

Rebuilding the Transatlantic Alliance after Iraq

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Stanley R. Sloan

Director, Atlantic Community Initiative

Visiting Scholar, Middlebury College

Today: The Transatlantic Link in Jeopardy

- Some Americans say France, Germany and Belgium are enemies, not allies.
- US “downgrades” relationship with France, Americans boycott French products.
- Some Europeans say they have more in common with Russia than US.
- Both EU and NATO deeply divided by Iraq.

In such an environment, can NATO survive?

- **YES:** Transatlantic alliance remains valid in terms of US and European values, interests.
- **BUT,** NATO and “transatlantic link” are seriously wounded, need attention.

What will I tell you?

- Euro-Atlantic alliance is based on a great treaty, value and interest based, targeted against no one.
- Since 1949, alliance has adapted to change, survived crises, remained relevant.
- Capabilities gap has increasingly divided US, Europe; 9/11 terrorist attacks on US created “threat gap.”

- The Prague summit took major steps toward a NATO that is more relevant to 21st century security.
- However, Iraqi crisis has created painful transatlantic and intra-European divisions.
- Allies have to repair damage done, start process of building new consensus; continue NATO reform; enhance US-European soft power cooperation.

The North Atlantic Treaty: A strong foundation

- **Preamble** expresses timeless shared values, interests.
- **Art. 2:** commitment to promote international peace and political, economic cooperation.
- **Art. 4:** pledges cooperation to deal with THREATS to “territorial integrity, political independence or security.”
- **Art. 5:** mutual defense commitment.
- **Art. 10:** countries that can “further the principles” and “contribute to the security of the North Atlantic Area” may be invited to join.

The “transatlantic bargain”

- **Original transatlantic bargain:** US would help NATO allies defend against USSR if they would organize Europe’s contribution to defense.
 - Failure of European Defense Community in 1954 ruined this plan.
- **Result:**
 - Created perpetual *burden sharing issue* in United States. (Today’s version: “...and so this is the thanks we get?”)
 - Encouraged development of *defense dependence culture* in Europe.
 - Europeans did enough to keep US committed in Europe but not enough to risk US withdrawal *or* to become a serious “partner” in defense.

European Security and Defense Identity (ESDI) and the US

- In 1980s, Europeans sought to create the framework for a more coherent European foreign policy and defense role (European political cooperation, CFSP).
- US accustomed to its strong position of leadership, cautioned against European “caucus” in NATO, Europe “ganging up on” US.
- 1991: EC (EU) members negotiated Maastricht Treaty on European Union, endorsing ESDI.

- Mid-1990s, US supported development of ESDI *inside the transatlantic alliance*.

From ESDI to CESDP

- ESDI blessed at June 1996 NATO Berlin ministerial meeting.
 - Loan NATO/US assets to European operations.
 - Deputy SACEUR available to lead European operations.
 - Create room for ESDI to “grow” inside alliance.
- After Berlin approach bogged down and NATO Kosovo operation once again revealed European military shortcomings, British PM Tony Blair called for new EU defense initiative (Autumn 1998).
- December 1998: Blair, Chirac, meet at St. Malo, France, agree EU should develop (autonomous) Common European Security and Defense Policy, coordinated with NATO.

The US “yes, but” approach

- US (Secretary of State Albright) said it supported European defense cooperation if it did not:
 - **DUPLICATE** *NATO cooperation*;
 - **DECOUPLE** *the United States and Europe*; or
 - **DISCRIMINATE** *against non-EU allies*.
- Lord Robertson said European efforts should *improve* capabilities, be based on an *indivisible* alliance, and be *inclusive* of all allies.

Resources and reform have not kept up with rhetoric.....

- Lord Robertson (and the USG) constantly emphasized importance of “capabilities, capabilities, capabilities.”
- But, from 1995 to 2001, NATO European members defense spending fell from \$184 to \$159 billion.
- **Result:** *growing gap between US and European capabilities.*

CONSEQUENCES!!!

- *Crisis* in alliance created by
 - inadequate European capabilities,
 - leading to limited US confidence in alliance,
 - calling into question alliance commitments.
- Some in US argued allies increasingly irrelevant, NATO “inconvenient” at best.
- Europeans despaired of “catching up.”

CONSEQUENCES.....

- Some observers argued that the alliance was inevitably headed toward a “**new division of labor.**”
 - US fights;
 - Europe finances (and does peacekeeping);
 - United Nations feeds.
- “US eats the meal, Europe cleans up the dishes...”

Why not divide responsibilities?

- Variable US and European military capabilities already produce different tendencies in security and defense policies:
 - *Because the US has a big hammer, every problem looks like a nail;*
 - *When Europe has little more than quill pens in its security tool bag, problems look like they can be solved by drafting a declaration or signing a treaty.*

Why not divide responsibilities?

- NATO has been based on the goal of sharing risks and responsibilities for good reasons.
- Divided responsibilities would encourage US unilateral tendencies; promote militarily toothless European autonomy.

- Growing gaps in capabilities combined with formal division of responsibilities would produce even more radical differences in US and European analyses of problems and preferred solutions.

The 9/11 Watershed

- **US saw itself as under attack; President Bush declared “war on terrorism.”**
- **NATO invoked Article 5, offered assistance.**
- **US appeared to ignore NATO and allied offers of assistance.**
- **Europe sympathetic but not in “war” mentality.**

Iraq: the threat gap widens

- *During 2002, focus shifted from war on terrorism to war on Iraq.*
- *Bush Administration saw Iraq links to 9/11.*
- *US unilateralist approach seemed to make the United States sheriff, judge, jury and executioner.*
- *Huge “threat gap” between US and some European allies on terrorism and Iraq.*

Prague Accomplishments

- In spite of Iraq dispute, “success” at Prague (11/2002).
- NATO endorsed membership for 7 countries.
- The allies moved beyond “out of area” debate and agreed to create **NATO Response Force (NRF)** to deal with future security challenges.
 - *Vaclav Havel* said the Prague Summit confirmed NATO’s transformation from a pillar of European security to a **“key pillar of international security.”**
- Important changes made to NATO structure, evolving SACLANT into **NATO Transformation Command.**

- NATO/EU (post-Prague) finally reach agreement on terms of cooperation (signed March 14, 2003).

Prague Implications

- If Prague reforms implemented, NATO can remain militarily relevant to 21st Century security challenges.
 - Today, NATO's most important military function is as a planning and training ground for future coalition military operations.
 - NATO's role in preserving *political and military habits of cooperation*, critical to future international peace and stability in Europe and beyond.
- Prague also expanded possibilities for conducting future military operations through NATO.
 - Taking responsibility for International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan;
 - Supporting Poland in Iraq peacekeeping.

Iraq and the US view of France

- Prague implementation could stumble over political fallout from Iraq war.
- When the United States decided it was necessary to go to war against Iraq, several NATO allies, led by France, tried to block military action, using veto in UN Security Council and NATO consensus rule to frustrate US initiatives.
- Some Americans, including supporters of and officials in the Bush Administration, have focused anger particularly on France.
 - Experience reinforces many old images and beliefs about the French.
 - ❖ The memory of a France that *not only stood against the United States but also led the opposition* will influence US attitudes and policies for a long time.

Institutional Implications....

- Reacting to French behavior, US diplomat in Europe says: “We will want to make sure that the United States never gets caught again in a diplomatic choke point in the Security Council or in NATO.”
- If the United States does not use the Security council or NATO for important international security issues, how will this change the international system?

Present at the Destruction?

- President Harry Truman's Secretary of State Dean Acheson observed that he was “present at the creation” of a new international system.

- Are we “present at the destruction” of the post-World War II institutions and alliances?
- The damage done cannot be repaired easily or quickly, but we should avoid doing additional harm and begin laying a new foundation for future transatlantic relations.

Reconstructing Transatlantic Relations

- The United States is the world’s unquestioned dominant military power, but simply cannot afford to go it alone.
 - The American people will not long support a policy that takes the burdens of international security four-square on American shoulders.
- Meanwhile, Europe cannot afford the financial and political costs of a policy that seeks to balance US power rather than channeling that power into mutually advantageous directions.

Reconstructing Transatlantic Relations (2)

- Soft and hard power are insufficiently recognized as two sides of the same coin.
 - Europe is all-too-quick to shun military might (of which it has much less than the United States) and too dependent on soft power (with which it is well endowed).
 - Europe's hard power deficit undermines the gravitas of European diplomacy, particularly in dealing with its superpower US ally.
 - US soft power policy approaches are all too often the neglected stepchild in American responses to international challenges.
- The United States and Europe need to fortify the foundations of their military cooperation while establishing a new framework for soft power cooperation.

First step: begin to repair damage

- The Bush Administration should invite European allies, *including France, Belgium and Germany*, to participate in post-conflict peacekeeping and reconstruction in Iraq.
 - NATO, the EU and the United Nations should all play a part.
- NATO allies should create an independent high level Euro-Atlantic panel to study how the allies could have cooperated more effectively in dealing with the Iraq problem.

What should Europe do?

- **Continue to support** NATO's role "out of area," beyond Europe, particularly in the struggle against international terrorism.
- **Focus EU military improvements and financial resources** on capabilities that will enhance ability of European militaries to fight in coalition with the United States as well as in "EU only" formations.
- **Build** on successful "Berlin plus" transfer of Macedonia mission from NATO to EU.
- **Avoid divisive behavior** such as holding rump meetings of EU members (France, Germany, Belgium and Luxembourg, for example) to organize future Europe-only defense arrangements.

What should the United States do? (1)

- For its own interests, and those of the international community, the United States must **control its unilateralist instincts**.
- United States is hegemonic power, in spite of preferences of the American people.
- Bottom line: "The United States must learn how to be a hegemonic power **without acting like one.**"

What should the United States do? (2)

- US must give **higher priority to coalition military operations; encourage growth of a "coalition culture"** in the US strategic community.
- Liberalize information exchange and technology transfer to NATO allies.
- DoD should always ask when making important strategy and weapons acquisition decisions "how will this affect our ability to operate in coalition with allies?"
- US should propose creation of a **NATO Combined Joint Concept Development and Experimentation Center in Washington, D.C.**, as part of the new transformation command, to facilitate early allied interaction with and contributions to changes in US doctrine, strategy, organization and weapons systems (including missile defense developments).

What should the United States and Europe do together?

- **Re-affirm** importance of Article 4's mandate to cooperate regarding **threats** to "territorial integrity, political independence or security."

- ***Make clear*** that NATO ***will*** be used to help fight war against terrorism (roles in Afghanistan, Iraq).
- ***Emphasize*** importance of sharing, not dividing, risks and responsibilities.

What should the United States and Europe do together? (2)

- All NATO nations need to focus on:
 - Improving their ability to project force beyond their borders;
 - Strengthening NATO's ability to mount and sustain peace enforcement and peace keeping operations;
 - Enhancing the ability of NATO and partner countries to operate in coalitions, whether under a NATO or EU flag or as *ad hoc* coalition operations.

Beyond NATO

- For US, NATO *has been* **the** transatlantic relationship.
 - *But future of transatlantic relations depends on much that goes beyond NATO's mandate.*
 - *NATO remains necessary for the transatlantic relationship but not sufficient.*
- The United States and Europe need to replace the current struggle between **US hegemonic instincts** and **European autonomous reactions** with new commitment to ***Euro-Atlantic community***.

Beyond NATO (2)

- For long-term recovery from the current crisis, the NATO and EU countries need a major political act, such as preparing a New Atlantic Community Treaty to create an Atlantic Community soft power cooperation organization.
 - ***Politically***, need initiative to help restore confidence in the commitment of the United States, Canada and the European democracies to the Atlantic Community.

- *Functionally*, need a new framework for “soft-power” cooperation, broadening and deepening transatlantic cooperation to deal with the wide range of challenges to Euro-Atlantic values and interests.

What have I told you?

- US-European alliance sits on a solid foundation; remains vitally important to our common future.
- Once again, there is a “crisis” in that relationship; crisis requires decisions:
 - *Will we choose to weaken or strengthen the Atlantic Community?*

What have I told you? (2)

- We should choose to strengthen our alliance by adopting a new vision of transatlantic relations that would:
 - *Continue NATO reform.*
 - *Revitalize the sense of community between the United States and Europe.*
 - *Create a new framework for US-European soft-power cooperation.*

- Thank you for your attention!!
- For additional information, go to:
www.AtlanticCommunity.org