Stanley R. Sloan/Heiko Borchert

The Soft-Power Solution: US-European Relations in and beyond Europe

The end of the brief "hot" war in Iraq and the accompanying transatlantic diplomatic conflict set the stage for a new and challenging period of US-European relations. The United States, its European allies and the international community more generally face complex and multifaceted rebuilding challenges: Iraq needs to be reconstructed after the war which removed Saddam Hussein's tyrannical regime from power; the transatlantic rift must be repaired; the United Nations needs to be rebuilt and with it the core of international law regulating the use of force; and finally, the bond of trust between Washington and the rest of the world needs to be rebuilt with a special focus on the kind of role that the United States is going to play in the international system.

Although this is a daunting agenda, the key to understanding and perhaps even solving several of these problems can perhaps be found in the examination of a single concept: soft power. As Joseph Nye, one of the advocates of the soft-power concept, outlined in his seminal book "Bound to Lead"[1] soft power is a nation's (or group of nations') ability to influence events based on cultural attraction, ideology and international institutions. Given the complexities of the new challenges of globalization, and in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks on the United States, the concept now may play an increasingly important role on the international political agenda.

In fact, soft-power and hard-power policies and resources are most effectively deployed in tandem. Soft power can help legitimize hard power. Although hard power is essential for the winning of wars, and often for giving credibility to strategic choices, soft power is vital for winning and preserving the peace. Soft power is the very prerequisite for trust among people and states. Without trust, a stable international order cannot be built and sustained.

Today, however, soft power and hard power are hardly seen as two sides of the same coin. Europe is clearly all too quick to shun military might (of which it has little) and too dependent on soft power (with which it is well endowed). Europe's hard-power deficit, however, undermines the gravitas of European diplomacy, particularly in dealing with its superpower US ally. This is part of the problem. The other part of the problem is that US soft-power policy approaches are all too often the poor cousin in American responses to international challenges.

---

1   Joseph S. Nye, Bound to Lead. The Changing Nature of American Power, New York 1990.

The lesson that should have been learned by the United States and its European allies since 1945 is that hard power and soft power are complementary elements of successful foreign and security policies. Instead, the United States and Europe have been busily dividing responsibility for the deployment of hard and soft power when they should have been finding ways to combine their resources to have even more impact on international peace and stability. As we will argue, this growing divergence is wrong and should be overcome with the help of a new institutional framework. First, we look at Washington's ambivalent attitude *vis-à-vis* the OSCE, one of the Euro-Atlantic community's key soft-power institutions. Then we turn to the sources of US and European soft power and argue that the growing signs of a transatlantic soft-power rivalry are alarming. Rather than competing on this ground, Europe and the United States should combine their respective soft- and hard-power capabilities. To that purpose, we advocate the establishment of a new Atlantic Community Treaty Organization (ACTO), which would take over and deepen the current EU-US agenda. Such an institution would help the Atlantic Community to develop concerted approaches to key global challenges and would support the consolidation of Europe's institutional architecture.

The United States and the OSCE: An Undervalued Soft-Power Resource

Following the end of the Cold War, NATO has remained the essential "transatlantic link" – the main political and security tie that binds the United States and Europe together. In the United States, NATO is the central symbol of US relations with Europe as well as a vehicle for co-operation. The 1949 North Atlantic Treaty gave due deference to the importance of soft power in promoting the security interests of the signatory states. The Treaty's preamble talks about the universal values of "democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law" that the Alliance seeks to promote. Article 2, in perfect "soft-power" language, says the allies "will contribute toward the further development of peaceful and friendly international relations by strengthening their free institutions, by bringing about a better understanding of the principles upon which these institutions are founded, and by promoting conditions of stability and well-being."

However, both during and since the Cold War, NATO has been best known for its role in co-ordinating US and European hard-power resources. That is its main organizational strength. During the Cold War and up to the present day, the United States has consistently underestimated the importance of a valuable soft-power institution within US-European relations – the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).

During the Cold War, the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe was seen in Washington as primarily a framework in which the com-

munist regimes in Moscow and the satellite states of the Soviet Union could be held accountable for their dictatorial systems and practices. In fact, the Helsinki Final Act's standards for relations among states and between states and their citizens amounted to a significant, if subtle, tool for eroding the legitimacy of the Eastern-bloc regimes.[2] From the US point of view, the most important function of the CSCE was its role in undermining the communist hold on Eastern and Central Europe, while NATO pursued the necessary deterrence strategy and maintained forces to contain any military threat from the Soviet Union and its allies.

With the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union, the CSCE (the OSCE from January 1995) lost its key significance for American policy. However, developments in Europe soon gave the Organization a new mission. War in the Balkans, the transition to democracy in former Warsaw Pact countries and instability around the fringes of the former Soviet Union created important new tasks for the OSCE. In the second half of the 1990s, the United States emphasized the operational role of the OSCE's long-term missions and other field activities partly because this helped boost Washington's influence over the Organization. With at best minimal prior consultation, the OSCE was handed over the challenging new missions of implementing virtually all the non-military parts of the Dayton Peace Agreement in Bosnia-Herzegovina after 1995 and of fielding the Kosovo Verification Mission in 1998. These activities and the fact that American diplomats led both missions provoked criticism from European countries who feared that the United States would use the OSCE to extend its reach in implementing its own Balkans policy.[3]

As important as these tasks may have been, however, the United States never interpreted the OSCE as a key institution for redesigning the Eurasian security landscape. Rather, Washington tended to look at the OSCE as a convenient framework for co-operation in which European states would take most of the responsibility for the OSCE's soft-power instruments and programmes, while the United States specialized in developing hard power resources for the "big" problems. "Superpowers", as one American analyst put it, "do not do windows".[4] The OSCE, from the US point of view, was engaged in cleaning Europe's windows, a necessary task but one that didn't particularly interest the United States, particularly American conservatives.

---

2   Cf. Daniel C. Thomas, The Helsinki Effect: International Norms, Human Rights, and the Demise of Communism, Princeton 2001.
3   Cf. P. Terrence Hopmann, The United States and the CSCE/OSCE, in: Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg/IFSH (ed.), OSCE Yearbook 2000, Baden-Baden 2001, pp. 63-81. For additional accounts, see also: Jonathan Dean, The USA and the OSCE: Still a Morganatic Union, in: Institute for Peace Studies and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg/IFSH (ed.), OSCE Yearbook 1997, Baden-Baden 1998, pp. 39-43; Eric Mlyn, The OSCE, the United States, and European Security, in: European Security, 3/1996, pp. 427-447.
4   John Hillen, Superpowers Don't Do Windows, in: John Lehman (ed.), America the Vulnerable, Our Military Problems and How To Fix Them, Philadelphia 2002, at: http://www.fpri.org/americavulnerable.

In fact, the soft-power/hard-power combination of the OSCE and NATO has worked quite effectively in dealing with post-Cold War security issues in Europe. After some hesitation, NATO was used to bring first Bosnia-Herzegovina and then Kosovo to the point of stability and peace where the OSCE could move in to help create a framework for the development of modern democratic states. The United States was fortunate that the OSCE was available to play a critical soft-power role in the Balkans and elsewhere in Europe. In part, however, the formula has worked because the OSCE has had the backing of NATO's forces and infrastructure.

The war in Iraq demonstrated the efficacy of US hard-power resources. US forces, operating with modern command, control and communications systems, real-time intelligence, finely tuned special forces, precision-guided munitions and multifaceted mobility swiftly defeated Saddam Hussein's military forces. The post-war situation, however, has revealed the extent to which soft-power resources are critically important to the ultimate success of the operation. The war lasted only a matter of weeks. The struggle to stabilize Iraq and to make the intended gains of the war real for both the Iraqi people and the international community will likely continue for years. It will rely on effective use of soft power, but soft power that is still backed by credible hard-power resources.

The NATO allies have partly opened the door to a NATO role in Iraq following their decision to have the Alliance take on responsibility for running the UN-mandated International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. Rebuilding in Iraq would benefit from the kind of synergy that was experienced in the Balkans between NATO military resources and the OSCE's soft-power means and methods. However, there is currently no framework for US-European co-operation on the use of soft-power resources beyond Europe. As we argue below, this gap could be filled by a new transatlantic framework to facilitate US-European soft-power co-operation.

Sources of US Soft Power – and Signs of Its Vanishing Strength

As John Gerard Ruggie has argued, the most important aspect of the international order post-World War II was not US hegemony, but the fact that the hegemon was American.[5] This meant that the United States decided to co-operate with its allies rather than dominating them, that Washington agreed to tame its power by being locked in multilateral organizations and that its political system was open for interference by its allies, thus offering them the opportunity to influence US decision-making.[6] As a result, Washington's

---

5   Cf. John Gerard Ruggie, Multilateralism: The Anatomy of an Institution, in: John Gerard Ruggie (ed.), Multilateralism Matters. The Theory and Praxis of an Institutional Form New York 1993, pp. 3-47, here: p. 31.
6   Cf. G. John Ikenberry, Rethinking the Origins of American Hegemony, in: Political Science Quarterly, 3/1989, pp. 375-400; G. John Ikenberry, Creating Yesterday's New World

leadership had to do with power (both hard and soft) but did not solely rest on it. Rather, as James MacGregor Burns has argued, leadership is inseparable from followers' needs and goals.[7] Leadership is an interactive process where the leader is followed because he is able to convince the followers. By listening to and caring about the opinion of its allies, the United States managed to base followership on persuasion and normative consensus – on soft power in other words. However, when the leader neglects to bring its soft power into play in support of military actions, would-be followers find the first occasion to deviate.[8] This is exactly what has happened in recent years and what led to the most recent transatlantic crisis over Iraq.

Unilateralism – whether in the rogue form of the current Bush government or in the more occasional, cushioned and velvet-clad form of the former Clinton administration – is a clear sign of a shifting balance between reliance on hard and soft power in US foreign policy. Crude hard-power politics provokes criticisms and resistance because it directly puts at risk the international consensus on "embedded liberalism"[9] and the value of international institutions. First, the neo-conservative ideology of a hard power-based foreign policy has increased the United States' preparedness to go it alone and to put into question core assumptions of the international order built after 1945 (e.g. the pre-emptive use of force vs. the UN Charter). This tendency came to the fore across different international issues ranging from the refusal to ratify the Kyoto protocol or the statute of the International Criminal Court to the increasing of tariffs for imported goods to protect the US steel industry or the extraterritorial application of the Sarbanes-Oxley act, which toughens US accounting standards. Second, statements like "the mission defines the coalition" can be interpreted as a farewell to the long-standing US support for a multilateral framework. In an extreme but telling judgment, William Pfaff has argued that the Bush administration "envisages a world run by the United States, backed by as many states as will sign on to support it but not interfere".[10] Therefore it wants separate coalitions for each task so no one can veto US policies. If bypassing international organizations becomes the rule

---

Order: Keynesian "New Thinking" and the Anglo-American Postwar Settlement, in: Judith Goldstein/Robert O. Keohane (eds), Ideas and Foreign Policy. Beliefs, Institutions, and Political Change, Ithaca/London 1993, pp. 57-86; G. John Ikenberry, After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order After Major Wars, Princeton 2001; Peter F. Cowhey, Elect Locally – Order Globally. Domestic Politics and Multilateral Cooperation, in Ruggie (ed.), cited above (Note 5), pp. 157-200; Thomas Risse-Kappen, Cooperation among Democracies. The European Influence on U.S. Foreign Policy, Princeton 1995.

7 Cf. James MacGregor Burns, Leadership, New York 1997.

8 Cf. Andrew Fenton Cooper/Richard A. Higgot/Kim Richard Nossal, Bound to Follow? Leadership and Followership in the Gulf Conflict, Political Science Quarterly, 3/1991, pp. 391-410, here: pp. 398 f.

9 Cf. John Gerard Ruggie, Embedded liberalism and the postwar economic regimes, in: John Gerard Ruggie, Constructing the World Polity. Essays on International Institutionalization, London/New York 1998, pp. 62-84.

10 William Pfaff, Bush's new global order will generate resistance, International Herald Tribune, 17 April 2003, p. 6.

rather than the exception, international relations of the 21st century will be fundamentally altered and could increasingly resemble the balance of power-driven international order of the 19th century.

In the long run, this tendency undermines the attractiveness of the US political, cultural and social model, thereby threatening the core of US soft power. According to John Paden and Peter Singer, US schools, universities and academic institutions are already complaining that application rates from abroad are falling, while other English-speaking countries are beginning to market their educational systems as alternatives to the US one. At a time when transnational links become ever more important, the United States risks the weakening of its bridgeheads to vital international communities such as the Muslim world.[11]

Sources of European Soft Power

Tensions about US leadership and the uncertainty about the course of US foreign policy in the future have put more focus on the soft-power – and so far to a lesser extent the hard-power – capability of the European Union. The EU's soft-power approach rests on the assumption that the law of the strongest can be successfully replaced by the strength of the law. In part thanks to the provision of security by the United States, Europe's preferred path has been that of the transfer of sovereignty and with it the adherence to soft power – rather than the build-up of hard power capabilities.

Europe's preference for rule-based politics is not, as Robert Kagan has argued, simply a result of its lack of hard power.[12] Rather it is the outcome of its history and its political complexity. William Wallace has pointed out that, "Europe's inclination to highly regulated politics can be explained by the density of Europe's population, the vulnerability of its ecology, and the penetrability of its frontiers. The lighter approach to governance in the United States follows from its open spaces and its continental position."[13] This experience has led to a distinct European approach to security that rests not only on the use of non-military instruments to deal with security problems but also on the adherence to multilateralism and rule-orientation, a network-centric approach to international politics and the close co-operation with non-state actors to tackle today's security policy challenges. In sum, the EU offers a

---

11 Cf. John N. Paden/Peter W. Singer, America Slams the Door (On Its Foot), in: Foreign Affairs, 3/2003, pp. 8-14. For a more detailed account of the role of US schools in building cultural ties see: John Waterbury, Hate Your Policies, Love Your Institutions, in: Foreign Affairs, 1/2003, pp. 58-69.
12 Cf. Robert Kagan, Power and Weakness, in: Policy Review, 113/2002, pp. 3-28, at: http://www.policyreview.org/JUN02/kagan.html.
13 William Wallace, Europe, the Necessary Partner, Foreign Affairs, 3/2001, pp. 16-34, here: pp. 29-30.

unique soft-power model that has so far not been matched by other states or group of states.[14]

US and European Soft Power: Combine, Don't Compete

The most recent experience in the war on Iraq appears to have set the scene for a soft-power rivalry between Europe and the United States.[15] At least from a European point of view, exporting a rival model of soft power looks tempting. Some European countries have traditional political and cultural bonds with many of today's pockets of crisis. The EU's emphasis on multilateralism and international institutions makes it easier to push through certain political issues, while the importance given to preventive diplomacy and international development aid could be used to position the EU in the opposite corner to the United States in international affairs. It therefore comes as no surprise that some people in Brussels and other European capitals are increasingly willing to combine these aspects via the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) with the aim of counterbalancing Washington.

However, nothing could be more damaging to the transatlantic relationship and long-term international stability than this. Philip Gordon is right to argue that Americans and Europeans must not "allow the prospect of a transatlantic divorce to turn into a self-fulfilling prophecy" because "no two regions of the world have more in common nor have more to lose if they fail to stand together".[16] Instead of entering into a useless "beauty contest" to decide who is the best soft power, Americans and Europeans should join forces in launching a soft-power initiative. The international community needs the "transatlantic couple" to hammer out solutions to the most pressing global challenges in tandem with other leading nations and international organizations.

At the core of this new initiative lies the reinvigoration of the transatlantic community of values through the development of a new Atlantic Community Treaty. This treaty would have two goals: Politically, it would shift the focus away from the issues that divide the transatlantic partners and towards that which they have in common. Functionally, a treaty signed by all NATO and European Union members would create a soft-power framework of co-operation to complement the hard-power frameworks of NATO and the ESDP.[17]

---

14 Cf. Jolyon Howorth, European integration and defence: the ultimate challenge, Paris 2000, pp. 88-91. A similar argument is developed by: Hans-Georg Ehrhart, What model for CFSP?, Paris 2002.
15 Cf. Charles Kupchan, The End of the American Era: US Foreign Policy After the Cold War, New York 2002.
16 Philip H. Gordon, Bridging the Atlantic Divide, in: Foreign Affairs, 3/2003, pp. 70-83, here: pp. 79, 83.
17 These arguments build on Stanley R. Sloan, NATO, the European Union and the Atlantic Community. The Transatlantic Bargain Reconsidered, Latham 2003, pp. 217-227; Stanley R.

The activities of a new Atlantic Community Treaty Organization (ACTO) with a soft-power focus could include twice-yearly summit meetings involving all members of NATO and the European Union as well as all countries recognized as candidates for membership of those two bodies. The meetings could be scheduled in conjunction with the regular NATO and EU summits and would supplant the current US-EU summit meetings. The summit framework could be supported by a permanent council to discuss issues as they develop between summit sessions and by working groups that meet as needed. To give the Community a representative dimension, the NATO Parliamentary Assembly could be transformed into the Atlantic Community Assembly, including representatives from all member states in the Community, with the mandate to study and debate the entire range of issues in the transatlantic relationship. In order to frame a common understanding of how to tackle tomorrow's challenges, the Atlantic Community Assembly should regularly meet with the Parliamentary Assemblies of the EU and the OSCE.

To help reduce institutional overlap and heavy meeting schedules for transatlantic officials, all items currently on the US-EU agenda could be transferred to the new forum, which – unlike the rather narrow US-EU consultations – would cover virtually all aspects of transatlantic relations and include all countries with interests in the relationship. When specific US-EU issues arise, they could be handled in bilateral US-EU negotiations. Atlantic Community institutions could be established in or near Brussels to facilitate co-ordination with NATO and EU institutions.

At the same time, it might be beneficial to address how the work of the new institution will be co-ordinated with that of the OSCE. The Vienna-based Organization should be strengthened as the body charged with bringing together the members of the new Atlantic Community and all the other states of the Eurasian region who do not qualify for or do not seek Atlantic Community membership, including most importantly Russia and Ukraine. To that purpose, all relevant functions of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), whose agenda is anyway hard to distinguish from that of the OSCE, could be transferred to the OSCE. The main responsibility of the OSCE would be to deepen co-operative security among its participants and help build peace and co-operation across the continent through confidence-building and arms-control measures, and early-warning, conflict-prevention, crisis-management and post-conflict-rehabilitation activities. Such a step would consolidate Europe's institutional architecture and strengthen the remaining organizations.

Approaching problems and issues from the broad perspective offered by an Atlantic Community framework would make it possible to treat issues that are discussed unofficially among allied representatives at NATO but are not within NATO's formal mandate. An Atlantic Community forum would en-

---

Sloan, Challenges to the Transatlantic Partnership, in: In the National Interest, 12 March 2003, at: http://www.inthenationalinterest.com/Articles/vol2issue10/vol2issue10sloan.html.

sure that all aspects of an issue were brought to the table, providing a better opportunity to realize synergies in problem solving. The war against terrorism is a good example of an area where this is the case. If an Atlantic Community Council had existed on 11 September, it could immediately have established working groups to address all aspects of the campaign against sources of international terror. The North Atlantic Council would not have been required to wait for the Atlantic Community Council to act and could have invoked Article 5 on 12 September just as it did. However, in the meanwhile, the Atlantic Community Council could have been co-ordinating the response of police authorities in Community countries, discussing ways to cut off terrorists' financial support, developing public-diplomacy themes to accompany military and diplomatic action, and beginning consideration of long-term strategies designed to undermine support for terrorist activities.

A new Atlantic Community would embrace, not replace, NATO in the overall framework of transatlantic relations. Because it would be a consultative forum only, it would not threaten the "autonomy" of the EU or undermine NATO's Article 5 collective-defence commitment. In fact, it could help bridge the current artificial gap between NATO discussions of security policy and US-EU consultations on economic issues. Because an Atlantic Community would encourage members to address issues that NATO doesn't tackle, the new structure would provide added value not offered by the traditional alliance. It might also provide some additional options for shaping coalitions of the willing to deal with new security challenges in cases where using the NATO framework may not be acceptable to all allies and where action could be blocked by a single dissenting member.

Elements of a New Atlantic Community Consensus

Given the most recent transatlantic rift, reinvigorating common bonds is an end in itself. But, of course, it is not enough. The United States and its European friends and allies need to address a number of issues that will be key to transatlantic relations and to international co-operation and stability.

The Debate Over New International Rules

With the US-UK attack on Iraq, the door to a new world order has been pushed wide open, but the jury on the basic principles of that new order is still out. Most important is the question of whether the pre-emptive use of force – as established in the United States National Security Strategy – will prevail or whether the members of the new Atlantic Community will be

willing to abide by the international rule of law in the sense of the UN Charter – which some have already declared dead.[18]

Both supporters and opponents of a reform of the UN Charter's ban on the use of force make effective points. Supporters, mostly from the United States, say that the drafters of the UN Charter did not foresee the new kinds of transnational and asymmetrical risks and the advent of non-state actors. Given the new capabilities that allow groups to exercise a threat on a global scale at any time, it is no longer adequate to wait for an attack to happen; rather, power should be used pre-emptively.

By contrast, opponents argue that the alternatives presented so far to replace the concept of "imminent threat" are vague on all counts, i.e. with regard to defining the circumstances, the objects and the means of the pre-emptive use of force. Furthermore, they convincingly argue that the return of an opportunistic and extensive use of the "right of self defence" will lead international relations back to where they came from – the security dilemma in which uncertainty prevails.

With the intervention in Kosovo (1999) and the war on Iraq (2003), members of the Atlantic Community have set two powerful precedents that deviate from the traditional understanding of the use of force. It is therefore appropriate that they initiate and lead a discussion on the future of international law in general and the use of force in particular. This debate should aim at finding new international rules for the use of force by taking into account the nature of new risks and strengthening, not bypassing, the role of the UN Security Council. By invoking this debate within the framework of the UN, the members of the Atlantic Community would send a powerful signal to the world that they remain committed to playing by a system of internationally accepted rules as long as other nations and groups are also willing to do so.

Strengthening International Institutions

By creating a new soft-power organization in the form of the Atlantic Community, transatlantic allies would already make a powerful case in favour of international co-operation. This should be backed by sustained efforts to make existing institutions more flexible and to provide them with the necessary resources commensurate with their tasks. By strengthening and advancing co-operation among international organizations, each such institution can make a powerful contribution to advancing the soft-power agenda.

It goes without saying that the UN is the pre-eminent platform for debating all issues pertinent to the establishment of a "new world order". Most important in this regard is the fact that, by working more closely with non-state actors such as non-governmental organizations and multi-national cor-

---

18   For a powerful obituary of the UN Security Council see: Michael J. Glennon, Why the Security Council Failed, in: Foreign Affairs, 3/2003, pp. 16-35.

porations, the UN has recently embarked on a course that promises to strengthen global governance. Providing civil society with access to the arena of international politics is one of the strongest tools for strengthening soft power in the long run.

At the heart of the transatlantic relationship, the establishment of the Atlantic Community Treaty Organization could overcome the long-standing dichotomy between NATO and the EU. As already mentioned, this new organization would benefit from the combination of existing hard- and soft-power capabilities. The OSCE should continue to play an important role because most of its field activities address the fundamentals of soft power, i.e. the establishment of democratic principles and institutions. Furthermore, the OSCE's presence in such important areas as the Caucasus and Central Asia makes it extremely well positioned to help the Atlantic Community Treaty Organization stabilize these potential hot spots in a coherent and concerted way.

Finally, international financial and trade institutions must be considered as instruments through which soft power bears economic fruits. For that purpose, the architecture of international trade and finance needs to be further developed by attributing more importance to, among other things, the interdependency of the transition to a market economy and relevant cultural and societal adaptations,[19] the relationship between trade liberalization and security policy (e.g. noting that terrorists seem to have benefited from the liberalization of financial and telecommunication markets) as well as intellectual property rights, health issues and regional development (e.g. the role of pharmaceuticals in providing AIDS treatment to the developing world).

Expanding the Role of Cultural Diplomacy

A key instrument in socialization and building up a common memory, cultural diplomacy has declined in importance since the end of the Cold War.[20] The value of culture as a means of forging trust has been rediscovered recently in the form of so called "hearts and minds campaigns", especially targeting the Muslim world. However, it is simply not enough to use these campaigns as mere end-of-pipe solutions to convince people that, for instance, the bombs that have been dropped did not target them but their leaders. In dealing with countries that have so far not benefited from the "Western model" and which thus tend to oppose it, cultural knowledge plays an indispensable role by facilitating understanding of the complexities of these societies. Compared with other policy instruments, cultural exchange programmes, education and training and other forms of cultural diplomacy are

---

19   Cf. Michael Mosseau, Market Civilization and Its Clash with Terror, in: International Security, 3/2002, pp. 5-29.
20   For a discussion of the impressive photograph exhibition "After September 11: Images from Ground Zero" see: Liam Kennedy, Remembering September 11: photography as cultural diplomacy, International Affairs, 2/2003, pp. 315-326.

extremely inexpensive, but yield a high long-term return by broadening our understanding and forging personal ties. For this reason, Atlantic Community members should develop a soft-power culture strategy that identifies ways of increasing understanding of our culture among other societies and entering into sustained dialogue with them. Existing international co-operation schemes for key areas such as the Mediterranean region should be harmonized,[21] budgets and the existing infrastructure of embassies, cultural foundations and even trade associations could be pooled in order to yield maximum benefit for all participants, and civil society networks at home and abroad should be actively engaged and strengthened.

A Hard Sell

At the current time, as mutual antagonisms still simmer across the Atlantic, it will be difficult to begin the process of enhancing the framework for transatlantic co-operation. Even as the French and German governments have tried to repair some of the damage done to their relations with Washington, emotions have remained high on the western shores of the Atlantic. Calls for strategic divorce abound, suggesting, for example, that "[i]gnoring 'Old Europe' on questions of grand strategy will liberate the United States, freeing us at last from the failed European model of diplomacy that has given the world so many hideous wars, dysfunctional borders and undisturbed dictators."[22] On the Atlantic's eastern shores, there are calls for renewed efforts to accelerate the European unification process to build a counterweight to the American superpower.

However, the time will come when wiser heads prevail. The American people do not want and will not support US policies whose consequences include responsibility for post-war reconstruction wherever US forces intervene to defeat dictators or ferret out terrorists. The best way to share the burden of maintaining international peace and stability is to work with like-minded allies. In spite of recent differences, the European members of NATO and the members of the European Union are the closest thing the United States will find to "like-minded" nations anywhere in the world. This reality will not be

---

21   The OSCE's Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation include Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia. NATO's Mediterranean Dialogue covers the same countries and also includes Mauritania. The EU's Barcelona Process includes the OSCE's partner countries and the Palestinian Authority, Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, Cyprus and Malta. In addition, the EU maintains a complementary Middle East Peace Process and relations with Middle Eastern countries in the Gulf region.

22   Ralph Peters, Au revoir, Marianne … auf Wiedersehen, Lili Marleen. The End of America's European Romance, published in: Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 15 May 2003, with the title "Hitler war wenigstens ehrlich. Ihr widert uns an: Die Amerikaner sind mit den Deutschen fertig"; the English version can be found at: http://209.157.64.200/focus/f-news/922556/posts.

86

changed by the current ranting and raving about the ill-conceived diplomacy of France, Germany and Belgium during the Iraq crisis.

Meanwhile, the process of building Europe will continue, but the varied European reactions to the war against Iraq demonstrate how diverse Europe remains. Europe cannot be successfully constructed while transatlantic discord prevails. Successful construction of a more united Europe will be possible only in the context of a working transatlantic relationship.

And so, the bottom line for both the United States and Europe is that they must find a common way to move on. On the European side, a greater willingness to see the advantages of hard-power capabilities must be combined with resources to create hard-power options – or at least the possibility for European nations to contribute to hard-power-solutions. For its part, the United States needs to find a better balance between soft- and hard-power instruments in its foreign- and security-policy tool kit. NATO remains relevant as an instrument for building transatlantic coalitions to deal with contemporary security problems. The OSCE is critically important for the application of soft-power resources to problems within its area of influence. A new Atlantic Community Treaty Organization would provide a framework for bringing US and European soft-power resources to bear on problems beyond Europe, where the United States and Europe have common interests.

A soft-power solution will not remove the need for credible military options. However, an effective marriage of US and European soft-power resources could help prevent some problems from becoming military challenges. It could enhance the ability of the international community to deal with post-conflict scenarios in ways that promote stability. Future transatlantic co-operation will require an effective blending of soft and hard-power resources from both sides of the Atlantic. The question today is whether the United States will continue down a unilateralist, heavy-on-the-hard-power path or will find a balance between the use of its hard and soft power that strengthens alliances, wins the hearts and minds of potential adversaries and reduces the occasions on which the United States actually has to use its impressive hard-power capabilities. Establishing the new Atlantic Community Treaty Organization would be a good first step in this direction.