

II. The Euro-Atlantic Origins of NATO's Attack on Yugoslavia

1. Introduction

It is largely taken for granted inside the main NATO states that the Clinton administration was driven to launch the NATO air war against Yugoslavia on 24 March 1999 mainly as a result of its perceptions of developments within the Western Balkans. Yet there has been one dissenting voice on the Clinton administration's main motive for war. It is President Clinton's. Some may regard him as an unreliable witness. But this article will argue in support of Bill Clinton's public view as to what he was up to when launching the war.

Clinton explained his motive quite bluntly in his speech of 23 March, the day before he unleashed the US Air Force. He explained that the attack was needed mainly because of its wide Euro-Atlantic political effects. As the *Washington Post* reported, Clinton explained 'that a strong U.S.-European partnership "is what this Kosovo thing is all about".'¹ So he didn't just say that the war was mainly about the political relationship between Europe and the US rather than Kosovo's Albanians or Yugoslavia's government. He said it was all about the US relationship with Western Europe.

And Clinton made a second important point about Washington's motives for the war. He explained in the same speech why a 'strong partnership' between the US and Europe was vital for the US:

If we 're going to have a strong economic relationship [with the

1. Charles Babbington and Helen Dewar, "Clinton Pleads for Support", *Washington Post*, 24 March 1999, p. A1.

world, PG] that includes our ability to sell around the world, Europe has got to be a key.²

The decision for war

Understanding a state leadership's motives for launching a war is a guide to its war aims and thus to understanding and judging the whole operation. But the leadership's public words are not always a good guide to its real intentions. And secondly, state leaderships are not unitary. In the US there is a whole array of actors with different concerns, often concerns in tension or conflict with each other. We must probe, as far as we can, into that Federal policy-making system to see who was for what and why. That should tell us more about war motive and aims.

A first guide is the Clinton speech. What, one wonders, could Clinton's words mean. *The Sunday Times* correspondent reporting the speech simply could not understand it. Noting that it did not seem to have been scripted by Clinton's media advisers, the correspondent considered that the President was off message. This is, at first sight a contradiction in terms, how can the President of the United States, the creator of the message, be off message? But this contradiction remains intriguing. Could it be that the President was simply transmitting the message from the wrong set of advisers: he was telling us what the executive bureaucracy was telling him instead of what the media management professionals would have told him to say?

This possibility is re-enforced by another curious, even unique feature of the Washington war decision. Neither US public opinion nor its Congressional representatives in either House were pressing for war. There was no significant push from that direction on Clinton. Not only was US public opinion not prepared politically for the war: the leaders of US public opinion had not been politically prepared either. In that 23 March speech President Clinton felt bound to ask the American people to get out their family atlases and look up Kosovo since, as he said, large numbers of them would never have heard of it. The whole thing was new to them. And as the BBC's Alistair Cook explained in his Letter from America programme on Sunday 18 April, this war was

2. For this part of his speech of 23 March see Andrew Sullivan, "Clinton's War Strategy is Hit and Hope", *Sunday Times*, 28 March 1999, p. 28.

unique in US history, at least since Roosevelt's time, in one central respect: in neither house of Congress was there any pro-war political leadership when the war was launched. Public opinion in the USA was, in other words, out of it at the start.

The drive for war came from within the federal executive. The Pentagon is a very important and powerful player in that bureaucracy. It is the guardian of US geostrategic interests. So if the Pentagon had been the lead force for war we could conclude that US strategic interests in the Western Balkans, South East Europe more generally or perhaps in relation to Russia were engaged: Kosovo was important for US national strategy in the east.

Yet according to the *Washington Post*, the Pentagon had been against the war. The *Post* reported:

In the weeks before NATO launched its air campaign against Yugoslavia, U.S. military chiefs expressed deep reservations about the Clinton administration's approach to Kosovo and warned that bombing alone likely would not achieve its political aims, according to sources familiar with their thinking. The Pentagon's senior four-star officers, meeting in closed-door sessions in the Pentagon's secure "tank" room, argued that the administration should use more economic sanctions and other non-military levers to compel Belgrade to make peace in the rebellious Serbian province before resorting to air strikes. They also complained about what they saw as the lack of a long-term vision for the Balkans and questioned whether U.S. national interests there were strong enough to merit a military confrontation. "I don't think anybody felt like there had been a compelling argument made that all of this was in our national interest," said one senior officer knowledgeable about the deliberations.

Thus, they feared US interests in the Balkan theatre could actually be damaged by the war. But they also warned Clinton that his war plan would not work militarily:

Privately, even the staunchest advocates of air power among the four-star commanders doubted that air strikes alone could do much to budge Milosevic in the near term. They noted the

challenges of sending planes against widely dispersed ground forces that were carrying out door-to-door terror. They spoke about the difficulty of hitting Yugoslav troops and equipment without striking Albanian refugees mixed among them.

They knew it would be a long air war and “They fret that the American public was not adequately prepared to accept a prolonged air operation.”³

But the group within the executive which had evidently and vociferously been for the bombing of Yugoslavia were the political strategists in the State Department, led by Madeleine Albright and her deputy, Strobe Talbott. All agree on that.

So we can reach a first set of conclusions about war motive. Realists in International Relations theory typically lay great emphasis on one type of motive for Great Powers to launch wars: the drive for geostrategic objectives, gaining control over space. Yet the guardians of such objectives in the Pentagon were against the war decision, because no significant objectives of this sort were at stake. Secondly, liberal theorists lay stress on the liberal democratic internal characteristics of a power like the US and would suggest that domestic public opinion has a big role. Yet in this case such a factor was far from important. It was the political side of the bureaucracy that led this war.

As the *Post* again explained, Washington had been preparing diplomatically for this attack on Yugoslavia since February 1998:

Some critics have seen a lack of resolve in the successive warnings Washington has issued since [February, 1998]. But what critics see as vacillation is described by policymakers in Washington as orchestration of international backing for military force, much as they said they accomplished in Iraq.⁴

This is a very important statement. The drive for the Yugoslavian war was being led by the State Department strategists. It was a drive to bring the West Europeans into line for war, lasting for over a year. “The

3. Bradley Graham, “Joint Chiefs Doubted Air Strategy”, *Washington Post*, 5 April 1999, p. A1.

4. Barton Gellman, “Allies See No Credible Alternative”, *Washington Post*, 23 March 1999, p. A12.

diplomacy that led up to yesterday's final warning was designed and built in Washington.”⁵

The key final steps were: first to get the West Europeans to agree that if there was no deal struck between the two sides at the Rambouillet conference, there would be war, whatever the Russians and UN said. Secondly, to insert into the draft agreement (written by Hill from the State Department) a clause for a NATO-led force creating effectively a NATO Protectorate in Kosovo, a demand the US government knew Milosevic could not accept. Then at Rambouillet, just to be sure, the US insisted that these NATO forces would have the right to roam anywhere in Yugoslavia. And at the same time, the US would not allow negotiations between the Serbian government, which wanted them, and the Kosovar Albanians to take place, presumably for fear of some other kind of agreement emerging between the two sides. As the *Post* explained, the US government “wrote up a model agreement between them and demanded that both sides sign before they had ever even laid eyes on one another.”⁶ So the US drove, over 14 months, for a war that it knew was in tension with US interests in the Balkans .

The form of the planned military attack

Those who imagine that the war was mainly about saving the lives of the Kosovo civilians should do so only after checking on the tactics chosen for the military campaign. The *Washington Post* reported that CIA officials had been running over the scenarios as war started for no less than 14 months, looking at all the streams of chain reactions to the bombing, considering every scenario. They predicted the obvious: that the Serbian army would sweep into Kosovo to shore up its defences, clearing villages near the border, causing streams of refugees, etc.

The Pentagon has acknowledged that the first bombing raids were very light ones, in contrast to the approach taken on Iraq. This gave the Serbian authorities time to consolidate their positions within Kosovo. NATO sources have claimed that they started the bombing after the Serbs has already started to pour troops and security forces into Kosovo. This is true, but it is crucially economical with the truth. Because it omits to explain that President Clinton had publicly warned the Serb

5. & 6. *ibid.*

authorities that the war was now to start in an unusual public declaration before the Serbian armed forces poured into the province. The Serbian moves began on the Sunday 21 March, after President Clinton had announced on Friday 19 March, in unambiguous terms, that the war would start. As the *Post* reported:

Clinton declared Friday that “the threshold has been crossed” for bombing, a comment described by one U.S. official as “enormously significant.” But by one accounting, Milosevic crossed the threshold more than a year ago.⁷

Thus, if we are to believe later NATO suggestions that the Serbian government was planning genocide and the driving out of the whole Albanian population, we arrive at a curious conclusion: the US government was planning a form of attack that would allow such a ‘genocide’: in effect, telling the Serbian authorities to get moving, running a week of very light bombing and then continuing with what was bound to be, according to not only the Joint Chiefs but also Secretary of Defence Cohen, a very long bombing campaign. The *Washington Post* reported: “Aides say Cohen never counted on the operation being over quickly.”⁸ And Cohen has been proved right. Six weeks into the campaign of bombing, Serbian military and security forces are still free to act as they please in Kosovo.

It is therefore just as well that the Serbian government was not planning genocide in Kosovo. If they had been planning that kind of response to NATO aggression, NATO’s plan of campaign would have helped them, by removing the OSCE monitors, warning the Serbian authorities of the strikes in advance, striking lightly for at least a week and refusing to engage in low strikes with apaches, harriers etc. against forces on the ground.

At the start of the attack on Yugoslavia, of course, Albright put it about that she was convinced that far from the Serbian authorities wanting genocide, they would want to hand over Kosovo to NATO after some token bombing. This was the pre-war spin, just as the genocide was the wartime spin (from some leaders like Tony Blair). But we know

7. *ibid.*

8. Bradley Graham, “Cohen Wrestles with Mission Risks”, *Washington Post*, 11 April 1999, p. A24.

that before the war started, the Pentagon leadership was indicating that the notion of a quick Milosevic capitulation was rubbish. The *Washington Post* reported Cohen aides as saying that

he did not subscribe to what one defence official called the “Milosevic-is-just-a-bully theory” that was prevalent among some in the administration and that held the Yugoslav leader would retreat promptly once subjected to NATO air strikes.⁹

Thus we can conclude that whatever else the military campaign was designed to achieve, it was not designed to stop the Serbian government from doing pretty much what they liked to the population of Kosovo. It was simply not in any sense, therefore, governed by humanitarian motives. Those who say it was must advance some evidence that it was.

The puzzle about motive

The state department and National Security Council political strategists who planned this war are far from being stupid or sloppy. These people are very bright conceptual thinkers. They plan meticulously for all the angles. They know the ABC of what happens when a super-power launches a local war anywhere: it sets off streams of chain reactions across the entire globe. They plan in detail for all the possible chain reactions in the main fields affected: the local war zone itself, in this case the Western Balkans; the chains of shock waves that would run through Eastern Europe, especially Russia and Ukraine; and the chain reactions, cleavages, swings in the elites and masses in the NATO zone itself. Their task is to seek to articulate the planning of these shock waves in such a way as to maximise the gains of objectives in each theatre of chain reactions. Any war is bound to produce some negative consequences for superpower in at least one theatre. The trick is to try to contain or absorb these while maximising success in the strategically key sector for the super-power. So what was the strategically key sector where they hoped for chain reactions that would amount to a US triumph.

On the eve of the war, there was much talk about the fact that the key issue was NATO’s credibility. On 23 March, the *Washington Post*

9. *ibid.*

reported that it was “the humiliation of NATO and of the United States, NATO’s creator and main component” that was the key factor leading to war. But credibility with whom? The *Post* went on:

Inaction “could involve a major cost in credibility, particularly at this time as we approach the NATO summit in celebration of its fiftieth anniversary,” said a European diplomat. National security adviser Samuel R. “Sandy” Berger, speaking Sunday, listed among the principal purposes of bombing “to demonstrate that NATO is serious.”¹⁰

On this reading, the war was launched because otherwise NATO would lose political credibility. Yet this is not itself a very credible view, for the simple reason that Albright and her assistants like Strobe Talbott had been working hard for months to turn the issue of Kosovo into an issue of NATO credibility. They were preparing the West Europeans, many of whom were against Albright’s bellicose line, for a situation where the US administration had made so many unambiguous threats of bombing that they would have to bomb. So a NATO credibility crisis was not the cause of the war, it was part of the US campaign for war.

But the *Washington Post* reports a somewhat different motive: not NATO credibility but US credibility within the Atlantic Alliance as its boss. According to the *Post* this was the argument that swung the joint chiefs behind the war: they embraced “the administration’s view that U.S. leadership in NATO had to be preserved.”

This is a very interesting statement. It suggests that the central concern of the US administration in launching the war was something to do with the power of the US within the Atlantic Alliance, in other words its power over its West and Central European Allies. This links up with Clinton’s public statements on 23 March which we quoted at the start of this article. We thus support both President Clinton and the Joint Chiefs of staff on the big cognitive issue: what on earth prompted the US to launch this atrocious stream of chain reactions in the Western Balkans.

10. Barton Gellman, “Allies See No Credible Alternative”, *Washington Post*, 23 March 1999, p. A12.

We will argue that the origins of this war lie right back in the crisis within the Atlantic world produced by the Soviet Bloc collapse; that the war was to be the culmination of a 10-year US campaign to rebuild its hegemony over the European powers, a hegemony whose political basis crumbled with the Berlin Wall. That the US had been making steady progress in this restorationist drive in Europe, but with the rise of the Euro, time was running out. However, it was able to engineer a shift in French policy and a campaign for yet another Balkan war as a means of clinching a decisive victory in this campaign to restore its European hegemony.

A sub-theme of our argument will be that this whole story cannot be understood through the optics of either mainstream realist or liberal International Relations (IR) theory. Nor are the fashionable, heterodox notions that non-state actors, NGOs and the like or some new 'international civil society' are occupying centre stage. Instead we must understand the behaviour of the Western powers as capitalist powers with expansionist drives focused on creating the political and social preconditions for expanded accumulation on the part of their national capitals. Thus the US drive for restored hegemony in Europe is not just a struggle for power for power's sake: it is a struggle to retain the global dominance of American capitalism. In this whole story, the peoples of former Yugoslavia on all sides of the conflicts there are small but immensely valuable pawns in the wider political strategies of the Great Powers, especially the USA in the struggle to get control over the forms of capitalist expansion.

To understand this story we need to be aware of the various political feedback effects of the military statecraft of great powers. By waging a local war against a 'rogue' state, a super-power can gain valuable political feedback on its relationship with allied powers. Or again, by identifying a potential challenge to state A from actor B and by applying its military power effectively against actor B, the superpower can change its relationship with state A in desirable directions. The end political result of the military operation can be for the superpower to be able to brigade state A more firmly under the superpower leadership. A classic example of this type of political brigading effect on a grand scale can be seen in the construction of NATO in the early 1950s. Electorates in Western Europe came to perceive the existence of a Soviet

military threat to themselves. The US then supplied military services to Western Europe to tackle this threat. As a result, Western Europe fell in behind US political leadership in world politics. And with that leadership in place, the US could exert great influence over the internal political and economic arrangements within the region.

We will not examine here the global political-economy strategy of the Clinton administration¹¹ but will concentrate on the meaning of Clinton's phrase about building US hegemonic leadership in Western Europe. Washington's campaign to achieve this during the 1990s has been focused upon one central task: transforming NATO, transforming its role in European affairs, and blocking West European attempts to build political forms which would deny the US hegemonic leadership. This exploration will take us into the internal politics of the Western alliance.

11. We have examined this elsewhere in some detail. See Peter Gowan, *The Global Gamble* (Verso, 1999).

2. Explaining Intra-NATO Policies

Some matters are too difficult and sensitive to be discussed frankly in front of the children. One such, in the West, is open and frank discussion and theorising of how the NATO powers engage in political conflict and compromise amongst themselves and what the substance of these conflicts and deals is about.

During the Cold War it was considered very bad form for NATO governments to air and explain their differences openly and frankly in public and political conflicts within the Atlantic alliance were generally conducted behind the backs of electorates, so to speak behind closed doors. Only attentive communities of policy experts outside government with the time and resources for meticulous detective work could follow the ebb and flow of political conflict and compromise between the Western powers. They would do so through careful analysis of the codes used in communiqués and in the public speeches of leaders. This was the science of what might be described as Atlanticology, a type of research akin to its eastern equivalent - Kremlinology. And those seeking a really successful career in this field would often find themselves having to relinquish their independence of analysis in order to acquire the inside information they craved.

Even worse form would have been to disclose the bottom-line concerns of the NATO states in their intra-NATO political processes. These concerns were as much about the various state's national capitalist strategies, strategies for assuring the political conditions for dynamic capital accumulation not only within Europe but more widely. For all these states military, political and economic dimensions of national strategies were seamless webs, or ought to be. But for public consumption, the substance of intra-NATO politics was supposed to be about one thing only: how to cope with the Soviet threat to protect the shared values of the Western liberal democracies.

As for attempts to theorise the forms, dynamics and sources of such intra-NATO political conflict, there was very little in the

mainstream literature. The dominant schools of thought in academic International relations in the West, Cold War realism and Cold War liberalism, offered no adequate framework for explaining such conflict. Instead, they tended, in different ways, to explain it away.

Realism and liberalism explained intra-NATO politics overwhelmingly in terms of responses to a Soviet threat which would tend to suppress political differences between the NATO powers, reducing them largely to technical-managerial issues. For realists, the Western states were unified by the strategic power balance: Western Europe and the US unified in an alliance for power political reasons to counter-balance the power of the Soviet Union. Disagreements within NATO would be accommodated and suppressed because of collective power interests. For liberal IR, the unity derived more from the internal political characteristics of the (most of) NATO states: their liberal democratic orders and values (and, for some, their open, market economies and liberal international economic frameworks). Because of these characteristics, the NATO states united against the Communist totalitarian threat to their values. If the USSR had been a liberal democracy, there would or need have been no NATO and no Cold War.

One might have thought that with the collapse of the Soviet Bloc, there would have been the swift development of new theorisations of West-West relations. After all, both realism and liberalism in their Cold War forms would have predicted the collapse of the Western Alliance: realism because the collapse of the Soviet super-power would lead to a rebalancing against the United States; liberalism because without a threat to the states with liberal values from any totalitarian/dictatorial enemy, there would be no need for any such military-political alliance: peace, liberal democracy and harmony would reign supreme. Thus, at the very least there would be a puzzle for those working in these frameworks as to what on earth was going on as NATO showed no sign of disappearing.

Some NATO leaders have, of course, tried to claim that NATO has turned from being a military-political defender of states with liberal values into a liberal norm-based collective security regime itself. Yet in the run-up to all three of Europe's wars in the 1990s - the Croatian war, the Bosnian war and the current war against Yugoslavia - the NATO powers have flagrantly violated basic international norms: in the Croatian case by recognising Croatia in the face of its government's refusal to

grant CSCE rights to its Serbian minority; in the Bosnian case by proclaiming that there was a Bosnian nation when there was not: there were four self-identifying main nations in Bosnia: the largest minority was the Bosnian Muslims, then the Serbs close behind numerically, then the Croatians and then the Yugoslavs. Both Yugoslav constitutional principle and the EC's international commission of Jurists agreed that in such a republic all the constituent nations must in their majority each approve a secession from Yugoslavia. But the US proclaimed a 'Bosnian nation's right to self-determination and to a unitary state, producing a civil war. And now NATO flouts a cornerstone of the UN Charter and the international legal order - one state does not launch aggression against another sovereign state - and kicks aside the international constitutional role of the Security Council. Whatever else NATO is, the claim that it is a norm-based collective security organisation will not do.

Yet, on the whole both realism and liberalism have managed to evade such issues, while much of the new theories in academic IR have taken our eyes off this ball altogether by suggesting that IR should spend less time focusing on the drives of powerful states and should devote its attention to other matters. One great interest in this context is 'non-state actors' such as multinational companies and NGOs; another is international or global institutions with the supposed emergence of a global post-state system embracing both new institutions and even a new international 'civil society'. States, on this reading, are increasingly passe. Yet search though we may, for such new trends, they do not seem to help us with explaining the intra-NATO background to this war. The war is generating great streams of chain reactions, both in the Western Balkans, across Eastern Europe and also across the NATO world. The political life of hundreds of millions of people is being thrown into a turmoil of new potential patterns and cleavages. And this is being done through the decisions of the NATO states. While non-state actors, such as Communist Parties or anti-colonial movements were certainly important in the Cold War, and while one is involved in the current conflict - the KLA - they do not seem to be driving the politics of NATO in taking the war decision. (Unless one thinks that NATO is fighting the war either for or against the KLA, both of which seem to be untenable propositions.) We must therefore search for some other framework for explaining the politics of NATO, of, in other words,

what President Clinton calls the US-European Partnership.

The continued existence of the NATO alliance throughout the 1990s suggests that it has all along been held together by something other than an enemy threat to security or values or power balancing. In other words, NATO has not been what the realists or liberals have thought it was about. When we find out what the alliance may actually have been about we may gain an answer to the mystery of the real Western background to the NATO military campaign in the Western Balkans..

We can posit four constitutive elements in the Western Alliance missed by both realism and liberalism in much of the Western variants of these literatures:

- 1). Shared (capitalist) interests.
- 2). Tensions within from conflicting capitalist interests.
- 3). US hegemonic dominance and bandwaggoning.
- 4). The cardinal political management principle: Not in Front of the Children: closed politics plus the US's hegemonic privilege of leading by fait accompli when necessary.

All four of these elements were at the centre of the Atlantic Alliance from the start, but they were easy to miss during the Cold War itself because both realism and liberalism seemed to provide adequate cognitive frameworks for understanding what NATO was about.

1) *Shared (capitalist) interests.*

A close look at NATO's formation would demonstrate that the domestic fear of Communism in Western Europe amongst capitalist classes seriously weakened by collaboration during the war was the biggest demand-pull on the continent first for British then for US help through the formation of an alliance (first the British-led Western Union, then US-led NATO). NATO then provided a framework for the revival and re-integration of German capitalism and the strongly American-inspired formation first of the European Coal and Steel Community and then the European Economic Community built a new anchor for German revival within a West European and Atlantic economic division of labour. All these arrangements drew the West European and American capitalist classes together both in a common project of domestic management of social and political conflict and in shared arrangements for securing common international interests in tackling a whole range of opponents,

especially non-state actors in the disintegrating European empires, in common capitalist expansion and, of course, in both exerting pressure on the Soviet Bloc while maintaining basic European stability .

2) *Tensions within from conflicting capitalist interests.*

There were, nevertheless, right from the start of NATO and the West European integration process, always tensions and conflicts within the alliance, and some of these became very intense. In the early years these were often connected to battles in the imperial field between West European powers and the US: Suez was a prime example, as was Algeria for the French as well as a whole range of other such issues. There were also tensions on the German question and intense tensions at times over US dollar policy, oil price manoeuvres etc. And perhaps the most sensitive issue in the late 1970s, an issue that would appear again at the end of the 1980s, was the issue of Germany's and, more generally, Western Europe's relations with Eastern Europe. The United States, and the British and French worried that German capitalism might, in the context of the economic turbulence that began in the early 1970s, re-orient its accumulation strategy eastwards, using European détente for that purpose. This period also witnessed what was known as conflicts over industrial policy or conflicts of 'interdependence', conflicts which eased only through the European turn towards neo-liberalism in the early 1980s.

Such tensions over capital accumulation strategies were also combined with battles over political and military issues. De Gaulle's attempts to build a West European Bloc under French leadership as a way of constructing what he might have called, a la Clinton, a 'strong Franco-German partnership' was one such political power battle. The long political struggle between Britain and the Franco-German axis in Western Europe was another. And of course there was a third political cleavage which became prominent on occasions: that between 'Europe' and the USA.

In all these conflicts within the NATO Alliance, all sides commonly used, for public consumption, the Soviet card. But this Soviet card was above all an ace in the hand of the United States. It could shift the whole European agenda back and forth by altering the state of relations with the USSR. And one of the main ways in which it could

engage in this political game derived from its overwhelming military capacity and military leadership of the alliance. To take one example: by deploying Pershing missiles in Germany, the US was able to break the Soviet-German détente and pull Germany firmly back under its political leadership in the early 1980s. But it also had other cards to assume its hegemony in Western Europe: its dollar dominance in the world economy, its effective control over world energy supplies, its capacity to play off its allies against each other - these were some of its main cards amongst many others.

3) *A political system which, at its height, gave the US hegemonic sovereignty.*

At the same time NATO was from the start the institutionalisation of US political dominance over the West European states. Much discussion of this US hegemony misses the specific political form that this dominance took and imagines that US dominance was anchored only in its preponderance of quantitative power resources - economic and military above all. Yet the hegemony acquired a political form which we could even describe as quasi-political sovereignty, when US dominance was at its zenith.

In liberal thought, sovereignty is usually defined in legal terms and it involves the notion of a highest legal authority to act, untrammelled by any other legal authority. But the German theorist, Carl Schmitt, furnished a non-liberal (indeed an anti-liberal) concept of politics which provided a political concept of sovereignty.¹ And Schmitt's thought was a powerful influence of some of the main intellectual organisers of American post-war foreign policy thinking, such as Hans Morgenthau and Henry Kissinger. When we deploy his concepts of politics and political sovereignty we can gain insight into the form of political power exercised by the US over the territory of the NATO alliance. His concept of politics was that of friend-enemy relations. Political action thus

1. Carl Schmitt, who died in 1982, was the leading Nazi jurist in the period 1933-36 and thereafter played a central intellectual role in theorising German hegemony in war-time Europe. The cognitive use of some of his analytical concepts does not, of course, make one a Nazi. For a survey of Schmitt's thought see Peter Gowan, "The Return of Carl Schmitt", *Debate*, vol. 2, no. 1, 1994.

consists of developing the capacity to decide, for a given community, who their friends are (and thus who *they* are) and who their enemies are (and thus also who *they* are). Using this concept of politics, we could say that the politics of NATOLand in the Cold War were those of a liberal capitalist anti-Communist political community shaped by and under US leadership. Armed with this concrete friend-enemy politics, successive US administrations could maintain their political leadership over Western Europe.

But Schmitt also, from this definition of politics, offered a political definition of sovereignty, explaining that the sovereign is he who can decide the state of emergency. Thus, for the US to have sovereign hegemony over Western Europe, it would have to be able to impose a state of emergency upon the region if it wished: it would have to, in other words, be able to call the political community to order and discipline under its undivided leadership and untrammelled by restriction.

Time and time again, in the Cold War, the US demonstrated this ability to declare a state of emergency in Europe. It did so over the Berlin Blockade, it chose not to do so over the invasion of Czechoslovakia. It chose to do so using the Soviet deployment of SS20s, using the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan and using the declaration of marshal law in Poland. It imposed a spectacular state of emergency over the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990-1991. Herein lies one of the secrets of US hegemonic leadership. It did not require the US to alter the *juridical sovereignties* of the states under its political command. Indeed, maintaining such juridical sovereignties strengthened US command capacities. The juridical empire approach of the West European powers in the 19th and first half of the 20th century were replaced by a radically new concept of imperial hegemony.

Through this political form, buttressed by the Soviet threat and the huge power resources of the USA, Washington effectively controlled the basic foreign policy orientations of the West European states and was able to secure the interests of US capitalism within Western Europe through this dominance. In these ways, the US could negatively control the international orientations of West European capitalisms, ensuring that their international strategies for capital accumulation did not impinge upon central US goals in this field. And it could ensure that US capital

had favourable opportunities for growth in Western Europe. There were often occasions when one or some of the West European states felt threatened or seriously disadvantaged by US decisions and policies. But they would tend not to respond by breaking with NATO and entering a confrontation with the USA which could be very dangerous. So they coped with US threats mainly by bandwaggoning - rolling with the punches, adapting to whatever new drive from Washington and attempting to find opportunities for themselves within the new direction of US policy.²

4) *“Not in front of the children”*: the bifurcated “citizens” and institutions of the NATO political system

One of the most important constitutive elements in the whole NATO-EC ensemble was the establishment of a closed state-elite collective political system for resolving intra-capitalist conflicts behind the backs of electorates. Within NATO this mechanism was the structure of committees centred on the North Atlantic Council and the core executives of member states. The personnel of these bodies, along with a periphery of networks of policy intellectuals, ‘sound’ journalists and business-linked think tanks constituted the ‘active citizens’ of the NATO polity. We should also include the central institutions and central personnel within the EC: first the Council of Ministers (i.e. the same core executives of states) and, from the early 1970s, the European Council, as well as the political sides of the Council Secretariat and key personnel from the most important directorates of the Commission. All states entered into a basic understanding that they would restrict their political battles to these institutional structures wherever possible, maintaining the secrecy of the deliberations of these committees and not trying to rouse electorates across the alliance for their point of view against those of other states. The only state to which this did not necessarily apply was the United States. As the hegemonic leader, it was entitled to launch public campaigns for its policy objectives within the electorates of the alliance.

By thus placing a diaphragm between the Alliance and EC elite

2. On bandwaggoning, see S. M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Cornell University Press, 1987)

political systems and domestic democratic systems a number of very important gains could be made: the leaders of states defeated in the political process would not be humiliated publicly and could therefore accept defeat more easily; realpolitik and power-political goals and tactics could remain out of public view and thus electorates could imagine that harmony within the Alliance was the rule and the alliance was united solidly by ‘shared values’. And finally, the real, overwhelming dominance of the US over its European allies could be concealed behind a facade of democratic consensus among equals, and even of what looked like West European collective political autonomy in the EC.

To understand the intra-NATO politics of the West we must always bear in mind this institutional and personnel bifurcation. When any one actor in intra-NATO politics acts politically, that actor is always addressing two audiences in two utterly different arenas: one is the elite audience in the closed elite arena. The other is the mass audience in the mass, open political arena. Handling this bifurcation discursively requires the use of linguistic codes. As any member of the elites of East Central Europe will explain, one of their urgent tasks after the collapse of the Soviet Bloc was to learn Western languages. Not so much English as the language of NATOland elite communication. To take a simple example, what does the word ‘Partner’ mean for the elite citizens of NATOland?

But just as it is a mistake to fail to notice the centrality of the elite citizenship in the politics of NATOland - they are the political subjects in the system - it is equally a mistake to fail to recognise the importance of the second class mass citizenship: the electoral public opinion base. They were a powerful *lever* that could be used by groups of elite citizens against each other. This lever could be exercised through instilling certain political values within the mass which could serve long-term national strategy. Then, through linking together an elite objective with the mass values, powerful political leverage could be generated against other elite groups’s positions on that objective. To take a simple example, the Reaganite turn in the second Cold War was extremely effective in redisciplining West European elites. But it was largely ineffective at the mass level in Western Europe, generating war fears and peace movements. With the arrival of Gorbachev to Soviet

leadership, certain elite groups in Western Europe in the late 1980s were able to link their distinctive political objectives vis a vis West European-USSR relations with this mass peace and anti-Reagan sentiment in Western Europe. Bereft of the mass politics lever for operations in Western Europe, the Bush administration found itself constrained in the tactics it could employ in Europe in 1989. Gorbachev's peace offensive was combining with moves by West European elites and mass peace sentiment to beach the US.

There remains, of course, the issue of where the Soviet Bloc threat fitted in. For Western Europe's main states, there were a number of discrete threats or problems that were coded as 'the Soviet threat'. One was a domestic threat from Communist Parties in some states, such as Italy and France; another was the big German problem of the division of Germany by the USA and the USSR in the late 1940s; and a third was the threat that US-Soviet global rivalry could plunge Europe into a devastating regional war.

If this was indeed the nature of the Soviet threat for Western Europe, then we are led towards the conclusion that much of what the NATO powers seemed to be pre-occupied with during the latter part of the Cold War was not what they were really pre-occupied with at all. The NATO powers seemed to be pre-occupied, overwhelmingly, with technical-military force issues of a defensive kind: how many war-heads do we need, what kinds of missiles, tanks etc. etc. to meet the Soviet threat? But in reality this constant military deployment debate was about politics more than defensive warfare: placing Cruise and Pershing missiles in Germany would have political effects: they would threaten the USSR and thus break the Soviet-German détente of the 1970s; and they would thus pull Germany more firmly under US leadership. Putting modernised Lance missiles into West Germany in the Spring of 1989, as Mrs Thatcher tried vainly to insist upon, would threaten the GDR and pull its population away from any dynamic towards German unity, remaining instead tied in to the Soviet alliance (which the Kohl government would not tolerate and thus insisted upon rejecting) and so on. The campaign for this, evidently designed to put a brake on the very dynamic German-Soviet detente, was first waged by Bush and Thatcher. But Bush retreated at the NAC that spring. The German government wouldn't budge, so Thatcher was defeated.)

But the collapse of the Soviet Bloc had the effect of destroying this entire West European political framework. And the entire shape of European politics and economics in the 1990s has been shaped by the battles amongst the main NATO powers over how to reshape the political framework in Western Europe after it was shattered by the Soviet Bloc collapse.

And this series of political battles over the political reshaping of Europe has proceeded in the same way as the West-West political battles of the Cold War period. The actual political conflicts have taken place very largely behind the backs of the electorates of Europe within the largely closed contexts of the NAC, the European Council of the EU and bilateral exchanges. The political coinage of the political interactions has been above all military/security moves: plans for changing the roles, capacities and decision making authorities of military or potential military organisations, such as NATO, the WEU, and the EU or of security organisations such as the CSCE/OSCE. The political battles have been waged on a number of levels: through debates and coalition-building within the Western institutions; but also through practical steps, attempted fait accomplis by the various key players - Germany, France and the United States. And throughout the 1990s, one very important zone in which various powers, especially the USA, have made big moves in this political conflict has been in the Yugoslav theatre. Military moves by the USA there have had a major impact upon the political battles within the West.

3. NATOLand Programmes and Power Politics after the Collapse

A superficial view of the collapse of 1989-91 would be that Western Europe remained untouched. Both the key institutions, NATO and the EC remained in place. Yet their political structure was shattered and the future of their political economy was thrown into question by the radical transformation of Western Europe's geopolitical and geo-economic context. The geopolitical context was transformed because the Soviet Union/Russia was no longer a threat or an enemy or even an opponent. Cold War NATO, the chief instrument of US hegemony was redundant as were the services supplied by the US in exchange for its leadership - US military power. The USSR/Russia was therefore becoming an included, legitimate player in West European politics and hence transforming all the equations of that NATOLand political system.

No less important was the transformed geo-economic context. The East was opening for Western business to flood in, transforming the conditions for Western capital accumulation in the whole of Europe. The West-facing, East-West European division of labour, institutionally anchored in the EC, faced a major challenge. Would its whole institutional form be battered down in capital's eastward stampede and through East Central Europe's beating against the doors of the EC trade regime, single market and accession procedures?

Thus the Soviet Bloc collapse placed two questions before the Western powers:

- 1) An absolutely fundamental inter-linked challenge to the main Western powers: what was their new accumulation strategy cum geopolitical strategy for the whole of Europe going to be? And, in answering that question, the main Western powers had to answer a second:
- 2) What new institutional forms for political-military arrangements and for political-economy arrangements for all Europe would they advance in line with and in pursuit of their answers to the first question?

If no answers were given to these two questions then two spontaneous dynamics would be unleashed upon NATO and the EU. First NATO would become a society for reminiscences of the good old

days of the Cold War since it was established for territorial defence of its members against attack and for nothing more. But now there was no territorial threat to its members from anywhere for the foreseeable future, except for mutual threats from two members of the alliance, Greece and Turkey. Thus the West Europeans could produce NATO's effective death simply by insisting it should remain the same in terms of its formal constitution and military posture. As a result it would give the US no political leverage whatever over the political orientations of the West European states since its military services were redundant.

The second spontaneous dynamic would be for the West European states and business classes to start moving off in all different directions, especially to make national political and economic gains in the East, thus pulling apart both NATO and the EC, neither of which had the institutional or political frameworks for preventing that: the EC had no joint foreign policy and no federal government; NATO could stop the scramble East only when such a ban could be justified by an enemy threat. This problem of a scramble eastwards would be most inescapable in the case of Germany, whose expansion in that direction would take place quite spontaneously unless it was consciously reined in by itself or by others.

All the stories of the 1990s, in the whole of Europe, have been little more than sub-plots or spin-offs of one big central plot: the manoeuvres of the Western powers in the battles over the answers to these two questions outlined above. What has happened throughout East Central and Eastern Europe, from the collapse of Yugoslavia through the various post-Yugoslavia wars, to the Katastroikas in Russia and Ukraine, to the blow-out in Albania and crises and impoverishments in other parts of East Central Europe - none of these events can be understood unless they are situated in a context shaped above all by the power struggles in the West and the various solutions to them. The peoples of East Central and Eastern Europe have been the big losers both from these struggles and from the ways in which the Western powers have sought to manage or resolve them.

Some today seem to take different views. They believe that the reshaping of European politics and economics has been and is being achieved by leaders of small Balkan states such as Slobodan Milosevic. This is simply not serious. Others believe that Europe has been 'whole

and free' as US leaders like to say, since 1989, a world of peace, harmony and interstate equality occasionally interrupted by explosions in the Balkans. Yet this is precisely what has not been happening. The wholeness of Europe was already disappearing by 1991 and the division of Europe has been deepening ever since as the direct consequence of the power struggles in the West and of the ways in which various Western powers are attempting to resolve these power struggles. The current NATO war against Yugoslavia is not the latest and most obviously dramatic of the steps along that path of division. Much of public opinion in Europe is blind to these power struggles in the West precisely because of the closed, elite character of the discursive side of these Western battles. Public opinion thus views developments such as the current NATO campaign against Yugoslavia in a cognitive political void. Hence their common sense idea that the war is only about NATO military-technical issues, the fate of the Yugoslav government and the fate of Yugoslavia's peoples - the Kosovo Albanians, the Serbs, the Hungarians and Muslims of Serbia and the Montenegrins and the populations of Macedonia and Albania.

To make sense of the main features of the post-Cold War political battles over Europe's future, it is important to appreciate that some states have been more important than others in this series of political dances. Only four states have been capable of fighting for programmes for the whole of Europe: the United States, Germany, France and Russia. No other state had a structural role in any of the possible projects: Britain, for example, could play the role of a partial spoiler of some projects, but only at great potential cost to itself. It was not integral to any of the possible projects. And Russia faded, partly because it swallowed some economic medicine urged on its leaders by American economic specialists which turned out to be both narcotic and highly toxic for Russian power. All other states have had to attach themselves to programmes generated by these pivotal states. And none of these pivotal states have been able to gain victory for their own programme alone: they have had to forge alliances for victory. And each set of alliances brings forth, of course, countervailing pressures from the other key players.

The political dances have progressed through the main players making small demarches in efforts to make small advances. Sometimes

they make moves forward by seizing on shifts on the part of other states; sometimes by seizing on opportunities on the ground, using events say, in the Western Balkans as an arena for making a large move in the European political theatre.

The whole game is very complicated in reality, because states are not, in this game, fully unitary actors: the German defence ministry, for example, under Volker Ruhe, was used as a valuable ally by the US administration to drag a reluctant German Auswärtiges Amt and Chancellery behind a key US move - NATO enlargement into Poland. The French military have been desperately eager to be re-integrated into the NATO command, while the Quai D'Orsay has been much less so. Similarly the British MOD has been a bigger fan of US political strategy in Europe, on the whole, than the Foreign Office. And so on. But for the sake of simplicity we will tend to discuss the main players as if they were unitary actors.

A further complication lies in the fact that each of the programme-capable states has to advance a programme which embraces a very wide field, basically the following: how to organise the politics and economics of three zones: EU Europe, Eastern Europe and EU-American Partnership.

The three basic programmes were, very schematically: one Europe, West European-Russian balance (with two main variants of both path and form) or American hegemony with Russian exclusion. We will look at each of these projects in turn. But before we do so, we must understand the deep issues of what we might call the geopolitics of accumulation for all the key Western players: the US, Germany and France. Only through a grasp of these deep structure issues can we gain an appreciation of the specifics of the three programmes.

Key issues of the geopolitics of accumulation for the three key Western states

It is important to bear in mind that the USA, France and Germany all have accumulation strategies that involve their reach across the world. And this world is mainly under the sway of the USA. This means that the European states must not push their battles with the USA too far for fear of been seriously damaged by the USA in the global theatre. Such damage could be done not only through Washington's use of

military-generated political influence against European interests, but also through its use of economic statecraft - exploiting the global dominance of the dollar and US leadership of the IMF/WB or indeed the role of its huge financial market and dominant financial services operators. This panoply set limits to West European ambitions, while it lacks a Euro acting not only as a 'domestic' European currency but as a global challenger to the dollar backed by united political and military power.

And especially once Clinton had become president, it became very clear that the US administration was making the rebuilding of US global capitalist ascendancy in the international political economy its dominant, governing priority.

This emphasis in its global strategy in the 1990s derived only partly from an awareness in US elites that their operations in the Cold War had diverted their attention from tackling new competitive threats from other capitalist centres: not only Japan and Western Europe, but also East and South East Asia. This defensive concern was combined with a new offensive concept, forged by the Reagan Administration - the concept of 'globalisation': this involves using political leverage - not only military-political statecraft but especially economic statecraft - to radically transform the political economies of the rest of the world so that they 'converge' with the needs of US capitalism. Such convergence requires removing the right of states to control the free movement into and out of their territories of financial flows, financial service companies, and all kinds of other multinational enterprises; it also involves re-engineering their domestic institutions to facilitate profit-making by Atlantic capital within their territory.

This new imperial drive into the South, initiated in the Reagan years, required the US to establish a political alliance with European Union capitalisms in order to pursue this campaign effectively through the multilateral organisations: especially through the GATT/WTO but also through the OECD and the IMF/WB, the operations of the Bank for International Settlements and so on. Yet at the same time, these West European capitalisms had many particular interests which conflicted with US interests in expansion into the South. To deal with this problem, the US had to plan a campaign to pressurise the EU states to re-engineer their EU political economy in ways that would

achieve a convergence of the EU with the US programme for global capitalist expansion. This was a vital US interest. But, with the Soviet Bloc collapse, finding ways to exert pressure on Western Europe for these purposes was extremely difficult since the use of US hegemonic leadership of Western Europe through NATO was disappearing.

And here was Washington's first big European problem at the end of the Cold war. The collapse of the Soviet Bloc was destroying the US's hegemonic political leadership over its European allies. The leverage it had enjoyed over its allies internal political economies in return for its supply of military/security services was withering. Samuel Huntington has explained how US tactics had worked during the Cold War:

“Western Europe, Latin America, East Asia, and much of South Asia, the Middle East and Africa fell within what was euphemistically referred to as ‘the Free World’, and what was, in fact, a security zone. The governments within this zone found it in their interest: a) to accept an explicit or implicit guarantee by Washington of the independence of their country and, in some cases, the authority of the government; b) to permit access to their country to a variety of US governmental and non-governmental organisations pursuing goals which those organisations considered important.... The great bulk of the countries of Europe and the Third World found the advantages of transnational access to outweigh the costs of attempting to stop it.¹

And as David Rothkopf has added, in the post-war years

Pax Americana came with an implicit price tag to nations that accepted the US security umbrella. If a country depended on the United States for security protection, it dealt with the United States on trade and commercial matters.²

The efficacy of the tactic depended upon two conditions: first,

1. Samuel P. Huntington, “Transnational Organisations in World Politics”, *World Politics*, vol. 25, no. 3 (1973) p. 344.

2. David J. Rothkopf, “Beyond Manic Mercantilism”, Council on Foreign Relations.

the ability of the US to persuade the local dominant social groups that they faced an external threat; and secondly, the US's ability to persuade these same groups that the US and only the US had the resources to cope with the threat and the will to do so. The distinctive US organisational model of the giant corporation could thus enter foreign labour and product markets, spreading first to Canada then to Western Europe (facilitated by the EC's rules and development) and then on to other parts of the world. In this way, rather than in the primitive militarist conceptions of realist theory, military power played a central role in post-war capitalist power politics.

In addition, the Soviet Bloc collapse was accompanied by a new sense among European elites that they could build a strong European political entity through an EU resting on a social democratic-Christian democratic, social liberal identity. In other words European political construction would be carried out under a banner which implicitly challenged the whole American capitalist social model. This was a tendency expressed by Delors but also by Kohl and indeed by French elites. Only the leaders of British capitalism (supported to a great degree by the Dutch) were on message with the US line. Yet within the capitalist classes of Western Europe there was potentially a powerful social constituency that could be mobilised for a domestic social transformation of the EU towards the American social model. The heartland of this domestic EU constituency lay in Germany. Provided the leaders of the German capitalist business systems could be diverted from a main orientation of expansion eastwards into Russia, the US could offer them the possibility of a partnership with US business at a global level, opening opportunities for them in the UK and in the US and in other parts of the American-led world. But the price would be transforming their own domestic social model in the direction of the US model. This would be a very attractive offer not only for German capital but for all the most dynamic European multinationals ready and eager for a race to capture markets all over the world and to position themselves strongly in the American market. But Germany was the key.

Thus, the US strategy for Europe would combine the drive to rebuild US leadership over Europe, through the campaign to re-organise NATO, with a parallel campaign to re-organise the political economy of the EU. This strategy has emerged ever more clearly since the Clinton

administration arrived in power in 1993. A full analysis of the campaign would have to track both its prongs: not only the political battles over the military-political reorganisation of NATO and European security; but also the battles over the re-organisation of the EU and its domestic political economy. Tackling the latter would take us into US diplomacy over Maastricht, the Uruguay Round, the formation of alliances between big US and European capital through the Trans-Atlantic Business Dialogue, the switch of the biggest of German banks and businesses towards American alliances, the growing strength of a radical neo-liberal coalition within the European financial sectors, central banks and parts of the EU European Commission.

The atmosphere in the United States when Clinton came into power was one suffused with a sense of great historical drama, a sense that the United States was facing a great world-historical Either/Or. There was the awareness of America's gigantic power in the military field and in the monetary-financial regime; on the other hand, there was the challenge of East Asia and uncertainty about Europe. There was the sense that the United States was about to give birth to an entirely new set of global growth motors through the new information industries and a feeling that these could play the role of the motor car as a huge pathway to revived international accumulation which the US could hope to dominate; yet, after very large investments in this sector, its supposed transformative potential for US productivity has simply not materialised. And, finally, there was the triumph over the Soviet Bloc and the international left; and yet, paradoxically, that collapse posed a major question-mark over the means that the US could use for exerting political influence in the world and consolidating that influence through institutions similar to the security zones of the Cold War.

Tremendous American intellectual energy was being devoted, therefore, to these strategic issues as Clinton came into office. As one policy intellectual put it, "essentially, we have to erect a whole new conceptual basis for foreign policy after the Cold War".³ Others equated the tasks facing Clinton to those that faced Truman in 1945: Clinton,

3. Will Marshall, head of the Progressive Policy Institute, in the *Washington Post*, 21 Dec 1992.

said one writer, is ‘present at the creation’ of a new epoch in world affairs and ‘the next half century hangs in the balance’.⁴

The Clinton team itself was not, of course, going to spell out publicly how it conceptualised its strategic problem and its strategy and tactics for tackling it. The signs had to be read more indirectly, for example, through Clinton’s appointments and institutional arrangements as well as through its policy statements and initiatives.

Clinton’s top foreign policy appointments, like Warren Christopher (State), Anthony Lake (National Security), Madeleine Albright (UN), Lloyd Bensten (Treasury) were conventional, rather passive figures with links back to the Carter days.⁵ Many observers wondered why Clinton had received a reputation for external activism when he made such personnel appointments.⁶ But this perception was itself the product of old thinking, whereby foreign policy meant what the Secretary of State or the NSC chief or the Secretary of Defence did. It ignored the instruments of economic statecraft, yet these were the instruments which Clinton placed in the hands of the dynamic activists.

The new team brought in to wield the levers of economic statecraft were a distinctive group: Robert Rubin, Ron Brown, Mickey Kantor, Laura Tyson, Larry Summers, Jeff Garten, Ira Magaziner and Robert Reich (as well as Vice President Al Gore) had distinctive general approaches to the defence of American power:⁷ For them, it was about ‘the economy, stupid’. And they believed that strengthening American capitalism was above all to be tackled through international political action. In line with this was their belief in the importance, even the centrality, of state political action in economic affairs: a conviction that the success of a national capitalism was ‘path dependent’ and the path

4. Roger Morris, “A New Foreign Policy for a New Era”, *New York Times*, 9th December, 1992.

5. Aspen in Defence had a more activist, radical agenda.

6. See, for example, Anthony Hartley: “The Clinton Approach: Idealism and Prudence”, *The World Today*, February, 1993.

7. Of this list one partial dissident was Robert Reich: he shared a belief in state action in international economics and his concern for labour standards and protection could be usefully instrumentalised in economic diplomacy over trade issues. But he lacked some of the America-First-in-Everything zeal of the others and dropped out of the administration eventually.

could be built of institutions fashioned by states. And there should not be barren counter-positions of national states and market forces: they should work together, help each other, whether in technology, trade or finance. They were not classical national protectionists, but they were also not free traders. The term used to describe the school of thought represented by this team was ‘globalists’, promoters of a kind of global neo-mercantilism. The new concept was that competition among states was shifting from the domain of political-military resources and relations to the field of control of sophisticated technologies and the domination of markets.⁸ The nature of the new game was also given a name: ‘geoeconomics’. Lloyd Bensten may have been of a different generation and of a different background from the others, but he also shared a ‘globalist’ view.

The outlook of this new team was expressed in books like Laura Tyson’s *Who’s Bashing Whom* and by a host of other such works by those within or close to the administration.⁹ The outlook was often expressed most bluntly by Clinton’s new US Trade Representative, Mickey Kantor, who openly argued for a new kind of American Open Door strategy to ensure that the 21st Century will be the ‘New American Century’. As he put it:

The days of the Cold War, when we sometimes looked the other way when our trading partners failed to live up to their obligations, are over. National security and our national economic security cannot be separated No more something for nothing, no more free riders.¹⁰

Kantor’s linkage of external economic objectives and US

8. Gioia Marini and Jan Rood: ‘Maintaining Global Dominance: the United States as a European and Asian Power.’ in Marianne van Leeuwen and Auke Venema (eds.), *Selective Engagement. American Foreign Policy at the Turn of the Century* (Netherlands Atlantic Commission, The Hague, 1996)

9. See Laura D’Andrea Tyson, *Who’s Bashing Whom: Trade Conflict in High-Technology Industries* (Institute for International Economics, Washington DC, 1992); Ira Magaziner and Mark Patinkin, *The Silent War: Inside the Global Business Battles Shaping America’s Future* (Vintage Books, 1990); Jeffrey E. Garten, *A Cold peace: America, Japan, Germany and the Struggle for Supremacy* (New York Times Books, 1992)

10. USIS, 23 Feb 1996: “Kantor says US to Fight Farm Trade Barriers.”

National Security was reflected in Clinton's remoulding of institutions in the core executive: just after Clinton's inauguration he created a National Economic Council within the White House alongside the National Security Council. The choice of name was designed to indicate that the new body would acquire the kind of nodal role in US global strategy which the NSC had played during the Cold War. At the same time, Congress instructed the Commerce Department to set up the Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee (TPCC) to co-ordinate 19 US govt agencies in the area of commercial policy. Instructive also was the fact that the head of the National Economic Council was to be a very experienced hedge fund speculator, Robert Rubin, former senior partner in Goldman Sachs, the hedge fund masquerading as an investment bank.¹¹ This gave the Clinton team prime links with Wall Street.

The way that the Clinton Administration defined its approach has been summed up by someone who was initially part of it, David Rothkopf. He has characterised the Clinton administration's new international strategy as one of "Manic Mercantilism".¹² Stanley Hoffman makes a similar point, noting the new US activism in world economic affairs under the Clinton administration and its drive to open borders to US goods, capital and services.¹³

In this article we will not track the US strategy at the level of the European political economy. Nor will we examine US economic statecraft. We will concentrate on the political-military side of US strategy in Europe. With the collapse of the Soviet Bloc, the Bush administration had still hoped that the United States role as controller of security zones and wielder of enormous military resources could remain a potent instrument for strengthening the position of American capitalism vis a vis its economic rivals. His great efforts to ensure that a united Germany remained in NATO were followed by his war against Iraq, one of whose main goals was to show the rest of the capital world that it had to treat the interests of US capitalism with respect. But this was a false dawn. With the collapse of the Soviet Union itself, the US's

11. Rubin later was to become Treasury Secretary - his current position.

12. David J. Rothkopf: 'Beyond Manic Mercantilism', Council on Foreign Relations, 1998.

13. Stanley Hoffman, Martin Wight Memorial Lecture, LSE, June 1998.

ability to make political use of its extraordinary military superiority was bound to diminish.

But this was not Washington's only problem with Western Europe, even if it was an urgent one in the 1990s. There was a more long-term and deeply worrying problem, both geopolitical and linked to the global pattern of future capital accumulation: the possibility of a West European-Russian link up. One-Europe political ideas precisely expressed such a link up. West-European-Russian-balance ideas could at any time be a prelude to such a link up. The geopolitical and accumulation consequences of this for US global dominance could be awesome: in the colourful language of geopoliticians, nothing less than the American loss of the planet's Eurasian heartland! And think of the potential for capital accumulation by yoking together the human and material resources of Western Europe and the former Soviet Union.

We will not survey here the debates within the US policy community on how to tackle these problems.¹⁴ But two central conclusions were drawn for US strategic goals in Europe. The first was that the US had to find a way of regaining its role as gate-keeper between Western Europe and Russia, able to control the flow of relations through the gate between Berlin and Moscow. And the second was that the US should not allow the emergence of a single West European political will to emerge, autonomous from Washington. Instead, it has to find a way to rebuild US political leadership above whatever integration went on in Western Europe. US tactics in Europe had to be geared to these two political goals.

The Bush administration quickly realised that an entirely new NATO was the key to tackling both these basic challenges. NATO needed an entirely new role, new members, new military instruments. The only things that should not be new in NATO would be US leadership and the subordination of West European policy-making, command structures and military-political initiatives to US leadership. But how to achieve this? What mix of tactics could achieve this strategic goal? That was the policy problem.

14. For a survey of the debates see the following important article: James Petras and Steve Vieux, 'Bosnia and the revival of US Hegemony, *New Left Review*, No. 218.

For Germany, the collapse of the Soviet Bloc broad an embarrassment of riches. While the USSR survived there seemed to German leaders the real possibility of moving straight to One Europe, on one condition: that France and Germany worked together for that goal and the US did not get too much in the way. But if One Europe was an optimal solution it was not a necessary bottom line for Germany in the early 1990s. The base of German capitalism was Western Europe. The security of that base depended upon the Franco-German partnership, anchored institutionally in the European Union. In the general expansion of German capitalism that base and its security anchorage must not be sacrificed: it must be strengthened. This was the cornerstone for Chancellor Kohl.

The second element that had to be added to that cornerstone was to secure Germany's new Eastern flank states: above all Poland, what became the Czech Republic and Hungary. Germany's own security and vital interests require that they are anchored firmly. That meant fitting their emerging capitalisms into the pattern of Germany's own economic expansion and being ready to commit itself to the security of these states externally as well as internally. But there were lots of different frameworks for doing this: their eventual entry into the EU, plus bilateral guarantees from Germany or guarantees from the WEU or guarantees from NATO or co-operative guarantees involving both Russia and Germany. Nevertheless, their friendly anchorage was a bottom-line issue for Germany.

A third element for the new Germany was to ensure adequate security frameworks for expanded capital accumulation, both eastwards and into the US-led global sphere. How this expansion of accumulation was articulated geographically would depend upon both political and economic developments. It would certainly proceed across the whole of East Central and Eastern Europe, but the relationship with the USSR/Russia would depend on unforeseeable developments. As far as the USA was concerned, Germany had every reason to keep the USA calm and contented while Germany built up its strength through working its way through the huge meal offered to its capitals by the Soviet collapse. On the other hand, precisely because all could see what potentially huge gains Germany had made, there were risks of Germany facing a rough ride from the USA and even some of its West European partners.

Thus no German government would wish to fall back under US dominance; rather it would wish to develop a strong, homogeneous West European political force and will, centred on Germany with France as its 'strong partner'.

France was placed in a very difficult situation, in terms of its own power strategy, by the Soviet Bloc collapse. Its accumulation strategy had been entirely centred on the EU, with France as a junior capitalism to Germany but still able to be a political equal and to pretend to political leadership because of its nuclear weapons during the Cold War. On these bases its whole tactical structure was that of France as the Europeanist alternative to Yankee-led Atlanticism: its hostility to US neo-liberal civilisational models, its hostility to US hegemonism, to the NATO integrated command, and to US imperialistic wars in the South etc. With the Soviet Bloc collapse, all this suited Germany fine, but did it still suit France also? Under Mitterrand, France's orientation concentrated on locking Germany into its West Europeanist partnership and sought also a Franco-German joint international political will and line. But Chirac would search for other ways out of a posture which now, with Germany's new strength, made French claims on West European leadership look less like a posture than posturing.

The three programmes on offer for Europe

Against this background we can examine the three programmatic projects for Europe that have been promoted during the 1990s.

1) One Europe

This option has been consistently advocated by the USSR from 1986 and by Russia throughout the 1990s, insofar as its leaders were not busy with other things. It was, however, only very briefly entertained by the two key West European powers, Germany and France, between 1989 and 1991. The United States was resolutely hostile to it.

The basic concept involves a pan-European political/security system that included Russia as well as all the other East European states and a pan-European economic system that involved replacing the EU division of labour with a new pan-European one offering the ex-Soviet Bloc states a developmentally effective framework. Since the EU was constructed from the start on the principle of breaking West

Germany from economic linkages with the East and on excluding the East European economies, it would eventually have to be reorganised to make One Europe work economically. Mitterrand and the Deutsche Bank had two ways of solving that problem: basically, keeping the Comecon region together as a regional economic unit for a whole transition period as its redevelopment took place. (For Mitterrand this had the key advantages of ending pressure for an overhaul of the EU regime. Eventually, though, the two regional economies of Europe would grow together into one.)

The big loser from One Europe would be the United States, since it would lose political hegemony over Western Europe and would lose control of a new and potentially very dynamic capital accumulation process harmonising the West European economy and the Russian economy - a frightening prospect for American capitalism if it were to develop in the long term.

In 1989-90 the German government was very interested in this One Europe project and so was the Mitterrand administration in France. The plan of Herrhausen, Chair of the Deutsche Bank and very close to Kohl in the autumn of 1989, embodied the concept: he argued for a collaborative effort between the EC and the USSR to revive the economies of East Central Europe. The initial concept of Jacques Attali and Mitterrand for the EBRD, along with the concept of a European Confederation from the Atlantic to the Urals, outlined on 31 December 1989 embodied the same idea. The difference was that Herrhausen's plan implied leadership on the economic front by the big three German private banks (Deutsche, Dresdner and Commerz) while Attali's public bank, the EBRD, could be under his (French) leadership. Another aspect of the One Europe project was demonstrated in the support in Germany in 1990 for making the CSCE the central collective security framework for the whole of Europe. Both Kohl and Mitterrand were interested in Gorbachev's proposals for a unified Germany to be neutral and outside NATO and even to a revamping of the entire European security apparatus once the Cold War was over.¹⁵ This Kohl-Mitterrand approach towards building a One Europe project with Russia at least on the economic

15. See S. Brown, *The Faces of Power: United States Foreign Policy From Truman to Clinton* (Columbia University Press, 1994).

front was still evident at the end of 1990, with their joint support for a free trade agreement between the EC and the USSR, which they persuaded the European Council to adopt in December 1990.

The One Europe project failed for a number of reasons: first, because of adamant and vigorous US hostility; secondly, because of the lack of strong unity between France and Germany in advancing the project; and thirdly, because the Gorbachev leadership was itself, despite its rhetoric of a Single European Home, unclear as to whether it feared a united Germany to be point of wanting a strong US role in Europe. The Soviet leadership also made serious blunders in its external economic policies towards the Comecon region at the time, while the vigorous US (via-the IMF) efforts to break up Comecon won support in Czechoslovakia and elsewhere in East Central Europe: the Bush administration persuaded these states that it would ensure that they quickly gained entry to the EU if they broke up Comecon and took the Shock Therapy treatment. When the USSR itself collapsed, an effective powerful Eastern partner for France and Germany in this project disappeared also.

But there were two other very important reasons for the failure of the One Europe programme in the early 1990s. First, its economic programme implied a social democratic-style development strategy for the East, which clashed with the whole American paradigm of neo-liberalism and globalisation, a paradigm which was attracting great support amongst the leaders of big capital in Western Europe. The Bush administration, desperate to impose US capitalism-friendly political economies everywhere in the East, moved successful to impose its regime goals on the Eastern economies. To counter that would have needed a big German push, using large German credit capacity, and that was not forthcoming. And the US ideas quickly gained influence amongst all the West European governments, under American and British influence, not least because they were the cheapest (for the West) way of getting capitalism over there quickly.

And there was another basic reason for the programme's failure: the lack of a strong political energy which linked institution-building with the capacity to generate strong popular support. Only this could effectively resist US hostility. The energy was offered by Mitterrand's grand vision of a pan-European Confederation. This did initially inspire

support from Vaclav Havel, but not from either Bonn or Moscow. So it collapsed. Genscher offered a strong peace-making rhetoric which echoed Gorbachev's stirring vision, but neither of them could concretise their visions in a definite institutional form that they could jointly achieve. The one they attempted, a qualitatively strengthened CSCE which could marginalise NATO required too much co-operations from the rest of the European states and hence was an easy target for American diplomacy. As the Soviet Union reeled into terminal crisis in the summer of 1991, Genscher veered off into championing Croatia, a move that looked like a message to the whole of Central and Eastern Europe to turn to Germany alone if they wanted a helping hand with any problems.

A One Europe project could still be revived, but it currently lacks support from any of the major powers, apart from a much weakened Russia.

2) EU-Russian balance, with Western Europe expanding into East Central Europe.

The second option has been that of turning the EC into a fully-fledged political entity which expands its influence over East Central Europe while giving Russia a sphere of influence in the CIS. The central idea here is that American hegemony in the West is replaced by a solid West European political entity under whose influence East Central Europe falls. The West European entity would be lead by France and Germany. Russia would be acknowledged as having its sphere of influence and leadership over the CIS, if necessary including an independent Ukraine, and Russia would not find a West European entity's expanding influence a threat to Russian security.

This project has had two variants of end-state and two paths to victory. The two end-states have been either the German conception of turning the EU into a more or less fully-fledged state or the French conception of turning the EU into a solid political bloc or alliance of states. In either case, NATO would eventually fade into the background, as would US hegemonic ambitions. The project has also involved two different paths to the end-state, paths that are not mutually exclusive. The first path is via the establishment of a Common Foreign and Security Policy of the EU that would eventually include a common defence policy and a common defence. The second path is via monetary union and

subsequent spill-overs into a solid political entity, buttressing the Euro. Both the CFS path and the Euro-path could produce either the German Federal Europe or the French political bloc.

Without going into the whole very complex story of the pursuit of this broad option, we can briefly mention the main aspects of it for the three zones: EU Europe, Eastern Europe and the West European-US Partnership. As far as EU Europe is concerned, both the Euro path and the CFS path were put forward by Kohl and Mitterrand from the spring of 1990 onwards. The Euro was Mitterrand's key price that he demanded from Kohl in exchange for French support for German unification. Kohl agreed and fought the opponents of monetary union in Germany successfully. Everybody understood that this was not simply an economic project but a political project as well. And the Euro can only be sustained economically if it is built on solidly united political foundations. Money is a politically created and sustained phenomenon.

The battle for a political entity linked to the monetary union project of Maastricht had to take the path of a genuinely united foreign policy and there is no such foreign policy unity without a military unity to match it. Therefore, in April 1990, Kohl and Mitterrand agreed to combine the EC's Inter-Governmental Conference (IGC) on Economic and Monetary Union with a second IGC on Political Union that would put a common foreign and defence policy at its core.

They already had a basis of Franco-German co-operation to build on. The Elysee Treaty of 1963 had made provision for defence co-operation between France and Germany and in January 1988 the two countries had established a Joint Defence and Security Council and created a 4,000 strong Franco-German brigade. In the early 1990s, ministerial, military and defence-industrial relations were strengthened.

At the same time, they had a useful, wider instrument for building up a political bloc which excluded the Americans - the Western European Union. France had taken the initiative to revive the WEU in 1984, persuading its members to support the so-called Rome Declaration of 27 October of that year. Alarm on the part of the West European states, including the UK, over the Reagan-Gorbachev summit in Reykjavik in 1987 had led to the WEU platform of European security interests being issued by the Hague WEU summit in October 1987. The Hague Platform had declared: "We are convinced that the

construction of an integrated Europe will remain incomplete as long as it does not include security and defence.” And it set the goal of a ‘more cohesive European defence identity’.¹⁶

In December 1990 Kohl and Mitterrand wrote to their European Council colleagues suggesting the WEU be placed at the centre of the debate on European security institutions. This letter was met with a ‘stern demarche’ from Washington, resulting in a statement from the German and French Foreign Ministers to the effect that the WEU should be subordinated to NATO.¹⁷ But this did not halt Franco-German efforts. In February 1991, Franco-German proposals for the IGC on political union again called for the elevation of the WEU at the expense of NATO. Then, in October 1991, the French and German governments shocked the British and American governments with their announcement of a plan to create a Eurocorps. As Paul Cornish explains, this was ‘widely seen as an unabashed attempt to undermine NATO’.¹⁸ The Maastricht Treaty followed through with a successful Franco-German insistence that there would be a CFS for the EU which would eventually lead to a common defence policy and a common defence.

Here, then, were the elements of a full scale challenge to US hegemony in Western Europe. The West European states were to have an autonomous foreign, security and defence policy making set of institutions which could take authoritative decisions quite independently of the US. Secondly, with the creation of Eurocorps, this autonomous West European Bloc or state would have its own autonomous military instrument - the Eurocorps, to which Belgium and Spain were soon also to contribute. And the whole operation would be geared to projecting military power outside the EU and NATO areas, engaging in the so-called Petersburg tasks as laid down at the WEU meeting at the St. Petersburg hotel outside Bonn in June 1992. These power projection roles included crisis management, peace keeping, peace enforcement and humanitarian interventions. And to cap it all, the WEU could itself expand its influence eastwards, absorbing new associate members and

16. See *Western European Union: The Reactivation of WEU: Statements and Communiqués, 1984-1987* (London, WEU, 1988)

17. See H. De Santis, ‘The Graying of NATO’, in B. Roberts (ed.), *US Security in an Uncertain Era* (MIT Press, 1993)

18. Paul Cornish, *Partnership in Crisis*, page 49.

members as its spread its political influences eastwards in ways that would not be perceived by Russian leaders as a threat to its authority. Here was a full-scale alternative organisation of political power in Western Europe to the concept of US hegemony.

This second option actually implied a very different project for East Central Europe from that of One Europe. It in practice involved EU mercantilism plus 'insulationism'.¹⁹ The EU would use its trade regime as a lever for gaining the economic expansionist interests of Western big capital in the economies of the East. This lever consisted, essentially, of making access to the EU markets for Eastern countries - something they all desperately needed - dependent upon their opening their political economies for entry by Western capital with the ultimate aim of harmonising their market rules with those of the EU. Their economic development needs were to be subordinated to this mercantilist goal. In addition, they were offered a vague promise that some of them may eventually be incorporated within the EU as, over decades, they competed with each other to see who could do more than the others in demonstrating 100 per cent compliance with every possible EU desire. This political-economic strategy was combined with political 'insulationism'. This concept means a rejection of active political intervention in the East to solve the problems of the East. Instead political policy towards the East would be confined to ensuring that Western Europe was insulated from the consequences of state instability, state failure, civil war or inter-state conflict in the East. A central problem requiring Western insulation in this context was the threat of great movements of refugees as well as economic migrants from the East. Anglo-French military involvement in Yugoslavia through UNPROFOR was essentially about that: 'humanitarian aid' in the war zone to ensure that the civilian population did not leave the war theatre. Italian military intervention in Albania in 1997 was about the same thing: staunching the flood of humanity out of Albania westwards by rebuilding an Albanian state. Within this general framework, a partial exception to insulationism has been Germany's concern to build a protective buffer on its eastern flank by drawing Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary

19. The concept of 'insulationism' is developed in Paul d'Anieri and Brian Schmedeler, "European Security after the Cold War: The Policy of Insulationism", *European Security*, vol. 2, no. 3, 1993.

(as well as Slovenia, eventually) under its wing and ensuring that these states were stable, viable entities anchored to the West. But this differentiation was essentially a concomitant of the insulationist policy, rather than a promise that lots of other countries in the region would also be drawn into the Western sphere (although West European propaganda suggested that all would eventually make it to safety on the Western shore.) The wider security balance would be assured by a co-operative, spheres-of-influence approach giving Russia great scope in the East.

As far as the West European-US partnership was concerned, the Franco-German project implied a replacement of US hegemony with a 'two pillar alliance' which would be a partnership of equals. The politics and economics of Western Europe and East Central Europe would be under German-French-led West European control. Western Europe would have the capacity for autonomous policy making and for autonomous action in the political and military fields. It would shape Western Europe's economic relationship with the East. And the US would have to accept Western Europe as a large, international player in world politics and economics.

This was not, of course, remotely acceptable to either the Bush or the Clinton administrations. From the very beginning in 1989, they have sought to reorganise post-Cold war Europe in order to maintain in new ways the political hegemony which they had enjoyed in Western Europe during the Cold War

3) The New Programme for US Hegemony

The third option - US Hegemony - has been centred on one single clearly defined goal: to bring Europe back under US leadership through the transformation and new ascendancy of NATO in the whole of Europe. To understand this programme, we must start by recognising that apart from the name and the leadership, the new NATO was going to be radically different from the Cold War NATO. The programme for this new NATO contained the following main planks:

a) NATO as gate-keeper for the US between Russia and Western Europe (especially Germany). This is the fundamental meaning of the NATO enlargement into Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary. It is

important to see why. In the first place, it blocks the possibility of a unilateral German influence stretching across Poland and the rest of Germany's Eastern flank because the USA is in Poland and Poland becomes a political base of the US via NATO. But secondly, the form of Poland's integration into NATO serves another crucial purpose. Poland could have joined without integration into the NATO integrated command: joining would just have involved Poland getting the NATO security guarantee. But secondly, the USA insisted on its right to have bases in Poland and station nuclear weapons there if needed. This was a bottom-line issue for the Clinton government. It also deeply angers Russian elites because it drove a US armoured division through the spirit of the Treaty of Paris of 1990 which settled the external aspects of German unification. These had specified that there should be no foreign bases on nuclear weapons in the former GDR territory. Now the US was reserving the right to bring these right up to the Soviet border. Why? Why should the US risk such Russian wrath for this goal?

There are two answers, one political and one military. The political one is that this provides the USA with its role as political gate-keeper between Russia and Germany. Above all it enables the US to make moves to freeze Russian-German relations if they get too friendly. All that needs to be done is to pick a quarrel with Russia, say over its internal treatment of some group or other or over its operations in the Near Abroad. Then the US can move forces into Poland, polarising West European opinion behind it and that should be enough to put a stop to any hopes of a new Rapallo.

But there is a military purpose in this aspect of Poland's accession as well. That is to be able to threaten to project power eastwards to ensure that Ukraine does not fall back under Russian sway, through, for example, entering a security pact with Russia which would result in Russian troops on Ukraine's Western borders, changing the entire strategic balance in Central Europe. The Brzezinski Circle which has been so central an influence on the US thinking on NATO enlargement (along with Rand specialists like Larrabee) is deeply committed to pulling Ukraine under NATO's wing. This would provide a solid US-led corridor of Poland and Ukraine between Germany and Russia while transforming the strategic situation in the Black Sea and thus the Caucasus and the Caspian.

There is also the question whether NATO should enlarge further into Central and South East Europe, corralling Slovenia, Slovakia, Romania, and even Bulgaria along, eventually with Albania, Croatia and part of Bosnia. Such matters are, of course, high on the agenda now.

Thus, enlargement is about Russian exclusion from the institutions of European politics. This is not because the US wants a confrontation now with Russia or even Russian hostility. Why should it? It just wants to be gate-keeper and Russian hostility today was the price that might have to be paid.

But the question here was whether the West European states, above all Germany, would also consider that Russian exclusion and hostility was a price worth paying in order to insure that the US could play gate-keeper across a new European divide.

b) NATO must be refashioned to play an entirely new aggressive military role 'out of area'. The US slogan for NATO as a military organisation in the 1990s has been 'out of area or out of business'. In the elegant words of Francois Heisbourg back in 1992:

In a world without the canonical Soviet menace, ambitions rather than threats may well have become of overriding importance in determining the future of the Atlantic relationship.²⁰

This drawing of NATO into ambitious external military action is a vital goal for the US in its political drive to regain political leadership of Western Europe. To understand why we must remember how the US gained hegemony in Western Europe after the war. It did so by helping to create circumstances facing Western Europe which would make West European states demand something that only the US had: the services of its strategic war machine. But when the Soviet Bloc collapsed, that strategic nuclear asset was redundant because NATO West European territory faced no strategic threat. This then created the problem that 'out of area' could solve. The US had to find a way of persuading Western

20. Francois Heisbourg, 'The European-US Alliance: Valedictory Reflections on Continental Drift in the Post Cold War Era.' *International Affairs* (London), Vol.68, 4, 1992.

Europe again that it needed some military services that only the USA could offer because it needed to do some aggressive ‘out of area jobs’. As it happened, the US was rapidly coming up with some new military services: these are the US Air Force with its tomahawks, its smart weapons, along with a whole assortment of other services. These services are not for sale: on the contrary, they are to remain exclusive US property. If the West European’s had them, no US political leadership. We can sum up the US offer by paraphrasing Kipling: you (West Europeans) need casualty-free weapons.

‘But we have got
The Tomahawk
And you have not!’²¹

The US has had lots of other things, apart from Tomahawks and its whole Air Force panoply. It has got its own (not NATO) huge logical base in Western Europe. It has got the vital battle-field intelligence systems; and it has got the vital heavy lift capacity while the West Europeans have no heavy military transport planes of their own.

Here, then, were the services on offer for a new Strong Partnership going ‘out of area’. The idea was immediately enough to gain an extremely sympathetic ear in certain elite constituencies in Western Europe. First there were the military establishments of the main West European states. In the early 1990s they had their backs against the wall as they stood eye-ball to eyeball facing finance ministries slashing at their budgetary underbellies with lethal knives. Washington gave them a weapon to fight back with - the slogan: ‘We must be protected and revived because you need us to go ‘out of area’. So there was one ally, along with the whole NATO bureaucracy.

But then Washington had another ally in the form of none other than the West European finance ministries! It could say to them: “Frankly, we do have to go ‘out of area’. You’re military brass are not just greedy, they are right. But we understand that you have a big problem. You have your EMS to protect (against Wall Street) and then your Convergence Criteria by slashing budgets and cutting borrowing. Yet building up your own West European out of area strike force will

21. Kipling quipped of the British victory in the Zulu war: “We had got the Gatling Gun and they had not’.

cost you a budgetary fortune. So maybe we can help. Drop this extravagant notion of your own autonomous West European (WEU or EU or whatever) strike force, and use the USAF instead. All you need to do is stick with US leadership in NATO. We'll supply the Tomahawks, logistics, battle field intelligence, bombers, whatever."

And then there was a third potential ally in the form of the two West European states predisposed to use militarism for political advantage within the Western alliance: France and the UK. The fact that both these states were long geared to military adventure for political gain gave them a great lead on Germany in this field, saturated as it was by pacifism. So they would be predisposed towards a few 'out of area' projects.

There was only one problem: how to convince the West Europeans of the vital necessity to strike aggressively 'out of area', in the first instance, in the eastern hinterland of the EU? This was the great problem with the strategy. It was a twofold problem: how to find convincing arguments for the two tiers of West European citizens: the elite audiences centred in the core executives had to be convinced; and the mass audience also had to be given a line that could rouse their support.

The elite audience was the big problem for advancing the US strategy for its revived hegemony. The problem can be simply put: for Germany, going back to US hegemony was not acceptable. Neither was it acceptable for France. They wanted their autonomous capacity to act as a West European political bloc, without invigilation by the USA. And at the same time, they wanted the capacity to decouple their West European political base from Anglo-American adventures all over the world.

But for US strategists there were ways around this elite problem. One key resource was the fact that the West European elites were not unified at all as a single, institutionalised political will. So one could strike bargains with key elite groups in key states for joint political-military demarches under US leadership. This could present the other elite groups in the other main West European states with a big dilemma: join the US-led thrust even though it was potentially dangerous for

Strategy	Politics	Economics	Central Powers	East Europe's Tasks
One Europe	Collective security including Russia, building of pan-European framework to which the EU would be subordinated	Geared to macro-economic growth and a new division of labour which gave Eastern Europe a reasonable share of the action	Germany leading France, Russia	Democratic development and rapid economic development in a permissive environment
EU/Russia	2 balanced centres: the EU and Russia in harmony	subordinating the East European economies to the dominant capitals in Western Europe through denying/granting access to the EU market	France and Germany leading the EU in combination with Russian leadership in the former USSR	US Europe first, East Central Europe fend for itself. If it wishes but offered the prospect of trying, in near impossible conditions, to make its societies acceptable for eventual EU membership
US Hegemony	a split Europe with the West excluding Russia and extending its military political (as well as economic) sway over the space between the EU and the	'Globalization' of economies and neo-liberalism	The US as hegemon with Germany and France 'bandwaggoning	Do what they are told and strengthen internal discipline within their states

your own interests, or stay neutral or even oppose? Then there was a second key resource: the West European mass audience, the children. If the US and its elite partners in Europe could use their political power media power to rouse the children on a fundamental basis, that could create major difficulties for the key elite groups in the key state(s) trying to steer clear of the thrust. Threaten that elite with a media-political mass pressure from below and you could drag them into line. Once that was done the other recalcitrant West European states lower down the hierarchy could be dragged, kicking and screaming perhaps, into the common thrust. (The three programmatic projects discussed here are summarised in the table on the previous page.)

4. Key Phases of the American Campaign

We will very briefly sketch the main phases of the US campaign to rebuild its hegemonic leadership in Europe, noting the counter-moves by other actors at each stage.

Phase 1: Washington on its back foot in Europe

From 1989, the Bush administration was fully alert to the dangers facing the US in its supposed European moment of Cold War triumph. It found itself in many ways on the political back foot vis a vis its West European ‘allies’ in the crisis. Bush was quick to see the need for NATO to enlarge quickly by admitting Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia in order that NATO “should be at the heart of the new European system” He also was clear that NATO should resist attempts to restructure its political leadership or Europeanist attempts to set up new institutions not integrated into NATO.¹ Yet it was Kohl who was setting the agenda and the pace from October 1989 through the summer of 1990, producing one *fait accompli* after another in a politically brilliant offensive to make the Anschluss with the GDR unstoppable. It culminated in the summer of 1990 dramatic public agreement with Gorbachev on all the outstanding issues in a meeting in Stavropol. The *Economist* announced it was Stavropol! Bush was able to insist that the unified Germany remain in NATO, but he could not even get the German government to agree to NATO hosting the treaty conference on unification: Germany and the USSR insisted on the CSCE. And keeping Germany in NATO was not much good if NATO itself was becoming redundant. In December 1989, Bush’s Secretary of State, Baker, made a high profile speech at the Aspen Institute in Berlin, saying NATO must change and become a more political organisation. Mitterrand was reported as saying

1. See S. Brown: *The Faces of Power: United States Foreign Policy From Truman to Clinton* (Columbia University Press, 1994)

contemptuously that he knew what Baker meant: the US would try to claim the right to interfere in everything in Europe. As for Bush being able to propose a NATO enlargement, that was unthinkable at that time.

Bush's Gulf War spectacular was a bold, aggressive effort to pull the French and Germans firmly back under US leadership, but it was a one-off: both states quickly got back to their European businesses. That business was about four main matters. First, responding to American efforts, begun in earnest in March 1991, to prepare for NATO 'out of area' action with a NATO March 1991 decision to build a multinational rapid reaction force. Second, to prepare jointly for a breakthrough at the Maastricht IGC, with the UK isolated on its own on EMU (though with quiet support, no doubt from the USA) and with a joint Italian-British opposition (also quietly but no doubt very vigorously backed by Washington). Thirdly, to maintain the momentum of the WEU's revival by moving towards defining a fairly clear set of 'out of area' military roles for the organisation. And fourthly, taking up, from the early summer, through the EC, a big political challenge: managing the Yugoslav crisis. These tasks were tackled in the context of a more strident than ever French call for the West European states to unite for independence in security and defence affairs.²

On all four of these issues of the second half of 1991, French and German political fire power was impressive. In October 1991 they shook the Anglo-Saxons to the core with their sudden unexpected announcement of their joint decision to establish a full army corps for power projection outside the NATO framework: the Eurocorps. Secondly, while giving Britain an opt out from EMU, they pushed it through Maastricht; at the same time they got the lion's share of the Maastricht Treaty's language on the CFSP and not only defence policy but also defence. Thirdly, The WEU reached agreement of its new external roles in the so-called Petersberg Declaration (from a hotel of that name outside Bonn) in June 1992. And on the fourth issue, Yugoslavia, Germany achieved a stunning victory in an extraordinarily vigorous thrust for EC recognition of Croatian independence.

But that victory turned out to be pyrrhic. For Genscher and Kohl

2. See A. Menon, "From Independence to Co-operation: France, NATO and European Security", *International Affairs* (London) vol 71, No.1, January 1995.

had shocked their EU allies with this ruthless drive for what looked like its Croatian client state. Washington had an opening to strike back. And it did so, like Germany, by using the Yugoslav theatre for Europe-wide political assertion.

Phase 2: The start of Washington's European fight-back, 1992-93

At the start of 1992, the Bush administration began a set of moves that would place the US back at the centre of the European action. First, and of great strategic political importance, it had secured its own man in the leadership of the new Russia, Boris Yeltsin. This former politburo Communist, driven by vengeful hostility to Gorbachev and blind lust for power, swung wildly over to a catastrophic drive for Washington's programme for Russia of bandit capitalism. Over the next years he made every move that Washington could have wished for to plunge Russia from one crisis to another on a slide into Katastroika which entirely transformed the possibilities for a US comeback towards European leadership. Simultaneously he combined increasingly ludicrous bombast with a readiness to play along with Washington's European game-plan.

Against this Russian background, the US began its promotion of NATO's come-back with an expansion of NATO's influence eastwards through a charm offensive, launched first as a reassurance campaign to the USSR in its final death agony. This was the most that Kohl would agree to as far as NATO was concerned. But it was a clever move. Announced in November 1991, the initiative was called the North Atlantic Co-operation Council (the NACC) and it began work in December 1991 just as the USSR disappeared. It invited all the successor states into a structured dialogue with NATO, thus institutionalising NATO links right across the former Soviet Union, though only at the level of political dialogue.³ Russia, like almost all other former Soviet republics, joined.

But the most powerful lever for future US advance was meanwhile being set in place in Bosnia. In December-January 1991-92, the Bush administration persuaded the Izetbegovic government to

3. In May 1997 the NACC was renamed as the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) offering a deeper level of political co-operation.

go for independence despite the fact that both governments knew that this step would lead to civil war. In March 1992 Izetbegovic, who had desperately pleaded with Genscher not to recognise Croatia, since he knew that this would lead to increased pressure in Bosnia for independence and war, drew back. He reached an EC-brokered agreement with the Bosnian Serbs and Bosnian Croats for a confederation. The US again urged him to go for independence and war and he agreed, rejecting the agreement one week after he had made it. He did so evidently because the US must have offered him substantial, perhaps open-ended commitments. US policy makers were well aware of the lethal fiction on which their drive for Bosnian self-determination and unitary independence was based: the fiction that there was a Bosnian nation when in reality Bosnia contained four main political nations, none of which subordinated their nationhood to a Bosnian identity: the Yugoslav Muslim nation, the Serbs of Bosnia, the Croatians of Bosnia and the Yugoslavs of Bosnia.⁴ This American move gave Washington leadership of a new phase of terrible warfare in the Western Balkans, enabling it to polarise European politics allegedly between those supporting Bosnian self-determination and those allegedly supporting an imperial Serb aggression for a Serbian mini-empire.

During 1992 and 1993, the US's Bosnian operation remained fairly low-profile. Britain and France had sent troops into the area under UN auspices and there were continuing mediation efforts conducted by an Anglo-American partnership of David Owen and Cyrus Vance. But in 1994 the US approach would shift both politically and militarily in a new pattern of European alliances.

A sign of the coming turn began to emerge in 1993, coming significantly from the defence bureaucracies of Western Europe. The first and most important sign of a new US ally emerged in the form of the German Defence Minister, Volker Ruhe, who surprised the whole of Europe by emerging as a stalking horse for an absolutely central plank of the US political strategy: NATO enlargement into the Visegrad

4. On this crucial episode which places a very large share of responsibility for the Bosnian atrocities that followed upon the big power politics of the Bush administration, see Peter Gowan, 'The Western Powers and the Yugoslav Tragedy', *New Left Review*, April-May, 1999. See also Susan Woodward, *The Balkan Tragedy* (The Brookings Institution, 1995)

countries. And Ruhe launched this campaign in the teeth of evident hostility from the Auswärtiges Amt and from the Chancellery. Then in the autumn of 1993 the chiefs of the French and German General Staffs agreed to place the Euro-corps under the direct command of NATO's SACEUR (Supreme Allied Command Europe). A path was opening to major US advance.

Phase 3: Washington on the European political offensive

At the January 1994 Brussels North Atlantic Council (NAC), the Clinton administration achieved three major break-throughs. First, it gained agreement in principle for NATO to prepare to enlarge into Poland and the whole Visegrad area. This did not by any means indicate that enlargement was secure - the French, British and parts of the German state were extremely dubious about the plan, to put it mildly. But it was still a huge advance for Washington.

Secondly, this NAC launched the Partnership for Peace (P4P). This achieved two very important things: first, it legitimated a move from purely political dialogue between NATO and Eastern states to direct military co-operation; secondly, it gave NATO the right to decide which states it would approve for P4P and to decide also what kind of co-operative military actions it would engage in. Some at the time saw P4P - Chancellor Kohl's idea - as an alternative to enlargement. But in practice it was a valuable path towards it, as well as a path to deepening military links with the strategically pivotal Ukraine.

Thirdly, the Brussels NAC marked a major defeat for projects to construct multinational military instruments under commands not integrated into NATO. It did so by declaring the new mantra that all forces of NATO member states should be 'separable but not separate' from NATO. This was a major defeat for those in France and Germany who had hoped for an autonomous WEU.

These steps opened the road towards a new US-German political linkage that was to come to fruition in the Bosnian war over the next two years and which, in the process, was almost to lead to France and Britain walking out of NATO. The confrontation between the US and the French and British governments came to a head in November 1994. A campaign in the US for a more aggressive US policy in the Bosnian war won a Congressional victory around the slogan of 'lift and strike' -

lift the arms embargo on the Bosnian Muslims and strike with air power against the Bosnian Serbs. In response, the Clinton administration declared that it would no longer enforce the UN arms embargo on the Bosnian government. But this was not the important thing (since France and Britain knew perfectly well that the US was covertly flouting the embargo anyway). The cause of the clash lay in the fact that US air strikes would make French and British UNPROFOR troops vulnerable to Bosnian Serb attack (since they could be supposed to be guiding the air strikes from the ground). But the conflict with Washington went deeper than that because Washington's major European propaganda offensive projecting the Bosnian civil war as Serb aggression against a united Bosnian nation was threatening to cast the French and British states as appeasers of, if not collaborators with, the hated Serbian who had supposedly masterminded the atrocities in Bosnia - Slobodan Milosevic.

Washington drew back and compromised, but did so in a way that established a joint US-German approach to the war: a military alliance with Tudjman's Croatia, the transformation of French and British military strength, a re-enforcement of the Bosnian Muslim army and then an all out assault on the Bosnian Serb forces. The whole campaign produce a victory and it also enabled the US both to show off its air power and to claim (falsely) that US air power had been responsible for victory. The result was Dayton which involved splitting Bosnia into two 'entities' and placing the Bosnian Muslims in a political embrace with Tudjman's Croatia.

But the result was widely seen as the US government had hoped: a military triumph for the US, with the Clinton administration giving leadership to the whole of Europe. In late 1995, for the first time since 1989, Washington seemed the master of the European political agenda.

In two respects, the triumph was far less impressive than it looked. The US had created an expensive and largely non-viable mess in the Western Balkans without producing just or even stable solutions to any of the real human problems there. And, secondly, even the Dayton stitch-up had only been possible thanks to Washington's having to call Russia into the heart of Europe's major political problem and to institutionalise Russian involvement in the Contact Group. But the impact in Western Europe was what counted.

Phase 4: Compromise Europe: 1996-1999

It is possible to see a compromise programme, around which the three key Western powers could work, as emerging in 1996-97. The compromise sought to reconcile the different projects of the different powers in the following ways:

1) The Clinton administration got its NATO enlargement into Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary in a form that could potentially give it a gate-keeper role between Russia and Germany. The key here was Washington's successful insistence that it reserved the right to establish US bases and/or nuclear weapons on Polish soil. Through this, it had at least the possibility of generating a state of emergency in Russian-German relations.

2) The Clinton administration also gained agreement that all NATO members forces and all their decisions about the use of force should be under NATO and therefore US control. This decision was achieved at the Berlin NAC in July 1996, where it was agreed that the WEU would be banned from undertaking any military actions without unanimous approval by the NAC. The bringing of all NATO members' forces under NATO control had been achieved earlier: in 1993, in relation to the Eurocorps, and in the January 1994 NAC, in relation to the WEU, with the formula of all such forces being 'separable but not separate' from NATO.

3) The Clinton administration also gained agreement in principle to NATO 'out of area' military strikes for so-called Petersberg tasks in NATO's eastern periphery.

4) In exchange for French approval of these concessions, the Berlin NAC agreed to the establishment of a so-called European Security and Defence Identity within NATO, and, along with that, France was given effective entry into NATO structures without formally renouncing its independence. While the actual substance of ESDI seemed extremely limited, two important issues need to be borne in mind: the West

European states were not actually interested in ‘projecting’ their power all over the place in the East: on the contrary, their main thrust continued to be insulationism. What they wanted was to maintain the right to build the basis for what could, in the future, become an effective and perhaps autonomous West European strike force. Secondly, the new arrangements at last gave France a very effective framework for political manoeuvre within the Western alliance: it need no longer be locked into the single choice of building with Germany against the US or alternatively standing in isolation. It could now move between Europeanist initiatives with Germany, and French-American and or French-British initiatives independent of Germany.

This, then was the basis of the compromise in the West. It sustained a framework for developments in East Central and Eastern Europe which unfolded from the early 1990s, which embodied a socio-economic division of the continent which we will briefly survey.

East Central and Eastern Europe under the compromise

Under the compromise, the dynamics of East Central and Eastern European politics during the 1990s have been governed largely by Programme 2: West European-centred mercantilism plus insulationism. The internal economic programmes for East European states promoted both by Programme 2 and by Programme 3 (Europe under US hegemony) differed less in substance than in emphasis. The US was concerned to promote its radical neo-liberal model along, of course, with the interests of its own particular key business sectors. The EU was less concerned with promoting the radical neo-liberal ideological model and more concerned with the variant of market organisation embodied in its Single Market regime, plus its trade policy interests in the region and of course, its own particular key business sectors as defined by its various member states. To achieve their political-economy goals both the West Europeans and the US sought to act swiftly in the 1989-92 period to take maximum advantage of both Soviet disorientation, the disorganisation and fragmentation of the Comecon region’s economy, and the ‘honeymoon’ disorientation and fluidity within the states of the region. Hence the urgency of the demand for Shock Therapy and the refusal to normalise trade relations unless governments swiftly plunged their societies into the vortex of ‘systemic

transformation’.

These overlapping economic programmes 2 and 3 have, of course been a fundamental factor in the shaping of the states of East Central and Eastern Europe. They have had to impose sudden falls in the living standards of the bulk of their populations, including sweeping loss of legal entitlements to pensions and other social benefits, while unleashing a chaotic scramble for control over economic assets on the part of aspiring new capitalists in conditions where huge swathes of industry were thrown into insolvency by the collapse of regional payments systems and trade links. While achieving all these things, they had to surrender their ability to manage freely most of the linkages between their economies and the world market; they had to open their trade regimes, immediately end their control over their current accounts through making their currencies immediately convertible, had to throw open their economic assets to Western companies and found the Western states using conditionalities to prevent them developing national strategies for restructuring their industries.

As a result, the functions of these states during the 1990s were overwhelmingly reduced towards one goal: imposing their authority and control over their domestic populations. The functions which West European states have for bolstering their legitimacy - above all their welfare functions - were not available in the East. They had basically two instruments: the electoral one, which gave populations the satisfaction of throwing out whatever government was in office, and the political argument that all the hardship which the population faced would be rewarded by eventual entry ‘into Europe’, an argument whose force weakened to negligible proportions the further east or south east states were from the EU’s borders. In the name of ‘democracy’ the democratic will of the populations was not to be allowed to influence public policy. The result was to place the cohesion of states and of social and economic life under enormous strains. Only Option 1, a genuine programme for re-unification of the continent in economic, social and political life would have ensured a framework for the building of secure, legitimate social and political orders.

Instead the 1990s has seen the shattering of the economic and social tissues of very many of the countries of Eastern Europe, the rise of gangster capitalism, very grave social and political pathologies and

damaged or even wrecked states. Informed and dispassionate observers, in the West as well as the East, and at all points in the political spectrum should and, in many cases, do recognise and acknowledge the West's responsibility for much of this state of affairs. The most catastrophic state collapses - those in Yugoslavia and in Albania, in both of which the Western powers were deeply implicated - are only the most spectacular cases. The recent disorders in Romania can be explained largely by desperate and reckless attempts by the Romanian government to win entry into the first wave of prospective entrants to NATO and the EU by implementing disastrously unrealistic domestic shocks.

But from the angle of the West European powers, the policy has been extremely cost effective. They have been earning substantial profits from expanding trade, investment, out sourcing and, in the case of Britain, fortunes from East European investment of flight capital in the City of London. (In the case of Russia alone, such flight capital has been running at \$20bn a year or more).

But the problem of shattered social systems and damaged states has another effect as well. It can lead to extreme intra-state tensions leading towards state breakdowns. This at first seemed to produce new opportunities for the EU states. In 1991 the EU's officialdom and many of the leaders of its member states were thrilled at the prospect of taking a lead in the management of Yugoslavia's disintegration. At the same time, the instability in the Western Balkans seemed to offer a role for the EU's main powers involved with the use of military power to enhance political influence: Britain and France. But the EU's chaotic internal rivalries and power plays in its mediation attempts over Yugoslavia's crisis in the second half of 1991 had the effect only of exacerbating the conflict over Croatian secession. And the decision of the US to intervene and take the lead on the Bosnian war placed the British and French states' military forces on the ground in mortal danger. They were incapable of maintaining their own manoeuvrist lines in the Bosnian war against US opposition. That was the end of collective EU efforts to project its military power autonomously in the East. When the Italian government decided to try to manage the blow-out in Albania in 1997, the British and French governments wanted no part of it. There was, by then, no stomach for purely West European collective power projection in the East.

All these issues about strategy towards the East have largely bypassed West European public opinion. It has believed what it was told: that Europe was now whole and free. That the West was generously aiding Eastern Europe with large hand-outs. That unfortunately a lot of nasty politicians had appeared in various East European countries, trouble-makers, anti-democrats etc. And that these characters probably emerged because of the uncivilised cultures revealed in the region when the lid of Communism blew off. If they were sensible they would set up a market, stop being mafias and get on with it.

Such ignorance of the real West-East dynamics on the part of Western public opinion was, however, perfectly understandable. The real operational Western policy was one of those matters too sensitive and difficult to discuss frankly in front of the children.

5. From Compromise to Kosovo

Washington's frustrations with the compromise

There were critical weaknesses still in this compromise from the point of view of the Clinton administration's strategy professionals. The first of these lay in the fact that the continental West European states were not giving NATO full political ascendancy over European political affairs: they were agreeing to the form - the enlargement, excluding Russia, plus the licence to strike out of area - but not the substance: a NATO free hand without a Russian say. This was because the continentals were insisting that NATO could only act under UN Security Council authority. This was maddening from three points of view: first, it was legally correct, thus putting US unilateralism in the wrong. Secondly, it enabled Russia to be brought right back into the heart of European affairs by the back door of the UN Security Council because of the Russian veto. Thus, thirdly, if the French or the Germans wanted to throw sand into the electronics of the US Tomahawks, all they had to do was give the Russians a ring and ask them to do the business of putting their foot down at the Security Council. The dreaded Moscow-Berlin axis could still be in play.

This led straight on to a second problem. The basic value of the struggle to rebuild US leadership over Western Europe lay, for the US, not just in showing how it could pull off Daytons or lead from the (casualty free) military front with its Tomahawks. The point was for West Europeans to feel so dependent upon such US leadership through military-services-rendered that they would bend to US demands for sweeping deals in the political economy field. Europe's subordination was needed as a subordinate ally for rebuilding the dominance of US capitalism in the European and global political economy. Yet Western Europe was becalmed and threatless, feeling no urgent need for the services of the US Air Force.

One possible way out would be to present Europe with a major crisis outside the European theatre, a crisis requiring massive fire power in the interests of the security of European capital accumulation. Another possibility would be a sharp repolarisation of European political life. But one way or another, under the compromise of 1996-1999, the US was still a very long way from regaining hegemonic sovereignty.

Finally, the compromises of the Berlin 1996 and the Madrid 1997 NACs still left open the possibility of a West European build-up towards an independent, unified political will which could eventually define its own political community and sovereignty around the regionalist political idea of Europe as a distinctive socio-economic and political and cultural community (the friend-basis) pitted against enemies of its own choosing and especially being able to define whom it regarded as neutral in the wider world. Even if the business and political elites of Europe have talked in the 1990s of belonging to a so-called Euro-Atlantic Community, none of the ordinary mass citizens, the children, has even heard of such a thing, far less thought that it was there identity.

Not only was the path to this potential outcome not blocked. Western Europe was actually marching down it through the drive to monetary union and the Euro. The Euro would have the tendency to become a world currency, challenging the dollar. Its path towards world currency would run through East Central and Eastern Europe. As these states linked up to the Euro and the ECB, US invigilation of these economies through the IMF would tend to crumble. And the necessity for currencies to be underpinned by politico-military power would naturally tend to produce a dynamic towards both a fully fledged federal EU and a genuinely common foreign, security and military policy either as the EU state itself or as a solid political bloc.

These developments would have the effect of the US losing its hegemonic influence over developments within the political economy of Euroland. The US would also tend to lose its influence in East Central Europe. And even more important, Euroland could become the initiator of a whole new, expanding centre of international capital accumulation, undermining the enormous political leverage open to the US through dollar dominance.

Of course, if one believes that, provided there is an open world economy with secure market rules, there can be complete harmony

between the main capitalist powers over matters of economics, then disagreements about the role of the Euro and the dollar or about trade policy, investment policy and the like are just small technical details. But this vision does not remotely capture the way in which the Clinton administration looks at such questions. For it, US global accumulation required and requires US political hegemony over Western Europe and its eastward orientation.

The potential threat to the dollar from the Euro

The gravity of the potential threat from the Euro to the entire political position of the United States is both great and entirely ignored in all discussion of the current war. The entire globalisation process has, all agree, been centred in the gigantic rise of US centred financial markets and financial operators. This rise to world power of US-centred financial operations has been intimately bound up with Dollar dominance. We have described the resulting Dollar-Wall Street regime at length elsewhere and we will not rehearse that analysis here.¹ We will simply assert that the mutually re-enforcing Wall Street financial forces and US-Treasury orchestrated dollar dances have produced a gigantic political weapon for taking a can opener to one political economy after another around the world, systematically producing financial blow-outs in two thirds of IMF member states since 1980 and thus bringing in the IMF's engineers to globalise and subordinate state's internal arrangements to the interests of mainly US capitalism.

This was the lever which produced the collapse of the various rival development models to the Reaganite globalisation paradigm: the import-substitution model in Latin America crashed in the early 1980s. Poland, Hungary and Yugoslavia were also trapped at that time, thus being consequently dragged towards the crisis of 1989 and all that followed. And the East Asian economies were the latest to fall to the twin yo-yos of a sharp switch by the US Treasury in Dollar-Yen exchange rates followed by the whip-lash of the financial yo-yo: first the flood in of hot money and then the stampede out.

If the managers of the Euro were to make a drive to turn it into a global challenger to the dollar, that would produce and be re-enforced

1. See Peter Gowan, *The Global Gamble* (Verso, 1999)

by a huge growth of Euroland's role as a rival global financial centre. The result could be a catastrophic fall not only in the role of the dollar and Wall Street, but in the US economy and in the political leverage of the US government.

Maastricht was carefully crafted, no doubt under some US diplomatic pressure, to provide no effective institutional answer to who would control the Euro's behaviour on international currency markets. And until the election of the Social Democratic government in Germany there was silence about this issue from EU leaders.

There was also silence from Washington. Or rather there were statements of qualified support for the Euro. This silence/support on such a cardinal political issue is absolutely fascinating. We will return to it. But we will only make one more point on this matter at this stage: there is nothing automatic about the Euro becoming a global challenger to the dollar. It is to a degree a matter of political choice. What is 'automatic' about any currency is that it must be anchored to a strong, firm political/ military base. This is usually the state, anchoring its own currency. But it does not have to be. One powerful state can politically anchor the currency of another state.

A way forward through the French turn and the British response

Yet the compromise of 1996-97 did open the possibility of a new approach for the Clinton administration in its path towards hegemony. It did so thanks to the turn in France policy, embodied in the compromise. France could now integrate increasingly with NATO and thus had the possibility of a new orientation, less dependent upon its purely Europeanist links with Germany. France could, if it wished, tilt policy towards joint ventures with the British and the Americans.

It didn't do so over Iraq. On the contrary, it swung the other way, towards Russia (undoubtedly with tacit German support). Yet in the autumn of 1998, the French government did begin a tilt towards the Anglo-American camp. This shift came as a result of a major new offer to the French government from the Blair government in Britain. The offer was, at first sight, an astonishing one. Blair was declaring that Britain was ready to support a defence role for the European Union. The French seized upon this offer and the result was the so-called St.

Malo Declaration of December 1998. To understand this, we must look briefly at the evolution of British policy in the great game of reconstructing the political shape of Europe in the 1990s.

Throughout the battles of the 1990s, the British strongly and tirelessly supported the American orientation for rebuilt hegemony in Europe, except for one nasty hiccup in the Bosnian war when the British and the French together had to threaten the break-up of NATO to stop the US putting their troops on the ground in Bosnia at risk through US air strikes.

But otherwise Britain's role in support of the US was to play spoiler of all efforts to create a cohesive West European political entity. So the British led the campaign against the Euro and led the campaign against the Franco-German efforts in the foreign policy and defence field. Britain waged a vigorous campaign against the Eurocorps, against the WEU having any autonomous command structure or forces or policy making authority: all such things had to be firmly integrated into NATO. Britain also waged war against the EU having any defence role and against German efforts to have a properly integrated EU system of foreign and security policy making - involving for example, qualified majority voting.

But by 1997 most of these campaigns on the foreign policy and defence front had been won, while the result for the UK was less influence than ever on European politics: the French and the Germans saw the UK as nothing but trouble and dealt directly with the Americans. And, most cruelly, the US saw that Britain's valiant efforts on Washington's behalf left Britain with very little influence and thus Washington should deal directly with the powers with clout: France and Germany. Worst of all, there was one campaign that the British lost hopelessly: that was their campaign against the Euro.

Against this background, Blair made his turn. The British had used the WEU as a way of blocking an independent West European entity centred on the EU. It at the same time had not been intrinsically interested in the WEU at all. So once NATO control over policy-making authority, command structures and forces had been achieved, why should London continue to oppose an EU defence role? The only reason would be German efforts to put the EU defence role into the EU state-building process of integration. But the French opposed that as much as the

British. Thus, why not try to form a joint position with the French, scuppering the WEU, talking up an EU defence role, but keeping it firmly subordinated to NATO and out of state building in the EU? That was the St. Malo offer to the French and it worked. Britain and France together leading Germany in the defence field in co-operation with the United States and drawing in the EU without allowing EU-statist integration.

For Blair and the British state this seemed like a watershed in the whole dismal story of British marginalisation in the European politics of the 1990s. Through the link with France, Britain could really play a leading role in an absolutely central issue of EU politics - foreign and military policy. This could in turn transform the entire problem of getting Britain into the Euro, both by showing EU states that Britain was playing a big role with the French and by showing the same thing to British elites and electorates. No less important, its link with the French would greatly enhance British influence in Washington on European politics for the first time since the Berlin Wall came down. What was needed, from a British point of view, was an issue on which to demonstrate its new role. Somebody must have mentioned: how about Kosovo?

For the French state, the Anglo-French link gave France unparalleled room for political manoeuvre in European affairs. France could use it to 'put Germany in its place', but it could also swing away from it over to a German link on a Europeanist tack. And France could hope that it would thus be the pivot of European international politics: the Germans, the British and even the Americans would in future be wooing France for whatever demarche they wanted to launch. With France against it, Germany could assert its European will only at the risk of appearing to want to Germanise Europe; with France against it, the US could not pull Europe behind its schemes. And without France Britain would be, as before, nothing in European affairs.

But one central question remains: what has been the big European pay-off which the Clinton administration has been hoping to gain from the Yugoslav war.

The Clinton administration's specific political objectives in launching the war

To understand the US approach to this issue, we can look at some of the

speeches of key US officials to elite audiences in Europe in the run-up to the attack on Yugoslavia. Valuable insight is gained in particular from the speech by Strobe Talbott to the German Foreign Policy Society in Munich in February.² The speech linked together four issues: the general US goals in Europe; the arrival of the Euro; the approach of the US to NATO and Kosovo. We will examine this speech at length, but draw upon other speeches of the same sort by other officials to fill out details absent from Talbott's speech.

First, Talbott explained the general US approach. He made three points. First that

in the 21st century, as in the 20th, the well-being of the United States will depend in large measure on what happens in Europe. In other words, the Euro-Atlantic community is indivisible, and the security link across the ocean is unbreakable.

In other words, it is an absolutely vital US interest to create an indivisible and unbreakable Euro-Atlantic Community. But Talbott also indicates that this Euro-Atlantic Community does not yet exist. He indicates this by saying that he sees "a strong Europe as essential to the foundation of a strong Atlantic community". So for him 'Europe' should be judged as a means to the goal of his projected 'Euro-Atlantic Community'. It is not stand-alone.

Talbott's second point about the fundamental US approach is that

the United States recognises and welcomes that "Europe" [Talbott's quotes] is redefining itself; it is not a static phenomenon; it is evolving - in its institutions, in its degree of integration, and in its very identity.

This is not a banality. This means that the US wants Europe's institutions and its very identity to change. If Europeans think they have their identity and basic institutions already established, they are

2. Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott, Remarks to the German Society for Foreign Policy, Bonn, February 4, 1999 (USIA, "Euro-Atlantic Partnership - Talbott Remarks to German Society for Foreign Policy, 2/4/99")

wrong.

Talbott spelt out the same theme in more detail in a second speech in London in early March. He declared:

... most Americans recognise that the phenomenon of “Europe” is not static. Rather, it is organic. In the nature and composition of its institutions, even in its geographical scope, Europe is constantly reinventing itself; it is, in the vocabulary of Euro-speak, both deepening and broadening. As Americans watch the evolution of Europe, we have our own hopes, and sometimes our own apprehensions, about where the process will lead. We want to see Europe define its identity and pursue its interests in a way that not only preserves, but strengthens, the ties that bind your security to ours, and, of course, ours to yours.³

We can gain further insight from Talbott’s assistant, Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs, Marc Grossman. In a speech in Washington in February, he explained his views on how the European Union should be changed as part of the construction of the Euro-Atlantic Community:

Let me first start with what I don’t think. And this is very important, I know, to members of the European Union. But I want to just be really clear about this. We do not believe that the European Union is a transatlantic institution. It’s not. It’s a European institution....But there is a very large transatlantic component to the relationship between the United States and European Union.⁴

So the Clinton administration does not want to turn the EU into a TU, a transatlantic union. Then Grossman slips into an interesting

3. Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott “A New NATO for a New Era” NATO at 50 Conference, The Royal United Services Institute, London, 10 March 1999. (USIA)

4. Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs Marc Grossman, Remarks on the Euro-Atlantic Partnership, Centre for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, DC, 10 February 1999 (USIA, Euro-Atlantic Partnership - Grossman Remarks at CSIS, 2/10/99)

tautology. He says there is a very large transatlantic component in something. We expect him to say the EU. But he doesn't. Instead he comes out with an absurdity: there is a very large transatlantic component in the transatlantic relationship! But he clears this idiocy up in his very next sentence which reads as follows: "So I don't *make the mistake of saying* that we ought to make this into a transatlantic institution." (my emphasis) That clarifies matters: it is a mistake to *say* you want to turn the European union into a transatlantic institution. But it is *not* a mistake *to want to do just that*.

Now at last we are beginning to understand the next concept of Clinton's "Strong European-US Partnership".

We can now return to Talbott's speech. His third general theme is that Germany must, for the US, be the key to establishing the transatlantic community and the reorganised European Union. Then he swiftly moves on to this next big theme: the Euro. Naturally he supports the Euro. But what is fascinating is why he thinks the Euro is a good thing. He quotes the US Ambassador to Germany on this in the following passage:

For us, the standard of success is simple: we want to see Europe define and pursue its safety, its prosperity, its integration and its identity in a way that not only preserves, but that strengthens, the ties that bind North America to Europe. The U.S. government's bottom line on EMU is simple and positive. Ambassador Kornblum stated it clearly in a recent speech: "We Americans are well served when Europe is vibrant economically and is opening its markets and strengthening its connections with the global economy. Europe will prosper from an economic and monetary union that supports these ends - and if Europe prospers, this will help prosperity in the United States."

So Talbott supports the Euro first, insofar as it makes the West European economy vibrant. But we know that the US Treasury considers the Euro will not do that - it will tend towards the opposite; second, insofar as the Euro helps to open European markets, but the Euro has nothing whatever to do with that as Talbott well knows; thirdly insofar as it strengthens the connection with the global economy, but what does that mean? It seems to mean strengthening the EU-US economic

relationship 'in a way that not only preserves, but that strengthens, the ties that bind North America to Europe'. Yet insofar as the Euro becomes a world currency, it does no such thing. It challenges the dollar and threatens a big struggle between Western Europe and the United States.

But the main thing, says Talbott, that he likes about the Euro is the way the Europeans have introduced it. He singles out four features:

First, the plan is ambitious; it is a venture worthy, in its essence and in its scale, of the opportunities at hand. Second, the Euro is based on the premise that common interests and common challenges require common solutions - that is, collective and cooperative action. Third,..... [it] has required each of those national leaderships to make hard political choices.... and to engage in hard political work, especially in marshalling support from their constituencies. Fourth, the Euro will have to prove itself in concrete ways; it must make sense, not just in theory, but in practice.

And Talbott likes these four features of the Euro so much that he is determined to apply them to his approach to NATO!

In these four features, your introduction of the Euro has a lot in common with the work we must do together in the transformation of NATO.

So Talbott moves straight from the Euro to the US response via NATO. The US would respond to the Euro also in an ambitious way on a big scale and using the opportunities at hand - Kosovo. It would demand on this collective and co-operative action. West European leaders would have to make hard political choices on Kosovo, especially to marshal their domestic constituencies. And NATO will prove to be under US hegemony not just in theory but in practice.

Talbott then rounds off his speech on Kosovo by waxing lyrical over how the US has managed to draw the EU and the OSCE into very valuable subordinate operational elements in the US campaign build up towards a solution to the Kosovo issue.

Let us add two further points about US goals in this war. One of the consequences of the attack on Yugoslavia has been that the US has been able to use its P4P military collaboration links with all the states

in the region as the basis for massively deepening its security relationship with these states. When we add to that the new East Central European members of NATO, we discover that in this war it is the US which has suddenly reappeared as the key military-political partner of the entire European space between the EU and Russia. This is a stunning political transformation. The EU states and especially Germany had, only yesterday, enjoyed a steady rise to dominant influence in the entire region. At one fell swoop, the US can hope to transform that. And all this was made possible in the first instance by P4P. No wonder that Grossman tells us,

I must say that I agree completely with General Scowcroft that I think that PFP has been one of the single, most successful programs that anybody has run over the last large numbers of years.”⁵

We must appreciate what this means. The US now links itself with the inner sanctums of the region's core executives. Such inner sancta deal with the really fundamental issues of state orientation, such as their core external military-political and monetary financial linkages with a big power. If the Euro is to develop as an international currency it will march down that road through expanding into East Central and Eastern Europe. Or it would have done. But will the new hegemonic partner of these states now approve of that?

The other final question we must consider is what plan the Clinton administration has for turning the EU into a transatlantic body. Here Grossman is interesting. One can infer from his remarks that he is proposing to introduce a new organising principle into the EU by small steps that link the new principle with the lives of EU citizens in a few areas:

We need, I think, to think about this relationship as one of the keys to the U.S.-European relationship of the future. And one of the most interesting things about it is the direct impact on the lives of our citizens, jobs, trafficking in women and children. The kinds of things that Europe and the United States can do

5. Grossman, *ibid.*

together. These are very important points, whether we're working together, as I say, to stop trafficking in women and children or dealing with Korean nuclear reactors; or stopping the drug trade in the Caribbean. These are important things to people's publics, and I think that would be a very important part of this relationship in the 21st century.⁶

Thus we can expect that after the Yugoslav war is over there will be a new campaign over trafficking in women and children.⁷

With these goals, then, the NATO-centred Anglo-French link provided the Clinton administration with the basis for advancing its drive for consolidated hegemonic leadership. That required the US to be able to use its fantastic air power in the European theatre and it could not politically do that on its own. With the Anglo-French buttress, it could drag the rest of the EU into supporting the use of American air power. Simultaneously, it could send a signal to the world that the new Euro was actually just a regional currency under US political hegemony. And over the longer term the US retained its political manoeuvrability: tomorrow, in the millennium round of trade negotiations, it could lead with the (chastened) German government as its key European partner. And it could even have the option of the Russian card at some stage in the future, a card which it could play against any West European monkey-business.

Here, then, was the origin of the Yugoslav war coalition. No sooner was the ink dry on the St. Malo Declaration than EU-NATO official links were established. Madeleine Albright had drawn up her draft agreement for a Rambouillet conference in such a way that she would give Milosevic an offer he could not accept. The German government was side-stepped by making France and Britain the co-chairs of the Rambouillet conference and these two governments were lined up to go for war without UN Security Council authority - a major

6. *ibid.*

7. An intriguing sign that Anthony Giddens is acquiring a taste for high politics was the fact that in his question and answer session in his so-called Reith Lecture in Washington on April 23rd, he highlighted this issue of children as a field where state sovereignty ought to be dispensed with by the Atlantic powers.

shift in the entire attitude of the French government towards the international system.

We will not discuss the actual conduct of the war. The Clinton administration could play the war by ear for three possible types of war, depending on how the war events went: a gesture war, a show-casing war or a war for hegemonic leadership. The gesture war is what we are told was intended: that it was to be a seven day war to show that the US air force can be cheered on by 19 NATO states to bring Serbia to its knees as a dazzling backdrop to the Washington NAC at the end of April, a summit designed to really constitutionally anchor the new NATO. Secondly, it could be a showcasing war, to demonstrate to every state on earth just how much casualty free destruction the US Air Force is capable of. As for a war for US hegemony, that is something altogether more serious and meaty. That is the full Monty and it seems to be the one which the US has been driving for. It is ready, if necessary, for a deep friend-enemy split along the river Bug, a Russian riposte to the NATO drive, its rebuttal followed by a military victory in the Western Balkans leading to long-term confrontation there together with a new Cold War with Russia. The latter could start with the struggle for Ukraine, a really dramatic contest.

We shall see.

Boonesbury

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6. Conclusion

We will restrict our conclusions to four issues. Some thoughts on NATO's way of approaching the legitimization problem in launching the war; some reflections on alternative IR approaches to explaining the NATO attack; some thoughts on the likely outcome of the US programme for Europe under its hegemonic leadership. And finally some thoughts on normative questions raised in this text.

The legitimization problem

The question as to what role human rights play in this war for NATO is an important and interesting one. It takes us into two important areas. The first is a problem that NATO leaders have grappled with throughout the 1990s: how to legitimate NATO's turn to 'out of area' aggressive action? Legitimation is needed for *the mass audience* in the NATO countries: the elite citizens of NATOLand can grasp intuitively what 'out of area' aggression is good for - ensuring a disciplined international accumulation process centred on their multinationals, with the disciplines being imposed on populations by their states in line with Atlantic political economy and regime requirements. But the mass audience even in NATOLand itself could find such 'out of area' strikes disturbing. After all, where is the direct pay-off for them when they are not threatened themselves by an enemy that could invade them? This is the first problem.

The second area is how much domestic *rational-intellectual legitimation* matters? And this question leads to two others: first, can the mass audience of NATOLand not be information-managed rather than having to be provided with solidly based-means-ends rational explanation? And the second is whether, if large parts of the mass audience cannot be managed, it really matters?

We will look first at the NATO search for rational legitimations for the mass citizenship. The problem here can be stated as follows: for the mass citizens NATO, as an out of area strike force, has to be legitimised as being somehow *necessary: both worth paying for and worthy of paying for*. The old Cold War NATO could be legitimise as necessary via the supposed Soviet threat to mass citizens of the West. But as Paul Cornish has pointed out, the new NATO will have to be legitimated as “an internally rationalised ‘alliance of choice’ rather than as an externally rationalised ‘alliance of necessity’”.⁸ But one way round this problem is to remember the bifurcated citizenship: an alliance of *pragmatic choice* for the elite citizens can be rationalised as some kind of *necessity* for the mass citizens. For example, a *moral necessity* (*imperative*) or a *civilisational necessity*.

And here, Cornish explains, Huntington was very appealing with his concept of ‘a clash of civilisations’. His idea found “a ready audience in NATO, and among Western military audiences more generally...” This is intriguing since on the face of it, Huntington’s analysis is rubbish and has been torn to shreds by lots of scholars, particularly because he says that civilisations are starting to fight each other when we can all see that states do it, not civilisations. And also because he posits civilisations like, say, the Moslem world, as being politically unified. But such criticisms entirely miss Huntington’s point - they are a mass citizen reading of Huntington which assumes his idea is cognitive - a statement about the facts.

But NATO chiefs understood Huntington’s elite code language: he writing was not cognitive at all, it was a normative programme for solving the problem the elite had with mass legitimation of the new NATO. Huntington was saying, let’s mobilise the mass citizens behind the new NATO’s military operations by mobilising them *for a civilisational war*. That was the point.

It was unfortunately a point that NATO’s Secretary General did not fully grasp in a sophisticated enough way in the mid-1990s. Obviously thrilled by Huntington, in early 1995 Willy Claes announced that “Muslim fundamentalism is now as big a threat to the alliance as Communism once was.” This was foolishly crude. NATO, after all, has only fought two wars, both in the 1990s and both in the name of Muslim nations which must surely have a few fundamentalists in their midst

just as all religions do: the Bosnian Muslims and the Kosovar mainly Muslim Albanians.

But Cornish adds: “Nevertheless, Huntington’s thesis has remained a respected point of reference in Western military circles...”¹ So we can see, in the current military campaign against Yugoslavia.

Claes had missed Huntington’s three key real points: first, you must convince the mass citizens of NATO land that values fundamental to their civilisation are under attack and only NATO can do something about it; but second, and more subtly, you must suggest that the source of this attack lies in an alien culture, an alien civilisation. The key thing here is mass suggestion, not Claes idiotically attacking a whole religious movement head on. And Huntington is then offering the elite audience a third programmatic goal, namely, through a series of NATO operations to generate in NATOland a growing conviction that there is indeed a civilisational divide which is becoming a Friend-Enemy divide in potentiality or actuality.

The current NATO military operation on Yugoslavia is precisely an experiment in this kind of operation: first there is the fundamental challenge to fundamental civilisational values: there is genocide, ethnic cleansing, rape, atrocities. Furthermore, as Blair explained, this is happening on what he called ‘Europe’s door step’: notice, not in Europe, but right on the doorsteps of our own home. Europe is our home because it is our civilisation.

Why is Serbia on Europe’s door-step and not in Europe? Because what is going on there is not just ‘Milosevic’ it is the Serbs. This is the suggestion. It has to be, because NATO has to bomb the Serb people - that is what US air power is all about - and this must be legitimised. So they are different. We care about the Kosovar Albanians because we see their suffering faces or dead bodies on the TV. But NATO can brush aside criticisms of killings of Serbs on a train or wherever because they are different, alien, Orthodox and Balkan, and of a different culture.

And the war is also producing the Huntington dialectic: We see Russia outraged, Russians outraged. Why do they not support our

1. Paul Cornish, *Partnership in Crisis. The US, Europe and the Fall and Rise of NATO*, Chatham House Papers, Royal Institute of International Affairs, (London, 1997) p 9.

civilisational values? We see them on TV at their orthodox churches, we hear their intellectuals talking of war. Why? Because of their civilisational link with their Serbian orthodox South Slav brothers, of course. So we sense a new division opening up in Europe, a civilisational-political split being generated by the NATO war. Thus does Huntington's advice to NATO elites for mass citizen legitimation turn itself into a brilliant piece of positivist prediction of the emerging facts for Huntington's mass citizen academic audience.

Let us be clear, though. This is subtle work. One cannot go around like Claes denouncing other cultures, Slav/orthodox or Muslim. One must leave that up to the *Sun* and the *Mirror*. No, we are above all that, we stand for universalist cosmopolitan values. It is just that over there in the east the most energetic forces don't: they are Slavophile or Muslim or whatever fundamentalists. They must be brought to their senses by humane bombing. This is a *fundamental necessity*, a moral and civilisational imperative.

The whole approach fits very well with Carl Schmitt's 1920s and 1930s concepts of politics as friend-enemy relations and of political sovereignty. It is thus not very new. Indeed, it was the basic approach to mass legitimation used by Germany's government in the second world war. People so easily forget how Germany's government rallied people across Europe behind German leadership in the great European coalition of states against the Soviet Union. That was legitimated essentially culturally, civilisationally - to preserve European civilisation from Asiatic barbarism and, of course, Judeo-Bolshevism. It was a civilisational war for European culture but with a universalist veneer as well - wiping all the Communists and Jews from the face of the entire planet. It is of course true that there was a strong race theory underlying the friend-enemy cultural division. But the effort at fundamentalist mass mobilisation for the values of a culture was basically the same technique. It worked well politically then and it works well now.

We are **not** of course suggesting that current NATO elite's *real* goals are for a civilisational war. They are about rational, pragmatic goals such as political frameworks for maximising state's power and its capital class's accumulation potential. Hitler was different: he really believed in all this nonsense about civilisational wars, even if his erudite advisers like Carl Schmitt did not. He was after genocide. The NATO

leaders are of course not. The fact remains, though, that the legitimation technique can now as then *successfully legitimate* wholesale mass killings of hundreds of thousands and even millions. Anglo-American use of the blockade as a weapon of mass destruction, killing over a million Iraqis, mainly women and children, according to UNICEF, is proceeding smoothly at the time of writing; its legitimation is thoroughly anchored in the British and American mass citizenry.

Alternative theories of what has generated the attack on Yugoslavia

Many analysis are offering an alternative real explanation for the current Yugoslav war. Some are West Balkan-specific. A realist version of this approach would suggest that some, at least, of the NATO states had a strategic stake in Serbia/Kosovo leading them to push for war. Yet there is no evidence of this. None of the NATO powers except Italy, Greece, Turkey and Hungary have strategic state interests in the Western Balkans. And of these four, only one - Turkey - is an enthusiast for this war. Both Greece and Italy have had to be bounced and dragged into the NATO campaign and even if some on the Hungarian right still hanker after annexing Voivodina from Yugoslavia, the bulk of Hungarian elite opinion is in reality in a state of shock over this war and must feel that Hungarian security is being seriously undermined by it. And it would be ludicrous to suggest that Turkey has led its 19 allies single-handed into a Balkan adventure. Indeed, as far as the US and the main West European powers are concerned, their one major strategic interest in the area is to prevent a war between Greece and Turkey, while the NATO Yugoslav campaign is producing extreme military tension between these two powers as the air forces of both are buzzing each other daily in the Eastern Aegean.

Another possible realist explanation is that the leading NATO powers are perhaps engaged in a new battle for *spheres of influence* in South Eastern Europe with Russia, perhaps sparked by the arrival of Primakov to power, leading NATO to fear a military alliance between Serbia and Russia in the Balkans. Yet there is no evidence whatever for that and if there had been such a risk, Washington would surely have leaked the information out by now. Russia was instead working with NATO in the Contact Group right up to the moment when the war was

launched. And apart from Serbia all the other states of South East Europe were in NATO's hands for the asking, queuing up to join the alliance. In the context of NATO's enlargement decision, Russia's President Yeltsin had declared his intention to form of military alliance with Bulgaria but that turned out to be empty bombast and, in any event, a combination of the IMF and financial instability had removed Bulgaria's Socialist government and produced a new pro-American government there as in Romania. Both states are furnishing NATO with military facilities during the war.

It is just possible that the USA is interested in anchoring its own political dominance over South East Europe via this war. It could do so via turning war-time co-operation into agreements to establish US bases in various parts of Central and South East Europe. The political function of such bases would be to stake out the countries concerned as within an American rather than a West European sphere of influence. But, as yet, we have not seen much evidence of such an intention.

Again, NATO can hardly be said to have significant imperial economic and political objectives in the Western Balkans. There are the potentially valuable mines in northern Kosovo and no doubt the bombing of all the industrial plants, infrastructure and bridges in Serbia is whetting appetites among transatlantic construction companies and multinationals for profitable post-war business. But it is surely absurd to argue that this has prompted the NATO action. Western capital has far easier ways of transferring ownership of such assets into their own hands than launching a war. As for the idea of taking over the Western Balkans with a collective or US set of protectorate colonies, that is absolutely the very last thing that the US and its allies could wish for, although they are being dragged into it by mistake in this war.

Liberal theories of the war as being driven by domestic public opinion in the NATO states rather than by statist power interests cannot be taken seriously since causality so obviously went the other way around: the currently strong mass citizen political will around 'human rights' has not shaped the will of its state: exactly the reverse. The mass-citizen will has been *formed by the NATO states*. A dispassionate research on US politics on the eve of the war shows that public opinion was out of it. Hence Clinton's call the day before it started for people to find out where Kosovo was. Hence too the absence of Congressional

pro-war leaderships.

In short, we return to where we began, with President Clinton on 23 March: A 'strong European US partnership' is what this Kosovo thing is *all about*. We just have to learn how to understand the language of all that to see what he means.

The US European programme: internally Oakshott, but led by Carl Schmitt

The Clinton administration programme for the EU entails turning it into an Oakshottian 'civil association' in which the governance mechanism has nothing to do with democratic will formation of any kind. The EU is united by no common, collective enterprise whatever. It is simply a framework for regulating capitalist accumulation. These features are already strongly evident within the EU. But large political forces in Europe have hoped that the EU is in a continuing process of integration towards a fully fledged democratic federal state. The US programme freezes the EU as it is, indeed it pushes it further down the Oakshottian path.

This, however, does not mean that the EU will lack a political sovereign. It will most certainly have a fully fledged sovereign: a Schmittian sovereign in the form of a US-led NATO constantly defining and redefining the friend-enemy relations of the EU community - in reality a particular kind of transatlantic community. At one moment the friend-enemy identity of the EU community will be 'human rights versus Milosevic', at another it will be 'children's rights versus whoever', and so on and so on. The EU, thus, in its external orientation will not at all be an Oakshottian Civil Association. It will be a Schmittian enterprise state. The sovereign will be the US in shifting combinations with Germany at one point and France-UK at other points. The result could be a very enterprising EU community indeed, striking with military power all over the place, deep into the Persian Gulf of even the Far East, not to speak of Eastern Europe and Africa.

The Atlantic community will be a peculiar one because it will only exist in the EU, not in the US. The US community will be a fully fledged national community which will not remotely feel itself to be tied to EU-Europe.

This is a very attractive programme for large parts of big capital

within the EU. With the political cap on the EU being supplied by the US rather than by either political federalism or by a West European political bloc, the only powerful policy input into the EU commission black box will come from big capital.

The leaders of European social democracy seem ready to go along with it. Only Oscar Lafontaine stood out. The fact that he did so is important. But will he be prepared to rally parts of the base of European social democracy for another vision and programme? We do not know.

Normative issues

The European left is faced by two big normative issues by the imperial manoeuvrings described in this article: a defensive one and a positive one.

We have to admit that the Anglo-American imperial leaders have, for the moment, snatched a banner from the Left: the banner of human rights. They have done so by means of a simple trick: making us forget that human rights in practice require a material basis if they are actually to exist - they require a viable economic development model; a state capable of asserting its authority positively, through demonstrating its capacity to deliver a better life to the majority of its population; a state capable of feeling itself in a secure enough international environment to relax authoritarian tendencies and military budgets. Yet these are precisely the preconditions for human rights which the new imperialism of globalisation is destroying. We have entered the era of a globalisation which produces states under strain in the south, damaged states, states in crisis, states exploding, states convulsing into civil war. Political forces in states trying to hold the show on the road in the interests of their domestic capitals turn to whatever they can lay their hands on to shore up state authority: often scape-goating minorities works for a while. Then the Atlantic imperial centres can decide who to strike at, who not, depending on geo-economic and geo-political interests or upon the necessities thrown up by the byzantine power struggles within the imperial bloc. At this point, human rights mobilisation for war takes place.

Globalisation imperialism is systematically destroying the basis for human rights. That has been the whole tragic story of the peoples of Yugoslavia. It must be stopped.

But that raises the second normative issue: how can the left move forward to stop it? The starting point is those on the left who have taken a stand in principle against this war. That rules out the leaders of Social democracy but not at all their members. But those parties on the left which have opposed the war, the PDS, Izquierda Unida and Refundazione Comunista and others, could form an alliance for a new start. So could Oscar Lafontaine, if he were to come forward with a positive programme.

That programme in Europe would have to break not only with the American plan for Europe but with the quasi-alternative plan of the current EU leaders outside the Anglo-American camp. It should be a programme for a United Europe, the whole of Europe including Russia and Ukraine. It should be a socialist developmental programme that opposes neo-liberalism, the mercantilism of the EU and the new international globalisation imperialism of the increasingly unified Atlantic imperialism we now see attacking Yugoslavia. It would be a programme not only for Human Rights but for the Causes of Human Rights. It is a tall order, a long struggle. But this war marks the start. It is a new, fundamental dividing line.

A real solution in the Western Balkans

A solution to the plight of the various Albanian and Slav communities in the region also requires an entirely new political framework of a regional kind which breaks with the Western powers' drive in the region in the 1990s which has, in effect, fragmented the populations into small, and often largely non-viable statelets. Bosnia survives only as a paper state which is in reality a NATO protectorate. Macedonia survives through US determination to prevent the Albanian minority there from either separating or gaining a federal state structure. A separate Kosovo would have to be a NATO protectorate, not least to prevent a KLA government from achieving the goal of a Greater Albania. The Serbian population is divided into the Srbska Republika 'entity' and in what will be a defeated and embattled Serbia. Montenegro's future is at risk. And every one of these statelets must devote desperately meagre resources to large military budgets while most of their populations cling to nationalist leaderships in the hope of some minimal safety. The only genuine winner among the states in the Yugoslav theatre (apart from

Slovenia, which has escaped the scene) is Croatia, thanks to its great power support. Yet Tudjman's triumphs have only increased his appetite for new conquests, in particular a slice of Bosnia which he has already, de facto, swallowed.²

The search for a new regional political framework which can provide all the Albanian and the Slav communities with a new unity and security must involve a new programme for Balkan confederation or federation. And such a new project can come only from social and political movements among the peoples of the region. Before the current NATO aggression against the region's largest nation it was still perhaps conceivable that the Western powers could have gained sufficient trust to have had a semblance of being a 'pouvoir neutre' that might encourage such an endogenous popular movement for reconciliation and partial re-unification. Now that is impossible in the short or even medium term. Any such endogenous movement of reconciliation will now have to repudiate this NATO aggression to have any credibility.

Some may imagine that the NATO powers may actually take responsibility for the lives of the people of the region and may itself engineer a new politics and a new start. But this is to completely misunderstand the basic premise of the whole operation of the Western powers in the Yugoslav theatre since the late 1980s. That premise is that not a single one of the NATO powers has a vital state interest in ex-Yugoslavia. For the European Union their only vital interest is containment of conflict, above all containment of refugee movements. The US does not even have that stake in the region's future. Taking responsibility and re-engineering for a secure and better future means creating a year zero and a 10 year occupation of the region as was done by the US in Germany from 1945 to 1955. It would mean occupying Serbia and turning the whole region into a protectorate and starting from scratch. This is a utopian dream. The only reason the US was prepared to send any ground troops to the region for this Kosovo operation was because the EU states refused to put troops into Kosovo, without US troops present, for fear that the US would turn such troops into hostages by engaging in one of its bombing orgies. Of course, the

2. Brooke Unger has made this point forcefully. See his "The Balkans: The Two Culprits", *The Economist*, 24 January 1998

NATO powers will need to put on a show of 'doing something' for the region in the aftermath of the conflict for the sake of domestic opinion management. But their entire record and inner nature dictates that 'doing something' will amount to nothing significant in the medium-term.

But a NATO 'victory' in this war should achieve the Clinton administration's central objective in waging the war: the winning of Western Europe's political systems over to US leadership of the new, aggressive NATO. After all, the political elites of all the main parties of Western Europe now find themselves justifying, day in and day out, the vital necessity and enormous human value of the new NATO: Western Europe is being won to the idea that attacking damaged sovereign states is good, shattering their military forces, infrastructures and economies is good, ignoring the UN Charter and the checks built into the UN Security Council structure is good; marginalising and excluding a currently weak Russia is good; humiliating and ignoring the interests of the largest nation in former Yugoslavia, the Serbs, is vital. And we Europeans could never have achieved all these things without the generous leadership of the United States.

