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Beyond Iraq: The Crisis of the Transatlantic Security Community

by

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Introduction

There is little doubt that the transatlantic relationship is in a deep crisis despite the patching-up work being done on either side of the Atlantic after the Iraq war. Therefore, it is time to re-evaluate U.S.-European relations and to take stock of its current evolution.[1] Such an effort has to take into account, however, that the history of the transatlantic relationship is a history of crises. Compare the crowds marching against George W. Bush, his rhetoric of "axis of evil," and the Iraq war with the demonstrations against Ronald Reagan, the talk of "empire of the evil," and the euro-missiles!

If the current conflicts are supposed to be different from the past, we need convincing analytical arguments pointing to structural changes in world politics rather than editorial adhocery. Three such changes come to mind: the end of the Cold War; unprecedented American preponderance; and September 11, 2001, and the rise of transnational terrorism.

I argue in the following that none of these changes (alone or in combination) offer sufficient evidence to conclude that structural changes in the international system are about to spell the end of the transatlantic community as we have known it over the past fifty years. The transatlantic security community rests on a) collective identity based on common values, b) (economic) interdependence grounded in common material interests, and c) common institutions based on norms regulating the relationship. The current conflicts stem from domestic developments on both sides of the Atlantic leading to different perceptions of contemporary security threats and, more importantly, different prescriptions on how to handle them. Such differences have existed before and they have been dealt with through the institutions of the transatlantic community including European use of domestic access opportunities into the U.S. political system. There is little to suggest that these transatlantic channels of mutual influence do not work any longer. This is the good news.

The bad news is that unilateral and even imperial tendencies in contemporary U.S. foreign policy and particularly its official discourse violate constitutive norms on which the transatlantic security community has been built over the years, namely multilateralism and close consultation with the allies. Building "coalitions of the willing" to deal with world problems rather than using enduring alliances has become the official talk in Washington. The more U.S. foreign policy in general acts

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[1] This is an updated and abbreviated version of a paper first presented at the American Institute for Contemporary German Studies, Washington DC, January 24, 2003, published as AICGS Seminar Papers. I owe a lot to discussions in my research seminar at the Free University. I thank the students as well as Tanja Börzel for their critical comments.

unilaterally and the more it renounces international agreements and institutions which the U.S. itself has helped to build, the more it touches upon fundamental principles of world order and the rule of (international) law in dealing with international conflicts. The "National Security Strategy" of the U.S. (President of the United States 2002) is indeed partly at odds with some principles of world order which have been part of the Western consensus in the post World War II era. In this sense, the current disagreements between Europe and the U.S. go beyond ordinary policy conflicts and touch issues of common values.

In short, the transatlantic community faces a deep crisis. It is no longer possible to paper over the differences in joint communiqués and nice photo opportunities. Rather, we need a new transatlantic bargain (Moravcsik 2003). As a result, a European response to the challenges of the Bush administration should be articulated. A European counter-vision is already expressed through practice – from European efforts in conflict prevention and peacekeeping to European support for the International Criminal Court and multilateral efforts at dealing with global environmental challenges. But the neo-conservative discourse emanating from Washington requires a European response in terms of an alternative vision of world order based on the rule of law and liberal principles.

Yet, a European (counter-) vision of world order is not meant to wreck the transatlantic security community. In fact, the rhetoric of building a counterweight to American hyperpower emanating from politicians and intellectuals in mostly "old Europe" is bound to fail, since it will split Europe further apart in foreign policy. It will lead to further "letters of the eight." Rather, efforts at a common European foreign policy and a European "grand strategy" should revive a serious transatlantic dialogue and to (re-) create the transnational alliances across the Atlantic among like-minded groups that seem to have been silenced after 9/11.

I proceed in three steps. First, I take stock of and discuss the fundamentals of the transatlantic security community including some alternative accounts. Second, I analyze domestic developments in the U.S. and Europe in order to account partially for the current crisis. I conclude with some suggestions for the necessary transatlantic dialogue concerning world order questions.

The Crisis of the Transatlantic Security Community in Crisis

Crisis, What Crisis?

It is wrong to argue that policy disagreements between Europeans and North Americans dominate the transatlantic agenda. There is still quite some variation across policy areas concerning the extent to which the U.S. and European governments disagree among each other. In transatlantic economic affairs, for example, things are fundamentally intact. The two main powers in the world economy – the U.S. and the European Union (EU) – still cooperate in managaing international economic relations through multilateral institutions, particularly the World Trade Organization (WTO). Even in security issues, it would be hard to argue that disagreements prevail. As to the top priority on the current international security agenda – the fight against transnational terrorism – both sides have established a rather smooth cooperative relationship concerning transnational law enforcement and intelligence sharing. Military and political security cooperation on the Balkans, in Afghanistan, and elsewhere has not been affected by the crisis in the transatlantic relationship. And as long as the Bush administration continues to actively pursue the "road map," Europeans and Americans are in fundamental agreement as to how to deal with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Thus, not all is bad in the transatlantic relationship.

Yet, policy disagreements between the U.S. and Europe do extend over a wide range of issues these days. During the cold war, such conflicts were rather normal, but they were mostly confined to specific questions. Today, things seem to be different. "Regime change" by force, "preventive war," and other policies of the Bush administration are not considered legitimate means of international politics in Europe. And this includes the United Kingdom and those European countries who have been part of the "coalition of the willing" in the Iraq war. Moreover, European and U.S. foreign policies are at odds with each other on almost all issues of global governance (except for international economic affairs). This relates to, among others, nuclear and conventional arms control, international human rights (the fight over the International Criminal Court [ICC] only constitutes the tip of the iceberg here), and the international environment (for details see Krell 2003, 22-25). The underlying problematique of these policy disagreements concern rather fundamental world order questions, such as the role of multilateral institutions including the United Nations (UN) in global governance, understandings of international law, and the like. It has to be noted here that many of these policy conflicts predate both September 11, 2001, and the Bush administration. The ICC and the European-American rift on the climate change regime have been with us already during the Clinton administration.

So, how can we explain the increasing policy disagreements between the U.S. and Europe? Is something wrong with the fundamentals of the relationship?

Three Claims on the Contemporary Crisis in U.S.-European Relations

The End of the Cold War

Mearsheimer and Waltz have already argued more than ten years ago that the end of the Cold War and the resulting end of the bipolar international system would lead to a decline of the Western alliance (Mearsheimer 1990; Waltz 1993). The argument was straightforward and came out of the structural realist theory of international relations: alliances are partnerships of convenience and joint interest to balance the power of an adversary. Once the power of the adversary has collapsed, the forces that bind an alliance together, decrease. NATO and the transatlantic relationship are no exceptions. More than ten years after the end of the Cold War, it is still unclear whether the argument is right or wrong. Worse, the neorealist claim is too indeterminate to tell us precisely what would count as evidence confirming or falsifying it. In 1990, e.g., Mearsheimer predicted not only the collapse of NATO, but also of the EU, and he expected Germany to go nuclear. Even if one concedes that NATO is in a deep crisis, the EU is certainly not in decline and Germany still has no intention to acquire nuclear weapons.

U.S. power (and European weakness)

A second argument holds that the end of the Cold War has led to an unprecedented supremacy of U.S. power in the international system (e.g., Wohlforth 1999; Brooks and Wohlforth 2002; Huntington 1999). The U.S. does no longer require allies to pursue its goals and can go it alone. At the same time, Europe is militarily weak and its military expenditures have declined sharply after the end of the Cold War. Kagan argued in this context that the U.S. lives in a Hobbesian "dog-eat-dog" world and sees itself as the world policeman, while European have made themselves comfortable in a Kantian world of peace and multilateralism (Kagan 2003).

There are various problems and inherent contradictions with these claims. First, it is certainly true that we live in a unipolar world when it comes to military power. Concerning economic power, though, the argument only holds true if the European Union (EU) is treated as fifteen (twentyfive from 2004 on) single states rather than an economic power with a single market and a single currency (and shortly a constitution). Concerning various categories of "soft power" (knowledge, ideas

etc.; Nye 1990), it is rather unclear whether the U.S. is in a league of its own, since "soft power" seems to be rather diffuse and more widely spread in the contemporary world system.

Second, as to superpower behavior in a unipolar world, we need to distinguish clearly between (benign) hegemony and imperialism. *Hegemonic* power rests on the willingness of the superpower to sustain an international order, on its preparedness to commit itself to the rules of that order and on the smaller states' acceptance of the order as legitimate. The latter is a function of the former as a result of which small states gain "voice opportunities" to influence the hegemon's behavior, as Ikenberry has convincingly argued (Ikenberry 2000, 2001). In contrast, *imperial* power still rests on the willingness of the superpower to sustain world order, but the main difference to hegemony is that the superpower only plays by the rules when it suits its interests. In other words, imperial power is above the rules of the order (Ikenberry 2002; see also Krell 2003).

Yet, unipolarity as a structural condition of the international system does not tell us whether we live in a hegemonic or an imperial order. The behavioral consequences of a unipolar world for U.S. foreign policy are unclear. Yet, for allies and for the sustainability of the transatlantic alliance it makes all the difference in the world whether they are faced with a hegemon or an imperial power. U.S. hegemony and leadership has been readily accepted by the European allies throughout the post-World War II period. U.S. imperialism, however, would indeed lead to the end of the transatlantic partnership and would have to be maintained by the use of U.S. power against its allies in the long run. The crucial point is that we need to look inside the U.S. itself in order to explain whether it behaves like a benign hegemon or like a malign imperialist. In other words, domestic politics and domestic structures become central to accounting for U.S. foreign policy, even if we accept realist assumptions about the (unipolar) structure of the international system.

September 11, 2001, and the Rise of Transnational Terrorism

There is a final claim that 9/11 and the reactions to it constitute a watershed in the transatlantic relationship. If this means that differences in domestic responses to transnational terrorist threats result in transatlantic conflicts over the means to handle the threat, there is some truth to it (see Katzenstein 2002). If it means that the transatlantic community as such is endangered because of 9/11, the argument makes no sense. On the contrary, the transatlantic alliance faces a new threat which endangers the survival of highly industrialized and democracies precisely because transnational terrorist networks exploit the vulnerabilities of open and liberal societies (Schneckener 2002; Arquilla and Ronfeldt 2001; Deibert and Stein 2002). As a result, increased transatlantic coopera-

tion in intelligence and law enforcement is necessary which should strengthen alliance cohesion rather than weakening it.

In sum, neither the end of the Cold War nor U.S. unipolarity as such nor the new threats of terrorist networks constitute changes in world politics which spell the end of the transatlantic community as such. These processes have in common that they are indeterminate with regard to their consequences for the U.S.-European relationship. Let us now have a closer look at the fundamentals of this relationship to determine whether they are still intact.

The Transatlantic Alliance: A Liberal Security Community

Debates about U.S. foreign policy, unipolarity, and the transatlantic relationship mostly overlook the obvious fact that the Western world consists of liberal and capitalist democracies tied together through strong economic relations and common institutions. Joint democracy, economic interdependence, and highly institutionalized international relations – these are indicators for what Karl W. Deutsch called a "pluralistic security community" already in 1957, defined as "a group of people which has become 'integrated.' By INTEGRATION we mean the attainment, within a territory, of a 'sense of community' and of institutions and practices strong enough and widespread enough to assure, for a 'long' time, dependable expectations of 'peaceful change' among its population" (Deutsch and al. 1957, 5-6, 9). A security community constitutes a particular social structure of international relations which then generates peaceful relations among the members (see also Adler and Barnett 1998b).

But what explains the expectations of peaceful change among members of a security community? Three factors – "three Is" - mutually reinforce each other and serve to account for the democratic peace in the contemporary security community of major powers (see also Adler and Barnett 1998a):

1. collective identity;
2. stable and interdependent interactions across societies creating strong social interests in each other's well-being;
3. strong institutionalization of relationships creating social order and enduring norms among the members of the community.

Collective Identity

Among the three factors, collective identity is probably the most difficult to measure. Yet, there are sufficient examples to sustain the argument that the often-proclaimed "value community" of the Western alliance does not simply represent sheer rhetoric (on evidence during the Cold War see Risse-Kappen 1995). After the end of the Cold War, the Western security community did fight for its principles several times, from the Gulf war to the war in Kosovo.

But is anti-Americanism on the rise in Europe, while there is growing anti-Europeanism in the U.S.? We need to distinguish mass public and elite opinion here. Concerning the former, the main measurement problem is not to confuse support for each other's foreign policies with collective identification. All public opinion polls agree that many Europeans – including British, Italian, Spanish, and Central Eastern European citizens - disagree sharply with the Bush administration's foreign policy (see e.g. The Pew Global Attitudes Project 2002; The Pew Research Center for the People & the Press 2002).

How rejection of particular U.S. foreign policies translates into "anti-Americanism," however, is hard to tell. The Iraq crisis and war has led to some decline in mutual sympathy for each other (for the following see The Pew Global Attitudes Project 2003, 19-22). Interestingly enough, the pre-war image of the U.S. in Europe was far more negative than the post-war image. 75% of the British, 61% of the Germans, and 63% of the French held favorable views of the U.S. in Summer 2002. These numbers declined to 48% (British), 25% (German), and 31% (French) in March 2003. In June 2003, once again 70% of the British, 45% of the Germans, and 43% of the French have favorable views of the U.S. In contrast, American citizens seem to sharply distinguish between those who were with the U.S. and those who were opposed to the Iraq war. While U.S. citizens still hold the British in very high esteem (82%), the previously positive image of the French and the Germans has declined sharply (French: 29%, down from 79% in February 2002; German: 44%, down from 83% in early 2002). It is too early to tell whether this negative image of U.S. citizens toward the French and the Germans is going to last.

As to European views of the U.S., however, it is abundantly clear that negative feelings toward America stem from the Bush administration's policies rather than from some underlying resentments of the U.S. in general. Take the following data for the "old Europeans" Germany and France. It is very hard to discern from these data that anti-Americanism should be on the rise in Germany and France.

U.S. Image in Germany and France (June 2003)

	Favorable views of Americans	What's the Problem with the U.S.?	
		Mostly Bush	America in general
Germany	67% (70% in 2002)	74%	21%
France	58% (71% in 2002)	74%	22%

(Source: The Pew Global Attitudes Project 2003, 21-22)

On the contrary, opinion poll data still confirm a remarkable degree of transatlantic consensus with regard to mutual sympathy for each other, threat perceptions, and support for a multilateral world order. While Europeans regard the U.S. less favorable in 2002 than in 1999/2000, more than two thirds still hold a positive image of America. The same holds true for American feelings toward major European allies (overview in The Economist 2003). Threat perceptions in Europe and the U.S. are still remarkably similar, even though support for the "U.S. led war on terrorism" declined in France and Germany (The Pew Global Attitudes Project 2003, 28). Europeans and Americans also agree that religious and ethnic hatred constitutes one of the greatest dangers in the world, while U.S. citizens seem to be somewhat more concerned about the spread of nuclear weapons than their European counterparts. Finally and perhaps most significantly in light of the current transatlantic disputes, it is significant to note that support for multilateral institutions remains equally high in Western Europe as in the United States. These data have remained stable for a long period of time (Krell 2003, 7; Worldviews 2002 2002; Holsti 1996, 2001). It is true, though, that support for the UN suffered quite a bit after the Iraq war, but on either side of the Atlantic (U.S.: 43%, down from 72% in 2002; Great Britain: 41%, down from 78%; France: 47%, down from 75%; Germany: 46%, down from 79%; The Pew Global Attitudes Project 2003, 27). Yet, international organizations in general are still held in very high esteem on either side of the Atlantic (The Pew Global Attitudes Project 2003, 97).

In sum, it is hard to construct a widening gap in the overall world views, general foreign policy outlook and a strong decline in mutual sympathy and we-feeling between Americans and Europeans, even though the latter views have been affected negatively by the Iraq war. It is the evaluation of the Bush Administration's foreign policy where U.S. and European public opinion differs sharply. Yet, while we do not see widening cleavages in mass public opinion on either side of the

Atlantic, elite opinion appears to be a different matter, particularly regarding the foreign policy elites now in charge in Washington. I will comment on this aspect later in this article.

Transnational Interdependence

Concerning the second factor contributing to a security community, transnational (economic) interdependence, I can be brief. Here, the transatlantic community is alive and kicking. Combined indicators for trade, foreign investment, and capital flows show that the transatlantic region is highly integrated economically and is only surpassed by the EU's single market itself. In 1999, 45,2 % of all U.S. foreign investment went to Europe, while 60,5 % of all European foreign investment went to the U.S. European investments in Texas alone are higher than all Japanese investments in the U.S. combined. Moreover, intra-firm trade constitutes a large portion of transatlantic trade. EU subsidiaries of U.S. companies import more than one third of all U.S. exports to the EU, while U.S. subsidiaries of EU companies import more than two fifths of all EU exports to the U.S. 6 million jobs on each side of the Atlantic depend on transatlantic economic relations (data according to Krell 2003, 10-17).

In sum, the transatlantic market is highly integrated and remains so despite the ups and downs in the political relationship. The U.S. and the EU not only constitute each other's most important economic partners, but are also the two leading world economic powers. As a result, the current international economic order is largely guaranteed and stabilized by the transatlantic economic relationship. What is less clear, though, is the degree to which high economic interdependence serves to smooth increasing political conflicts. The spill-over effects from one area to the other are not clear, in either direction.

Multilateral Institutions

This leads to the third factor constituting a security community, multilateral institution-building. Again and in parallel to the density of transnational interdependence, Europe and the transatlantic region constitute the most tightly coupled institutionalized settings within the larger security community. This region of the world also hosts the two strongest political, economic, and security institutions in terms of robustness of norms, rules, and decision-making procedures, the EU and NATO. The multilateral institutions of the transatlantic community serve to manage the inevitable conflicts inside a security community (Risse-Kappen 1995). Strong procedural norms of mutual consultation and policy coordination insure that the members of the community have regular input

and influence on each other's policy-making processes. These procedural norms and regulations are among the major tools mitigating power asymmetries among community members.

Of course, these "voice opportunities" (Ikenberry 2001) suffer, the more U.S. foreign policy pursues a unilateralist course or falls victim to "imperial ambitions" (Ikenberry 2002). U.S. unilateralism violates fundamental norms of multilateralism which are constitutive for the transatlantic community. If unilateral tendencies which have always been a temptation in American foreign policy, become the prevailing practice, the transatlantic security community's constitutive norms are endangered. The dominant discourse emanating from Washington concerning "coalitions of the willing" which is now enshrined in the foreign policy doctrine of the United States (President of the United States 2002), stands in sharp contrast to the idea of multilateralism on which the transatlantic alliance has been based over the past fifty years. NATO was so successful in the past as an instrument of alliance management, precisely because it served as a clearing house for potential policy disputes *before* firm decisions were taken on either side of the Atlantic. The more consultations in the alliance framework are reduced to merely inform each other about decisions already taken, the more NATO becomes irrelevant for the future of the transatlantic relationship. This is why the North Atlantic alliance has taken such a toll in the past years, even before 9/11 and certainly before the Iraq crisis. In sum, if we are in a fundamental crisis of the transatlantic relationship, it primarily concerns the norms governing this relationship which have been enshrined in its institutions. If the U.S. continues to build its foreign policy on "coalitions of the willing," this constitutes unilateralism in disguise and is fundamentally at odds with the norms of the transatlantic security community.

In sum, if we use the "three Is" – identity, interdependence, institutions – as indicators for the state of the transatlantic security community, we get a rather precise picture of its current situation. While the collective identification with each other seems to have declined slightly in 2002 and 2003, the basis of common values and shared principles is still intact. In the wider world community, European and the North American societies still have more in common than any other societies in the world. The transatlantic economic interdependence remains equally strong. Current challenges to the community mostly concern its institutions and the constitutive norms on which they are based. Growing U.S. unilateralism and imperial ambitions violate fundamental community norms and, thus, give rise to increased transatlantic conflicts. To understand the sources of these conflicts, however, we need to open up the black box of the states on both sides of the Atlantic and look at domestic politics.

Domestic Sources of the Transatlantic Disputes

If we want to understand the current transatlantic troubles, we need to look at domestic politics on either side of the Atlantic. To some extent, one is reminded of the transatlantic tensions during the times of the first Reagan administration in the early 1980s (see Kubbig 1988; Risse-Kappen 1988; Talbott 1984). While George W. Bush is widely perceived as a unilateralist president in Europe, Ronald Reagan was seen as abandoning nuclear arms control in a similar fashion.

The Domestic Side of U.S. Foreign Policy

These similarities run deeper than perceptions in public opinion. Most importantly, U.S. foreign policy is currently controlled by a domestic coalition whose worldviews differ substantially from dominant European foreign policy coalitions. In the following, I concentrate on the U.S. side. Three competing groups dominate the Bush administration's foreign policy and they hold strikingly similar worldviews as the prevailing and equally competing domestic coalitions during Reagan's first term (on the latter see in particular Talbott 1984, 1988; Kubbig 1988). During the early 1980s, a neo-conservative group hating détente and arms control as well as despising the "whimpish" European allies were largely in control of the Pentagon. Some members of this group, such as Richard Perle, are still around in the Bush administration. Now and then, this group consists of devoted militant internationalists preferring American unilateralism over entangling alliances. During the early 1980s, neo-conservatives were convinced that arms control had to be abandoned in favor of arms racing in order to ruin the Soviet economy and, thus, to win the Cold War. Twenty years later, this group believes in the "unipolar moment" as a unique opportunity for the U.S. to (re-) create international order according following an American design. Their "imperial ambition" (Ikenberry 2002) is prepared to accept temporary alliances, but their fundamental beliefs reject stable partnerships such as the transatlantic community as too entangling to suit U.S. interests. In other words, this group of neo-conservatives rejects the principles upon which the security community between the U.S. and Europa has been built. It is anti-European to the degree that it considers the transatlantic alliance as largely superfluous and constraining U.S. foreign policy.

However, we need to distinguish between two versions of neo-conservative thinking in foreign policy (for a broader analysis of these various strands see Mead 2001; Hassner 2002; Nau 2002).

They are both unilateral and aggressive internationalists and prepared to use American power offensively when they see U.S. interests at stake. But they differ in how they view the world and which values they want to promote. One group – among them Vice President Cheney and Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld – see the world in Hobbesian terms as a "dogs eat dogs" world. They are aggressive realists who believe in the U.S. role as world policeman to keep order in an anarchic international system (on offensive realism see Mearsheimer 2001). But there is also another group of neoconservative hawks who are prepared to use American power to promote liberal values and to construct a world order based on liberal democracies, universal human rights, and American-style capitalism. Undersecretary of Defense Wolfowitz is among the most prominent representatives of this group which Hassner has aptly called "Wilsonians in boots," analogous to Napoleon's "revolution in boots" (Hassner 2002, 43). In their view, the purpose of American power in the world is to promote democracy and capitalism. U.S. power is to be used to aggressively push a liberal world order. This is why they supported regime change in Iraq. The two groups of unilateralist neo-conservatives constitute what can be called the "Pentagon party" in the current U.S. administration.

Yet, the neo-conservatives of the early Reagan as well as the current Bush administrations have been balanced domestically and bureaucratically by a more moderate and traditional conservative group. Officials such as Richard Burt, Paul Nitze, and George Shultz in the early 1980s, Bush senior's foreign policy team of the late 1980s, as well as Colin Powell in the current Bush administration see the world in more moderate realist terms. While they certainly share liberal values, they are not Wilsonians in the sense of supporting a multilateral liberal world order. But they resent the "imperial ambition" of the unilateralists and are convinced that the U.S. cannot go it alone – even in a unipolar system. At the same time, this group is rather sceptical of the nation-building implications which the neo-conservatives' liberal visions imply. Today as well as twenty years ago, this group has remained committed to the transatlantic security community. With a little help of their European friends, the traditional conservatives succeeded in gradually moving Ronald Reagan toward the resumption of nuclear arms control – and in having George W. Bush go to the United Nations to seek support for his Iraq policy. As to the Bush administration, Powell's fellow conservatives at the State Department are supported by the disgruntled U.S. military (see Hassner 2002, 28-33, also Holsti 1998/99), on the one hand, and – not to be overlooked – by the foreign policy establishment in the U.S. Senate – e.g. Senators Richard Lugar and Joe Biden, the former and the current chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

From the beginning of the Bush administration, a tug-of-war between the neo-conservatives and the traditional conservatives – between the "Pentagon party" and the "State Department party" - characterized the foreign policy decision-making process in Washington. The President himself was not known initally for favoring the liberal vision of the neo-conservatives, even though U.S. foreign policy had already become more unilateralist than during the Clinton administration. In particular, the Bush administration abandoned most efforts at seeking multilateral solutions for the world's most urgent problems. Then came September 11, 2001, and the attack against the U.S. homeland by transnational terrorism. 9/11 and the understandable shock and sense of vulnerability it generated among Americans had profound consequences for the domestic balance of power in U.S. foreign policy. It created a policy window of opportunity for neo-conservative policy entrepreneurs such as Wolfowitz. As a result, the domestic balance of power in the U.S. changed in favor of the neo-conservative group whose liberal vision including "Wilsonianism in boots" was increasingly shared by the President (see Woodward 2002).

The Presidential "National Security Strategy" of September 2002 as well as the focus on Iraq constituted expressions of the new domestic balance of power in Washington. Nevertheless, both examples also show that neo-conservative unilateralists of the offensive realist and the liberal variety both had to make concessions to the traditional conservatives and their allies in Congress and in Europe. As to the "National Security Strategy" document, for example, it does express a liberal vision of world politics: "Finally, the United States will use this moment of opportunity to extend the benefits of freedom across the globe. We will actively work to bring the hope of democracy, development, free markets, and free trade to every corner of the world" (President Bush in President of the United States 2002, V). Incorporating the foreign policy views of the neo-conservatives, the document commits the U.S.

- to pre-emptive, if not preventive warfare against terrorism and "rogue states" with weapons of mass destruction (WMD);
- to unilateralism "when our interests and unique responsibilities require" (President of the United States 2002, 31);
- to military superiority "to dissuade potential adversaries from pursuing a military build-up in hopes of surpassing, or equaling, the power of the United States" (ibid., 30).

None of these statements as such are new. However, it is the combination of a liberal vision with unilateral action "if necessary" (but who decides?) that represents quite a shift from previous foreign policy strategies of the U.S. Yet, the document also contains quite a few paragraphs expressing

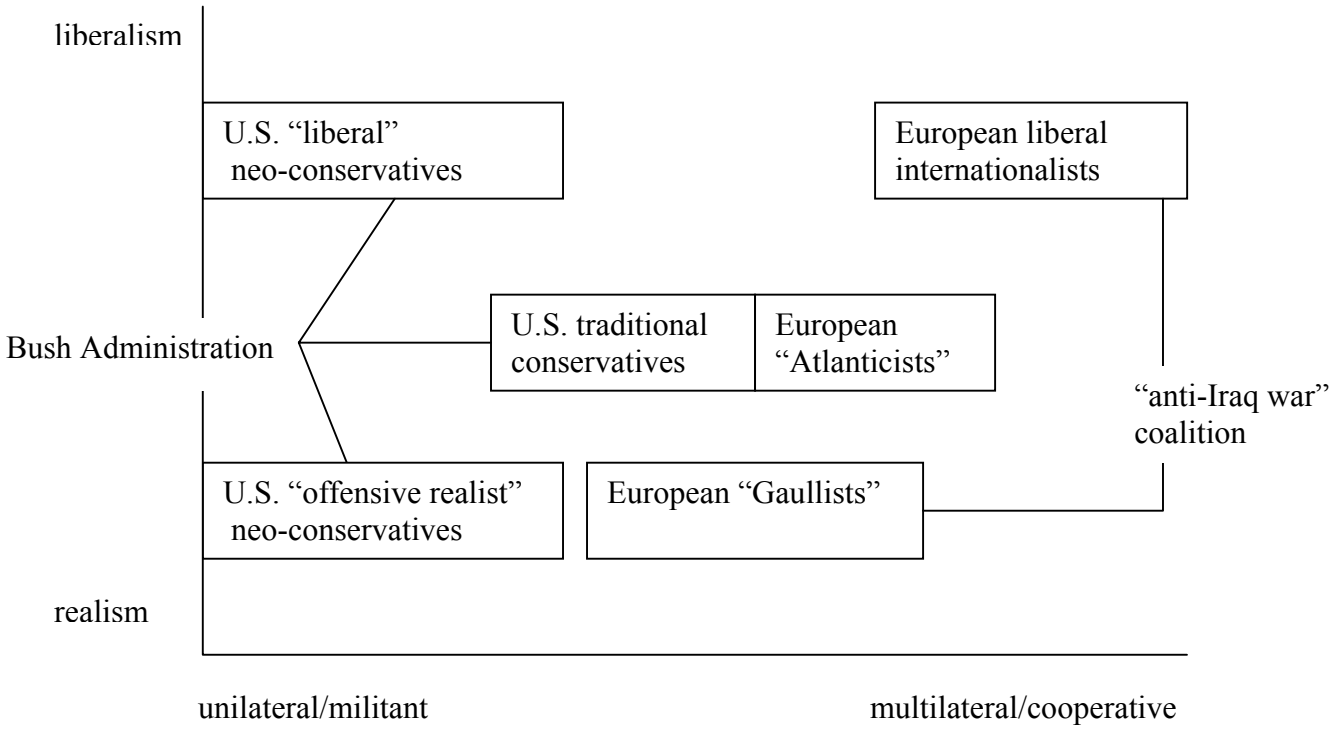
the standard repertoire of the traditional conservatives, such as the commitment to NATO, the EU, and other allies. It also commits the U.S. to active engagement in regional crises and to a substantial increase in foreign aid. Finally and significantly, the U.S. remains committed to a multilateral and liberal international economic order. This latter point is often overlooked in Europe, but it is of utmost importance for the future of world order. In sum, the much critisized "National Security Strategy" document actually represents a policy compromise between neo-conservative unilateralists and traditional conservatives in the Bush administration.

The Domestic Side of European Foreign Policy

While the dominant coalition in charge of U.S. foreign policy is composed of neo-conservatives (liberal as well as realist unilateralists) and traditional conservatives (realists with a preference for traditional alliances), the dominant coalitions running the EU's foreign policy as well as the foreign policies of the most important member states look rather different (see the figure below). The figure depicts the dominant coalitions on both sides of the Atlantic in a two-dimensional space. A third dimension which is often used to describe foreign policy attitudes – isolationism vs. internationalism – is omitted here, since the dominant foreign policy elites in the U.S. and in Europe share a commitment to internationalism. Rather, the various groups differ from each other with regard to

1. a "*realist-liberal"* continuum (y-axis) which depicts whether people view the world in realist terms and, thus, security interests dominate their vision of foreign policy, or whether they are primarily committed to the promotion of a liberal vision, i.e. the spread of human rights, democracy, and market economy;
2. a "*unilateral/militant – multilateral/cooperative"* continuum (x-axis) delineating whether foreign policy-makers favor unilateralism and the use for force to promote foreign policy goals or whether they support a cooperative foreign policy working with and through multilateral institutions.

Dominant Foreign Policy Coalitions in the U.S. and Europe



The three factions dominating the Bush's administration's foreign policy are situated on the left-hand side of the figure.[2] The figure also depicts three European foreign policy groups according to their views. The first group in the upper right corner of the figure could be called "liberal internationalists." It is often overlooked that the European center-left shares with American "liberal" neo-conservatives a commitment to the promotion of democracy and human rights as their foreign policy priorities. In sharp contrast to the U.S. right, however, this group is equally firmly committed to a cooperative foreign policy and to work with and through multilateral institutions. This group which, e.g., is currently in charge of German foreign policy pursues the foreign policy of a "civilian power" (Maull 1990; Harnisch and Maull 2001), and, thus, shares a Kantian vision of world order in the true sense of the "perpetual peace," i.e., building a pacific federation of democratic states and strengthening the rule of law in international affairs (Kant 1795/1983). European Kantians are not pacifists, they support the use of military force if necessary (cf. Chancellor Schröder's stance on Kosovo). Yet, military power has to be embedded in political and diplomatic efforts. Unilateralism is anathema for the European center-left (see also the new EU foreign policy document).

[2] I have deliberately ommitted American liberal internationalists here who share liberal values *and* are committed to multilateralism. This group figured prominently during the Clinton administration.

There is a second group among the European foreign policy elites which holds a more realist view of the world than either the American neo-conservatives or the European center-left. Since this group thinks primarily in realist "balance of power" terms, it is very much concerned about the growth of U.S. power and promotes a European foreign policy of balancing and building a counter-weight to U.S. primacy. One could call this group the "European gaullists." Their mantra is to build a multipolar world in contrast to a unipolar one dominated by U.S. hyperpower. Interestingly and strangely enough, the Franco-German anti-Iraq war coalition brought together the European center-left and the European "gaullists" who joined forces for different reasons. Both were concerned about American unilateralism. But the center-left was primarily opposed to use force for liberal purposes ("regime change"), while the "gaullists" opposed the war because of concern over U.S. "hyperpower."

The third group among European foreign policy elites can be located in a similar position as the American traditional conservatives. This group holds rather moderate worldviews on either the "liberal-realist" axis or the "militant-cooperative" axis. Above all, however, this groups is strongly committed to preserving the transatlantic partnership almost no matter what. This group of "European atlanticists" which formed the core of the European "coalition of the willing" during the Iraq war, is strongly motivated to avoid policy disagreements with Washington which could weaken the transatlantic community.

Two main conclusions follow from this attempt at locating the various foreign policy groupings on either side of the Atlantic in a two-dimensional political space:

1. The core of the transatlantic disagreements does not concern value commitments such as the goals of promoting democracy or human rights. When it comes to the question whether foreign policy should primarily promote liberal values rather than serving strategic or economic interests (the realist view), Europeans are as much divided among themselves as Americans. Despite of the different positions on the Iraq war, however, Europeans are overwhelmingly in favor of multilateralism and cooperative foreign policies, while the two groups of neoconservatives in Washington are unilateralists. Thus, the main dividing line between the U.S. and Europe concerns the commitment to multilateral norms which have been constitutive to the transatlantic security community.
2. It is also obvious that the two opposing camps in Europe that emerged during the Iraq crisis ("new vs. old" Europe) constitute anything but stable foreign policy coalitions. To put it more bluntly: Neither European gaullism nor European atlanticism of the old kind can form the basis

of a common European foreign policy consensus. I will come back to that point in the conclusions.

To sum up this point: The current crisis in the transatlantic relationship has to be explained on the basis of the differing worldviews of dominant foreign policy coalitions on either side of the Atlantic. It is domestic politics, stupid!, rather than structural changes in the international system that has made the Atlantic a wider ocean. This is not to imply that the crisis is less serious. In fact, one of the dominant groups currently running U.S. foreign policy does not believe in the values and norms of the security community anymore. Whether this group will be strengthened or weakened in the future, is impossible to predict.

Conclusions: European Responses to American Unilateralism

The argument of this article can be summarized as follows. As to the fundamentals of the transatlantic security community, a mixed picture emerges. Two of the three Is – interdependence and identity as a commitment to collective value – appear to be still intact. Yet, its institutional basis as well as the norms governing the security community appear to be eroding gradually. These conflicts stem from domestic developments on both sides of the Atlantic leading to different perceptions of contemporary security threats and, more importantly, different prescriptions on how to handle them. Unilateral and even imperial tendencies in contemporary U.S. foreign policy violate constitutive norms on which the transatlantic community has been based for more than fifty years. They also touch upon fundamentals concerning world order and the rule of (international) law in dealing with international conflicts. American neo-conservatives are as committed as the European center-left to the global promotion of human rights and democracy, but they are also convinced that the unprecedented American power position in the world requires unilateral action to promote these goals including the unilateral use of (preventive) force. In contrast, a strong European consensus favors a cooperative foreign policy geared to strengthening international institutions and the rule of international law.

What policy consequences follow from this assessment, particularly for European responses to America's "imperial ambitions?" I see three major corollaries. First, neither balancing nor bandwagoning can be a valid basis for a European response to American imperial ambitions. Building Europe as a "counterweight" to U.S. power is neither feasible in practical terms nor can a European

consensus be built around it which would have to include the United Kingdom as well as the new EU member states in Central Eastern Europe. Bandwagoning is not an option, either, since it would betray core principles of European foreign policy when dealing with U.S. unilateralist tendencies. Thus, there is a European paradox: On the one hand, Europe and the EU need to speak out with one voice in order to be listened to in Washington. On the other hand, a European common foreign policy will fail immediately and split Europe further apart if it is constructed as counter-hegemonic project.

Second, however, there is a way out. I would argue against Kupchan (Kupchan 2003) that the social structure of the transatlantic relationship and its institutional basis in particular can be repaired. Moreover, the traditional European reaction to U.S. unilateralist impulses remains valid. In the past, Europeans have usually responded to transatlantic conflicts by increased binding through strengthening the transatlantic institutional ties rather than counter-balancing. They have used the open U.S. domestic system for their purposes by successfully forming transnational and transgovernmental coalitions across the Atlantic in order to increase their leverage on American foreign policy (for evidence see Risse-Kappen 1995). There is no compelling reason why this strategy which worked well during the first Reagan administration with a similar domestic configuration of forces, cannot be successfully employed today. Now and then, the natural allies of Europeans inside the administration and in Congress are the moderate conservatives who care about the transatlantic community. Moreover, European foreign policy can exploit the fact that American public opinion continues to hold views much closer to European outlooks than to those of the neo-conservatives inside and outside the administration.

Third, it is important that European voices are being heard loud and clear in Washington. While European governments should pick carefully the conflicts with the U.S. administration and cannot fight simultaneously on all fronts, the "National Security Strategy" document deserves a common European response. Of course, one can argue that this response already exists in practice given the emerging European foreign policy focussing on human rights, democracy, and multilateralism. Yet, European practice has to be complemented by a European foreign policy discourse. The goal is not to weaken the institutional ties in the transatlantic community, but to strengthen similar voices inside the U.S. domestic system. Such a European foreign policy strategy needs to tackle the world order conflicts which constitute the root causes of the transatlantic policy disagreements:

1. A clear expression of a *liberal vision of world order* based on the rule of law, democracy, human rights, and market economy: It would be disastrous to leave liberal visions to American

neo-conservatives and not to recognize that Western foreign policy is first and foremost about promoting liberal values. This entails in particular that a European response is needed to the neoconservatives' political agenda of promoting democracy in the world's crises regions, particularly the Middle East (see Rudolf 2002, 8). A pro-active European foreign policy is needed in this regard.

2. An equally unambiguous commitment to *multilateralism and the rule of international law*: This is the characteristic feature and trademark of contemporary European foreign policy that distinguishes a European foreign policy strategy from some of the ideas articulated in the recent U.S. "National Security Strategy." The point is that a liberal vision of world order cannot be promoted unilaterally without being inherently contradictory. If it is constitutive for domestic liberal orders that nobody – not even the most powerful – is above the law, this is also true for a world order based on democratic principles. A liberal world order requires recognition of the rule of law as a constitutive feature – together with democracy and human rights. This is also the ultimate reason why European foreign policy must not give in to U.S. pressures concerning the International Criminal Court. However, one has to recognize that contemporary international law is in serious need of reform. This concerns first and foremost norms of national sovereignty which are increasingly at odds with commitments to international human rights.
3. Europe also has to articulate a clear strategy on how to deal with the new security threats, such as weapons of mass destruction in the hands of dictators and the dangers emanating from transnational terrorism. Transnational terrorist networks and weapons of mass destruction are real threats to liberal societies that require not just political, but also military answers. The current transatlantic division of labor – the U.S. as the military fighting force and the world's policeman, Europe as the main provider of political nation-building and cleaning up afterwards – is not sustainable. Once again, it would be disastrous to let the use of military force be dictated by American unilateralists. This is particularly true if one rejects the idea of preventive war in the absence of a clear and present danger. We need a serious transatlantic debate, not on preventive war, but on preventive action to stem the double dangers of WMD and of transnational terrorism. The new EU foreign policy document constitutes a step in the right direction.

In short, a new "transatlantic bargain" is required if the U.S.-European alliance is to survive the coming challenges. Whether this can be done by reforming NATO or by building new U.S.-EU security institutions remains to be seen. But current and future world order problems require a strong transatlantic relationship to meet these challenges jointly.

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