NATO in Crisis:

Comparing the Iraq Controversy with the Gaullist Challenge

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Name Student: Marianne Copier

Student Number: 3624366

Thesis Advisor: Laurien Crump

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# Chronology of Events

## 1954-1968

**1954**

*30 August*: The French reject the European Defence Policy.

**1956**

*31 October*-5 November: Suez Crisis.

**1961**

*4 June-9 November*: Second Berlin Crisis.

**1962**

*14-20 October*: Cuban Missile Crisis.

*21 December*: Nassau Summit.

**1963**

*14 January*: President de Gaulle's "triple *non"* press conference.

*22 January*: Elysée Treaty between France and West Germany.

*5 August*: Limited Test Ban Treaty (LTBT) signed by the US and the Soviet Union.

**1964**

*16 October*: The Chinese carry out their first nuclear tests.

**1965**

*1 July*: The French representative walks out of an EEC Council of Ministers meeting.

**1966**

*21 February*: President Charles de Gaulle declares that France intends to regain sovereignty over its national territory and armed forces.

*7 March*: President de Gaulle sends a letter to President Johnson, announcing the withdrawal from NATO's integrated military command structure.

*9 March*: President de Gaulle sends letters to Chancellor Erhard and Prime Minister Wilson, further explaining his decision to withdraw from NATO's military structures.

**1967**

*14 December*: The Harmel Report is formally adopted.

**1968**

*16 January*: NATO adopts a new Strategic Concept in the Defence Planning Committee

*1 July*: The Non-Proliferation Treaty is signed by, among many others, the US, the Soviet Union and the Federal Republic of Germany.

## 1989-2011

**1989**

*9 November*: Fall of Berlin Wall.

**1992**

*7 February*: Maastricht Treaty (Treaty on European Union) is signed.

**1997**

*2 October*: Treaty of Amsterdam is signed.

**2001**

*11 September*: Terrorist attacks on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon

**2002**

*19 January*: President Bush's first State of the Union Address.

*1 June*: President Bush's speech at West Point.

*26 August*: Vice-President Dick Cheney advocates a war in Iraq during a speech.

**2003**

*5 February*: Secretary of State Colin Powell and Prime Minister Tony Blair hold a speech before the UN Security Council in which they present the evidence that was found for Saddam Hussein's possession of WMDs.

*17 March*: Berlin Plus Agreement comes into effect.

*18 March*: Prime Minister Blair receives support from Parliament for the war against Iraq.

*20 March*: The war in Iraq begins.

**2004**

*12 July*: European Defence Agency established.

**2005**

*29 May*: French rejection of the EU Constitution.

*1 June*: Dutch rejection of the EU Constitution.

**2007**

*13 December*: Lisbon Treaty is signed.

**2009**

*11 March*: President Sarkozy announced the French return to NATO's integrated military command structure.

**2010**

*19-20 November*: Lisbon Summit.

# List of Abbreviations

CFSP: Common Foreign and Security Policy

EDA: European Defence Agency

ESDP: European Security and Defence Policy

EEC: European Economic Community

FRG: Federal Republic of Germany

GDR: German Democratic Republic

IANF: Interallied Nuclear Force

MLF: Multilateral nuclear force

MNF: Multinational nuclear force

RRF: Rapid Reaction Force

TEU: Treaty on European Union

UK: United Kingdom

US: United States

WEU: West European Union

WMDs: Weapons of Mass Destruction

# Introduction

## The Atlantic partners in crisis

The history of the Atlantic Alliance is a history of crises.[1]

Crises have indeed dominated the Atlantic Alliance, as professor Stanley Hoffmann, a prominent French scholar in the field of international relations, argued. Hoffmann, however, added that it was important to distinguish between "true crises" – crises that threaten the very existence of the Alliance – and 'routine difficulties engendered by Western Europe's dependence on the United States for its security'. The crises of the last category were less serious by nature and often subsided as quickly as they had appeared, and thus did not threaten the foundations of the Atlantic Alliance. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) forms the heart of the Atlantic Alliance and is currently experiencing what is believed to be a "true crisis", as defined by Hoffmann. According to conventional wisdom, this crisis erupted in early 2003 over a war in Iraq, a country outside of NATO. The alliance members were split on whether or not they should support their most important member, the United States, in its war against Iraq. The subsequent crisis led G. John Ikenberry, among many scholars, to believe that '[t]he first years of the twenty-first century will long be remembered as a time of political upheaval in Atlantic relations.'[2]

However, this is not the first time that there has been political upheaval among NATO's members. There have been previous disagreements before, such as over German rearmament, Suez and Bosnia,[3] but these disagreements were never considered serious enough to threaten the existence of the Alliance. There has only been one other crisis within NATO that was regarded as a "true crisis": what is commonly referred to as the the 'Gaullist challenge' of 1966. French President Charles de Gaulle challenged American hegemony within NATO by withdrawing the French troops from NATO's integrated military command structure in March 1966. At the time, it was feared that this move by de Gaulle could set a precedent for other countries to follow and might thus lead to the disintegration of NATO. This did not happen.

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[1] 'NATO and Nuclear Weapons: Reason and Unreason', *Foreign Affairs*, 1988, 60(2), 327-346.
[2] 'Explaining Crisis and Change in Atlantic Relations', in J. Anderson, G. Ikenberry, T. Risse (Eds.), *The End of the West? Crisis and Change in the Transatlantic Order,* (New York 2008), 1.
[3] W. Hitchcock, 'The Ghost of Crises Past: The Troubled Alliance in Historical Perspective', in in J. Anderson, G. Ikenberry, T. Risse (Eds.), *The End of the West? Crisis and Change in the Transatlantic Order,* (New York 2008), 55-71.

The Alliance "survived" the Gaullist challenge and, according to different scholars,[4] came out even stronger.

Contrary to conventional wisdom, I do not regard the French withdrawal of 1966 as the starting point of the crisis. In my opinion, supported by Swiss international relations scholar Anna Locher's extensive research on this topic,[5] the NATO crisis of the sixties began in 1963, when de Gaulle announced his "triple *non*"[6] during a press conference in January. This strained relations within the Alliance, especially between de Gaulle and the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations in the US. The crisis culminated in the French withdrawal from NATO's integrated militay command structure, which actually paved the way for a solution, as will be explained later. The crisis of the early sixties lessened after the French withdrawal. Still, the crisis was not officially resolved until December 1967, when NATO formally adopted the Harmel Report. This report outlined the agreements the members of the Alliance had reached on the issues that had divided them since 1963. For these reasons, I will refer to this crisis as the crisis of 1963-1967.

## The Iraq crisis in the Atlantic Alliance

On September 11, 2001, the United States were the victim of the most spectacular terrorist attacks in history. Members of al-Qaeda, an Islamic fundamentalist terrorist network, hijacked four commercial passenger planes and flew them into high-profile targets in a coordinated attack. The first two planes hit the two towers of the World Trade Center in New York, the third plane hit the Pentagon and a fourth plane crashed on its way to Washington D.C., where the terrorists most likely wanted to hit the Capitol Building or the White House. Almost 3000 people, most of whom civilians (of over 70 nationalities), died in the attacks that shocked the United States, but also the rest of the world.

Immediately after the terrorist attacks of 9/11, the United States and Europe appeared closer than ever before, with NATO invoking Article V of the Washington Treaty[7] for the

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[4] V. Mastny, 'Was 1968 a Strategic Watershed of the Cold War?', Diplomatic History, 29(1), 2005, 149.
[5] A. Locher, Crisis? What Crisis? NATO, de Gaulle, and the Future of the Alliance, 1963-1966, (Zurich 2006).
[6] De Gaulle refused British accession to the European Community, dismissed the offer to purchase US Polaris missiles, and announced a lack of interest in a multilateral nuclear force within NATO.
[7] Article V: The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all and consequently they agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them, in exercise of the right of individual or collective self-defence recognised by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area. Any such armed attack and all measures taken as a result thereof shall immediately be reported to the Security Council. Such measures shall be terminated when the Security

first time in history. The U.S. received broad (political) support from its Atlantic allies for its retalliation against al Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan. Yet, Atlantic relations soon soured when the US significantly changed its foreign policy preferences and even embarked on a controversial war against Iraq in 2003. This war was opposed by the majority of the European public and European governments were divided over the issue. Where the Tony Blair supported the war against Iraq, Jacques Chirac and Gerhard Schröder found each other in their opposition towards it. For France, there was nothing new in opposing U.S. foreign policy, but ever since 1955 (West-)Germany had always sided with the U.S. when it came to issues of fundamental importance. Now, opposition to American foreign policy even became part of German chancellor Schroder's reelection campaign.[8] The Europeans were appaled by the Bush Administration's dramatic turn towards unilateralism, completely sidelining the Atlantic partners. Many Americans came to believe that the only superpower left did not need the support of its Atlantic allies in the pursuit of its security agenda.[9] An Atlantic crisis was born.

To be sure, the political crisis did not come out of the blue. Before 2002, social and cultural differences between the U.S. and Europe had already come to the fore. Often noted are the disagreements between the U.S. and European countries on topics such as global warming, energy consumption, the death penalty and the International Criminal Court.[10] These and other issues have driven scholars to question the nature and sources of the Iraq crisis. Was the conflict really about the war in Iraq or were there deeper underlying causes? Were the two sides of the Atlantic growing apart, signifying an "end of the West"?[11] This research will provide new insights on these questions.

The crisis that erupted over a war against Iraq has not seen an equivalent to the Harmel Report as the formal solution of the crisis. In fact, it is unclear whether the crisis has ended at all. In my opinion, the "true crisis" has ended, because I do not believe that the current disagreements pose a threat to the continued existence of NATO. This does not mean, however, that there are no important issues to be worked out still. In this thesis, I will use 2010 as the enddate for the Iraq crisis, for two reasons. First, because at the end of this year, NATO adopted a new Strategic Concept, demonstrating agreement between the Allies over

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Council has taken the measures necessary to restore and maintain international peace and security. http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_17120.htm

[8] E. Pond, 'The Dynamics of the feud over Iraq', in M. Andrews, *The Atlantic Alliance Under Stress: US-European Relations after Iraq,* (Cambridge 2005), 37.

[9] Ibid., 34.

[10] R. Rupp, *NATO after 9/11: An Alliance in Continuing Decline*, (New York 2006), 7.

[11] 'The End of the West?' is the title of a book edited by J. Anderson, G. Ikenberry and T. Risse, consisting of articles by different authors on the nature of the relationship between the United States and its Western allies.

NATO's purpose, tasks and strategies. Second, this Strategic Concept signalled an improvement of the relationship between NATO and the EU, by explicitly recognizing the importance of a European defence force. It will become clear that this had been a divisive issue during the crisis.

Like for the crisis of 1963-1967, I disagree with conventional wisdom over the starting date of the Iraq crisis. It is generally held that the first three months of 2003 marked the beginning of the Iraq crisis. In my opinion, the crisis started a year earlier, in January 2002. I believe it was President Bush's State of the Union Address on 29 January 2002 that strained the relations with the Allies. It caused great concern among the Allies over a US shift to unilateralism. This shift had been noticeable ever since George W. Bush became President, but had not been as profound as it became in January 2002. Thus, the Iraq crisis will also be referred to as the crisis of 2002-2010.

There is general agreement that the Iraq crisis is in some way unique,[12] but what it is exactly that makes this crisis unique is not stated explicitly. Does its uniqueness lie in its duration? Or perhaps in its severity? Whether the crisis of 2002-2010 was unique and, if so, what made this crisis unique, I hope to discover through comparing the Iraq crisis to the crisis of 1963-1967. I believe this could be useful because the Gaullist challenge is generally seen as the only other "true" NATO crisis. By comparing them, I hope to find an answer to the research question: What factors determine the nature and duration of a true crisis within NATO?

The differences and similarities found through comparing the crises on several themes should help us understand what factors determine the nature and duration of a crisis within NATO, and whether or not the Iraq crisis was indeed unique in some way. This research should also shed a new light on the development of NATO in general, and on the crisis of 1963-1967 in particular.

In order to compare and analyse two crises within NATO, it is necessary to first determine what constitutes a crisis for NATO. It was already established that a "true" crisis is one that threatens the very existence of the Alliance. But that is not all there is to it. Here, I will also borrow Gunther Hellmann's definition of an institutional crisis:[13] a crisis within NATO is 'defined by one or more of three characateristics: (1) fundamental disagreement

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[12] T. Lindberg, 'Introduction: the limits of transatlantic solidarity', in T. Lindberg (Ed.), *Beyond Paradise and Power: Europe, America and the Future of a Troubled Partnership,* (New York 2005), 1.
[13] 'Inevitable Decline Versus Predestined Stability: Disciplinary Explanations of the Evolving Transatlantic Order', in J. Anderson, G. Ikenberry, T. Risse, *The End of the West? Crisis and Change in the Transatlantic Order,* (New York 2008), 48.

over what at least one side believes to be a core interest; (2) institutional breakdowns as far as rules and norms are concerned; or, (3) a breakdown in a sense of community'. For both crises it should become clear which of these three characteristics defined the crisis.

## What is NATO?

The Atlantic Alliance is formally organized in (NATO), which is why I will primarily concern myself with this organization in this thesis. NATO is an intergovernmental military alliance that was created when the North Atlantic Treaty was signed on 4 April 1949 in Washington D.C. (for that reason sometimes also referred to as the Washington Treaty). Its twelve founding members were the US, the UK, Canada, Iceland, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Italy, Luxembourg and Denmark.

The foundations for NATO were laid a few years earlier. On 4 March 1947, France and the UK signed a 'Treaty of Alliance and Mutual Assistance' in Dunkirk, in which they agreed to collaborate "in the event of any renewal of German aggression".[14] One year later, on 17 March 1948, France and the UK entered into an alliance with the Benelux-countries with the 'Treaty of Economic, Social and Cultural Cooperation and Collective Defence' (or Brussels Treaty).[15] This alliance would also be referred to as the West-European Union.[16] By then, a possible renewal of German aggression was no longer the only rationale for a collective defence agreement. It was the Soviet Union that was feared most. However, it was clear that to deter the Soviet Union the Western European countries needed the US by their side. Therefore, the US were invited to form a collective defence alliance with the West-European states. This came in the shape of NATO.

In the beginning, NATO was mostly a political association, whose main goal was to curb Soviet political influence. But this changed with the Korean War that broke out in 1950, and that forced the alliance members to come up with common military plans.[17] Then, under American leadership the integrated  military command structure was added to the alliance structure. Furthermore, the post of NATO Secretary General was created. NATO's first Secretary General, Lord Ismay, famously stated that it was the job of the alliance "to keep the Russians out, the Americans in and the Germans down".[18] The first two elements of Ismay's

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[14] The Dunkirk Treaty, retrieved on 05-05-2011 from http://www.ena.lu/.
[15] The Brussels Treaty, ibid.
[16] The Western Union would later evolve in the Western European Union.
[17] A. Wenger, 'Crisis and Opportunity: NATO's Transformation and the Multilateralization of Détente, 1966-1968', *Journal of Cold War Studies,* 2004, 6(1), 24.
[18] D. Andrews, 'The United States and its Atlantic allies', in D. Andrews (Ed.), in *The Atlantic Alliance Under Stress: US-European Relations after Iraq,* (Cambridge 2005), 61.

formulation, to keep the Russians out and the Americans in, are rather straightforward. The third element may require a little more explanation.

When NATO was established, Europe was already divided into a Western and an Eastern half. Although the Europeans were not very happy with this state of affairs, the situation was fairly stable. The US and the Soviet Union mostly allowed each other to act freely on their respective sides of the dividing line. Except when it came to Germany. Moscow, just like France and the UK, would never allow (West) Germany to become too strong again, especially not if it were politically independent and nuclear-armed. This could even have triggered an armed attack from the Soviet Union.[19] Therefore, any solution to 'the German problem' would have to satisfy the Soviet Union as well. This solution came in the form of a large American military presence in West Germany. Thus, the three main tasks of NATO were very much interconnected.[20] In 1955, West Germany[21] was incorporated into NATO, also mainly so that the other members were able to monitor its development. It was the third state to join NATO after its foundation, after Greece and Turkey had become members in 1952.

The focus of this thesis will be on NATO – instead of on the UN or any other international organization – because there are only European and North-American members to this organization, allowing for an in-depth analysis of Atlantic relations. Another reason for my special interest in NATO is the fact that NATO has both a military and a political component. This allows for a more detailed comparison of the two crises under consideration.

Even though NATO has changed much between 1966 and 2003 – for example through enlargement – I still believe it is possible to compare the two crises that threatened NATO's existence, mainly because both crises involved the same main players. These players are the US, the UK, France and (West-)Germany. In studying and comparing the crisis of 2002-2010 with the crisis of 1963-1967, the focus will be on these four countries. This leaves little room for the roles played by the other members of the Atlantic Alliance. Their roles will only be discussed when closely related to the policies of the four countries under consideration.

## Why comparative historical analysis?

In this thesis I will use the method of Comparative Historical Analysis (CHA) to find an answer to the research question. CHA has been practiced since the foundation of the social

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[19] Z. Brzezinski, 'Moscow and the M.L.F.: Hostility and Ambivalence', *Foreign Affairs, 43(1), October 1964.*
[20] D. Andrews, 'United', 61.
[21] West Germany, or the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) had been created in May 1949, as a consequence of the First Berlin Crisis, that lasted from 24 June 1948 till 12 May 1949.

sciences. This research method has dominated the social sciences for centuries, for example in works by de Toqueville and Marx, which cannot be without reason. It was not until the mid-twentieth century that other modes of investigation, such as statistical analysis, became more popular, leading to a period of neglect for comparative historical analysis.[22] These new modes of investigation were believed to be the future of the social sciences, where CHA was considered the past. CHA was especially criticized by those who believed that the new research methods would provide the social sciences with universalizing knowledge, whereas CHA could not due to its preference for comparing a limited number of cases.

However, the late 1970s marked the beginning of a revival for CHA in the social sciences. Though not without its challenges, CHA can still make a substantive contribution to the accumulation of knowledge in the social sciences. Although it cannot easily generate universalizing knowledge, due to the often limited number of cases that are compared, lessons can still be learned from in-depth case-studies and comparisons. In this proces, the researcher must find a balance between doing justice to the historical particularity of a case and at the same time search for generalizations.[23] The difficulty in producing universalizing knowledge should not be seen as a lack of results, but rather as a "reduction of ambition".[24] The return to CHA is probably also related to a lack of results from other modes of investigation, such as statistical analysis. Although universalizing knowledge can more easily be obtained from these studies, the conclusions are often too general to explain specific cases. CHA, by contrast, can often offer better insights into specific cases.

Then, what exactly is CHA? According to the social science professors James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer it 'is defined by a concern with causal analysis, an emphasis on processes over time, and the use of systematic and contextualized comparison'.[25] Important for CHA is, of course, that the cases under comparison 'exhibit sufficient similarity to be meaningfully compared with one another'.[26] This definition by Mahoney and Rueschemeyer will also be employed in this thesis. This means that there will be a focus on the different factors that caused the crises of 1963-1966 and 2002-2010, and on how these factors changed over time. Furthermore, while not rejecting quantitative research methods as relevant for comparative historical analysis, the emphasis of this thesis will be on qualitative analysis.

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[22] J. Mahoney & D. Rueschemeyer, 'Comparative Historical Analysis: Achievements and Agendas', in J. Mahoney & D. Rueschemeyer (eds), *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences,* (Cambridge 2006), 3.
[23] D. Rueschemeyer, 'Can One or a Few Cases Yield Theoretical Gains?', in J. Mahoney & D. Rueschemeyer (eds), *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences,* (Cambridge 2006), 318.
[24] Ibid., 328.
[25] J. Mahoney & D. Rueschemeyer, 'Comparative', 6.
[26] Ibid., 8.

## Gaining New Insights from CHA

The reason I have decided to make a comparison between the crisis of 2002-2010 and the crisis of 1963-1967 is that I believe that new insights can be gained from this exercise. So far, a lot has been written on both crises. Most of this literature is quite descriptive. Some works on the Iraq crisis do mention the crisis of the sixties, but only briefly.[27] Or, when the Iraq crisis is compared with a previous crisis, there is only a comparison on one aspect of the crises. No in-depth comparison of several aspects of the crises has been performed yet. The most extensive comparison of the crisis of 2002-2010 with past crises I have come across was in a book called *"The End of the West?"*.[28] In this collection of articles, two articles specifically discuss previous NATO crises in relation to the crisis of 2002-2010.

William H. Hitchcock looks at the dispute over German rearmament, the Suez crisis, the Gaullist Challenge and disagreements over Bosnia, before he turns to the Iraq crisis. However, his research is mostly descriptive. He does not compare and analyse different aspects of each crisis to find out how they influenced it. His goal is merely to point out that Atlantic disagreement is nothing new and that crises have been resolved before.[29] However, he does point out the fact that in previous times there was always a common threat of which the nature was clear, that worked to unite the alliance. This may not be the case with terrorism.[30]

In the same volume, Henry R. Nau also compares the Iraq crisis with previous Atlantic crises. He defines 'a transatlantic crisis in terms of the existence of one or more of four circumstances: (1) disagreement over core security interests; (2) disruption of rules and institutions; (3) sharp breaks in market and social interdependence; and (4) loss of sense of community or shared values'.[31] Nau then compares the Iraq crisis to five other alleged crises on these four aspects. The five previous crises Nau identifies are the Suez crisis, the Second Berlin and Cuba crises combined, the French withdrawal from NATO, the Vietnam and oil crises combined and the crisis over NATO missile deployment.[32] Although still useful for my own research on transatlantic crisis, Nau's research is not an in-depth analysis of the four different aspects of a transatlantic crisis. Neither does he specify how he determined his

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[27]G. Soutou, 'Three Rifts, Two Reconciliations: Franco-American Relations during the Fifth Republic', In D. Andrews (Ed.), *The Atlantic Alliance Under Stress,* (Cambridge 2005), 102-127.

[28] J. Anderson, G. Ikenberry & T. Risse (Eds.), (Cornell University 2008).

[29] W. Hitchcock, 'Ghost', 53.

[30] Ibid., 80.

[31] H. Nau, 'Iraq and Previous Transatlantic Crises, Divided by Threat, Not Institutions or Values', in J. Anderson, G. Ikenberry & T. Risse (Eds.), *The End of the West? Crisis and Change in the Atlantic Order,* (Cornell 2008), 84.

[32] Ibid., 91-92.

classifications. His research is better considered a brief comparison of six transatlantic crises, that shows that the severity of the crisis of 2002-2010 differs depending on the aspect of a transatlantic crisis under consideration.

My research will expand on the researches by Hitchcock and Nau. Through comparing and analysing different aspects of the two crises I hope to find out what aspects determine the nature and duration of a crisis within NATO. This thesis should add new insights to existing literature on the NATO crises of 1963-1967 and 2002-2010 by providing a detailed comparative analysis of multiple factors that were of influence for both crises.

## Set-up of the chapters

Because the crises of 1963-1967 and 2002-2010 did not take place in a void, it is important to examine the circumstances in which they took place. The first chapter will describe the structural settings in which the crises occurred, which had changed significantly in the years before the crises broke out. A discussion of the changes in the world order will be followed by an overview of important changes in Europe. Here, I will also provide an analysis of how these changing circumstances impacted the crises.

The second chapter will discuss the development of the crises, illustrated by the most important events. My comparison should then show that the crises of 1963-1967 and 2002-2010 were very similar in many respects. This should lead to new insights on the Iraq crisis, especially concerning its starting and ending dates, as well as on the crisis of 1963-1967. This chapter will also examine the national security interests of the four countries under consideration.

Chapter three will deal with the different perceptions on the threat emanating from Baghdad, and from terrorism in general. It should become clear that the threat perceptions differ on both accounts, but that they diverge more widely on the threat posed by the regime of Saddam Hussein. The divergence of views on how to tackle terrorism can only partially be attributed to the divergence in threat perceptions. Besides discussing perceptions of threat, this chapter will also pay attention to the Allies' perceptions of the Atlantic Alliance.

The fourth and last chapter looks at power games between the four countries under consideration. It first looks at the balance of power between Europe and the US and the role of burden sharing in this equation. It then takes a more global view, by discussing the role that the proliferation of WMDs played in both crises. For the crisis of 11963-1967, this then logically leads to the solution of the crisis. For the crisis of 2002-2010, I will elaborate on the

steps that the Atlantic Allies have already taken to work out their issues. This then leads to a conclusion on which problems, if any, have been overcome, and which still deserve more attention.

In the end, I will provide an overall conclusion as to how the crisis of 2002-2010 was comparable to the crisis of 1963-1967. An examination of the nature of the crises should allow me to draw conclusions on what factors influence the duration of a crisis within NATO. By then, it should have become clear that there were many similarities, and a few differences, between the two crises. In fact, the two crises were so similar that it is possible to discern a common pattern between them, consisting of five phases.

# Changing Circumstances

## Introduction

In this first chapter, the international background of the crises of 1963-1967 and 2002-2010 are examined. It will soon become clear that in both cases the international setting was of central importance. Both crises were directly influenced by the major changes that had occurred in the world order in the decade previous to the crisis. In the years before the Gaullist challenge, the dynamics of the Cold War had changed significantly when a nuclear stalemate between the Soviet Union and the US developed. The arms race between the two superpowers had gotten to a point where a nuclear war could potentially destroy both states completely.[33] This made the communist empire an equal and therefore more dangerous adversary. Paradoxically, the Soviet threat became more important to NATO when East-West relations improved, especially for France and West Germany.

In the years before the outbreak of the Iraq crisis, the world order had again changed significantly. Most importantly, the Cold War had ended, removing the *raison d'être* for the Atlantic Alliance. NATO had been founded as a security alliance against the Soviet enemy. With the communist threat gone, it would not have been strange if NATO had ceased to exist. However, NATO did not disintegrate. Instead, NATO enlarged,[34] incorporating most former Warschaw Pact-countries. Apparently, the Atlantic alliance had become more than a security alliance. Institutional ties through NATO, as well as economic interdependence and common values became the explanatory factors for the survival of the Atlantic Alliance. Then, on 11 September 2001, a new threat emerged: global terrorism. Although terrorism in general was nothing new and al Qaeda and others had already attacked Western troops abroad, the scale of destruction had increased. Also, innocent citizens became the targets, preferably in their home country.

Both crises followed a period of significant change on the European continent as well. In the early sixties, European economic integration was paying off. The war-shattered economies were now booming and succesful integration in the economic field caused people to call for integration in other fields as well. In the late nineties, EU integration had indeed spilled over to other areas, both geographically and content-wise. The EU would soon cover most of Europe and a whole range of topics, including defence.

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[33] http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/nuclear_arms_race.htm.
[34] In 1999, Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic joined NATO. In 2004, they were joined by Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Bulgaria and Romania.

## The Crisis of 1963-1967

### Major Changes in the World Order

The NATO crisis of 1963-1967 was inspired by several major changes in the international order since the foundation of NATO. Three changes are generally considered most important: the somewhat improving relationship between the East and the West, which led to a diminished (perceived) threat or a *détente*; the weakening of the US security guarantee, due to the fact that the Soviet Union had acquired nuclear capabilities more or less equal to those of the US; and, the US preoccupation with areas other than Europe, which sparked anxiety among some European Alliance members about being drawn into conflicts against its will, for example in Vietnam.[35] All three points should be seen in the more general context of the relationship between the US and the major European countries, most importantly France.

The first major change, the improving relationship between the East and the West, had important effects on the relationships within the Atlantic Alliance. Already halfway the 1950s Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev opted for peaceful coexistence with the US. However, this was undermined by the subsequent Second Berlin crisis[36] and Cuban missile crisis.[37] After these incidents, the United States and the Soviet Union came to fully understand the urgency of the need to accept each other's existence and make it work, especially considering the fact that they were now in a nuclear stalemate.[38] Efforts were made by both sides to improve the relationship. One area in which the two superpowers found each other was arms control and nuclear non-proliferation. Anxious to keep the Soviet Union out of the Vietnam War, the Johnson Administration could not afford nuclear proliferation in Europe.[39] However, many European countries, chiefly France and West Germany, wanted a greater say in the US' nuclear policy. They became concerned that their security interests were of lesser importance to the US than, say, the US interests in South East-Asia. Especially when the increasing burden in Vietnam meant that the US military commitment to Europe could be reduced. Also, the West European states began to question the legitimacy of the US presence in Vietnam and did not bring in as much support as the US would have liked.[40] This problem of credibility was very clearly linked to the second major change in the world order.

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[35] H. Haftendorn, *NATO and the Nuclear Revolution: a Crisis of Credibility, 1966-1967*, (Oxford, 1996), 2.
[36] This crisis lasted from 4 June till 9 November 1961.
[37] This crisis lasted from 14 till 28 October 1962.
[38] A. Wenger, 'Crisis', 23.
[39] H. Haftendorn, *NATO,* 7-8.
[40] A. Wenger, 'Crisis', 31.

A nuclear stalemate had developed between the US and the Soviet Union. Tthis did not immediately lead the Europeans to question the American willingness to use these weapons in their defense, as the Atlantic policy of massive retalliation remained in place. However, when the US announced a shift in military strategy, from Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) to flexible response it was no longer clear that whether the Americans would use their nuclear weapons in the case of an attack on Europe. This weakened the US security guarantee.[41] This strategy left the option of conventional war in case of an attack on Western Europe open. The European governments, and especially the French and West German, protested against the new strategy. They feared that it was an indication that the US wanted to 'decouple itself from the defence of Western Europe'.[42] The differences in strategy preferrences were very much influenced by differences in risk distribution. If it ever came to a conventional war between the East and the West, this war would be fought on European territory, destroying the continent once again. Where the Americans were keen on avoiding being dragged into a nuclear war in Europe, the Europeans were keen on deterring any form of war.[43] Thus, where nuclear non-proliferation and a strategy of flexible response made sense for the US, they did not satisfy the concerns of the European allies.

The discussion on structural changes so far has dealt with the changing dynamics of the Cold War and their effects on the transatlantic relationship. However, the Cold War division in itself constituted a major structural change as well. Before WWII, multipolarity characterised the world order. Now, for the first time in history, the world was a bipolar place. France and the UK, with their large empires in the past, where going through the process of decolonization. Their status had been reduced to a second-class power. It took France and the UK some time to adjust, as the Suez crisis of 1956 demonstrated. There, the US has forced them to end their war against Egypt. The days when France and the UK were great powers were gone.

**European Integration**

European integration was a result of the Second World War, which had completely destroyed Europe. Ten West-European countries decided to make efforts to prevent such a disaster to ever happen again. They established the Council of Europe in 1949, whose job it was, and still is, to ensure respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law throughout the member

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[41] The new strategy, flexible response, no longer entailed an automatic response to the use of nuclear weapons. This increased the importance of acquiring superior capabilities in conventional warfare.
[42] H. Haftendorn, *NATO,* 5.
[43] Ibid., 387.

states.[44] Six countries decided to go even further. France, West-Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Belgium signed the Coal and Steel Treaty on 18 April 1951. These heavy industries, necessary to make weapons of war, were placed under a common management. In March 1957 the cooperation between the six countries was expanded when they signed the Treaty of Rome. With this treaty they created the European Economic Community (EEC) or 'Common Market', where people, goods and services should be able to move freely across borders.[45] It did take quite some time before these goals were realized, but on 1 July 1968 customs duties on goods were lifted between the six. However, even before this date, economic growth started in Europe during the 1960s.[46]

European integration did much to pacify the continent, most importantly because it allowed West-German reintegration into Western Europe. 'Continued German pacification depended in large measure on Franco-German reconciliation, undertaken partly within the context of NATO and partly within the context of European integration.'[47] The discussion on the extent to which European states should integrate started almost from the beginning. Most states wanted to develop an effective European decision-making body, while preserving their national independence.[48] This turned out to be very hard in practice, especially in the field of foreign policy and defense. Already in the early fifties, there were plans to create a European Defense Community. However, this plan was rejected by the French in 1954.[49] When it came to national security, sovereignty turned out more important than integration, even for a country generally in favour of a more united Europe.

Within Europe, France qualifies as a more Europeanist country than most other states, who are considered more Atlanticist.[50] The difference is one of focus. For Europeanists, European integration is important to strive for, regardless of what the US wants. For Atlanticists, European integration comes second to the Atlantic relationship, and can only continue to a degree that it does not jeopardize this relationship with the US. To be sure, it is not at all clear that a more united Europe would be harmful for the relationship between Europe and the US. The fear of harming the Atlantic relationship stems from the possibility

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[44] http://www.coe.int/aboutCoe/index.asp?page=nosObjectifs&l=en.
[45] http://europa.eu/abc/history/1945-1959/index_en.htm.
[46] http://europa.eu/abc/history/1960-1969/index_en.htm.
[47] A. Wenger, 'Crisis', 63.
[48] R. Schaetzel, 1966, 'The Necessary Partnership', in *Foreign Affairs,* April issue
[49] Ibid.
[50] Z. Giakoumis, 'EU-NATO relations after the Riga Summit', 8 September 2008, retrieved on 24-08-2011 from http://www.atlanticcommunity.org/Giakoumis%20Krynica%20presentation%20on%20EU%20and%20NATO.html

that a strong united Europe might someday determine that its interests do not coincide with the interests of the US. For this reason, the US has not been very supportive of the idea of a European common defense policy.[51]

At the end of the fifties, after his tripartite proposal had been rejected by president Eisenhower in 1958, de Gaulle shifted his outlook in terms of common defense and security. He wished to "replace transatlantic integration with intergovernmental European cooperation in the fields of politics, economics, culture, and security".[52] Although the other five were sceptical, de Gaulle's plans for closer European cooperation in the field of security were considered. In 1961, the Fouchet Plan I was drafted, which proposed a common foreign and security policy for the Six. The other states rejected the policy for two reasons: "the lack of any supranational elements and the implied weakening of NATO".[53] When de Gaulle proposed for the Six to leave the NATO framework altogether, in the Fouchet Plan II, a European common security policy became unacceptable for the other five, who now had a profound distrust of de Gaulle's intentions for the Atlantic Alliance.[54] Thus, for the other five European integration was welcomed as long as it did not jeopardize the Atlantic relationship. When it came to security matters, the Atlantic relationship was valued more highly than European integration. For the other five, competition with the US was not a motivation to further European integration.

At the time of the Fouchet Plan-proposals, the UK was taking part in the European discussions, because it was in the process of membership negotiations.[55] For the British particularly it was unthinkable to substitute the transatlantic relationship for more European cooperation. British opposition to more European integration in the field of security was an important reason for de Gaulle to conclude that the UK was too heavily influenced by the US and thus not suitable for EEC-membership.

On 14 January 1963, de Gaulle announced his "triple *non*" during a press conference. He refused British accession to the European Community, dismissed an offer by the US for Polaris missiles, and announced a lack of interest in a multilateral nuclear force within NATO. These announcements were not only seen as an attack on the Atlantic Alliance, but also as an attack on the European Community, because it caused a setback in European

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[51] I. Wallerstein, 2008, 'France back in NATO? Is this for real?', in *Eurasia Critic,* retrieved on 4-08-2011 from http://www.eurasiacritic.com/articles/france-back-nato-real.
[52] A. Locher, *Crisis?,* 51.
[53] Ibid.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Ibid.

integration, due to a lack of sense of unity.[56] A week later, de Gaulle and Adenauer signed the Elysée Treaty, which provided for regular political and military consultation and cooperation - NATO matters.[57] This French-German agreement was seen in light of the French anti-Alliance policies and was therefore viewed with dustrust. Especially as the treaty covered the topics for which NATO was created. The Elysée Treaty caused distress in European as well as transatlantic relations.[58]

De Gaulle's policies in the early sixties in general were not viewed favourably by the other members of the Six. Except for West Germany under chancellor Adenauer, the other five did not show much sympathy for de Gaulle. The smaller states of the EEC made clear that de Gaulle did not speak for Europe and were not interested in a more integrated Europe to French design. The Belgian and Dutch governments even stated, after de Gaulle's triple *non*, that he 'had proven to be neither Atlanticist nor European'.[59] This does not mean, however, that there was no understanding for de Gaulle's positions. Opposition to US dominance within the Alliance, especially in the field of nuclear cooperation, was not limited to France. Other European members of the Alliance were also frustrated by a lack of influence over US foreign policies.[60] But the methods used by de Gaulle were not seen as constructive. His unilateral decision-making and announcements caused tensions within Europe as well as in NATO.

In fact, it was in the EEC that the Gaullist challenge took on a new dimension. On 1 July 1965, the French representative left a meeting of the Council of Ministers, leaving an 'empty chair'. There were different issues at stake, but underlying them all were different views of how to organize further EEC cooperation. The French opted for inter-governmentalism, while the others preferred to introduce some supranational elements. More supranationality would limit French dominance within the EEC. It was by walking out of this EEC meeting that de Gaulle showed how far he would go to defend his views.[61]

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[56] Ibid., 50.
[57] Ibid.
[58] Ibid., 51.
[59] Ibid., 65.
[60] A. Buchan, 1963, 'Partners and Allies', in *Foreign Affairs,* 41(4), 621-637.
[61] A. Locher, *Crisis?*, 228-229.

The Crisis of 2002-2010

**Major Changes in the World Order**

For some, the Iraq crisis came as a shock. How was it possible that the alliance was in disarray over an out-of-area war? But there were also those who had been expecting a crisis in the Atlantic alliance. In fact, they had expected the two sides of the Atlantic to drift apart sooner. Why was this expected and why did it not happen sooner? These questions will be discussed next.

The end of the Cold War dramatically changed the structure of the world system. For more than four decades this world system had been bipolar. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, only one superpower remained: the US. Subsequently, strategic attitudes of governments all over the world, but specifically within the Atlantic alliance, were altered to fit the new unipolar system. For the Atlantic alliance, the most important change was that the Soviet threat had disappeared. According to many writers, amongst whom American international relations scholar David Andrews, this would have negative consequences for the Alliance, as there would be less tolerance for transatlantic tensions. Before the end of the Cold War there had also been tensions within the alliance. However, the presence of a strong common enemy was a strong motivation not to let issues get out of hand.[62] Now that this strong common enemy was gone, the US no longer needed to worry about the Soviet Union gaining influence in Western Europe. And Western Europe was dramatically less dependent on the US security guarantee. Indeed, it can be observed that the two sides of the Atlantic tended to disagree quite often during the nineties, on issues such as the Kyoto Protocol, the International Criminal Court and so on. But these disagreements never turned into crises. Why not?

According to Andrews, there were a few mitigating factors, such as the institutional robustness of NATO, the election of President Bill Clinton – who strongly believed in mulilateralism – as President in the US, and several military conflicts, such as those in Bosnia and Kosovo, that diverted attention away from the changes within the alliance. And then there was also the NATO enlargement process.[63] But the biggest stabilizer in Atlantic relations was probably the American public opinion. The American public consistently favoured multilateralism on the international scene, ever since the end of World War II. The end of the Cold War did not change this. Neither did the terrorist attack of 9/11, although they are often

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[62] D. Andrews, 'United, 57-58.
[63] Ibid., 66.

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seen as a turning point in American support for multilateralism.[64] In fact, the American public came to attach more importance to multilateralism when foreign threats suddenly became more direct.[65] It also viewed Europe as the most reliable partner in the fight against terrorism.[66] But the foreign policy approach adopted by the Bush Administration in the run-up to the Iraq war did not reflect the views of the American public. How could there be such a big difference between general public opinion and the Bush Administration's actions? An explanation could be the increasing polarization of American politics. The moderate center has for a large part disappeared, leaving room for more extreme views on foreign policy. The neoconservative Republicans, who were overrepresented in the Bush Administration, were far more prone to unilateralism and the use of military means than the general American people.[67] Thus, even without the threat of terrorism, the election of US President Bush was likely to have negative consequences for the transatlantic relationship.

Another important change in the world order has been globalization. There is considerable debate as to whether globalization causes a decrease or increase in the power of the nation-state. However, there is general agreement that it makes the world "become a smaller place", figuratively speaking.[68] This has had a tremendous influence on threat assessments. The terrorist attacks of 9/11 demonstrated a relatively new type of global threat. International terrorist networks are not bound by territory, which makes it more difficult to deter an attack. Finding the right response to this new threat, logically, takes time.


**European Integration**

If the Iraq crisis made one thing very clear, it was that European integration is very much interrelated with the Atlantic state of affairs, particularly in the field of defence.[69] Considering the overlap between the two organizations, this is not surprising. What is more important is that the relationship between the EU and NATO can be described as difficult, if not competitive.

Since the original Six started the process of European integration, new members have joined the EU. Before the outbreak of the Iraq controversy, the EU had expanded to fifteen

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[64] M. Kahler, 'US Politics and transatlantic relations', in D. Andrews (Ed.), in *The Atlantic Alliance Under Stress: US-European Relations after Iraq,* (Cambridge 2005), 85-86.
[65] M. Bouton & B. Page (Eds.), *Worldviews 2002: American Public Opinion and Foreign Policy,* (Chicago 2002).
[66] M. Kahler, 'US', 87.
[67] Ibid., 95.
[68] http://www.globalenvision.org/library/25/1618
[69] U. Diedrichs, 'The development of the European Security and Defence Policy and its implications for NATO: cooperation and competition', in *Journal of Transatlantic Studies*, 3(1), 2005, 55.

members, and was finalizing the membership negotiations with ten more candidate countries, mostly Central- and Eastern European.[70] Besides enlarging, the EU was also broadening its tasks. One area in which substantive headway was being made was the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP).

The European CFSP was first introduced in the Maastricht Treaty of February 1992 - formally the Treaty on European Union (TEU) – which was signed by all members of the European Community and established the European Union. The EU would consist of three pillars: the first dealt with previous European Community issues and was mostly governed supranationally; the second pillar consisted of the CFSP; and the third pillar dealt with justice and home affairs.[71] The last two pillars were still intergovernmental in nature. The second pillar, CFSP, was later complemented with the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP).[72]

Confusingly, the ESDP was first implemented through the West-European Union (WEU),[73] whose members did not include all members of the European Union, although those who were not members did have observer or associate member status. The WEU adopted the Petersberg Tasks in June 1992, which included: "humanitarian and rescue tasks; peace-keeping tasks; and tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peace-making".[74] Thus, the WEU planned to develop capabilities that also existed within NATO. This led to some worrying on the side of NATO. However, in 1996, the members of NATO and WEU agreed on operational cooperation in WEU-led operations. WEU would serve as the European pillar within NATO.

The next big step came with the St. Malo-Declaration in December 1998, when the UK and France agreed on the Joint Declaration on European Defence: "The Union must have the capacity for autonomous action, backed up by credible military forces, the means to decide to use them, and a readiness to do so".[75] The St. Malo initiative, which essentially called for a European defence capacity outside the framework of NATO, met with opposition from Washington. The Clinton Administration had its representative to NATO, Madeleine

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[70] http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/the-policy/from-6-to-27-members/index_en.htm.
[71] Treaty on European Union: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2006:321E:0001:0331:EN:PDF.
[72] http://europa.eu/pol/cfsp/index_en.htm
[73] The West-European Union was an organisation based on the Treaty of Brussels of 1948, which called for cooperation on defence and security issues. In a way, the WEU was the forerunner of NATO. However, when NATO was founded, the WEU was not dissolved. That did not happen until 2010.
[74] Petersberg Declaration: http://www.assembly-weu.org/en/documents/sessions_ordinaires/key/declaration_petersberg.php.
[75] St. Malo Declaration: http://www.fco.gov.uk/resources/en/news/2002/02/joint-declaration-on-eu-new01795.

Albright, spell out three conditions it set for a separate European defence capacity, which became known as the 3D's: no decoupling, no duplication, and no discrimination. Decoupling referred to the relationship between NATO and the EU. Washington would not allow the European allies to sideline NATO in favor of the ESDP. Duplication concerned American worries that the contribution of the European allies to NATO would be reduced due to a duplication of military capacities for the two different organizations. The ESDP should not interfere with European obligations towards NATO. Discrimination applied to the differences in membership between the EU and NATO, specifically Turkey. The development of the ESDP should not negatively affect European cooperation with Turkey and other non-EU members of the Alliance. Besides the 3D's, Washington set a forth condition, implicitly: NATO should retain the 'right to first refusal'. Only if NATO did not become involved in a conflict could the EU take charge.[76]

European intentions behind the St. Malo initiative differed. For French president Chirac, it represented an impuls to develop an ESDP more autonomous from NATO, and from the US. For Paris, the relationship between the ESDP and NATO was thus one of competition British Prime Minister Blair saw the ESDP as complementary to NATO. It would actually benefit NATO by improving European military capacities within NATO as well, and by dividing the military and financial burden more equally between the two sides of the Atlantic. This discrepancy in European views has not been resolved to this day.[77]

In 1999, most WEU assets were transferred to the EU. This, combined with the 1997 decision in the Treaty of Amsterdam to incorporate the Petersberg Tasks in the TEU, made that the EU now controlled the ESDP. The Treaty of Amsterdam, which was signed on 2 October 1997 and came into force on 1 May 1999, also created the post of High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy (EU High Representative in short).[78] In 1999 as well, the European Council, during a meeting in Helsinki, set the military capability target that became known as the Helsinki Headline Goal. The idea was to create a European Rapid Reaction Force (RRF) by 2003, that could implement the Petersberg Tasks.[79] This had not happened yet when the Iraq controversy started in 2002.

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[76] J. Haine, *Berlin Plus,* paper for the Institute for Security Studies, retrieved on 18-08-2011 from http://www.ppl.nl/ebooks/files/03-jyhb%252B.pdf.
[77] U. Diedrichs, 'Development', 56.
[78] Treaty of Amsterdam, retrieved on 24-08-2011 from http://www.europarl.europa.eu/topics/treaty/pdf/amst-en.pdf
[79] Helsinki Headline Goal, retrieved on 18-08-2011 from http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/Helsinki%20Headline%20Goal.pdf.

The Iraq Crisis thus came at a time when the EU was in a period of profound change concerning the CFSP and ESDP. The crisis exposed disagreement within Europe not only over Iraq, but also over the perceived relationship between the ESDP and NATO. The differing views within the EU on the invasion of Iraq generally related to the differing views on the role of the ESDP. Those who supported the US envisioned the ESDP to be complementary to NATO. Those who opposed the US generally opted for a more autonomous role for the ESDP. The Iraq Crisis thus very much influenced the debate on the ESDP.[80] It also impacted on European integration and enlargement in general.

The division between "old Europe" and "new Europe"[81] became even more explicit when the European states that supported the US invasion of Iraq wrote an opinion essay for the *Wall Street Journal* and signed an American-drafted declaration that laid out their support for US policies. Among the signatories were Central- and East European candidate states as well. An angry Chirac memorably stated that the EU candidates had "missed a good opportunity to shut up", after which he threatened to veto their entry into the EU.[82] The support of the EU candidate states for the US reinforced the general believe that the upcoming enlargement of the EU would make the US more pro-American. At the same time, however, the new member states also have a strong interest in the further development of the CFSP. As not all their neighbours are members to the EU, they are interested in neighbourhood policies - especially towards Russia - which would fall under the CFSP. During the Iraq Crisis, it also became clear that the European states, West- and East European states alike, could not wield much influence in Washington. The Bush Administration was able to play out the European states against each other, maximinzing the power of the US. Only if the Europeans stand united will their voice be heard in Washington.[83]

It was probably US unilateralism and a European lack of influence over American actions on the side of the European states who supported the US, that provided an impetus for the development of the ESDP.[84] For example, in December 2003 the European Council adopted the European Security Strategy, the EU equivalent to NATO's Strategic Concept.[85]

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[80] Molenaar, *(Dis)Organising*, 22.
[81] As defined by US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. "Old Europe" referred to the states who opposed an invasion of Iraq, "New Europe" referred to the states who did support this invasion.
[82] C. Smith, 'Chirac Scolding Angers Nations That Back US', in *The New York Times,* 19 February 2003.
[83] H. Riecke, 'Foreign Policy of an EU in Crisis', in a publication by the Netherlands Atlantic Association, *German and American Reorientation Toward NATO,* 2006, 64-65.
[84] Pew Research Center, 'A Year After Iraq War', 16 March 2004, retrieved on 23-08-2011 from http://people-press.org/2004/03/16/a-year-after-iraq-war/.
[85] EU Security Strategy 2003, retrieved on 24-08-2011 from http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/78367.pdf

And in 2004, the formal agreement on the Helsinki Headline Goal[86] was reached. In 2004 also, the EU set up the European Defence Agency (EDA), whose task it is to manage the ESDP.[87]

But perhaps more importantly, the Iraq Crisis emphasized the need for more NATO-EU cooperation. On 17 March 2003, at the height of the Iraq Crisis, NATO and the EU concluded the Berlin Plus Agreement. This agreement called for more consultation between the two organizations and, importantly, allows the EU to make use of NATO assets and military planning capacities for EU-led operations.[88] In December 2003, NATO and the EU reiterated their intentions for more political consultation and cooperation.

That this was not enough to revitalise European relations is demonstrated by the failure of the EU Constitution, that was finally agreed upon in the Rome Treaty signed on 29 October 2004. The process of ratification was halted by the French and Dutch referenda, held in May and June 2005 respectively. The failure of the EU Constitution is generally seen as a humbling experience for those Europeans who believed that European integration was going so well that soon the EU would become a major powerhouse in international relations, on an equal footing with the US.[89]

It was not until December 2007, after a long period of reflection, that the EU member states signed a treaty that revitalized the CFSP. With the Lisbon Treaty, that entered into force on 1 December 2009, the member states consolidated the EU's legal status and changed voting requirements. The Lisbon Treaty also created the posts of a President of the European Council and of a High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (EU Foreign Minister).[90] After a few years of delay, the CFSP was back on track.

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[86] As of 1 January 2007, the RRF became reality, with 60,000 European troops available for deployment for at least a year.
[87] Helsinki Headline Goal, retrieved on 24-08-2011 from
http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/Helsinki%20Headline%20Goal.pdf.
[88] http://europa.eu/agencies/security_agencies/eda/index_en.htm.
[89]Berlin Plus Agreement, retrieved on 24-08-2011 from http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/03-11-11%20Berlin%20Plus%20press%20note%20BL.pdf.
[90] Lisbon Treaty, retrieved on 24-08-2011 from http://eur-lex.europa.eu/JOHtml.do?uri=OJ:C:2007:306:SOM:EN:HTML

## Conclusion

The way the world was structured had changed significantly before the crises of 1963-1967 and 2002-2010. It first changed from multipolarity to bipolarity during WWII. For the US, this meant that it had to remain engaged in world affairs, particularly in Europe. For France and the UK, it entailed a shift in status, from great power to second-class power in global affairs. Although Germany had not been a colonial power, it was the strongest country in Europe before the outbreak of WWII. Now, it was divided and only semi-autonomous. For some, these changes were hard to accept, especially for de Gaulle, who found US dominance in NATO hard to accept. The "little *détente*" created room for dissent within the Alliance. The changes that accompanied the decreasing tensions between East and West caused the European Allies to demand more influence over decision-making.

The end of the Cold War marked the beginning of the unipolar era. The US was the only remaining superpower, or 'hyperpower'.[91] Without the threat of the Soviet Union to hold the Alliance together, many scholars expected that the importance of NATO would decline and NATO might eventually be dissolved. The US and Europe no longer depended on each other for their own security, so they could unilaterally try to achieve their own ambitions. Still, both continued to favour multilateralism over unilateral approaches. That is, until the neo-conservative Bush Administration came to power in the US and the attacks of 9/11 took place.

In both cases, the decade prior to the outbreak of the crisis had witnessed important changes in Europe. Both in 1963 and in 2002, Europe was in a state of flux in terms of European integration. Important steps were being taken, either in terms of economic integration or in terms of developing a common security and defence policy. These steps forward made the Europeans feel more confident about their capabilities.

In the early sixties, de Gaulle was already arguing for a European defence force, clearly intended as a counterweight to American dominance in NATO. This was not acceptable to the other members of the, then, EEC. They were dependent on the US security guarantee. In the nineties, this European defence force, together with a European common foreign policy, was under construction. The question of whether it would be complementary to NATO structures or that the relationship between the EU and NATO would be more competitive had not been solved yet. Negotiations on the CFSP and ESDP took extremely long because of worries over what the US might feel about the new policies to be implemented. Thus, the Atlantic relationship still played an important role in European affairs, as it did in the sixties as well.

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[91] This term was coined by French Foreign Minister Hubert Vedrine. Retrieved on 22-08-2011 from http://www.businessweek.com/2001/01_05/b3717011.htm.

There are also differences between the two time periods, in the field of European integration. In both cases enlargement, of the EEC and the EU, was considered. In the early sixties, the UK was negotiating membership of the EEC. In 2002, ten new members were about to join the EU. On both occassions, the applicants for EEC/EU membership were among the supporters of the US. In 1963, this led the French President to block British entry into the EEC. In 2003, another French President threatened to veto the entry into the EU of ten applicants from Central and Eastern Europe. However, he decided not to. Perhaps the French had learned some lessons of the crisis of 1963-1967?

# The Crises Enacted

## Introduction

The Islamic extremist threat could logically have taken the place of the communist threat as the uniting common enemy for the Atlantic Alliance, especially as there was again a clash of ideologies.[92] Islamic fundamentalism and liberal democracy can both be considered ideologies, as they provide a comprehensive vision on how society should be structured. The underlying values of Islamic fundamentalism and liberal democracy are impossible, or at least extremely difficult, to reconcile. Therefore, they are likely to clash where they come into contact with each other. Due to the global spread of both, especially liberal democracy, it is nearly impossible for them not to interact. Because of the superior military and economic positions of the liberal democracies, the Islamic extremists resort to terrorist tactics. Although at first it appeared that the terrorist threat would have a unifying effect on the Atlantic Alliance, like the Soviet threat did during the Cold War, within less than two years it splitted the Allies in two camps. What happened?

This chapter looks at how the crises unfolded themselves. It will thus provide an overview of the important events occuring during the period 1963-1967 and 2002-2010. In both cases, a few events that determined the development of the crisis can be pinpointed. A discussion of the national interests of the four countries under consideration – the US, the UK, France and Germany – is included to gain a better insight in what motivated the decisions of the four major players in both crises.

The conclusion will not only look at the information set forth in this chapter, but will also combine this information with some important points that were raised in the previous chapter. This is due to the interconnectedness of the themes discussed in the two chapters.

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[92] S. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilisation and the Remaking of World Order*, (New York 1996).

The Crisis of 1963-1967

## The Gaullist Challenge

On 7 March 1966, French President Charles de Gaulle informed US President Lyndon B. Johnson that he would withdraw all the French armed forces from the integrated military command structure of NATO, meaning that France was stepping out of the military alliance.[93] However, France did remain a member of NATO, as it did not leave NATO's political structure, based on the 1949 Washington Treaty. At the time, it was not clear where this move by de Gaulle would lead to. Many feared that France leaving the integrated military command structure might signal the end of the Atlantic Alliance. Especially since, as of April 1969, the North Atlantic Treaty could be renounced on one year's notice.[94] The fact that the French withdrawal led to a (temporary) crisis within NATO does not mean that it came as a surprise. President de Gaulle had been attempting to reform the structure of NATO as of 1958, when he proposed to establish a tripartite directorate – consisting of France, the US and the UK – to lead NATO. This would have gained France more influence in international affairs. Not only did Washington deny France this special status, it also favoured the UK over France through the Nassau Agreement, in which nuclear co-operation was offered to the UK, but not to France.[95] These insults combined with major changes in the international order since 1949 eventually led de Gaulle to decide 'to re-establish normal conditions of sovereignty in which all that is France, its soil, sky, sea and its forces, and every foreign element within it, shall be subject solely to French authority'.[96] Consequently, all NATO institutions located in France needed to be relocated to Belgium.

As already stated, the French withdrawal did not come as a surprise. It was the, by many expected, consequence of the deteriorated relationship between France and the US. France challenged the leading role of the US within NATO, mostly because it no longer found the US security guarantee for Europe credible enough to trust on it. (This point will be elaborated upon later in this chapter.) France found it increasingly necessary, especially after the Suez crisis, to develop its own nuclear *force de dissuasion*, or *force de frappe*.[97] In fact, the French

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[93] A. Wenger, 'Crisis', 22.
[94] H. Haftendorn, *NATO*, 1.
[95] Ibid., 2.
[96] Press Conference of French President Charles de Gaulle, 21 February 1966.
[97] A. Locher, *Crisis?,* 38.

withdrawal from NATO's integrated military command structure coincided with the coming into operational readiness of the first elements of this *force de frappe*.[98]

De Gaulle was not the only European leader to question the credibility of the US security guarantee for Europe. Others, especially Adenauer, also wanted reassurances for the case of a Soviet attack on Europe. The UK was the only other European nuclear power. However, it was dependent on the US to maintain its deterrent force.[99] And the FRG, most vulnerable to a Soviet attack, was not allowed to develop a nuclear program. The European states demanded a US guarantee 'of continued deployment of nuclear weapons in Europe, as well as the right to have a say on whether or not and how they would be used'. The US was willing to share more nuclear information with the Atlantic allies, but not to let the Europeans have a say in 'deployment, targeting and employment principles of its nuclear weapons'.[100] The strong disagreements over nuclear strategy and planning constituted an important element of the NATO crisis of 1963-1966.

Recognising the validity of European security concerns, especially those of Germany, the US proposed to set up a NATO multilateral nuclear force (MLF). However, they did have some prerequisites: to keep their veto and to coordinate the MLF with US strategic nuclear systems. An important reason to propose the MLF was the concern that West Germany in the long run would not be satisfied with a second-class status within the Alliance. Furthermore, it might not be willing to leave its nuclear defence in the hands of other states anymore.[101] However, whereas Washington preferred to satisfy the Federal Republic's nuclear ambitions within NATO, other states were not ready yet for a nuclear role for the Germans.

The most intense opposition against a nuclear role for the FRG came from the Soviet Union. It used a possible Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) to prevent nuclear sharing within NATO. The US and the UK were also very interested in an NPT, although for other reasons. For the US, it presented a way to further the arms control negotiations with the Soviet Union. This in turn, the US hoped, would restrain the Soviet Union in Vietnam. Also, it might curtail the influence of China, which had tested a nuclear device in 1964. For the UK, the reasons for seeking an NPT were mainly financial.[102]

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[98] H. Haftendorn, *NATO,* 3.
[99] J. Suri, The Normative Resilience of NATO: a community of shared values amid public discord, in A. Wenger, C. Nuenlist & A. Locher (Eds.), *Transforming NATO in the Cold War: challenges beyong deterrence in the 1960s,* (New York 2007), 21.
[100] H. Haftendorn, *NATO,* 112.
[101] Ibid.*,* 113.
[102] H. Haftendorn, *NATO,* 113-114.

Then how exactly did the MLF and the creation of an NPT influence the relations among the Allies? To begin with the obvious: the US had the biggest nuclear arsenal among the alliance members. Aside from the US, only the UK had nuclear weapons, but it depended on the US to use them (France developed the *force de frappe* later). The European states believed that they depended on nuclear weapons for their security, but with the beginning of the *détente* in 1962, the US abandoned the strategy of massive retaliation for one of flexible response.[103] To be able to deter a possible attack by the Soviet Union, the European states believed they needed their own nuclear forces. It was their security more than that of the US that was at stake most, so they wanted a bigger say in the decision-making process on when and how to use nuclear weapons. However, the US would not allow the European states a say on their nuclear weapons and believed that European nuclear arsenals might be "disruptive", as they might drag the US into a nuclear war. The US proposed a (small) multilateral nuclear force instead. This nuclear force would consist of the British nuclear weapons and some US nuclear weapons, under a common command structure. The French nuclear arsenal could also be integrated. However, the US wanted a veto on the use of the weapons in the MLF.

The MLF proposal finally gained ground after two important events. The first was the signing of the Nassau Agreement between the US and the UK at the end of 1962. With this agreement the US promised to sell the UK Polaris missiles. According to different scholars the US was more or less tricked into this agreement that prolonged the existence of a British national nuclear force.[104] To compensate it was agreed that the British national force would be assigned to a NATO multinational force (the Interallied Nuclear Force, or IANF), along with some US nuclear weapons. However, the agreement referred to the IANF differently in two different paragraphs. Confusion existed as to whether the IANF would be a multi*national* force or a multi*lateral* force. The UK preferred a multinational nuclear arsenal, as this would not change the command over its national nuclear forces. The US wanted the IANF to be a multilateral force.[105]

But the most important event was the French response to the Nassau Agreement. This British-American agreement was an insult to France, as the US awarded the UK the nuclear status that it had refused France a few months earlier. De Gaulle announced his "triple non", which caused a shock in NATO. De Gaulle believed that the European Community should become more of a counterweight against US dominance. In his eyes, there was no place for a

[103] A. Locher, *Crisis?,* 40.
[104] Ibid.*,* 41.
[105] H. Haftendorn, *NATO*, 118-119.

country that placed its security relationship with the US over European solidarity.[106] To be fair, president Kennedy did realise that a similar arrangement should be offered to the French, which he did. The Polaris missiles were offered to de Gaulle as well.[107] However, 'France had neither the submarines nor the warheads to render Polaris functional'.[108]

Thus, France refused to participate in the MLF from the beginning, as it did not want to depend on the US security guarantee any longer.[109] However, at the time the MLF was proposed, it did not take a strong stance against the other alliance members developing the MLF. The UK was not very enthusiastic either, as it preferred the IANF over the MLF. The only European government that strongly supported the MLF plan was the one in Bonn. West Germany ran the biggest security risk, due to its geographical position, but had the least influence over security affairs within NATO. Due to its role in WWII, it was not allowed to develop a national nuclear force. The MLF was thus its only hope for a bigger role in the nuclear decision-making process. However, even the Federal Republic was in a difficult position when it came to the MLF. Just eight days before the French veto on the UK's entry into the Common Market, the Federal Republic had signed a treaty of friendship with France. Now, it felt like it had to choose between the Atlantic Alliance or European integration, as they appeared to become mutually exclusive.[110]

German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer decided to continue the MLF process for three reasons: (1) to show that Bonn regarded the Atlantic Alliance and European integration as compatible, (2) to couple European security more firmly to US security, and (3) because co-ownership of nuclear weapons might eventually lead to co-determination. Another reason, less frequently stated, was to prevent that a possible US-Soviet arms control agreement would come at Germany's expense. If the MLF was concluded before the NPT was, it could not be reversed.[111]

From Washington's perspective, 'the MLF became a panacea, a means of accentuating American leadership while eliminating the effects of nuclear inequality and their detrimental effect on Alliance cohesion; strengthening the Atlantic partnership with a collective nuclear solution while promoting the integration of Europe'.[112]

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[106] Ibid., 119-120.
[107] A. Locher, *Crisis?*, 41.
[108] Ibid., 46.
[109] In which it never succeeded completely, due to the small size of its nuclear arsenal.
[110] H. Haftendorn, *NATO,* 120.
[111] Ibid.
[112] Ibid., 121.

From March till October 1963 exploratory talks were held. Then, in October, the official negotiations started between the US, Germany, Italy, Greece and Turkey.[113] In April 1964, continuation of the negotiation process was again up for discussion in Washington, where Johnson had replaced Kennedy. He decided to continue with the MLF negotiations. However, the Europeans would have to take the lead. The West Germans took on the leading role, and offered to pay 30 percent of the costs of the MLF. The FRG being 30 percent owner of 200 megaton in nuclear weapons was still hard to swallow for some other NATO members, but mostly for the Soviet Union. However, this was not the biggest problem in the MLF negotiation process. The main issues were command and control. When or under what circumstances would the nuclear weapons be used? And, how would this be decided? These issues have never been resolved.[114] When the treaty negotiations started, the Soviet Union began to step up its efforts for a NPT. In the eyes of the Soviet Union, an NPT would halt a MLF within NATO. Washington instead argued that the MLF should not be seen as nuclear proliferation, because it did not increase the number of states with a national control over nuclear weapons.[115]

The MLF never came about, due to three major setbacks. At the end of 1964, the UK's newly elected prime minister Wilson had strong reservations about the MLF project. He only wanted to participate in an IANF. Or else, he wanted the UK to have a veto as well, something which Bonn was not prepared to grant. If the UK did not join, several smaller European countries would back out as well.[116] The second setback came from France. In 1963, de Gaulle had "permitted" West Germany to participate in the MLF project, because he did not believe it would ever come about. But now that the treaty negotiations had started, he had second thoughts. In the summer of 1964, de Gaulle started to raise his criticism of the MLF and made West Germany choose between the MLF and European integration. Because of this, there was no longer any pressure for a swift conclusion of a MLF treaty.[117] The third setback came from the US, where now even socalled "good Atlanticists" came to oppose the MLF. This led national security adviser McGeorge Bundy to send around a secret memorandum in which he stated seven reasons to "let the MLF sink out of sight".[118] These seven reasons were: (1) a deeply reluctant UK; (2) the Federal Republic being more and more divided over the issue; (3) an additional strain on the Italian government; (4) at least a temporary setback in efforts to limit the spread of nuclear weapons by international

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[113] The UK, Belgium and the Netherlands joined later, when it was clear that negotiation did not necessarily lead to participation.
[114] Ibid., 122-130.
[115] Ibid., 131.

agreement; (5) the Congress not being convinced that the European states wanted a MLF; (6) even more debate within NATO, that would further justify the Gaullists; and (7) an enduring blow to the Franco-German relationship that the Germans might blame on the US.[119]

The only European state that actually wanted the MLF, the FRG, held on as long as possible. It even linked participation in a NPT to a prior agreement on the MLF, but to no avail. The Johnson Administration also made a final effort to set up the MLF, trying to avoid dealing the MLF the final blow. Therefore, it was not until German Chancellor Erhard's final visit to Washington in September 1966 before the MLF project was finally declared dead.[120]

## National (Security) Interests

The major changes in the world order discussed earlier were perceived differently in the four countries under consideration and affected their national (security) interests. To fully understand the NATO crisis of 1963-1967, it is important to know what these national interests were. They are outlined per country below. It will become clear that the Soviet threat was not the only issue keeping the Alliance together. Although related to the security issue, the allies were also interested in keeping the US defence coupled to the West European defence for its own sake, for political and economic reasons. Furthermore, the German question called for a common policy among the Atlantic partners.

### France

At the end of the Second World War, communism was soon seen as the main threat to the West. In French eyes, however, Germany was perhaps an even greater threat. Though a victor of the Second World War, France had been defeated militarily by Germany several times in recent history.[121] This was humiliating and had also been destructive for France. The French were thus very much concerned about German recovery and wanted to be able to monitor, and even influence, this recovery. The French did not want West-Germany to economically recover quicker than they themselves did, but most of all they did not want a German military

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[116] Ibid., 133-134.
[117] Ibid., 135-136.
[118] Memorandum to Secretary Rusk, Secretary McNamara, Undersecretary Ball from McGeorge Bundy. Subject: 'The Future of the MLF', 25 November 1964, LBJL/NSF, memos to the President, McGeorge Bundy, Box 2 (Washington: Stromseth papers).
[119] H. Haftendorn, *NATO*, 137.
[120] Ibid., 141-145.
[121] First in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1871, and then in both World Wars.

recovery. Although the French fear of Germany was more dictated by history than by reality,[122] Paris did not want German rearmament, and in terms of German reunification, Paris preferred the status quo.

After a while, however, De Gaulle did come to see that the Soviet Union posed a bigger threat than West-Germany. In fact, West-Germany was the barrier between France and the Soviet Union (through East-Germany). The security of France was intertwined with the security of West-Germany. Seen in this light, German rearmament made sense, but was only tolerable if France could monitor the process.

In terms of France's position in world affairs, de Gaulle saw France as the leading country of a stronger Europe, a third force between East and West. He also saw France as a possible facilitator of improving relations between the Soviet Union and Europe, due to the historic ties between France and the Soviet Union.[123] One reason for a stronger Europe was the felt need to counterbalance the power of the "Anglo-Saxons", de Gaulle's term for the US and the UK combined. De Gaulle was of the opinion that European political leadership was first and foremost the responsibility of the Europeans.[124] Unfortunately for de Gaulle, political leadership was strongly related to military capabilities. If France wanted less US interference in European affairs, something needed to be done about Europe's dependence on the US security guarantee. To that end, the French Fourth Republic decided to develop the *force de frappe*, a French national nuclear deterrent.[125] When de Gaulle came to power, he speeded up this nuclear program. With the French nuclear capabilities coming into existence, de Gaulle demanded a bigger, if not equal, say in the planning and use of nuclear weapons within the Alliance.[126] In the end, de Gaulle's policies were all designed to regain France's first-rate power status, even though it was not always clear how his policies would achieve this aim.[127]

Nevertheless, France had no interest in the disappearance of the Alliance altogether. Despite the development of the French *force de frappe,* France still needed the American "nuclear umbrella", even if it was no longer watertight. This nuclear umbrella was also necessary to prevent West Germany from striving for a nuclear program. Although the relationship between France and West Germany had greatly improved, West Germany still

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[122] Germany was divided and West Germany was integrated into NATO to be kept in check.
[123] A. Wenger, 'Crisis', 26.
[124] Ibid., 31.
[125] A. Locher, *Crisis?,* 38.
[126] Ibid, 40.
[127] M. Frankel, 'Riddle of de Gaulle: US Analysts Differ About What He Wants and Why', in *The New York Times,* 16 March 1964.

constituted a possible threat. For all these reasons, France decided not to cancel the Treaty of Washington, but "only" to withdraw from NATO's integrated military command structure.[128]

*West Germany (FRG)*

For the FRG two issues were most important: security from the Soviet threat and reunification with East Germany. Thus far, there had been no progress on German reunification whatsoever. Partially based on this lack of progress, Bonn was not convinced of *détente*. The security guarantee from the US was therefore still of utmost importance to West Germany. Bonn wanted West European defence to remain closely coupled to US defence and preferably based on nuclear deterrence. However, when the US pushed for a strategy of flexible response instead of massive retaliation, West Germany was willing to compromise, because it needed the US security guarantee, in whatever form.[129]

Naturally, considering their frontline position, West Germans wanted more influence on security policies that concerned its territory, including the nuclear policy. However, all efforts in this area met with opposition from de Gaulle. On the one hand, Adenauer and de Gaulle had signed a friendship treaty in 1963 and Bonn did not want to damage the relationship with Paris. But on the other hand, de Gaulle's plans for Europe were not very attractive for Bonn, as they amounted to 'a Europe under French hegemony'.[130] This constituted a serious dilemma for the West Germans.

*United States*

For the US, security was less of an issue than it was for the other countries under consideration. In fact, not joining the Alliance and unilaterally guaranteeing its own security would have been less costly for the US. However, the US was not only interested in military security. It wanted to deny the Soviet Union political influence in Western Europe and the Alliance provided the US with an effective way to do so.[131] Even though the relationship with the Soviet Union was now improving, the US goal was still containment. This goal was not changed by the nuclear stalemate that developed, only the method of containment changed. Denying the Soviet Union any influence in Western Europe was particularly important due to the German question. The US did not want the Soviet Union to control the process of German reunification. Even without the risk of Soviet influence over German reunification, the US

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[128] H. Haftendorn, *'NATO',* 407.
[129] Ibid., 406.
[130] US Secretary of State Dean Rusk, June 1966, in A. Wenger, 'Crisis', 33.
[131] H. Haftendorn, *'NATO',* 406.

wanted to keep West Germany in NATO, to prevent West German political and military unilateralism.

In economic and political terms, the US found "Europe was on the move".[132] Economically, the European Common Market was growing stronger and more important to the US. The US was no longer economically dominant over Europe and needed to adjust its monetary strategies to this fact. To keep booming Western Europe close to the US, the US lowered its tariff barriers with the *Trade Expansion Act* of 1962. Thus, in economic terms, it was in US interests to maintain a close relationship with the Atlantic partners.[133]

Politically too, the European states were becoming stronger. This was an important reason why the US pushed for British membership of the EEC. Politically, the UK was very supportive of US policies and with British entrance into the EEC, the Atlantic orientation of Europe would be solidified.[134]

*United Kingdom*

For the UK's foreign policy, the two World Wars have been formative. History has taught the British that for their security they are ultimately dependent on developments on the European mainland. Therefore, they have a strong interest in good relations among the European states. However, as Margaret Thatcher said: "throughout history all the problems had come across the Channel and all the solutions across the Atlantic".[135] It was the US that came to the rescue of Europe twice. The UK thus depended on the US for its security and therefore had an even stronger interest in maintaining good relations with the US.[136]

The UK wished to be a bridge between the US and the European mainland. However, the more asymmetrical the US-UK relationship became and the more integrated the European states became, the more difficult it was for the UK to play this role. It could not wield enough influence over the US to have much influence in Europe, nor was it trusted enough within Europe to be of special importance to the US. Especially France would not allow the UK a leading role in Europe as long as it considered the UK too close to the US. That the 'special relationship' meant more to the UK than to the US became clear in the MLF crisis. Out of security concerns, the UK wished to maintain a national  nuclear deterrent, in case the US security guarantee would fail. Also, it would enhance the UK's global standing. The Gaullist

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[132] D. DiLeo, 'George Ball and the Europeanists in the State Department, 1961-1963', in D. Brinkley & R. Griffiths (Eds.), *John F. Kennedy and Europe,* (Baton Rouge 1998), 263.
[133] A. Locher, *Crisis?*, 36.
[134] Ibid.
[135] A. Molenaar, *(Dis)Organising,* 127.
[136] Ibid., 141.

challenge provided the Wilson government with an excellent opportunity to reaffirm its status as loyal ally to the US and to challenge France's leading role in Europe.[137] Although unintentionally, de Gaulle did the British a favour.

At the same time, the UK noticed that European integration was taking off. To prevent the French from deciding by themselves what direction European integration would take, the UK wanted to play a bigger role in Europe. This aim was frustrated by de Gaulle, who rejected British entry in the EEC. This, combined with a fear for French-German nuclear cooperation, prompted London to actively support US policies towards Europe and to consider a nuclear sharing program for NATO. Another reason for strong support for the US was that doubting the US security guarantee for Europe might provoke an act of aggression by the Soviet Union, as a test for alliance cohesion.[138]

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[137] A. Locher, *Crisis ?*, 271.
[138] Ibid., 77.

## The Crisis of 2002-2010

**The Iraq Controversy**

The story of the Iraq Crisis with the US and the UK on one side and Germany and France on the other side begins with the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Immediately after these attacks, Europe rallied behind the US, expressing sympathy and solidarity. For the first time in NATO history article V was invoked. European governments supported the very understandable American retalliation against al Qaeda and the Taliban harboring these terrorists. They especially appreciated Bush's 'restraint in resisting …the notion of a Christian-Islamic clash of civilizations'. Furthermore, they welcomed Bush's efforts to build a grand anti-terrorism coalition, which was seen as a clear sign of the US embracing a multilateralist policy. However, the Europeans were allowed only a small role in Afghanistan, a first indication of the unilateralist stance the Bush Administration would take later.[139]

The peak in the Atlantic relationship would not last long. It was already at the beginning of 2002 that this relationship deteriorated. On January 29, President George W. Bush's State of the Union address gave rise to concerns among the Allies. First, because Bush hardly mentioned his European allies when he spoke about the fight against terrorism, but foremost because Bush described Iraq, Iran and North Korea as an "axis of evil". Even though these countries were not connected to 9/11, Bush threatened to attack them as part of the war against terror.[140] The critics believed that it was unwise to describe certain countries as an "axis of evil", because it might strengthen fundamentalists.[141]

Shortly after the State of the Union address, on 2 February, Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz gave a speech at the Munich Security Conference. Here, he repeated Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's statement that from now on 'the mission must determine the coalition, the coalition must not determine the mission'.[142] The unilateral message was clear: Washington would determine the mission and the European partners were allowed to join. However, if they decided not to join, the US would go ahead anyways. The Atlantic Alliance was "expendable".[143]

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[139] E. Pond, 'Dynamics', 32-33.
[140] George W. Bush, State of the Union address, 29 January 2002, retrieved on 11-04-2011 via http://stateoftheunionaddress.org/2002-george-w-bush.
[141] E. Pond, 'Dynamics', 34.
[142] Paul Wolfowitz, Speech at the Munich Security Conference, February 2, 2002, retrieved on 11-04-2011 via http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/wariniraq/paulwolfowitzmunichconference.htm.
[143] E. Pond, 'Dynamics', 34.

In June Bush introduced the new strategy of "preemptive strike"[144] at his West Point graduation address.[145] The idea behind this strategy is that waiting for the enemy to strike first means waiting till it is too late. To prevent another tragedy like 9/11, it might be necessary to strike preemptively. The problem with this strategy is that it is incredibly difficult to determine which (possible) enemy is planning to strike. This was one issue of disagreement during the Iraq controversy. Europeans and Americans alike agreed that international law needed to be adjusted to the changing circumstances, so that it would become possible to respond to imminent threats before they materialized. However, the Europeans opposing the war did not believe that Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein posed an imminent threat. The new strategy also made them wonder how many other countries the US might want to strike preemptively.[146]

Then, in August 2002, Vice President Dick Cheney gave a speech in which he advocated a preemptive strike against Iraq.[147] This led to a split in Europe, at least among European governments. The European public was generally in agreement over its opposition to the invasion of Iraq. Germany and France became the opposition leaders in Europe. In Germany, there would soon be an election and the polls predicted that Chancellor Gerhard Schröder would lose. However, Schröder picked up on the anti-war sentiments among the German public and, after Cheney's speech, made his opposition to a war in Iraq part of his re-election campaign. Schröder even went further than the French government by saying that he would not even support an invasion in Iraq if the UN Security Council gave its permission. This was not appreciated in the White House. Bush ignored Schröder for a year, apparently even refusing to take his calls. Washington felt betrayed by its longtime ally. Schröder did win the elections.[148]

Even after Cheney's speech, it remained unclear to European governments whether there would really be an attack on Iraq. The Europeans were told that nothing was set in stone yet and that there were many competing voices in Washington. This became even more credible when Bush turned to the UN in September to ask for permission to enforce UN

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[144] The principles of this new security strategy were already visible in Bush's State of the Union address of 29 January 2002, where he states: '*We'll be deliberate, yet time is not on our side. I will not wait on events, while dangers gather. I will not stand by, as peril draws closer and closer. The United States of America will not permit the world's most dangerous regimes to threaten us with the world's most destructive weapons.*'

[145] George W. Bush, Speech at West Point graduation ceremony, June 1, 2002, retrieved on 11-04-2011 from http://www.nytimes.com/2002/06/01/international/02PTEX-WEB.html

[146] E. Pond, 'Dynamics', 36.

[147] Ibid., 36.

[148] Ibid., 37-38.

prohibitions on Iraq's weapons of mass destruction (WMD) program. After all, this move could be interpreted to mean that Bush opted for a multilateral solution in Iraq. However, there was soon a US military buildup in the Gulf region. Though the Bush Administration maintained that no decision had been made yet untill only a few days before the invasion, it later became clear that the decision to topple Saddam Hussein had already been made as early as November 2001.[149]

French President Jacques Chirac was also opposed to an invasion of Iraq. However, it appeared that France was just playing hard to get and would eventually join the coalition. Especially after finally agreeing with the US on the wording of UN Security Council Resolution 1441, which called for international inspections in Iraq to resume. It also stated that there would be "serious consequences" if Saddam Hussein was found to be in "material breach" of UN inhibitions of Iraqi WMD programs. Unfortunately, the 'serious consequences' were never specified. The US expected that Chirac would eventually give permission for an attack if Hussein was uncooperative. This did not happen. Instead, Chirac was reinforced in his opposition to a war in Iraq by the schism between Bush and Schröder.[150] He now argued that the serious consequences mentioned in Resolution 1441 would be more intensive inspections, not an invasion. He threatened to veto any UN Security Council resolution that would permit the US to attack Iraq and succesfully mobilized a majority of the Security Council against such a resolution. The US believed they did not actually need a Security Council resolution to justify an attack on Iraq, but the consent of the Security Council was important for British Prime Minister Tony Blair.[151] French foreign minister Dominique de Villepin publicly stated in January 2003, after a Security Council meeting on counter terrorism measures, that an invasion of Iraq by the US would be 'a victory for the law of the strongest'.[152]

This angered the Bush Administration prominents. Even Secretary of State Colin Powell, normally considered moderate compared to his collegues, was so offended that he now strongly supported an invasion of Iraq. Europe was strongly divided on the issue – and not just by Rumsfeld, who spoke of an "old Europe" and a "new Europe". "Old Europe" then consisted of countries that wished to challenge American hegemony, whereas "new Europe" consisted of countries that accepted and supported American leadership. France, Germany and

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[149] Ibid., 39-40.
[150] This period coincided with the fortieth anniversary of the Elysée Treaty between France and Germany, see http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/2683409.stm.
[151] E. Pond, 'Dynamics', 40-42.
[152] Ibid., 42-43.

the other states opposing the war in Iraq, according to Rumsfeld belonged to "old Europe", while countries that supported the war in Iraq, such as the UK, Italy, Spain and most of the Middle and Eastern European states,[153] made up "new Europe". A week later, on 30 January, the *Wall Street Journal* published an opinion essay written by leaders of eight European countries,[154] in which support for an invasion of Iraq was expressed. Shortly thereafter, ten more European countries issued a joint declaration of support for the US approach to Iraq.[155] Thus, a majority of European governments backed the US in its policy towards Iraq.

In the last few weeks before the war in Iraq began, the French kept insisting that the inspections in Iraq should be prolonged. Washington believed that prolonging the inspections would never yield results and believed it was time to act. In a last attempt to get UN permission, on February 5, Powell tried to convince the Security Council of the threat posed by Iraq's WMD's with "evidence" that later turned out to be false. No permission was granted.

Deciding to go ahead without Security Council permission, the US and the UK gave Saddam Hussein a deadline for disarmament on 7 March. However, because of the importance attached to UN permission by Westminster, Blair now faced major opposition at home. On 11 March, Rumsfeld stated that British support was not essential for the US war on Iraq. Then, Blair gave a speech for Westminster, in which he stated that '[f]ailure of Europeans to stand by the United States now…would be the biggest impulse to unilateralism there could ever be'.[156] The majority of Parliament gave its consent for an invasion of Iraq, which began on 19 March 2003.[157]


**National (Security) Interests**

The major changes in the world order in the years before the outbreak of the Iraq crisis had significant consequences for the national interests of the four main players. Of crucial importance was the downfall of the Soviet Union. The members of the Atlantic Alliance were

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[153] Interestingly, most former Warschau Pact-members strongly supported the US. The anti-war East-Germans were an exception.
[154] These countries were Britain, Spain, Italy, Portugal, Denmark, the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary.
[155] J. Springford, *''Old' and 'New' Europeans United: public attitudes towards the Iraq war and US foreign policy',* retrieved on 12-04-2011 via
http://centreforum.academia.edu/JohnSpringford/Papers/187615/Oldand_NewEuropeans_United_Public_Attitudes_Towards_the_Iraq_War_and_US_Foreign_Policy.
E. Pond, 'Dynamics', 43.
[156] Tony Blair, Speech in Parliament, March 18, 2003, retrieved on 12-04-2011 via
http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2003/mar/18/foreignpolicy.iraq1.
[157] E. Pond, 'Dynamics', 47-48.

now more free to act according to their own national interests. What those national interests entailed is outlined per country below.

*France*

The Franco-American relationship has been troublesome since de Gaulle. Although a workable solution was found after the 1966 French withdrawal, the Franco-American relationship remained difficult at times. De Gaulle left a permanent legacy in France, that subsequent French presidents needed to deal with. From time to time France and the US agreed to disagree. In that sense, the difficult US-French relationship can be considered a stable factor. The conditions of the Cold War and the French desire to play an important role in world politics led the French to cooperate with the US in times of hardship.[158]

The end of the Cold War changed the French perception of the relationship with the US. Close bilateral cooperation with the US is no longer seen as a priority in France. Important issues that used to be overshadowed by the conditions of the Cold War have now come to the fore. These issues all have a negative effect on the Franco-American relationship.[159]

The first of these issues separating the French from the US concerns foreign policy theory. The French see multipolarity as the best option for a stable world order, enforced through multilateral instituions such as the UN, NATO and the EU. Unipolarity is considered dangerous, because the hegemon, due to its capabilities to act unilaterally, will be tempted to ignore the interests of other actors and decide to go it alone. This will lead to clashes and thus to instability. The US decision to sideline NATO and to only let British special forces join in the attack on Afghanistan was seen as a forebode to US unilateralism. The decision to invade Iraq, against the wishes of some important Atlantic allies, was considered outright imperialistic.[160] Therefore, US unipolarity must be resisted and multipolarity is the solution. The French believed the world was changing already. New power blocs were rising, such as India, China and Russia, but also regional blocs, such as the EU and South America. To maintain the peace between these power blocs, multilateral organisations will become increasingly important. In this view, French president Chirac differed from the Bush Administration, that saw multipolarity as 'an outmoded remnant of the past'.[161]

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[158] G. Soutou, 'Three rifts, two reconciliations : Franco-American relations during the Fifth Republic, in D. Andrews (Ed.), in *The Atlantic Alliance Under Stress: US-European Relations after Iraq,* Cambridge, 2005, 109.
[159] Ibid., 102.
[160] Ibid., 115.
[161] Ibid., 116.

It should be noted that multipolarity is not only seen as the most likely development in world politics, but also as the most desirable. France continues to desire to play an important role in world politics. It hopes to have an important political, economic and cultural influence through a stronger European Union, that would follow the French lead. In this respect, the Franco-German relationship is very important. The other members of the European Union are unlikely to follow France only. The French need the Germans aboard on their plans for the European future. An important French aim for Europe is a common foreign and defense policy. To be able to resist US policies, Europe needs such a common policy. Although development is slow in the European Union, headway is being made in this respect. However, when it comes to making important steps within the European Union, France also needs British support.[162]

The French, probably more so than other European nations, see themselves and continental Europe as quite distinct from the 'Anglo-Saxons', culturally and in terms of views of the world. Much has been written about the degree to which American and European values diverge, but no conclusion has been reached yet. What is important, is that the French see globalization as serving the spread of Anglo-Saxon influence, and thus as a threat to French culture and influence. This is felt in all layers of French society. Whether on the political left or right, calls for a restrengthening of Franco-American relations are weak. It could very well be that the difficulties between France and the US are of a structural nature.[163]

French public opinion before the American invasion of Iraq illustrated the widespread scepticism towards US policies. An overwhelming majority of the French people did not support an American invasion of Iraq. It was thus also in Chirac's personal interest to oppose the Bush Administration on this issue.[164]


*Germany*

For Germany, the end of the Cold War had the most profound consequences. On 3 October 1990, the German reunification process finally came to an end. And the paralizing threat coming from the Soviet Union had subsided. This left Germany in a much stronger situation to determine its own faith.

The experience of WWII had shaped German political culture, national identity and self-image. The Germans saw Germany as "a civilian power that would solve conflicts

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[162] Ibid., 117-118.
[163] Ibid., 120-123.
[164] General Marshall Fund, *Transatlantic Trends*, retrieved on 23-08-2011 from http://trends.gmfus.org/

through positive engagement rather than the application of military force". This clashed with the US strategy of unilateralism and militarism.[165] Public opinion was thus very much against participation in the invasion of Iraq. For Chancellor Schröder, opposition to the US invasion of Iraq provided an opportunity to stay in power.[166]

The special relationship with the French also contributed to some sense of special responsibility towards Europe.[167] In terms of European integration in the field of security, Berlin had to balance between Europeanist Paris and Atlanticist London[168] Thus far, these two had been largely reconcilable, but this time Berlin had to choose. Schröder had to choose between a leading role in Europe that was reconcilable with its national identity and a secondary role in the coalition of the willing that was not. Seen this way, Schröder made a logical decision.

*United States*

Within only hours after the attacks of 9/11, US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and his Under-Secretary Paul Wolfowitz suggested that the US should seize the opportunity to topple Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq. Soon, intelligence preparations for a possible invasion of Iraq were carried out. From evidence that became known later, it was concluded that President Bush already in the first half of 2002 had decided that military action against Hussein would be necessary.[169] It seems that it was first decided that Hussein's regime needed to be toppled and that the argumentation for this policy came later. This may also explain why different lines of reasoning were put forward at different points in the debate.[170]

To understand the interests of the Bush Administration in a war on Iraq, one needs to look at how the grand strategy of the US under Bush, which was based on a reassertion of American hegemony, intersected with the American interests in the Middle East, including the oil fields and the containment of Iran and Iraq. To explain all aspects of the American policy towards the Middle East under the Bush Administration would take too much space here. Suffice it to say that Bush and consorts expected that a decisive military victory in Iraq would serve as a clear warning to other states in the region and who would therefore be more

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[165] A. Molenaar, *(Dis)Organising,* 181.
[166] E. Pond, 'Dynamics', 37.
[167] A. Molenaar, *(Dis)Organising,* 185.
[168] Ibid., 182.
[169] B. Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, (New York 2004).
[170] A. Molenaar, *Dis(Organising),* 29.

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willing to cooperate with the US.[171] In essence, it was hoped that the invasion of Iraq would send a shock wave through the Middle East, causing dictators to realise that democratic reform was a better option than war.[172]

The Bush administration, heavily influenced by neoconservative thinking, justified the removal of Saddam from power by referring to a conjunction of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction (WMD).[173] Still, American opinion polls indicated that the American people would only support the war if the allies gave their support.[174] Whether this was based on a genuine preference for multilateralism or pragmatic considerations in terms of burden-sharing remains unclear.[175]

When in spring the weapons inspection regime still had not delivered any results, in the eyes of Washington, time pressure became important. Soon temperatures in Iraq would rise so high that it would be impossible to fight a war there. If there was to be a war, it would have to start quick.[176]


*United Kingdom*

The UK has been the US' staunchest ally on invading Iraq. However, even in the UK there was a big debate on whether or not to support the Iraq War. During the Cold War, it had always been in the UK's best interest to side with the US when it came to important security concerns. But in the run-up to the invasion of Iraq, it was no longer clear that supporting the US was in the UK's best interest. Many wondered whether the 'special relationship' with the US had not become an end in itself. Especially with the advantage of hindsight, it is difficult to see how the UK was rewarded for its unquestioning support.[177]

When Tony Blair became Prime Minister in 1997, he stated that regaining a leading role in Europe for the UK would be his top priority. Yet, the relationship with Europe obviously proved secondary to the Atlantic relationship during the Iraq controversy. This was partly due to Blair's personal conviction that Saddam Hussein was an imminent threat to the entire world. To convince the British public, he had the Foreign Office publish a dossier of Hussein's human rights abuses, in December 2002.[178] However, Blair had agreed in

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[171] R. Hinnebusch, *The American Invasion of Iraq: Causes and Consequences,* 2007, retrieved on 18-08-2011 from http://www.sam.gov.tr/perceptions/volume12/Spring07_raymond.pdf.
[172] M. Yaffe, 'The Gulf and a New Middle East Security System', *Middle East Policy,* 11(3), 2004, 119.
[173] M. Danner, 'The Secret Way to War', *The New York Review of Books,* 9 June 2005.
[174] E. Pond, 'Dynamics', 43.
[175] M. Kahler, 'US', 86.
[176] A. Molenaar, *(Dis)Organising,* 33.
[177] Ibid., 40.
[178] Ibid., 44.

November 2001 with Jacques Chirac that it was unnecessary to expand the war on terror to Iraq, as UK intelligence services saw no link between Saddam Hussein and the terrorist attacks.[179] Whether he had changed his mind in the meantime is questionable. It appears more likely that he had gotten himself in a position where he had no choice but to support the invasion of Iraq.

Blair seems to have been convinced that as the US' closest ally, he would be in a position to influence the policies of the Bush administration. He wanted to broaden the agenda of the Americans, by drawing attention to nation-building, both in Afghanistan and, in case of an invasion, in Iraq. Most importantly, Blair wanted the Bush administration to work through multilateral organisations.[180] He worried as much about US unilateralism as the other European states, but he worked from the premise that as a friend he would be able to gain more influence in Washington than as a critic.[181]

Blair knew that he needed a UN Security Council mandate for invading Iraq, if he was to deploy British troops. Without it, he would not be able to obtain domestic support, as the British public was not much in favour of the Iraq War. In September 2002, Blair and Bush made a deal: Bush would first try the multilateral approach through the UN, but if it did not lead to genuine Iraqi disarmament, Blair would support an invasion of Iraq. This was Blair's only moment of influence in Washington.[182] Like France and Germany, Blair was of the opinion that the UN weapons inspectors should be given more time. However, he also knew that the US would not wait for a long period, due to the hot summer under way in Iraq.[183]

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[179] Ibid., 42.
[180] Multilateral cooperation through the UN was central in his 1999 'Doctrine of the International Community.
[181] A. Molenaar, *(Dis)Organising,* 40-42.
[182] Ibid., 43.
[183] Ibid., 44.

Conclusion

**The Development of the Crisis**

A close inspection of the crises of 1963-1967 and 2002-2010, and how they developed, reveals many interesting similarities, as well as a few differences. To begin with the crux of both crises: unilateralism. A perceived American shift to unilateralism, whether profound or not, lies at the heart of both crises.

In this respect, 9/11 can be compared with the Cuban missile crisis. During the Cuban missile crisis, the US had been so close to a Third World War, with the added destructiveness of nuclear weapons, that it became a turning point in the Cold War. To improve the relationship with the Soviet Union became a US priority. Bilateral talks with Moscow were held on how to achieve this. Thus, political strategy turned away from multilateralism. Also, the US unilaterally changed their military strategy. De Gaulle saw in this a dangerous shift to unilateralism on the part of the US, that could jeopardise European security interests. 9/11 is regarded as a turning point in US history in general. It changed US threat perceptions dramatically as well. An enemy without a territory or a population had now become the largest threat to US national security. Unlike threats from other states, the threat could now come from anywhere. Also, the time span for response had shortened. This required a change of military strategy, at least in the eyes of the Bush Administration. The principle of "preemptive strike" was introduced. Unilateralism – "the mission will determine the coalition" - became the new political strategy. These new strategies were viewed as highly problematic in European capitals and even led Schröder and Chirac, without consulting the Allies first, to condemn them in public. Therefore, I regard the speech that introduced, or at least hinted upon, these new strategies, Bush's State of the Union Address of 2002, as the starting point of the crisis of 2002-2010. In the sixties, it was a press conference that signalled the beginning of a crisis, but it did not come from the side of the US. In this regard there is thus a difference between the two crises. Instead, the press conference was held by de Gaulle on 14 January 1963. He, unilaterally, announced the "triple *non*", that constituted a challenge to US dominance in the Atlantic Alliance. These announcements caused a shock, followed by panic, in Washington as well as in European capitals. Therefore, I believe 14 January 1963 to be the starting point of the crises of 1963-1967. An interesting difference between the two crises is that in 1963 it was the unilateralist response to perceived US unilateralism that

became seen as the cause of the crisis, while in 2002 it was US unilateralism itself that was considered the trigger of the crisis.[184]

The 2002 State of the Union Address, and subsequent speeches that outlined the new strategies further, and the French triple *non* caused great consternation within the Atlantic Alliance. However, these announcements actually announced for anticipation of what was feared would be coming. In 1963, the Allies feared the complete withdrawal of France from NATO in 1969. In 2002, the Allies feared US overreaction to the terrorist threat, that might only increase the problem. The announcements allowed them time to contemplate the best response. In the early sixties, this meant that the US could consult the other Allies, and especially the other five members of the EEC, on their views. It also allowed the US to devise new plans to satisfy the security needs of the Alliance, to bind the other Allies closer to the Alliance. In 2002, this allowed Chirac and Schröder to develop common standpoints and consult other governments who opposed the new US strategies as well. An important difference with the situation of the early sixties is that Chirac and Schröder could do little to lessen the impact of the crisis. The Iraq controversy had divided the EU as well.

The unilateral moves de Gaulle and the Bush Administration threatened with were carried out in both cases. Their effects differed, though. The French withdrawal from NATO's integrated military command structure did not have a destabilising effect on the Alliance, as none of the Allies followed the French example. The invasion of Iraq did have a destabilising effect on the Alliance, as well as on the EU, where the process of integration was now hampered by political divisions.

**Alliance Cohesion**

In terms of alliance cohesion, there was continuity, but also discontinuity. The most obvious case of continuity was of course the role the UK played, supporting the US effort to topple the regime of Saddam Hussein. Ever since the Suez crisis, the UK had never defied the US when it came to important security issues.

When looking at the role of France in the run-up to the war in Iraq, one can discern aspects of both continuity and discontinuity. In the past, France has publicly challenged US leadership within the Atlantic alliance and US foreign policy on several occassions. The most obvious example of this is the crisis of the sixties, when French president De Gaulle announced the withdrawal of French troops from NATO's integrated military command

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[184] It might be very interesting to research to what extent this change could be attributed to foreign perceptions of the national leaders of the "problem countries" during both crises.

structure, largely out of dissatisfaction with the role of the US within the alliance and in global affairs. Thus, Paris criticising Washington over foreign policy issues was nothing new. In this sense there was continuity in France objecting to US plans to invade Iraq. In the past, however, France in the end always sided with the US when it came to the most important security matters. This earned France the status of 'bad weather friend' in Washington.[185] In 2003, there was a fundamental break with the past, when 'Paris became the champion of the opposition to the US in a crisis that the administration of Washington considered of supreme importance.'[186] The discontinuity thus lies in France not deciding to support the invasion of Iraq (as some had expected Chiraq to do at the last minute).

Although France was considered a "bad weather friend", the French opposition to the war in Iraq did not come as a very big surprise. The German opposition to US foreign policies, on the other hand, came as a shock. German defiance constituted the most drastic discontinuity in transatlantic relations since the end of WWII.[187] When the Cold War ended, and Germany was reunited, Germany became able to act more independently.[188] In 2003, the German government for the first time decided that it could not support the US on a critical security matter.[189] Not only did the German government not support the Bush administration's policies, it actively tried to obstruct them. At the same time, the German administration moved very cautiously. Firstly, Berlin did not characterise the Iraq war as "illegal", so that it could maintain its indirect support for the US and other allies. Secondly, Germany remained cooperative within NATO, indicating that it would not let the Iraq controversy damage the Atlantic relationship in all respects. In fact, it was the Germans, together with the Dutch, who initiated NATO's command over ISAF in Afghanistan, a move that was very much welcomed by the US.[190] Thus, there was also much continuity in the US-German relationship.

What is interesting is that in both crises, French opposition to US policies was to some extent expected and accepted. What US (and UK) officials tend to worry about more is what side the Germans will choose.[191] In the early sixties, even though West Germany was very much dependent on the US security guarantee, it was not taken for granted that Adenauer

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[185] S. Reyn, 'Is there a Transatlantic "Crisis"?', in a publication by the Netherlands Atlantic Association, *German and American Reorientation Toward NATO,* 2006, 11.

[186] G. Lundestad, 'Towards transatlantic drift?'. in Andrews, D. (Ed.), *The Atlantic Alliance Under Stress: US-European Relations after Iraq,* (Cambridge 2005), 9.

[187] S. Reyn, 'Atlantic', 11.

[188] There were many reasons not to go against US policies during the nineties, one important reason of course being the strong feeling of gratitude that especially West-Germans had towards the US.

[189] G. Lundestad, 'Towards', 9.

[190] M. Rühle, 'Germany's Foreign and Security Policy: Where Next After the "German Way"?, in a publication by the Netherlands Atlantic Association, *German and American Reorientation Toward NATO,* 2006, 48.

[191] A. Locher, *Crisis?,* 272.

would not align himself with de Gaulle. Their personal relationship was very close, and although Adenauer eventually labeled de Gaulle's "triple *non*" a mistake, he did defend de Gaulle's actions domestically.[192] It was not until Adenauer's successor Ludwig Erhard came to power that Bonn clearly decided in favour of the Atlantic relationship. In 2002, Schröder decided in favour of the Franco-German relationship. This angered the Bush administration more than Chirac's decision to oppose US policies. It has to be noted, though, that the German opposition to US policies was very much in line with German self-perception. What can be concluded from the foregoing is that Washington appears to attach more importance to the position of Germany than to the position of France.

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[192] Ibid., 49.

# Diverging Views on Threats and Solutions

## Introduction

The 9/11 terrorist attacks ended the relatively short period in which the Atlantic Alliance did not face a common major threat, compared to which all other issues paled. During the Cold War, this threat had been the Soviet Union, trying to spread communism by force. Since 9/11, the overriding threat was terrorism derived from Islamic extremism.

Due to the four countries' different histories, geographical positions and military capacities, they held varying views of their shared threats. How and why these threat assessments diverged will be discussed first. Then, attention will be paid to how the four countries preferred to deal with the threats. Both in 1966 and in 2003, the US, the UK, France and (West) Germany held diverging views on how best to respond to the threats they faced. These divergences can be partially explained by the different threat assessments. However, different experiences in the past also played a role.

Because a crisis in a relationship is not only determined by rational factors, but also by emotional attachments, this chapter will also discuss the extent to which the crises involved a breakdown in the sense of community. The term 'security community' was introduced by the renowned Czech political scientist Karl Deutsch and his team, in the book *Political Community in the North Atlantic Treaty Area: International Organization in the Light of Historical Experience.*[193] Deutsch found two prerequisites for a successful security community: firstly, 'the capacity of the participating political units or governments to respond to each other's needs, messages, and actions quickly, adequately, and without resort to violence'; and secondly, 'compatibility of major values relevant to political decision-making.[194] It should be noted that these two prerequisites do not necessarily apply to the foundation of the security community, which is based on 'the increasing unattractiveness and improbability of war', but to the durability of the security community.[195]

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[193] K. Deutsch et all, *Political Community in the North Atlantic Treaty Area: International Organization in the Light of Historical Experience,* (Princeton 1957)
[194] Ibid., 66.
[195] A. Tusicisny, 'Security Communities and Their Values: Taking Masses Seriously, in *International Political Science Review,* 28(4), 2007, 428.

The Crisis of 1963-1967

**Different Threat Perceptions**

During the Cold War, the Soviet threat was the single largest threat to the security of the Alliance. The relationship between East and West, if there was any, was tense, to say the least. These East-West tensions culminated in the Cuba crisis, when the world was close to a Third World War. But the Cuba crisis was followed by an "*inter*-bloc thaw" that left room for *intra*-bloc tensions.[196] The little *détente*[197] changed the threat perceptions of the members of the Alliance, thereby changing foreign policies. Below, the threat perceptions of the four countries are discussed in turn.

*US*

The security of the US homeland has always profited from its unique location, being protected by two oceans. This relatively secure position also enhanced the US' relative power and shaped its military strategy, due to the need to project forces. With the coming of new weapons that could threaten the US homeland, mainly ballistic missiles, the US decided to become more and more involved in security issues around the globe, trying to maintain regional power balances, ultimately to enhance its own security. To that end it also set up military bases in different regions of the world. Afraid that the communists, both the Soviet Union and China, would profit from power vacuums in Europe and Asia after WWII, the US entered into protection arrangements with countries in those regions.[198]

In the eyes of the US, the most probable cause of war with the Soviet Union would be a conflict in Europe or Asia. Especially in Europe, because of the Article V obligation under the Washington Treaty, the US ran the risk of being dragged into a war. For this reason it wanted to retain as much control as possible over European security affairs, especially since the Europeans were often considered too 'emotional' to take rational decisions concerning their defence. This was of course due to the fact that both World Wars had been fought on European territory. The chances of a Third World War being fought on US territory were considered slim. Therefore, for the US, the risk of war was a less existential threat than for Europe, at least psychologically.

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[196] A. Locher, *Crisis?*, 86.
[197] A. Locher & C. Nuenlist, 'Reinventing NATO: Canada and the multilateralization of détente, 1962-1966', *International Journal,* 58(2), Spring 2003.
[198] A. Molenaar, 13.

With the start of *détente*, Washington 'held that the immediate threat to Europe has lessened and that more probable than a general war were local hostile actions that could develop out of political crises and would not involve immediate use of nuclear weapons'.[199] This called for a strategy of flexible response, which in turn called for an increase of conventional forces, as it was generally believed that the Soviet Union's conventional forces outnumbered the conventional forces of the Atlantic Alliance. However, within the Alliance, there were different assessments of the number of forces the Soviet Union controlled. The Americans did not count the forces of the satellite states, as they believed that the Soviet Union could not reliably depend on them. Therefore, Washington believed that a balance of conventional forces could be achieved with relatively little effort.[200]

*France*

The geographical position of France had a large influence on its assessment of the Soviet threat. As for all members of the Alliance, there was a risk of nuclear destruction. However, for France there was a larger risk of fighting a conventional war on its own territory, or at least close to home, than there was for the US and the UK. This, combined with a declining trust in the US security guarantee, called for a national nuclear deterrent. Still, because the French *force de frappe* was very small compared to the Soviet nuclear arsenal, France remained dependent on the US security guarantee, although not to the degree Bonn did,

The French also took into consideration the fact that the Soviet Union had a much larger conventional force than the Alliance had. Because this difference could not be overcome in the short- or mid-term, Paris decided it better to rely on the nuclear deterrent.[201] In the eyes of de Gaulle, the US strategy of flexible response in essence meant that the European forces would be reduced to 'foot-soldiers and thus canon-fodder',[202] especially as there was no credible guarantee that the US would immediately come to the rescue of Europe. After all, it had taken quite some time before the US had become involved in both World Wars.

*UK*

For the UK, the risk of a conventional war fought on its territory was substantially smaller than for West-Germany and France, because of the natural protection the Channel offered. Still, it was a possibility. Like France, the UK had a national nuclear deterrent. However, also

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[199] H. Haftendorn, *NATO*, 213.
[200] Ibid., 212.
[201] Ibid.
[202] Ibid., 201.

like France, this nuclear arsenal was very small compared to that of the Soviet Union. Thus, the UK eventually depended on the US security guarantee as well.

The difference between the UK and France was that London had more trust in the US security guarantee, probably due to the special relationship between London and Washington. Like Washington, the UK believed that a limited conventional conflict was now more likely than a general nuclear war. They also believed the strategy of MAD to be outdated and pushed for the adoption of the strategy of flexible response.[203]

*West Germany*

For West Germany, the Soviet threat was most imminent. Due to Germany's history as aggressor in both World Wars and the German question, there was no trust whatsoever between the two countries. Add to that West-Germany's geographical proximity to the Soviet Union and it is clear that West-Germany ran the biggest risk of a Soviet attack.

Ironically, the country that was under the largest threat had the smallest say in strategy planning. West-Germany did not have any nuclear capabilities and was completely dependent on the US security guarantee. Also, it depended on a large foreign troop presence.

Bonn maintained that *détente* should not change the military strategy towards the Soviet Union. It argued that the perception of the Soviet threat should be based on concrete military capabilities, and not on presumptions of Soviet intentions. Importantly, Bonn was not convinced of the good intentions of the Moscow. An important reason for this was the lingering division of Germany. The German government pointed to the large military strength of the Warsaw Pact, which was recently enhanced by forms of nuclear integration. The strategy of the Atlantic Alliance should be changed based on these developments.[204] Nuclear sharing, through the set-up of an MLF, would provide the answer to these developments within the Warsaw Pact. Contrary to what Washington believed, Bonn did not believe that the Atlantic Alliance could easily achieve a balance of conventional forces with the Soviet Union.[205] Therefore, there was no point in investing heavily in the conventional forces. For Bonn, creating an MLF was much more sensible and desired.

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[203] Ibid., 212.
[204] Ibid., *NATO,* 214.
[205] Ibid., 212.

**Different Solutions to Threats**

The four countries' different threat assessments led to different views on how to enhance their security. Militarily, the US and the UK called for building stronger conventional forces, while France and West Germany preferred to stick with nuclear deterrence. They called for improvement of the nuclear strategy before investing in conventional forces. Financially, it was impossible to do both.[206] Politically, some states called for a more active role for NATO in furthering *détente*. Others were more critical, of *détente* in general or of NATO's role in it.

*US*

Washington saw *détente* as a good opportunity for arms control arrangements with the Soviet Union. During the summer of 1963, Washington, London and Moscow negotiatied the Limited Test Ban Treaty that prohibited testing of nuclear weapons under water, in the atmosphere and in outer space.[207]

Although Washington recognized the stabilizing effect of nuclear weapons, the Berlin crisis had shown that not all Soviet acts of aggression could be deterred by a large nuclear force.[208] The US adapted its deterrence strategy to this new reality, by moving away from a strategy of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) towards a strategy of flexible response. The nuclear arsenals that both East and West possessed may have limited the risk of a general nuclear war, local hostilities could only be deterred by large conventional forces. Therefore, the US called for enlargements of the conventional forces of the European states. They also argued that the US nuclear arsenal was large enough a nuclear deterrent to protect the European states as well.[209] In financial terms also, to avoid duplication, it would be unnecessary for the Europeans to build nuclear arsenals. Their focus should be on the build-up of large conventional forces.

*France*

During de Gaulle's days as president of France, the French deterrence strategy focused on an almost immediate recourse to nuclear warfare in the case of an attack on France. Priority was given to strategic nuclear forces, instead of conventional forces. In fact, the latter were considerably reduced in size and strength. To a certain extent, this French strategy was made possible by France's sheltered geographic position (surrounded by other Western European

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[206] Ibid., 218.
[207] A. Locher, *Crisis?*, 107.
[208] H. Haftendorn, *NATO,* 200.
[209] Ibid.

Alliance members) and by inherent NATO protection. Yet, despite these large benefits to France, de Gaulle still criticized the NATO structure that placed too much power in the hands of the US.[210]

In terms of nuclear sharing, de Gaulle maintained that it was better to develop a national nuclear deterrent than to join a system that was not nationally controlled and was equally expensive. De Gaulle had chosen independence over multilateralism.[211] France saw nuclear proliferation as inevitable and therefore rejected a NPT.[212] For Paris, nuclear deterrence would form the backbone of its military strategy. Everything to prevent another war on its territory.

Concerning *détente*, the French warned that it would be illusory to think that the West could favourably influence Soviet policies.[213] Together with West Germany, France formed a coalition against wide-ranging *détente* under NATO auspices. Examples of issues they opposed are a non-aggression agreement and ground observation posts. In the eyes of the French, détente should be linked to the German question, including the Berlin question.[214] Stemming from a renewed focus on Europe and as a way to gain influence over West-Germany, de Gaulle announced during a press conference on 4 February 1965 that German reunification was an exclusively European issue.[215]

At the same time, de Gaulle recognized opportunities for improving the bilateral relationship between France and the Soviet Union. To that end, he planned to visit Moscow at the end of June 1966.

All things considered, de Gaulle realized that the Atlantic Alliance was necessary, but rejected the structure of NATO, for it allowed US dominance. He wanted to reorganise the alliance, but refrained from making proposals because he knew that the other members preferred the status quo.[216] De Gaulle wished to replace NATO's integrated command structure with a series of bilateral treaties shaped in accordance with French interests.[217] In the end, de Gaulle wanted the Europeans to be responsible for their own defense and to be independent of the US.

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[210] A. Locher, *Crisis?*, 40.
[211] Ibid., 203.
[212] Ibid., 227.
[213] Ibid., 88.
[214] Ibid., 113-114.
[215] Ibid., 222.
[216] Ibid., 109.
[217] H. Haftendorn, *NATO,* 226.

*UK*

London supported Washington in its efforts to change the official NATO strategy to one of flexible response. The UK was also a fervent supporter of détente, including a NPT. British Foreign Secretary Lord Home called for a more active role for NATO in improving East-West relations. According to Home, the emphasis should not be on making war unprofitable, but on making peace worthwile.[218]

*West-Germany*

The West Germans were sceptic of *détente*, and opposed wide-ranging multilateral *détente*. They were unconvinced that *détente* would be lasting, exemplified by Foreign Minister Gerhard Schröder's referrence to it as a "pause" in Soviet foreign policy.[219] It was also worried that East-West rapprochement would cause the Americans to neglect German interests in favour of *détente*.[220] For example, Bonn opposed an NPT because it would prohibit West Germany from acquiring access to nuclear weapons, something Bonn found necessary to improve its security position.[221]

For West Germany it was important that new policies towards the Soviet Union were mindful of the German question. *Détente* should not jeopardize German reunification. In fact, in the eyes of Adenauer, *détente* should be linked to the German question. When Washington and London concluded the LTBT with Moscow, Adenauer felt left out because he had not been involved and because there had been no linking the LTBT to the German question. West Germany worried that concluding treaties with the Soviet Union would indirectly lead to recognition of the German Democratic Republic (GDR). Only after the Americans had formally declared that this would not happen was Adenauer willing to sign the LTBT.[222]

Under Erhard, with Foreign Minister Gerhard Schröder, the West German stance towards *détente* became more flexible. Schröder still cautioned for *détente* at the expense of the German question, but was less rigid in the need to link the two issues. He hoped that *détente* in certain areas, such as culture and trade, would eventually lead to political *détente* and a solution of the German question.[223]

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[218] A. Locher, *Crisis?,* 87.
[219] Ibid., 88.
[220] Ibid., 107.
[221] Ibid., 227.
[222] Ibid., 107.
[223] Ibid., 115.

**A community of shared values**

Despite sometimes widely diverging national interests and threat perceptions, NATO played an important role in the formation of an Atlantic community of shared values, instead of a mere military alliance. That this was also a strong wish of the members of the Alliance is evidenced by the text of the preamble to the North Atlantic Treaty, which states that:

> "The Parties to this Treaty…are determined to safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilisation of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law."[224]

By referring to a common heritage and, especially, the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law, the members of the Alliance created a common identity for themselves, that set them apart from the Soviet Union in particular. Practically, Articly IV of the Treaty, in which the members agreed to consult together on matters of security, was very important. As NATO practice subsequently showed, consultation is an important step in forging mutual understanding and working out differences. Although differences within the Alliance continued to exist, commonalities became more significant.[225] Assumptions on the foundations of liberal democracy were increasingly shared between the two sides of the Atlantic.[226] By providing a forum for communication, discussion and cooperation, NATO acted as a facilitator for the creation of a Western identity.[227]

The combined experiences of the Second World War and the Cold War played an important role in the development of the Atlantic community, particularly on an emotional level. On both sides of the Atlantic, the perceptions of the other side were very positive during the sixties. On the European side there was also a large amount of gratitude towards the Americans and Canadians, who had come to their rescue during WWII. In terms of shared values, the 1950s and 1960s are sometimes referred to as the 'Golden Age'. Before détente gained momentum, the sharp contrast between the values of the East and the West was enough to remind the members of the Alliance of their shared values.[228]

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[224] Preamble to the North Atlantic Treaty, retrieved on 17-08-2011 from
http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_17120.htm.
[225] J. Suri, 'Normative', 20.
[226] Notwithstanding the fact that not all members of the Alliance could be considered liberal democracies.
[227] J. Suri, 'Normative', 22.
[228] W. Wallace, 'A rational partnership in a post-atlantic world', in M. Zaborowski (Ed.), *Friends again? EU-US relations after the crisis,* Institute for Security Studies, 2006, 47.

Besides furthering the sense of an Atlantic community, the security that NATO provided also allowed for European integration. This eventually led to an emergence of a West European identity. This West European identity was very much compatible with the Atlantic identity, but it did allow for a more assertive West European stance towards the US. This became noticeable at the end of the fifties/beginning of the sixties, when the European states began to call for more influence in NATO decision-making.[229]

As stated in the introduction, Nau's research on transatlantic crises did not consider a loss of sense of community to play a large role during the crisis of the early sixties. According to Nau, there were foreign policy differences and civil society issues, but there was no 'political distrust of the respective domestic systems'.[230]

**A new role for NATO?**

The countries in favour of wide-ranging multilateral *détente*,[231] especially the smaller NATO members, were looking for a new role for NATO, to revive the Alliance. When the little *détente* started in 1962, they worried that NATO's *raison d'etre* would disappear. To prevent the break-up of NATO, they searched for new tasks, such as the coordination of multilateral *détente*. Not all members of the Alliance, West Germany and France specifically, were in favour of multilateral *détente* becoming a NATO matter. For that reason, it took the French withdrawal from the military structures of NATO for multilateral *détente* to become official NATO policy, with the adoption of the Harmel Report.[232]

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[229] Ibid., 23.
[230] H. Nau, 'Iraq', 91.
[231] Multilateral *détente* can be seen as a synonym for *détente* through NATO.
[232] A. Locher, *Crisis?*, 113-117.

The Crisis of 2002-2010

**Different Threat Perceptions**

There was, in essence, no divergence on the gravity of the threat stemming from terrorism. One only needs to look at the commonalities between NATO's Strategic Concept, the EU's Security Strategy and the US' Security Strategy to see that their threat assessments are generally convergent. All three list terror, failed states and WMDs as the three top threats to their security.[233]

Furthermore, there was no doubt in the mind of Americans and Europeans alike that President Saddam Hussein was a dictator, oppressing the Iraqi people. And, as history had shown, Iraq under Saddam Hussein could be a substantial threat to its neighbors. Furthermore, all Western intelligence services estimated that Iraq still had some chemical and possible biological weapons left after the inspection regime of the 1990s. Moreover, the possibility that Hussein had reinitiated his nuclear program could not be excluded.[234] Still, the threat emanating from Saddam Hussein in the war against terrorism was perceived differently by those in favor of the war in Iraq and those against. Consequently, opinions differed on whether a war on Iraw constituted a 'war of necessity' or a 'war of choice'.[235]

*US and UK*

For the US, 9/11 had fundamentally changed the threat perception of terrorism *and* of WMDs. It was the first (and thus far only) attack on this scale on civilians on US soil, which created "an acute sense of vulnerability".[236] If al-Qaeda terrorists could do so much damage by hijacking planes with a creditcard and plastic knifes, so to speak, it was unthinkable what damage they could do if they got their hands on WMDs. In that light, the "one percent doctrine" was endorsed by Vice President Dick Cheney. 'If there's a one percent chance that Pakistani scientists are helping al-Qaeda build or develop a nuclear weapon, we have to treat it as a certainty in terms of our response. It's not about our analysis ... It's about our response.'[237] Although many objections have since been raised against the "one percent

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[233] A. Moens, 'Transitioning NATO Out of the Bipolar Transatlantic Trap Into Global Security Operations', in a publication by the Netherlands Atlantic Association, 2006, *German and American Reorientation Toward NATO,* 27.

[234] A. Molenaar, *(Dis)Organising,* 30.

[235] Ibid., 18.

[236] Ibid., 35.

[237] R. Suskind, *The One Percent Doctrine: Deep Inside America's Pursuit of Its Enemies Since 9/11,* (New York 2006).

doctrine", it does make sense in a way. Especially in the run-up to the invasion of Iraq, there were many who pointed to the discoveries of the UN inspectors after the First Gulf War. They found that Hussein had been on the brink of owning a usable nuclear weapon, even though intelligence estimates at the time said otherwise. The risk of making another such mistake was too high after 9/11.[238] Moreover, the US military had found evidence in Afghanistan that al-Qaeda had been experimenting with chemical, and possible radiological, WMDs there.[239]

What did not help Hussein evade a US invasion, was his long history of supporting Palestinian terrorist groups, both financially and politically. Although experts doubted that the secular Hussein would allign himself with Islamic extremists, the possibility that he would do so out of anti-Americanism could not be excluded. Hussein joining Islamic extremists, when possibly owning nuclear weapons, could have desastreus consequences. The unlikelihood of this scenario becoming reality, because it would not be in Hussein's interests, was easily dismissed by pointing out that Hussein could not be considered a rational actor. For the same reason, the hardliners in the Bush administration argued that if Hussein developed nuclear weapons, deterrence might not work on him.[240]

Thus, the White House saw Saddam Hussein as a big security threat to the US that needed to be eliminated, before it was too late. Whether Saddam would ever attack the US or support terrorist groups that would, will never become known. What can be said is that the Bush administration miscalculated the threat emanating from Iraq once Hussein was gone. US leaders had anticipated that its military forces would be welcomed as liberators. This did not happen. Although the US military won relatively quickly and decisively, Iraq after the invasion was very unstable. The underground resistance to US forces lasted much longer than expected and the different ethnic groups in Iraq turned against each other. Some experts had already warned for this during the Senate hearings of August 2002, but the warnings were brushed aside. The civil war that followed the invasion in Iraq has led to thousands of civilian casualties, diminishing support for the US war on terror among the Iraqi people. '[T]he chaos in some parts of Iraq [was] an open invitation to al-Qaeda.'[241]

Besides the chaos in Iraq after the US invasion, there may have been other negative side-effects for US security. The Bush administration seemed to believe that a quick victory against Hussein could be won, that would show the overwhelming military power of the US. The downfall of Saddam Hussein's regime would be a warning to other dictators in the

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[238] A. Molenaar, 30.
[239] Ibid., 36.
[240] Ibid., 30-31.
[241] Ibid., 34-35.

neighbourhood, who would then be inclined to reform their policies out of fear for US intervention.[242] It did not work out that way. With the US tied down in Iraq and Afghanistan, the other "axis of evil" countries may have seized the opportunity to speed up their nuclear weapons programs. The US invasion of Iraq may have convinced them that the need for a nuclear deterrent against the US had become more urgent.[243] And the Iraq controversy made clear that the international community, including the Atlantic alliance, did not agree on how to handle defection by rogue states.

*France and West Germany*

American critics often asserted that the European opposition to the war in Iraq appeared to be more concerned about the threat coming from Washington than about the "dictator in Baghdad".[244] Whether that is true is questionable, but it is a fact that the French and German governments were highly concerned about the political developments in the US. The possible negative consequences of the Bush doctrine, such as lending credibility to terrorist claims of US imperialism, were taken very seriously in Paris and Berlin. And it can also be observed that these European states were less concerned with the threat coming from Baghdad, at least not to the extent the US was.

Chirac and Schröder did not believe that an attack on Iraq to topple President Saddam Hussein was necessary or wise in promoting Western security. They thought that Hussein was effectively contained through the United Nations system of embargo's and no-fly zones. Based on their own intelligence reports, they did not think that Hussein possessed any nuclear weapons, although they did believe that he was trying to acquire them. However, France and Germany believed that Hussein would not succeed in acquiring these weapons. Nor did they think that he would use the chemical weapons believed to be still in his possession, unless perhaps in the case of an invasion, when there was nothing left to lose.[245]

The French and Germans feared other unintended consequences of invading Iraq as well. The Americans appeared to expect that after Hussein was removed from power, Iraq would become a free democracy and democracy could even spread through the region. "Old Europeans" believed that the opposite scenario would be more likely. The Bush Administration was considered naïve. An invasion of Iraq might provide the Islamic fundamentalists with another justification for terrorist attacks –in addition to the Israel-

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[242] Ibid., 38.
[243] Ibid., 35.
[244] Ibid., 19.
[245] E. Pond, 'Dynamics', 34-35.

Palestine conflict. Focusing on a solution for the Israel-Palestine conflict would do more for the war on terror, because it would likely reduce anti-Western sentiments in the Arab world.[246]

An occupied Iraq could thus become a breeding ground for terrorism. Most Europeans did not see an invasion of Iraq as part of the war on terror, but by invading the country Iraq could be drawn into the war on terror. Paris and Berlin believed that an invasion of Iraq and the subsequent nation-building efforts would only draw resources away from the war on terror.[247] The four countries thus had different views on what constituted the war on terror.

Interestingly, the European countries that have had to deal with terrorism most in the past, namely the UK, Spain and Italy,[248] were most willing to support the US invading Iraq, even though they expected repercussions from Islamic terrorist groups. These repercussions came, with attacks in Madrid and London.[249]

This draws attention to another important aspect of European threat assessments. As President Bush himself stated many times, American power invites hostility. This led to a new security dilemma for US allies. Through (politically) siding with the US they could benefit from the export of American military security. However, through importing US security, the Allies might also import the threats generated by US strength. Furthermore, these threats are likely to grow when Europe becomes militarily stronger itself. Then its own military power might reach the treshold where it invites hostility.[250]

It is also important to remember that, while US power invites hostility from Islamic fundamentalists, Europe shares borders with the Muslim world. Also, European states generally have relatively large Muslim immigrant populations, that are often less well integrated into European society than Muslim immigrants in the US. European governments therefore need to act extremely carefully to prevent radicalization of the Muslim populations in their own countries, which would possibly constitute an even larger threat than terrorism from abroad.[251]

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[246] A. Molenaar, *(Dis)Organising,* 31.
[247] E. Pond, 'Dynamics, 34-35.
[248] On the other hand, France had dealt most with Islamic extremism.
[249] A. Molenaar, *(Dis)Organising,* 19.
[250] Ibid., *(Dis)Organising,* 18-19.
[251] D. Zimmerman, 'Counter-Terrorism in the European Union and in Europe', in a publication by the Netherlands Atlantic Association, *German and American Reorientation Toward NATO,* 2006, 73.

**Different Solutions to Threats**

Even though the US and Europe both rank terrorism amongst the three largest threats to their security, that does not mean that they are in accordance over the ´acceptability´ of this threat.

> The United States is in some senses ill suited to sustained international leadership. Blessed by nature and history with two maritime frontiers, American foreign policy tends to lack the necessary discipline to sacrifice immediate interests to longer-term considerations.[252]

Terrorism did not play as large a role in American recent history, as it did in the history of many European states. Past experiences may have led Europeans to accept that terrorism can never be completely annihilated. It has also taught Europeans that militarism is not the answer to terrorism. 'For Europe, the target remains the softer underbelly of terrorism: poverty, human insecurity, drugs, lack of effective development aid, and failed states. For America, the fights is against … the new ideology of "Islamo-facism", and their "enablers", which are mainly terror networks but also include states.' This means that the European fight is bottom-up, while the American fight is top-down. The Europeans use practical aid and international diplomacy, whereas the Americans use military power and ideology.[253]

These policy preferences are probably at least partially based on capabilities. Since the end of the Cold War, the US is the only military superpower with a global reach. It has military bases all over the world. It also acts as protecter for a number of countries in different regions in the world. Most of these countries are considered secondary regional powers through which the US can play a role in maintaining regional balances of power, "thereby perpetuating its own global predominance".[254] The US does not have a military rival, but lacks the European experience as a civilian power. The EU is militarily much weaker than the US, but is rich in soft power. The term soft power is here used to refer to culture, ideas, and other non-military policies.[255] Thus, even if the four countries had agreed that the regime of Saddam Hussein posed a terrorist threat, their responses would still have differed.

The weapons inspections in Iraq are a case in point. Even though Washington pushed for enhanced weapons inspections as well, the Bush Administration never believed these inspections would deliver the desired results. Vice-President Cheney famously warned that

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[252] D. Andrews, 'United', 58.
[253] A. Moens, 'Transitioning', 27.
[254] A. Molenaar, *(Dis)Organising*, 14.
[255] J. Nye, *Europe's Soft Power,* 3 May 2004, retrieved on 24-08-2011 from
http://www.theglobalist.com/StoryId.aspx?StoryId=3886

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"the absence of evidence is not the evidence of absence".[256] Whether the pre-positioning of US troops was meant to pressure the UN weapons inspection regime, or was purely related to military planning is unknown. It did eventually lead Saddam to allow for enhanced weapons inspections. But by then, the Bush Administration had already decided to go ahead with the invasion.[257] Too little, too late.

**Community of Shared Values?**

According to Nau, the Iraq crisis demonstrated a loss of sense of community in the Atlantic Alliance. Besides significant foreign policy differences and a large number of civil society issues, there was also "political distrust of respective domestic systems". This was reflected by an increasingly strong sense of anti-Americanism in much of Europe.[258] Never before was anti-Americanism so widespread in Europe. However, Nau warns that it is very common for there to be a loss of sense of community when the party differences between the US Administration and many European governments are as significant as they were when the Iraq crisis erupted. It is important to keep in mind that Bush's conservative Republican Administration clashed most with the social democratic governments in Europe. A change of government could therefore have a substantial mitigating effect on the Iraq crisis.[259]

Already before the Iraq crisis started, there was a growing perception of societal and cultural differences, which was exacerbated by the Iraq crisis itself. This perception of differences was ethically underpinned, with both sides of the Atlantic claiming moral superiority.[260] Throughout the Cold War, hardly any political gain could be derived from opposing US policies, except maybe in France. Now, European electorates were susceptible to anti-American rhetoric.[261] It is this fact that anti-Americanism in Europe moved "from the political fringe to the political centre" that is a new element in the relationship between the US and Europe.[262] European perceptions of the US seem to have changed more than the other way around. Was the US considered an "empire by invitation"[263], it now came to be regarded as an intrusive imperial power.[264]

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[256] A. Molenaar, *(Dis)Organising,* 33.
[257] Ibid.
[258] H. Nau, 'Iraq', 92.
[259] Ibid., 89-110.
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[261] F. Romero, 'What do we share?', in M. Zaborowski (Ed.), *Friends Again?EU-US relations after the crisis,* Institute for Security Studies, 2006, 35.
[262] D. Frum, 'A new Europe, a new anti-Americanism', in M. Zaborowski (Ed.), *Friends Again?EU-US relations after the crisis,* Institute for Security Studies, 2006, 40.
[263] G. Lundestad, 'Towards', 19.
[264] F. Romero, 'What', 34.

One explanation offered for why the perceptions the US and Europe hold of each other are changing is generational change. The political leaders of the early sixties had experienced WWII during their formative years. The Iraq crisis played out between people who had never experienced a war firsthand and for more than a decade now lived without the Soviet threat.[265]

Even though there are differences between the US and Europe, there is disagreement over the importance of these differences. For some, the differences, such as in views on the role of the state,[266] are central to national identity. Others see them merely as 'lifestyle choices.[267] More persuasively, one should not forget that there are still many similarities in values and identities between the US and Europe. Similarities that go to the core of the Western identity. Albeit practising different forms of liberal democracies, the members of the Atlantic Alliance are all liberal democracies nonetheless. They all value freedom and human rights highly, and work to promote these values.[268] It is important to remember that, despite their differences, Europe and the US share more values with each other than with any other region in the world.[269] The new challenges and threats that globalization and the rise of new powers bring, can be better dealt with through a common strategy.[270] When the Allies come to realise again that cooperation serves them better than conflict, finding a solution to existing disagreements becomes more urgent, and thereby hopefully more likely.

**A new role for NATO?**

In the past decades, NATO has acted as a keeper of peace and stability on Allied territory. Defence was its main task. This was later expanded to include security, which is broader than territorial integrity. Still, for a long time, security was mostly related to ptotecting borders or becoming involved in conflicts close to home, such as in Bosnia and Kosovo during the nineties. The attacks of 9/11 demonstrated that national security can be threatened by developments far away from home. This has meant that NATO operations have become out-of-area operations. For the US, this is not new. For most European states, it requires quite some adaptation. Adapting national militaries to new tasks takes time.

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[265] Transcript of Defense Secretary Gates' Speech on the Future on NATO, retrieved on 24-08-2011 from http://blogs.wsj.com/washwire/2011/06/10/transcript-of-defense-secretary-gatess-speech-on-natos-future/.
[266] T. Risse, 'Conclusion', 276, though it should be noted that in this respect there is much heterogeneity among the European states.
[267] R. Asmus, 'A dissenting voice on the values and interes gap', in M. Zaborowski (Ed.), *Friends Again?EU-US relations after the crisis,* Institute for Security Studies, 2006, 57.
[268] W. Wallace, 'Rational', 49-50.
[269] R. Asmus, 'Dissenting', 59.
[270] Ibid.

# Conclusion

During the Cold War, there was always "something worse" than American hegemony, as American historian John Lewis Gaddis rightly observed.[271] Notwithstanding some opposition to US dominance in NATO, particularly in France, there was always the Soviet threat. However, when the US invaded Iraq in 2003, the widespread opinion across Europe, and elsewhere in the world as well, became that 'there could be nothing worse than American hegemony if it was used in this way'.[272] US power and its manner of handling foreign terrorist threats became seen by many as more threatening than terrorism itself, or at least as perpetuating terrorism by fighting symptoms and not causes of terrorism.

In the early sixties, the Sovet threat assessments of the four countries varied considerably. For the continental European states, and for West Germany particularly, the Soviet Union provided a more existential threat than it did for the UK or the US. If it came to a conventional war between the West and the East, continental Europe was likely to be the battlefield. Despite the security risks the US imported by acting as the protector or Europe, the US was heavily commited to European security. This reflected the importance of Europe for the US. European support provided Washington with legitimacy for its foreign policies. And losing Europe to the Soviet Union would have had detrimental effects on the US position in the world. It would have strengthened the Soviet Union and left the US more isolated. The Atlantic Alliance was thus also in the best interest of the US.

After 9/11, the four countries agreed that terror, failed states and WMDs constituted the three main threats to their security. But again, threat perceptions differed. The US was the main target of the terrorists, making terrorism a more imminent threat to the US. However, whether the threat of Islamic terrorism is more existential for the US or for Europe can be debated. Europe contains larger Muslim communities, who are generally less well integrated than into European societies than their counterparts in the US. European political leaders must be careful not to act in a way that might radicalize their domestic Muslim populations. Also, the EU shares long borders with the Muslim world and does not have the natural protection the US receives from the oceans to its East and West. Furthermore, support for the US invasion of Iraq would have increased the terrorist threat to Europe. With the Soviet threat out of the way and the threat of terrorism largely aimed at the US, it was unclear how support for

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[271] Transcript of an interview with John Lewis Gaddis, retrieved on 24-08-2011 from http://www.cfr.org/us-strategy-and-politics/surprise-security-american-experience/p7040.

[272] in S. Reyn, 'Is there a Transatlantic "Crisis"?', in a publication by the Netherlands Atlantic Association, *German and American Reorientation Toward NATO,* 2006, 11.

the US war against terror would be in the best interest of the European states. It can be concluded that during both crises there were diverging threat perceptions of terrorism in general.

The threat assessments that played an important role in the Iraq crisis were not limited to the perceived threat of Islamic terrorism in general. The most divisive issue was whether the regime of Saddam Hussein formed a part of the threat of terrorism. In the eyes of the Bush Administration, an invasion of Iraq would be part of the war on terror. Bush and his aides also maintained that the regime in Baghdad developing WMDs constituted an imminent threat. France and Germany, and many others, saw matters differently. They did not believe there was a link between Saddam Hussein and Islamic terrorism. Neither did they expect Iraq to become a nuclear state in the near future. Therefore, they did not see the imminence in the threat from an Iraq under Saddam Hussein.

These differences in threat perceptions, along with past experiences, caused differences over preferred strategies to deal with the threat. In the early sixties, the US changed its deterrence strategy from MAD to flexible response. This move was not welcomed in Europe, where it was believed that the emphasis should remain on nuclear capabilities. Not all European states were equally against the strategy of flexible response, though. Not only did the Allies differ over military strategy, there was disagreement over the political strategy towards the Soviet Union as well. The US and the UK wanted détente, not necessarily linked to the German question. France and West Germany insisted that a policy of détente shóuld be linked to the German question.

During the Iraq crisis opinions again differed on both military strategy, or rather the lack thereof, as well as on political strategy. The US favored the use of hard power and proclaimed a *war* on terror, while the Europeans spoke of a *fight* against terror. The difference is in the means by which the states respond to terrorism. The two sides to the conflict did not share the same view on "the utility of diplomacy versus military force, and short-run versus long-run remedies".[273] Specifically, the Americans opted for a military approach, thus fighting terrorists directly. The Europeans preffered to deal with terrorist through the judicial system. Their fight against terrorism was aimed at dealing with the causes for terrorism, rather than fighting the symptoms. Additionally, the Bush Administration chose the unilateralist path, while the Europeans hoped for a multilateral response. The lack of multilateralism from the side of the US caused resentment in Europe, where views of US foreign policy had

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[273] A. Wenger, 'Crisis', 84.

already become less favorable. In their responses to Saddam Hussein's alleged quest for WMDs, the US and Europe differed as well. The Bush Administration, placing the issue in the wider war against terror, chose to remove Saddam Hussein from power with military means. The European states would rather have used diplomatic channels to contain the threat from Baghdad.

Interestingly, in both crises it can be observed that those who faced the largest threat became the hardliners. In the sixties, de Gaulle and Adenauer refused to cooperate on a policy of *détente*, unless it was linked to the German question. They were also the ones who wanted to keep the strategy of MAD intact. In the first years of the new millenium, the US faced the largest threat and took the hardline position, by advocating a *war* on terror, rather than a *fight* against terror.

The complexity of the threat had shifted from the US to Europe. In the sixties, caving in to European foreign policy preferences, such as on nuclear sharing, might have increased the Soviet threat for the US. The recent crisis showed the reverse: European support for American foreign policies increased the threat for those European states who did.

What Nau has rightly observed is that the main difference between the Iraq crisis and the crisis of the early sixties can be found in the loss of sense of community that was visible in 2002-2003[274]. The combined experiences of WWII and almost two decades of Cold War forged a strong sense of community in the Atlantic Alliance. Not that there were no differences and disagreements, but there was a strong political will to strive for consensus.[275] The electorates viewed the transatlantic relationship favorably as well, except maybe in France. Therefore, there was no political gain in questioning the Alliance, or opposing US leadership. The situation had changed significantly in 2002, when there was a growing perception of differences between the US and Europe. Increasing US unilateralism, already noticeable before the outbreak of the Iraq crisis, had a detrimental effect on European perceptions of the US. Then, during the Iraq crisis, the populations of most European countries opposed the American invasion of Iraq. This time, politicians were able to gain votes by stating their opposition to US foreign policies, especially unilateralism. The sense of community within the Atlantic Alliance had weakened.

It should be noted that this weakening of the sense of community is not necessarily irreversible. The heads of state of the four countries under consideration played a very

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[274] H. Nau, 'Iraq and Previous Transatlantic Crises, Divided by Threat, Not Institutions or Values', in J. Anderson, G. Ikenberry & T. Risse (Eds.), *The End of the West? Crisis and Change in the Atlantic Order*, (Cornell 2008), 91-92.
[275] R. Asmus, 'Dissenting', 59.

significant part in the crisis. European publics were mostly opposed to the Bush Administration's preferrence for unilateralism. Europe in general prefers to see Democrats rather than Republicans in the White House. A change of government might thus go a long way in restoring the Atlantic relationship, as will be discussed in the next chapter. In Europe, the exceptionally close relationship between Chirac and Schröder permitted their opposition to Washington. Both were replaced with more Atlanticist politicians in the following elections. In November 2005, Angela Merkel replaced Schröder. In May 2007, Chirac was replaced by Nicolas Sarkozy.[276] Sarkozy was considered strongly pro-American and pledged to renew French relations with the US and the rest of Europe.[277] Whether he succeeded in this will be discussed in the next chapter.

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[276] Interestingly, Sarkozy found most support among people older than sixty. Young voters supported the socialist candidate Royal.
[277] E. Sciolino, 'Sarkozy, elected in France, vows break with past', in *The New York Times,* 7 May 2007.

# Power Games

## Introduction

The previous chapters have touched upon power games between the four countries under consideration. However, because power games played such an important role during both crises, the balance of power will be discussed separately in this chapter. The first part of the chapter deals with the belance of power within the Alliance, and specifically with the balance of power between the four countries under consideration.

The balance of power between the Allies is to some extent related to how much they contribute to the Alliance, and to NATO in particular. The issue of burden sharing has been quite a constant factor in relations between the US and Europe. The US has consistently shouldered a much larger share of the burden within the Alliance, financially as well as in the military field. This makes the US the *primus inter pares* in NATO.

Next, this chapter will elaborate on the balance of power between the Alliance and the rest of the world. Because it would take several books to discuss all aspects of these relations, the discussion here will be limited to nuclear power relations in the sixties and the spread of WMDs after 9/11. In the early sixties, there were only few nuclear powers – the US, the Soviet Union, the UK, France and China, with China not acquiring nuclear weapons until 1964. The debate back then was focused on whether or not West Germany would be allowed a nuclear status. Nowadays, there are more states with nuclear capabilities. At the same time, non-state actors have grown more powerful. The attacks of 9/11, when about 20 terrorists were able to do so much damage with a bag of money[278] and two commercial airlines, sparked a fear of what terrorists could do if they get their hands on nuclear weapons, or WMDs in general.

In the early sixties, the renewed balance of power between the US and the European states facilitated a solution for the nuclear problem, and then for the crisis in general. What the solution entailed exactly will be discussed in the last part of this chapter. Although not all issues concerning the Iraq crisis have been solved, important steps have been taken towards a solution.

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[278] The terrorist attacks of 9/11 required extensive planning, but also quite a lot of money. Besides paying for the living expenses of the terrorists involved in the attack during their preparation in the US, much money was spent on the flight lessons that four of them took in order to be able to fly the planes into their targets.

The Crisis of 1963-1967

## Balance of Power

Closer French-German cooperation, formalized in the Elysée Treaty, was to a certain extent a reaction to closer Anglo-American cooperation. It is therefore possible to discern some balancing of power within the Atlantic Alliance in the early sixties. The Berlin- and Cuba crises demonstrated a divergence of interests and of approaches towards the Soviet Union. Paris and Bonn were much less willing to negotiate with Kruschchev than Washington and London.[279] For de Gaulle, French-German rapprochement was a way of counterbalancing against the Anglo-Saxons, who were becoming ever more dominant in international relations. It was also a way to make clear that France was still an important player in Europe. De Gaulle hoped that French-German rapproachement would eventually lead to closer European cooperation and possibly integration.[280] For Adenauer, the Elysée Treaty provided a means to pressure the US to allow West-Germany more influence in nuclear matters. At the same time, it provided a reassurance to Bonn that there would be no French-Soviet alliance.[281] It is also likely that Adenauer hoped to favorably change de Gaulle's perception of NATO.[282]

De Gaulle's triple *non* barely a week before signing the Elysée Treaty shed a different light on closer French-German cooperation. In Washington, it was interpreted as an attempt by the French president to reduce American influence in Europe, which it was. This despite the European, even French, dependence on the US security guarantee.[283] For Bonn, de Gaulle's announcement created a difficult position, where it had to choose between the French-German relationship and the transatlantic relationship, even though the two were not necessarily mutually exclusive.

For the Johnson Administration, the Elysée Treaty was worrisome for three possible consequences. The first was that France and West-Germany might extent their cooperation to nuclear issues. Second, given de Gaulle's reorientation towards Moscow, there was a fear in Washington that Paris and/or Bonn might pursue a bilateral policy of détente with the Soviet Union. Lastly, if de Gaulle could convince Adeauer that the current organizational structure of

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[279] A. Locher, *Crisis?*, 52.
[280] Ibid., 55.
[281] Ibid., 53.
[282] Ibid., 57.
[283] Ibid.

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NATO left too little room for their views, there was a possibility, however small, that NATO would break apart.[284]

It was after de Gaulle and Adenauer signed the Elysée Treaty and after de Gaulle's triple *non* that the Kennedy administration revived the MLF-project, mostly out of fear for possible French-German nuclear cooperation. With the MLF, Washington hoped 'to reclaim the transatlantic character of Western nuclear planning'.[285] The MLF was particularly tailored to the needs of the West Germans. The Kennedy administration believed it necessary to use "carrots and sticks" to prevent West German disengagement from the Atlantic Alliance, even though Adenauer kept insisting that the Elysée Treaty was in no way related to de Gaulle's triple *non*. Adenauer claimed to be surprised by the US response to it, especially since Washington had been an avid supporter of French-German rapprochement prior to the events of January 1963. The sticks consisted of a threat of US disengagement from West German security and the pressure for a preamble to the Elysée Treaty, that placed the treaty in an Atlantic framework. The MLF, of course, was the carrot. The MLF became a symbol of US-French power politics.[286]

For months, de Gaulle had made public statements on what he believed was wrong with the Atlantic Alliance and with NATO, but never did he make any concrete proposals for changes. In January 196, Johnson came to believe that there was no point in trying to figure out how to please de Gaulle and instead decided to focus on how to strengthen the relationship with the other members of the Alliance. The Americans decided to cooperate with the French wherever possible and to follow an "empty seat-policy" in areas in which de Gaulle no longer wished to cooperate. It was hoped that this way the French would not be able to blame the Americans for pushing them away, which might gain them sympathy in other European states. By continuing close cooperation in fields of "shared aims", the Americans hoped to tie the French closer to the Alliance again.[287]

The fact that the French withdrawal had been coming for a long time, meant that the Allies had had some time to prepare for it. Already in May 1965, the US and the UK started to consult the other members of the EEC on their intentions in NATO.[288] So when de Gaulle finally acted upon his threats, the others had already determined how to respond. For the US particularly, a bilateral agreement with France was out of the question. The Johnson

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[284] Ibid., 58.
[285] Ibid., 66.
[286] Ibid., 67-68.
[287] Ibid., 110-111.
[288] Ibid., 235.

Administration wanted de Gaulle to suffer the consequences of his actions, without being able to claim that French isolation was anything other than self-imposed. The most important thing for the US was to make sure that the French isolation was not perceived as US-driven.[289]

## Nuclear Proliferation

Although nuclear non-proliferation had been on the agenda before, after 16 October 1964 the Americans came to push harder for a nuclear non-proliferation treaty. On that day, the Chinese tested a nuclear bomb. This prompted the Johnson Administration to shift emphasis from a nuclear sharing program within NATO to a NPT.[290]

The NPT had been impossible thus far because Moscow objected to the MLF, because it believed the MLF to be a form of nuclear sharing with West Germany. Whether technically the MLF constituted nuclear sharing or not – the idea was that the US president would still be the only one allowed to push the button – did not matter for the Soviet leaders, who refused to enter the discussion as long as the MLF was under consideration.[291] It was clear that for the Soviets a NPT only made sense if Bonn signed it as well.[292]

This way, nuclear non-proliferation – very much desired by the US – was inextricably linked to nuclear sharing within NATO. Most other Alliance members were in favor of a NPT as well, mostly because it was a way to keep the Germans from acquiring access to nuclear weapons.[293] The US and the Soviet Union had essentially agreed upon a NPT at the end of 1966. All there was left to do for the US was to win over the West Germans. To achieve this, they needed to come up with an acceptable alternative to the MLF.[294]

This alternative had its origin in 1965, when the US proposed the set-up of an NPG, in which the European member states would be consulted in nuclear planning, including the set-up of guidelines for the use of nuclear weapons. The plan initially met with scepsism in European capitals and was therefore shelved. However, when the MLF plan was sunk, the NPG became seen as a viable alternative.

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[289] Ibid., 266-267.
[290] Ibid., *Crisis?*, 178.
[291] Ibid., *Crisis?*, 226.
[292] O. Bange, 'NATO and the Non-Proliferation Treaty: triangulations between Bonn, Washington, and Moscow', in A. Wenger, C. Nuenlist & A. Locher (Eds.), *Transforming NATO in the Cold War: challenges beyond deterrence in the 1960s,* (New York 2007), 165.
[293] Ibid., 162.
[294] A. Priest, 'NATO and the Non-Proliferation Treaty: triangulations between Bonn, Washington, and Moscow', in A. Wenger, C. Nuenlist & A. Locher (Eds.), *Transforming NATO in the Cold War: challenges beyond deterrence in the 1960s,* (New York 2007), 156.

In the middle of 1965, US Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara proposed to establish a Special Committee to consult on nuclear issues. This committee should improve communications and consultation on nuclear issues within the Alliance. It was also intended to educate the other members of the Alliance, who were not all very familiar with nuclear planning.[295]

Erhard at first was very angry when the Johnson Administration gave up on the MLF, but later recognized that the MLF was unattainable.[296] Bonn started to change its position on the NPG in July 1966, when Foreign Minister Gerhard Schröder and Defense Minister Kai-Uwe von Hassel announced that they could accept the NPG, if it "evolved into an acceptable forum for nuclear planning and crisis management with good communications".[297] At the end of 1966, the Erhard government fell. Willy Brandt became the new Chancellor. Even though this met with domestic opposition, Brandt was willing to prioritize détente – and Ostpolitik in general – over reunification.[298]

Even when the West Germans had agreed upon the NPG as a substitute for the MLF, they were not immediately willing to sign a NPT. Bonn first needed a few guarantees from the US. These were agreed upon during an NPG meeting in 1968: Bonn would have the final say on the use of nuclear weapons on German, including East-German, soil; and, the conclusion of the NPT would not limit Bonn's role in the NPG.[299] The Non-Proliferation Treaty was eventually signed on 1 July 1968.

**Burden Sharing**

One of the reasons for the US to pursue a multilateral nuclear force within NATO was to get the alliance members to spend more money on nuclear defense and so to divide the costs more evenly.[300] Now that the European states were becoming wealthier, the US pressed for a more equal division of costs. Another reason was the Vietnam War, that costed the US billions of dollars. In fact, burden sharing was one area where the US should actually be thankful to de Gaulle, for suggesting that the European states should become responsible for their own security.[301]

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[295] A. Priest, 'Hardware', 151.
[296] Ibid.
[297] Ibid., 155.
[298] A. Wenger, 'NATO's tranformation in the 1960s and the ensuing political order in Europe', in A. Wenger, C. Nuenlist & A. Locher (Eds.), *Transforming NATO in the Cold War: challenges beyond deterrence in the 1960s,* (New York 2007), 234.
[299] O. Bange, 'NATO', 175.
[300] A. Locher, *Crisis?*, 37.
[301] Ibid., 270.

The US and the UK had a rather large troop presence in West Germany. For this, they received offset payments from West Germany, but these did not cover the costs entirely. In the mid-sixties, for domestic reasons,[302] both the UK and the US demanded an increase in offset payments. The UK even demanded full compendation. Otherwise a reduction of troops would be necessary.[303] For the Germans, who were facing financial constraints as well, it was impossible to accept this demand. In fact, it became increasingly difficult for the Germans to live up to the current offset payments agreement.[304]

Besides the financial incapacity to pay the large sums in offset payments that the Britsh and the Americans demanded, there was also the matter of fairness. The foreign troops stationed in West-Germany were there not only to protect the West-Germans, but to protect the entire Alliance. There was no reason why Bonn would have to pay substantially more than others. Bonn was already paying a larger share, out of a more direct fear for a Soviet attack.[305]

When Bonn refused to increase the offset payments, first London and then Washington announced plans to reduce the number of forces stationed in West-Germany. According to Wilson, these cuts were also justified because the threat of a conflict in Europe had receded.[306] Chancellor Erhard worried about the precedent that British troop reductions might set in the Alliance and pointed to NATO force planning studies, where the US and the UK consistently called for more conventional forces. Erhard also worried about the message that unilateral troop reduction would send to Moscow. He was not opposed to troop reduction per se, but wanted to see it linked to an agreement with the Soviet Union on bilateral troop reductions.[307] The US were also concerned about possible consequences of British force reductions in West Germany, in terms of combat strength as well as Alliance cohesion.[308]

At the same time, the Americans were considering troop withdrawals as well. In the US, domestic pressure for increased offset payments was mounting. The Americans made clear that they were no longer willing to pay for what the Europeans would not *and* that they could no longer afford to.[309] Furthermore, the use of the new giant C-5 A transport aircraft actually allowed for troop reductions, as it made possible the quick transport of troops in times of crisis. Defense Secretary Robert McNamara wanted to withdraw as much overseas troops fas

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[302] The US was fighting a costly war in Vietnam, for which it needed money and troops. The UK had to deal with the crisis of the British pound in 1965.
[303] A. Locher, *Crisis?*, p.268
[304] Ibid.
[305] H. Haftendorn, *NATO,* 241-242.
[306] Ibid., 244.
[307] Ibid., 245.
[308] Ibid., 250.
[309] Ibid., 245-246.

possible.[310] His wishes met with opposition from the US State Department, though, who feared a crisis of confidence in NATO. Instead, president Johnson offered the German government to hold trilateral talks on offset payments, including the UK. Bonn was weary to accept this proposal, out of fear that it amounted to indirect recognition of a special German responsibility for a matter that concerned all Allies.[311] West Germany's geographical position would not legitimize a heavier financial burder for Bonn.[312]

Eventually, in March and April 1966, with the pressure of the Gaullist challenge, the three reached different agreements that solved the problems with offset payments. There would be small troop reductions for the UK and troop rotations for the US. In exchange, the US would make additional military purchases in the UK, to offset British military costs. West-Germany would also increase the offset payments, and accept some troop withdrawals.[313]

## A Solution to the Crisis

Even though the Gaullist challenge constituted a serious crisis for NATO, the French withdrawal did not impact the Alliance in such a negative way as many had feared beforehand. Firstly, and most importantly, none of the Allies followed the French example.[314] Second, not all cooperation with the French was hampered by it. In many respects, the functioning of NATO had not been interrupted. On the Berlin question,[315] for example, there was considerable agreement between all Alliance members, as well as regular consultation.[316] In fact, some maintained that NATO and the Atlantic Alliance were not experiencing a crisis at all. For example, president Johnson stated, in 1964:

> The Atlantic Alliance is not in the midst of a crisis, as some alarm mongers would have you believe. But it is in the midst of a change. Every important period of progress has been marked by the same kind of discussion and debate that is now in progress.[317]

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[310] Ibid., 251.
[311] Ibid., 251-253.
[312] Ibid., 274.
[313] Ibid., 283-291.
[314] A. Locher, *Crisis?*, 261.
[315] After the construction of the Berlin Wall, started on 12 August 1961, the Alliance as a whole was concerned with maintaining free access to West Berlin at all times. To this end, NATO developed contingency plans, complemented with political, economic, psychological and public diplomacy efforts. See 'NATO marks 50 years since the 1961 Berlin Crisis', 13-08-2011, retrieved on 23-08-2011 from http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-3CCF924A-0FA2ABC2/natolive/news_77213.htm?.
[316] A. Locher, *Crisis?*, 77.
[317] Johnson Remarks at the 175th Anniversay Convocation of Georgetown University, Washington, 3 December 1964.

Even though Johnson was probably right about the sixties being most of all a period of profound change for the Alliance and NATO, it became increasingly difficult not to speak of a crisis. Especially in the field of nuclear sharing, the positions of the Alliance members were widely divergent.

When it became clear that the MLF could not count on enough support, there was a quest for other solutions. Rather unexpectedly, the solution came in the form of closer cooperation in nuclear planning and consultation. Actually, the idea had been proposed before by McNamara, during a meeting of NATO Defense ministers on 31 May 1965. At that time, some European governments received the plan with caution, as they feared that the Nuclear Planning Group (NPG) would replace the MLF. But when the Alliance members had given up on the MLF, the NPG suddenly became very attractive. It constituted an acceptable shift from "nuclear hardware" to "nuclear software", to both nuclear and non-nuclear members of NATO. What was most important to the European states was that it made NATO more multilateral. For the US, it meant European endorsement of the strategy of flexible response. By 1967, the NPG was operational and consisted of four permanent members – the US, the UK, Italy, and West-Germany – and three rotating members.[318] France did not participate in the NPG. The NPG solution did not cause distress in Moscow and even paved the way for the NPT.[319]

Concerning the role of NATO in the Atlantic Alliance, the Harmel Exercise of 1966-1967 played a big role in determining NATO's role in a period of *détente*.[320] This Harmel Exercise comprised a series of multilateral discussions on a possible restructuring of NATO – both politically and militarily – led by Belgian Foreign Minister Pierre Harmel. All members, including France, participated and voiced their opinions on how NATO should be improved. It covered all the problematic issues, including military strategy, nuclear sharing and planning, *détente* and political consultation.[321]

The Harmel Report concluded that NATO had two main tasks: to provide military security for the members of the Alliance and to coordinate policies to further *détente* with the Sovet Union. Thus, NATO's dual purpose had become "defence *cum détente*".[322] The report also acknowledged the need for the strategy of flexible response. The report was approved

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[318] A. Priest, 'Hardware', 156.
[319] A. Locher, *Crisis?*, 223-226.
[320] Ibid., 220.
[321] O. Bange, 'NATO', 175.
[322] V. Mastny, '1968', 149.

and integrated into NATO policies on 14 December 1967.[323] It was even signed by France. De Gaulle saw himself faced with either signing the document that was unnecessary in his eyes, or rejecting it, which could have had detrimental effects for NATO. As the possible break-up of NATO did not benefit de Gaulle, he decided not to reject the Harmel Report.[324]

The recommendations of the Harmel Report were shortly thereafter restated in a new Strategic Concept[325]. This document was adopted by the Fourteen in the Defence Planning Group and not by the North Atlantic Council, due to the French withdrawal.[326] Before, it had not been possible to formalize the strategy of flexible response for NATO, because of French obstruction.[327]

In the end, the French withdrawal paradoxically allowed for closer cooperation among the remaining fourteen members of the Atlantic Alliance. Before it became clear that de Gaulle would withdraw from the integrated military command structure of NATO, the multilateral debate on the restructuring of NATO was hampered by French disengagement and obstruction. Now that France had left NATO's military structure, the pressing issues could be discussed more constructively.[328]

With the establishment of the NPG and further agreements on political consultation "NATO evolved from the previously hierarchical military alliance of fifteen to a more political and participatory alliance of fourteen…In short, the transformation of NATO was instrumental to the multilateralization of *détente*.[329] In fact, NATO had become more multilateral in general, which had been the aim of de Gaulle to begin with. In the end, once a solution was found, the members of NATO were more satisfied with the Alliance than before the Gaullist challenge. Ironically, the crisis of 1963-1967 had strengthened the Atlantic Alliance.

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[323] H. Haftendorn, *NATO*, 368.
[324] Ibid., 370.
[325] http://www.nato.int/docu/stratdoc/eng/a680116a.pdf.
[326] H. Haftendorn, *NATO,* 201.
[327] Ibid., 208.
[328] A. Locher, *Crisis?*, 220-221.
[329] A. Wenger, *'Crisis',* 24-25.

# The crisis of 2002-2010

## Balance of power

The crisis of 2003 was about much more than whether or not to invade Iraq. It was also about conflicting world views, especially concerning security.[330] After 9/11, the Bush administration developed a new grand strategy that was to guide the role of the US in world affairs. The new grand strategy immediately sparked a fierce debate over issues such as "preemptive strike", "unilateralism" and "coalitions of the willing". Many people, not only in Europe, were anxious about the possibly severe consequences of this new grand strategy. By justifying a possible invasion of Iraq in terms of this new grand strategy, the Iraq controversy was placed in the light of the broader debate on the "long range implications" of the US grand strategy.[331]

The two different world views were quite clearly outlined by French Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin and British Prime Minister Tony Blair. According to de Villepin, a safe world is one that is based on regional poles that do not compete, but complete each other, based on solidarity. In his opinion, the CFSP and ESDP should reflect this worldview. De Villepin thus argued in favor of multipolarity. However, whether the French government really did not intend for the ESDP to compete with NATO is questionable. In the eyes of Blair, in a multipolar world, the different power centers will soon begin to rival each other. What is needed is a unipolar world, with a strategic partnership between the US and Europe.[332]

The French and British world views envisaged different roles for the European Union, although they both stressed the need for cooperation. In fact, the three European powers all strived for influence over US policies during the Iraq controversy. They just differed in their approaches. In the end, neither strategy proved effective, calling for a period of reflection in the EU.[333]

The Bush Administration was not willing to allow the Allies to (co)determine US policies towards Iraq. His resort to unilateralism was made possible by the military power of the US. Militarily, the US is unquestionably in a league of its own, accounting for almost forty percent of worldwide defence expenditures. And in terms of quality, the US military leaves all others far behind. This is likely to remain so in the near future, as the US accounts for about eighty percent of the worldwide budget spent on military research and development.

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[330] A. Molenaar, *(Dis)Organising,* 11.
[331] Ibid., 19.
[332] Ibid., 20.
[333] Ibid., 17-18.

However, there are limits even to American military power. In the wars the US is currently fighting, relatively lightly armed insurgents can still do much damage to the US military.[334]

In Iraq and Afghanistan, the US soon discovered the limits to its military capacities. Sure, the US achieved a quick military victory. However, there were no plans for the reconstruction period after the fighting. Because of this, the US missed the opportunity to quickly stabilize the country and insurgents has the chance to reorganise themselves. The consequences are still being felt. The Iraq War, up to 30 June 2011, left 4,469 US soldiers killed and 32,130 seriously wounded.[335] It also drew away necessary resources from the war on terror in Afghanistan, causing a deterioration of the situation there. In the end, the Bush Administration was left with costly, seemingly endless wars. This was a humbling experience for Bush and his aides. Upon reelection, the second Bush Administration steered a more multilateral course.

This did not mean that France and Germany had "won". First of all, most other members of the EU had joined the "coalition of the willing", leaving Berlin and Paris rather isolated. The issue was not only divisive for NATO, but also for the EU. 'The first victim of the impending war against Iraq has been Europe's pretensions to a common foreign and security policy.'[336] Also, despite their abundant celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Elysée Treaty in 2003, which served a clear symbolic function, France and Germany still have differing views of the future security role for the EU.


**Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs)**

Despite the NPT, the past decades have seen the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Besides the five permanent members of the Security Council, India, Pakistan, North-Korea and Isarel have acquired a nuclear arsenal as well. A few other states are suspected of trying to develop nuclear weapons. Iran and Syria are amongst them. Before the invasion by the US, Iraq was suspected of trying to develop a new nuclear program as well. In the past decades, Iraq had set up nuclear programs several times before. Once, in 1981, Israel ended the Iraqi nuclear program with precision-bombings. The First Gulf War of 1991 again ended an Iraqi nuclear program. Thus, the Bush Administration's allegiations of Saddam Hussein developing weapons of mass destruction were not that far-fetched. Especially because intelligence services had missed the 1991 nuclear program as well. This diminished the credibility of

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[334] Ibid., *(Dis)Organising,* 12-14

[335] D. White, *Iraq War Facts, Results & Statistics at June 30, 2011,* retrieved on 18-08-2011 from http://usliberals.about.com/od/homelandsecurit1/a/IraqNumbers.htm

[336] J. Joffe, 'Continental Divide', *The National Interest,* Spring 2003

European intelligence services claiming that Saddam Hussein was not trying to acquire nuclear weapons in 2002. However, no nuclear weapons were found in Iraq.

WMDs include nuclear, chemical, biological and radiological weapons, or even more, depending on the definition used. The spread of these weapons is combated with treaties and arms controls. But these measures cannot prevent proliferation completely. The situation in Afghanistan illustrated the danger of rogue states and terrorism. Al-Qaeda was protected by the Taliban government, who fortunately did not possess any WMDs. It is not hard to imagine what the damage could be if Afghanistan had possessed WMDs. Rogue states with WMDs at their disposal collaborating with terrorists have become a big fear for those who know themselves to be the targets of those terrorists.[337] This equation could also come to include a failed state, where terrorists seize the opportunity to take power and control the WMDs. These possibilities have become the largest possible threat to the Western world.

What complicates the matter is that it is more difficult to deter terrorists from using WMDs. Unlike states, they do not necessarily have a territory or people to defend. The Cold War deterrent of massive retalliation therefore does not work against international terrorists.[338]

Proliferation of WMDs increased the threat of WMDs being used by rogue states or terrorists, especially because technological advancements increase the range of these weapons. The question of how to respond to this rather new type of threat has not been resolved yet. The Bush Administration obviously opted for a preemptive strike, thereby also hoping to deter other states in the region to develop a nuclear program. Whether the invasion of Iraq has deterred other states in the region to develop WMDs or has sparked them to accelerate the programs is not certain. Europe chose the use of diplomatic channels and weapons inspections to halt the spread of WMDs. The effectiveness of this approach can be questioned as well, for it could be that force will not be applied until its too late. In conclusion, no effective response to the combined threat of terrorists, failed states and WMDs has been found yet. To find an effective response against these threats is better done by the

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[337] George W. Bush's State of the Union Address of 29 January 2002 included the following: *'States like these [North-Korea, Iran and Iraq], and their terrorist allies, constitute an axis of evil, arming to threaten the peace of the world. By seeking weapons of mass destruction, these regimes pose a grave and growing danger. They could provide these arms to terrorists, giving them the means to match their hatred. They could attack our allies or attempt to blackmail the United States. In any of these cases, the price of indifference would be catastrophic.'*
[338] George W. Bush stated this clearly in his speech at West Point on 1 June 2002: *'But new threats also require new thinking. Deterrence -- the promise of massive retaliation against nations -- means nothing against shadowy terrorist networks with no nation or citizens to defend. Containment is not possible when unbalanced dictators with weapons of mass destruction can deliver those weapons on missiles or secretly provide them to terrorist allies.'*

Alliance as a whole, perhaps by balancing the different approaches. Because neither side to the conflict claims to have found the perfect remedy, there is room for convergence on the best strategy against the threats they all face.

**Burden Sharing**

From time to time, Washington has called for more equal burden sharing within NATO. The US has consistently delivered the largest part of NATO's budget, with recent figures of as much as seventy-five percent. The Atlantic partners have consistently refused to comply with this request, despite the increasing European wealth. In fact, their combined defense budgets in percentage of GDP have been steadily declining the last two decades.[339] Various reasons have been given for this European unwillingness to 'pay up', most significantly its expensive social welfare systems, the difficulty to push through unpopular spending in a pluralistic parliamentary democracy, and cultural differences – Europeans are generally considered more pacifist than Americans.[340]

American calls for more equal burden sharing are closely linked to the 'military capabilities gap', which is enormous. This capabilities gap was more or less accepted when there was an existential security threat that 'forced' Washington to provide security to the European continent. With the Soviet threat out of the picture, and the development of the ESDP, it was expected that the Europeans would now maintain the peace on the European continent. However, the wars in Bosnia and Kosovo demonstrated European inabilities to do so, in what was considered the EU's "backyard". The need for the US armed forces to still do all the hard work caused irritation over European incapacity. Dissatisfaction with unequal burden sharing in the military field is interrelated with the unequal burden sharing in financial terms.

Yet, if financial and military burden sharing were really that much of an issue for Washington, one would expect more drastic US counter measures. If the US believed that the costs of NATO were higher than the gains, the US could withdraw from NATO if it wanted to. Since this has not happened, and is not likely to happen soon, the US must receive important benefits from the Atlantic Alliance as well. Most obviously, the US' dominant

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[339] N. Zwagerman, *NATO Burden Sharing,* 2008, retrieved on 19-08-2011 from http://atlanticreview.org/archives/1074-NATO-Burden-Sharing.html.
[340] Ibid.

position in world affairs allows it to set the agenda and largely shape the world to its own preferences.[341]

Thus, there was a paradox in burden sharing. The Americans claimed they wanted the European partners in NATO to spend more money on their defence, which would enhance their military power. This should relieve the burden on the US military. The best (and cheapest) way to enhance European military capabilities is to develop a truly common defense and security policy. But the ESDP and CFSP were very difficult to implement, the main reason being that the European states were worried that it would have a negative influence on the relationship with the US, because the US might see a militarily united EU as a challenge to US global leadership. In the meantime, the Europeans were unable to get much done in the military field, which frustrated Americans and Europeans alike.[342]

The question then becomes: do the Americans want the EU to become a great power as well, with great power military capabilities? Today, America is the *primus inter pares* within NATO, which greatly enhances its influence on decision-making. However, this does not reflect the wish of most Europeans for reduced American leadership in global affairs.[343]

**Towards a solution**

Whether the Iraq crisis has been resolved is not entirely clear. There has been no initiative comparable to the Harmel Exercise. The tensions seem to have abated, though. It could be said that the members of the Alliance have "agreed that they disagreed" and are now trying to move on. The Atlantic relationship appears to be in a process of normalisation, to a situation where cooperation and multilateralism are reintroduced as the preferred modes of conducting foreign policy. This was facilitated by a number of developments.

First, the Iraq experience was humbling to all parties involved. The Bush Administration found the limits to American military power. Fighting two overseas wars proved too much, even for the strongest army in the world. The military victory in Iraq was relatively easily achieved. The reconstruction phase posed many problems. The US needed European expertise in this area. This realisation made Bush change course at the end of his first term. He now pursued a more multilateral approach to foreign policy decision-making. He returned to NATO as the primary channel through which to operate in the areas of defence

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[341] J. Hall, 'Passions within Reason', in J. Anderson, G. Ikenberry & T. Risse (Eds.), *The End of the West? Crisis and Change in the Transatlantic Order,* ( New York 2008), 235.
[342] U. Guérot, 'Changing', 44.
[343] Ibid., 40-42.

and security. For example, he requested NATO and UN assistance in Iraq,[344] which he received.

For London, the Iraq crisis demonstrated the importance of the relationship with Europe. Blair's allegiance to the US left him empty-handed, as he was unable to alter US foreign policy decision-making and was now on a bad footing with the European powers. In fact "the Iraq experience may have reversed the lesson London drew from the Suez crisis of 1956… 'Iraq' made clear that its [London's] habitual transatlantic allegiance may … put it out on a dangerous limb with continental Europe."[345]

For Berlin and Paris, the Iraq crisis was humbling as well. The divisive effect the crisis had in NATO was visible within the EU as well. It inhabited progress on the CFSP and ESDP, the areas in which Europe needed to develop further to become more independent of the US. Thus, there were no winners to this conflict. Not even Chirac and Schröder, for they were replaced by more Atlanticist heads of state.[346] In December 2008, Bush was replaced by the Democrat Barack Obama, a more Atlanticist player as well. His foreign policy preferences were more in line with those of the EU.[347] The changes of government on both sides of the Atlantic have allowed for substantial political convergence. European public approval rates of President Obama began at 83 percent and have not declined much. In fact, Europeans view Obama more positively than the Americans do.[348] On both sides of the Atlantic, support for the Atlantic relationship has increased over the last few years.[349]

In terms of the strategy against terrorism, there has been convergence as well. During the elections, Obama stated that the war on terror could not be won with military means and that he would withdraw the troops from Iraq as soon as possible, which he did. Instead, he reached out to the Arab world, in a widely broadcasted television speech.[350]

In the military field, cooperation never stopped. In Afghanistan, for example, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Operation started on 16 January 2002 as a 'coalition of the willing'. On 10 August 2003, NATO took over command of the ISAF mission.[351] At that point in time, the political relations between some European states and the

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[344] M. Mastanduno, 'After Bush: A Return to Multilateralism in U.S. Foreign Policy?', *Nanzan Review of American Studies,* 30, 2008, 42.

[345] S. Reyn, 'Transatlantic', 11.

[346] A. Molenaar, *(Dis)Organising),* 11.

[347] At the end of his second term, Bush was viewed favourably by just 20 percent of the European public.

[348] H. Maull, *U.S. Foreign Policy and European Puclic Opinion: An Enduring Honeymoon,* 17 September 2010, retrieved on 23-08-2011 from http://www.transatlanticacademy.org/blogs/hanns-maull/us-foreign-policy-and-european-public-opinion-enduring-honeymoon.

[349] General Marshall Fund, *Transatlantic Trends,* retrieved on 23-08-2011 from http://trends.gmfus.org/.

[350] A. Cowell, 'On Arab TV Network, Obama Urges Dialogue', *The New York Times,* 27 January 2009.

[351] http://www.isaf.nato.int/troop-numbers-and-contributions/index.php.

US were still tense. Nevertheless, France and Germany both joined the ISAF mission on 24 July 2003. It was the situation on the ground in both Afghanistan and Iraq that forced the American army to become involved in nation-building. At the same time, the Europeans found themselves increasingly needing military power to provide security for their bottom-up efforts. Moreover, next to cooperating in that other out-of-area mission, and despite diverging threat perceptions concerning the nature of the terrorist threat, the US and Europe continued their cooperation on intelligence and transatlantic police.[352]

The progress in overcoming the Iraq crisis was demonstrated by the French re-entry into NATO's integrated military command structures officially announced on 11 March 2009, after 43 years of absence. This move was of great symbolic value. Sarkozy already made public his plans for the French return to NATO in 2008. This coincided – coincidence? – with the US endorsement of the principle of a unified European defence force, on the condition that it will be linked to NATO, of course.[353] Two years later, at the Lisbon Summit in November 2010, approval of a European defence force became official NATO policy, when it was included in the new Strategic Concept.[354]

The fact that the Allies were able to formulate a new Strategic Concept signalled that they had overcome important differences on the role and strategy of NATO, for else there would have been no point in creating a new strategy paper. It also signalled an improvement in the relationship between NATO and the EU. Out of all steps that were taken to improve the relations within the Alliance, the drafting of a new Strategic Concept comes closest to being comparable to the Harmel Exercise of the sixties.

An important reason for the shift in American views of a European defence force was the increasing financial burden, from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, exacerbated by the financial and economic crisis that began in 2007 and have not been resolved yet. This made the European initiative look more attractive. It is hoped that the establishment of a European defence force will mean that Europe steps up its military efforts, relieving the US burden. The question is: will this happen? On the one hand, the economic malaise has increased the need for more efficiency in NATO and the EU, possibly speeding up the process of European

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[352] T. Risse, 'Conclusion', p.270

[353] I. Wallerstein, 'France'

[354] With regards to the NATO-EU relationship, the Strategic Concept explicitly states that *'An active and effective European Union contributes to the overall security of the Euro-Atlantic area…NATO recognizes the importance of a stronger and more capable European defence.'* In *Active Engagement, Startegic Defence: Strategic Concept for the Defence and Security of the Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization,* adopted by heads of state and government at the NATO Lisbon Summit, 19-20 November 2010, 28.

defence integration. On the other hand, it has caused most members of the Alliance to heavily cut their defence expenditures.[355]

The issues of burden sharing and the future of the European defence capabilities are probably the last two important issues that need to be worked out. Although it is important that these issues are resolved, as they diminish political unity within the Alliance, they are not perceived as being so divisive that they constitute a threat to the continued existence of NATO. According to the definition borrowed from Hoffmann, then, the Atlantic Alliance is no longer in a crisis.

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[355] Transcript of Defense Secretary Gates' Speech on the Future on NATO, retrieved on 24-08-2011 from http://blogs.wsj.com/washwire/2011/06/10/transcript-of-defense-secretary-gatess-speech-on-natos-future/

# Conclusion

In the early sixties, the scale tipped in favor of the US in terms of political and military power. However, it was not the case that the European states had no leverage whatsoever in Washington. They were all very much dependent on the US security guarantee, allowing for US dominance in the Atlantic Alliance. This does not mean, however, that the US did not need anything from Europe. The US tied its security to that of Western Europe to prevent the Soviet Union from gaining political influence there. This would not only have affected the European states negatively. The US ideology of freedom and liberal democracy required a 'free world' outside the US, even if only as a market for its products. To maintain the political overweight in the West European states, US policies needed to be perceived as legitimate. Western Europe thus provided the US with legitimacy. The Gaullist challenge was so important because it questioned this legitimacy. The solution to regaining legitimacy, at least among the Fourteen, was making NATO more multilateral – de Gaulle's aim all along.

After the end of the Cold War, the European states became less and less dependent on the US security guarantee. This had much to do with the progress made in European integration, especially concerning the CFSP and ESDP. Some even began to question the necessity to keep NATO alive. For the US, the collapse of the Soviet Union had ushered in the era of unipolarity. The US was the last remaining superpower. The lack of competition reduced the perceived need for legitimacy, especially when the Bush Administration took office. Thus, on both sides of the Atlantic, a sense of arrogance set in. Europeans judged the Americans for a lack of morality, while Americans grew increasingly tired of the European military incapacity.

In this atmosphere, the Iraq controversy led to a crisis in the Atlantic Alliance, as it confirmed and exacerbated the negative views both sides had of each other. Stated this way, the solution seemed simple: Washington should return to multilateralism and Europe needed to increase its defence efforts. Even though it took quite some time, this is exactly what happened, mostly during Bush's second term. Especially on the American side, there was a clear shift from unilateralism to multilateralism. The Europeans stepped up their military efforts in ISAF. When the financial crises started, however, European defence expenditures decreased again. This issue remains to be worked out in the future.

That the members of the Atlantic Alliance overcome their differences is even more important now that they face new challenges that are better faced together. Nuclear

proliferation played an important role in the crisis of the early sixties, but at least the Soviet Union and the US mutually agreed upon the need for a NPT. And the risk of the five nuclear powers becoming failed states was not as large as, say, Iran, Syria and of course Iraq becoming failed states after developing nuclear weapons. The threat posed by nuclear proliferation, and the spread of WMDs in general, is now larger than it was in the early sixties. Increasing interdependence calls for enhanced cooperation in fighting terrorism.

The solution to the crisis of the early sixties came in the form of the NPG, that made NATO more multilateral. This then set off a chain of positive reactions that eventually led to a solution. With the adoption of the Harmel Report, the Allies formalized the agreement they had reached over issues such as military strategy, nuclear sharing and détente. Nothing comparable to the Harmel Exercise occurred after the invasion of Iraq. Still, the crisis has lessened and no longer constitutes a threat to the existence of NATO. Resolving the crisis has happened incrementally. Fortunately, many little steps forward make one big step forward. The most important "step" was the fact that the second Bush Administration returned to multilateralism. On the European side, the realisation that discussions within NATO have negative effects on European integration has done much to increase European political will to find a way to make it work in NATO.

What is left of the transatlantic crisis now are the issues of burden sharing and the future role of a European defence force. Concerning the latter, the Iraq crisis may have been a learning experience. The Europeans were very much offended when Washington sidelined them with his unilateralist decision-making. After all, 'what would be the relevance of NATO if the US decided on a case by case basis whether or not to use it properly as a forum of transatlantic consulation?'[356] The same could be said of developing a European defence force competitive to NATO. It thus seems clear that agreement must be found on how to develop a European defence force complementary to NATO, without completely integrating it into NATO's structure.

Considering the issue of burden sharing, it is very well possible that the EU needs a wake up-call, before anything will change. The status quo serves the Europeans well, as they can keep their defence expenditures low. As long as the US continues to fill the gap, nothing will change. Perhaps US Defense Secretary Robert Gates' farewell speech, on the future of NATO, will have some influence. This speech, delivered in Brussels in June 2011, caused quite some consternation in European capitals. Gates used unusually harsh words to condemn

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[356] A. Molenaar, *(Dis)Organising,* 19-20.

the European lack of effort within NATO. He warned that soon the day might come that US political leaders do not see the importance of NATO as self-evident. He spoke of a 'two-tier Alliance': the U.S. military at one level and the rest of NATO on a lower, almost irrelevant plane. He believed this was due to a lack of financial burden sharing, which in turn caused European capabilities to lag far behind those of the US. This may cause the demise of NATO.[357] Here lies NATO's next challenge.

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[357] Transcript of Defense Secretary Gates' Speech on the Future on NATO, retrieved on 24-08-2011 from http://blogs.wsj.com/washwire/2011/06/10/transcript-of-defense-secretary-gatess-speech-on-natos-future/

# Final Conclusion

**The Nature of the Crises**

In the introduction, an institutional crisis was defined as such if one or more of three criteria are fulfilled: (1) fundamental disagreement over what at least one side believes to be a core interest; (2) institutional breakdowns as far as rules and norms are concerned; or, (3) a breakdown in a sense of community.

The NATO crisis of 1963-1966, that culminated in the French withdrawal, fulfills the first two criteria of an institutional crisis. The first criterium, "fundamental disagreement over what at least one side believes to be a core interest", covers the issues of military strategy and *détente*. In terms of military strategy, the Allied preferences ranged from the US strategy of flexible response to the French insistence on the strategy of MAD. The UK and the FRG were somewhere in between, calling for a combination of both strategies. Concerning the issue of *détente*, there were two camps. Kennedy, and then Johnson, and Wilson were in favour of a wide-ranging *détente* policy, separated from the German question. De Gaulle and Adenauer would not allow *détente* if it was not linked to the German question. The issue of *détente* was not only related to the German question, but to nuclear sharing within the Alliance as well.

The crisis of the early sixties also involved an "institutional breakdown as far as rules and norms are concerned". The obvious occurrence of institutional breakdown was the French withdrawal from the integrated military command structure. However, the institutional breakdown of NATO actually predates this move by a few years. The Cuban missile crisis, which had brought East and West so close to an all-out war, caused both superpowers to realise that a change in their relationship was necessary. Kennedy and Kruschchev reached out to each other and started bilateral talks on how to improve their relationship. There was a lack of consultation with the Allies on this matter. When the Kennedy Administration then announced unilaterally that the military strategy would be changed from MAD to flexible response, de Gaulle saw confirmed his belief that the US might sacrifice European concerns for the sake of *détente*. It was a lack of influence in decision-making, caused by the US unilateralist turn, that led de Gaulle to announce the triple *non* – unilaterally as well. Thus, the norm of multilateral consultation on defence matters within NATO was breached, both by the Kennedy Administration and by de Gaulle. The crisis of 1963-1967 has often been termed a

'crisis of credibility',[358] but my research has found that the issue of unilateralism formed the main reason for the Gaullisy challenge. Therefore, this crisis is also a "crisis of legitimacy".

The NATO crisis of 2002-2010 fulfills all three criteria of an institutional crisis. In terms of "disagreement over what at least one side believes to be a core interest", there was again disagreement over what the strategy against the main threat, terrorism this time, should be. This divergence over strategy was based on different threat perceptions. The Iraq crisis was further complicated by diverging views over whether or not removing Saddam Hussein from power would form part of the war on terror. President Bush immediately coined the term "war on terror" to describe the US fight against terrorism, indicating a preparedness to use military means without hesitation. Most European states, in contrast, tend to view terrorism more in terms of an internal threat to be dealt with by the police (and intelligence services, of course) and the judiciary. Most Europeans also tend to view terrorism as one among many threats, whereas for the US, especially immediately after 9/11, terrorism is the main security preoccupation.[359]

The Iraq crisis also entailed an institutional breakdown in NATO. Again, US unilateralism was the underlying cause. The US shift to unilateralism had already started before 9/11, when the Bush Administration withdrew support for a number of international treaties. Then, after 9/11, NATO was sidelined in the war in Afghanistan, even though NATO Allies had offered their assistance.[360] But it was Bush's January 2002 State of the Union Address that caused great concern among the Allies. In this speech, Bush laid the foundation for the strategy of preemptive strike. He referred to the North-Korea, Iran and Iraq as the "axis of evil" and stated that he would 'not wait on events while dangers gather'. This unilateral change of strategy caused the relationship between the US and Europe to deteriorate. European fears of US unilateralism were confirmed when the White House announced that it planned to invade Iraq, without consulting the Allies first. US unilateralism was met by European unilateralism, when Chirac and Schröder stated their opposition to an invasion of Iraq, without consulting their NATO Allies either.[361]

The Iraq crisis differed from the crisis of 1963-1966 on the third criterium for an institutional crisis: "a breakdown in a sense of community". In the early sixties, there was a strong sense of community within the Atlantic Alliance, which was also decsribed as a

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[358] H. Haftendorn, 'NATO and the Nuclear Revolution: A Crisis of Credibility, 1966-1967'.
[359] T. Risse, 'Conclusion', in J. Anderson, G. Ikenberry & T. Risse (Eds.), *The End of the West? Crisis and Change in the Atlantic Order,* (Cornell 2008), 270.
[360] Ibid., 273.
[361] Ibid., 274.

community of shared values. The sharp contrast between Eastern and Western values created an instant realisation of how alike the members of the Alliance were. The disappearance of a common enemy against which to form a shared identity has made the Allies more aware of their differences. The lack of a threat comparable to the Soviet Union in the nineties also allowed more room for differences and diverging policies. There was no longer a "natural" sense of community within NATO. European public opinion turned against US unilateralism in a way that was unprecedented.

In contrast to the crisis of 1963-1967, the crisis of 2002-2010 was often described as a 'crisis of legitimacy'.[362] My research has found that legitimacy indeed formed the crux of this crisis. However, the crisis of 2002-2010 was, to some extent, a "crisis of credibility" as well. Those who opposed the invasion of Iraq did so not only based on moral grounds, but also out of a belief that the US war on terror in Iraq would not succeed. Thus, American capabilities were questioned as well as its motives and means of action.

Many scholars, instinctively or based on their own research, have maintained that the crisis of 2002-2004 was in some way unique and more serious than previous Atlantic crises. By comparing the Iraq crisis to the crisis of 1963-1966, that was previously considered the most serious crisis within NATO, I have found proof for this claim. Although very similar to the crisis of the early sixties on many accounts, the crisis of 2002-2004 was unique in that it included a breakdown of the sense of community among the members of the Atlantic Alliance. Still, it should be kept in mind that it is difficult to decide the threshold of convergence on values that is necessary for a sense of common identity.[363] This makes it more difficult to determine if and when the Iraq crisis ended, if it has ended indeed, as I have argued here. Just to be sure, it should be mentioned that both crises were deep *political* crises only. *Militarily*, NATO continued to act quite effectively.[364]


**Other Important Differences and Similarities**

The issue of unipolarity was the crux of both crises. What de Gaulle saw as a dangerous increase in US unipolarity is what led him to challenge American hegemony within NATO. A US that was too powerful could neglect European security interests. Eventually, he believed the best strategy was to withdraw the French troops from NATO's military command structure. The circumstances of the Cold War made that the US needed its European Allies.

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[362] R. Kagan, 'America's Crisis of Legitimacy', *Foreign Affairs,* March/April 2004.
[363] Ibid., 276.
[364] Ibid.

For example, it could not go ahead with *détente* without the support of at least most Allies. Therefore, the Gaullist challenge could not be without consequences. The Johnson Administration actively searched for a solution that would satisfy the Allies.

Chirac and Schröder saw the Bush Administration's new emphasis on unilateralism as dangerous for the Alliance as well. They withheld their support for what the Bush Administration believed to be an aspect of the war on terror. Support for the invasion of Iraq had the potential for being extremely harmful for European security interests. Some European states, notably the UK, decided to join the "coalition of the willing" anyway. Others, like France and Germany, refrained from participation. Where the bipolar structure of the world, with the Soviet Union posing a big threat, called for political and military unity, the new reality of unipolarity did not. In the eyes of the neoconservatives in the White House, American military might should be projected abroad to perpetuate the superpower status. Thus, the biggest difference with the situation of the sixties was that the Atlantic Alliance was now expendable, or at least so it was believed. That this turned out not to be the case, because there were limits to what American military might could achieve in Iraq, as well as in Afghanistan, sheds a new light on the structure of the world order. Perhaps the unipolar moment is over. In that case, multipolarity has returned to define the global order.

In terms of strategy, the hardliners in both crises were those who perceived the threat as most existential. In the sixties, these were de Gaulle and Adenauer. After 9/11, it was the Bush Administration, supported by Blair. This division between the French and the Germans on one side and the British and the Americans on the other can be seen as a difference with the crisis of 1963-1967. Back then, the West Germans chose the side of the US. However, the close relationship between the French President and German Chancellor was nothing new. In fact, during the crisis of 1963-1967, it was not immediately clear which side Adenauer would choose.

**The Duration of a Crisis in NATO**

From this comparison of the crises of 1963-1967 a few conclusions can be drawn concerning the duration of a crisis in NATO. Firstly, the duration of a crisis in the Atlantic Alliance is dependent on how long it takes before all parties to the conflict realise that unilateralism does not serve their interests better than multilateralism, no matter how weak or powerful they are. In both crises, the return to multilateralism marked the beginning of the solution.

Secondly, a perception of shared values works as a glue for the Atlantic community. Without it, political disagreements within NATO can be exacerbated by domestic pressure on

national leaders. A lack of trust and solidarity, based on a perceived divergence of values, can have a detrimental effect. In the end, it is the voter who decides who can stay and who leaves. In a democracy, public opinion matters. Therefore, not only the substance of security policies matter, but rhetoric as well. NATO's political leaders would be wise to keep this in mind.

During the Cold War, the perception of shared values benefited from the Soviet threat in two ways. First, because there were obvious differences between the two the members of NATO and the Warsaw Pact. Second, because the Soviet threat created a need for political unity, calling for an emphasis on commonalities rather than differences. So far, the threat of terrorism, or Islamic fundamentalism in general, has not achieved a new "we-feeling" comparable to the days of the Cold War.


## The Development of the Crises over Time

When I began my research for this comparison, I had not anticipated to find so many similarities in how the crises of 1963-1967 and 2002-2010 developed over time. Quite a clear pattern has become discernable, that provides new insights on both crises. The conclusion of chapter two (see pages 53-54) has already outlined how the first phases of the crises were very similar. Therefore, I will not repeat everything here. Important is that the crux of both crises was the problem that the resort to unilateralism, on both sides of the Atlantic, caused for NATO. Furthermore, it is possible to detect a pattern in the development of the two serious crises NATO has faced. The first phase is the (perceived) turn to unilateralism from one of the Allies. Phase two is constituted by an announcement that causes consternation in the Alliance. However, because this announcement is not the enactment of the feared unilateralist move yet, there is time for anticipation, which is the third phase. Then comes the fourth phase: the unilateral act. In the sixties, this was the French withdrawal from NATO's integrated military command structure. In 2003, it was the invasion of Iraq.

Interestingly, in both cases the unilateral act concerned a military move. Conventional wisdom dictates that both military moves were the *cause* of the crisis. I regard them as *symptoms* of the crises instead. In medical terms, symptoms provide clues on illnesses. That is what happened here as well, with the illness being unilateralism. Identifying the illness is the first step towards finding a remedy. If we extend this logic to the development of the crisis, it can be said that the unilateral acts actually formed the beginning of the solution to the crises. The solution is then the fifth and last phase.

In the sixties, the French withdrawal facilitated the solution to the crisis, as it allowed for the establishment of the NPG, that paved the way for agreement on new political and

military strategies – *détente* and flexible response, respectively. The NPG, made possible by the French withdrawal, proved a remedy against unilateralism, as it injected an element of multilateralism to NATO's decision-making processes, which was exactly what de Gaulle had wanted all along. In that sense, de Gaulle's challenge to US unilateralism was successful. But seen the other way around, the Fourteen's efforts the Gaullist challenge were successful as well. In the end, de Gaulle only achieved part of his agenda. His moves had left him rather isolated in the EEC, with no support for a European defence capability. Because of his lack of influence in NATO and the EU, he could not act as a bridge between East and West either. Aware of his difficult position, de Gaulle accepted the Harmel Report.

Chirac's and Schröder's challenge to US unilateralism was less successful, although the Bush Administration did eventually return to multilateralism. However, this was not caused by anything the French and German challengers had done. Instead, it was caused by the consequences of the invasion of Iraq. These showed that the Bush Administration had overestimated the military capabilities of the US. The limits to US military power were painfully exposed. The US needed the help of the Allies, which called for a return to multilateralism. Even so, the Bush Administration was now faced with two wars that would not end during its days in power. Thus, it seems that in both cases, those responsible for the crisis suffered most.

**The Future of NATO**

The transatlantic partners should together determine what it is that they want to be capable of doing in global affairs. The times for an inward looking transatlantic Alliance have gone, now is the time to become outward looking and to determine whether the outside world should be confronted by a unified western Alliance.[365] If it is decided that this should indeed happen, the question then becomes in what way the Atlantic Alliance should be structured to meet the new global challenges, and especially what NATO's role will be in this. Will NATO become an exclusively military alliance, with the right of first refusal on military operations? Or will NATO become more comprehensive, for example dealing more and more with nation-building and crisis management. Will there be a role division between NATO and the EU? Or will they eventually blend into an "Atlantic Union"?[366]

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[365] U. Guérot, 'Changing', p.41
[366] J. Smith, 'Partners', p.58

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# Epilogue

## The Arab Spring in Libya

One of the motivations the Bush Administration gave for the invasion of Iraq was a hope that it would cause a shock wave through the Middle East that would be the beginning of democratisation of the region.[367] The idea was that dictators would come to fear to be the next victim of the Bush doctrine. This should then inspire them to introduce democratic reforms. Democratic reforms are now being called for, in the Middle East and in the Arab world in general. However, it is not the dictators who call for democratic reforms. It is the people.

What has come to be known as the Arab Spring started with the Jasmin Revolution in Tunisia in December 2010, that led to the downfall of the Ben Ali-regime. In February 2011, the Egyptian dictator Hosni Mubarrak was the next political victim of the Arab Spring, which has now engulfed the region. It has also reached Libya, on 17 February, where Muammar al-Gaddafi has been in power since 1969. The Libyan dictator refuses to step down, which has caused a civil war. In response to this, the UK and France, together with Lebanon, raised the issue in the United Nations Security Council, which then adopted Resolution 1973. This Resolution demanded an immediate ceasefire, gave the authorisation to establish a no-fly zone, and called upon the members to use all means short of foreign occupation to protect civilians.[368] Thus, military intervention was allowed.

France, the UK and the US began the implementation of Resolution 1973 on 19 March, with air strikes targeting Gaddafi's military structures. On 23 March, NATO began patrolling Libya's coastline, to enforce an arms embargo. NATO decided to take over command of the no-fly zone on 24 March. And then on 27 March, NATO took control of the entire military operation in Libya.

Operation Unified Protector is the first out-of-area mission since the Iraq crisis. It is also the first mission since the economic and financial crises. In this regard, it can tell more about whether or not NATO has overcome these crises. In terms of overcoming the Iraq crisis, the mission in Libya shows that there now was substantial political agreement among France, the UK and the US. However, Germany refused to join the mission. As a member of the Security Council, it abstained from voting on Resolution 1973. This has nothing to do with German

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[367] Molenaar, *(Dis)Organising, 38.*
[368] For the full text of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1973 see http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/mar/17/un-security-council-resolution

approvement of the Gaddafi-regime. It concerns pacifist traditions within Germany.[369] In this sense, there is a similarity between the invasion of Iraq and the intervention in Libya, even though Merkel is supposed to be more Atlantic-oriented than her predecessor. Still, by abstaining, rather than opposing, like Schröder did, Merkel is not blocking the rest of the Alliance to take action. This can be seen as an improvement.

Former US Defense Secretary Robert Gates stated in his last speech in office that the operation has created hope for NATO's future, but that it has also exposed major shortcomings, notably concerning NATO funding and the ability of many Allies to not only give permission for the mission, but to participate also. Less than half of the members have participated in the mission in Libya. According to Gates, this was not due to a lack of political will, but to a lack of military capabilities. These capabilities can only be acquired by making large investments in the military field. However, this is not likely to happen. In fact, the opposite is more likely, as most European countries are cutting back on their defence budgets, due to the economic and financial crises.[370]

With the days of Gaddafi appearing to come to an end in Libya, Operation Unified Protector may not become a test for NATO, simply because it did not last long enough for that. What appears to have become the biggest challenge for NATO now is not finding agreement on when and where to intervene or how to run an out-of-area operation. An even bigger challenge has presented itself: how to fund NATO operations? This concern counts for the European Allies in particular. NATO's Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen has called for the European members of NATO to cooperate more in the field of defence. This should allow them to do more without dramatically increasing their defence budgets.[371] Burden sharing has become the most important challenge facing NATO today. Let us hope it does not develop into a new crisis.

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[369] S. Weiland & R. Nelles, 'Germany has marginalised itself over Libya', *Spiegel Online International*, 18 March 2011.

[370] Transcript of Defense Secretary Gates' Speech on the Future on NATO, retrieved on 24-08-2011 from http://blogs.wsj.com/washwire/2011/06/10/transcript-of-defense-secretary-gatess-speech-on-natos-future/

[371] A. Rasmussen, 'NATO After Libya: The Transatlantic Alliance in Austere Times', *Foreign Affairs,* July/August 2011.

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