

## **How Europe Views America**

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## **Introduction**

Despite the fact that the transatlantic relationship is the most important and complete relationship in the world, Europeans have never held such a low opinion of America as they do today. Not even during the dark days of Vietnam or the Star Wars ambitions of Ronald Reagan has the US been so reviled by so many Europeans. There are two short-term related reasons for this alarming slump in American popularity in Europe - President George W Bush and the US-led invasion of Iraq. In summer 2004, less than one in five Europeans has a favourable view of the US president and over 75% think the war in Iraq was a mistake. The horrendous pictures of American soldiers torturing Iraqi prisoners have further worsened America's already poor image in Europe. But there are also more fundamental and long-term political, economic and social trends developing that affect the transatlantic relationship, and how Europeans and Americans view each other.

In June President Bush made three visits to Europe, for the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the "D Day" landings in Normandy, for the EU-US summit in Ireland and for the NATO summit in Istanbul. Questioned about his poor poll ratings in Europe and elsewhere, the President replied that the only poll that interested him was on 2 November 2004. After these meetings there were some officials who suggested that "relations were back to normal". Certainly there is a growing desire among most politicians and officials to try and work together where possible. But European leaders must operate against a backdrop of the continuing poor public perceptions most Europeans have of the US.

What is Europe? For the purpose of this paper Europe is defined as the 25 Member States of the European Union (EU). One of the fears in France and elsewhere is whether the new Member States that joined the Union on 1 May 2004 will be American "Trojan horses." It is argued later that this fear is exaggerated. This paper considers the views of most Member States towards America as well as the attitudes of EU officials dealing with the US.

What is America? For most Europeans, America is synonymous with the United States. That everyone understands the word America to refer to the USA is testimony to the power of the brand that America projects through its foreign policy, military power, intelligence capabilities, business corporations, universities, cultural outlets, media and NGOs. America, in its actions and effect on other people around the world, forms a complex whole. But there are at least two Americas, one with much closer affinity to European values than the other. A glance at the electoral map of the US

reveals a country sharply divided between the Democrats and Republicans. The Democrats are well established on both coasts, in New England and parts of the mid-West. The Republicans are now the dominant party of the South, the Southwest and the Mountain states. Elections are won and lost in just a few swing states such as Florida, Ohio, Michigan. The Democrat controlled states are generally liberal, pro-abortion, anti-gun, pro-environment, internationalist and secular. The Republican areas are generally conservative, anti-abortion, pro-gun, anti-environment, nationalist and religious. In many countries these fundamental differences would lead to perennial conflict but because America is such a vast country these two very different societies co-exist uneasily with one another.

### **Public Opinion**

How serious is the fall in European support for the US? According to a series of opinion polls up to the summer of 2004, the image of the US among Europeans has never been worse. For many years the Pew surveys (Pew Global Attitudes project) and the German Marshall Fund have tracked European attitudes towards the US. An analysis of their combined results plus Gallup and Time/CNN polls, reveals that the vast majority of European (78%) have an unfavourable view of the Bush administration and its foreign policy. The results, taken before publication of the pictures inside the Abu Ghraib jail in Iraq, reveal an even sharper fall in support for the US in European countries that sent troops to Iraq. Even in Britain and Poland there are clear majorities opposed to Bush's foreign policy. It is important to distinguish between attitudes towards the Bush administration and America as such. There remains a strong regard for America as a nation (57%) but little support for the present administration (23%) This varies from country to country but in France, for example, 53% have a favourable view of Americans, yet only 24% support the Bush administration. The figures for Germany are 55% and 26% and in the UK only slightly more favourable at 61% and 28%.

There are substantial majorities in all European countries (73% average) who believe that the US lied about its motives for the Iraq war and similar high majorities (68%) consider the US is over-reacting to the threat of terrorism. This has led to a sharp drop (51% compared to 68% in 2003) in those who believe that US world leadership is a good thing.

The polls also reveal many similarities in public attitudes on both sides of the Atlantic, especially on the desirability of working through multilateral institutions. While 77% of Europeans prefer the UN as the first focus of any international crisis, only slightly fewer (68%) Americans share the view. The main differences in public attitudes across the Atlantic relate to

pre-emptive strikes and readiness to use military power and support for Israel. While 68% of Americans accept the need for pre-emptive strikes to deal with security threats only 44% of Europeans agree. On the Arab-Israeli dispute, a majority of Americans (74%) blame the Palestinians for the conflict while almost the same number of Europeans (71%) blame the Israelis.

### **What Divides Europe and America?**

From the end of World War II until the fall of the Berlin Wall America and Europe appeared to grow increasingly similar as American culture dominated Europe and the transatlantic economic relationship steadily grew in importance. The EU and US are each other's biggest suppliers, consumers and investors. Over one billion euros in goods and services is traded each day across the Atlantic. A stream of political declarations and speeches has reiterated the mantra of Europe and America sharing the same values but there is considerable evidence that the two blocs are moving apart on many political, social and economic issues.

These differences cover many areas ranging from the importance of money in US election campaigns to the lack of welfare provisions in America. For most Europeans the amount of money spent on elections is unacceptable. Equally, many Europeans find the lack of health and social security cover for millions of Americans unacceptable. Another divisive issue is America's continuing use of the death penalty, despite continual European pressure to end this form of punishment. There are very different attitudes towards gun control, towards sustainable development and the environment, towards genetically modified foods, and perhaps most importantly, religion. Europe is largely secular while the influence of religion on the American political system remains disturbingly high to many Europeans. In addition there is considerable fear in Europe that Europeans may be dragged in to fight American wars around the world. Although political leaders on both sides of the Atlantic talk of shared values one must question this in light of the above and other issues such as respect for international law. Europeans have been shocked at the treatment of "illegal combatants" in Guantanamo.

For some, mainly on the Left in Europe, anti-Americanism is essentially a matter of ideology. American capitalism, military power and self-reliance are shunned. For others, anti-Americanism is a French plot to promote Europe at the expense of the US. There is thus much mutual schizophrenia and not a little paranoia, sometimes mixed with jealousy, on both sides of the Atlantic.

At the same time, there are many Americans and American institutions Europeans admire. Michael Moore's films (*Fahrenheit 9/11*, *Bowling for Columbine*) and books (*Stupid White Men*) are highly popular in Europe. Europeans flock to see Hollywood's latest films, listen to Madonna and Britney Spears, and watch '*Friends*' and '*ER*' on television. Europeans use Microsoft, drink Coke and drive Fords like their American counterparts. Europe's brightest and best are often lured to Harvard and Stanford by high salaries and unrivalled research facilities.

The present anti-American feeling in Europe is thus different from 'the Ugly American' image of the 1970s and 1980s. It is different in two important respects. First, it is largely focussed on the narrow group of neo-cons within the Bush administration. Second, it includes representatives from the elites in countries such as Germany, Italy and Spain, countries that were traditionally pro-American.

### **A Little History**

Historically, Europe and America are more closely connected than any other continents. Modern America was populated by Europeans, a majority of whom were seeking refuge from tyranny and poverty in Europe. In the nineteenth century waves of Irish, Italians, Poles and other European emigrants enriched the melting pot that became today's America. For them, America was the promised land and for the most part they turned their back on the old continent. Europeans thus made a huge contribution to the development of America. In more recent times, European immigration has dwindled and Asian and Hispanic immigrants have been the main source of population growth in the US. These ethnic groups have correspondingly increased their political influence at the expense of the various European diasporas. American presidential candidates have to woo the black vote, the Hispanic vote, the Asian vote, the Jewish vote, but not the European vote.

Twice in the twentieth century America came to the rescue of Europeans embroiled in highly destructive civil wars. After the first intervention the US retreated into isolationism. After the second intervention the US helped create the multilateral system that we know today - the United Nations, the IMF and World Bank and the GATT, forerunner of the WTO. The US also provided Europe with a security guarantee through NATO and was generous in its provision of economic assistance via the Marshall Plan.

During the Cold War most Europeans were grateful for the American presence on their continent. Sure there was the odd trade dispute (chicken wars) and some major political clashes (Suez) but the Soviet threat provided the glue that held the transatlantic alliance together. It was

America's involvement in Vietnam that started the decline in the hitherto positive image the US had in Europe. While John F Kennedy enjoyed cult status in Europe, Lyndon B. Johnson and Richard Nixon aroused more hostility than enthusiasm. Although Henry Kissinger declared 1973 to be the "year of Europe" European views of America continued to decline, partly because of fresh disputes over Germany's *Ostpolitik*, the stationing of Pershing missiles in Europe and Reagan's Star Wars. America's penchant for military interventions around the world also found little support in Europe.

With the end of the Cold War George Bush Senior regarded Europe as an important factor in his new world order. In 1990 a transatlantic partnership was agreed that provided for regular political consultations. Most European leaders wanted Bush Senior to win the 1992 elections rather than the unknown Governor from Arkansas. The first few years of the Clinton presidency were poisoned by disputes over the break-up of Yugoslavia. But in 1995 the US intervened to bring a temporary end to the bloody conflict and in the same year the EU and US agreed on a New Transatlantic Agenda that provided for regular consultation and cooperation on global, regional and economic issues, and aimed to foster 'people to people' contacts. Partly because of his personal charm and sympathy for his troubles with Congress, Clinton enjoyed a high reputation in Europe, a continent in which he had studied and travelled, and with which he seemed to have a special rapport. Ironically his impeachment following his affair with an intern, Monika Lewinsky, probably did more to increase his popularity in Europe.

### **George W Bush**

Taking office in January 2000, George W Bush was a different story. He had rarely visited Europe and enjoyed a poor reputation in Europe as governor of Texas for his alleged dismal record on the environment ("the Toxic Texan") and propensity to using the death penalty for convicted felons. Most European intellectuals and most of the media were solidly behind Democratic candidate Al Gore, a fact that did not go unnoticed and which was not forgotten in the Bush camp. The farcical circumstances surrounding Bush's election victory, especially in Florida where his brother was Governor, aroused widespread derision in Europe.

If George W Bush had a master plan to upset Europeans in his first nine months in office he could not have been more successful. He had hardly entered the White House before he rejected many treaties of fundamental interest to Europeans. Indeed he seemed to take delight in stating categorically that the Kyoto protocol was dead, that the US would never sign up to the International Criminal Court (ICC) and that arms control

treaties were not for the world's sole superpower. His senior advisors, Dick Cheney, Condoleezza Rice, Colin Powell and Donald Rumsfeld, knew very little about the European Union and seemed uninterested in Europe's drive for closer integration. The administration also seemed to take delight in rejecting everything that Bill Clinton had tried to do in foreign policy. There were to be no more negotiations on the Arab-Israeli dispute, or with North Korea.

This feeling of hubris, thanks mainly to America's astonishing military superiority over other nations, affects thinking across the political spectrum in America. But to the neo-cons taking office in 2001 it was an opportunity to demonstrate a new type of American leadership. Given America's military might there was only one sensible approach for the US. America must lead and others must follow. There was no need for alliances or consultations. At best there could be 'coalitions of the willing' ready to accept American policy, without question. America's swift defeat of the Taliban in Afghanistan reinforced the belief in military power as an all-encompassing tool. The neo-cons were convinced that American power could defeat Iraq, then Iran, Syria and North Korea.

Most European leaders were perplexed at this new approach to leadership. Previous US presidents had sometimes gone it alone when the occasion demanded, but on major issues, such as the first Gulf War, the US had been at pains to consult its major allies. Now the message was crystal clear. America leads – others should follow.

### **The Impact of 9/11**

It was against this background that America suffered the traumatic shock of 9/11. There was genuine sympathy across Europe symbolised by the *Le Monde* headline "*We are all Americans Now.*" Europeans largely agreed with the initial measured response of the US towards the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and Al Qaeda. They were dismayed, however, that the US rejected the instant offer of NATO to invoke article V, the automatic defence guarantee. The Pentagon let it be known that as a result of the Kosovo experience there was to be no more 'war by committee.' Now the mission decided the coalition not the coalition the mission - and NATO was not required. Europeans thought that the shock of 9/11 would propel the US back towards the multilateral track. After all this was exactly what George Bush Senior had argued in an interview with the *Boston Globe* just three days after 9/11. But Bush Junior was determined to use American power in an untrammelled manner to win the "war on terror."

Even this phrase was rejected by Europeans. Javier Solana spoke for the old continent when he said that the world faced a "fight against terrorism,"

not a war on terror, as such a war could never be won. There was to be further Bush rhetoric that was unacceptable to Europeans. The president's "axis of evil" speech in January 2002 grated on the ears of Europeans more than the fact that the president failed to mention either the EU or NATO in his speech but made several references to the importance the US attached to Israel. Europeans rejected the notion propagated by Bush "you are either with us or against us."

During the remainder of 2002 American plans for war against Saddam Hussein began to take shape, a decision that would cause immense damage to transatlantic relations and the image of America in Europe. It is clear from many sources that the decision to go to war was taken in the summer of 2002 and that the diplomatic efforts at the UN were a sideshow. The world looked on with incredulity as Colin Powell attempted to prove in a power point presentation at the UN that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction (WMD). French Foreign Minister, Dominique de Villepin, was engulfed by applause after rejecting the American case. The stage was set for the tragic Iraq adventure that would do so much damage to transatlantic relations.

Among the charges that Europeans level at the Bush administration concerning the Iraq war are the following. Intelligence about Iraqi possession of WMD was distorted for political purposes. There was an intoxication caused by hubris and belief that American military power could achieve anything. Consequently there was almost no sensible planning for a post-Saddam administration. Europeans and ordinary Iraqis could not understand how a country that could develop such precision munitions could not manage to re-establish basic services such as electricity and clean water supplies. The first pro-consul sent to Iraq, General Garner was incompetent. His replacement, Paul Bremer, has no experience of Iraq. The Iraqi exiles that the US wanted to place in power enjoyed no popular support. There was a massive under-estimation of the likely resistance to what most Iraqis viewed as an occupation rather than liberation. And finally there was an appalling lack of discipline in the treatment of Iraqi prisoners, most notably in the Abu Ghraib prison. Far from Bush demanding the head of the man ultimately responsible for this debacle, Pentagon chief Donald Rumsfeld, the president praised him for doing "a superb job."

### **Beyond Iraq**

Although Iraq is the single most damaging issue causing the massive drop in support for America in Europe, there are other factors to be considered. Post Cold War America is the only superpower, or 'hyperpower' as Hubert Védrine suggested. For the Democrat Madeleine Albright, the US is 'the

indispensable nation' for global order. For the Republican Richard Perle, the US is 'Rome and Athens combined.' The feeling that military power entitles the US to be treated differently is widespread in political elites in America.

In addition to major differences over the use and purpose of military power there were also transatlantic disputes over how to tackle so-called rogue states even if military power was ruled out. Cuba was a classic case of US-EU differences. For forty years Washington, under the influence of Cuban exiles in Florida, has imposed a strict embargo on Fidel Castro's regime. But instead of bringing about change it merely provided a rallying call for the embattled Cuban leader. Europeans, and Canadians, have preferred a policy of critical engagement with Cuba and as a result were hit by American sanctions against their companies.

Reference has already been made to the changing demographics in America. Political power has moved to the south and west, away from the traditionally pro-European elites of the north-east. If Kerry wins in November he will be the first president from the region since Kennedy in 1960.

### **Attitudes of Member States**

Most Member States of the EU, not just the UK, think that they enjoy a 'special relationship' with America. The Irish Prime Minister has automatic entry to the White House every St Patrick's day. Both Italian Prime Minister, Silvio Berlusconi, and former Spanish Prime Minister, José Maria Aznar played up their special ties to Bush. Each European ambassador in Washington DC is judged by how long an audience he can secure for his head of government with the US president. This may range from a brief 'photo op', to a thirty minute meeting, to an hour meeting with lunch, to a weekend at Camp David, and finally the top accolade, a visit to Crawford, Bush's ranch in Texas.

#### **Britain**

Britain considers that for reasons of history, shared experience, language and culture, it enjoys an inside track with the US. There is little doubt that it does enjoy considerable access in Washington but there is also little evidence that this translates into influence. Among post-war British Prime Ministers only Edward Heath put Europe at the same level as loyalty to America. Harold Wilson supported Lyndon B. Johnson in Vietnam, albeit not to the extent of sending British troops. Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan enjoyed a close ideological relationship based on antipathy towards communism. John Major and Bill Clinton had a strained

relationship as Major made no secret of his preference for Bush Senior to win the 1992 elections. Tony Blair and Bill Clinton were also ideological soul mates (the Third Way) and had a close personal relationship. What baffled most observers was Blair's willingness to have an equally close and uncritical relationship with a right-wing Republican president. His entourage let it be known that Blair was determined to show that a Labour Prime Minister could have a good relationship with a Republican president and act as a bridge between the US and Europe. Whatever the motive, Blair has paid a heavy price for giving the appearance of being no more than the lap-dog of Washington. His polling ratings have slumped to a record low and he may be fatally wounded by following Bush into Iraq.

British popular culture follows closely American developments. The British media are also heavily pro-American and anti-European, which is hardly surprising as Rupert Murdoch owns a large part of the media. But there are also strongly dissenting voices both on the right and left of the spectrum.

## **France**

France and the US enjoy a love-hate relationship dating back to their shared 18<sup>th</sup> century revolutions. France has traditionally adopted a more sceptical approach towards America, despite the fact that it is the only major European state that has never fought the US. Since President Charles de Gaulle withdrew France from NATO's integrated command structure in 1966, Paris has often been a thorn in the side of America. Unlike the UK or Germany, France has never been afraid to criticise US policy in public. France has railed against the pernicious impact of Hollywood and the 'McDonald's' culture but accepted Disneyland outside Paris. France has also rejected the hegemonic tendencies of Washington arguing for a multipolar world in which Europe would be a counterweight to the US. At the same time, France has always recognised the importance of the US commitment to Europe and has never urged an American withdrawal from the continent.

Although France bore the brunt of American anger in the run-up to the Iraq war ("cheese eating surrender monkeys") there was little damage to the economic relationship. There was a slight fall in American tourists visiting France but two-way investment has actually increased. By being ready to oppose the US from time to time, France arguably enjoys more respect in Washington than the UK, which is taken for granted.

There was much popular and genuine sympathy with America following 9/11. President Jacques Chirac flew the tricolour at half-mast; France also pressed for a UN resolution in support of the US; and agreed to invoke article V of the NATO treaty. But like other European states France

expected that the US would return to the multilateralist fold after 9/11 and became increasingly worried at Washington's determination to opt for a unilateral approach. As the disaster in Iraq unfolded France maintained a diplomatic silence, content to let its record of opposition to the invasion speak for itself.

### **Germany**

Perhaps the most fundamental shift in European attitudes towards America has occurred in Germany. During the Cold War it was unthinkable for a German Chancellor to criticise Washington. Germany's role was often to try and mediate between Paris and Washington. But with the end of the Cold War and following German unification, there was a new assertiveness about German foreign policy and a willingness to challenge conventions. One of the first changes in German policy, approved wholeheartedly by the US, was a readiness to send German troops abroad into combat operations. Gerhard Schröder's election in 1998 marked a new generation taking over the reins of power, one which did not automatically look to Washington for guidance and approval. Indeed, to the consternation and anger of President Bush, Schröder fought and won the 2002 election partly on an anti-US platform, pledging that Germany would never participate in any invasion of Iraq. Schröder tapped into a rich vein of distrust about America, fuelled by arrogant US behaviour over several issues ranging from the environment to the security perimeter of its embassy in Berlin. Even the CDU opposition found it opportune not to identify themselves too closely with Bush. The Green foreign minister, Joschka Fischer, won plaudits when he confronted Donald Rumsfeld at a conference in Munich in February 2003, stating that as Rumsfeld had not convinced him on WMD in Iraq how could he convince the German people?

### **Italy**

In Italy, another traditional pro-American country, there has also been a dramatic deterioration in attitudes towards the US despite the close personal relationship between Berlusconi and Bush. America had often intervened in Italian politics to support the Christian Democrats against the Communist Party. This had been largely tolerated by many Italians but Iraq has changed attitudes. Over 80% of Italians were opposed to the US-led war and Italian participation in the war.

### **The Nordics and smaller Member States**

America has also seen its image slip across Europe including Scandinavia. Norway has traditionally been a faithful ally while Sweden and Finland

have tended to distance themselves from US policy. But in all three countries there are hardly any politicians willing to stand up for Bush.

The Netherlands and Belgium have traditionally been very pro-US but anti American sentiment has been rising, even within the centre-right coalitions governing both countries. In Ireland, another country with close ties to the US through history and immigration, anti-Bush sentiment was such that the EU-US summit in June was held in a secluded castle in the west of Ireland for fear of demonstrations. In Greece, America's image has also plummeted.

## **Spain**

Spain is one of the few European countries that does not owe the US for its freedom. There has also been a history of rivalry with US dating back to 1898 when America captured Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Philippines and Guam from Spain. There has also been very little Spanish migration to US so that there is no comparable diaspora to that of the Poles in the Chicago area. Spain is also different from other European countries in that it has close ties to the Arab world with the Iberian peninsula being Muslim from 711 to 1492. Former Prime Minister Aznar thus broke with Spanish tradition in preferring close ties with the US over Europe. But he paid a heavy price with opinion polls showing less than 10% of Spaniards approved his decision to send troops to Iraq. Aznar's handling of the Madrid train bombs in March 2004 was the final straw for a majority of Spaniards, who voted to replace his conservative government with the socialists. The government of newly elected Prime Minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero swiftly moved to withdraw Spanish troops from Iraq and then moved Spain away from the US, back towards the mainstream of Europe.

## **Trojan Horses?**

In central and eastern Europe, the US enjoys a rather more favourable image. This is partly because the US is perceived as being the strongest supporter of these countries when they suffered under communism. This sentiment is perhaps strongest in the Baltic states and Poland. Furthermore they are grateful to the US for hastening their membership of NATO, in face of some opposition in Western Europe. They also recognise the generous American support to civil society before and during the transformation years. There were no huge anti-war demonstrations in Prague or Budapest in February 2003 as there were in London, Paris and Madrid. In the run up to the Iraq war all the governments in the region supported the US including signing public letters. This irritated France, which did its own cause no good when President Chirac accused the

eastern Europeans in February 2003 of behaving like badly brought-up children who “had missed a good opportunity to shut up.”

It would be a mistake, however, to describe these countries as American ‘Trojan horses.’ Most regret signing the public letters and all recognise how unpopular Bush is with their own populations. As they become more integrated within the EU they are likely to accept the consensus EU views as they have done over Kyoto, the ICC and arms control agreements. Only Romania succumbed to US pressure and signed a bilateral accord with the EU on the ICC.

Even Turkey, a traditional ally of the US, has witnessed mounting anti-American attitudes, which were epitomised by the Turkish parliament’s refusal to allow US troops to enter Iraq from Turkish territory in the spring of 2003.

### **The EU Institutions**

There are many officials in the EU institutions dealing with the US as a result of the 1995 New Transatlantic Agenda that spawned a new bureaucratic machinery. All Member States have their largest embassies in Washington DC and the European Commission also maintains its largest delegation in the American capital. This means that there are several hundred bureaucrats with a vested interest in transatlantic relations. For the US, there is a natural tendency to divide and rule, most obvious during the Iraq war. This was an unfortunate example of the reluctance of Member States to agree on a common foreign and security policy. But when the EU speaks with one voice - as it does for example in trade, agriculture and competition policy - then the US sits up and listens. There is never a problem gaining access in Congress for Commissioners Pascal Lamy, Franz Fischler or Mario Monti. EU and Member States’ officials thus have differing views of the US depending on which part of the bureaucracy they represent. Trade officials may conspire to strike a deal before important multilateral negotiations. Agricultural officials may spend much time proving that the other side spends more on farming subsidies.

On political affairs, the Presidency leads for the EU. But the six-monthly rotation means that Member States have a habit of promoting their own agenda with the US, sometimes at the expense of the European interest. The top priority of the Swedes during their presidency was simply to get President Bush to visit Sweden, something no American president had ever done. President Chirac received President-elect George W Bush at the French ambassador’s residence in December 2000 without inviting either Commission President, Romano Prodi, or Javier Solana. It is no surprise,

therefore, that often there is no united European front when it comes to dealing with the US.

## **Conclusion**

Since the end of the conflict in former Yugoslavia there has been a general consensus among the foreign policy elite in the US that Europe is no longer a problem. But many wonder if Europe can be part of the solution to today's security threats, as seen from Washington. While the Republicans are more scathing of Europe's capabilities and use words such as 'appeasement' to describe Europe's response to terrorism, the Democrats are also asking what is Europe's role and vision of the future of the world. Both parties ask what Europe can do to help stabilise and bring democratic change to the Middle East. Both press for the swift entry of Turkey to the EU. (President Bush was indeed most explicit on the subject at the NATO Summit in Istanbul, prompting a sharp reaction from French President Chira.) Both ask what the EU can do in Russia, Iran and North Korea, three problem countries for the US. Both ask when Europe is going to improve its defence capabilities.

Although much of the current state of anti-Americanism in Europe is really anti-Bush, it would be a mistake to think that the election of John Kerry in November 2004 would resolve all transatlantic differences. Although there would likely be a change in style, attitude and rhetoric there will remain a number of serious differences, reflecting very different perceptions and interests.

The differences relating to sharing of sovereignty and readiness to use military power cross both parties. The social and economic differences are also not party related. These differences demonstrate that America, post 9/11, is more individualistic than Europe, more patriotic, more conservative and more religious. This American exceptionalism is indeed far stronger than any French exceptionalism. It is also not entirely new. Americans have always considered that they had a 'manifest destiny' to make 'the world free' from any 'axis of evil.'

The obvious lesson to be drawn for the EU is the urgent necessity of improving its ability to speak with one voice in foreign and security policy. Polls show that this would be a hugely popular development. There are majorities of over 70% in all Member States, including Britain, for a stronger EU foreign and security policy. Only 10% consider the world would be safer if the US were to remain the sole superpower. Fortunately, there are some proposals in the new Constitutional Treaty that should help the EU speak with one voice. There will be an EU Foreign Minister, a

nascent EU diplomatic service and provisions for some countries to move ahead on defence cooperation.

The bottom line for all Member States is that they are more likely to achieve their policy goals by operating through the framework of a 450 million strong EU rather than attempting to go-it-alone. But recognising this reality and transforming it into policy will be the real challenge for the EU. Only by offering an agreed European vision of the future of the international system and devoting the necessary resources to external relations will Europe be able to influence the US and help achieve its goal of developing a genuine partnership with America. Such a move could change how America views Europe, and also how Europe views America.

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