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# A New U.S. Approach to Europe?: The Transatlantic Relationship after Bush

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Although the NATO alliance has suffered from policy disagreements throughout its history, current divisions derive mainly from a shift in US grand strategy associated with the Bush Doctrine, which is based on assumptions of U.S. hegemony, an assertive nationalist approach in relations with other states, including erstwhile allies, and the preemptive/preventive use of force. Although this approach has failed to achieve its objectives, the underpinnings on which it is based are deeply rooted in the American political psyche. Given the different interpretations of the security challenges facing the member states of the NATO alliance system, the deeply imbedded views of uniqueness and hegemony that characterize the American political psyche, and the likely unwillingness of the next generation of U.S. political leaders to revise US policy so fully as to eliminate all aspects of recent US attitudes and behavior, it is highly unlikely that the close institutional relationships that characterized the cold war years will be an important feature of future U.S. relations with European states.

**Keywords:** Bush Doctrine; failure of U.S. foreign policy; NATO; Transatlantic relations; U.S.-European relations

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The Bush Administration has less than a year remaining during which to salvage something from the massive, but failed, agenda of restructuring the international system that it set for itself even before the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001. Given its drastically weakened position both at home and globally, however, it is not likely that serious progress will be made during that time in accomplishing objectives – in Iraq and Afghanistan, more generally in the so-called 'war on terror,' or in a rebuilding of relations with either long-term European allies or reemerging challengers like Russia and China. Much has been written about the impact of the Bush Doctrine and of the U.S. decision to invade Iraq on U.S. relations with France, Germany and other NATO countries, as well as about the supposed improvement in those relations, or at least in their tone, in Bush's second term in office. The purpose of the present discussion is to assess the likely longer-term relationship between the United States and its European allies in the period after January 2009, when George W. Bush will retire to his west Texas ranch. To what extent can we expect that there will be a 'return to normal' in U.S. relations with its long-term allies? Will the fissures evident within NATO in recent years

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[1] This article builds upon several recent essays including Kanet 2005; Kanet 2006; Kanet 2007; and Kanet 2008. The author wishes to express his appreciation to those whose comments on those earlier manuscripts have helped to clarify the argument: Gülner Aybet, Trine Flockhart, Graeme Herd, Chris Layne, Ron Linden, Andrew Michta, Susanne Nies, Gabriela Marin Thornton, and, especially, Edward A. Kolodziej.

be closed? Or, as others contributing to this symposium assert, are NATO and the Transantlantic Alliance doomed to a slow, or even rapid, death?[2]

It is important from the outset to lay out the theoretical assumptions on which the author is basing this assessment. First and foremost, he shares the view expressed most forcefully by analysts of a realist persuasion that alliances such as NATO are built and maintained on a coincidence of interests among the major participants in the alliance. Thus, with the end of an external security threat perceived as such by all the members of the Western alliance during the cold war, the primary motive force for the continuation of the alliance arrangements disappeared. Even during the cold war, however, when alliance members were committed to collaboration as essential for defense against the common Soviet threat, serious divisions occurred periodically that threatened the organization's very existence (Kaplan, 1999, *passim*).

However, the author also finds persuasive the neoliberal institutionalists' argument that during its first forty years of its existence NATO had become more than simply an alliance focused on defense against an external enemy. A network of institutional linkages had evolved that proved to be beneficial to a majority of NATO's member states – including, probably most importantly, the dominant member of the alliance, the United States. These linkages facilitated collaboration on a range of activities, not least important the assurance that differences among the members would not, could not, escalate to the level of conflict – a pattern all too familiar in the pre-NATO history of Europe. For the United States the linkages also ensured access to and potential influence over the states of Europe that, Washington hoped, would continue to follow the U.S. lead on major issues of foreign and security policy.

Closely related to the second set of issues was the impact on NATO members of the social and political unrest in ex-Yugoslavia and other portions of former communist Europe. Eventually the decision was made in Western Europe that only by collaborative action – i.e., within the context of a restructured NATO – could Europe prevent the explosion of ethnically-based conflict that would have a strong negative effect on future European stability. So, NATO was reinvented in the 1990s – no longer to meet a commonly-viewed existential threat shared by all members, as in the past, but to provide security and stability on the periphery of 'Europe' and to contribute to stabilizing and socializing the countries of the former communist East into the broader European community, and to ensure the continuation of US involvement and influence in Europe.[3]

Yet, as has become most obvious over the past decade, or so, the perspectives of major members of the transatlantic community on issues of security no longer coincide. There is no commonly perceived enemy to threaten the very existence of the member states. Moreover, the very nature of security is viewed differently in key members of the NATO community. Perhaps the clearest and most controversial of the assessments of the divide between views of security that have dominated U.S. thinking and that of at least some European states is Robert Kagan's assertion that Americans are from Mars, while

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[2] The future of the transatlantic relationship has been the subject of numerous studies in recent years. A small, but relevant, sampling includes Burwell, *et al.,* 2006; Cox, 2005; Cox, 2006; Fry, 2007; Jones, 2004; Layne, 2006a Pouliot, 2006; Shearman, 2003; and Smith, 2006;.

[3] Gülnur Aybet's (2000) treatment of this issue remains perhaps the very best assessment of the 'reinvention' of NATO. See, also, Yost (1998).

Europeans come from Venus – that is, Americans are prone to respond to a crisis with the use of coercion or threats of coercion, while Europeans emphasize the possibilities of resolving differences through negotiations. (Kagan, 2003)[4] Although Kagan's broad-brush characterization of Europeans as incapable of acting forcefully to protect their legitimate security interests is patently false, it is quite clear that views on security differ substantially between Washington and Berlin – as well as between Warsaw or London and Berlin or Paris – and that a huge gap in capabilities exists and will continue to exist.[5] The conclusion reached by many is that the differences and divisions are so great that the longer-term prospects for the formal alliance network that has characterized transatlantic relations for almost sixty years will continue to erode (Menon, 2007).

## The Bush Doctrine and the Splits in the Transatlantic Community

The framework for what has come to be known as the Bush Doctrine was developed before the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 or George W. Bush's declaration of a 'war on terror'. In fact, as others have demonstrated quite convincingly, the roots of a unilateralist and hegemonic approach to foreign policy are deeply embedded in American history. (Gaddis, 2004; Kagan, 2006; Layne, 2006b) and have represented the overwhelmingly dominant thrust in U.S. foreign polity throughout its history.

Although those committed to a policy of collaboration with like-minded states to pursue security against the Soviet Union after World War II won the policy debate, others for whom a form of go-it-alone nationalist assertiveness was a more appropriate approach to assuring U.S. security did not simply vanish. In fact, with the end of the cold war and the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991 their intellectual descendants, now christened neo-conservatives, quickly resuscitated much of the 'logic' of assertive nationalism (Kanet, 2005). The gist of the argument – first developed in a policy paper authored by then Under Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz,[6] later expanded by neoconservative ideologues like Max Boot and Charles Krauthammer,[7] and finally presented in a fuller version by the Project for the American Century (1997) – noted that the United States was the sole superpower remaining in the world. Moreover, it called for the use of this globally dominant position to carry out a restructuring of the international system in a way that would be advantageous to the United States and, in the view of its advocates,

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[4] Some have noted that the challenges of Islamic fundamentalism, the economic and political rise of Asia, the rush of migrants from the poverty of the Global South to the industrialized North, and the threats of global environmental degradation represent for the industrialized West the functional equivalent for the twenty-first century of the Soviet threat of the second half of the twentieth. (Ash, 2003) They call for the revitalization of the commitment to collaborative action of the countries of 'the West' that includes the incorporation of other major global actors to deal with issues that are just as threatening to the future of the global community as was the cold war.

[5] These points and others are developed more fully in Kanet (2005) and Kanet (2007).

[6] Paul Wolfowitz authored a Defense Planning Guidance document during the first Bush Administration which called for the explicit use of U.S. power to achieve U.S. interests. The furor caused by the implied called for unilateral and preventive U.S. intervention resulted in the suppression of the report. Andrew Bacevich (2002, pp. 42-46) discusses the Wolfowitz 'indiscretion' in some detail.

[7] For their positions see Boot (2002) and Krauthammer (2004).

beneficial to the entire global community. The elimination of authoritarian, rogue, regimes – starting with that of Saddam Hussein – was a central element of the Project's proposed approach to foreign policy already in the 1990s. Since many of the key members of the foreign and security policy team appointed by George W. Bush after the Supreme Court selected him as president in December 2000 were active members of the Project, the basic elements of their approach to U.S. security and foreign policy were put into place even before the terrorist attacks of September 2001.

Almost nine months after those attacks, in his speech to the 2002 graduating class at West Point, Bush laid out the central elements of a new strategic doctrine that has come to be known as the Bush Doctrine. He noted that, 'as we defend the peace, we also have an historic opportunity to preserve the peace. We have our best chance since the rise of the nation-state in the seventeenth century to build a world where the great powers compete in peace instead of prepare for war.' (Bush, 2002) This positions the United States to use its power to 'create a balance of power that favors human freedom: conditions in which all nations and all societies can choose for themselves the rewards and challenges of political and economic liberty' (U.S. White House, 2002, Introduction).

The Doctrine, as elaborated in numerous official speeches and publications, beginning with the 2002 version of the National Security Doctrine of the United States, eschews a policy based on containment, assumes that other states will accept U.S. dominance in global affairs, justifies the use of force by the United States in 'preventive wars' meant to forestall any possible long-term challenge to U.S. security as defined exclusively in Washington, and generally presents the United States as a global hegemon able and willing to restructure global society in the manner of its own choosing, but ultimately for the well-being of the world community.[8]

## The Failure of the Bush Doctrine and Attempts to Repair Transatlantic Relations

With very few exceptions, most foreign and security policy analysts now agree from the vantage point of late 2007, that the Bush Doctrine of unilateral pre-emptive/preventive war to defeat terrorism, to stop nuclear proliferation, and to democratize global politics, starting with Afghanistan and Iraq, is a failed approach to foreign and security policy. Critics and partisans alike of the invasion of Iraq agree that inept planning, notably in preparing for the aftermath of 'mission accomplished,' and an incompetently administered occupation account for much of the debacle. This assessment, however relevant it might be, will not get us very far in understanding the root sources of the abject failure of the Bush Doctrine or in charting new and effective directions in American security and foreign policy, including relations with long-terms allies. The problem with the Bush Doctrine lies less at the surface in its demonstrably flawed execution than in the fatal defects of its material and moral assumptions: that the United States is a hegemonic superpower capable of inducing allies and compelling adversaries to submit to American preferences for world order — views shared by both proponents and opponents of the war and deeply embedded in the political psyche of most Americans.

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[8] Among the analytically clearest assessments of the basic principles that underlie the Bush Doctrine is that of Edward Kolodziej (2008).

Abandoning the Bush Doctrine will require discarding this triumphalist view that emerged in the United States more than a decade ago with the collapse of the former USSR and the self-proclaimed U.S. victory in the cold war. Creating a new global order unilaterally is beyond the reach of the United States, or of any state, within a world of multiplying and increasingly interdependent but diffused and decentralized centers of power, both state and non-state, that will have a say in how the world is governed — or not governed. In other words, future policy must be based on the type of collaborative relationships with other state (and non-state) actors that chararacterized U.S. policy during the Cold War – despite the complexity of pursuing such relationships.

The perverse genius of the Bush Doctrine was its success in melding the idea of American exceptionalism, a widely and avidly held view by liberals and conservatives alike in the United States, to the superpower claim. This union at once mobilized domestic support for the Bush Doctrine and transformed American exceptionalism, hitherto the privileged preserve of Americans, into a collective good supposedly deliverable by the United States to all states and peoples across the globe.

The claimed moral and material superiority of the American superpower assured domestic support for the Bush Doctrine. Yet, a review of the principal regions of the globe demonstrates the falsity of the claim that the United States is a hegemon in any meaningful sense of the term beyond its overwhelming military capabilities in traditional warfare.[9] The invasion and the subsequent disastrous occupation of Iraq illustrate, but scarcely reveal, the scope of the overextension of American power. The catalogue of disastrous outcomes in Iraq grows daily: American forces caught in the cross-fire of a civil war; mounting casualties; thousands of Iraqis killed each month; the multiplication of insurgents and Jihadist terrorists where none were before; a Shi'ite sectarian regime to which Washington is now hostage; Iran's rise as a regional, potential nuclear power with more influence over the Shi'ite government than the United States; Israel's *de facto* defeat by Hezbollah, which conspires with Iran and Syria to topple the western-leaning Lebanese government; U.S. reliance on a weak UN Secretary General since summer 2006 to preserve the fragile cease fire between Hezbollah and Israel; and Washington's abdication of its balancing role in managing the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

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[9] The assessment provided here is based on a collaborative research project that began as an examination of the ways in which regional states around the world responded to U.S. unilateralism and hegemony. What emerged most clearly over the course of two conferences and much analysis and discussion was the fact that the notion of the United States as a superpower could not stand up to close scrutiny. It was a misleading characterization of U.S. power and of its ability to get others to assent or to submit to its preferences, whether at the margin over specific policy difference, say the means and methods to ferret out and defeat terrorists, or whether over the broader issues of regional and global order and security. It became increasingly clear to the participants in the project that the United States was not a superpower in the sense that other actors were induced either to bandwagon on American preferences or were prepared to concede that resistance to American power was a losing game. What became progressively apparent in the deliberations were the material and political constraints limiting American power and the multiple checks either imposed on American power by regional actors or the many and substantial concessions extracted from a besieged global power. The results of the project appear in *From Superpower to Besieged Global Power: Restoring World Order after the Failure of the Bush Doctrine*. (Kolodziej and Kanet, 2008) The current discussion draws heavily on the results of that project and specifically on the introduction to the volume coauthored with Kolodziej.

The results of the November 2006 congressional elections in the United States provided evidence that this grim catalogue of reverses is now obvious to a majority of Americans, if not to the president who continues to pursue a policy based on 'more of the same.' Less obvious is just how vulnerable American power and purpose are around the world.

In Northeast Asia the United States has outsourced its efforts to contain North Korea's efforts to go nuclear to China. Beijing, concerned about its client's stability, resists applying effective pressures on the Pyongyang regime to halt the nuclearization of Northeast Asia. Nor can much help be expected from China to impose sanctions on Tehran to abide by the Non-Proliferation Treaty, since its ravenous appetite for oil equals that of the United States. China's economic leverage over the United States – over $1 trillion in foreign reserves, hundreds of billions of dollars in trade surpluses, and a quarter of the U.S. foreign debt under the control of the Chinese central bank – mollify any effective pressure that Washington might exert to induce greater Chinese respect for human rights or to elicit Chinese support for ending the genocidal conflict in oil-exporting Sudan.

The story is much the same in South, Southwest, and Southeast Asia. The United States depends on a vulnerable, nuclear Pakistan, beset by ethnic divisions and rising Muslim fundamentalist pressures, to support the global war on terror. Washington attempts to bribe an ascendant India to balance rising Chinese influence by undermining the non-proliferation treaty in agreeing to supply a non-signatory to the NPT with nuclear materials and know-how, an accord that a Democratic controlled Congress is likely to uphold. The attempt to create a coalition of the willing to contain expanding Chinese influence in an arc anchored by Japan, Indonesia, and India has yielded no tangible results; quite the reverse. Japan's rising nationalism inflames its regional neighbors. The states of Southeast Asia are drawn increasingly into the Chinese economic orbit and calmed by Beijing's charm diplomacy. New Delhi, meanwhile, rejects the role Washington has cast for it, as a counterweight to Beijing, by increasing its political and economic cooperation with Beijing.

Latin and Central America are no less resistant to U.S. preferences. The leftist drift in Latin America falls loosely under the influence of Venezuela's incendiary Hugo Chavez or Brazil's more moderate Luiz Inácio Lula Da Silva, while most states of the region simply ignore limited American efforts at leadership as never before. We should have no illusion that the deep split in Mexican politics between the Right and Left will produce help any time soon in addressing the problem of over 12 million illegal aliens in the United States whose emigration and billions of dollars in return transfers relax pressures on their governments to create jobs and economic opportunities for their citizens.

In Africa the United States is largely absent. It has had no appreciable effect on stopping genocidal depredations from Rwanda in 1994 through the Congo since the turn of the century until now or in Sudan today. Millions have lost their lives in these fratricidal struggles for power and dominance. The Bush administration has also largely reneged on its UN Millennium promise to increase assistance to Africa. The United States is at the bottom of the list of donors at an assistance level of less than two-tenths of one percent of GDP.

U.S. relations with both long-term friends and former opponents have been greatly undermined by U.S. policy initiatives over the past half dozen years. Serious divisions have split the NATO alliance – only partially as a result of Washington's decision to forge ahead with the invasion of Iraq in spring 2003. Efforts to patch up those relations have been successful in part, but have not really resulted in the rehabilitation of the transatlantic relationship. The major issue, as others have demonstrated, results largely from the shift in U.S. policy that has replaced consensus building and cooperation with coercion and imposition, even in relations with nominally friendly states.[10]

Even 'new Europe,' to use former Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld's inopportune term, has gradually pulled back from its original wholehearted support for U.S. policy in Iraq and Afghanistan. Relations with Vladimir Putin's Russia are a growing disaster – although Putin and the Russian government are no doubt more responsible for this situation than is Washington. Yet, Washington's policy of taking Russia for granted and of assuming that it could be bullied into compliance with US policy objectives has proven to be a failure (Simes, 2007; Trenin, 2007)

To acknowledge the limits of American power in the world, however, is not to return to the discredited declinist debate of the late 1980s. There is no doubt that the United States is a global power, however much it may be bogged down in the quagmire of Iraq, isolated diplomatically, increasingly deep in debt, and challenged in world markets. It is the only state capable of projecting its military power around the globe. American economic power and technological leadership remain world class. Its $11 trillion dollar economy dwarfs all others. American culture -- whose creative fashions, music, television, media, and movies impacts on peoples around the world, especially the young -- is an important soft power asset. America's open system of governance and respect and support for civil liberties and human rights commanded, at least until recently, worldwide admiration and emulation.

The current administration in Washington, although firmly refusing to accept the argument that its overall approach to the rest of the world is at root the primary source of many of its problems, has in fact, already backed off from some of those positions. While adamantly refusing to deal with so-called 'rogue states' that challenge U.S. global interests, Washington has still been willing to discuss issues of mutual concern with both North Korea and Iran. More relevant for the focus of this paper, since the nadir in U.S. relations with its long-term European partners at the time of the invasion of Iraq, efforts have been made on both sides to tone down hostile rhetoric and to close the splits in relations. The change of government in Germany and, more recently in France, have brought to power leaders less hostile to U.S. global policy. On the other hand, political leaders in Spain, Italy and the UK who were closely associated with support for U.S. policy have seemingly paid for that support with the loss of favor and power in their home countries. The serious policy divisions between the U.S. leadership and its European counterparts still exist, but they are expressed in less hostile terms than they were in 2003. Greater emphasis is placed on common interests and on areas where agreement exists.

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[10] Trine Flockhart (2008), among others, makes quite clear that the central issue dividing the NATO alliance in the run up to the Iraq War was the shift in U.S. policy away from consultation with its allies.

**Additional European Sources of Divisions in NATO and the EU**

Any discussion of transatlantic relations and the prospects for the future of the relationship must not focus exclusively on divisions between the United States and European partners. From the very outset of the recent friction in inner-NATO relations serious differences have existed in perception and in policy between European countries themselves; although the nature of the relationship of Europe with the United States has an important element in those differences, it has by no means been the only issue in dispute. Since 2003 the divisions among both the European members of NATO and the European Union have, if anything, expanded. The central issue has concerned the divisions on the very nature of the European Union, represented most visibly and forcefully by the defeat of the proposed constitution in both France and the Netherlands and the limited progress to date in reaching agreement on a new version. At a different level, the addition of ten postcommunist members to both organizations has brought with it serious disagreements on the relations with the Russian Federation and the most appropriate way to respond to what some of these countries view as the revival of unacceptable Russian assertiveness in Central Europe. It is here that the relationship between Europe and the United States enters the picture, since for those countries in which Russia is viewed a potential security threat – or current one, as in the case of Estonia – only the United States is capable of providing the type of support that they view as essential.

When we examine the views of the major members of NATO today toward the security threats facing them and toward the most appropriate way to deal with those threats, we find serious differences. The interpretations of the challenges to security and the ways to respond to those challenges differ substantially among the French, the British, and the Germans. (Marin Thornton, 2007, chapter 4) Moreover, those views differ appreciably from the dominant perspectives in the United States – not just within the current administration, but across a substantial portion of the American political elite and electorate.[11]

In discussing the differences in perspective concerning security among major European countries, Joachim Krause (2004)[12] cautions that analysts should not oversimplify the matter and must recognize the fact that three major schools of thought exist in Europe concerning multilateralism in global affairs, each associated with one of the major member states of the E.U. and each with important implications for future relations with the United States. The German approach, he argues, is based on 'an almost uncritical preference for all kinds of multilateralism' based on the assumption that the mechanisms that contributed to the resolution of the Cold War are applicable to the

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[11] Drawing upon a wealth of U.S. sources, Anatol Lieven 2004) paints a picture of 'mainstream' American attitudes on foreign and security policy that is much more bellicose and nationalistic in tone than attitudes that predominate in Europe.

[12] This discussion draws heavily on Krause's argument. To some extent that argument includes elements that overlap with Robert Kagan's (2003) contention that the United States and Europe have experienced two quite different sets of developments over the past half century with the result that their responses to security issues are at odds with one another.

global and regional security situation of today. The approach is especially weak in assessing risks or threats, Krause concludes.

Although French politicians and diplomats sound much like their German counterparts in their rhetoric supporting multilateralism, in fact they are much more pessimistic – and, thus, realistic -- about the global security situation and are definitely willing to use military force to preserve stability. This assessment shares much in common with that of the United States, but the French call for a multilateral approach to security is motivated much more by their opposition to a world order in which the United States plays a dominant role, in Krause's view, rather than to a principled commitment to a collaborative approach to security.

For the British, multilateralism and negotiations are the preferred approaches to dealing with international security threats, though their pragmatism leads them to recognize that in some cases force simply must be employed. The British assessment of risk is comparable to that of both France and the United States and, thus, differs significantly from that of Germany. In contrast with the French, however, 'the British do not consider the United States the main target of multilateralism . . . but rather the indispensable power without which the global community cannot pursue a multilateral approach to world problems,' These differences in perspective are not likely to change within the foreseeable future and will result in three quite different responses to U.S. policy and the dominant role of the United States in global affairs, regardless of who is president in Washington. When one adds to the mix the fact that Poland and other postcommunist members of both the EU and NATO harbor serious concerns about future Russian threats to their security not necessarily shared or understood by the countries of Western Europe, and the nature of the differences on security that divide the Europeans themselves begins to be evident.

**The Foundations for U.S. Policy after the Bush Administration**

Much of what has been said and written about the rigidity of U.S. policy and the unilateral and assertive nationalist approach to dealings with the rest of the world applies specifically to the current U.S. administration. One might conclude, therefore, that with the end of George W. Bush's current term in office in January 2009, one might expect a return to the more balanced approach that the United States took in its relations with the rest of the world in the past. Yet, the foundations of U.S. empire are deep and the domestic support for a hegemonic approach to the rest of the world commands significant support domestically – even if the disaster of the war in Iraq has greatly weakened support for that particular initiative. Given the assertive nationalist orientation of so much of U.S. society and, more importantly, the role of corporate America in the political process -- what President Eisenhower half a century ago termed the military-industrial complex -- it is highly unlikely that we will witness any dramatic shift in U.S. strategic policy – despite the advice and criticism of other states, of independent analysts or of individual political figures. The behavior of the leadership of the Democratic Party since it took control of Congress in January 2007 and the positions taken by those Democrats currently running for president provide ample evidence that change will likely be

incremental, at best. Yet, the harsh tone that characterized the early years of the Bush Administration will likely not return.

How will this play out in the relationship of the United States to its long-term allies within NATO? What are the prospects for the reestablishment of the type of collaborative security relationship that characterized the NATO alliance throughout the first forty years of its existence? In attempting to respond specifically to this question, let me return to the point made at the outset of this paper concerning the nature of alliances. Alliances are built on a shared view of security – both concerning the threats that the members of the alliance face and the ways in which those threats might most appropriately be met. Even during the cold war, when there was usually general agreement among the transatlantic partners that the Soviet Union represented a serious threat to the security of all the members, disagreements existed among the members that challenged the alliance itself.[13] Precisely because of the external threat these disagreements were usually papered over. Moreover – and this is an extremely important point – the United States was willing during most of this period to act with restraint in its relationships with allies and to modulate its temptation toward unilateralism. It acted as a 'consensual hegemon' in most cases, rather than as a 'coercive hegemon.' So, it is important to recall that the transatlantic relationship was not one that was free of friction throughout the postwar period.

This brings us back to the question about the future of the transatlantic relationship after the Bush presidency beginning in January 2009. Only when the U.S. leadership recognizes that the United States simply cannot bear the costs of 'going it alone' in global affairs and understands that military power alone cannot accomplish most of the legitimate interests of the United States will U.S. relations with the rest of the world, including its long-term European partners, change. What is likely to occur, however, with virtually any new president is a return to a more balanced approach that includes more substantive cooperation with partners and a less strident approach to dealing with others political leaders. It is doubtful, however that the United States will embrace the types of international institutional developments required to deal with many of the security challenges of the present, because of its inability to control or dominate those institutions.[14] It is not at all clear that Americans and their leaders are prepared, as has already occurred to a substantial degree in Europe, to put their interests in the hands of supranational institutions or regimes.

The main institution that has tied the Americans and their European allies together since World War II has been NATO. Yet, as we have already seen, NATO lacks the integrating force that it once had during the confrontation with the Soviet Bloc that characterized the cold war. From the perspective of Washington, NATO is no longer an important adjunct to U.S. security capabilities, but rather a 'club' from which collaborators for specific projects might be drawn, as been the case in both Afghanistan and Iraq. It is highly unlikely that NATO will ever again have the security functions that

[13] For a discussion of some of the serious rifts that occurred in relations among NATO members see Kaplan (1999).

[14] Throughout the cold war, but especially in the early postwar years, when the United States was an active initiator of and participant in international institutions, Washington was able to influence, even control, many of these institutions. This is no longer true in the twenty-first century.

it once had. Moreover, as U.S. and European perceptions of security needs continue to differ and as long as at least some European states view the United States as a potential security problem, progress will likely be made within the European Union to develop an effective security instrument independent of the United States. (Marin Thornton, 2006) This will of necessity drive an even larger wedge between the United States and Europe.

The conditions and interests that led to the emergence and flourishing of NATO and of the special relationship between the United States and its European allies died with the end of the cold war. Efforts to resuscitate and restructure the organization into one that will meet the future security needs of the members, most importantly the United States, have been only partially successful. As Menon (2007) has argued, the end of the cold war and developments over the past decade, or more, have brought the likely end of a U.S. security strategy in which formal alliances are no longer viewed as an important component of that strategy. This does not foreclose cordial and mutually-beneficial relations between the United States and Europe – in particular, individual European countries. What it probably means is that the unusually close collaborative relationship that characterized the transatlantic community during almost half a century is not likely to be recreated.[15]

## Concluding Comments on Future U.S. Policy

Expanding our vision somewhat from the Transatlantic relationship and focusing on the broader U.S. policy within which that relationship will be embedded, it is essential to recognize that, even though the United States is not the global hegemon envisaged by the neocons, it still commands formidable size as a global power. Ample hard and soft power remains, or can be rehabilitated, to help shape the world to favor American interests and those of free peoples everywhere. These guidelines for the effective use of American power are apt. First it is essential to scrap what remains of the Bush Doctrine and superpower presumptions and to scale U.S. security interests and objectives to the real power and capabilities of the United States.

Second, Washington should actively and creatively engage U.S. power around the world – but in concert with other like-minded peoples and countries dedicated to open, transparent, and accountable government, to free market practices, and to the protection of civil liberties and human rights. Either the democracies of the world hang together or they will hang separately, if they fail to construct a world order that is safer, more prosperous, and legitimate for their citizens and as a legacy for other peoples around the world.

A third essential element of a revitalized U.S. foreign and security policy relates to rebuilding the country's domestic material capabilities to ensure its continued economic and technological leadership. That imperative generates equally compelling priorities for improving the quality of education at all levels, for renewal of the nation's neglected infrastructure, for the protection of the environment — nationally and globally,

[15] As noted earlier, Timothy Garton Ash (2004) is no doubt correct when he argues that now as much as during the cold war the West must cooperate, if their vision of the future and their role in that future is to be realized. The question is, are the leaderships of the relevant countries, especially the United States, ready for such cooperation?

and for the repair, maintenance and expansion of the country's social welfare safety nets that are prerequisites for forging unity across its diverse and diverging populations, the creative human resource that is indispensable for domestic revival and for successful global engagement.

The fourth element of a revitalization of U.S. policy and of its position in the world calls for the reaffirmation of the respect for the rule of law, domestically and internationally, and for globally recognized moral norms and practices. The defections of the Bush administration from traditional American practices have incurred widespread condemnation, isolated the United States in the world community, and delegitimized the exercise of American power and, worse, generated incentives for other states to do likewise.

Shedding the reassuring notion of the United States as a superpower with whose policies reluctant friends must bandwagon and against which resolute foes must align will not be easy. This adaptation to a complex world society will take time, upwards of a generation to change the thinking of Americans and their leaders about the real prospects and promise of the United States as a great, global power. American exceptionalism in its form as the first modern national that has welded peoples of every race, religion, culture, linguistic, and ethnic affiliation into 'a more perfect union' has been a positive good – an inspiring ideal that is no less a collective good than security or material progress. Exceptionalism that dons either a conservative or liberal dress in the misguided and mischievous belief that the United States is a superpower, capable of dominating others and imposing American goals on them, will fail as have all other empires, which destroyed themselves in large part because their reach was beyond their grasp.

The future of the Transatlantic relationship hinges in part on the ability of the United States to redefine itself in its relationship with the rest of the world, including Europe. Yet, even such a redefinition will not mean that the type of institutional ties characterized by NATO during the cold war are likely to be reestablished in the future.

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