

A Brookings Press Briefing

**REPAIRING THE RIFT:
THE UNITED STATES AND EUROPE AFTER IRAQ**



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MR. JAMES B. STEINBERG: Good afternoon and welcome. Today you get at least a partially double dose of Iraq although I hope our discussions this afternoon will go well beyond it.

We're very fortunate to have a distinguished panel up here today as well as a number of distinguished guests in the audience. This panel is in part in connection with our semi-annual meeting of the U.S.-European Forum which is a joint effort by a number of institutions both here and in Europe to try to provide an ongoing dialogue between senior U.S. and European officials and those of us who like to stand on the sidelines and help U.S. and European officials think about what they should do. We have a number of representatives of those organizations with us on the panel today.

The title is "Repairing the Rift" though I think part of what we're going to try to think about is whether the rift is repairable.

With us to discuss this I have first on my left, and I don't think he'll take it amiss that he's sitting on my left, is Dr. Christoph Bertram who is the Director of the *Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik* in Berlin and one of the most distinguished commentators both as a journalist and an analyst of foreign policy, not only transatlantic but globally. Christoph has had many important positions over the years including when I first got to know him as Director of the International Institute for Strategic Studies.

On my near right, not too far to the right, Bob Kagan, a well known author and analyst from the Carnegie Endowment, now based in Brussels but soon to be returning back here to join the Washington circle and to become a neighbor again. We're glad to have you here.

To his right, Ivo Daalder, well known to all of you here, a Senior Fellow at Brookings.

Finally, Charles Grant who is the Director for the Centre for European Reform, also a distinguished journalist as well as analyst and author of many insightful comments on transatlantic relations well as on the future of Europe.

I thought we would begin first by focusing a little bit on how we got to where we've gotten to which is obviously not a very happy place in terms of transatlantic relations. I'm going to ask Bob and Christoph to begin that discussion and then turn from there to Ivo and Charles to talk about how we get out of where we are. Although as I know from long experience with my colleagues, I think all of our panelists will have something to say on both of those topics.

Let me begin perhaps by Christoph asking you to begin our discussion, and then we'll turn to Bob.



MR. CHRISTOPH BERTRAM: Thank you very much.

I think we've gotten where we are not just in the last few months. I think probably the risks start at the time when Europe becomes whole and free again and when there is very little left in the world to balance American power and the strategic challenges move beyond Europe.

That has the following consequences. That the United States which has looked after these strategic challenges before, and Europeans were quite happy to leave those things to the Americans, now can use her power in a way in which it wasn't possible when the Soviet Union existed and restricted and restrained that power, and when the strategic center or the center of strategic issues was in Europe.

And secondly, it meant that Europeans haven't really developed a strategic sense of those issues that are now dominated.

If I ask myself how we got here, then it has something to do with the double learning process which we are still in the midst of. I think the United States learning to live with this extraordinary unchecked and unbalanced power in a world in which the strategic challenges are no longer as predictable, orderly as they used to be before, and Europe gradually waking up to the sense that the challenges are out there, that our means to deal with them are woefully underdeveloped, and that the kind of relationship we thought we had with the United States is no longer [opposite]. And many of the ineptitudes which have been so visible in the ways in which governments on both sides of the Atlantic have tried to deal with each other, I think have their roots precisely there. The process of coming to grips with a fundamentally changed strategic situation is still on and hasn't been complete.

Now if I ask myself whether, and you may not want me to say anything on this Jim, how do we get out of this?

MR. STEINBERG: If you'll indulge me, why don't we hold it right there for a minute because I do think it's important to spend a minute thinking about, to see whether we have an agreement or disagreement about how we got here. I think it's really critical to the question of how we go forward. If it's a question of strategic divergence, we have a very different problem than if we have a problem of, as you might have suggested, learning curves that might ultimately lead to different decisions or different kinds of political leadership and the like. So I'd be a little bit focused for a moment and then we'll have a chance and some time to get to that as well.

Bob?



MR. ROBERT KAGAN: Thank you, Jim.

Christoph, you just said to me that you've been very critical of me and I have to say that I'm not in a position to be very critical of you because I actually agree with what you just said very substantially. I guess the only thing I would inject in that, and this I think is where Jim was heading, is whether in addition to the sort of structural issues you raised which are very real and perhaps are the determinative factor, whether they result in something that might fit under the category of ideological differences. In my view there probably are ideological differences and the difficulty of the situation is that the ideological differences tend to reinforce this strategic divergence and the strategic divergence reinforces the ideological gap.

By ideological gap I mean simply that I think Europeans and Americans have developed very different ways of looking at questions of military force and where legitimate authority comes for action and that this, I do think that although it's probably been an evolution that began before the end of the Cold War, certainly the end of the Cold War was the pivotal event, and the formation of the European Union with a whole set of rules and principles for international relations within the European continent, that as far as I can tell living in Europe, Europeans increasingly believe can be applied to the rest of the world.

So we have this different attitude towards the use of force and the exercise of military power and even the utility and morality of military power. And there are a lot of people who I think have been trying to make the argument that it's really not that great a divergence and we've had, I would say, some misleading polls over the past year suggesting that there really is no disagreement. But here we stand today with 70 percent of the American public favoring the war in Iraq and something approaching 80 percent of the European public opposing the war in Iraq. I think there's something there that we need to grapple with. It's not simply that we have a disagreement about technical details about whether this is right or whether this is exactly the appropriate way to go about it. I think there are some very significant ideological divergences which we will need to address.

I won't get into how to repair either, but I think if we ignore these differences we will not make a lot of progress. If we ignore the difference in world view we will not -- We have to confront it, grapple with it, and come up with a new way of dealing with each other that acknowledges it.

Now I think a historian looking back on the last year could have a wonderful time, although it may tax even the finest historians to try to put together exactly what went wrong and how things got so bad, because I think clearly in addition to the clash of world views and the strategic divergence that Christoph talks about there have been personalities involved.

A good historian could go through the events of just the last year or eight months and try to understand why Jacques Chirac said this at that moment and what is the relationship, how did the relationship between Chirac and Schroeder get impacted by things that the Bush Administration said? There's a very complex set of issues having to do with personalities and the relationships within Europe and between governments in Europe.

But I do think that standing behind all that and ultimately pushing it in the direction it went is this fundamental divergence of ideological viewpoints.

MR. STEINBERG: Let me push you on a couple of elements of that, Bob.

We had the use of military force in Afghanistan. This was certainly supported by European governments and not profoundly objected to by the European public.

You had a situation, really up until the sort of end game here in the United States where the American people were moderately supportive but not hot to trot to go to war in Iraq. Clearly there's been a rallying around the President, and once the troops get in you're going to get large numbers.

But are we trying to put too much on seeing Iraq when's there's obviously a huge divergence, as a template for everything? Or are we going to see in each case, in some respects people will come together on some, people diverge on others?

MR. KAGAN: Obviously that's true to some extent. I don't agree with you in terms of the American public opinion. The polls on straightforward questions should the United States take military action against Iraq have been remarkably consistent for over a year. They've been ranging between 60 percent and 70 percent all the way through.

MR. STEINBERG: To be fair, we don't have to debate polls, but for most of it, 30 percent or less through most of the fall said the United States should act alone. So it's not an overwhelming --

MR. KAGAN: You're right. We shouldn't debate this because it's an endless discussion.

I will tell you that Americans, when you ask them would you like to do it alone, would you like to have a million dollars? The answers come back easily enough. But when push came to shove they were willing to do it alone and in fact poll support for the UN Security Council dropped precipitously in the last month as it became clear that the UN Security Council wouldn't support it.

So let's not get into polls because the questions are all very misleading.

But sure. I think Iraq is the perfect storm. You couldn't have picked an issue more likely to divide Americans and Europeans on precisely the hottest issues that tend to divide them, and I think that on other issues in the future, if we have a crisis in Asia, let's say the next big crisis is in Asia. Let's say it's a crisis on the Korean Peninsula. Say it's a crisis between China and Taiwan. I don't think it's likely that you're going to have the same level of transatlantic tension as you had over the Iraq crisis.

But I do not believe, because I think Christoph is right on the structural changes, and I believe there are also fundamental ideological issues which Iraq cast a particularly harsh light on, but which were pre-existing.

Afghanistan, it ended nice and quickly. But you remember as well as I do --

MR. BERTRAM: It hasn't ended.

MR. KAGAN: Well, the hard aspect of the war. As that war was dragging on, before it was becoming clear, before the Taliban collapsed, European discomfort with that war was growing and if things hadn't moved more successfully it's not clear to me. And I think that even on issues where we fought together as in Kosovo there were clearly splits that opened up between the United States and the allies. Even Kosovo revealed some of these divergences and some of the difficulties that we were going to have. So Iraq made it worse. Iraq is the worst possible case. But I think the problems are real.

MR. STEINBERG: Christoph, two questions to you.

One, Bob raised the question of leadership and it's obviously been dramatically an issue in the case of Germany. How much is the depth of the hole that we're in a function of individual leaders making decisions as opposed to broad orientations of governments?

Bob's also hinted at a second problem which is divisions within Europe itself and how much is this old Europe/new Europe, old EU/new EU and how much of it should we think of these as common European divergences from the United States as opposed to differences even within Europe?

MR. BERTRAM: On the first one, I don't want to justify or excuse, but it seems to me that America has changed the playing field. It hasn't been remarked by the German Chancellor. Real change is the way in which the United States says this is what we want to do. If you don't want to be involved that's your problem, not ours.

On the second one, it's become very clear now that any idea that Europe could hold together against the United States I think always was an illusion, but people actually held onto that illusion because it was so nice to have. This illusion has now been exposed.

I think what we're going to see is not old Europe/new Europe. After all, is Denmark old Europe or is it new Europe? Is Italy old Europe or is it new Europe? I think we're going to see that the European Union will hang together on a number of very important things. It will not hang together on strategic decisions. But that means, unfortunately, that in order to have some European weight a much smaller group of countries will have to provide it, rather than with 15 or 25 or 36 that might one day become members of the European Union.

MR. STEINBERG: But is that good news or bad news? If there's going to be a diversity in European views, does that mean the United States will always have enough Europeans that agree with it that we're going to have if not a perfectly harmonious transatlantic relationship, at least enough of a bond that --

MR. BERTRAM: Well you know, for 50 years the United States has been trying to encourage European integration and that time is over. They're no longer doing it.

IF you look at the way in which European integration actually came about, it would not have come about without massive support from the United States.

You look at the way in which money actually did its work with all the help from Atchison and Truman you could get, quite remarkable. You remember how John Foster Dallas was actually scolding the British to stop undermining the European community as it was then. Quite remarkable. There has been a tradition going up to Clinton of supporting that kind of effort.

MR. KAGAN: Oh, come on.

MR. BERTRAM: That is no longer so.

MR. KAGAN: The United States didn't support it that enthusiastically. There was a lot of concern expressed in the Clinton Administration about the common defense and foreign policy --

MR. BERTRAM: Common defense and foreign policy until they realized there's a lot of hot air. I agree with that. But nevertheless on the notion that it would be useful for Europe to unite, I think until recently we've had a continuity in the American position. That is no longer there.

MR. STEINBERG: Whichever version of the diagnosis you take, the challenge that falls to Ivo and Charles is obviously a fairly serious one. Whether it's strategic, leadership, structural, these are big problems.

Charles, how do we take it from here?



MR. CHARLES GRANT: I'm told I'm allowed three minutes. I'm going to fit 15 suggestions into three minutes. [Laughter] Five for the Americans, five for the Europeans, and five for them to do together.

Five for the Americans. Start with the most obvious of all. Think twice before you act unilaterally. Of course America will want to be unilateral sometimes and it should be unilateral sometimes. But there is a price to be paid. Joe [Nye's] warnings in his book last year has come true, really. If you behave arrogantly and unilaterally you lose friends, you lose allies, and you can't win votes at the UN.

Secondly, remember the style of your diplomacy affects the outcome. If you tell countries or allies that they're like Libya and Cuba or if you tell others that they're old Europe and that kind of thing, they're less likely to support you diplomatically. They're more likely to try and undermine you diplomatically. So remember the style of your diplomacy.

Thirdly, Iraq. Treat reconstruction of Iraq as an opportunity to revive transatlantic cooperation. That means that the UN has to play a role in the politics and the economics of rebuilding Iraq as it's done in Kosovo. And it also means that we can use NATO to play a role in Iraq, too. Peacekeeping.

Fourthly, the Middle East peace process. Try to appear even-handed. Don't go on having two different foreign ministries trying to deal with the problem. America is a very unusual country. It has two foreign ministries. Most countries have one. You have two foreign ministries with different foreign policies on many things including the Middle East peace process. So the President has to decide to have one foreign ministry and decide which one it is. And work with the quartet because you won't get peace in the Middle East of course unless the Americans are driving it. They've got to be the most important people involved. But if you do it on your own it won't work very well because your credibility is so low with Arab people. Therefore use the quartet as a cover, have the UN, the EU and the Russians giving you some cover for what will actually be driven by the Americans.

Fifthly, don't jiggle the knife in the wound between new Europe and old Europe. A Europe that is weak and divided is not good for the U.S. You may get some countries who will

support you, but by definition you will have other countries who are plotting against you. That's not in your interest.

As for the Europeans, of course enhance your military capabilities. I think European countries should adopt a target like spending 2.5 percent of their GDP on defense, for example. And they need to of course invest in some of the new technologies which we're reading so much about at the moment.

Secondly, and this is where I agree with the U.S. hawks. Take weapons of mass destruction more seriously. For too long Europeans have ignored them. America spent \$7 billion on Nunn/Lugar money in the last ten years. The Europeans spent \$1 billion. That's shameful. Take the threat more seriously. Be prepared to get tougher on proliferators. And be prepared if necessary to use force against them.

Thirdly, improve the institutions of your CSFC, the Common [inaudible] Policy. This isn't rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic while it sinks. Institutions actually matter. And some of the reforms coming out of the convention such as abolishing the rotating presidency, such as merging the jobs of Patten and Solana are encouraging. And they will at the margin make a difference.

Fourthly, get your economy going faster. I think one of the big problems in transatlantic relations is the perception, in deed the reality, that the European economy is growing slowly compared to the U.S. economy. It has a lot of economic problems. So the Europeans should push ahead with their economic reform program and reform the growth and stability pack so it's less constraining. That will give the Europeans more self-confidence.

Finally for the Europeans, develop stronger and more effective neighborhood policies. Enlargement has been a huge success. It's spread stability and security and democracy over most of the continent. But now we have a new set of neighbors. We have an arc of instability running down the east, southeast, and south of the EU from Ukraine to Morocco, through the Balkans. The EU can't offer membership to these countries any time soon. It does need to offer much closer partnerships, more aid, more trade, but conditional on good behavior, good governance, economic performance. They need to get tougher with their conditionality.

Finally, advice to both Europe and America. Insulate the WTO round from strategic crisis. Already it's been damaged. I hear that some of the concessions that it was due to make on the pricing of drugs in the Third World has been overruled by people above him in the Administration which is very sad. And the French, of course, are not in a mood to compromise on agriculture at the moment. So try and insulate the trade round.

Secondly, and this is in deference to what Ron Adams has been writing, Iran. Iran is a

future source of great rivalry and risks between us. We have the same objective. We know what kind of Iran we want. We have different tactics. Europe wants to engage, America wants to isolate. Both tactics have failed completely. Let's try and get together around a table and work out a common approach to Iran.

Thirdly, on weapons of mass destruction. The sure [inaudible] for a grand strategic bargain. As I said, Europeans must take the threat more seriously, be prepared if necessary to use force; but Americans must sign up to the arms control treaties which are not as relevant as the Pentagon thinks.

This leads onto my fourth suggestion to both of them. We believe in intervention in different ways. Most liberal left Europeans think intervention is for humanitarian reasons, although Kosovo is fine. Many hawks in Washington believe intervention to deal with WMD a la Iraq is fine. They don't really come at it from the same position. But surely we can get together and work out some sort of guideline, some sort of doctrine for when we should intervene in another country's internal affairs.

Some people in this town may say we'll just do it when it's in our national interest. Well fine, you can do that. But if you don't have legitimacy from some international organization, at least a set of principles and guidelines, you won't have any allies when you intervene.

And lastly, do we not need some sort of institution? There's no transatlantic institution except for NATO which is only dealing with security questions. How about having fireside chats for world leaders? Twenty-five European Prime Ministers, 25 senior Americans including senators and congressmen, getting together for 24 hours once a year to talk to each other, no officials allowed in the room. They need to get to know each better than each one's done in the past.

Those are my 15 suggestions.

MR. STEINBERG: There's a lot to be said for practical suggestions and I'll give Ivo the principal shot. I would just say I hope Iran doesn't turn out to be the test case. Having spent a number of years of my time in government trying to find a common policy towards Iran, I would not put that on my list of things that I'm most hopeful about.

Ivo?



MR. IVO H. DAALDER: You just heard the list of 15 suggestions coming after the discussion of what's wrong and how we got where we are. I think we can probably all go home now because I'm deeply depressed. I think all 15 are brilliant. I would support every single one. And I don't think any one of them is going to happen. [Laughter] That in fact tells you a lot about the state of the relationship.

This is a very different time. I'm not old enough to have lived all 50 years of this relationship, but I've lived a good part of it. I've never seen anything like it. This is different. This is not the Euro missile crisis. This is different. It's fundamentally different.

Bob's written a book about it. I think Christoph has put his finger on it. Therefore, the first thing we need to do when we think about repairing the rift or overcoming the divide is to recognize we can't go back. There is no more going back to the good old days where we had the same kind of relationship within the same kind of structures. It's not that there is an Atlantic framework out there that we're all going to, when this crisis is over or when these leaders leave, that we can then go back to the same comfort that all of us Atlanticists have grown up with. That era is over. It's gone. It's no more. That's the first thing we need to recognize.

It is the reality that the status quo ante does not exist. That is very difficult for a lot of those people who care about U.S.-European relations because they're Atlanticists. And the problem is they are for something that no longer exists. So we've got to figure out some new way of thinking about it. We've got to find a new framework in which to deal. That recognizes the realities that Bob and Christoph talked about.

Most importantly, the reality that the transatlantic relationship is no longer the central relationship either for Europe or for the United States. Number one, we may wish it was, but it isn't. We have to figure that out.

What does that mean? Concretely. Just three issues that I'd highlight, and some of them are as ambitious as the 15 that Charles, in fact they overlap, as Charles' issues.

One is, Europe needs to step up to the plate. To recognize that it can no longer, will no longer be able to depend on the United States for many things that it wants. Therefore Europeans need to find ways to cooperate among themselves in order to achieve objectives that they seek. Not just in Europe, which they do pretty well, not just in the immediate neighborhood which they don't do very well, but globally, which they don't do at all. That is going to be the challenge. It's going to be a challenge for Mr. Blair, for Mr. Chirac, for Mr. Schroeder and their successors.

If they don't grasp the fact that they have to cooperate, they're going to be quite literally left in the dust by this relationship that we have now developed.

That's number one.

For the United States, an issue that both Bob and Charles talked about. Leaders matter and people matter and it does matter when you don't call your close allies. The President of the United States and the Chancellor of Germany have not spoken in many months. That matters. It matters that the Secretary of State is today for the first time in Europe with one exception in eight months. He went to Davos, I think, in December. But he has never been to Paris. It matters. It matters that you are basically saying to people we don't really value you enough to spend any time with you over there. To pick up the phone. To say let's figure out how we're going to move ahead together.

It doesn't mean that the grand strategic issues are going to be resolved by more interaction and better diplomacy. It doesn't mean that the ideological differences are going to be bridged and overcome by just having a tête-à-tête. But it does mean that many of the vitriol that is now existing in the relationship might be released, at least somewhat, if we engage in normal diplomatic behavior. That is we travel and visit each other. Not just for the five minutes or the two-second meeting, but actually spend some time. That's what we have done for 50 years and we probably ought to do it in the future.

Third, Iraq. Iraq is on the one hand the perfect storm that divides us but it is also perhaps the perfect opportunity to figure out how to reunite us. I think all of us on this podium, and Bob and Jim and I have in the last four weeks, spent quite some time figuring out how can we design a strategy to take this opportunity that exists. We have a massive, extraordinary problem that is uncommon which is we have an Iraq that has to be built, not rebuilt, but built. Reformed. From the ground up. This is not something that the United States can do alone. It's not something that the United States and Europe can do alone. It is not even something the United States, Europe and the Iraqi people can do together. But we have to make a start and we cannot fail. It is in the strategic interest of everybody not to fail, so we have to start and we have to start by making sure that the moment we have a new governing structure in Iraq, it is not just American, but it includes as many non-Americans who are capable and willing and able to do what needs to be done.

Think of a Bernard Kouchner, what he could do in a transitional administration. A man who spent many years in Northern Iraq, who was the founder of Doctors Without Borders who ran the first year of the UN Mission in Kosovo, who is a doctor and a former Minister of Health, who happens to be from a country that is not part of the coalition. But he could make a contribution to this transitional administration. That's number one. Internationalize, bring in as many talented people around the world within the structure that is being set up to take care of the

civilian administration.

Secondly, on the security and stabilization side. We have the most successful alliance in the history of the world that has no idea what to do. It's called NATO. It's the one place where Europeans and Americans dare to talk to each other in civilized ways. And why not use it?

Actually this organization knows how to do peacekeeping. It knows how to do stabilization. It knows it better than the U.S. Army and the U.S. Marine Corps or indeed anybody else. Let's use it.

Third, we've got to figure out a way to overcome the ideological differences that exist, to figure out a way in which we can set up post-war structures in Iraq within a UN umbrella. Whatever that umbrella is, we just have to work it. We have to work it together to figure out what that UN umbrella is. And to leave our most extreme ideological positions outside the door which is the European sense that the UN has to run the whole place. The UN doesn't run places like this. And the U.S. position which is that the UN just has to bless anything we say it needs to bless. Those positions are not going to get us anywhere.

But in between there's lots of stuff that Europeans and Americans in a practical, pragmatic way can agree on. And if we do that, if we can get a UN framework of *chapeau* to use the diplomatic language of record. If we can get a NATO role in the security structure. If we can internationalize the administrative structure. Those three things, we will have done practically a lot of things. That doesn't repair the rift but it puts the relationship on a very new and different pattern which is, after all, what all of us -- Atlanticists and non-Atlanticists -- would like to see happen.

MR. STEINBERG: I guess, Ivo, even if you can't use French in the Congress it's okay still here at Brookings. [Laughter]

I want to give both Christoph and Bob a chance to react to these prescriptions and give some of their own but I'd just like to make one observation about the strategic environment.

I think, Bob and Ivo and others have pointed out the fact that we do have a radical change in the strategic environment. Unlike the period of the Cold War when we were indispensable partners and we had to cooperate with each other, the world has changed. We don't have to cooperate with each other, but at the same time I think it's important to recognize as I think both interventions from Charles and Ivo have suggested, that things will be a lot better if we do. And we are moving from an indispensable partnership to an elective partnership which means that it's not fated to happen but there is an opportunity for it to happen. I think that's why this question about trying to identify where we can go forward and understand both the extent of the strategic divergence and the limits of that divergence is really critical.

Christoph, your way forward. It's your chance now.

MR. BERTRAM: I'm half [inaudible] on this one. I think that Ivo is absolutely right, that we have to stop thinking in Europe in strategic terms in relation to the new strategic challenges. We are not doing that enough. And clearly in order to have any real impact on this we can't do it on a unilateralist, national level, we have to do it together in the European sense.

I think it's also right that we have to try and reduce the tensions and the frustrations and irritations where we can. We have to have back-channels, not just visits. There is no back channel between Berlin and Washington. There hasn't been from the start. It's very disturbing. Very disturbing. And I'm not quite sure there's a back channel between Paris and Washington.

So we have to try and do that. We have to be careful how we speak because the way in which politicians speak has an impact on public opinion, and while governments are cynical, public opinions are not.

But having said that, I think there is going to remain a fundamental [inaudible], and that is the United States and I think it's going to continue to be there, has ceased to be a status quo power. And while Europeans also like to see things changing, their way of thinking about change and their methods of producing change will remain fundamentally different.

And not just because, Bob Kagan, because of different means. I think that as a deep conviction. That instead of excluding countries and going after them with miniature might, one has to include them and undermine them to embrace it. Nothing is as difficult in a globalized world as influencing unpleasant regimes from the outside. Including, by the way, of clobbering them militarily and occupying them. Nothing is as difficult to do that.

I think our view will remain, and in order to do this successfully you have to do it from the bottom up rather than from the top down.

I believe this is going to be much [inaudible], it will be much more slowly, it will not have the ideological overtones that are familiar here. And expect that America not least resting on the enormous resources of military power will find it very difficult to resist the temptation of changing the status quo, actively. But if this deep division which precedes the Bush Administration, which precedes the Clinton Administration, of how we're going to live, what order is going to be in the world which I think is going to be the most difficult one to cope with, it increases the need to try and find areas of cooperation and practice cooperation. And when Ivo said and others about post-war Iraq is right. It's bang in the center of something one could think of.

I think we may find a similar effort in North Korea. I think we may even be able gradually to write something out in Iran and elsewhere. I'm not sure about Israel and Palestine for reasons that have much more to do with domestic American politics than they have to do with the problem itself. So we shouldn't fool ourselves. We also shouldn't fool ourselves that there can be some kind of new transatlantic organization given these differences. We have to use the ones that we have, we have to use NATO as much as we can, we have to hold the United States to NATO, even an Administration that seems to be a bit tired of it. But all of these things are second best. We're not going to return to a transatlantic relationship which concentrates on the Atlantic, which concentrates on the European situation, which concentrates on American leadership bringing about consensus across the Atlantic.

MR. STEINBERG: Christoph, this argument, the European argument that the best way to deal with difficult states is by engaging them isn't something that's just come up in recent months or years. It's been a long debate. For some time, and including in the Clinton Administration, there had been disagreements about the efficacy of that strategy.

The question is post 9/11 do we have the luxury of that kind of long term living with danger as difficult states develop weapons of mass destruction, as the Administration fears potentially makes those weapons available to even more dangerous terrorist groups? What's the likelihood that in this environment, given the level of at least in the U.S. the concern about that problem, that we would find more convergence around that kind of strategy.

MR. BERTRAM: I'm not sure that 9/11 has changed the European conviction about the best strategy.

MR. STEINBERG: I'm arguing that what it has done is perhaps deepened the American doubts about that strategy.

MR. BERTRAM: Indeed, somebody said the other day and I think it's worth repeating, Americans thought that 9/11 had changed the world but it only changed Americans. The rest of the world has not changed since 9/11. The rest of the world has experienced terrorism in various ways. The rest of the world has found it quite natural to be vulnerable. The rest of the world has adapted to vulnerability over decades and centuries. The United States has that still coming to them -- adapting to vulnerability.

Now you say one had to deal with the challenges that relate to terrorism and non-state actors and the globalization of insecurity and you are absolutely right. But isn't precisely the most promising way of dealing with the undercurrent of these developments, and that doesn't exclude if they are not successful, you may have to act rapidly and preemptively. But isn't the most successful way of [inaudible] is to preciously try to influence the domestic behavior of states by making it interesting for them to conform to your ideas rather than try to impose your

will on them? Isn't that the most lasting and most promising way of doing it?

So it seems to me 9/11 has not reduced in any way that cleavage that you and I have been talking about, and has emphasized it. And it also has increased, I believe, the European conviction that basically our approach, and I hope one day we'll have the means to follow through on our vision. That remains one of the fundamental problems with all of us, we have nice visions but not enough means to implement it. But I think it has confirmed the view in Europe that precisely because of the way in which states collapse and states fail and groups with nasty projects profit from this and take advantage of this, it is necessary to try to work by encouraging society, by providing stability, by enlarging your parameter of stability as we have been doing.

As Bob Kagan has said, it is not we have to have the European Union established everywhere including in the transcorporate world. This is not what we are thinking. We are not as naive as that. But it is a model which in different ways can be tried and needs to be tried. It's really the problem of terrorism in a globalized world and it can be addressed.

MR. STEINBERG: Bob? I don't mean to set you up.

MR. KAGAN: No, but I mean that's a wonderfully perfect illustration of the divide that exists on these fundamental issues. That is a most eloquent statesmen of the European view of the world which I think is not shared even by Republicans and Democrats sitting up here on the podium.

So this gets to the question of how -- When I hear that, and we're back at this discussion again. I'm now a three-quarters Daalderist on the pessimism front.

If I could maybe just get back to beginning to answer how do we start repairing this question, I guess because I think the gulf is so large we shouldn't be too ambiguous in our effort to bring some kind of great unity where there is no great unity, and that perhaps a combination of baby steps and the right music is not a bad idea. And also avoiding the worst temptations.

I guess one of the things I wanted to add to the conversation was that there is a very strong -- Each side has a very strong temptation now which both sides have very good reason to follow, but which both sides should try very hard to resist. On the American side -- And they're also very intimately related to each other.

On the American side there is a temptation now to punish those who were against us on this conflict and to try to divide Europe so that we can work a Europe, work the European split in such a way that it's advantageous to American policy.

I think both of those temptations should be resisted. I think they're ultimately self-defeating. I think it's a mistake for the United States to ask Europeans to choose between being European and being pro-American. That is not a choice that we even want to ask Tony Blair to make, or particularly we don't want to ask Tony Blair to have to make.

So I just think as tempting as it may be to want to punish and reward, we should probably just let it go.

On the European side there is a temptation in some quarters, obviously in certain parts of Europe, to want to create a Europe that is capable of checking the United States. That either overtly or implicitly is designed to check American power or to create a Europe that is capable of resisting that, and you see some of this in what I take it now is becoming an abortive mini-core group defense community of Belgium and Luxembourg and --

MR. GRANT: Christoph is a great fan of the idea of a core group including Belgium and Luxembourg.

MR. BERTRAM: I'm longing for a moment to be able to explain it, but I don't want to. [Laughter]

MR. KAGAN: We never get to explain your characterizations of -- [Laughter] So I don't think you get to explain your Luxembourg/Benelux strategy minus the Netherlands anyway.

But I think approach is self-defeating for Europe because I think that as long as Europe tries to maintain any sense of opposition to the United States, it divides Europe. So if Europe wants to be whole, it has to settle its problems with the United States because the U.S. is now a foreign policy issue in Europe but it's a divisive issue. It is not a uniting issue as it turns out.

So I think that let's start by avoiding those mistakes because those mistakes reinforce each other. When Americans see that there's a tendency on the part of some Europeans to want to rise up to check the United States, then they have an incentive and good reason to want to divide. When the United States is dividing, then the Europeans have a good reason to want to -- So it's all very circular.

Finally, I guess I would say among the baby steps that we can take, and it's not a baby step in a real sense, but is in Iraq. There are compromises to be reached. The United States should approach this with an open mind.

I think one thing we have to be clear on, and I hope we all agree on this, is that the interests of the Iraqi people have to come first. We're not going to organize a transatlantic repair job on the backs of the Iraqi people. So the first goal should be to do what is best for the Iraqi

people, but within that context try to bridge the differences that we have on this issue. And if we can do that and take these baby steps and avoid the worst temptations, maybe we can look up again in two years and see what else can be done.

MR. STEINBERG: I'm going to let Christoph have a chance to explain how the Belgians are going to lead Europe into a new era of defense capability.

MR. BERTRAM: You're a pretty arrogant lot. [Laughter] A pretty arrogant lot.

MR. KAGAN: We're Americans. [Laughter]

MR. BERTRAM: What problem do we have? We have a problem that we need to be close to the United States in our own interests. We don't want to be totally dependent on what America does. We want to have a degree of influence. If you look at the way in which the French and the British and the Germans and others have behaved over the last six months it was each of them trying to have some influence. Stupidly not together, which might have given them some influence; and stupidly too late. If they had done that much earlier, they probably would have had some influence.

So it's not a question of ganging up against the United States which would be A, counterproductive because it would split us; and B, it would not have much effect.

But how do you put more weight on the scales? And I think that the experience we've had over the last six months is that clearly the idea that we could bring all members of the European Union, now enlarging to 25, including Malta and Cyprus, to a degree on a common position in strategic terms -- even agricultural policy is difficult enough -- but not on this long-term structural [inaudible], we would probably find agreement over that. That's good enough.

But on strategic issues, the 15 and the 25 will not do.

So the question is should one not think of a much closer group in which countries actually can see eye to eye sufficiently with each other so that even in a crisis they are willing to act together? That is the argument for the core group.

I don't think that Luxembourg and Belgium will be able to form a core group, but I do think that France and Germany, if they're serious, can form a group to which others will adhere providing they're playing it right. I don't think they've played it right so far, but I think they can play it right. And the core group doesn't mean that you're against other members. It means that some countries are saying we are going to form -- It's like Delaware and [inaudible]. I don't know whether that's common borders, agreeing to join one state. It seems to me what matters is precisely this quantum jump of cooperation in order to make sense.

So the core group is not an attempt to undermine the European Union. It's not an attempt to gang up against the United States. It's an attempt to try and have vis-à-vis the [inaudible] some degree of influence. And that I think is what we have to think of.

MR. STEINBERG: Christoph, and I do want to open this up to the audience. Charles, talked about European Security Corporation. An important part of the question that I have for you which is that it strikes me that the most positive development towards the vision that you articulate and the one which I have a lot of sympathy for because I do think it's in the U.S. interest, was when the dialogue began not between France and Germany which has always existed in European construction, but between France and Britain to have a common view. Because without that pole, it seems to me very unlikely that Europe is going to have the outward strategic orientation that has been talked about by you and others.

And if it is a Franco-German led effort, how do you avoid the possibility that this, given at least the balancing against the U.S. orientation of the French government, to provide not a partner for the United States, but a counterweight to the United States. How do you avoid that becoming the defining issue in European politics?

MR. BERTRAM: I must say, I have a simple answer for that. If you want to blend countries together, don't start with too many at the same time but start with one or two and then see how it's working.

The argument that one hears now is we're all in favor of a core Europe, but Britain must be in there from the start, is an argument against the core group. You're not going to bring it about that way.

And if you hear it, Jim said oh, we must not exclude others. Those arguments are usually done by those who don't want to do anything serious in this respect. Who want to keep their national structure and do a little bit here and there which then they can sell as [inaudible] of which were very productive in Europe, as you know, which don't really mean that we're getting anywhere.

If we're serious, we shouldn't start with too many at the same time. But later on, others will want to join because they think it's a good idea and the experience of the continentals is that the Brits usually join when we do something serious. If we don't do anything serious, they say where they are.

So let's do something serious in the hope that one day the --

MR. GRANT: I think Christoph's been led off the garden path by the French. [Laughter]

I normally agree with almost everything Christoph says and writes. It's quite rare that I disagree with him. But I really think this is a pretty crazy idea.

There are two things behind this core group. One is the French are terrified of enlargement and they want to go back to good old days of a cozy little club of six countries which they can dominate and boss around.

The second idea behind it is that the federalists, and there are still some of them in Germany, in Italy, in Belgium. The federalists are frightened of enlargement because they know as Mrs. Thatcher rightly pointed out, you can't have a super state if you have 25 countries in the union.

So you have two groups of people worried about change who want to turn the clock back, hence the core Europe. The treaties allow EU countries to set up so-called avant-garde groups, [in French] but only if most EU countries agree. Now most EU countries will not agree to what Christoph is proposing because they don't want to be outside. The East Europeans hate the idea of being left out. The British and Spanish [inaudible]. Many of the smaller countries too. They'll say no.

But if you do it against their wishes or set up a new organization outside the treaties with its own institution and you say that's not going to divide Europe, you say it's not undermining the EU? It's playing into Rumsfeld's hands. You will be dividing and ruling, allowing Rumsfeld to play off the new Europe against old Europe. You are not anti-American, Christoph, but many people pushing this are and they see the core establishing a European foreign policy that is anti-American. And you've been bamboozled by them. [Laughter]

MR. KAGAN: And you thought Democrats and Republicans were -- [Laughter]

MR. STEINBERG: -- transatlantic divide.

MR. KAGAN: This is why the Americans should not stew about dividing Europe because it's entirely unnecessary. [Laughter]

MR. BERTRAM: That's why we continentals have to stay together as well.

MR. STEINBERG: Okay, I think that's a perfect note to pivot to questions from the audience. We have a terrific group of people here and what I'd like you do, especially because we have a large group, if you wait until the mike comes to you and identify yourself and then ask your question.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

QUESTION: I'm Bo Miller. I do some analysis in the State Department. A quick question for Bertram and another one for Charles.

Christoph, how does that core group work in the defensive security area given the kind of German defense attitude and spending and the situation that we have under this government? It seems to me like they belong closer to the Luxembourgers and the Belgians perhaps than they do to the French at the moment.

And a question for Charles. On your proposed sort of an EU of 25 on each side and so forth, besides the fact that I'm not sure that that's very workable given our history of high level meetings, would one part of that be a prior discussion of mutual threat perceptions or divergences in understanding the nature of those things that we see as threats around the world?

MR. STEINBERG: I was going to ask Charles, among the 25 is the President of the EU also in the room? [Laughter]

MR. BERTRAM: On the first issue I think you must have been away from the State Department for the last few days because you otherwise would have realized that both the Green Foreign Minister in Germany and the Chancellor have been talking about the need to increase defense spending. Now I don't think that's going to be much of a remedy, quite frankly. If you increase defense spending by five or ten percent you very soon find that the rise of personnel costs is eating it up again. The only way in which Europeans can put more money into defense than they spend is to fuse their resources.

The idea for the core group that would make, perhaps exemplify what I have in mind, is the French and the Germans fusing their efforts. This would not in any way upset the European Union. It would make it necessary to create a common command, a common political control, a common budget, a common parliamentary control. It would be quite remarkable in actually getting things done.

I think the only way to get more effective power in military terms, you know we spend a lot of money in Europe on defense. We spend half a billion euros a day on defense. Do you realize that? You people, for reasons that are not quite clear to any of us, spend a billion euros a day, or dollars a day. We spend half a billion dollars or euros a day. That's a lot of money. We're buying very little for it.

So unless we really put our structures together, we're not going to be very efficient in this

field. We have to start doing that.

I don't think that whatever abrogations the Europeans have produced, this is likely to do that job. We have to do it differently.

MR. GRANT: I think discussing common threat perceptions is very important. All I'm really saying is I don't want a new institution. I just want people to get together and talk.

The old idea when Giscard who invented both the G-7 and the European Council, the idea was informal fireside chats, walks in the woods, get to know each other then you understand each other better. One important thing would be threat perception and also, as I already mentioned, the idea of when you intervene. I think we need to try and thrash out some common guidelines on when it's okay to invade other countries.

QUESTION: Andrew Pierre, Georgetown University.

A lot has been said about the divisions within Europe, but I'm not sure that European opinion today, broad European opinion, is that divided about its view of the future role of the United States and the world.

Here I'm struck by the fact that there has been a shift in the European public toward its view of the United States as a result of a runup to the Gulf War, and I suspect that when the war is over there will be a residue which will prevent simply a realignment of European views towards the old [inaudible] view.

So irrespective of whether one is the new Europe or the old Europe and Berlusconi and [inaudible] don't necessarily represent their countries.

So I'm asking whether there's something fundamental which has changed. That is the perception of how the United States acts and decides somewhat outside the international system and past practices of international law and past evaluation of the United Nations.

In that regard Jacques Chirac has put forth an alternative view, let's say, and one could be very skeptical about his motivation, etc., etc., but it's striking that first of all it has wide support within—not just his own followers, let's say. In fact some of his own followers are going the other direction. They worry about the impact of the damage from the United States. But the Socialists in the National Assembly really tried to mandate a necessary veto on the part of France at the Security Council.

He does put forth in the debate a Gaullist point of view, if you like, which is an alternative view of Europe and the world and what the role of the United States in the world is.

I wonder to what extent anybody on the panel thinks that the French view has resonance not only in France but well beyond France and Europe.

MR. STEINBERG: I know Bob hates polls, but I'm still going to go back to his favorite poll. The reality is that even just before the Iraq war, you took public opinion on both sides of the Atlantic and the attitudes of people towards either—Americans towards European and Europeans towards the United States were quite favorable. The historic sense of these is as countries that have things in common, that share values, that see each other as friends and partners, was fairly substantial. So at least prior to the Iraq conflict that sort of long-term basis had not dramatically eroded. Even with all the conflict over Kyoto and the ITC and all of that.

There's no doubt that Iraq has had a big impact, but the question that we're going to face over the long term is one, how much is that a function of a particular Administration both in terms of its policies and its style, and a very virulent conflict which may well be over soon and which new things will come up.

So I think it's premature to make a long-term judgment about this. I think is quite serious and I don't mean at all to whistle past the graveyard. The deepening of the division and the playing on both sides on those divisions has made this harder.

But I also believe, and I think it hasn't perhaps gotten enough attention this afternoon, is that there remain a lot of things that we will probably need each other for and things we need to do together. Over time as we deal with problems that are increasingly problems of interdependence, it is quite possible that we will find things that we do work on together and these tensions will remain but not be the sole focus of our efforts.

So I don't think we can make a judgment right now about whether in terms of the deepening public attitude that this is a sharp split over a policy which is extremely important, but which may be ameliorated by Charles' 15 proposal or Ivo's three. Or whether this is something that we're going to be having to deal with indefinitely.

Ivo, you've thought about this as well.

MR. DAALDER: I guess I'm a little bit more pessimistic and closer to Andrew. I do think that Iraq has aggravated a division that is popular, on a popular level and a structural one and it becomes therefore even more difficult to start bridging the gap that exists. So in that sense I do think that European and American publics are increasingly looking at the world in different ways, reflecting the fact that their elites are looking at the world in very different ways. I agree with Bob on that. You go to Europe, it's very different, when you read the European press. It just is different to the debate that is taking place here and the debate that is taking place in Europe.

That doesn't mean that we're about to go to war. Charles Kupchan might—that thesis you don't have to buy. But it does mean that you can't go back.

I think it's very important that we as analysts think about not how can we go back to this very comfortable place where we all agreed, where we all worked together on a common problem and think about how do we transform the relationship so that we can cooperate when it is necessary. Because I think Jim is absolutely right, there are lots of things out there in which we have to cooperate because it is in our interest. It isn't necessarily the case that just because Europeans and Americans have an interest to tackle a problem together that they will then end up doing so. There are lots of times that self interest, even when self interest coalesces, that you don't pursue the same policy -- because of distrust, because of a whole host of reasons. That's what the institutions are for. They allow you to channel the cooperative functions that are based on self-interest into a cooperative framework, into a cooperative set of policies. That's why institutions matter. It's not something you can throw out of the window and think that everything can be done by a coalition of the willing. Or ad hoc coalitions that are there for the mission and then you throw them away and you buy something else. But those institutions themselves have to be based not on some ideal that existed 50 years ago, but have to start to reflect the world in fact that we live in which is very different than the world was 50 years ago or even 10 years ago.

MR. KAGAN: You're certainly right on your analysis. Chirac did speak for the European people, broadly speaking, and Blair didn't. That's certainly true.

But the only thing I would say is that when the Iraq crisis is over, assuming it is someday over, the U.S. is not naturally going to be the number one issue on the European publics' minds. I think the number one issues on European publics' minds, number one, two, three, four, and five, are going to be issues of Europe.

Europe is in a very self-examining, self-absorbed, for very good reasons, mood right now and I think that it is because the United States has sort of forced itself upon the European consciousness. It's not because Europeans want to spend a lot of time thinking about the United States.

So I do think when we get past this crisis Europeans are going to become reabsorbed in the very very taxing issues that they have to deal with.

I would also just say, if you look at the potential crises that lay out ahead of us, Iran is the one big exception. If we had a big crisis over Iran in the next couple of years, it could be just as bad or worse maybe than this Iraq division. But most of the other potential crises that you can foresee I think do not have anything like the same effect on transatlantic relations.

MR. BERTRAM: I have my doubts about that. I think Bob, that clearly what we've had

in the run-up to the war has been a long period in which emotions [inaudible] became rather [excess] all over Europe. And as usual, as we've seen in the double track decision, as we've seen in the [2nd] Gulf War in 1991, this long buildup tends to arouse a lot of popular emotion so we shouldn't take that necessarily as something that's going to be permanent.

I think the way in which the United States is going to be perceived even afterwards is not going to disappear. We're not going to -- Because it is clearly, if you're number one, you're also a target of choice. It's something which people rub against each other, define themselves against. This is I think something that's there and will continue to be there.

MR. KAGAN: -- that concept? I mean --

MR. BERTRAM: Well there will be economic reality which we see in the United States increasing its budget deficit, creating problems for available funds around the world. There will be other things like environment. Why do we get so hung up on environment? It's an emotional issue. I think we'll continue to have that.

That is why it's so important for the political leaders in Europe, and I think also political leaders here, to try to impress on their own publics that there is an interest in doing things together, and if they don't, then the discrepancy between what the elite think is necessary and what the public will follow are going to be much more [inaudible]. So the kind of emotional impasse that we've seen is perhaps, is understandable from the situation. But it's necessary now that politicians don't in a way try to kindle that even further, that they actually realize that they have to impress on our public the advantages in their own national interest on doing things together, so the responsibility is even higher than this one.

QUESTION: Dieter Dettke, Ebert Foundation. I guess my question is for Christoph and for Bob.

Christoph, what's wrong with taking up Bob Kagan's proposal to sit down, Europe and the United States, on the issue of Iraq, the most controversial issue, figure out what the proper role of the United Nations in the process is where Europe has a different position than the United States, and play a positive role? We have to do that. We can't just as Europeans sit there and say well, the United States started the war and now they're responsible to do it. I mean that would be a policy on the back of the victims of this war, right? So we have to play a constructive role.

Why should we pick that up? Why do you go back at this moment of time to a core concept when in the past we had a perfect solution of our long struggle over the proper role of European forces and now we do have the solution? Why is it necessary to go back to a core concept when as of February 17, after the letter of the 8 that separated Europe so badly we did have a kind of European weak consensus, but there was a consensus. Why not build on that kind

of European unity and go ahead and try to work something out instead of going back to an old core concept that throws us back to the wrong days, Christoph, to say the least?

MR. BERTRAM: Well, if something was right ten years ago why should it be wrong now just because it has a date on it? I don't think that's in any way convincing precisely because we're seeing that this Europe doesn't hold together in the way in which innumerable communiqués by heads of states and governments have made people believe. I'm amazed that somebody as shrewd as Dieter Dettke still believes that what they said they actually meant, and what they said they would do they'd actually do. They haven't done it. They haven't meant it, they haven't done it. And they will not do it.

So the question is if you really want to get some degree of European ability to act in the world you need a change of mentality, but you also have to think of bringing resources together. That is not possible on the level of the 15 and the 25. I think it's as simple as that.

If you want to have some weight in relationships with the United States, the United States which remains in many ways the indispensable nation for Europe as well, you have to put some more on the scale. It seems to me a perfectly straightforward, almost Anglo-Saxon pragmatic proposal that I am making.

QUESTION: John Parker of The Economist.

I get the sense over Iraq that the American Administration cares enormously much more about Iraq at the moment than about Europe and I just wonder if people think that that's a temporary thing or whether there's actual serious interest in doing business with Europe as perceived by the Administration? How much do they really care about getting these things right again?

MR. STEINBERG: Bob?

MR. KAGAN: Why I do have to answer that question?

MR. STEINBERG: Any insight into --

MR. KAGAN: All right.

The honest answer is it's an open question. It's literally an open question. It's not clear to me that they don't want to have European involvement. I know the general view is that Colin Powell works for a different Administration so that even when he goes out to Europe it has nothing to do with what this Administration wants. But probably he has some relationship with this Administration so that when he does go to Brussels and talks about NATO, that he might be

able to get his two cents in somehow.

I think a combination of things can, if there's a balance that needs to be tilted within the Administration there are certain external pressures than just sort of realities that could push the Administration into doing what it might, what some might not otherwise do.

There are certainly those in the Administration who don't care very much about repairing the relationship. I don't think there's any question about that. But I'm not sure that that includes, for instance, President Bush. I'm not sure that he doesn't care and I think that the fact that Powell is out there does represent something.

MR. STEINBERG: He does have considerable debt to the British Prime Minister here and other Europeans who will care about these things. I think just as he may never speak to Schroeder again, as far as I can tell, I think he does, he knows that for other Europeans who have supported the United States, and not just the Spanish and the Italians but also the Danes and others, that it will be important that it not look like that was taken for granted, and they will have important needs to shore up their own political position. After all, as everybody has pointed out, they didn't exactly have a lot of political support for what they're doing.

So I think there's a lot of reasons to think that they would. What concerns me, and I actually have some sympathy for it, is this presidency depends on a success in Iraq. In the first instance it depends on a success in the military operation that's underway, but in another term it depends on showing that this was a net gain for the United States. That we are in fact better off for having done that. That means that up to a point Iraq has to succeed in becoming relatively stable, a place where we're not taking a lot of casualties post the end of the war, a place in which there's not a lot of terrible things happening around in the neighborhood. So there's going to be a lot of focus on we've got to make this work.

When you feel that way about a problem the tendency is that you want—If you own that intensive responsibility you want to control it and that will lead to a desire to say we know how to do this, it's complicated, and detracts from performance to have to involve a lot of others. I don't necessarily think that's true but I think there's a tendency to think that way. So there will want to kind of hold onto this thing and make it work. That's I think the thing that worries me more than an ideological sense that we don't want to repair the differences with Europeans so much as we're on the line here to make it work, we're going to do it ourselves.

QUESTION: Niels Storoff, Finnish Broadcasting Company.

If you read all the documents from the Administration before the presidential elections, everybody speaks about the importance of the Atlantic relations. But when it came up towards the decision about Iraq and I think that Haass for the State Department in an interview for the

New Yorker said that he came down to the White House for a chat with Condoleezza Rice in the first week of July and he had got the impression that the decision about Iraq was already done.

So we should ask why wasn't there any wish to involve the Europeans before the decision was done?

MR. KAGAN: I don't think that's an accurate portrayal of reality, and again, I don't even think that if you look at the last eight months the story is a simple one of the United States didn't care about what Europe thought.

This President would not have gone to the Security Council for approval, that would not have come naturally to him. He did it precisely because one, a very close European ally demanded it or asked for it; and in the course of negotiating Resolution 1441 there was tremendous cooperation between the United States and France, after all.

QUESTION: [inaudible]

MR. KAGAN: I don't agree with you, and 1441 potentially undid the decision.

If Saddam had behaved differently as some thought that he might, maybe whether Bush wanted to go into Iraq or now would not have mattered. Bush did take significant risk of seeing his -- Let's say the decision was made. He took the risk of having that strategy derailed through the 1441 process. That was the significant concession that was made. If it's true that he doesn't care about Europe and he'd already made the decision, why did he bother going through the 1441 process? And 1441 put at risk that policy.

I really believe that if Saddam had even made a different declaration on December 7th we might not even be at war now, even though I think that probably it would be unfortunate if we weren't at war now. But nevertheless that is the case.

So there was tremendous, in a way, reaching out to Europe and cooperation with Europe. I won't rehearse here everything, but I must say in my, just quickly say, I believe ultimately it was France that walked away from 1441, not the United States. But that's -- I'll just leave it there.

MR. DAALDER: I agree.

QUESTION: [Esther Rea] for [inaudible].

Many [inaudible] recently decided France would actually [inaudible] public opinion. Indeed many European leaders were happy to announce that a policy corresponding to public opinion in these matters.

I understand that nowadays politics is not designed to serve a prince but a people, yet it seems to me that in many other issues European leaders tend to ignore public opinion.

If you look for example at the EU in the last ten years it seems that more than 50 percent of the public opinion in Europe says one cannot trust the European commissioners. The same applies for the enlargement.

Since 1997 more than 50 percent of the European public think that the enlargement process should not take place yet it is set to take place by 2004.

So I guess what I am trying to ask is when is it legitimate to listen to public opinion and when should we ignore public opinion?

MR. GRANT: I don't believe in direct democracy. I don't like the Swiss system of having referendums on a lot of decisions. I think representative democracy is okay. If governments take decisions that matter, particularly on foreign policy and not just look at opinion polls, if electors don't like that then they can kick them out at the next election, but I wouldn't like to see foreign policy driven by focus groups and public opinion polls myself because I think foreign policy needs to take into account long-term issues that people, the general public don't always appreciate. If they don't like that, they can vote out the government concerned.

MR. STEINBERG: Specifically on enlargement, do you think this is a long-term problem for European leaders to be moving forward in the face of public opinion?

MR. GRANT: The only country where there's probably a majority that really don't like it is France. But I believe Chirac will not hold a referendum on enlargement. If he did, that could stop enlargement in its tracks.

MR. KAGAN: He'll have his core Europe.

MR. STEINBERG: And have [inaudible] élevé members of the EU, right? [Laughter]

QUESTION: Sara Fondress, USAID.

I think there is some unfinished business with the U.S. and the UN. That's in the Balkans, and I hate to take you all back from Iraq, take you back a couple of years. But I'm concerned about what the rift may do. As we are almost ten years after the Dayton Peace Accords, Bosnia, Kosovo, unfinished business. Final status issues of Montenegro and Kosovo. Still some issues of unrest there. And the U.S. hopeful that the EU will take a more active, probably the word we

might use, but certainly a much more prominent role there.

How is this rift going to affect this as we move forward in trying to bring stabilization to that region?

MR. STEINBERG: Ivo, you're the master of things Balkan.

MR. DAALDER: I used to be.

I don't think the rift will have any impact. I think there is a fundamental consensus between the United States and Europe that we are transitioning, continuing the transition of a process that used to be U.S.- and NATO- dominated to something that is EU dominated, and what I think is most important is that this Administration has continued to support the effort that the EU is undertaking.

They haven't walked away. They away in terms of troops, they didn't walk away in terms of engagement. Mr. Powell has been more often to the Balkans than he has been to France or Germany. And I think that's important. The visit he made yesterday in Belgrade was crucial. It was a very important visit. The visit he made to Macedonia back, in April 2001 was very, very important. The transition from NATO to the EU in Macedonia followed by the transition to the EU in Bosnia which I think is going to come soon, and ought to come soon, and ultimately in Kosovo, will continue to have American support. That's the way it should be.

This is a problem that Europe must, should, will handle and the United States will support it. I think the rift will have nothing to do with it.

MR. STEINBERG: I can't pass up the opportunity to end on that positive note.
[Laughter]

I think we've seen that the challenges are severe. I think there are clearly differences among us and among our leaders about how important it is to fix it and what it will take to get it done. But I'm grateful to our panelists for helping to illuminate the discussions and to all of you for coming.

So thank you.

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