

Rebuilding Transatlantic Relations – It's Time to Repair Damaged Bridges*

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Relations between Europe and the United States have been subjected to many strains over the last two centuries, but throughout there has been a justified presumption that common history, values, and interests make for a lasting partnership. This trust in a fundamental and lasting transatlantic relationship has recently been severely shaken in the period up to, during, and following the Iraq War of March/April 2003.

One symptom of this shaken trust is the growing prevalence of negative popular stereotypes on both sides of the Atlantic. Among Americans, Europeans are caricatured as militarily weak, economically stagnant, wracked by disunity and hence unable to act decisively, full of Gaullist Anti-Americanism, and plagued by “the arrogance of the weak.”¹ Among Europeans, the United States is commonly portrayed as a military hyper-power, paranoid and aggressive, unilateral and power-hungry in its approach to the rest of the world, focused on short-term gains, but insensitive to the world's and its own long-term interests, and exercising “the arrogance of the powerful.”²

The key contention of this paper is that amidst rising signs of transatlantic tensions and distrust there is a need for a better understanding of the facts and forces that shape these relations. In turn, such understanding can hopefully lead to a commitment and action to repair the bridges that have served both sides well over the last two centuries. Indeed, as the dust is hopefully beginning to settle after the Iraq War, this is an opportune and critical time to turn attention again towards the long-term challenges and opportunities in transatlantic relations.

This paper starts by surveying briefly the findings of recent opinion polls on transatlantic relations. It then assesses the significance of five key factors that impinge on these relations – basic values, external events, leadership, public opinion and public policy. The paper concludes by making some recommendations for the management of transatlantic relations.

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What Do Opinion Polls Tell Us?

Transatlantic relations form the bond between the democracies of Europe and the US. It is therefore only natural that one would start analyzing what the voting public on both sides of the Atlantic thinks about these relations.

Four recent opinion polls offer an important starting point for assessing the changing public perceptions within which transatlantic relations are currently managed. The four polls are: (1) a Eurobarometer poll of the 15 EU member countries of Spring 2003,³ (2) a Eurobarometer poll of the 13 EU accession countries of May/June 2003,⁴ (3) a Pew Research Center poll of EU and US respondents of June 2003,⁵ and (4) a German Marshall Fund poll of EU and US respondents of September 2003.⁶

The commonality of key results from these four different polls is striking. Of course, in interpreting them it is important to remember that opinions can and do change rapidly.⁷ It is also important to realize that there are significant differences across countries within Europe and across population segments within the US. Therefore generalizations need to be taken with a big grain of salt. Four broad conclusions nonetheless stand out:

1. There are some important transatlantic commonalities.

- On both sides of the Atlantic there are shared fundamental political and economic values, centered around the common goals of democracy, economic openness and integration and free markets.
- There is a shared view that the 5 top-most important global threats include: international terrorism, weapons of mass destruction in both Korea and Iran, Islamic fundamentalism, and the Arab-Israeli conflict.
- There is common support for a stronger, more unified EU (3/4 of respondents in Europe agreed to this, as did 2/3 of respondents in the US).⁸
- A majority of respondents in Europe and in the US think US unilateralism is an important threat.⁹
- There is also a shared recognition of an emerging value gap across the Atlantic.

2. There are important differences in values and opinions, especially on war.

- Close to 2/3 in the US feel it is more important to enjoy the freedom to pursue personal goals without government interference than to have a government guarantee that no one is left in poverty; the reverse is true for Europeans.¹⁰
- 2/3 in the US favor the use of military force, if need be bypassing the UN, to deal with weapons of mass destruction in Korea and Iran, while only 1/3 in Europe are of that opinion. Even with NATO or UN Security Council approval, only 1/2 in Europe support military action, while 3/4 in the US do.¹¹
- 84% in the US believe war can be used to achieve justice, while only 48% in Europe do.¹²

- A large majority of Europeans think the war in Iraq was not worth the cost of life and resources (81% in Germany, 84% in France), while 55% in the US think that war was worth fighting.¹³
- In Europe a majority thinks the US is favoring the Israelis inappropriately over the Palestinians and exerting more pressure on the latter, while in the US American policy in the Middle-East is generally seen as even-handed.¹⁴

3. The views on the US global role increasingly diverge.

- A majority of Europeans view the US global role as strongly negative in categories that include the preservation of peace, fighting poverty, and protection of the environment. A majority of Europeans believe that US global leadership is undesirable. In fact, there has been a clear and significant deterioration in this indicator between fall 2002 and spring 2003.¹⁵
- In contrast, since 1947 the highest percentage of Americans favor an active US role in world affairs (77%).¹⁶
- 71% of Europeans want the EU to become a “super power,” but only half of that (35%) do so if it involves more military spending.¹⁷
- Finally, a majority of Europeans support a common foreign and defense policy.¹⁸

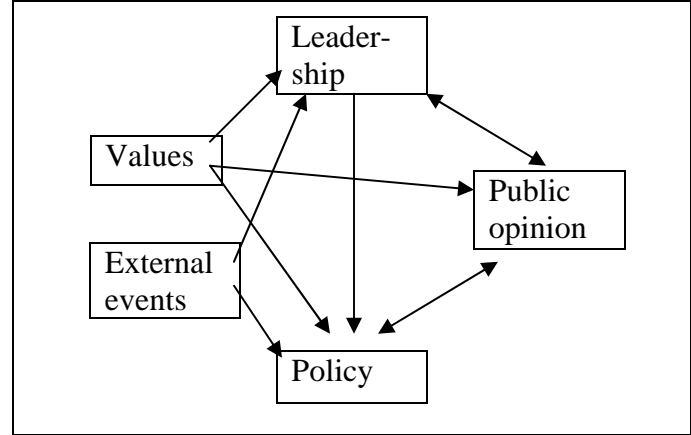
4. Many of the European views are shared by respondents in the 13 EU accession countries (EU-13).

- Respondents in the EU-13 ranked the EU higher than the US in terms of their relative contribution to world leadership in the areas of poverty reduction, growth, environment, anti-terrorism and maintaining peace.¹⁹
- As regards to US leadership in the role of maintaining peace, only 34% in the EU-13 think the US plays a positive role, while 45% think it is playing a negative role. In contrast, 65% see a positive role for the EU, with only 13% negative.²⁰
- There is also strong popular support for a common foreign and defense policy for the EU in the countries of the EU-13.²¹

In sum, respondents in Europe and the US have some important shared values and shared perceptions of threats, but on matters of war and peace Americans are willing to be more interventionist, to take a lead role in world affairs and when in doubt to go it alone. In contrast, Europeans believe much less in military solutions to international threats, and a majority take a dim view of US global leadership. The latter point of view is also shared by respondents in the prospective EU member countries, and a majority of Europeans – old and new EU alike – support a stronger EU role in foreign policy and defense.

What are the major factors affecting policies on transatlantic relations?

Of course, public opinion is not the only factor shaping public policy in democracies, including policies on transatlantic relations. In thinking about transatlantic relations it is therefore important to understand what shapes public opinion and policies on both sides of the Atlantic. In particular, three key factors affect transatlantic relations, aside from public opinion: basic values, external events, and leadership. The simple graph to the right shows the main interactions: values and external events each affect policy, public opinion and leadership. Public opinion influences policy and leadership, and vice versa. And leadership determines policy, along with the other factors. To see how this works in practice it helps to explore some examples.



1. Basic Values:

Commonality in basic values and interests pulls partnerships together, differences tend to push them apart.²² A few examples can exemplify this:

- Different basic attitudes towards the role of war and military action led to significant differences in public opinion and supported different policies regarding military action in Iraq in the US, as compared to much of Europe.
- Different values regarding the role of the environment – much greater stress generally placed on environmental protection in Europe than in the US – has led to greatly differing approaches in key areas of global environmental policies, such as the Kyoto Protocol on Global Warming.
- More subtly, as Jed Rubenfeld has recently argued,²³ different perceptions of the role of international law and institutions prevail across the Atlantic: In Europe, international law and supranational institutions are seen to have value in their own right and are strongly supported, while in the US they are supported only in as much as they are seen to be consistent with the national, democratically determined constitutional law and the national interest of the US. This difference gives rise to different approaches to international legal norms -- which Europeans generally regard as binding on nation states, while the US does not --, and to differences in their respective willingness to sign up to international treaties such as the International Criminal Court. Even differences in capital market rules between the US and Europe can be traced back to this different attitude towards sovereignty.²⁴

External Events:

External events can dramatically affect public opinion, policy, and leadership. But recent events show how differently the same event can affect the US and Europe. Key examples are the events of the twin dates of “11/9” and “9/11”:

- The fall of the Berlin wall on November 9, 1989 signaled the end to the Cold War, and while this was of major significance for the US, it certainly had a greater immediate impact on public opinion and policy in Europe, causing increased focus on integration, an enhanced sense of security and the perception of a reduced need for military spending.
- In contrast, the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001, caused a much greater shock in the US than in Europe by creating a new, pervasive sense of vulnerability, setting in motion the US-led war on terrorism, and creating an emerging conflict between the exigencies of homeland security and maintenance of basic freedoms to which Americans are traditionally much committed. In Europe, the events of 9/11/01 created much less of a shock wave, primarily due to the distance of the events and the fact that Europeans have had to live with various forms of terrorism over the last decades.

2. Leadership:

Political leadership is a key determinant of policies. Political leaders both influence, and are influenced by, public opinion. They are also shaped by the fundamental values of their countries and by external events.

Certainly, the leadership exerted by Mr. Bush and his closest associates has shaped not only US policy in its current directions, but has also had, post-9/11/2001, a major favorable response in US public opinion, while European perceptions have been highly unfavorable. There is little question that Mr. Bush reflects some of the basic American values (some Europeans would argue that he does so to the point of caricature), and that he was tremendously influenced by the events of September 11, 2001.

In Europe, too, leadership has been a key factor: British Prime Minister Blair’s belief in a close partnership with the US clearly has been the decisive factor explaining the support which the UK has provided to US foreign policy, especially in Iraq. Similarly, Spanish Prime Minister Aznar and Italian Prime Minister Berlusconi, essentially in opposition to prevalent public opinion, have led their countries to support the US in since September 11, 2001. In contrast, the political leaders Mr. Chirac and Mr. Schroeder of France and Germany, respectively, have taken a personal lead in opposing the US policy in Iraq, aligning themselves closely with public opinion in their countries, and in the case of Germany, reversing a long tradition of strong German support for US international policy.

Of course, the interactions between these various factors—values, external events, leadership, public opinion and policies—are complex and may change quickly over time.

Take as an example the US political scene after September 11, 2001: In the immediate aftermath of the attack, Mr. Bush's policies on Afghanistan and anti-terrorism were widely supported by, and aligned with, public opinion in the US. However, by embarking on an Iraq war without UN approval, the US administration went beyond what public opinion demanded.²⁵ Once the war was underway, public opinion rallied in support of the Commander-in-Chief and the troops on the ground. However, subsequently external events and basic values in the US combined to require modifications in US policy, albeit limited so far. In particular, the mounting difficulties and resistance which the US and UK encountered in their occupation and reconstruction of Iraq pushed the allies to seek more international support, including a re-engagement of the UN and other multinational bodies. At the same time, mounting domestic concern about the endangerment of highly valued fundamental liberties and constitutional rights appears to have led to some easing in the treatment of the alleged terrorist detainees held by the US in connection with the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Despite the complexity and changing nature of interactions among the various factors considered here, the simple framework can help track and explain, and can help in developing alternative scenarios for the future, depending on what assumptions one makes regarding external events and possible changes in leadership (e.g., changes in leadership that might result from the US election later in 2004).

Implications for Managing Transatlantic Relations

Rather than tracing out alternative scenarios, however, the remainder of this paper develops some implications for what is probably the key factor determining transatlantic relations, namely leadership. If recent events have taught anything, then they have certainly taught the importance of leadership for the management of international affairs, including for transatlantic relations. Bold changes in leadership will be required on both sides of the Atlantic, if the damaged transatlantic bridges are to be repaired and ultimately maintained for the benefit of both sides. There are at least seven principal implications:

1. Recognize the importance of interdependence.

European and US leaders must always remember that modern global society is intensely interdependent in many critical ways. This is vividly and daily demonstrated by the many "wars" that need to be waged on a global scale, including the wars on terrorism, the wars to save failed states, the wars on drugs, HIV/AIDS and SARS, the wars on world poverty and on global warming. Add to these "wars" the internationally shared opportunities and challenges of economic globalization that arise from the rapidly expanding interdependencies associated with the flows of trade, capital, people and ideas. No one nation has the resources or the influence to fight these wars alone and no country can rise to the opportunities and challenges of globalization on its own. Every nation needs to take part in finding solutions for the global challenges. What is more, as Joseph P. Quinlan has pointed out, in the economic, commercial and financial sphere the

relationship between the US and Europe still dominates by far, for each side respectively, all other relationships.²⁶

This means that “going it alone” is not a real option for the US. The difficulties which the US has been encountering in occupying and rebuilding Iraq, including the significant stresses put on the US military and on the US budget, have perhaps been the clearest examples of why the US needs to work with others.

For the Europeans “opting out” is not an option either. Defining policy in chronic opposition to the US, as the French government has tended to do, or giving an unconditional “no” to any consideration of German involvement in a military action in Iraq, as Mr. Schroeder has done, are not a good ways to maintain a constructive cross-Atlantic engagement. Nor does opting out help to play a lead role in major international issues or deal with serious international challenges in a serious manner.

2. Focus on the common challenges

By the same token, there are many important global challenges that require joint US-European leadership, if lasting solutions are to be achieved:

- Bringing peace and political stability to the Middle East: The political situations in Israel and Palestine, Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan represent threats to both Europe and the US that transcend the immediate region and its supply of oil to the world to include the risks of Islamic fundamentalism, nuclear and other WMD proliferation, and long-term economic and social stagnation throughout this key region of the world.
- Ensuring a successful completion of the transition process in the Former Soviet Union and South East Europe: Over the last ten to fifteen years, the US-European partnership has worked well overall in helping to support both a peaceful transition in the CIS and to stem the tides of war in the Balkans. Much remains to be done, however, to ensure a full integration of a democratic Russia and Ukraine with the rest of the world, to ensure that the small, poor and unstable CIS countries in the South-Caucasus and Central Asia progress, and to cement democracy, peace, economic development and regional integration in the Balkans. Unfortunately, there have been cases where transatlantic differences have spilled over into relations with governments in the Balkans with potentially dangerous implications.²⁷
- Integrating China, India, Brazil and other future world powers into a stable, cooperative global governance structure: One promising approach might be to strengthen the currently weak G-20 framework as an alternative to the excessively narrow G-7 forum.²⁸
- Fighting world poverty and environmental threats by reinforcing international economic, financial and regulatory structures, such as the International Financial Institutions, the Doha Round, the Kyoto Protocol, the Global Aids Fund, etc.²⁹

3. Recognize, understand and accept that there are some fundamental differences in values and interests across the Atlantic.

In the international political arena, just as in national politics, a pluralism and competition of perspectives and ideas is the key to better solutions. In this sense, transatlantic differences should be welcome, rather than deplored, as long as they do not represent clear transgressions against shared basic values. Where these occur, usually in the interest of political expediency—as the current neglect by the US of basic human rights in the imprisonment without transparency and legal recourse of some prisoners of the Afghan-Iraq wars, or the neglect by the Europeans of the Balkan wars in the early 1990s—neither side should hesitate to speak out in making the case of change. Often there are important allies in the domestic political debate on the same issues.

4. When speaking out, don't gratuitously offend your partners.

When working through inevitable differences in transatlantic relations, it is in the long-term interest of all partners to avoid tit-for-tats of recrimination, demeaning in tone and form, and with an appearance of arrogance—whether arrogance of the powerful or of the impotent. The volleys by US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld aimed at the “old” Europeans, or the demonstrative joint statement by the French, German and Russian UN delegations announcing their lack of support for the US-led reconstruction of Iraq—after just having voted for a UN resolution in support of reconstruction—may have felt good for the speakers at the time and may have scored short-term domestic political points, but they risk damaging, perhaps fundamentally, the fabric of mutual transatlantic trust that has been built up painstakingly over decades.

5. Pursue a proper balance of “soft power” and “hard power” approaches and instruments in international policy.

US leadership should remember the need for “soft power” approaches to international policy, including the use of non-military means of conflict prevention, nation-building and fighting poverty. It also should be mindful of the fact that perhaps its strongest “soft power” weapon is the trust the US has traditionally earned and deserved for its defense of freedom, democracy, and free markets. This trust is currently under stress due to what appears to be a growing proclivity for unilateral military action, an imbalance in support for Israelis over Palestinians, and questionable treatment of Afghan/Iraq war detainees.

On the other hand, European leaders should remember that there is a need also for “hard power” capabilities in order to be an effective and respected partner. The erosion of European national military capabilities, the lack of a unified EU foreign and defense policy, and the apparent unwillingness to take a strong lead in anti-terrorist activities, including the fight against weapons of mass destruction, are all dangerous signals that Europeans are not ready to pull their weight in assuring international peace and stability.

6. Support strong, transparent, accountable and representative institutions, conventions and treaties.

In an increasingly interdependent world, international institutions and common rules are necessary if international relations are to be reasonably stable and predictable. There are several relevant examples of this. The international war on terrorism requires the exchange of intelligence, common approaches to money laundering, and similar procedures regulating international travel, among other things. Conflict prevention, peace keeping and post-conflict reconstruction are best carried out on a multilateral basis with capable international institutions, as successful transatlantic cooperation in the Balkans has shown. The management of international finances, trade, and development requires effective international financial institutions and agreements. Global environmental challenges can only be met with global agreements and financial instruments, as many successful global environmental conventions and the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) have demonstrated. Of course, these institutions need to be effective, transparent, accountable and representative for them to be trustworthy and considered legitimate.

The US may have the greatest difficulty in meeting these and other challenges of global governance, because giving up national sovereignty in the interest of global institutional solutions is not typically consonant with basic American values or national constitutional traditions. The difficulty the US has had in accepting global institutional constraints is obvious, as demonstrated by cases involving the International Criminal Court, the Kyoto Protocol, and the Iraqi war. However, there can be little doubt that in the long-term, the status of the US as the lone super-power, under stress as it is even today, will be stretched increasingly by the multiplicity of global problems and by the emergence of new global power centers.³⁰

While Europeans have more experience than the US with sharing sovereignty, especially in the context of the EU, and are generally more willing to cooperate in international conventions and institutions,³¹ they too have reservations at times. Their difficulties in creating and strengthening a single EU constitution, for example, demonstrates well the challenge acting consistently together in international forums and institutions.³²

7. The new members of the EU face a special challenge in helping to repair the damaged transatlantic bridges.

The leadership of the prospective new members of the EU, especially those from Central Europe, faces a particular challenge and opportunity in helping to strengthen the transatlantic partnership. As newcomers who understand that they are joining both strong European and transatlantic institutions (esp. the EU and NATO), and who evidently have a clear interest in maintaining such institutions, EU accession states can and should take a lead role inside the EU while remaining trusted partners of the US and advocating strong rather than weak transatlantic partnerships. Since they carry little or no historical

baggage in terms of stressed transatlantic relations, their credibility and effectiveness in this regard can be especially strong.

The US and the EU have a special responsibility to respect this role of EU accession states. For the US, the temptation to pursue an aggressive policy of “cherry picking” among European countries is evident, especially among new members of the EU.³³ This is likely to backfire in the longer term, as countries will increasingly consider themselves torn between European and US interests and will come to resent the pressure exerted on them from the distant partner.³⁴ In any case, the US cannot count on sustained support by the new EU members for aggressive unilateral actions by the US, since public opinion in these countries rarely supports such actions. On the other hand, the current EU members should not be surprised by, and indeed should even welcome, an assertive stance by the new EU members when it comes to maintaining good transatlantic relations with the US.³⁵

Now Is the Time to Repair the Damage to Transatlantic Relations

Much damage has been done over the last two years to transatlantic relations and polls show public opinion among the two regions drifting apart. This paper has argued that differences in basic values, external events and leadership are key factors influencing increasingly divergent policies and public opinions, but, also, there are steps that can and should be taken by political leaders on both sides of the Atlantic to repair the damage. The time to work seriously on this is now. If left unattended, the trend towards an increasing divide could well continue.

European leaders should remember that from the perspective of many constituencies in the US, Europe is only one of many partners or competitors with whom the US needs to contend. As one moves across the American continent from the North-East to the South and West, Europe becomes increasingly distant both geographically and culturally.³⁶ If Europe does not soon manage to convince Americans that it is a serious, trustworthy, and effective counterpart, many Americans may very well conclude that Europe is largely irrelevant to many of their concerns. For Americans, especially those of non-European descent, it is only natural to look towards East and South Asia, Latin America, and Russia as key players in shaping the future of the world and of the US role in it.

On the other hand, American leadership needs to remember that the difficulties the US has been experiencing in bringing many of its European allies along to support key international US policies is not principally due to ineffectual European leadership, but rather is due to strong, prevailing negative public opinion in Europe concerning US involvement in many key global issues. If some of the causes of these negative opinions are not addressed soon as suggested above, chances are that distrust of the US in Europe will become a lasting and fundamental force for the US to contend with. Indeed, it is quite possible that over the next few years some of the more supportive leaders in Europe, in particular Mr. Aznar of Spain, Mr. Berlusconi of Italy, and Mr. Blair of the UK, will be replaced by leaders less willing to go against strong prevailing public

opinion.³⁷ Also, as argued earlier, the US should not take for granted the unquestioning support for its policies by new EU member countries of Central Europe. Certainly, it cannot be in the interest of the US to be confronted with an increasingly hostile and uncooperative Europe as it deals with many of the challenges it faces around the globe.

Therefore, and considering the urgency of many shared international threats, challenges, and opportunities, it is essential that the tide in transatlantic relations be turned now. It is important to engage seriously on both sides of the Atlantic, to rebuild trust, to foster constructive diplomatic interactions, to pursue a common search for solutions to common problems, and to demonstrate courageous and positive leadership to help deal with the challenges of external shocks, with inevitable differences in basic values and with possibly divisive trends in public opinion.

Endnotes

¹ Hulsman, John C. "Cherry-Picking as the Future of the Transatlantic Alliance: The Reemergence of European Gaullism," The Transatlantic Relationship: Problems and Prospects. Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars and the Stanley Foundation. March, 2003. 59+. Also Ash, Timothy Garton. "Anti-Europeanism in America," The New York Review of Books. February 13, 2003.

² Evans, Gareth. "The US Versus the World? How American Power Seems to the Rest of Us." The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs 27.2 (Summer/Fall 2003) : 99-113. Of course, stereotypes and antagonisms across the Atlantic are not a novelty, as William J.Lederer's and Eugene Burdick's book, The Ugly American, first published in 1958, attests (reissued in 1999 by Norton, New York). Also, the Anti-Americanism of the Vietnam War era is in some ways comparable with today's Anti-Americanism in connection with the Iraq War. Finally, the author recalls participating in a meeting with German CEOs in 1999, shortly after the Davos meeting of the World Economic Forum. On that occasion the CEOs were fuming about what they portrayed as arrogant lecturing by the Americans at Davos about the need for Europe to follow the US example in creating the conditions of successful growth.

³ Eurobarometer 59: Public Opinion in the European Union Spring 2003. European Opinion Research Group EEIG. <http://europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb59/eb59_highlights_en.pdf>.

⁴ Eurobarometer 2003.2: Public Opinion in the Candidate Countries May-July 2003. Magyar Gallup Intezet. <http://europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion/archives/cceb/2003/2003.2_full_report_final.pdf>.

Two additional Eurobarometer polls (on the European candidate countries, September 2003, and on all European countries, December 2003) were consulted.

⁵ The Pew Global Attitudes Survey. The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press. 2003.

<<http://people-press.org/reports/display.php3?ReportID=185>>.

⁶ Transatlantic Trends 2003 Survey. The German Marshall Fund of the United States.

<[http://www.gmfus.org/apps/gmf/gmfwebfinal.nsf/\\$UNIDviewAll/DB6E3FB8A75A3C7F85256D96007A1583?OpenDocument&K1E73ABE2](http://www.gmfus.org/apps/gmf/gmfwebfinal.nsf/$UNIDviewAll/DB6E3FB8A75A3C7F85256D96007A1583?OpenDocument&K1E73ABE2)>

⁷ One recent example of how rapid public opinion can change occurred in the United States after the capture of Saddam Hussein by American troops early December 14, 2003. Times/CBS News polls gathered data during the days both immediately prior and immediately following Mr. Hussein's capture and indicated that the approval ratings for the way US President Bush is handling foreign policy and the situation in Iraq rose dramatically as a result. Nagourney, Adam and Janet Elder. "Bush's Approval ratings Climb in Days After Hussein's Capture," The New York Times. December 17, 2003: A1+.

Another example is the change in European opinions regarding the US, following the 9/11/2001 attacks: Initially-strong sympathy soon turned into resounding distrust, as the Bush Administration turned a war on terror into a war on Iraq (see Menon, Anand and Jonathan Lipkin. "European Attitudes Towards Transatlantic Relations 2000-2003: An Analytical Survey." European Research Institute. May, 2003, p. 7)

⁸ Transatlantic Trends 2003 Survey.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ The Pew Global Attitudes Survey (2003).

¹¹ Transatlantic Trends 2003 Survey

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ Eurobarometer 59: Public Opinion in the European Union Spring 2003. An interesting question is whether these negative views held in Europe reflect an anti-Bush attitude, rather than a more fundamental anti-American attitude. A Pew Research Center survey of March 2003 does address this particular point: 76% of French respondents and 68% of German respondents agreed that the problem was "mostly Bush," instead of "mostly American." (see Menon, Anand and Jonathan Lipkin. "European Attitudes Towards Transatlantic Relations 2000-2003: An Analytical Survey." European Research Institute. May, 2003.) It is likely that both anti-American and anti-Bush sentiments have been on the rise and that a reelection of Mr. Bush in November 2004 would help to close the gap between these two perceptions, especially if Mr. Bush wins a strong electoral mandate.

¹⁶ Transatlantic Trends 2003 Survey.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Eurobarometer 59: Public Opinion in the European Union Spring 2003.

¹⁹ Eurobarometer 2003.2: Public Opinion in the Candidate Countries May-July 2003.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² Most commentators on transatlantic relations pass lightly over the question how to define “basic values” and how they differ from “public opinions.” Here, following common sense, “basic values” are taken to refer to views regarding fundamental, life and death issues that are embedded in traditional culture and do not vary quickly or significantly over time. Even though “public opinion” refers to views and perceptions mainly on matters of current politics and events, they can and generally do also cover and reflect basic values.

²³ Rubinfeld, Jed. “The Two World Orders,” Wilson Quarterly. Autumn 2003. 22+.

²⁴ Note a recent statement by the Shadow Financial Regulatory Committee: “Traditionally the United States followed the national treatment approach under which foreign firms operating in the United States are fully subject to U.S. rules, such as the requirement that foreign firms file reports using U.S. GAAP and comply with the CEO/CFO financial statement certification requirement of Sarbanes-Oxley..... To a great extent, the EU has adopted still another approach, mutual recognition, within its internal financial market. Mutual recognition requires the host state to recognize the validity of the home state’s rules, assuming some minimum level of harmonization.” (Shadow Financial Regulatory Committee, Statement 203, February 9, 2004).

²⁵ The decision by the US Administration to seek UN support in the fall of 2002 was likely driven by domestic political considerations, as Congressional elections loomed in November, 2002, and public opinion in the US generally preferred multilateral action with UN support. After the elections this immediate concern with domestic public opinion was removed from the Iraq policy of the Administration and the Bush administration led the US into the Iraq war without UN approval.

²⁶ Quinlan points out that while US-Asia trade has exceeded US-European trade for a number of years now, broader measures of economic interdependence, particularly those including mutual direct investment and foreign affiliate sales, show still a heavy preponderance of transatlantic relations over others. Quinlan, Joseph P. “Drifting Apart or Growing Together? The Primacy of the Transatlantic Economy.” Washington, DC: Center for Transatlantic Relations, 2003.

²⁷: “Worst of all, Americans and Europeans have imported their acrimonious disputes over Iraq and the International Court into security- and politically challenged Macedonia. The dispute over the ICC featured competing threats of specified and unspecified ‘consequences’ for Skopje’s failure to adhere respectively to the European or American positions. The pressures have taken their toll on the weak political system, opening up cracks between the country’s strongly pro-American President Borivski Trajkovski and the more middle-ground Prime Minister Crvenkovski (who must contend with an anti-America, pro-French and pro-Russian faction in his party and in Parliament.” Joseph, Edward P. “Macedonia: The Risk of Complacency”, EES News. East European Studies, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington, DC. Nov/Dec 2003.

²⁸ The G-20 is a forum of Ministers of Finance and Central Bank Governors from 19 large countries and the EU. Its virtue is that it is much more inclusive than the industrial country-only G-7, but its current weakness lies in the narrow financial focus of its mandate and the fact that it does not operate at the level of heads-of-state.

²⁹ One of the transatlantic bridges that have remained intact in recent years has been the cooperation of G-7 finance ministers in dealing with international financial issues. From all accounts, the meetings and deliberations of the ministers and their deputies have remained largely unaffected by cross-Atlantic hostilities in other policy areas (esp. defense).

³⁰ Or, as Tony Judt recently summarized the views of Charles Kupchan (in a review of Kupchan’s book, The End of the American Era. New York: Knopf, 2002): “Despite appearances, the post-cold war American monopoly is already on the wane. The “unipolar” window is fast closing and in its place we shall see a return to unstable, multiple poles of power, in which the US will need – as in the past – to compromise and negotiate with allies and competitors.” (Judt, Tony, “America and the World,” The New York Review of Books. April 10, 2003. p. 30). Kupchan was referring to Europe as a possibly resurging

ally and competitor. Chances are that in the long term, China and India, perhaps along with other large emerging country competitors, could be even more important.

³¹ See Menon and Lipkin, p. 16: “[In Europe] there is a clearly expressed desire to bolster the European security and defense capability in order to work towards a world order with greater balance, in which international law and international institutions determine the scope of political and military intervention in global trouble-spots.”

³² Another example involves the governing boards of various International Finance Organizations (IFIs), where European representatives often pursue different agendas and a common EU position is rarely discernable.

³³ “Cherry-picking” refers to the selective US engagement with states that are compliant with US policies and objectives. Some US commentators have advocated cherry-picking as an optimal policy, as was made clear, for example, by Secretary Rumsfeld when he divided European states into “new” and “old” on the basis of their compliance with US foreign policy. For a statement specifically advocating “cherry picking” for US transatlantic policy see Hulsman, John C. “Cherry-Picking as the Future of the Transatlantic Alliance: The Reemergence of European Gaullism,” The Transatlantic Relationship: Problems and Prospects. Edited by Sabina A.-M. Auger. Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, March 2003.

³⁴ Opinion polls show very clearly that while Central Europeans tend to have a relatively positive view of the US, their views of the EU are uniformly and significantly more positive towards the EU. See Eurobarometer 2003.2: Public Opinion in the Candidate Countries May-July 2003, as well as Eurobarometer 2003.3: Public Opinion in the Candidate Countries, September 2003.

³⁵ Mr. Chirac’s insensitive and even paternalistic statement about the letter signed by some of the new EU members in support of US policies last year is a case in point of the kind of negative reaction by current members which goes against the grain.

³⁶ Timothy Garton Ash put it this way: While “Anti-Americanism is a real obsession for entire countries [in Europe] . . . [A]nti-Europeanism is very far from being an American obsession. In fact, the predominant American attitude to Europe is probably mildly benign indifference, mixed with impressive ignorance.” Garton. “Anti-Europeanism in America,” The New York Review of Books. February 13, 2002, p. 32.

³⁷ Of course the same thing could happen in reverse: in Germany Mr. Schroeder and his left-green coalition may be replaced in 2006 by a right-liberal coalition which could be expected to be more interested in rebuilding US-German relations.