for Europeans and Americans to cooperate in all but the most extreme cases.

In discussion, this same European analyst further developed his views. (1) France does not want NATO to continue. It seeks rather to replace NATO by an EU defense. France seeks to win a campaign against the United States as a way of reshaping Europe. (2) Chirac and Schroeder are both playing games, trying to push the United Kingdom out of the dynamic core of the EU. (3) A debate within Europe over basic issues of security is needed; otherwise we will revert to a great game. This analyst’s primary concern is over the role of international law and the danger of preemptive action. The threat from terror admittedly is unprecedented. But when the U.S. administration announced its long-term strategy, Europeans feared that any state the United States did not like could be labeled a rogue state. It appears that the United States wishes not to be constrained by international law and treaties. When America claims the right to act militarily, it arouses the fears of Europeans and creates divisions

that could make the EU unravel. This is a pivotal moment in transatlantic relations.

2. Another European analyst provided a view from the vantage point of a medium-sized European nation where NATO is the cornerstone of security policy. But this analyst contends that a European Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) must be developed. If it does not materialize, the process of European integration will break down, and even the common currency (the euro) could be endangered. He hopes that a choice will not have to be made between the United States and Europe. There is an ideal solution: that Europeans come together, unite, and become a strategic partner (not rival) of the United States. One way to create a CFSP is to develop the logic of integration, which would replace military power by a culture of negotiation and consensus. Europe may thus be the first powerful postmodern state. The role of international law is an essential difference between Europe and America. Smaller nations in particular see trade as dependent upon peace and stability in the world, with war replaced by international law. In discussion, this same analyst made several important concessions to critics. He agreed that international law differs in its essentials from national law, that there is no world community sufficiently cohesive to sustain a common legal system, and that the UN is an intergovernmental agency. He also agreed that if Europe succeeds in creating a CFSP backed by armed force, it would cease to be a postmodern state. Hence a real debate among Europeans is yet to be organized.

3. Another European participant from a small country (not a member of the EU) observed that the conflict over Iraq is a no-win situation. We cannot go back to the unity of the cold-war era, when we had more discipline in the face of a common enemy. We have to reinvent transatlantic relations for the postcold-war era. Europe must wake up to new challenges and threats, and the United States must become less arrogant. We should make more of an effort to understand why others may disagree and make greater use of diplomacy. This same European participant was especially critical of the United States, which gives the impression that it does not care about international law, does not respect the rules of the game, and uses double standards (denouncing some states as rogue but supporting others that are just as tyrannical). On the other hand, many small states are concerned about the possible domination of the EU by a French-German axis.

4. Another European participant questioned the relevance of the concept of a great game today. It made sense in the context of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century balance of forces in Europe and the world. But we are not now in a balance-of-power situation. We have instead a renationalization of power forced by American strategic decisions. It is difficult for the United States to work out a multilateral approach to head off or resolve a crisis; multilateralism comes into play after the crisis. In the Middle East and other areas, the United States did consult with Europeans. But Bush's decision to go to war in Iraq was a unilateral move that

broke the previous consensus. This European participant wonders what was behind it. Perhaps the neoconservatives in Washington believed that Europe should be put in its place.

5. Another European participant denied that France supported Saddam Hussein; such a view is either a distortion or dishonest. Iraq was not a case of self-defense but of preemption. Often Franco-American disputes are really Euro-American disputes. The great game metaphor does not capture the U.S.-EU problem, which is between two institutions. The tendency in Europe is to project externally what is being done internally (gradual integration through negotiation and consensus). Because of that tendency, the Europeans first encounter the reality of international politics and then encounter the United States. This European participant questions some statements that depict transatlantic differences as extremes. For example, it is a cavalier attitude by Europeans to say that the United States disregards international law. We should not put all treaties in the same bag. This participant is critical of the United States for not joining the International Criminal Court but not for its opposition to the Kyoto accord, which is quite useless. Nor does this European participant accept the distinction between an American tendency to use force and a European preference for diplomacy. In 1995 we have a perfect counterexample: The United States did not want to use force in Bosnia, and France did.

6. Another European participant returned to the question of legitimacy. Who can do what to whom? It is not legitimate for the United States, on the basis of whatever forces drive its policy, to designate countries as targets. This is the fundamental divide between the United States and Europe as a whole. The United States lumps together terrorists, WMDs, and rogue states; but they are altogether different problems. It takes a lot of effort to build an atomic bomb and biological-chemical weapons. Their development can be detected and monitored. It is also doubtful that one radiological bomb will bring down Western civilization.

7. Another European participant returned to the concept of the great game. The United States has been thrust into a great game that it does not understand. Military developments put the United States into a position in which it has overwhelming might but produces results that are not palatable. This use of power is producing more anger and resistance. The mix of hard and soft power is the key; that is where Americans and Europeans can have discussions.

This European participant criticized the doctrine of preemption. There was nothing imminent about an Iraqi attack on the United States. Was Europe divided or not over Iraq? The media exaggerated the differences among Europeans. There was underlying agreement that there be recourse to the UN and that war is the worst of all policies. Timing was the key. A few more months would have permitted the problem to be resolved. This European participant (who is not French) also defended French action, denying that France wants to pull out of NATO. We have to get away from the apparent American belief

that everything the French do is underhanded. But this participant does not understand what the French mean by multipolarity. We are moving into a system of regional groupings, of which the EU is the most unique. The United States will be the last remaining true state.

8. Another European participant believed that there is need for new security architecture. The United States is now finding that power cannot solve all problems. The solution would be the creation of a European Common Foreign and Security Policy.

### *American Perspectives*

1. For an American discussant, the great game is not a good analogy. There was a clear goal in the 19<sup>th</sup>-century "great game." But now there is no clear goal. Transatlantic relations cannot be reduced to a power game; they are far more complex. Among the factors to be taken into account are the role of personalities, foreign policy goals, and internal problems. The personalities of the key players did count. We should also examine the goals of U.S. and European foreign policies. The neoconservatives in Washington, reflecting the views of Leo Strauss, want to invent new situations. Europeans are not sympathetic to this approach; they are more passive. Internal factors also affect foreign policy decisions in all countries. Everywhere there are interagency disputes that reflect different bureaucratic perspectives. Grandiose statements about power in the abstract have to be examined closely. This American participant also emphasized the complexity of the legitimacy problem. Can the United Nations endow power with legitimacy? Legitimacy rather derives from a combination of factors, including realities of international life. Libya has been elected chair of the UN Human Rights Commission, hardly a shining example of endowing power with legitimacy. The nature of war and of the laws of war is changing. There is greater justification than in the past for preemptive action in the fight against terrorism. The basic problem with the notions of a great game and of legitimacy conferred by international law and the UN is that states are still the major actors. We cannot assume that the UN will be capable of solving the problem of legitimacy when a majority of its members have authoritarian governments. This is a basic difference between American and European perceptions.

2. Another American participant returned to the question of international law. The United States is deeply committed to international law, said this participant, and takes it seriously. For example, the United States works within the World Trade Organization (WTO); no one in the administration argues that the United States should repudiate the WTO. The United States went to the UN for a resolution on Iraq and, after the war, to lift sanctions. For this American participant, it is important to distinguish between treaties the United States has signed, whose obligations it respects, and treaties it has declined to sign (like the Kyoto Convention on Emission of Greenhouse Gases and the Rome Treaty creating the International Criminal Court).

3. Another American participant remarked that the United States subscribes to international law as it is understood. But new challenges are forcing the United States to go beyond traditional international law. The United States is proceeding on parallel tracks. In relations with states, the United States acts according to established international law. But when dealing with rogue states, the United States believes there may be a need for preemptive action, which may not accord with traditional international law.

4. Another American participant emphasized the changes that have taken place in American foreign policy under the new administration. When Bush assumed office, he said that China was a strategic competitor and vowed to avoid personal involvement in the Middle East crisis. Where are we today? The Bush administration now has a greater understanding of China as a partner. And Bush is the first U.S. president to participate personally in an Israeli-Palestinian meeting held in the Middle East. There is a sense in Washington of an absolute need for political cooperation with the EU and with European nations in the UN and NATO. However, fundamental distrust of the UN will continue.

## **MANAGING TRANSATLANTIC DIVERGENCE: LESSONS FROM AFRICA**

### *American Perspectives*

1. An American analyst observed that the United States and the European powers have been interacting intensively in and about Africa since World War II. U.S.-European relationships concerning Africa have sometimes been marked by irritation and even severe disagreement. But issues involving “Western security interests” have almost always been resolved through dialogue, joint analysis, cooperation, and occasional joint military action.

This American analyst then reviewed the major stages in the evolution of U.S.-European relations in Africa since World War II. (1) The first phase was the winding down of colonialism. The United States exerted pressure on the colonial powers to bring their colonies to self-government and independence. Europeans argued that Africa was not prepared for independence. Despite these disagreements, the Americans and Europeans never lost sight of larger security considerations—seeking Western European recovery and containment of Soviet expansionism. The cold war trumped idealism. (2) African independence and Soviet influence. The Soviets were successful in exerting substantial influence in the African liberation movements (seeming to confirm European fears); but American and European efforts were successful, though essentially uncoordinated, in preventing the Soviets from co-opting any African government (seeming to vindicate American hopes). (3) The collapse of Portuguese rule in Africa led to an expansion of Soviet influence and the intervention of Cuban troops in Angola and subsequently in Ethiopia. Americans were concerned about this extension of Soviet influence, whereas Europeans believed they should work with the new regimes. But the

United States and Europe continued to consult and occasionally cooperate, notably in Rhodesia. (4) The United States took the lead in the search for stability in Africa in the 1980s, particularly in southern Africa. (5) With the end of the cold war in 1989, the United States and European powers cooperated in resolving conflicts in several African countries (notably Ethiopia, Sudan, Angola, and Mozambique). After 1993 the United States and Europe turned conflict resolution over to the UN and African regional organizations, which were unable to prevent some major human tragedies (e.g., Rwanda, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and the Congo). After 9/11 it became evident that instability in Africa had global implications, including sanctuary and support for terrorist networks. In several cases, European governments have intervened militarily (the United Kingdom in Sierra Leone in 1999, France in the Ivory Coast in 2002). The ad hoc nature of these interventions, significantly after the fact, suggests that the development of structured approaches by the Western democracies toward emerging hot spots would probably be more effective.

This same American analyst summed up the lessons learned and recommendations. (1) Develop strategies within "the club" (of democracies) first. The industrialized democracies should consult initially about international and regional security problems worldwide away from nonmembers of the club. U.S.-EU consultations as currently structured are useful but do not allow for the hard analysis and debate designed to develop working strategies to deal with chronic and potentially dangerous instability as well as potential direct threats to Western interests. (2) There is a need for intensive exchanges of analyses. The U.S.-European command in Stuttgart is developing an expanding circle of intelligence and analysis sharing with NATO allies. It would probably be feasible to raise this to the political level within the NATO structure. The development of strategies begins with analysis. (3) The club of Western democracies needs a clubhouse. NATO is the only structure in which the Western democracies can discuss the world's security problems in private. It may be time to assign NATO a crisis-management and prevention vocation, without, of course, detracting from the key roles played by the UN Security Council and regional players. (4) There should always be room for ad hoc coalitions. (5) In emerging democracies the development of professional, competent, and well-financed security forces is a paramount necessity for stability. (6) The European Commission has the important capability to inject money quickly into a crisis situation or to stop the flow of money already agreed to. The EU Commission should therefore be a partner in any structured procedure for crisis management by the Western democracies.

This American analyst summed up: The time has come for a more structured approach based on cooperative analysis within a club of Western democracies. Such an approach will not always result in agreement on the nature of a problem or on the appropriate solution. But the mere fact that frank exchanges have taken place within the confines of the exclusive club cannot fail to have an ameliorating impact on eventual disagreements.

In response to criticism, this same American analyst clarified and

further developed his views. Conflict is the major obstacle to development in Africa. How to deal with it? Conflict is normal; it cannot be prevented. It can be handled through politics. Belgium is one of the most conflicted countries in the world. But it has institutions enabling it to deal with conflict. U.S.-European trade relations are conflicted; but there are institutions to deal with the problems. The United States and the EU have no mechanism to deal with conflict in the outside world of disorder. In Africa, most transatlantic conflicts were dealt with through intensive dialogue and consultation and some specialization of labor. For example, in Guinea there was friction between the Guineans and the French, and so the United States took responsibility for conflict resolution there. France agreed to handle problems in the former Portuguese colonies. The arrangement worked perhaps because the United States viewed Africa as mainly a European priority. The important exception was South Africa, where the American, British, and German ambassadors played lead roles in facilitating the transition to democracy.

If transatlantic cooperation worked in Africa, why not elsewhere? This American analyst believes there should be a forum in which the democracies have a way to discuss the world of disorder on the basis of a systematic exchange of analyses. Compromise would be required on both sides of the Atlantic. The United States must understand that it cannot afford to provide for its security alone. The Europeans have to agree that sometimes the United States will have to act on its own. We must find a way of keeping the transatlantic alliance from becoming dysfunctional.

Hence, this same analyst argued, NATO must be transformed. It must be changed from an alliance that is predominantly military with some politics to one that is largely political with some military components. We would then decide which vehicle to use: NATO, the EU, the United Nations Security Council, other international institutions or regional organizations, or coalitions of willing partners. The lesson of Africa, then, is that when democracies get together and pool analyses, they can help prevent their relations from becoming dysfunctional. When we focus on key issues and keep them from turning violent, there is a greater possibility of managing problems. All issues may not be resolved by intensive dialogue among experts. But at least we are less likely to fail. Because there was no such dialogue, Iraq was a problem waiting to happen. This American analyst defended his choice of NATO as a possible clubhouse for democracies because it already has a structure. The democratic nations presumably would first decide on a course of action and then choose an appropriate instrument.

2. An American participant warned that the specific features of Africa limit the lessons to be drawn for other areas. Using NATO as a clubhouse might open the way to the charge of colonialism or to the claim that a directorate is being created for a new world order.

### *European Perspectives*

1. A European discussant found it interesting that disagreement

between the United States and Europe did not block cooperation in Africa. Perhaps the key was American recognition that Europeans have priority in Africa and European agreement not to rock the boat. Nonetheless, this transatlantic cooperation did not resolve the problems of Africa, which remains a mess. U.S.-Italian cooperation in Somalia, for example, was not a success. Furthermore, North Africa poses a different set of problems, which are becoming more urgent than those of the Sub-Sahara.

The idea of having an array of institutions available for transatlantic cooperation, continued this same European discussant, is very important. We need to increase Euro-American cooperation and to do something different. Summits between the EU and the United States are not working. But this discussant wonders whether NATO would be the best clubhouse and whether the U.S. European Command is the best institution for exchange of views on African problems. Other commands might be more appropriate. If we take into account North Africa, there is a complication. The North Africans were willing to engage in discussions with NATO provided there was no mention of the alliance. The solution was to call it the Transatlantic-Mediterranean Dialogue. There is a need for an EU mission in Africa and for increased cooperation between the United States and Europe. One possibility is the creation of U.S.-EU committees as a "clubhouse" for analysis and management of crises through coordination. Finally, this European discussant asked whether 9/11 has changed the nature of the African problem. There is clearly a danger of terrorism in and emanating from Africa. The United States is following a prudent approach in Africa in the war on terrorism. It is not acting unilaterally and is only asking for support. But this may not go on indefinitely because the United States has other priorities, notably in the Middle East.

2. A European participant suggested that it was a mistake to support dictators and thugs in Africa instead of clearly opposing colonialism and encouraging democracy. There should be a structured dialogue between the United States and Europe on African problems, but NATO is not the place.

3. Another European participant said that there were three models of U.S.-European relations concerning Africa: cooperation, competition, and division of labor. The United States and Europe improved their cooperation after 1995-1996. At least some agencies of the U.S. government sought to displace French interests (evidencing competition). Division of labor is taking place, whether we like it or not. The Europeans will deal with humanitarian tragedies, while the United States concentrates on fighting terrorism and protecting oil resources. Genocide, however, is a moral problem for the United States as well as for Europe. Is the United States preparing to avoid responsibility for stopping genocide? At the end of the day, American and European interests in Africa are not divergent. This European participant is all for repairing the structures of U.S.-European dialogue and cooperation, but it would have to involve the EU. NATO would be the worst possible vehicle for consultations and crisis management in Africa or any other areas outside of Europe.

4. Another European participant said that NATO does not work now because there is no agreement on its function. Is it a collective security system or a structure for consultation and crisis management? West Europeans believe that Central and East Europeans are old-fashioned; they consider NATO a collective security system because they fear Russia. West Europeans believe that NATO should be a place for dialogue. This European participant agrees that the democracies must have a clubhouse. The United States and Europe should organize themselves for security in the same way they manage economic issues. But the EU now has no power to discipline itself and therefore cannot produce effective policies. We must introduce supranational elements into the CFSP. There are no other solutions.

5. Another European participant deplored the insecurity in Africa. The West cannot avoid engagement but must devise it in a new form. We have a moral responsibility to prevent humanitarian tragedies. The United States and Europe should be sitting down now to think through a solution. For this European participant, NATO is dying. The CFSP is suffering from severe disease and is years away. We must have the ability to create alliances or coalitions of the willing and able.

6. Another European participant concurred that NATO is dying. One reason is the U.S. tradition of not really consulting the allies. The American attitude is if you oppose us, you are an enemy. There may be some useful things to be salvaged from NATO but not as a clubhouse for coordination of policy. At least the rhetoric of alliance still exists. Can we make Washington revive NATO? It comes back to our definitions of security risks and what it means to be an ally.

## **FRANCE AND THE UNITED STATES: CAN THE RELATIONSHIP BE REPAIRED?**

### *European Perspectives*

1. A European analyst said the current crisis between the two countries is deep and important. There is a profound resentment about France in the United States. How did we get here? The most important factor is that the commitment on both sides was extremely strong. There were also misunderstandings. In Washington, many believed that Paris would eventually come around and agree on an operation against Iraq. In Paris, many misunderstood the firmness of the U.S. commitment to solve the Iraqi problem once and for all. French opposition to permitting NATO to take collective measures for the defense of Turkey infuriated many in the United States. Chirac's announcement that he would oppose any draft resolution authorizing the use of force was the straw that broke the camel's back. But France did not try to create an anti-American bloc; a lot of its policy on Iraq was improvised. Germany was the first to break ranks; Russia just came along; France did not go looking for allies.

When the American political and media campaign against France began, the French reaction was incomprehension, then sadness, then anger. Incomprehension, because from the French point of view there was no immediate Iraqi threat and thus no reason to show solidarity

with Washington's policy. At the root of the French opposition to the U.S. stance was the idea—right or wrong—that no less than the future of the international system was at stake. This is why Chirac's stand was so strong. Sadness because France sees itself as a good ally of the United States. France has always been present whenever there was a clear and present danger to U.S. or Western security or both U.S. and Western security. Anger finally because the American attacks on France have recently taken the form of vicious and deliberate disinformation. The French view on multipolarity is not specifically anti-American. There is an assumption that the international system will be healthier if there were not just one dominant power. Even in the American national security policy paper it is assumed that great powers will defend their interests and compete.

For this European analyst, the French attitude during the Iraqi crisis was too rigid. It was a political mistake to oppose any kind of NATO collective action to protect Turkey. The French did signal that they would come to the aid of Turkey if it were actually attacked. The French tactic in NATO was logical but disastrous. It was a mistake to say publicly that France would oppose any second Security Council resolution aimed at authorizing the use of force. It was a mistake for Chirac to join Putin and Schroeder in Saint Petersburg, hence giving the impression that an "Axis of Good" was going to be transformed into a durable anti-American alliance. Also, continued this same analyst, personalities mattered but were not in themselves a triggering factor. Washington (wrongly) assumes that "anti-Americanism" is the driving factor of French policy, and Paris (wrongly) assumes that the quest for "hegemony" is the hidden U.S. agenda. Perhaps, added this European analyst, Security Council Resolution 1441 was a mistake.

But that is past us. Paris has shown a willingness to mend fences; but it seems this has not satisfied the U.S. administration. So France will not participate significantly in the stabilization and reconstruction of Iraq, and there will be other irritants. But things will not go much further than that. The reasons are many. Economic sanctions could backfire. France has assets that can be useful to the United States, for example, expertise regarding internal security, counterterrorism, and peace-support operations. France's position in the Security Council, its status as a nuclear power, and its weight in the European Union make it an important and potentially useful partner. Finally, the Pentagon's ideas regarding decision making in NATO are probably doomed to failure. The Defense Planning committee cannot replace the North Atlantic Council. On balance, concludes this European analyst, we may be fairly optimistic concerning the ability of France and the United States to work together again when and where needed.

Washington and Paris will continue to have structurally different agendas on the international scene. There is a consensus in France on the primacy of international law, the centrality of the UN role, and the need to balance U.S. power. But the United States and France will continue to share many common interests. It is, for instance, a mistake to say that in the management of international crises the United States always prefers the option of military force and

France always prefers the option of diplomacy. The perfect counterexample was Bosnia in the spring of 1995. Even the so-called Bush Doctrine finds echoes in France. The new Five-Year Defense Plan voted by the French parliament in the fall of 2002 explicitly mentions the preemptive use of force as an option in the fight against terrorism. Reconciliation is possible and even likely. However, it remains a choice. During the cold war we had no choice: The overwhelming potential threat we faced forced us to reconcile. Today things are different. There is no immediate major military threat to unite us. European integration ensures that France cannot be isolated. So, to a certain extent, we can afford *not* to reconcile. If that is the U.S. choice, says this European analyst, so be it. This analyst does not expect the bond of trust to be restored until there is a change of government on either side or both sides. Until then, there will be only a working relationship.

In further discussion, this European analyst clarified a few points. The statement by an American participant that the French and Europeans generally may have scored a long-term victory by restraining the United States is most interesting. But perhaps we should not shout it from the rooftops. Americans were upset by French lobbying against U.S. policy. But the United States lobbies in favor of its policies. Why can't the French do the same? In neither case should we speak of "betrayal." This dispute goes back to the question, what is an ally? We must, finally, deal with the dual or hybrid nature of Europe (a supranational economy but an intergovernmental foreign and security policy). It will take several generations to change, if it ever happens at all. An effective CFSP is a fantasy in the near future. Ultimately, all states, including the United States and France, defend their interests.

2. A European participant remarked that France and the United States are similar in that both consider themselves guardians of a revolution. The language of Franco-U.S. relations got out of control. The French government was driven by a belief that Iraq was not an immediate threat, that any action should be approved by the Security Council, and that international law be respected. In opposing U.S. policy, France was also trying to constitute a core within Europe. The French always talk about strengthening the EU but try to use the EU to bolster their position in Europe and the world. Some Europeans took advantage of the squabble to block Franco-German domination of the EU. Both France and the United Kingdom were playing a game (to advance their own national interests) within the EU.

The end of the cold war, this same European participant continued, must lead to a reconstruction of the international state system. The United States must be more receptive to European ideas. This participant complained that Europeans find it hard to inject their ideas into the American political system. The United Kingdom and France suddenly find themselves in a position to manage the United States. But they do not have the leverage to do so because of the power gap. Neither is supported by the EU, nor do they have encouragement from the United States. We need a new transatlantic contract, even if informal. The United States accepts checks and balances internally but not externally. Europeans are also concerned

that policy as well as the shape of the American military is driven by domestic politics. The American position on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is not balanced because of pressure from domestic constituencies.

3. Another European participant returned to the question of the meanings of an alliance and an ally. During the cold war, solidarity was clear under Article 5 of the treaty; but there were always policy debates and divergences. After the cold war, solidarity was more problematic. The Balkan wars gave the alliance a new lease on life, but that challenge is now winding down. Iraq has been a change, but only a step change. What can be demanded of an ally? It is not what some in the United States believe, that its allies must always go along. An ally should be able to state its case and even oppose American initiatives. The United States should accept opposition as legitimate. The United States lost Europe almost entirely when it became clear that it would go to war in Iraq without having made a compelling case. If it continues on its course, the United States will find itself alone. Blair thinks of the world as unipolar, with the United States as the hub. For France, the United States is the largest entity, but other poles exist. Networking is to be expected.

For this same European participant, Europe has moved to a different plane through gradual integration. It is true that Europeans do not spend enough on defense and that the EU remains a hybrid with different structures for economic and foreign policy. But the EU is a fact of life to which the United States must adjust. The United States is not used to dealing with resistance from Europe. The problem is rendered more complex because of the rage in America over the 9/11 attacks.

4. Another European participant saw many levels to this discussion, with domestic factors weighing more than the international ones. Chirac's policy on Iraq compelled the opposition to vote for him a second time. Europeans had the impression that U.S. policy was decided by internal and interagency politics, which was not conducive to transatlantic understanding. The pan-European element was totally missing throughout. No one consulted the entire EU even informally. No one tried to create a common position. This was a complete failure for European policy. Iraq also underlined the importance of reforming the UN by enlarging the Security Council and abolishing the veto. India, Germany, and other major powers are not playing their proper role. However, it is impossible to carry out this reform soon, and so we have to work with the existing imbalance in a transitional period.

For this same European participant, all conflicts between France and the United States tend to be exaggerated. It may be hoped that both countries will grow out of it. American diplomacy concerning Iraq was poorly prepared. For instance, Mexico was in the opposition, as were many other traditional American allies and friends. The basic problem is the absence of a grand strategy.

5. For another European participant, the Iraq issue has all the ingredients of a rivalry among great powers: imperialism, oil, and

the West versus Islam. This is the first huge crisis since the end of World War II, a battle for world order. It is a fact of life that the United States is the only superpower, and it naturally takes the lead. But some resistance to U.S. initiatives is to be expected. The choice was either to work with the United States (as did the United Kingdom) or oppose (as did France). The United Kingdom, however, was not able to modify U.S. policy. The issue is not a matter of solidarity but of world order. The problem will continue for at least a decade until there are changes in the underlying structural forces. The Europeans must decide what they want. For this participant, the answer is to be found in the creation of a European Common Foreign and Security Policy.

### *American Perspectives*

1. An American discussant pointed out that one American official (Richard Perle) recently said France can no longer be considered an ally. But he is an exception. The U.S. military, for example, values cooperation with France. The French play a leading role in gathering and coordinating information concerning terrorists throughout Europe, and this is greatly appreciated by the United States. The Americans were bothered not by French criticism but by their active worldwide campaign against the United States. American officials expected the French to keep a low profile.

In the view of this American discussant, the French have won a kind of victory because the United States will not be able to repeat the Iraq scenario. There are some in Washington who believe they should now take preemptive action against Syria and Iran. Europe effectively has stopped such an action. The French will win out because they are preaching multilateralism. The United States cannot go it alone in the Middle East because of financial considerations. The United States will have to involve the United Nations for a simple reason: It contributes one-fourth of the UN budget, but that means the rest of the world will contribute three-fourths of the cost of reconstructing Iraq if done through the UN. Over time the anti-UN forces will lose out in the United States. For this American discussant, it would be short-sighted for Europeans to cut the superpower off at the knees. This superpower is a relatively benign democracy, which makes policy through a system of separation of powers and checks and balances. Despite the rhetoric that the United States does not need Europe, in fact it does. The 9/11 attacks provoked a feeling of rage among Americans. This special situation will last another three or four years. Eventually, the United States will go back to a normal situation. What unites Americans and Europeans is a commitment to democracy and the rule of law. Most nations are not democracies. America and Europe together should try to foster democracy. The Arab world has become a cesspool, out of which came 9/11. The West has to do something about it. Even without a formal new transatlantic contract, the Europeans should come up with a constructive alternative to U.S. policy. This American discussant returned to a suggestion previously made in the roundtable: There should be a forum in which democracies can discuss policies and grand strategy. We need a "clubhouse" for democracies.

2. An American participant said that we should look at the larger perspective. Americans and Europeans have lost basic trust in one another's motives. Americans used to think that the French would be difficult always but eventually would come aboard. They no longer believe it. The United States needs help from Europe in dealing with problems in Iraq, Iran, North Korea, and elsewhere. Steps have to be taken by both Americans and Europeans to address common concerns.

3. Another American participant remarked that the world in fact is multipolar. The United States may be a superpower, but it is still only one power among many and does not control the world. Of course France has the right to oppose the United States. The problem is that differences of opinion became open and virulent. At the core of American resentment is the sense that France has betrayed the United States. The French may not be anti-American, but they legitimized anti-Americanism. The only way that France can rise to eminence is through use of the UN. We might be able to come together in the war on terrorism in view of France's special competence in this area.

## **THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT**

Although not on the agenda, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict inevitably came up. Striking differences between the American and European sides came to the fore. One American participant referred to a recent conference of Muslim scholars in the United States, sponsored by the National Committee, that concluded that Muslims cannot accept the existence of Israel in their midst. Further, they stated that coexistence between Islam and the infidel West is not possible. The only long-term solution then is to change the Muslim mind-set. This participant also referred to the United Nations report on Arab Human Development, authored by Muslims, that concludes that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is not the cause of the lack of development and authoritarianism in the Arab world. A European participant replied that of course Muslim scholars will tell us that coexistence is impossible. But if we deal with Arab nationalists and politicians, we will be able to make a deal. Another European participant agreed, adding that Americans and Europeans both root for the underdog. The difference is that for Americans the underdog is Israel and for Europeans it is the Palestinians.

Another European participant agreed that Islam has a problem with modernity. Many Arab regimes are indeed oppressive. The problem is that Israel claims to be a Western state yet oppresses the Palestinians. Israeli policy is a form of ethnic cleansing. Israel's long history of illegal conduct and violations of international law infuriate Europeans. One American participant replied that Israel has been threatened by Arab states for a long time and is entitled to defend itself. Another American participant said that somehow the parties can manage to live together. The crucial problem is the right of Palestinians to return. Another American participant believes the question is one of trust and confidence between Europeans and

Americans. Europeans believe that U.S. policy is determined by the Jewish vote. The United States views Israel as a military and democratic ally. We have to recognize that the two perceptions are divergent. The discussion ended on that somber note.

## **NATO: LAST ACT OR ENTR'ACTE?**

### *An American Perspective*

Alliances endure, began an American analyst, when they serve the interests of member states. For that reason, they are generally short-lived. When national interests are redefined in response to the shifting tides of power, alliances tend to disappear. That NATO survived the end of the cold war and even flourished means that it assumed new and important functions. But does NATO continue to serve the interests of its member states?

NATO was plunged in February 2003 into its deepest crisis since the end of the cold war, perhaps even since its founding in 1949. At stake was a seemingly minor issue: a request by Turkey to plan for its defense in the event of war with Iraq and for small amounts of defensive equipment. Arguing that to grant the request would lock NATO into a "logic of war," France, Germany, and Belgium refused. This crisis represented a departure from NATO's central procedural principle, a key to its longevity and success. NATO operates by consensus, which does not preclude lively debate and intense negotiations. It has been understood up to now that no member will prevent the others from forming a coalition of the willing and the able. In the February 2003 crisis, three allies cast an unprecedented veto. NATO was able eventually to muddle through by referring the decision to a defense planning committee that did not include France and by persuading the Germans and the Belgians to permit the others to proceed. But the February crisis was a fire bell in the night.

A delegation from the National Committee on American Foreign Policy recently held talks (off the record and not for attribution) in Washington with officials of the State Department, the National Security Council, and a former senior American official at NATO and with officials of NATO and SHAPE in Brussels and Mons. The American analyst then reported and commented on the findings of the delegation. Some American officials spoke of the February crisis as "a near-death situation," an "earthquake," and of "shifting tectonic plates." However, a senior official at the French mission to NATO was less concerned. This French spokesman presented a cogent though familiar defense of his government's position: Basically, the Iraqi regime was being contained, and there was no valid reason to resort to war, which might have unpredictable and disastrous results throughout the Middle East. NATO should become an alliance with two solid and equal pillars: on the one side America (plus Canada), and on the other side Europe. France has the right to its own opinions, contended this official, to express them, and to oppose American policy if need be.

The French vision of NATO sketched above is not acceptable to the United States. It demands for Europe a role based on hopes, not existing power realities. A former senior American official at NATO commented that any attempt to create a European caucus would “ruin” NATO. It would require the entire alliance to wait until the Europeans agreed among themselves on a policy, which means delay; it assumes that the Europeans would actually be able to arrive at a coherent policy, which is doubtful in view of the conflicting interests of the major nations as opposed to the smaller, the West Europeans as opposed to the East Europeans, and among the major nations themselves. In the unlikely event that the Europeans could formulate a common policy, there would be a reluctance to make concessions to the United States because it would require beginning the whole negotiating process all over again; and the Europeans would also consider their policy inherently “multilateral” and therefore more legitimate than any U.S. policy. Delay would lead to passivity (the only “common” policy acceptable to all) and ultimately to deadlock. The United States could not entrust its vital interests to such an organization. Only the United States can provide the leadership required to make the complex machinery work. This same official strongly supports any movement toward a European identity within NATO, asserting that he cannot imagine any strictly European military action that would not be approved by the United States.

There is wariness on the American side about the capacity of the European Union to develop a meaningful CFSP. The power centers in the domain of European foreign and security policy are and will remain the member states. A “common” policy will necessarily reflect a clash of national interests. An underlying problem is the absence of a lead nation that can take forceful initiatives and the lack of consensus concerning the role of the United States in the European security structure. The European pillar may be strengthened, but it cannot be “equal” because of the hybrid nature of the EU.

Most American officials with whom the delegation consulted believe that the United States and Europe have different agendas. Some argued that Americans are ahead of Europeans in recognizing new threats from out of area. Europeans downplay and underestimate the threat from terrorist networks and the danger that they will buy or acquire WMDs from states hostile to the West. Many Europeans believe the new threats are an extension of the old threats they have been living with for a long time and can handle through intelligence gathering, police action, and economic aid to alleviate poverty in developing countries. Europe has not yet made a mental shift, said one official, concerning the threat from out of area. Americans are more skeptical than Europeans of the utility of massive government aid, which all too frequently is siphoned off by local elites. The United States is prepared to provide significant new aid only on condition that recipients carry out reforms and policy changes. The big difference between American and European approaches, said one National Security Council (NSC) official, is that the United States has military as well as economic tools in its toolbox.

All of the American officials consulted by the National Committee delegation believe it is worth an effort to create a new NATO for

the 21<sup>st</sup> century. There are lingering problems left over from the cold-war period and the 1990s, when NATO reinvented itself in order to contribute to security, stability, and democratization in East and Central Europe. A continuing American strategic commitment to the Continent is favored by East and Central Europeans as an insurance policy against resurgent Russian nationalism or domination of European institutions by Germany. Although the progress of democracy in Eastern Europe will now be solidified through membership in the European Union, a vital contribution is also made by an American-led NATO. A valuable sense of community has been built up over more than half a century of multilateral cooperation through committees, councils, and joint military exercises. NATO has become more than just a military alliance; it is a semipolitical institution and the major structural link between North America and Europe.

However, there is no longer a sense of life-and-death mutual dependence among the members of the alliance. There was general agreement among our American respondents that NATO needs a cooling-off period. It must choose pragmatism over grand strategy, at least in the near future. It should focus on issues concerning which there is large agreement: counterterrorism; controlling or eliminating weapons of mass destruction and especially the possibility that rogue or hostile states might sell or transfer such weapons to terrorists; fighting against international drug traffic, crime, and fraud; and peacekeeping in the wake of American-led military action. The emphasis on flexibility and the deployment of rapid reaction forces at the Prague summit of November 2002 point toward rotation of troops (without families) at new forward bases. There is no longer need for large permanent American garrisons in Western Europe, particularly in Germany. NATO has to become leaner and meaner.

To recapitulate: The crisis of February 2003 showed that American, French, and perhaps European interests are now divergent. The question is not how to “punish” dissident allies but how to manage underlying divisions revealed by the Iraqi crisis. “Going it alone” is not an option. The recent National Strategy paper makes clear that there are limits to military action and American power. The United States must strive for good relations with historic allies, the paper continues, and with so-called potential great powers—China, Russia, and India. The stated goal is to create a balance of power favorable to the interests of the United States and its allies and friends. The United States must make adjustments in confronting a new situation, one in which it is the declared prime target of attack by a determined foe seeking to use weapons of mass destruction. We are entering a period of reappraisal and probably a new diplomacy.

### *European Perspectives*

1. A European discussant said the main objective of NATO now is to promote global security, as in Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Middle East. The goal should be to create a European foreign minister, a single

European foreign policy, and a consultative mechanism between the American and European pillars of NATO. The larger need is to define a grand strategy.

2. Another European discussant believes that NATO is dying. Underlying problems were revealed by the February crisis. NATO's structures, procedures, and ways of thinking are not geared to important challenges. This discussant favors the creation of a European caucus within NATO. If Europeans want to do things on their own, they should get together and create action structures. It is time for Europeans to grow up and assume their responsibilities. The United States must get used to it. American opposition to a European caucus is wrong; it expresses an "old" and arrogant way of thinking. For this European discussant, the American administration seems to be turning away from NATO and toward bilateral relations. Of course states are important and the EU remains a hybrid. But it is inappropriate in the long term for the United States to try to divide and rule.

This European discussant questioned whether U.S. leadership is required any longer. What does the United States bring to NATO that is essential? NATO may have been an indispensable tool during the cold war and was useful in the Balkan crisis. But now its function is not clear, and its future is in doubt. It may survive as a forum but does not add much to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the EU. Yet this European discussant believes that the United States, Europe, and like-minded states should coordinate their actions. Perhaps democracies do need a clubhouse.

3. A European participant said that we need a deeper discussion of the meaning of an alliance. The United States had a golden opportunity to take NATO seriously after 9/11 but did not. Europeans have been very patient with Washington. This participant is skeptical about the use of NATO to deal with immediate problems like counterterrorism and in general to operate out of area.

4. Another European participant agreed that NATO has undergone a transformation, but hard choices have not been made. We should be honest and say that NATO is no longer a collective defense system. Article 5 was invoked immediately after 9/11, but the United States did not turn to NATO. The political significance and hence the value of NATO will decrease. It may remain useful in carrying out limited missions, in achieving a modest degree of interoperability, and as a framework for coalitions of the able and willing.

5. Another European participant remarked that the speed with which the U.S. Senate approved the enlargement following the Prague summit means that it was irrelevant. Only one country can kill NATO, and that is the United States. The Americans can do it in two ways: to withdraw or to turn NATO into a technical instrument without political clout, to be used mainly in order to secure defense contributions from smaller nations. The United States will find as allies only those who want a security guarantee on the cheap. Such allies are not worth having. The United States might also try to use NATO as an instrument for influencing the Europeans. But what

will the United States give in exchange for European support?

This European participant asked, can there be a new alliance? The United States does not want to invest a lot in a new NATO. Perhaps we should switch the nationalities of the secretary general and the supreme allied commander, Europe (SACEUR). A European SACEUR would serve to strengthen the European pillar. Such a reform could bring about greater integration of European and American military forces. Could NATO become the clubhouse of democracies? It depends on whether or not the United States wants a political role for NATO. Also, the Europeans would have to identify clear policy areas in which they could cooperate with the United States. Another European participant remarked: The tragedy of NATO is that it cannot be transformed.

## CONCLUSION

At the end of the first day, the Europeans were asked what message they would like participants on the other side to take back home; at the end of the second day the Americans were to be asked the same question. This exchange of messages (due to lack of time, American participants were polled subsequently) provides a useful way of summarizing differences.

One European participant said, "You are losing us. Even those who tend to be pro-American," he continued, "are being alienated by this administration." However, this participant also believes that common interests make possible cooperation in several areas, notably, the reconstruction of Afghanistan and Iraq, counterterrorism, and nonproliferation (especially regarding Iran and North Korea). If you continue on this course, warned another European participant, you will be opposed by all of Europe and will be on your own. The United States and Europe no longer have common ground or common values, he continued. The U.S. government should take international law and the United Nations seriously, consult with Europe, and act only with the sanction of the UN. For several other European participants, the United States should accept the European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy as a reality taking shape and treat the European Union as an equal partner now. Several European participants asked for public acknowledgment by the U.S. government of Europe's contribution to the fight against terrorism. Another European participant asked that the United States stop trying to control Europe especially since the United States has announced that Europe is no longer its highest priority.

Messages from the American side to the Europeans were quite different and even diametrically opposed. "*You are losing us,*" said one American participant. Comparisons of American and European society, culture, political systems, and foreign policies that find all defects on one side and all virtues on the other are offensive if not absurd in view of the diversity of each side and the complexity of the problems both face. This participant urged Europeans to tone down the rhetoric and talk soberly about interests that are shared or are in

conflict and how problems can be resolved. Another American participant warned that systematic and unrelenting criticism of the United States in Europe is creating a backlash. Another American participant had a specific recommendation: In negotiating international conventions (for example, on global warming or antipersonnel mines), it is better to have a good convention with the United States inside than a perfect convention with the United States outside. Without U.S. participation, no convention can work. With U.S. participation, a convention has a good chance of working. This is due, of course, to the great weight of the United States in all areas. Americans have the impression that Europeans would rather have solidarity with the third world in isolating the United States than in creating a mechanism that would really be useful and workable. In the case of both the global warming and antipersonnel mine conventions, a few compromises would have brought the United States in. Another American participant said that Europeans should be reconciled to the fact that transatlantic relations, however important on the economic front, are no longer a priority (happily) on the American security agenda. Americans believe that the major challenges to their security come from Asia and the Middle East, with terrorism and WMDs potentially devastating threats to the United States and Europe alike. The United States needs help from European friends even when they disagree. Friends do not have to agree on everything in order to cooperate. Another American participant added that the starting point for negotiations in the Middle East is to recognize that many Arabs do not accept the legitimacy of the state of Israel.

This exchange of messages reflects a change in the perceptions that political leaders have of national interests. With the end of the cold war there is no longer an urgent need for the United States and Europe to act as one. In the immediate postcold-war period, NATO took on new functions: It permitted the integration of Germany into Atlantic structures; it enabled the United States and Europe to cooperate in stopping the Balkan wars; and it created a sense of security in East and Central Europe primarily through the Partnership for Peace and then enlargement that facilitated the transition to democracy. But with greater acceptance of Germany as a “normal” country, the gradual stabilization of the Balkans, and the coming entry of East and Central European states into the EU, these functions are no longer as critical. The United States and Europe (and within the EU, individual member states) will claim and enjoy greater autonomy. Long-simmering differences as well as nationalist sentiment (carrying with it the disparagement of others) have come to the fore. Tension and disagreements between Americans and Europeans are inevitable and normal; the end of the cold war took the lid off a boiling pot.

Yet American and European participants in the Geneva roundtable agreed that problems are easier to manage when the United States and Europe work together. Conflicts of interests cannot be eliminated; but we can resort to procedures and create mechanisms that will enable us to reconcile interests and create favorable conditions for parallel action. Increased consultation does not neces-

sarily lead to common policies. There was intense discussion of the Iraqi issue in the UN Security Council and between the United States and individual European states. Many Europeans want not just to be heard but also to have a veto. The Americans want not only to be heard but also to be in a position to act with willing allies or alone if necessary.

Several participants pointed to the management of economic issues between the EU and the United States as a model for geopolitical disputes. In the economic realm, there are procedures for the resolution of conflict, including regular contacts between the European trade commissioner and the American trade representative (currently Pascal Lamy and Robert Zoellick), as well as arbitration by the World Trade Organization. Economic and geopolitical issues, however, are qualitatively different. Member states of the European Union will remain the power centers for foreign and security policy. We may be heading for the worst of all possible worlds: a European partner just strong and determined enough to resist American initiatives but too weak and divided to be able to propose and implement an alternative policy.

## **NATIONAL COMMITTEE POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

Short of a federal Europe and a federated transatlantic system, neither of which will materialize in the foreseeable future, much can be done piecemeal to improve the present situation. The National Committee on American Foreign Policy makes the following recommendations, which will contribute to progress in managing transatlantic policy conflicts and are consistent with American foreign policy interests.

1. *Increase and regularize contacts between the United States and Europe.* Under the constitution drafted by the Convention on the Future of Europe, foreign and security policy will be coordinated by a new minister of foreign affairs. This official will combine the functions presently exercised by the high representative of the CFSP and the commissioner for external relations. Existing contacts between the U.S. State Department and both European officials and their staffs have proved to be an efficient way of communicating with the entire diplomatic establishment in Europe and help to head off surprises. The creation of a European ministry of foreign affairs will make it possible to increase and perhaps institutionalize these contacts, which will benefit both the United States and Europe. However, European foreign and security affairs will remain essentially intergovernmental, and many European states are not yet or may never be members of the EU. Hence bilateral relations between the United States and individual European states will continue to be crucial.

2. *Take NATO seriously.* The crisis of February 2003 over Turkey's request for aid under Article 5 illuminated the divisions within NATO. Among the serious consequences of this crisis is an understandable reluctance on the part of the United States to entrust

vital interests to an organization whose actions can be stopped by any member. If it happened once, it can happen again. Nonetheless, it is in the U.S. interest to act *as if* NATO were the primary instrument of collective security for all of its members. NATO is a gage of American commitment to Europe's security. It is a useful framework for the creation of coalitions of the able and the willing. It continues to contribute to the stability of the Balkans and of Eastern and Central Europe. It facilitates joint military action by members through the introduction of common standards and procedures ("interoperability"). It may well assume new functions in the fight against terrorism and international crime and in providing a channel for policy analysis and dialogue. The United States, like all other members of the alliance, retains the option of acting independently.

3. *Create a clubhouse for democracies.* American and European participants in the Geneva roundtable agreed on the need for more structured dialogue between the United States and Europe going beyond the Transatlantic Agenda and annual one-day summits. The National Committee proposes as a goal the creation of a democratic nations' "clubhouse" where specialists could prepare, exchange, and discuss their analyses of common problems. This kind of cooperative expertise has proved useful in tackling selected problems in Africa, for example. NATO might be adapted to serve this function in several ways: through the international secretariat, under the supervision of the secretary general (always a European); placing it under either the North Atlantic Council or the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council; or by adding a political dimension to planning in SHAPE. Alternatively, this element of expertise might be introduced into the Transatlantic Agenda, perhaps associated in some way with the EU or NATO or both the EU and NATO. A structured dialogue offers a greater possibility of finding common ground for action. If no common ground can be found, we should determine how to limit the damage. Whatever the procedures or mechanism: "think clubhouse."

4. *Bring in civil society.* Repairing the transatlantic breach is a major responsibility of political leaders and diplomats. It calls also for participation by creative forces within civil society and dialogue across the Atlantic by economic, social, and cultural actors. The National Committee intends to do its part by continuing to sponsor this roundtable, which brings together on a continuing basis analysts and former government officials for frank and far-ranging discussion of issues, options, and proposals for further reflection and action.



# PARTICIPANTS

In alphabetical order for each side, the participants are listed below.

## *The United States*

Bernard E. Brown (political science, Graduate Center, City University of New York, and director of the National Committee's Transatlantic Relations Project)

Herman J. Cohen (professorial lecturer, School of Advanced Studies of Johns Hopkins University, and former assistant secretary of state for African affairs)

Michael Curtis (political science, Rutgers University, and member of the Executive Committee of the National Committee)

Kevin E. Moley (permanent representative of the United States to the United Nations and other international organizations, Geneva)

William M. Rudolf (executive vice president, National Committee)

George D. Schwab (president, National Committee)

## *Europe*

Rob de Wijk (professor, Netherlands Institute for International Relations "Clingendael," The Hague)

William Hopkinson (associate fellow, Royal Institute of International Affairs and Royal United Services Institute, London)

Jolyon Howorth (professor, European Studies, Universities of Bath (England) and Yale (United States))

Julian Lindley-French (faculty member, Geneva Center for Security Policy)

Nicole Schley (senior research fellow, Center for Applied Policy Research, University of Munich)

Stefano Silvestri (president, Istituto Affari Internazionali, Rome)

Bruno Tertrais (senior research fellow, Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique, Paris)

## *Observer*

Gérard Stoudmann (director, Geneva Center for Security Policy, and former ambassador)

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**NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON  
AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY, INC.**

320 Park Avenue

New York, N.Y. 10022

Telephone: (212) 224-1120 • Fax: (212) 224-2524

E-Mail: [ncafp@aol.com](mailto:ncafp@aol.com) • Web site: <http://www.ncafp.org>