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"THE UNITED STATES AND FRANCE AFTER THE WAR IN IRAQ"

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PANEL TWO: "THE UNITED STATES AND FRANCE AFTER IRAQ"
CHAIR: PHILIP GORDON
JEAN-DAVID LEVITTE, FRENCH AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED STATES
WILLIAM KRISTOL, THE WEEKLY STANDARD
THÉRÈSE DELPECH, DIRECTOR FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES,
FRENCH ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION
AND COMMISSIONER OF UNMOVIC
JAMES STEINBERG, THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

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PHILIP GORDON: Well, ladies and gentlemen, let me welcome you back in. I apologize for the delay, but we look forward to making a transition now from discussions of mutual perceptions to policies. As somebody pointed out at the end of the last discussion, there's obviously a link between the policies these two countries pursue and the way that their publics perceive each other, and we have really a first-rate panel to do that.

What I would like to do is I will very briefly introduce our four guests and then we will ask them in an informal way, and quite briefly, to present a few thoughts. This will be, I think, much more a discussion among all of us, among the panelists themselves and with the group, than the last one.

The first speaker -- we are really privileged to have with us the Ambassador Jean-David Levitte, the French ambassador to the United States, who is appropriate for this panel not only because he's the French ambassador to the United States, but even more because what he has done in recent years. Most recently, and most relevantly, before coming here he was the French ambassador to the United Nations, including the period during which the United States and France and others worked on Resolution 1441, and Ambassador Levitte was a key actor in that process. And before that, also quite relevant for this discussion, he was a senior diplomatic advisor to President Chirac in the Elysée. So obviously he knows intimately the process and the thinking in Paris.

The second speaker will be Bill Kristol, who is the editor of "The Weekly Standard," among many other things, well known to people from his appearances on TV and his writings. And, I think quite relevant to note for this discussion, he was said in *Le Monde* last year – I'm sure Bill is aware of this – to be the most influential man in America. (Laughter.)

WILLIAM KRISTOL: And *Le Monde* is always accurate. (Laughter.)

MR. GORDON: And I can attest that he is indeed an influential man.

Then we will turn to Thérèse Delpech, who, like all of our speakers, has many talents, has done many things, is a researcher, and is in government. And I think quite relevant to this discussion, Thérèse was a French commissioner, I guess, first to UNSCOM and then to UNMOVIC, the monitoring and verification commission for Iraq. So in addition to understanding the relationship between France and the United States, Thérèse is an expert on weapons of mass destruction, proliferation issues, and Iraq in particular, and we will value her insights.

And then finally, Jim Steinberg, again, known to all of you here, who is the vice president and head of the Foreign Studies Policy Program at Brookings. But quite importantly as well, in recent years was the deputy national security advisor in the White

House for President Clinton and before that he headed the State Department's policy planning staff. So again, someone with great experience on the bilateral relationship, on U.S. foreign policy, and on the question of terrorism in general.

As I said, we would like to do this quite informally. I will first turn to the Ambassador. I have asked our speakers to speak for only seven minutes -- and Jim has a stopwatch from his running experience and we will hold them to that -- he has more authority than I do -- and then we will have a brief conversation among ourselves and then open it to the room. Ambassador, the floor is yours to start.

AMBASSADOR JEAN-DAVID LEVITTE: Thank you, Phil, and thank you for this opportunity. And thank you Brookings, Strobe Talbott and Jim Steinberg, and especially you, Phil, for what you are doing for U.S.-French relations.

This meeting couldn't be more timely. I will not focus on the past but on the future. But first, I would like to say a few words on the relations between the U.S. and France, because when I read some papers, I see that France is painted now as a strategic adversary of the United States, or even as the strategic adversary of the United States. This is, for me, quite a challenge. I read in the press that France is trying to control American power, that France is trying to use the European Union as a counterweight to the American power, that we want to destroy NATO, and so on and so forth. And, frankly, that is not the experience I had with President Chirac.

Phil said that for five years I was his diplomatic advisor. Let me remind you what were his first initiatives. When he was elected, he decided first to turn our army into a professional one. We had conscription, and he wanted to follow the American and the British examples. Second, he decided to try to have France as a full member of NATO again, and we had within two years of negotiations, and we nearly succeeded. So, here you see a Gaullist president who wanted to see France again as a full member of NATO. Third, he wanted to solve the Bosnia war and the Kosovo problem, and he called with John Major first and Tony Blair, then President Clinton to convince him to solve militarily the problem through NATO.

Now, the euro. I see that the euro is, from time to time, painted as a competitor to the dollar. That's not why it was created. The euro was created simply because we had a unified market and we needed a common currency for a unified market. We were in the situation where you were two centuries ago, where you had different states with different currencies; then you unified your market and you had the dollar. That's exactly what we did. So these are not ideas but facts about the French foreign policy.

Now, I see that we want a multipolar world and that it is a kind of insult to the unipolar world represented by the United States. If you allow me, I will adapt what Professor Joe Nye said in his last book. He described the world in roughly the following terms. He says, well, the world, economically speaking, is already multipolar. You have the United States, or North America; you have the European Union; you have China in Asia; tomorrow maybe India; you have Japan; and it works -- and it works in our money.

Of course we have, from time to time, difficulties -- that's life. But this economic multipolar world is not a disaster; it's, on the contrary, a great success. And by the way, two major economies, the European Union and the United States, are more and more integrated.

Second, militarily speaking, the world is unipolar and it will remain so for years and years; and it is not a problem for France. Our problem is not too much American power, our problem is not enough defense policy and defense possibilities, or military might, for the European Union. And we want to achieve a reasonable integration of our forces within the context of the Atlantic alliance so that the European Union at last will be in a position to take care of our problems at our doors. Bosnia and Kosovo were two examples where we failed miserably as the European Union. It is not the normal situation to see an economic powerhouse not in a position to take care of limited crises like Bosnia and Kosovo alone. And the United States, rightly so, was not enthusiastic to be involved in this crisis. So that's exactly our goal and it has nothing to do with the -- supposedly the will of countering or curbing American power.

And third, on global issues: environment, AIDS, development, and so on, Joe Nye says we have to think globally; that is, we have to think multilateral, we have to think of solutions through the multilateral institutions, and we consider it's a reasonable way to solve global problems. So, in a way, that's the Joe Nye way of thinking, and we have no problems with his interpretation of today's world.

Now, what should we do with the Franco-American relations? I will propose four very simple rules of the game. First, when you are in a hole, first thing to do is stop digging. We have stopped digging for weeks and weeks in France, but not in the United States. When I saw a few days ago in *The Washington Times* that France would have given to Saddam Hussein and his cronies French passports, everybody knows that it's a lie -- it's simply a lie. But it is very damaging, so please, let's stop digging, that's first message.

Second message, let's have a real dialogue. What was lacking, in my view, in the last month is a real dialogue; not on limited issues but on the strategic issues: what do we want to achieve together? This kind of dialogue is absolutely essential and we must give enough time for hours of quiet discussions about the dangers of today's world, how as good partners and allies we can work together, and so on. That's my second message.

The third one is, let's recognize what we already do together. Our cooperation is a perfect example of an excellent cooperation between France and her allies. Judge Bruguière will explain what we do together on the fight against terrorism. President Bush told me that he considers France the best ally of the United States in this fight against terrorists, which is your main preoccupation and our main preoccupation in today's world. We have the same excellent cooperation against the threat of arms of mass destruction. We have exactly the same view and we have an excellent cooperation on North Korea, on African issues, in the Middle East, and so on and so forth -- on the world economy, the preparation of the G8 in Evian. So let's recognize that on all issues

with one exception, which is past – Iraq –we have an excellent cooperation, and that's key for the future.

And fourth, beyond the relations between the U.S. and France, we must think and rethink the transatlantic dialogue because – this is key for me, for the future – it has been damaged but it can be easily repaired, provided that first, we recognize the two differences which exist nowadays. The first is 9/11. In Europe, we don't understand the huge shock that 9/11 has represented for the United States. America is at war and we have difficulties to understand that. On the other side, we consider the question of sovereignty as a question of shared sovereignty. We build together the European Union, our common destiny, on the basis of shared sovereignty. And so when we look global we think of shared sovereignty. For the environment or AIDS, it goes without saying for us that multilateral institutions should play their role, and we are ready to adapt our roles to take care of the views of the others. Shared sovereignty is a second nature for all Europeans, with maybe the exception of our British friends. (Laughter.) But here, in this country, sovereignty is something that you have to protect.

So these are, in my views, the two key differences between the two rims of the Atlantic, and we should recognize that. And beyond that, we should also recognize that we are the two pillars of the world. Together, we represent 62 percent of the world economy. Each day, $3 billion of goods, services, and investments are exchanged on both sides of the Atlantic; but together, we represent only 11 percent of the world population: 5 percent for the U.S., 6 percent for the United States (sic). So if we agree and work together, everything is possible, no problem is without solution. If, on the contrary, we disagree, we are split; then we fail. You fail and we fail.

Just to give you an example, you need allies in Afghanistan. You have, yes, troops deployed. Where do they come from? Europe, and basically only Europe. You need troops in Iraq, where do they come from? Europe, as always. You need Europe, we need the U.S., and we need to fix the transatlantic dialogue. Here we have a real problem: reform of NATO has been engaged and it will be implemented, I am optimistic about that. The E.U.-U.S. dialogue is miserable. Each time we meet for this supposed summit, we discuss bananas and steel, we have a long experience of bananas and steel. (Laughter.) We should discuss strategic issues. I will stop at that, seven minutes?

MR. GORDON: Very good, thanks for the substance and the time. Bill Kristol, this session is called "France and the United States after the War in Iraq." How to do you see that issue?

MR. KRISTOL: The -- E.J. Dionne advertised it as France and America at each other's throats, and I feel that everyone else on this panel is so reasonable that you're not going to get the true – that's going to turn out to be false advertising, so maybe I should – on the other hand, I don't know that I'm supposed to be the person who is – lives up to E.J.'s promise of being at anyone's throat.

Let me actually answer your original three questions. The first was, is this the same old crisis or a new one? Obviously, it's different, I think, and the reason for the difference can be summed up in two words – three words I guess: the Cold War. Fifty-six, '66, and '86 all were overcome reasonably quickly, though Suez was a big mistake on our part, in my view, and therefore the French are entitled to hold that grudge, I would say, against the Eisenhower administration. But, you know, at the end of the day there was this common enemy and we worked together against it. The Cold War ended -- that is a very big deal -- and it would be amazing to any historian or political scientist or sociologist that – what is it now, 12 years, 14 years, depending on how you count, after the end of the Cold War – that relations would stay the same; and they're not. And they're not going to go back to the way they were in the Cold War.

So no nostalgia is my view. It was fine when the Cold War relationship did a lot good for the world. There can be a new relationship; it won't look the way it looked in the '60s and '70s and '80s. That's leaving aside the fact that we, of course, romanticize what that relationship was like in retrospect. Cold War is a very big deal. I think Europe is a very big deal, and I think that – I don't think this needed to have happened, and I don't think it needs to be the case in the future; but I do believe that the move in the last decade towards much greater European integration has made French-American relations – with France as a leader of obviously the European integrationist forces – has made U.S.-French relations more difficult. That said, I don't think that's inevitable, I just think that is true, though.

And I think a lot of what happened in the last six months after all of this – not simply France, sort of personally, so to speak, as a country having a different view from the U.S., but France thinking of itself as a leader of a European Union which had a different world view and a different role to play from the U.S. view. Us -- a lot of the American annoyance clearly was based not on France per se, but on France's relationship with Germany, and then the pressure put on the other European nations. So I think Europe's not going away. I, myself, don't particularly even think European integration should go away and it's not going to go away even if I think it should. But it's -- just as an analytical matter, it needs to be taken into account when thinking about the future of U.S.-French relations.

The second question – so I think it is a new moment, it's not back to the '50s or '60s or '80s: 9/11 also plays a great deal, is very important in this respect, too. But that gets to Phil's second point, which is he's struck, and I am, too, about how different the narratives, so to speak, are on the French side and on the American side, how different they were before the war, how different they are after the war. It's not the case that most Americans look at the outcome of the war in Iraq and think, you know, we were wrong, we should have taken those French concerns more seriously; again, rightly or wrongly, maybe we should have. But that's, I would just say, empirically, analytically, that is not the mainstream mood in the Bush administration or, for that matter, even among most of the American political spectrum.

And I'm struck that in Europe, it seems to me, and in France – that it's more complicated. Perhaps there is some regret about tactical misunderstandings and mistakes. The general mood is not, gee, the U.S. was right and we have to rethink our policy. So that tells me that the gulf is real. When two different people or nations or institutions see the same event and the outcome of the event seems to them to confirm their own prior view, which is different from the prior view of the other person, it tends to suggest that the split is a little deeper than merely a particular misunderstanding based on a particular event.

The other point I would make on that is, you know, the war itself will have an effect; that is, America has now fought a war without French support or encouragement or help, obviously; that we fought the war, we won the war, it went better, I think, than most people expected – I think aside for a minute the issue of weapons of mass destruction, I think most Americans think it was both the just and necessary thing to do. That is going to have its own effect on the American political class and the American political system. And I suppose similarly, Europe's abstaining from the war will have its own effect. I mean, wars are big deals, and it would be unusual in history if having fought what is, in fact, a rather major war from the American point of view, that it doesn't have its own effect on American perceptions of the world and therefore of Europe, and therefore of France.

So I think to the degree that we could have and didn't, in fact, sit here three or four or five months ago and say, gee, there's really a surprising gulf between America and France – it's hard to believe that, having fought the war, the gulf is going to get less. And I think in some short-term way, it probably gets greater and the hole does get dug deeper, even despite really anyone's particular efforts. Whatever *The Washington Times* says or doesn't say on the front page doesn't really matter that much.

Which brings me to my third and final point. Phil sort of mentioned these two visions, the French and American universalism clashing. I guess whatever the truth of that -- and that's a big and complicated and deep subject, and whatever the truth of Philippe Roger's interesting presentation about this long history of French anti-Americanism and American francophobia – I'm actually struck that this is a very fluid moment. It's a very new moment at the end of the Cold War, 9/11, and Iraq. This is a case where I would say the deeper structural realities are more fluid than usual, and a lot depends on what happens in the very short-term, I would say – and I would say really in the short-term, actually, like in the next three or four weeks.

I mean, if we were sitting here a month from now and we have had a successful U.N. Security Council process which has resulted in an agreement in Iraq, if there are actually cooperative developments on the ground in Iraq, if there are cooperative developments in terms of Iraqi debt and the like, and if there's a successful G8 meeting, I think the world would look – the U.S.-French relationship, at least, would look one way. If things don't go well in the U.N. Security Council, if there's continued fighting about Iraq, if the G8 becomes a scene for renewed fighting between the us and France and conceivably among other – with other nations involved one way or the other – that's a

very different world looking out, at least for the next few weeks and months, and even I would say years.

So I think it's an unusually fluid moment, and this brings me to my actual final point, part of this third point, which is I actually sort of disagree that we need to have more of a strategic dialogue and obsess about U.S.-French relations and U.S.-European relations. This is all going to be resolved about what happens in the real world. And can we work together to deal with real problems in the real world or not? And what are likely to be the biggest problems? Terror is one; there we seem to be working together pretty well. Weapons of mass destruction; I don't know that we agree on how to deal with Iran, let's say, to take one obvious nation that could be a huge issue a year from now. But Iran could be six months from now what Iraq has been over the last year, in terms of the debate in the U.S., the debate in the world community. Did we work together on that or do we end up with very different views of how to deal with dictatorships racing to develop -- in this case, nuclear – weapons, where there's hopeful potential for regime change but also a real question about how to bring it about. Do we agree on the Middle East or not?

I mean, ultimately, I think the president, Bush – President Bush believes we need to – 9/11 teaches us that we need a new policy towards the Middle East. We haven't thought it through in every way, we're not consistent in every way, but the basic – we need to somehow or other transform the dynamics in the Middle East, I'm not at all clear that that's the French view, maybe it's not the right view. But in any case, I think it is the president's view and again, over the next few months, will we come together on Middle East policy or move further apart? I think those things are really key.

You know, I do think this American administration, whatever its deficiencies and limitations, whatever criticisms one can make, they do think about there's a world out there and there are real problems and real challenges in this world. And we -- the Bush administration has been tolerably clear, actually I would say – some people might say too clear or too simple – on how it thinks these problems have to be dealt with, both on a general level and a reasonably particular level. And that's, I think, the key. The key question is going to be what happens as we deal with these problems, in terms of the relationship. And I think one could spend a lot of time talking in a very big-picture way about strategic dialogue and is the world more like, you know – as Walter Mead's example, you know, are we with mommy and daddy or is the U.S. the daddy with a lot of concubines, and, you know, mistresses, and is that – what's the shape of the world in the future.

But I don't think – I guess the way I would put it in my last sentence would be this: I don't think the Bush administration particularly wants to keep on digging, in terms of our relations with the European allies. But I do not think they will put as a higher priority making the French feel better or making Chirac feel better – they will not make that a higher priority than accomplishing what they regard as the absolutely important real objectives in dealing with the problems out there in the world. So a European notion

that the question of U.S.-European relations is going to be at the center of U.S. foreign policy for the next couple of years, I think, is just mistaken.

I think that can be good, that can be healthy, incidentally. We don't need to obsess about U.S.-European relations; we just need to go solve all of these problems around the world. But I think there is a difference there because I'm struck that Europeans think that the whole question of U.S. and Europe, in a way, should be the central question, which I don't think it is going to be for the Bush administration.

MR. GORDON: Bill, thanks, I think you made some important points. So may I -- I might add as I turn to Thérèse – your point about the gap in perceptions, what bothers me about that is that it almost creates a different interest on the two sides; that those who oppose the war, countries and individuals, almost have a stake in it not going well, just as we have a stake, or those who support it have a stake in it going well. And so long as that perception gap exists, we can't move forward together. I think that seems to me to be the challenge for France and for Germany and others who opposed the war.

If we could get on the same side of this one and create for ourselves a common interest in making it work, then I think we're going to start getting into your second domain, or in the real world, cooperating. But so long as it's an open question about whether this will or won't go well, that in itself becomes a structural obstacle to our cooperation.

Thérèse, how did this all look from where you sat in Paris?

THÉRÈSE DELPECH: Well, I will introduce some element of discussions in the first part of the presentation, although I share the objective presented by Jean-David. I mean, first I will try to deal with three major points in seven minutes. The first one is, where were we shortly before the Iraqi crisis and during the Iraqi crisis? I want to make three points here. Secondly, I would like to speak about the immediate future and beyond, and thirdly, why should the relationship be mended.

On the first point: where were we immediately before the Iraq crisis? What I mean by immediate, particularly after having heard Philippe Roger, is really the few years before. It seems to me important to recognize that we have had two important crisis before, and one was precisely the NATO South Command crisis because I totally agree with Jean-David that, when Jacques Chirac arrived, this was an excellent move. But the main problem -- and I remember it myself, this situation as a real nightmare at the prime minister office -- is that suddenly it derailed and became a real embarrassment, I mean, in the negotiation between the United States and France with the discussion on the South Command.

The second crisis I see before Iraq, which was something we can't put aside because we have been talking about it for at least two or three years, is the missile defense crisis. I mean, France was the most vocal European on this matter and was the only European country voting the Russian resolution against the missile defense and the

withdrawal of the ABM treaty twice. And I have to say that we have had, in our political discourse, this cornerstone of strategic stability that we have all forgotten now, but for some time this was in all the newspapers. I mean, nobody now would speak about it again, but this was something which has, in my view, soured the atmosphere as well.

Now, during the Iraq crisis, it seems to be important to recall that the crisis was not only -- and in my view, not mainly – about international law. It was mainly about different political visions, and this was the case concerning the Middle East, this was the case concerning the consequences on terrorism, and this was also the case concerning American power. And I do believe that those three elements were very important in the very nature of the crisis.

Now, concerning the immediate future and beyond -- concerning the immediate future, there are three things I'm sure of. First is that everything will be done – on the French side, at least – everything will be done to have a successful G8 summit. This means that the resolution on Iraq will be – I mean, the problem will be solved before this summit. The second thing I'm sure of is that the depths of the crisis will be covered by politeness and pragmatism. And the third thing I'm sure of, as well, which is more important, is that there are some areas which will escape the storm. And those areas are first, terrorism -- and here we will listen in the afternoon to what Jean-Louis Bruguière has to tell us. It seems to me that here not only the cooperation is going on, but the cooperation is enhanced, and this is one of the few domains where the relationship between France and the United States is really even. I mean, this is an area where we have equal relationship, which is perhaps in addition to the vital nature of the subject, why it works so well.

Now, the problem with counterterrorism, in my view, as far as the political relations are concerned, is that this area is almost invisible. It is invisible because you do have a lot of intelligence, you do have a lot of confidential relationship – what I mean by that, that it is neither very well known to the American public or to the French public.

In addition, in France there has been absolutely no serious debate on what terrorism -- I mean the new forms of terrorism -- meant actually for our society, which means that when Jean-Louis Bruguière tries to explain to the French people that the problem is before us, not behind us, he has a very difficult task. So this is, in my view, one of the problems. I mean, the part which escapes the storm is certainly not giving the French public or the American public a sense of cooperation.

Now, beyond that, another area, which could escape the storm, I hope, is the area of nonproliferation. And here, Bill, you were talking about Iran. It seems to me that on Iran, on North Korea, the more we work together, the more our analyses are coming closer. Now, to be absolutely frank, this is true at the technical level, and the technical level in France, in my view, in this area, is pretty good and recognized as such. The problem of the translation from the technical level to the political level is something which could remain difficult; but again, it seems to me here, there is some hope. Now, these are the things I'm sure of for the immediate future.

Now for the period beyond the immediate future, what I'm less sure of is the following: first, that the two parties -- I mean the two countries have analyzed their respective mistakes, and let me mention only some of them. I mean, on the American side, it seems to me that the war was brilliant -- and we have to recognize that -- but it was waged with confusing arguments; I mean, let me list three arguments which have been put forward by the United States. One was, in my view, absolutely uncontroversial: 12 years of defiance on the side of Saddam Hussein. And since I'm following Iraq for these 12 years, I can tell you that I totally share this analysis of defiance for 12 years.

Now, the problem is that this administration has added two other objectives: one was regime change and the other one was preventive war. It seems to me, concerning preventive war, that it was completely foolish to embody this concept into a doctrine because this is not only totally unacceptable for the rest of the world, but it's also dangerous. Now, concerning regime change, I'm completely conscious that any war against Iraq – a second war against Iraq – would have had, as a consequence, regime change. But to speak about so much before, in my view, was a mistake. This is on the American side.

On the French side, what I find myself -- a serious mistake was that at the time when we were saying that all the options were open -- I mean including the military option -- almost at the same time we began declaring that we would vote against a second resolution, regardless. At the same time, we had this campaign which not the Russian, not the Chinese, not the Arab countries, have done. So, in my view, we have gone too far and we should recognize that. So I'm not sure any of the two parties will make this kind of assessment.

Now, the second reason why I'm skeptical is because the two parties have visions, which are not conducive to serious improvement beyond the immediate future. On the American side, it seems to me that while they are affirming the importance of the Atlantic alliance, it's absolutely clear that the coalition of the willing, that the truth and pick – or pick and choose – allies is something which is undermining the alliance as such, now.

On the French side -- and here I have a slight difference with Jean-David, I hope he will forgive me -- on the French side, it seems to me that you cannot say at the same time, it's bad to have a position of coalition of the willing and to put forward this very ambiguous concept of multipolar world -- particularly on the strategic level because a multipolar world means that you take as a given the fracture of the Western democracies; that there is America on one side and there is Europe on the other side. So it seems to me the world itself is much easier to understand when you have China/Russia promoting it than when you have France.

Now, let me end with the third point: why should it be mended -- I mean, why the relationship should be mended? Well, the reason why I came here for only one day to speak seven minutes – (laughter) – is that there is only one thing I find more useless, and in some way, more outrageous – than transatlantic disputes, and these are Franco-

American disputes. I do believe that to indulge in our petty disputes in this kind of internal narcissism of the Western world is something almost unbearable in the kind of world – in the kind of turbulent world – where we are living.

And here, I'm totally on the side of the Ambassador because it seems to me that, first, only the alliance of the Western democracies will be able to give any stability to this world, which again is more than turbulent. And secondly, it seems to me that those turbulences are, for us, as dangerous and perhaps even more dangerous than for the United States. And this is why it seems to me -- and I will end by that -- this is why it seems to me that even in the most controversial papers we have in this country -- mainly the national security strategy -- it seems to me that instead of focusing our minds on what is controversial – preventive war – we could have a common work on something Jean-David mentioned, which is the importance of the Doha round in order, first, to redirect our aid; secondly, in order to limit our trade barriers; and thirdly, if we talk about the Middle East -- I mean, to diversify this region apart from the oil industry because this kind of mono-industry, in my view, is part of the – I would say – the fateful situation in which the Middle East is finding itself.

And I will conclude with a quotation by a senior British diplomat, which will show that perhaps the Franco-American relations are not that bad. He said in Prospect recently -- I mean, the May issue – he said the following: "the special relationship is now supported only by Prime Ministers, submariners, and code breakers." And, it seems to me, that on the U.S. American side, we are still able to do something better.

MR. GORDON: Thank you, Thérèse, that was really good. I think, next year, we will institute a new policy of giving at least eight minutes to people who fly in – (laughter).

MS. DELPECH: I have got my eight minutes, by the way. (Laughter.)

MR. GORDON: You took your eight minutes. So I think it should be at least one minute per hour of flying time. (Laughter.) I mean, that's the least we can do for our guests from Paris. Jim, France and the United States after Iraq.

JAMES STEINBERG: In light of Thérèse's very eloquent presentation, I was tempted to cede her all of my seven minutes because I think that really she gave a very powerful account of both why we can and why we must work together. And I think that we clearly failed E.J.'s test to be at each other's throats, and I think it's not an accident that you have four people up here -- five counting yourself -- people who have worked in government and recognize that the issues are too important to spend our time in rhetorical debate. But there really are very important issues in front of us, that Thérèse has so powerfully described, about what we need to do together. But the common theme, I think, that we have all been presenting is, one, we need to be pragmatic about it; and two, we need to be realistic.

It seems to me that there are two touchstones for thinking about how we mend, how we repair, how we go forward, and they come from the first panel. Walter Mead said this morning that part of the problem that he saw -- and he saw it on the glass half-empty side -- was that each side has different views about what the other has or hasn't got to offer; and that if we don't have a common view about the value of what each can contribute to working together, then we're unlikely to work together. I would just say, let's focus on the flip side, which is to the extent that we can identify things that we do have to offer each other, that begins to form a basis for moving forward.

And the second touchstone that I would identify comes from Philippe Roger, who said that when we talk about periods when the U.S. and French relationship has worked, it's because when we have had very concrete interests in common and that we are able to pursue those, and that there are all these differences that attend to the side. But when we're pragmatically focused on the convergence of interests, the Franco-American relationship goes well.

So it seems to me that putting these two together begins to develop a strategy and a program, a very pragmatic strategy and program. First, to identify those circumstances when the interest converge -- and we have heard all three of the previous panelists identify some of those, you know, and I will touch on them as well -- and then, second, think of what it is that we have to offer each other and how we can strengthen those dimensions of complementarity that allow us to take interests that are in common and take those goals, and add to them common means to pursue them. And I think if we can do that, we begin to have, as I say, a pragmatic agenda of how we go forward.

Well, we have heard from a number of the panelists some of the elements of common interest. I think it's important to try to keep that list as large as we can, but also be realistic about the fact that within even broadly common interest, we have some differences. So, for example, a number of us have identified counterterrorism as an area of common interest, and I think that's quite important. And we have seen, pragmatically, how we can work together.

But it's also important -- and Bill touched on it a little bit -- is we also have to understand that our interests are not identical in the sense that the level of threat perceived in the United States is different, and that is not just subjective, in my judgment; that is to say that, for a variety of reasons, not least of which because we are the sole superpower, because of our global engagement, and because of the symbolism of the United States. In fact, many of the largest and most dangerous terrorist organizations do see the United States as a more important target than our European counterparts.

And so, while there is -- for example, with al Qaeda -- a general critique of the West, I think it's fair to say that, as the leader and the avatar of the West, the United States does face perhaps a more extreme version of the threat. And so, while we go forward, we have to recognize that it is not just a sense of American paranoia or overreaction to 9/11, but I think a reasonable reaction to the characteristic of the threat that causes some divergences. Nonetheless, these are differences in degree, not in kind;

and, as we will hear from Judge Brugière, I think there is tremendous opportunity to collaborate there.

Similarly, with weapons of mass destruction, which Thérèse has touched on, there are important commonalities of interest. The basic bargain that we have always had, which is it's better for us to have them and nobody else to have them, still remains true; and in a world in which the ability of not only small states to acquire weapons of mass destruction, but non-state actors to do it, it seems to me that that commonality of interest continues to be the case. But here, while we have a strong agreement on goals, we do have at least some divergences on means. And I share Bill's view that coming together around the question of Iran in the near future will be critically important for a sense of whether we are both on the same track with weapons of mass destruction.

I believe that there is a basis for going forward. I think the United States has to be more willing to engage in discussion with the Iranians about how to achieve these objectives, but I also think, in turn, the Europeans have to get serious about suggesting that there are consequences if Iran goes forward. That's also true of the Russians, by the way. But I do think that if we take this problem seriously – and this is where I do believe that more dialogue is necessary – that there is a possibility of moving forward.

Another area where we have a great deal of interest is part of what, arguably, is the old agenda -- but it's not a finished old agenda -- and that is completing Europe, and particularly the integration of the new democracies, and most importantly dealing with Europe's own periphery; that is, Russia, Turkey, the Caucasus, and North Africa. And I think that there we have understood that these are issues that are not simply issues for Europe itself, and that our joint efforts together are dealing with those problems. And I would particularly suggest that, with respect to Russia, that it's enormously important, that while we see a number of positive trends in Russia, there are also some disquieting dimensions of the strategy that Russia is pursuing in terms of its own domestic development; and we are clearly better off trying to have a joint and common approach to that problem.

There's also a deep interest in the broader problem of global economic and political development. This is something in which we have cooperated through the G7 and G8 over the years, but we have never really made a kind of common cause, on a bilateral basis, between the United States and Europe, towards understanding that our long-term success -- both economically and in our own interest in sustaining globalization -- as well as political stability, does depend on effectively spreading the benefits of globalization.

I think it's -- the good news/bad news story in the United States is, post 9/11, we see an administration surprisingly being willing to propose substantially additional resources for development policy; but, unfortunately, proposing to do it entirely in a unilateral proposal, through the Millennium Challenge camp, whose basic motivations are good. But here, no one country can make the kind of impact that we need to make,

and so if we're going to increase our resources, why not do this in partnership with our European friends?

And finally, there's the issue of the environment, which has been a contentious one between us, but one which ultimately we are going to have to deal with together. We have done so in the past when we dealt with the problem of ozone depletion. We saw a common threat and quickly developed a common strategy that was led by the United States and Europe. And I think that here, again, a realistic dialogue in which the United States recognizes that it is not going to be acceptable for us to simply stand aside on the question of global climate change; but also the Europeans accepting the fact that the Kyoto Protocol as it now exists is not just dead because of political forces in the United States, but also will not succeed in its own terms, and therefore, a pragmatic accommodation on those issues, it seems to me, are possible, although clearly it will take political leadership on both sides.

At the same time, as I said, we have to recognize that we do have divergences. And I think that, with respect to the Middle East, there are important divergences that remain and are unlikely to be fully resolved, even with deeper dialogue. The nature of the United States' relationship with Israel is different from the relationship between Europe and Israel. The connection between Europe and Arab and Muslim states is different than the American connection, and I think that we will have differences there. We had differences before the Bush administration and we will have differences in the future. And these are areas where we are going to have to manage them rather than expect to solve them in its entirety.

But certainly, with respect to East Asia, it remains to be seen as whether Europe will begin to see itself as a strategic actor in East Asia in facing the very important political challenges that are going to come forward as China grows; as ultimately, in some form or another, the Korean Peninsula is reunified; and the final question of Japan's security role is engaged. And I think that up until now -- although there has been talk among Europeans about playing a role, with the exception of the WMD issue, which Thérèse correctly identifies – there has not, in my judgment, been any serious effort on the Europeans' part to understand the nature of the challenges that we are dealing with, and therefore making it very difficult to have a common strategy between the United States and Europe.

But that goes to the second part of my argument about how we need to move the relationship forward, which is, part of the reason why we have this divergent – with respect, for example, to, say, East Asia – is precisely because Europe does not have either the capacity or the determination to act as a global actor. And it seems to me that in the long-term, if this partnership is going to work and there is going to be a better alignment of perceptions and interests, it will take Europe taking responsibilities outside the European periphery more seriously, and being willing to understand why the United States takes the positions it does; because it perceives its own interests being in play and therefore has to be more pragmatic, whereas Europe, more divorced from these issues, can deal with them in a kind of rhetorical and theoretical way rather than a practical one.

So, in my view – and I know it's not universally shared – a stronger and more effective Europe on the global stage is actually likely to be a better partner and deal with the problem that Walter identified, which is, is Europe going to have something to bring to play in dealing with these issues that are the new agenda for our two nations? That means, one, that Europe has to enhance its internal capacities to act. I think the issue of the constitutional convention is enormously important. The United States has a big stake in how that comes out, and I think we should not be afraid to identify the fact that we are not indifferent to how Europe moves forward, in terms of developing its capacities to act on the international political and security stage. But it also means – and I know that this is also not something that is shared by all the panelists – that we do need new mechanisms to interact with each other; that NATO needs to be the preeminent place in which we engage in security dialogue and cooperation. But the range of issues that I have identified are clearly not issues that fully can be addressed in NATO, and the mechanisms that we have today, as Jean-David has said, are wholly inaccurate to building the kind of relationship that I have tried to sketch out.

MR. GORDON: Jim, thank you, particularly for widening the debate beyond the Iraq debate.

What I would like to do now, if it's all right before we open it for comments and questions from the room, is take the advantage of the chair and pose a few follow-up questions to the panelists on what has already been said, and if I could start with the Ambassador.

Jean-David, I'm not sure if you were here -- Walter Mead presented an American perspective this morning and talked about a school of thought in America that basically says, you know, the alliance is fine and Europe is fine, but we don't really need it. We are the most powerful country, possibly in the history of the world. Allies are quite nice, but we're certainly not willing -- or we don't need to go out of our way to get them. It seems to me that's a real challenge for Europeans. I mean, you can tell me whether you acknowledge or whether you agree that this way of thinking exists, but I think it's a fairly accurate portrayal. Bill didn't mention this issue, but he's sometimes associated with this way of thinking. We are powerful, we can get by pretty well in the world. We did in Iraq. How does Europe and France react to such an America and such an American way of thinking?

AMB. LEVITTE: I would say first, the choice is yours, of course. But second, if you look to Iraq today, you want to withdraw troops and at the same time you have to maintain law and order in Iraq. Difficult task -- you just have to read the papers these days. It means that you will have to replace your troops. Okay, which countries: China, Russia, Brazil, Argentina – you give me the names, and you will see that you will find only, or mainly, European powers. So the question is, okay, should we consider that NATO is a toolbox where the plumber, the United States, take here a hammer, and so on, from the Czech Republic, or should we organize NATO with two pillars?

And here, I come back to the multipolar world. I agree with Jim. It seems to me it's better for the U.S. to have an integrated Europe and a strong partner. That's a dream for the Europeans; we have succeeded economically, we still have to do it politically and militarily. But if we succeed, I think it will be good for the United States. Does it mean that we will be in competition? Not at all. You have global responsibilities. Jim very generously – (audio break, tape change) – should think global and emerge as a global actor. There is a long way to go, but I think it's a good ambition. Good for the Europeans because it will help them to do better, in terms of military capacities. We don't put enough money in our military capacities simply because we feel protected by the alliance, and we have to do better together.

So my answer to that is, first, we have a common interest in maintaining a good old alliance and in reforming it to adapt it to the challenges of today's world. And second, it is in the interest of the United States to consider where are the allies, and if it's better for the United States to have a split Europe or a more integrated Europe. And my answer is, on the two questions, yes.

MR. GORDON: Thank you. Bill, let me follow-up with you. You can obviously react to that, if you like; but I will just add to it a bit, which is, you said you don't think the Bush administration is digging, that they haven't taken a conscious decision to make this worse. But, at the same time, I think you said that you don't expect it to go out of its way to be doing any favors to the countries that opposed us. What would you, as the most influential man in America – (laughter) – when the president and vice president call you every morning and ask you how to play this issue, should we have a France policy? What do we do on this issue?

MR. KRISTOL: Look, it's an interesting question. I mean, in a way, does France want us to have a France policy or a Europe policy, you know? The administration, to its credit, has, in my view – well, in a hard-headed way, has decided that Germany is different than France, and they now have a different Germany policy from a France policy. That's quite evident if you look at what's happening. They have a different Poland policy from a Germany policy from a France policy. I think, given the experience of the last six months, it is hard to blame the administration for deciding that, at least in the short term, they are not going to take Europe as a whole, as defined by France or by the most hostile common denominator, and say we're not going to work with other nations where we need their help – precisely, for example, in peacekeeping and nation-building in Iraq.

Now, they do this, of course, and then they're accused of splitting Europe and having a horribly Machiavellian and dastardly policy of driving wedges in Europe. But what are they supposed to do? I mean, they're supposed to do nothing until Europe agrees or until everyone else in Eastern Europe bows to France's leadership? So I think they have a – I mean, to be fair to the administration, they get beat up either way. And I think their short-term judgment is -- look, it is not a theological question, for me at least, I can't speak for the administration – as to whether a united Europe is better or worse for America. It all depends on what the character of that Europe is. It all depends on what

the concrete understanding of how to deal with issues in the real world is, and I think that is an open question.

In 1991, Europe was much less united and we had much more support to fight that war. Admittedly, it was a very different war, different grounds for it. Now, Europe is much more – it wasn't clear to me that the greater integration of Europe has been helpful to U.S. foreign policy in the last couple of years; maybe it will become helpful. But, you know, that's got to be – any responsible policymaker, not thinking about the metaphysics of whether it would be nice to have two pillars or one pillar, or a multipolar world or a unipolar world, but actually thinking about dealing with real problems in a real world where American forces are globally deployed, where American forces have fought two wars in the last 19 months -- any serious policymaker cannot simply say, well, as a matter of theology, we believe in united Europe, we believe in two pillars; and therefore, that's going to drive our policy. It would be irresponsible, frankly.

And so, the administration, I think, has been sensible in its policy since the end of the Iraq war in terms of Poland and in terms of Germany. I don't think there is any need to antagonize people more than they need to; and I think they have done some of that, obviously, as I guess any administration might. But I just think it's very much – and I think honestly, in their own minds, incidentally, it's an open question as to what -- the whole question of Europe. And I do think it's – in Europe, Europe is a project, as they say, and a very deep and important project; and I don't criticize in regards to that.

But I don't think it's – that any serious American administration, dealing with real problems in the real world, is going to have to take a look and say, what can we do in the short- and medium-term, what do we need to do to help deal with these problems. And so, I think – I don't know if that quite answers your question, but my sense is that the administration, for now, has decided to deal with European nations differently. But that doesn't mean that they have some big plot to split or drive a wedge into Europe.

MR. GORDON: Yeah, I think we will come back to Thérèse last because I would like to ask Jim the same question.

MR. STEINBERG: And fortunately we have finally found something to disagree about, because I do disagree with Bill on this. I mean, the problem with aggregating short-terms is that you never get to the long-term. And then if we keep making the decisions, well, it's more convenient for us now to deal ad hoc with individual European allies, and we lose sight of what I do believe is a long-term interest in the United States in Europe's integration, and its increased capability as Europe in dealing on the global stage, then we will simply never get there; that we will have a problem of, you know, in each case, it seems easier – well, we can get the Poles to do this, we can get the British to do that, and we never see the coming together of something which I think is in our long-term interest.

So I think there is a way to do this which doesn't simply say we're not going to do what we need to do; but it also says that we don't have a policy that says we're going to

punish the French, ignore the Germans, reconcile with the Russians. We say that we want to work with Europe and here's what it will take, and let the people who share that view in Europe carry the burden of that. I think for us to challenge it in a positive way, to take that forward and say, this is what we want, this is still how we think we will be better off – both as the United States and, in the broader sense of it, our common objectives – and to make that a possibility rather than say their issues are too urgent and important now to allow that to develop.

And I think that there is, if not a deliberate strategy of trying to divide Europe, a sense in the administration that we can do, as you suggested, everything that we need to do without Europe. And so, if individuals want to come along that's fine; if Europe never develops, that's fine – maybe that's even good. And therefore, there's no reason for us to even make the effort to see if this can be put back on track.

And I think that's going to cause us problems, not just with France, but I think in the long-term it's going to cause us problems even with the U.K., which I don't think is going to be willing to play, in the long-term, with a strategy that sees it in the dividing line. And I don't think it's going to work with Germany, either, because I don't think Germany will ever accept having to make the choice between the United States and Europe, and I think that there are some in the administration who would like to see that happen. And I don't think we should put Germany on the spot to do that. I think we should basically take the forward-looking perspective that Thérèse has identified and say, okay, we couldn't come together on this one, but we do have a common interest in the stabilization of Iraq. And here is the challenge to Europe: we are prepared to open that door again to Europe acting with us, as Europe, and let's see where we can take it.

MR. GORDON: Thanks, Jim. We can obviously come back to this and others in a moment. Let me just, before we open it to the room, take advantage of Thérèse being here. Thérèse, you spent maybe a decade of your life looking for weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. We have now been able to look for them a little bit more carefully than we could in the time when you were doing so, but we really haven't found very much. Where are they, did they have them, and how come we haven't found them – and will we find them?

MS. DELPECH: Well, first, do you allow me to say one sentence about the previous question or no?

MR. GORDON: Please.

MS. DELPECH: Thank you. (Laughter.) What I want to say about the previous question is the following. It seems to me that, concerning the alliance, the big difference between the United States and France right now is that on the American side there is a clear element of choice. I mean, America can choose. On the French side, there is continuous ambiguity. And, in my view, here it would be very important to have, on the French side, a position which would be clearer because that the declaratory position is not enough any longer. It's not enough, not – I'm not speaking about this country; I'm

thinking about the European Union as well, because as you said, no country – and particularly the Germans – they don't want to have to choose between America and Europe. There is a good article by Wolfgang Schauble in *Le Figaro*, which sometimes tells the truth – (laughter) – Bill, precisely on this matter.

Now, the second point I wanted to make is to say that, in my view, one of the biggest conversions the French should undertake is to leave aside their obsession with America and to deal with the rest of the world. I mean, this obsession is really a kind of illness, in my view, okay?

Now, I come to WMD, and I hope that you're not asking me where those WMD are because this is certainly not an answer I will give you. What I can say concerning WMD is the following: I mean, first, there is something one has to recognize, which is that after the war -- and particularly with all the debate before the war -- after the war, there was, to some extent, no way for Washington to be right because you either would have discovered those weapons early, and this would have been the proof that you didn't give the relevant information to the inspectors; or you would have found those weapons late, and this would have been the proof that you had planted the evidence; or thirdly, that you don't find any weapons, at least for some time, and this destroys the main argument for going to the war.

So this is my first point, and it's an important one because I do know a number of people particularly hostile to the war, and you could have put 500 tons of anthrax before them; they would still not change their position. Okay, so this is the first point.

The second point is that the WMD here -- before the war -- was shared by the European capitals, at least by the major European capitals. Why? For three reasons. I mean, why? One, there were reports that the production on B and CW, particularly on CW, had restarted in summer 2002. Secondly, there were also information that massive importation of antidotes took place in the months before the war. And thirdly, there was reportedly – reportedly -- an activation of the special chain of command. So this is the second point.

The third point is that, obviously, the coalition was expecting – was expecting a high risk of WMD use, and this is why the troops were vaccinated against anthrax and smallpox, and were also wearing these chemical suits that I'm convinced they would have left happily aside in the Iraqi desert with the kind of heat they had there. So this is the third point.

Now, coming to the main issue: what about WMD in Iraq? What I want to say on this particular point is twofold. I mean, the first is that I thought, even when I was working with Blix and the inspectors on site, I already thought that the main route for discovery was not to go around the country and visit bunkers or facilities, but it was about interviews, it was about documents, and it was about badges.

Now, concerning interviews -- and here I have something unpleasant to say, I'm sorry. Concerning interviews, if you want to conduct serious interviews, you should at least have the story of the programs in your mind. And I'm not sure at all that those now in Iraq, working on this issue, do have this complex story in mind, which means -- because you can assume that the Iraqis are really good in interviews, they have been trained for years – so, if you're not as good as they are and if you don't know the entire story yourself, you're going nowhere. And I have read a number of articles in the American press, including by very good journalists, which, for me, were absolutely appalling – I mean the substance. Obviously, the programs were not known.

Now, the second point, which is directly linked to this one, is that I do believe that international verification of the WMD finding is absolutely necessary for a question of confidence because of my first point. I mean, if, after some months, you do discover some important elements of the program, nobody will believe you if you don't have an independent verification mechanism. And this is why I do regret that the inspectors who knew very well the program, who have been trained for that, are completely left aside.

Now, the last point, that I do recommend because this is my book of reference on the subject: what Blix has published on the 6th of March, the 170 pages where he describes all of the Iraqi WMD programs and lists the questions. What I expect, myself – not for political reason but for strategic reason – is at least to get answers to those major and outstanding questions in some months. Thank you.

MR. GORDON: Excellent. Thanks very much, Thérèse. We will open the floor now. I will gather a few questions and start in the back, in the very back please.

Q: Good morning, I'm Anne Elizabeth Moutet.from Proche-Orient.Info, I thought my question would be to Thérèse Delpech; I hope that it may be addressed also this afternoon by Jean-Louis Bruguière. This is about the cooperation between the United States and France on the matter of terrorism. And, in fact, I had cause to interview experts on terrorism in this – recently, this day, right now in the United States, I'm doing – I'm based in Paris.

And they say that, yes, there is complete cooperation between the United States and France when it comes to al Qaeda, but there is no cooperation whenever American authorities are trying to cooperate with the French on Hezbollah and Hamas. And I'm – specifically, it was quoted, a trip by two American officials in November of 2002 to various European capitals, in which any information that they had from sources that would have been either Hamas or Hezbollah was refused, even though they said it pertained to networks of logistics and financial that were coming to al Qaeda and the others. Have you heard of this and would somebody answer about this?

MR. GORDON: Hold it, Thérèse, we will take a few. For the interest of time, I would like to gather a few and then give the panelists a chance to respond. Chuck Cogan.

Q: This is more of a statement than a question, but I – is it working? I would like to get Bill Kristol's reaction to it. The war is over. The next problem is the Middle East peace process, and we have this laborious initiative of the quartet, which has finally surfaced its road map. And what do we do with the quartet? We send the first violin out to the area and the others remain in the background. What was the purpose of this initiative if we can't put the weight of the international community behind this effort to end this conflict that has been going on for 30 years?

MR. GORDON: Thank you, Chuck.

MS. DELPECH: (Off mike.)

MR. GORDON: Yeah, people are exhausted or anxious to get to lunch, I suspect. Yeah, please?

Q: Thank you. Anne Deysine, University of Paris 10. I have a very basic question. I have the feeling that, in this room, we tend to agree with each other. We haven't jumped to each other's throats. And my question is, how can we convince the Bush administration that Europe, and a united Europe, is the right partner?

MR. GORDON: Okay, thank you. Pierre Lellouche, a member of the French parliament.

Q: Just a remark at the end of this seminar -- a very interesting seminar. I have the feeling that, in the very positive desire to get beyond this crisis, we may tend to paint a story that is far more easy than it is in fact. I am concerned that, above and beyond Iraq, the disagreements may persist and may be quite deep.

Somebody said, in the previous panel, the problem for France today is to decide whether it can live happily with unipolarity and accept it, or continue trying to contain American power. I think there is a third way, of course, and this third way I share, of course, with Jean-David and many European friends. The third way is to try to build a counterweight in Europe, to try to build a partner. This is what we have been trying to do.

The difficulty is that -- the bottom line is that we don't agree on very much nowadays. In Iraq -- we disagreed on Iraq. We disagreed on the Middle East. We disagreed on how to handle Iraq vis-à-vis terrorism, or vis-à-vis the Middle East. I am not sure that these disagreements are behind us.

And when I look at public opinion in Europe or in my own country, or the dynamics of the political class in France or in America, I think we are way – the road ahead of us is very, very long. So I am concerned that we are not out of this particular box yet, and my impression is that the disagreements are, in fact -- very much represent the – that Iraq was a constellation of many other problems, that this problem will remain. And I do not see in the dynamics of American politics today or in the dynamic of

European politics reasons to be quite optimistic or rejoice and sort of put it aside. Maybe this sound too pessimistic an assessment, but I think this, then, should be closer to the truth.

The reality, in a nutshell, is that there is growing indifference in the U.S. about Europe and that Europe itself is splitting among various subgroups, and that if you look very hard at the work of the convention and the institutions that are being talked about, the fundamental is a basic disagreement about what this is all about: what is it that we want to do in Europe, how much money we want to spend, how close we want to be to the U.S. I mean, those questions are not resolved on either side, and I think we have been very optimistic this morning.

MR. GORDON: Okay, I thank you for your pessimism. You have managed to provoke comments – (laughter) – from Mark Leland and Julie Finley. We will see if you have provoked counter-optimism or reinforced pessimism, but – Mark?

Q: Pierre did bring out something because I really wanted Jean-David to kind of respond to Bill's point about the fact of – now that you – always, it has been a case with Europe, all of us who have ever been in government, is you deal with the lowest common denominator whoever -- if the French are on agricultural policy, they may guide it, and that's it.

So how do you deal with a Europe in the way he's talking about unless it is, because in all these meetings – I go to too many of them, probably a lot of people here do – but the fact of the matter is that, first of all, it's one thing for the continentals to leave out Britain as part of Europe, but we shouldn't do it -- that's the first thing -- because Britain has never talked about it. If you talk about a transatlantic divide, I believe that this administration – and that's – I want Jean-David – really will, you know, Blair plays a big role. He's that -- you know, he really does. And if he wants to bring it together, he will have -- whatever happens at Evian and so forth – he will have a big role.

So my question really is, it seems to me -- I know Jean-David has been developing this theory of the French view of sovereignty and our view of sovereignty. From our side of the Atlantic, it looked as if what happened before was we went to the U.N., we wanted to see what happened with nine votes, the French said they would veto whatever, whether we had 14 votes. Before they had it, they vetoed the proposal of their partner, the British, when there were 20 countries already in Europe on that side. But I really want to know how you would have us – because it goes to what John said about -- how you would have us deal with Europe as Europe without it being simply dealing with the lowest common denominator?

MR. GORDON: Thanks. Julie?

Q: Well, I just wondered why there should be any burden on us with regard to what Europe wants to do vis-à-vis organizing itself. If the present administration has chosen to deal with Poland on certain things and with Germany in certain things and not

have an overarching policy, maybe that is exactly the right role for the United States to play right now while Europe organizes itself.

MR. GORDON: Thank you. Maybe we will take one final one from Bob Bradtke, in the middle on the right. It's coming from the front.

Q: Thank you. I came to listen rather than to speak for the administration, but I couldn't resist my better judgment and have decided to speak anyway. There are two points I wanted to make. One was -- and perhaps this is in the vein of the pessimism -- that, despite the Ambassador's very eloquent opening presentation, I think it is not clear to those of us in Washington which direction France's policy is going: whether France is indeed tilting more toward the counterweight to the United States for European power.

And the example of the summit meeting on April 29 is one that had a great impact here. The choice of the countries that were part of this summit: the same countries who opposed us in Iraq, leaving out European countries who have an important role in defense matters, who have strong capabilities in defense -- I think this left us with a big question about what was going to be the organizing principle. Was it going to be putting together small groups of countries where the common theme was opposition to U.S. policies? So, again, I think the question is open, but there are still developments that could cause concern here.

I also find myself caught between Bill Kristol and Jim Steinberg on the issue of long-term vision and practical day-to-day responsibilities. I think that we do have to have a vision. I think the president put a vision forward in his speech in Warsaw when he made his first trip to Europe. It was a vision of a Europe that's whole, free, at peace; and we have spent much of the last two years trying to implement that vision with NATO enlargement, with support for the enlargement of the European Union, with completing years of work on a relationship between NATO and the European Union that allows us to work together in the defense field. So I think that vision is still there. The president goes back to Europe at the end of this month, and I think he will elaborate further on the vision for the years ahead.

But you have to deal with the world the way it is. And we did not seek to cause splits among European countries, but when countries come to us -- not because we have twisted their arm behind their backs, and say they want to help -- are we supposed to say no? And indeed, when countries come to us and say, France does not speak for us, please listen to us, please work with us, that puts us in a position where we have to deal with the situation in Europe as it is. So again, it's not a policy of trying to divide Europe, it's not abandoning the long-term vision of a Europe that is whole and free and at peace, but it is trying to balance the long-term vision with the practical realities of day-to-day work.

MR. GORDON: Thanks, Bob, that's very useful. Why don't we come back to the panel for anyone who wants to respond. There are a range of questions and comments on a range of issues. Why don't we do it in reverse order, starting with Jim. Anything you want to react to?

MR. STEINBERG: Just two brief comments. I want to react to Pierre's comment because obviously it is an important perspective. Well, I think one of the challenges, and we have to remind ourselves, is that the United States and Europe never agreed much about out-of-area issues during the Cold War. I mean, we didn't agree about Vietnam, we certainly didn't agree about Suez, we didn't agree about the Reagan administration policy towards Latin America. So it shouldn't surprise us that, now that these issues are more central -- because we have made progress, both in the end of the Cold War, but also progress in the nearer European issues like the Balkans – that issues which have been very difficult before are difficult.

The question is, is this worse than before or, in fact, as these new global and transnational issues come up on the agenda, are we, in fact, finding that there are things that we can work on. I mean, we didn't agree on much of the out-of-area in the '50s, '60s, and '70s; but we do agree on a lot of things, like collaborating on dealing with international crime, on dealing with terrorism, and hopefully – and I think it is the big challenge – as we face WMD. So, yes, these are difficult issues and they are not ones which we have a strong track record of having worked together effectively on.

But it strikes me that there is enough reason to believe that our interests are affected in similar ways, that actually we can begin to develop -- (unintelligible) --around these issues that, you know, gives some traction to our ability to work together. The proof will be in the pudding, it will be a very pragmatic decision. And I think that the earlier observation about the sort of – the impact of some of the very near-term choices, I think, is quite powerful because I do think that we have an opportunity now to make clear that, while we are going to have differences -- and I identified some which I think will persist -- that there are practical things that we can do together. And people will be reminded that while it is true that we can't do everything together and won't do everything together, that there is an important reason to try to do that.

And I think that goes to my sort of response to Bob Bradtke's point, which is we clearly don't have to say no if somebody wants to help us, but we can also look for opportunities to do this in ways that are most likely to bring us together as a transatlantic community. That's why, in thinking about how we want to do stabilization in Iraq afterwards, notwithstanding the debacle over using NATO before the war, we ought to try again. And if it turns out that we can't make that work, then by all means let Poland have a sector. But why not try to use the mechanisms that we have, to see whether, under these circumstances, that people are prepared to say, you know, we are in a different phase; and at least make a greater opportunity for all of us, Julie, to do this together rather than saying we're just going to do it with individual countries.

MR. GORDON: Thérèse?

MS. DELPECH: Well, to Bob Bradtke first. It seems to me that there is an agreement, and particularly at the presidential level, that there will be no meaningful

defense in Europe without the British. Now, if you ask me – but you won't have time to do it – then why April 29? My own answer to that is that April 29 was unfortunate.

Concerning the E.U., the two things I want to say is the following. First, it seems to me that the E.U. will be credible only when the E.U. will have some kind of military capability able to back its diplomatic stance. So this is the first point.

The second point is that, for the very first time, the Europeans are beginning to seriously think about having a European threat assessment. You may be surprised by that, but the only word of threat was taboo in a number of European capitals, and this has to do first with the trauma of last century. I mean, the mixture of the trauma of the wars, which are still very important in Europe, and secondly, the culture of irresponsibility coming with the Cold War. And, in my view, we are overcoming this progressively, too slowly in my view, but this is coming.

Now, Pierre, only one word: It seems to me that what we need is certainly hard work. The bottom line is to recognize, on both sides, what has been done in a wrong fashion, and this is where I share your pessimism. Okay, this is the only point I want to make.

On terrorism, only three points. First, to tell you that, concerning terrorism, international terrorism, the reason why the cooperation is so good on international terrorism – not only on al Qaeda, on international terrorism – is not because we have an even cooperation as I said -- not only because of that, but also because it's seen as a common threat. I mean, in Europe, we do now recognize the possibility of unconventional attacks. This is very new but this is something that we cannot take but seriously. And this is why, Jim, in my view, Europe is now in many ways as threatened as the United States, I'm sorry to say, because we did have only in October last year a declaration by Al-Zawahiri, number two of al Qaeda, threatening directly Germany and France.

Now, the second point is that we have a new trend, which is very worrisome, which is represented by those young British who went to Israel to blow them up. I mean, this is a new button, which will oblige the Europeans to take Hamas more seriously, in my view, for those who haven't done that up until now.

And the last point, concerning Hezbollah, my own view is that Hezbollah should be – I mean, we should recognize Hezbollah as a terrorist organization because in 1986 Hezbollah has been attacking France in a devastating manner, if not for any other reason. So these are the – okay, these are the anwers.

MR. GORDON: Thérèse, thank you. Bill?

MR. KRISTOL: Let me just -- I think it's interesting that the discussion has turned so much on Europe, which I don't think is an accident because the more -- I have been struck over the last six to nine months that a lot depends on one's attitude towards

Europe, and a lot depends on what happens in Europe. And my attitude, and I – (unintelligible) – don't speak for the administration, Thérèse is very eloquent on this, as Bob says – but my attitude is, a Europe whole, at peace, and free is fine; a Europe divided, at peace, and free is perfectly acceptable to me, and I don't believe that the wholeness or the unity is required to be at peace or free.

And this is really up for Europe to decide, but we cannot make our immediate and urgent foreign policy priorities hostage to waiting for a common foreign policy, a reduction of the democracy deficit, the second pillar of a true partnership, which I don't think is likely anyway.

I really disagree with those here who think France is a strategic adversary, that's – I mean, France isn't a strategic adversary; France is a nation of medium size that can either be very helpful to us or somewhat unhelpful to us, and probably will be a combination of both as it always has been. And that's fine. France has no obligation to be going along with America on everything. We shouldn't obsess about France.

France, Germany, Belgium, and Luxembourg meeting? That's not worth -- I mean, it's not serious. It's not serious. And if you care a huge amount about -- if you think everything depends on the twin pillars for the future of the world, then, of course, one has to take it seriously, and then I think it's an amazing act, frankly, of irresponsibility on the part of anyone in those four countries who is at all serious at the end of the Iraq war about trying to give the Bush administration some grounds for helping them – helping people within the Bush administration. Let me even put it more strongly: those, you know, in the Bush administration who wanted to reach out to those countries -- to have that meeting was just pointless and idiotic. Nothing is going to happen. It's just a farcical kind of demonstration of, you know, putting a -- poking a finger in the eye of the U.S. and I suppose of Britain, and I suppose of the East Europeans. To make people – and then, of course, you talk privately with the Germans and they say, well, we don't believe in it but we had to do what the French asked. Then you talk privately with the French and they say, well, we don't believe in it, but the Belgians asked, you know, and they have a – (laughter).

I mean, it's – we can't – and here's the core point – and I really mark, and I agree with the last three or four questioners in this respect. Now, all that's fine if we think, look, the world's fine. We can take our time, you can have a constitutional convention, you can work all these things out, we can have endless discussions. If you have the attitude -- and maybe it's wrong -- but if you have the attitude of the Bush administration that we have extremely urgent threats out there, and that five or 10 years from now the world is either going to be a world of rogue states with weapons of mass destruction, proliferating those weapons, destabilizing other regimes nearby; or we have a chance to really, at this pivotal moment, make a fundamental difference and begin to create a safer world – if you have that sense of urgency, you can't wait on sort of wishes about a common foreign defense policy, greater defense spending, and all that.

Now, I agree with Jim. We shouldn't act to -- if we can, to block that or to obstruct those efforts, and I don't have any interest in doing so. And I think, to be fair to the Bush administration, it has been pretty scrupulous in trying to avoid that. But at the end of the day, if Poland is willing to take responsibility in Iraq, we're supposed to say, oh, sorry, we have to wait until we have, you know, endless discussions in the Security Council and the E.U. makes up its mind?

Final point -- NATO, I think – this is something Jim and I have worked a little together on, Phil, and others here – I think that, concretely, a lot depends on NATO, the way in which a healthier American-European relationship will move ahead is if we can do more things through NATO. And if that fails – and here I think, again, the administration has been pretty forward leaning – I mean, if that fails, I think we are in real trouble, and then it's going to be hard to blame the administration for putting together various coalitions of the willing. Now whether NATO needs to be reformed -- these are all interesting questions. But I would say that I think, of the existing institutions, NATO is by far the most promising, practical way forward to rebuild a serious transatlantic relationship, a serious relationship among the European – a security and defense relationship among the European nations and the like.

And insofar as people were spending a lot of time, you know, creating this April 29 meeting, and then instead of being serious about what NATO, for example, could do in Iraq or whether you could have NATO take more responsibility in some of these proliferation issues – I think that's, at worst or at best, a sort of a silly diversion; but at worst, a sort of a dangerous moment because again, I think the administration, correctly in my view, has a real sense of urgency about dealing with these problems out there. And it's going to deal with them alone if they must, but they would prefer to have lots of allies – they would prefer to have all of Europe as a big ally. But they're not going to wait indefinitely on that, and they certainly are going to accept and want the help of Britain and Spain and Poland and a lot of other nations if they can get that help.

MR. GORDON: You have the final word.

AMB. LEVITTE: Well, I'll start with the comments on the European Union. We succeeded with the euro without the support of the United States. We wanted it; it was necessary; we did it; it is a success and it's good for America. It's good for American business because if you want to invest in Europe you have one market with one currency. We are preparing our constitution. We are exactly where you were in Philadelphia in 1787. If we succeed, it seems to me, it's good for Europe and it's good for the United States. It's good for the United States -- we see one president of the European Union for five years and not the merry-go-round of six-month presidency. It would be good also to have a foreign minister for the European Union, a real one, merging the functions of Solana and Patten.

European defense. I remember vividly when we had Saint Malo. Saint Malo is British and French, and we succeeded and we announced. Ten minutes later I received a call from Sandy Berger, and he said, hey, what are you doing? We were not informed.

And I said to my counterpart on the British side, didn't you call Sandy? And he said no, we are doing this with you. Lesson one, there are things we can do with the Brits as well as with our German friends or Belgian friends, and that's exactly what we will continue to do, but we should do it with transparency with our American friends. Maybe that is what was lacking on the 29th of April.

But nonetheless, it's good news when the Europeans are together to do better, in terms of European defense, because we put a lot of money. But as we are in different pieces and bits, we are not efficient for us and for you, and what we have to do is put more money but also to get together. Will it be with 25, because now we are 25, or in different groupings? I think it's reasonable to think that what we call reinforced cooperation will be the way forward, provided that it's not against anybody, certainly not the United States or some European partners; but with the possibility for everybody to join when they feel appropriate and when they are ready.

But let's move on. If it is with the U.K. or with the Germans or with the Belgians, let's do it. We need a Euro-core; we have it with the Germans and a few others. We have, in the spirit of Saint Malo, an excellent partnership with the British. And let's aggregate all these different elements into a pragmatic demarche to do better for our European defense. And I agree with Thérèse, when we have the military tool, then it will be easier to get a foreign policy for the European Union as a whole.

Now, maybe Pierre is a bit too pessimistic; maybe I'm a bit too optimistic. But what's for sure is that there is a way forward, and the way forward is to have a strategic dialogue, not about the two pillars – Bill didn't understand my view. Of course, we should not spend too much time about how to organize the transatlantic partnership. We need to fix better NATO, but that's underway. I know I am optimistic on that. What is needed is a better U.S.-E.U. dialogue, and there is a lot to do on this. But what I had in mind when I discussed the idea of a strategic dialogue is a dialogue between Europe and the United States about the Middle East.

Thérèse said there was a transformation of the goals on the war in Iraq: his full disarmament, then the change of regime, then the transformation of the whole Middle East. Hey, that's something which is very important for us. The Middle East is our backyard, and if you decide to transform the whole Middle East, it's worth a good dialogue with your European partners. And to my knowledge, this has never been discussed with us, with the Germans, or even with the British. It is true, I think, Blair was not informed before he learned that on the TV networks.

So it is important to have a strategic dialogue on our common goals. Do we agree on the transformation of the Middle East? How do we achieve that goal? Do we agree on what is needed on Iran, North Korea? And how do we, together, achieve that goal? It's fair that you don't wait to have the 25 European members in agreement on each and every issue. Let's have the Europeans take care of their own business and organize themselves; and in the meantime, let's organize in a better way a transatlantic dialogue to take care of the key issues, which are the common threats against you and us: the fight

against terror, Islamist terror; the organization of the Middle East; the threat of arms of mass destruction; Iran; North Korea; and so on and so forth. And that's exactly the kind of transatlantic dialogue on strategy issues which is now lacking.

My last point is about the fluid situation where we are, and I agree with Bill. The next few weeks will be key, that's for sure. And for that we need flexibility, not only on our side, but also on your side. You have proposed a draft resolution to – (unintelligible). If it is take it or leave it, then we may have difficulties. If it is a starting point for a good discussion with flexibility on all sides, I'm very optimistic we will achieve a consensus resolution. Thank you very much.

MR. GORDON: Thank you, Jean-David. (Applause.)

A good place to end, leaving us a question. Before people run out, I apologize, we're running late but here's what we will do. It's a very un-French thing to propose a quick lunch, but that's what we're going to have to do. (Laughter.) I think it was worth running over because of the substance and wealth of the discussion we just had, but we do want to get back here on time to hear Judge Bruguière.

So we have a buffet lunch set up next door -- no coffees outside, no cigarette breaks, head right over for the food. And join me in thanking the panel for an excellent discussion.

(Applause.)

(End of panel.)