

**ATLANTIC DIPLOMACY TRANSFORMED:
FROM THE "TRANSATLANTIC DECLARATION" (1990)
TO THE "NEW TRANSATLANTIC AGENDA" (1995)**

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A noteworthy change in *diplomatic form* has occurred in the dialogue between the United States and the nations of the European Union. The last of the classic formulations of official Atlantic consensus between Washington and Brussels may well turn out to have been the DECLARATION ON EC-US RELATIONS, or TRANSATLANTIC DECLARATION (TAD), that was signed on November 23, 1990, on the margins of the Paris Summit of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. That text was essentially a political statement made in view of the radically changing situation in Europe at the end of the Cold War. It basically did two things: it endowed the US-EC relationship "with long-term perspectives" and it set up an "institutional framework for consultation."¹ It was, like most such statements (those of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization as well), very much a top-down document. Phrased mostly in abstract and value-laden language, the Transatlantic Declaration was a directive from the highest level of politics to lower levels of government and to the American and European publics. Its basic message was the renewal, in the post-Cold War context, of a sense of transatlantic solidarity.

The Declaration identified three broad areas of US-EC "partnership": cooperation in multilateral and bilateral trade; scientific and educational exchanges; and unity in meeting the new transnational challenges of combatting terrorism, narcotics, crime, environmental degradation, and weapons proliferation. Although not a document having mainly an

¹Transatlantic Declaration on EC-US Relations, November 23, 1990, Directorate General for External Relations, Unit for Relations with the United States, Commission of the European Communities.

operational purpose, the TAD did specify the "procedures for consultation" that were to bring US and European Community leaders and officials together, more regularly and, it was hoped, more intimately. Europeans then suspected that the United States government wanted, in effect, a "seat" of some kind in European decision making -- at the very least, a *droit de regard*. Their very concern about this U.S. interest was a measure of the new American respect for the European Community, in light of the reduction of the Russian military threat and the probable decline in the relative importance of NATO -- hitherto the main instrument of transatlantic "alliance." The idea of transatlantic "community," it now seemed to some Americans as well as Europeans, could replace alliance-thinking as the dominant mode of US-European cooperation. So it seemed at the time.

The Transatlantic Declaration did mark a new maturity -- a relationship of equality -- in US-European relations as well as the incipient institutionalization of them by prescribing regular high-level meetings. "Both sides are resolved," the Declaration stated, "to develop and deepen these procedures for consultation so as to reflect the evolution of the European Community and of its relationship with the United States." The text did not, however, predetermine, except in three broad categories mentioned, what the new Atlantic partners actually should talk about. It was meant mutually to inspire, to recommit, and to link, but not to mobilize the American and European populations behind anything in particular. It did not, in itself and by itself, *do* very much.

By marked contrast, the NEW TRANSATLANTIC AGENDA (NTA) and its longer companion text, the JOINT ACTION PLAN (JAP), that were approved at the US-EU Summit meeting in Madrid on December 3, 1995, outlined a practical program. "The key

idea," as European Commission Directorate General I officials Horst Krenzler and Astrid Schomaker described the intended impact of these two Madrid texts on the new US-European partnership, "was to focus together on a number of joint actions and to move the relationship from one of consultation to one of joint action."² Cast for the most part in instrumental and concrete, rather than normative and generic language, the NTA and JAP differ, very significantly, from previous US-EU joint communications.

Some knowledgeable participants and observers, such as former US National Security Council Director for European Affairs Anthony Gardner, who was himself involved in drafting the Madrid texts, view this remarkable change in the style and form of the US-European political dialogue entirely positively. The New Transatlantic Agenda, as he has written, "differs from previous platitudes about common transatlantic values and traditions; rather than being inspired by nostalgia, it is a concrete blueprint for action" Gardner further explains his positive assessment of the NTA/JAP by pointing out that, besides being forward-looking, it responds "to the fundamental truth of today's interdependent world that many of the most important challenges facing the United States and the European Union cannot be addressed satisfactorily by either acting alone." These challenges -- international crime, terrorism, environmental destruction, poverty and disease -- are "transnational in scope and require human and financial resources which exceed those at the disposal of

²Horst G. Krenzler and Astrid Schomaker, "A New Transatlantic Agenda," European Foreign Affairs Review 1, no. 1 (July 1996): 9. The authors, at the time of writing this article, were, respectively, Director General of Directorate General I-B, External Economic Relations, and Administrator, Unit for Relations with the USA, Directorate General I-B.

Washington or Brussels at a time of increasing budgetary austerity."³ The American and European governments were in the same boat, an Atlantic boat.

Others have not been so enthusiastic about the new format, if it may be so called, of transatlantic diplomacy. One such person is former US Secretary of State James A. Baker III, who himself had helped to formulate the Transatlantic Declaration, the TAD, on behalf of the United States government five years earlier. Baker's own efforts during that time to renew the transatlantic relationship in the changed international context, including his landmark 1989 Berlin "New Atlanticism" speech, were historically extraordinary.⁴ In conversation with him recently about this subject I said, "You must be proud" of how the Transatlantic Declaration has developed into the New Transatlantic Agenda. "I am," he replied firmly, but then added, of the NTA, "It's a laundry list."⁵ In truth the New Transatlantic Agenda and Joint Action Plan -- with its four main chapter headings of "I. Promoting Peace and Stability, Democracy and Development Around the World," "II. Responding to Global Challenges," "III. Contributing to the Expansion of World Trade and Closer Economic Relations," and "IV. Building Bridges Across the Atlantic" -- contain a disparate set of some 150 specific proposals. I can imagine that Secretary Baker, without

³Anthony Gardner, "Motivations and Long-Term Significance of the New Transatlantic Agenda," ECSA Review [European Community Studies Association] 10, no. 1 (Winter 1997): 11.

⁴On Secretary Baker's contributions in reformulating the terms of transatlantic cooperation as the East-West conflict came to an end, see Alan K. Henrikson, "The New Atlanticism: Western Partnership for Global Leadership," Journal of European Integration/Revue d'intégration européenne 16, nos. 2-3 (Winter/Spring, Hiver/Printemps 1993): 165-191.

⁵Author's conversation with former Secretary Baker at Tufts University, Medford, Massachusetts, October 30, 1996. He was there to deliver the annual Issam Fares Lecture on *Middle Eastern affairs*

presuming to know exactly what he thought, viewed the NTA/JAP documents as lacking in classical brevity and even in statesmanlike dignity. More profoundly, he may have seen the NTA/JAP as being largely devoid of historical vision, moral content, or even political strategy. His own highly political style of statecraft is well expressed in the title and substance of his memoir, The Politics of Diplomacy.⁶ Very possibly, it is this last element -- a genuine political strategy -- that is most damagingly absent in the combined NTA/JAP initiative of the United States and European Union. Time will tell whether such a strategy was called for in the relatively stable circumstances of 1995.

The processes of deliberation initiated at the Madrid US-EU Summit are anything but high-political ones. The NTA/JAP was an organizationally produced, institutional artifact. The officials who crafted the texts, and probably the Atlantic political leaders themselves, saw them as fitting into "the overall vertical structure" of the US-EU relationship.⁷ The processes described therein may not be, however, capable of being held entirely or firmly under "vertical" political or bureaucratic control. The NTA/JAP opened the floodgates of participation, not so much from the bottom (or "grassroots," as officials are wont to say) but, rather, from outside. A powerful lateral entry into Atlantic politics occurred in 1995. The very axis of the system's structure was thereby turned. The resulting structure of transatlantic decision making is thus, in a sense, less vertical than horizontal, and it may remain so if, as I predict, the passage from 1990 to 1995 indicates a new direction in the

⁶James A. Baker III, The Politics of Diplomacy: Revolution, War, and Peace, 1989-1992 (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1995).

⁷Krenzler and Schomaker, "A New Transatlantic Agenda": 27.

way Atlantic diplomacy is done.

The particular agent of this transformation was the Transatlantic Business Dialogue (TABD). The TABD was a brainchild of the late US Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown, who sensed, rightly, that business was getting ahead of governments in developing innovative ideas about international trade liberalization. Moreover, he was concerned about Congressional criticism of his department, including even threats to abolish it, and may have considered that he could use increased backing from corporate leaders in his fight. He may have had the further motivation of wanting to mobilize the business community in Europe against the European Commission with regard to certain issues in dispute between the US government and the Commission. European Commissioners Sir Leon Brittan and Martin Bangemann, who liked Secretary Brown's idea of a top-level American-European business dialogue, may well have had a comparable motivation, hoping to bring the pressure of US multinationals to bear on the Clinton administration in support of some EU positions.

As a result of this high-level instigation, approximately one hundred chief executive officers of American and European corporations met initially in Seville in November 1995, just prior to the US-EU Summit in Madrid early the next month. The co-chairmen of this first TABD conference in Seville were, for the US side, Paul Allaire, chairman of the Xerox Corporation, and Alex Trotman, chairman of the Ford Motor Company, and, for the European side, Jürgen Strube, head of BASF, and Peter Sutherland, head of Goldman Sachs International and, formerly, of the staff of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in Geneva. This was to be a performance with a star-studded cast. In the brightness of the gathering, the traditional American and European trade associations, such as

the American Chamber of Commerce in Brussels, were somewhat cast into darkness.

Although American and European officials themselves probably would wish to qualify the following assessment, it can be argued that the TABD became, both in the planning and in the implementation phases of some of the most important parts of the Madrid Summit program, the driver of the US-EU dialogue, particularly in regard to its most distinctive product, the "New Transatlantic Marketplace" (NTM). The particular focus of the NTM, as distinct from the hitherto much-discussed idea of a "Transatlantic Free Trade Agreement" (TAFTA) which was scarcely mentioned by the Madrid negotiators, was the progressive reduction or the *non-tariff* barriers inhibiting the flows of goods, services, and capital across the Atlantic. To most of the leaders of American and European multinational corporations, tariff levels in themselves, already considerably lowered by multilateral negotiations held under the auspices of the GATT and the World Trade Organization (WTO) which succeeded it, were of less serious concern than technical and regulatory impediments -- duplicative and cumbersome inspection requirements, and the like. Illustrative of the new kind of international agreement sought, and shaped, by big businessmen are the recent WTO Information Technology Agreement and, in the US-EC bilateral context, the Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) on the coordination of standards for testing pharmaceuticals, telecommunications equipment, medical devices, and other products preliminarily approved by the United States and European Union at their Summit in The Hague on May 28, 1997.⁸

⁸Alison Mitchell, "President Urges Aid for East in Spirit of the Marshall Plan," The New York Times, May 29, 1997. The MRA was formally signed by Sir Leon Brittan and Charlene Barshefsky, the US Trade Representative, at the start of the Summit of the Eight, June 20-22, 1997, in Denver, Colorado. Bruce Barnard and Henry Dubroff, "Denver Summit of the Eight," Inside Europe 5, no. 7 (July-August 1997), in Europe: Magazine of the European Union, no.

It may be restated that, rather than fitting into some officially conceived hierarchy of activities, occurring on different levels of government or society, the exertions of the TABD and its specific task-force "groups" set up since the Seville meeting to identify the obstacles needing to be removed in order to smooth the paths of transatlantic trade might better be thought of as taking place on a broad plane of cooperation, "horizontally" rather than "vertically."⁹ The circle of involvement thereupon is getting wider all the time. The publicly prominent role of the TABD, which is referred to by name in the Joint Action Plan, may, through the force of its leadership and by its example of success, almost surely open up the US-EU dialogue to other influential private organizations and public-interest groups. Some of these will be noted later. Sir Leon Brittan himself, European Commission Vice President, has attested to the noteworthy impact of the Transatlantic Business Dialogue on Atlantic policy making. "This has proved to be an important catalyst for progress in our economic relations," he said in a recent speech. "It allows our business leaders to develop common priorities and to pursue them effectively with Governments. It is a perfect example of how non-Governmental actors can influence the EU/US relationship." As for the TABD's particular proposals, Sir Leon said: "I am strongly attached to the continuation of the TABD and hope it will carry on producing important recommendations like those that led to our

368 (July-August 1997): after 24.

⁹For an update regarding the activities of the TABD, including its "issue groups" and broader "groupings" dealing with sectoral and other problems, see TABD NEWS: A Report on Transatlantic Business Dialogue Developments, Issue No. 97/1 (March 1997). The TABD's web site is <http://iepnt1.itaiep.doc.gov/tabd/tabd.html>. The current co-chairmen of the TABD Joint Steering Committee are: Dana Mead, Tenneco, for the United States; and Jan Timmer, Philips Electronics, for Europe.

work on the Information Technology Agreement and the Mutual Recognition Agreement."¹⁰

By opening up the US-EU relationship to the direct influence of the TABD and, potentially, to other such transatlantic dialogues and other kinds of non-official exchange, the NTA/JAP may thereby fundamentally transform that relationship. That is my hypothesis in this paper. Nothing less than *a revolution* now is taking place in transatlantic diplomacy, in large part as a result of this innovation, this new vessel of Atlantic statecraft. The revolution is being led by the creation of the new forms of cooperation that are now being developed between the United States and the European Union, to a greater extent even than is occurring in relations between the United States, with Canada, and the European members of NATO, which also is undergoing major change today. The transition from the 1990 Transatlantic Declaration to the 1995 New Transatlantic Agenda/Joint Action Plan has coincided with, and also is producing, a transformation in the very nature of transatlantic diplomacy as a whole. These new processes of American-European connection may, in time, engender a new and different kind of Atlantic community, much more participatory than in the past.

If, for the sake of discussion, this above-described perception of deep change in the politics and diplomacy of the Atlantic world is accepted as being at all valid, some account of the causes of a change of such magnitude is in order. I would suggest three main explanations of the phenomenon of a currently transforming Atlantic diplomacy.

¹⁰Sir Leon Brittan, "EU US Relations: A Partnership of Peoples," keynote address to the New Transatlantic Agenda Conference, "Bridging the Atlantic: People-to-People Links," Washington, D.C., May 5, 1997.

The first factor by way of explanation is what I would call "the failure of grand designs" -- that is, the self-evident inability of American and European statesmen to find a replacement "project" for the formerly supreme task of waging, and winning, the Cold War. The conceptual shortfall that has resulted from the West's victory in that struggle has led to a search for lesser but still significant tasks, on which it may be possible for Americans and Europeans to agree and which it may be possible for the transatlantic partners to fulfill together. A second factor, already noted, is the increasing prominence, in the neo-liberal economic policy context at present, of the business community in transatlantic processes, even to the extent of defining the terms of major new initiatives such as the New Atlantic Marketplace. The third factor is a technological factor: the rapid development of information technology (IT), specifically the Internet, which has vastly expanded the degree and also the range of social participation in Atlantic affairs, even if as yet somewhat vicariously. Millions of transatlantic dialogues now take place daily, in virtual space. Most of these are in no way mediated by government officials or diplomats. In truth, governments risk becoming irrelevant to this interchange.

Permit me now to describe each of these factors -- all of them contributing to a new form of Atlantic diplomacy, and perhaps community -- in a bit more detail. The first, as mentioned, is the failure of Atlantic leadership to find an overarching design for the next historical phase of Euro-America, as the Cold War era closes and the twenty-first century nears. Most transatlantic policy attention during the early 1990s, following the TAD, centered on two particular substitution-projects, if they may be so termed. One is the aforementioned concept of a Transatlantic Free Trade Agreement or Area, a TAFTA.

Among the leading European political figures who have suggested this idea are Germany's Foreign Minister, Klaus Kinkel, and a former Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom, Malcolm Rifkind. Even earlier, and very influentially, the Canadian Trade Minister Roy McLaren also had urged that consideration be given to a North Atlantic free trade pact. McLaren's idea was that, as Canada, the United States, and most countries of the European Union are so advanced in their business and trade development and practices, they could and should provide leadership to the entire international community and, more specifically, to the World Trade Organization by negotiating among themselves an exemplary free trade arrangement (naturally somewhat modeled on the North American Free Trade Agreement) that would be "WTO plus," both in the subjects (like trade in services) that it covered and in its operating principles (including its dispute-settlement mechanisms).¹¹

¹¹The original "NAFTA," it should be noted, was a proposal for a North *Atlantic* (rather than North American) free trade agreement. It was largely a Canadian-originated and Canadian-interested concept. See, e.g., Roy A. Mathews, "A New Atlantic Role for Canada," Foreign Affairs 47, no. 2 (January 1969): 334-347. A transatlantic "NAFTA" probably would have been linked with the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), formed by Great Britain with smaller, mostly peripheral European countries following the initial British failure to become part of the European Common Market. The Canadian-born economist, Harry Johnson, provided cogent theoretical justification for transatlantic free trade, which during the 1960s constituted a large portion of global trade and thus did not (then) seem exclusionary (as it might now).

There is a probable connection between Roy McLaren's advocacy of a TAFTA and the better-known proposal made subsequently by Klaus Kinkel, in a speech delivered in Chicago. When McLaren as Trade Minister argued in favor of a TAFTA proposal within the Canadian Cabinet, he was told by his colleagues that he would have to have support from another government or other governments. Presumably, Canada therefore approached Germany, which no doubt had its own independent reasons for floating the TAFTA proposal. A private-sector German proponent of the TAFTA concept was Edzard Reuter, when he was head of Daimler-Benz.

An Italian economic official, Renato Ruggiero, prior to his becoming secretary-general of the new WTO also spoke in favor of the Atlantic free trade concept. There has been some support for the TAFTA idea in the United States as well. With the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) example in mind, Ellen Frost, a political scientist specializing in trade

The other large scheme has been that of a comprehensive Transatlantic Treaty that would encompass not only economic and trade matters but also political-security, and possibly even military-defense, issues. One consistent proponent of this grand idea has been the former German Foreign Minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher.¹² Still another proponent is the current President of the European Commission, Jacques Santer, who stated his personal belief in the long-term goal of a Transatlantic Treaty in his inaugural speech to the European Parliament.¹³ This Transatlantic Treaty notion reflects an ambition to "unify," presumably more on the basis of the US-EU relationship than on the foundation of the NATO relationship, the 1949 Washington Treaty, the economic and the military strands of the transatlantic relationship, thus forming a single Atlantic community of even a formal kind.

It is perhaps unfair to describe these great proposals, which have substantial merits of their own in the view of their far-sighted proponents and many others, as "substitutes" for defunct Cold War-era schemes. It is noteworthy, however, that among many persons who have felt the need for such visionary designs or lesser, but more substantial forms of

issues at the Institute for International Economics, has contemplated establishing a calendar, or fixing a schedule, for the progressive removal of tariffs between the United States and the European Union over a period of years. Such proposals have not caught on.

¹²Hans-Dietrich Genscher, "The New Partnership: Europe's and North America's Global Responsibility," address at The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University, Medford, Massachusetts, April 28, 1993. "Here and now I propose a new European-American treaty creating the New Partnership," he then stated. Such a treaty connection would be a "new kind of special relationship" between the European Community and the United States and Canada that would be "wider in scope than NATO," although that organization would remain of great significance. "What we need," he emphasized, "is a new transatlantic partnership for peace and progress, for economic growth, social justice and human rights, which includes NATO as a guarantee for security and stability."

¹³Speech by President Santer to the European Parliament, January 17, 1995, mentioned in Krenzler and Schomaker, "A New Transatlantic Agenda": 17.

transatlantic construction is a concern that the "glue" is going out of the American-European relationship with the cessation of the West's struggle against Soviet communism. "We should guard against the simplistic argument that the removal of a common external military threat removes the whole basis of our relationship," Sir Leon Brittan has said, attesting to the force of this worry even though he himself does not share it.¹⁴ Perhaps even for him, however, there was good reason, prudential as well as substance-related, to have on hand a transatlantic agenda that would truly challenge both Americans and Europeans to work together more closely.

So far, neither the TAFTA nor the Transatlantic Treaty idea, though presumably not abandoned by their proponents and strongest advocates, has generated much support. Conditions generally are acknowledged not to be ripe for such ambitious projects.¹⁵ In part the reasons are technical, owing to the likely problems of specifying the relationship of a TAFTA or a Transatlantic Treaty to existing international obligations, notably those under, respectively, the World Trade Organization, NATO, and the Western European Union (WEU). The reasons are also political, related to the predictable problems of winning

¹⁴Brittan, "EU US Relations." His May 1997 words were: "Until quite recently, on both sides of the Atlantic, Cassandras were crying out that Europe and the United States were condemned to drift apart. I have never accepted this, although it is as well always to be alert to the risk."

¹⁵Horst Krenzler and Astrid Schomaker wisely point out that some of the main arguments against a TAFTA are "of a temporary nature." Reforms in the European agricultural sector, for example, might ease the negotiation of a transatlantic free trade agreement. Similarly, a "redefinition" of the relationship of the European Union, the Western European Union, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in connection with the 1996-97 Intergovernmental Conference might help facilitate negotiations for a transatlantic treaty. Krenzler and Schomaker, "A New Transatlantic Agenda": 16-17.

national legislative and also popular support for brand-new, far-reaching international commitments. Not only does the European Union's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), whose abolition or at least radical reform presumably would be demanded by Washington, remain an object of criticism in the United States, but even the US government's own North American Free Trade Agreement is coming under fire. The benefits from NAFTA that were promised have been slow to materialize, and some discernible harmful effects (local unemployment and environmental degradation) have become evident. The Clinton administration's follow-on plan for a Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) is on hold, owing to Congress's unwillingness as yet to grant it so-called fast track negotiating authority.

Such considerations, in sum, have refocused attention on lesser, more achievable goals, and on those who are proposing them -- such as the New Transatlantic Marketplace and the Transatlantic Business Dialogue. Moreover, it is more widely recognized today than it was at the beginning of the 1990s that not every country is equally supportive of every proposal for transatlantic cooperation. Different sectors within societies, too, favor different measures. A single overarching Atlantic agreement approved by everyone, European member states as well as the European Union and the federated, branch-separated US government, could simply prove impossible to achieve. To seek a formal Treaty, particularly, would be complicated and difficult. When in late 1990 Secretary of State Baker and Foreign Minister Genscher reflected upon the vagaries of the treaty-ratification process, particularly in the United States, they and their foreign-ministerial colleagues decided that the Transatlantic Declaration, concluded on the executive level, would be much the easier and

probably also wiser course.¹⁶

This complex political judgment in the early 1990s and after established a pattern for subsequent planning of American-European practical collaboration. As Krenzler and Schomaker have pointed out, policy makers, having set aside if not forsaken the formal-treaty option, "looked for a simpler and more flexible, yet comprehensive instrument. A political rather than a legal instrument was needed to deal with all the areas described, leaving open who would act on the European side in any specific matter. It could be the European Union, or the Member States, each of these acting in the specific domain of their responsibilities. This is how the idea of the New Transatlantic Agenda and a Joint Action Plan was born."¹⁷

The second factor that has produced this more informal, practical, and probably productive kind of Atlanticism is, as indicated above, the interest and influence of the business community, especially American and European multinationals. Even before the TABD was formed, large European and also American corporations, though remaining mostly in the background, had moved powerfully to shape the 1992 Single Market in Europe.

¹⁶A further "temporary" consideration then was the preoccupation of the American and European governments, especially from August 1990 to the middle of 1991, with the military and economic challenge posed by Iraq's Saddam Hussein in the Persian Gulf area. The Iraqi Army's seizure of Kuwait increased his control of the world's oil reserves to approximately 40 per cent. This reality imposed a different, more security-centered sense of solidarity on Americans and Europeans.

¹⁷*Ibid.*: 18. Such thinking already had animated the European Commission when, earlier in 1995, it came up with the idea of identifying potential "building blocks" for what it called, with creative ambiguity, a "Transatlantic Economic Space." This flexible notion is a forerunner of the current umbrella term for specific measures of economic liberalization, the New Transatlantic Marketplace, the programmatic centerpiece of the NTA/TAP

The much more prominent part, indeed the almost direct role, that some leaders of the American and European multinational firms in the Transatlantic Business Dialogue are now playing in the Atlantic planning process is truly unprecedented.¹⁸

Although the new business role is partly a reflection of the natural fact that in the post-Cold War period economic prospects tend to outshine military opportunities, the centrality of business leadership in present US-EU discussions is so remarkable as to require special explanation. It was, as has been noted, political-administrative leadership -- namely, US Commerce Secretary Ron Brown and European Commission Vice-President Sir Leon Brittan and Commissioner Martin Bangemann -- who in meetings early in 1995 initiated the overture to top American and European business figures that resulted in the coming together of the Transatlantic Business Dialogue. That spark, however, quickly caught fire.

The TABD's organizing conference at Seville on November 10-11, 1995, created a powerful new unified transatlantic presence, whose recommendations found actual reference in the official NTA/JAP documents in Madrid on December 3. "We will not be able to achieve these goals," the American and European summiteers in Madrid stated candidly, "without the backing of our respective business communities." President Clinton and his European counterparts therefore added: "We will support, and encourage the development of, the transatlantic business relationship, as an **integral part** of our wider efforts to strengthen our bilateral dialogue" (emphasis added). They further noted: "The successful

¹⁸Imperfect, partial precedents are offered by the role of advisory groups in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and also by the government consultation with businesses that occurred, especially in the United States, during the GATT Uruguay Round. For European businesses, no prior experience approaches the contribution they have been able to make, via the TABD, to the content and context of the US-EU NTM initiative.

conference of EU and U.S. business leaders which took place in Seville on 10/11 November 1995 was an important step in this direction. A number of its recommendations have already been incorporated into our Action Plan and we will consider concrete follow-up to others."¹⁹

This extraordinary official recognition of the TABD sets a significant precedent for possible participation of other strong non-governmental groups in transatlantic diplomacy. Since the Madrid meeting, a "Transatlantic Labor Dialogue," with the AFL-CIO taking the lead on the American side and the ETUC on the European side, has started to be formed. A "Transatlantic Education and Training Dialogue" also is being contemplated. Other such "Dialogues" corresponding to the pertinent substantive passages in the NTA/JAP program might in the future come into existence as well. They, too, could become integral to the new transatlantic dialogue conducted on the official level.

The third factor that I have identified as a cause of the transformed Atlanticism of the 1990s decade, both its communicative processes and its resulting broader sense of community, is the Internet -- more generally, information technology and electronic exchange. The NTA/JAP texts approved in Madrid, whatever deficiencies they may have in terms of logical coherence or literary style (as seen from the professional perspective of James Baker or other traditionally inclined diplomatists), may well turn out to be a new mode of diplomatic expression. The format of the NTA and JAP may particularly suit the character of closely related, highly interdependent, and technically advanced cultures such as those on both sides of the Atlantic increasingly have become. A subsection of the Joint

¹⁹"The New Transatlantic Agenda," section IV, "Building Bridges Across the Atlantic."

Action Plan's third chapter dealing with trade and economics -- "Information Society, information technology and telecommunications" -- commits the Atlantic partners to a bilateral "Information Society Dialogue" for the purpose of increasing common understanding via access to information services through public institutions, regulatory reform, and technological cooperation. This is one of the components of the New Transatlantic Marketplace, and it may turn out to be one of the most innovative and consequential ones.²⁰

One of the least conspicuous elements in the NTA/JAP documentation, coming at the very end of the Joint Action Plan, may turn out to be one of the most distinctive features of it. The JAP text refers, in what seems almost an addendum, to a mechanism for further communication -- in a sense, providing for an extension of the text itself. These lines state: "We will use our sites on the INTERNET to provide quick and easy access to the New Transatlantic Agenda, the Joint EU-U.S. Action Plan, information on EU and U.S. studies, descriptions of pertinent library holdings as well as other material relevant to the EU-U.S. relationship." Probably intended by its official authors merely as a reminder of the availability of textual information to computer users who may be interested, this explicit reference to the Internet within the text of the Joint Action Plan itself symbolizes the beginning of a new phase of active, and prospectively more and more interactive,

²⁰An "Atlantic marketplace," which is a kind of geographical metaphor, may actually be constituted by the use of information technology. As Vincent Mosco has noted in Will Computer Communication End Geography? (Cambridge, MA: Center for Information Policy Research, Harvard University, September 1995), 5, "rather than just attenuate geography, computer communications transforms it by creating new and expanded spatial terrains on which organizations can operate." The New Transatlantic Marketplace is such a "new and expanded spatial terrain." The passage is quoted in Gunnar Klinga, "The Digital Diplomat: New Information Technology as a Tool in a Foreign Service," Fellows Program, The Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, May 1996.

transatlantic communication.²¹ The very last words of the Madrid Joint Action Plan are: "We will consult and cooperate on the preparation of a mediumterm communications strategy which will aim to increase public awareness on both sides of the Atlantic of the EUU.S. dimension."

This proactive communications effort, combined with the natural inquisitiveness of American and European information-technology users, is rapidly increasing the level of participation in the US-EU dialogue which, as suggested at the outset of this paper, ought no longer to be considered a "vertical structure" but, rather, a widely expanded horizontal one. It is a field of inquiry and discourse on which all, increasingly equal to one another in technological access if not social rank or political influence, can play. The makers of the Madrid initiative would seem to be aware of the current structural change in the Atlantic order. A section in the Joint Action Plan dealing with "People to people links," in its fourth chapter on "Building Bridges Across the Atlantic," affirms that the United States and members of the European Union "encourage our citizens to increase their contacts in diverse

²¹Some indication of the degree of interactivity, as opposed to passive document reading, between outside inquirers and the European Union can be gained from Louis Hersom, Directorate General I Information Correspondent. According to Hersom, DG I receives an average of 10 to 20 e-mail messages per week from users of the DG I website. About a third of these are forwarded to other Directorates General of the European Commission. "Together with questions on EU trade policy, in particular our Market Access Strategy, questions on EU-US, EU-China and EU-Japan relations are the most popular," he writes. Usually the inquirers seek information, or documentation. "I have the impression that the reason we do not receive any more requests for documentation is because we have a policy of downloading as many documents as possible onto the site itself, thereby avoiding having to spend time on forwarding documents." April 14, 1997, e-mail message in response to inquiry from Louis.HERSOM@DG1.cec.be. Christina Barron, "Internet: European Connection," Europe: Magazine of the European Union, no. 363 (February 1997): 6-9, gives a country-by-country look at what the Internet offers from European Union member countries, and the European Union itself.

fora," such as youth, professional, and think-tank settings, "with a view to deepening grassroots support for the transatlantic relationship and enriching the flow of ideas for the solution of common problems." Though still reflecting a top-down view of American-European society, this appeal for "grassroots support" could be revolutionary. At a minimum, the American-European dialogue will thereby be given fresh content and, presumably, a broader set of preoccupations.

Signs of a restructuring of the transatlantic relationship, which in 1990 was still the preserve of statesmen, are increasingly evident, even as editorialists and other pundits decry the rise of "isolationism." Evidence of new American-European linkage-forming recently could be seen at the New Transatlantic Agenda conference, "Bridging the Atlantic: People-to-People Links," held in Washington, DC, on May 5 and 6, 1997. Organized by the US Department of State and US Information Agency in cooperation with the European Commission and EU Presidency, this conference, though initiated by political leaders in office, brought together "over 300 prominent Europeans and Americans to discuss ways to nurture the next generation of transatlantic leadership through new forms of partnership." Not only government executives and parliamentarians but also state and local officials, business executives, labor leaders, media representatives, heads of private foundations, and "key actors in our exchange communities" participated. Specialized working groups composed largely of "personalities from non-governmental sectors" at this meeting explored new areas of transatlantic cooperation, one of the foremost being electronic exchange. The first "key proposal" in the electronic-exchange area is to be establishment of "a multilingual forum," to be called the Transatlantic Information Exchange Service (TIES), the purpose of

which is "to connect the spectrum of institutions, projects and initiatives involved with EU-US affairs." Other recommendations in the IT sphere are: a transatlantic digital library project; electronic links between legislators; electronic links between cities, counties, and regions; workshops on the subject of on-line publishing in science; virtual transatlantic classrooms; and links between public interest organizations concerned with democracy promotion, personal privacy, freedom of expression, intellectual property, universal access to advanced information infrastructure, and telecommunications regulation, and also a data base of information on "best practices" such as WebVote, Democracy Net, and Senior Web. Through the use of the proposed TIES, it would become possible to enhance transatlantic cooperation and coordination in the area of "civil society issues."²² The Washington "Bridging the Atlantic" Conference is a product of the New Transatlantic Agenda/Joint Action Plan initiative of 1995. But it can also be a powerful producer of something approaching a New Atlantic Community.

The 1995 NTA/JAP was launched, as has been seen in this paper, in a changing medium of discourse that will carry it far beyond the usual channels, as well as the language, of conventional international diplomacy. The NTA/JAP is an engine of diplomatic change, as well as a vehicle of thought, possibly more powerful than any grand post-Cold War ideological and political substitution-project could have been. It is more dynamic, if less

²²"Transatlantic Conference 'Bridging the Atlantic: People-to-People Links; Issues Recommendations," The European Union Press Releases, May 8, 1997, No. 31/97. At the subsequent US-EU Summit meeting in the Netherlands later in May, further consideration and support was given to these recommendations. See "New Transatlantic Agenda Senior Level Group Report to the U.S.-EU Summit," The Hague, May 28, 1997.

concise and eloquent, than the 1990 Transatlantic Declaration. The processes of the NTA/JAP have begun continue to generate activities. These practical programs of cooperation agreed upon and stimulated at the Madrid US-EU Summit and thereafter may grow almost organically, assuming lives of their own. If the New Transatlantic Agenda of 1995 does so continue to proliferate and to flourish, the political leaders of the Atlantic world may find that they then expressed themselves in a way that both defines the limits of their own leadership and opens space for a new idea of Atlantic citizenship.