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Reform of Transatlantic Security Relations: a View from Bonn

by

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Introduction

As Jacques Delors' Commission of the European Communities (EC) was renewed in Brussels for two years, Copenhagen started its six months term of Presidency of the Council, and Bill Clinton's Administration took office in Washington for four years European-American relations did not figure prominently on the policy agendas on either side of the Atlantic. In his "Working Program for 1993-1994" and his speech to the European Parliament, the Commission President devoted a large part to "acting on world level" but except for a small reference to the Uruguay Round paid little attention to aspects of particular Atlantic concern.¹ The same applied to the "Objectives and Priorities of the Danish Presidency" as they were laid out in a statement by Foreign Minister Ellemann-Jensen before the European Parliament.² The new US President in both his inaugural address and his "state of the union message" was hardly more specific.³ While Delors as well as Ellemann-Jensen at least referred to the Joint Declarations between the Community and the United States and Canada of 1990 as a framework within which the Europeans intend to develop their relations and cooperation with these two countries, Clinton did not even include the EC (or NATO for that matter) in his programmatic deliberations.

The obvious explanation of this neglect is that political leaders on both sides of the Atlantic are convinced that - for different reasons - they ought to focus their energies on domestic issues: Washington feels that it can afford to reduce its international commitments and concentrate on long overdue work at home, while Brussels is preoccupied with developing its capacity internally for a broader external responsibility in the future. This downswing-upswing analysis tells little about the present state of atlanticism nor its prospects. At the outset of 1993, is atlanticism sound and can it therefore be omitted from the list of pressing tasks? Is atlanticism a dormant issue which no one wants to bring up as too many unresolved questions are on the agenda anyhow? Are European-American relations taken care of by the "New Atlanticism" which the Bush Administration had launched right after the fall of the Wall? The answer to these questions is that atlanticism remains essential for both Europeans and Americans alike but needs more thorough adaptation than has resulted from the Baker Plan. Enriching the consultative structures was a first step. The next step has to be a renewal of the commonness of values and concerns. This is necessary as a basis for *cooperative leadership* in a world with a

1 For Jacques Delors' speech see *Europe (Documents)*, No. 1822, February 11, 1993. Concerning the EC Commission work program for 1993-1994 see *Europe (Documents)*, Nos. 1823/24, February 12, 1993.

2 The Danish Presidency's working program is reprinted in *Europe (Documents)*, Nos. 1818/19, January 22, 1993.

3 See President Clinton's January 20, 1993 inaugural address (US Policy Information and Texts, No. 009, January 19, 1993, pp. 15-19) and his February 18, 1993 address to Congress on his economic program (US Policy Information and Texts, No. 019, February 19, 1993, pp. 9-20)

widening set of international actors, with increasingly fragmented aspirations of peoples, and with a range of urgent global as well as regional issues. Neither the European nor the American side has yet embarked on preparing such joint leadership.

Atlanticism has never been a theoretical concept, rather it expressed a practical orientation for the way in which the West coped with the two prime challenges after World War II: the reconstruction of Western Europe and the containment of the Soviet Union. Today, atlanticism is no less important for dealing with immediate challenges: managing the change in Europe, redefining common values, and preparing atlantic nations for the challenges of the twenty first century.

Managing change in Europe

Despite several years of transition after the end of the Cold War the context for atlantic relations continues to be in flux. The change started in the Eastern bloc in the mid-eighties, lead to major reforms of Western institutions at the beginning of the nineties, and, now, change is entering the structures of Western states and societies. None of these interrelated processes of change has reached a final stage, but their accumulation seems to have come to an apex. This is the point where the degree of uncertainty over the future developments is highest and where the opportunities for shaping these developments are widest. Atlantic nations and institutions, while themselves in the midst of transition,⁴ are asked to help with the management of interlocking areas of change.

On the American side the shift from many years of Republican presidency to the rule of the Democrats occurs at a time when the US has reached a multiple turning point:

- The new Administration has no choice but to turn inward and put America first. The country is not just faced with huge accumulated public debt, enormous annual budget deficits, and a temporary economic downturn but with a structural crisis, a psychological uncertainty of its mission, and a relative decline of its international influence.

- Putting America's house in order also means to turn away from an internal infrastructure and a political mindset largely driven by the posture of the Soviet enemy. The conversion of the country concerning both the domestic and the external behavior is in full swing but it is still unclear where it will end up.

- While the United States remains the only "superpower," it is less inclined and able to carry the "super-burden." In dealing with foreign problems the US administration will act on the

4 When NATO's North Atlantic Council meets these days it is not the threat from Moscow which fills the agenda but the "serious challenges to European security arising from regional conflicts." See Ministerial Meeting of the North Atlantic Council, NATO Headquarters, Brussels, December 17, 1992, in: *Atlantic News*, No 2484 (19 December 1992), Annex, p. 1.

conviction, which is shared by Congress and the wider American public alike, that the Americans have been shouldering too many international responsibilities.

American reorientation in these areas will affect Europe and European-American relations in fundamental ways. It will be harder to make the case for a substantial US participation in managing change in Europe, in Asia and in other parts of the world. Washington will want to rely on other international actors such as the Community and Japan to share the burden. The Clinton campaign formula of "domestic policy is foreign policy is domestic policy" may demand too much of an enlightened attitude from the American citizen, even though the formula is based on an up to date analysis of external relations. It is not easy for the citizens of the sole worldpower to admit international interdependence and to accept defacto reductions of national sovereignty. On a more specific plane North Americans will have to understand that managing change after the Cold War is as much a common atlantic task as it is a national endeavor:

- To the extent that the United States or Canada undergo fundamental changes of their own it must be in their interest to keep its allies and partners in Europe posted and to discuss with them any major consequences that will flow from national (reduction of military presence in Europe) or regional (see NAFTA) changes.
- Just as in the past, the US will continue to hold major stakes in Europe (be it only large investments in Western Europe or its strategic relationship with Moscow) and, therefore, will want to play an active part in reshaping power balances and cooperative structures on the European continent.
- America as a worldpower cannot afford to be absent from the management of change in one of the most important strategic regions in the world, particularly, as any new order in Europe has repercussions for adjacent regions in Asia, the Middle East and Africa.

Participating in the management of change in Europe is not just demanding for American "software" such as political guidance and moral support. To have a say and to make a difference, the US will have to contribute "hardware" ranging from financial support to military commitments. The same is true for the West Europeans. Confronting change and insecurity in Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union (FSU) demands an effort of a secular dimension, which can only be met by a joint approach of the major industrialized countries.⁵ West European states have been trying to cope with this new demand on their continent and some of the results, such as emergency help (Phare Program), political and economic relations (Europe Agreements), are encouraging. Unfortunately, Western Europe is facing opportunities and challenges in the East at a time when recession in the West is pressing the priorities of domestic economic agendas upon leaders in EC and EFTA countries - Germany being no exception.

⁵ For an account of the economic and political dimension of this secular challenge see the two reports linking foreign policy research institutes from the member states of the EC: *The Community and the Emerging European Democracies* (London: RIIA, June 1991); *Confronting Insecurity in Eastern Europe: Challenges for the European Community* (London: RIIA, December 1992).

Moreover, plans for the building of a more forceful West European international actor have not materialized in a swift manner and the progress which has been made with engaging the Community in bringing about peace in Yugoslavia has also demonstrated its limits.

These limits are of a structural nature and would certainly become more obvious were the West Europeans asked to manage a crisis which involves larger states such as Poland, the Ukraine or Russia. For the time being, only the United States has the size and the prestige to act as a counterbalance to critical developments in the former Soviet bloc, especially if the Russian Federation is a party in the conflict. European nations continue to have to rely on American strategic nuclear weapons to keep possible nuclear adventurism emanating from former Soviet territories in check.⁶ Moreover, only the US has the leverage in the Middle East which allows Europe's economic interests in the region to remain secure; only Washington has the weight "to tip the balance" (Bill Clinton) in a stalemate situation such as in Bosnia. West European countries continue to need America's involvement in European affairs, particularly its relations with Germany, to balance divergent forces. East European states consider the presence of the US in Europe as an irreplaceable factor of their own stability and security.

In short, to stabilize ongoing change in Europe the Europeans cannot do without the United States while Washington has its own set of reasons to remain a European power. In these circumstances, atlanticism consists of a mutual interest of Americans and Europeans to hold each other engaged in the management of change in Europe and to find a new redistribution of tasks among them which allows for the need to concentrate on domestic affairs while using comparative advantages to display a credible external engagement.

On the European side, the new Delors Commission and the Danish EC Presidency do not convey the image of a new Europe, although they may both be leading the Community to a number of crossroads:

- Whether the Maastricht Treaty is ratified by Denmark and the United Kingdom by mid-1993 or not, the European integration process has obviously reached a point of saturation. The prominence of the principle of subsidiarity (see the Birmingham European Council) is one sign for second thoughts among integrationists, the deliberate abandonment of the coherence rule and the contractual acceptance of a multi-tiered European Union (see the Edinburgh European Council) is another.

- European monetary union as signed in Maastricht in December of 1991 is for all practical purposes dead. It now appears inconceivable that all twelve countries can or would wish to stick to Maastricht's timetable. This does not mean that Europeans will abandon hopes of

⁶ For the possibilities and predicaments of a European nuclear deterrence see Roberto Zadra, *European Integration and Nuclear Deterrence after the Cold War* (Paris, November 1992, Chaillot Paper No. 5).

instituting a new monetary order. On the contrary, the EC currencies that are able to keep step with the Deutsch mark will press ahead and form a German-led economic and monetary union.

- In February 1993 the EC started to negotiate enlargement with three EFTA countries (Austria, Sweden, Finland). Norway and Switzerland may follow in the Fall of 1993. In the mid-nineties the European Union is likely to comprise 15 to 17 member states, to be reoriented toward Central and Northern Europe, and to harbor a reinforced core group of countries led not only economically but also politically by Germany in collaboration with France.

- Given the relative dynamics of the European integration process, the crisis management role of the Community in Yugoslavia, and its key function in the transformation of Eastern Europe, Brussels will certainly try to demonstrate more assertiveness in the future management of change on the continent and beyond. The European Council's Lisbon Declaration on foreign and security policy has listed the Community's medium and long term priorities, but doubts remain to what extent the Twelve can act in a concrete situation (see Greece's objection to recognition of the new state of Macedonia).

Just as the Community has reached a crossroad, most of its member states are undergoing significant internal change with optional outcomes.⁷ The most striking case is Germany which has come a long way from an occupied country to one of Washington's "partners in leadership" (George Bush).⁸ Now that it is much freer to make its own decisions, how will the new Germany define its international role, and what kind of international responsibilities is it prepared to shoulder? Since unification Germany has displayed both reinforced integration in multinational frameworks (Euro-Corps, European Union) and deliberate acts of unilateralism (recognition of Slovenia and Croatia, policy of high interest rates to finance the recovery of East Germany). In some areas, Bonn has refused to take on international burden (military involvement in peacekeeping operations), in others, it has been prepared to accept almost all of the burden (support of Eastern economies, immigration from Eastern countries). At this point it is hard to say whether this pattern of mixed behavior is indicative for the future or whether Germany has to be ranked a worldpower pretty soon alongside the US and Japan.⁹

German leaders and the people have been living for so long with the habit of understating the country's strength, they do not yet know their real ability to shape events. Analysts have observed that, for the moment, "this ability is instinctively better understood by their neighbors than by themselves."¹⁰ France was among those who have drawn some radical conclusions

7 This transformation period is particularly significant in the military sector of West European nations, see Peter Schmidt (Ed.), *In the Midst of Change: On the Development of West European Security and Defense Cooperation* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1992).

8 For an account of the structural change in the German-American relationship in the post-Wall world see Steven Muller and Gebhard Schweigler (Eds.), *From Occupation to Cooperation. The United States and United Germany in a Changing World Order* (New York, London: W.W. Norton, 1992).

9 This last assumption is being made by Jeffrey E. Garten, *A Cold Peace. America, Japan, and Germany, and the Struggle for Supremacy* (New York, 1992).

10 Jeffrey T. Bergner, *The New Superpowers. Germany, Japan, and the New World Order* (New York 1991), p. 196.

from the substantial retreat of the US from Europe and the reestablishment of German power in the center of the continent. Reluctantly, Paris has accepted to reintegrate in specific situations part of its military forces, its Euro-Corps troops, into NATO, while at the same time pushing the plan for an independent European defense as well as strengthening its bilateral military relations with Bonn and London.¹¹ France, for obvious reasons, does not favor any substantial new function of NATO in European security, Britain, on the contrary, puts NATO first and holds a basically negative position on European integration, a position which frustrates its partners in the Community and diminishes London's weight in the intra-European balance of power.¹²

Atlantic relations will be affected in several respects by these changes in the European Union, its member states and other countries in Europe (like Turkey, the Central European states, and the Russian Federation). Atlanticism will extend to a larger group of countries than in the past and a wider range of concerns will have to be accommodated. With the European Union as well as Germany, Turkey and Moscow in new roles, Washington will have to diversify its partners in Europe and at the Eastern and Southern fringes of Europe.¹³ A first test for America's new role in Europe is the war in Bosnia. The long expressed demand for deeper US involvement in European security was finally accepted by the incoming Clinton Administration. The rationale given was manifold:

- the human toll, ethnic cleansing, shelling and other mistreatment of civilians;
- strategic concerns involving the destruction of a new UN member state;
- the threat of a huge new wave of refugees if the war spreads;
- and the political and economic threat to the vigor of Europe.

11 "Nous développons d'ailleurs avec le Royaume-Uni une relation bilatérale privilégiée dans le domaine de la Défense. Les nombreux échanges militaires ont été intensifiés et vivifiés ces dernières années par des engagements communs sur des théâtres extérieurs: Golfe, actions humanitaires au profit des Kurdes, zones d'interdiction aériennes en Iraq, Yougoslavie, ce dernier exemple étant particulièrement significatif puisqu'il a lieu en Europe, sans les Américains jusqu'à présent." (Speech of Defense Minister Pierre Joxe at the 30th Munich Conference on Security Cooperation, February 6, 1993). See also Philip H. Gordon, *French Security Policy after the Cold War* (Santa Monica, Cal.: RAND, 1992).

12 Smaller European countries have started to react to the new distribution of power in Europe. The case of the Netherlands is particularly striking: "In the coming years, the extended reduction of the US forces in Europe, and the steep decline of British influence, will inevitably mean that Dutch foreign policy, while keeping on good terms with the US and recognizing the value of the UK as a link in transatlantic relations, should nevertheless become more closely aligned to Germany." (*Transatlantic Relations and the Management of Disorder*, Report to the Netherlands Atlantic Commission, The Hague, February 1993, p. 40).

13 Managing change in Europe includes also significant transformations at its southern rim. For American analyses see Graham E. Fuller, *Turkey Faces East. New Orientations Toward the Middle East and the Old Soviet Union* (Santa Monica, Cal.: RAND, 1992) and Ian O. Lesser, *Mediterranean Security. New Perspectives and Implications for US Policy* (Santa Monica, Cal.: RAND, 1992). For European research reports see Roberto Aliboni (Ed.), *Southern European Security in the 1990s* (London/New York: Pinter Publishers, 1992) and Marie-Lucy Dumas (Ed.), *Méditerranée Occidentale: Sécurité et Coopération* (Paris: Fondation pour les Etudes de Défense Nationale, 1992).

The Clinton administration, like the Bush administration before it, has strong reservations about the specifics of the peace plan negotiated by Cyrus R. Vance, the UN envoy, and Lord Owen, the EC mediator and about a possible military involvement. US officials and military officers have been against the commitment of American ground troops under any circumstances in the Balkans. Already in 1992, when the UN Security Council formed a multinational force for peacekeeping in Croatia, the United States refused to participate. The nearly unanimous view of US military leaders has been all along that there could be no graceful exit once American troops injected themselves between the bitterly warring parties. Beyond this judgement from the military professionals, which is largely shared by European experts, the American government's reluctance matches the view in Congress and the general mood of the wider political public in the US that the Europeans should run the operations and take most of the burden of solving the Balkans' conflicts.

In a nutshell, the European and American responses to this first hot war after the Cold War in Europe demonstrates the new balance of interests and roles, stakes and preoccupations, burdens and gains in current and possibly future atlantic relations. Canada and some European states participate in UN peacekeeping actions. Rather than taking the lead Washington adds to the equation by symbolic interventions, by using its cooptive power (especially in Moscow), and by preparing multilateral institutions (especially NATO) in the background in case things really get out of control. The Europeans, *nolens volens*, are in the front row, try to manage the conflict as far as they can, and prepare for more structural help once the war is over.

Redefining atlantic values

The processes of transformation after the Cold War have not yet lead to a new world order. After the first period of dissolution of the East-West conflict from 1989 to 1992 another transitional period has begun which is characterized by a mix of order-building as well as order-destroying processes. During this period, the definitions of stability, order, development and progress are proving quite heterogenous. Tensions are arising between various ideas of order, while lines of conflict are being drawn in a different way than at the time of East-West confrontation. This is a stage of development in atlantic relations where both sides are tempted to simply refer to the set of common values on which European-American relations have been successfully built during the last decades whereas it would be more appropriate to examine whether and in which ways norms and concerns have changed or should be altered.

Such a re-evaluation process has been part of recent reform of NATO, the CSCE and the UN. It has also been tabled whenever atlantic nations had to react to major conflicts, such as the systemic reform in Eastern Europe and the FSU, Iraq's aggression, the Yugoslav wars and the humanitarian intervention in Somalia. In each of these cases, the normative foundations of atlanticism were challenged. Europeans and Americans should come together, compile the new evaluations and discuss their further modernization. Such a compilation would have to include among others the following elements:

- One of the most important values which atlantic nations should be keen on fostering is *cooperative security* as a principle of international relations. With a rapidly rising number of states and an equally increased differentiation among these states, the scope of international cooperation and integration needs to be widened in order to reinforce peaceful structures of conflict resolution. This includes the deliberate transfer of sovereignty and, in the case of peace breakers, the enforced reduction of sovereignty.
- National as well as collective actions are increasingly being rated according to their normative background and *legitimation*, either by the UN Charter, international conventions, general principles of law including human rights or by Regional Arrangements such as the CSCE. Finding consensus for legitimized actions may be hard, but commonly agreed procedures should be followed to ameliorate normative authority. Atlantic countries hold key positions to develop and carry such mandates.
- The principles of sovereignty and national *self-determination* will remain important elements of any international order to come and atlantic nations should support them. The striving for national self-determination will have to be conditioned, however: Individual human rights, especially ethnic and religious minorities, have to be respected, democratically federated states should not be destabilized and cooperative international structures should not be disrupted.
- *Democracy*, too, will have to remain a central element of the international structure. Its efficiency is being tested under unfavorable circumstances both in the former socialist states and in many developing countries. Atlantic nations should admit that democratization of former authoritarian or totalitarian regimes normally breeds destabilisation and conflict which endanger the democratic process itself. Specific problems occur where authoritarian forces use democratic rules for anti-democratic objectives and where the transition is accompanied by pressing socio-economic crises.
- Although basic *human rights* are supposed to be taken care of by domestic authorities, the compliance with these principles has become more relevant in international relations. The notion of human rights is being extended from the protection of individual rights vis-à-vis authoritarian regimes to the guarantee of basic socio-economic standards and the protection against ethnic and religious discrimination. To what extent will atlantic nations support this trend?
- Just as the respect of national law forms the basis for free development inside a country, the compliance with *international law* is a precondition for reliable international cooperation. In recent years, international law and so-called soft law have undergone important change, but the international mechanisms and institutions to implement this progress has been lagging behind. Atlantic nations will need to help to initiate such instruments in areas such as human rights, minority rights, basic standards of democracy, and global environmental protection.
- Under present international circumstances, *market economy* has proven to be the most flexible and the most efficient economic system to deal with the pressing problems of sustainable development. Market economy needs, however, a guiding political framework which

guarantees fair competition and good governance. Atlantic nations which are all firmly based on market economy have to render it compatible with social, ecological and cultural needs of their societies and support the same concept in other economies and in international relations.

Modernizing the atlantic value system and international code of conduct is a large enterprise with many incremental steps. Each new conflict in the world and each reformative move of international organizations, where atlantic nations are involved, offers an opportunity to develop joint approaches or to become aware of differences of interest. The major challenge, however, is not the revision of the set of common atlantic norms, but the determination of the bottom line at which such standards ought to be defended. Now that the communist dragon is slain and the NATO *territory* not likely to be threatened by a major attack, who is endangering atlantic *political culture* and who is prepared to defend this culture and with what kind of commitment?¹⁴

It seems that the answer to this question will remain uncertain for some time. The Atlantic Alliance and more specifically the Washington Treaty have been serving a range of concerns within the international context of the Cold War which is now being revolutionized. As opposed to *collective defense* during the old era, *collective security* of the new era opens up a whole new world for allied relationship. It demands a new, an additional atlantic contract which establishes the new areas and the new scope of mutual commitment among a wider group of atlantic nations. It would be an insurance against indifference whenever the European-American security culture is at risk.

Coping with global challenges

With the Cold War over, many observers now argue that military rivalries and armed races between East and West are being replaced by economic rivalries, technology races and commercial as well as monetary warfare among industrial centers. Others expect islamic fundamentalism to form the antagonistic power in a future North-South clash. While increasing conflicts in these relations are undeniable the real crunch seems to emerge from dramatic trends in a few crucial fields of the survival and wellbeing of mankind such as the demographic explosion, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the dangers to the natural environment. Some analysts extend the list to technical revolutions such as in the communications and financial sectors, biotechnology, robotics and automation. These are all

¹⁴ For an analysis of the shift from territorial to normative stakes, see John Gerard Ruggie, *Territoriality and beyond: problematizing modernity in international relations*, in: *International Organization*, Vol. 47, No. 1 (Winter 1993), pp. 139-165.

areas of a transnational, global nature and they all demand responses which the world and its nation states do not seem to be prepared for.¹⁵

Atlantic countries are no exception to this rule, yet the way in which they will deal with those challenges will determine future atlanticism. The global population explosion occurs in developing countries, but many of its implications, especially mass migration from South to North, concern industrialized countries in a direct way. Immigration in Western Europe (including large inflows also from the East) and in North America takes place under different circumstances, the pressure of economic refugees at their borders, however, is the same. And so is the problem of reducing this pressure which is basically a trade and aid question. Likewise, North America and Western Europe are differently affected by the proliferation of sophisticated arms, launching systems and the knowhow thereof, but atlantic nations have a common interest to ameliorate existing non-proliferation regimes including control and enforcement. (The continuation, adaptation and extension of the Nuclear Proliferation Treaty after 1995 is the single most important issue in this context.) Compliance with existing agreements and regimes is also the key issue of the future fight against the damage of the global environment.¹⁶ As the Rio gathering in 1992 has shown it is easier to celebrate pledges than to implement them and, to cite another example, it is relatively easy to raise one billion at the Munich 1992 Economic Summit to absorb some of the nuclear dangers which emanate from a FSU in disorder, but it is almost impossible to find congenial counterparts and reliable infrastructures there to make Western help reach the hotspots of ecological disaster.

Answers to all of these global challenges demand a domestic shift of resources and a change of economic behavior within atlantic countries that affects their international competitiveness in significant ways. Therefore, these answers should be given in a concerted manner, possibly including other industrialized countries, particularly Japan. Atlantic concertation (or concertation among G-7 countries) is needed to avoid that one industrial center can profit from its competitor's engagement in the endeavor to meet global challenges, i.e. those who internalize the costs of stabilization should not be punished by a disadvantage in competition.¹⁷ Concertation is also needed to be more effective in the combat of such challenges in order to

15 A strong case is being made in this regard by Paul Kennedy, *Preparing for the Twenty First Century* (New York: Random House, 1993).

16 Reviews which look at the compliance problem have just begun, see United States Accounting Office, *The Verification of International Conventions on Protection of the Environment and Common Resources: A Comparative Analysis of the Instruments and the Procedures for the International Verification with the Examples of Thirteen Conventions* (Washington, 1992).

17 In the Spring of 1992 the Community after years of internal debate had finally agreed on an energy tax, its introduction, however, was postponed until the US and Japan would do the same. When Bill Clinton in his February 1993 economic plan proposed an incremental tax on energy, his critics in Congress and in the media refused it with the argument that such levy would affect America's international competitiveness.

develop common strategies and instruments as well as coordinated or joint action. In this regard, the dynamics of the above mentioned technical revolution, its orientations, rules and objectives should be an integral part of the concertation effort.

In the context of coping with global challenges, atlanticism is spelled out in a combination of solidarity and effectiveness. Analysts have argued that, in the aftermath of the Cold War atlantic nations have entered an era marked by the primacy of economic over security issues and that NATO is doomed to become irrelevant. They have it all wrong. NATO has moved on to a stabilizing role for Europe as a whole, while at the same time reducing its status to just one among several actors within a set of mutually reinforcing institutions in Europe.¹⁸ Likewise, it is not the primacy of either the economic or the security instruments that establishes regional and world order, it is their connectedness and their interplay which provide for the maximum influence.

Atlantic leadership

Taken together the tasks of managing change in Europe, redefining common atlantic values, and coping with global challenges constitute a wide and tall order. Their common denominator is that, to meet these tasks successfully, publics and politicians need to be convinced to change their traditional mindsets and to make the necessary sacrifices. There are not that many countries in the world which have the skills and the resources to either take over these tasks themselves or entice others in the effort. No country should be excluded from this enterprise, but as it stands now, if atlantic nations do not take the lead, it is likely that major international problems will remain unresolved and that chaos will become the basis for the future world order.

Today, leadership among states is neither a natural talent nor a rewarding role. It has become a complex task and a heavy burden. It needs special attention. If not, nations might be tempted by complacency or good excuse to shy away from obvious responsibilities. Atlantic nations can only enjoy their peace dividend if they are prepared to shape a post-Cold War order which allows them to. It has easily been said that "Clearly America must continue to lead the world we did so much to make"¹⁹ and that "We shall have to display a more active presence together in global affairs relating to peace, liberty, respect for others and solidarity with the poor

18 For the first time in its history, the Atlantic Alliance, together with the WEU, is taking part in UN peacekeeping and sanctions enforcement operations in Serbia and Montenegro.

19 Clinton Inaugural Address, op. cit., p. 15.

worldwide."²⁰ The predicaments American and European leaders will encounter on their path of assertiveness are enormous.

Relatively speaking, the states they run are still the most efficient policy-making entities but many factors have undercut the moral, economic, military, and political foundation of the modern Western-style state. The attempt to increase governing power by multilateralism has shown some positive results, but limits are obvious as we witness a retreat from multinationalism toward complacent nationalism.²¹ The interlocking of international organizations has been disappointing so far. States are not prepared to shift more funds from national to multinational organizations: The UN, overburdened with national cries for help, is in a serious financial crisis. Will the new American President be able to change course by reorganizing his Administration and reallocating national resources? Will the Maastricht process in Europe press for more efficient ways of governance and more international risk-taking? The answer must be yes, there are no alternatives. What is worrying, though, is the fact that on both sides of the Atlantic the adaptation of government and policy to the new world is driven predominantly by financial constraints while conceptual considerations are relegated to the files.²²

In all Atlantic countries we will find those who are protectionists and those who plead for free trade, nationalists and integrationists, isolationists and internationalists. All of these positions seem to fail the true nature of the present constellation.²³ Rather, the situation of the major industrialized states must be characterized as a struggle to accommodate both extremist attitudes: while they are increasingly forced into international cooperation, their actual ability for multinational cooperation is constantly diminishing. In this situation, potential Atlantic leaders are tempted to interpret leadership as the ability to convince others to take the lead and to bear the burden. Such "leadership" would run the risk of simply adding to economic and political competition among Atlantic nations instead of transcending this competition. It could lead to ruinous *competitive leadership*.

European (colonial) powers have gone through long periods of leadership in history. America has made the experience in its alliances during and after the two world wars of this century. Today, leadership is demanded in a different context and requires different skills. The domestic

20 See the interview with Jacques Delors, Financial Times, January 2/3, 1993, p. 2.

21 This phenomenon is analyzed by Stephen P. Cohen, US Security in a Separatist Season, in: *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, July/August 1992, pp. 28-32.

22 This is the impression for the situation on the American side from a report of the Office of Management and Budget, *A Vision of Change for America*, Washington, February 17, 1993.

23 An exception to the rule is demonstrated in the study of C. Cooper, J. Steinberg, M. Shires, *The Evolution of the European Economy: Implications for Transatlantic Relations* (Santa Monica: RAND, 1992).

public needs to be convinced that external engagement is vital. In the US this might be easier than expected as Leslie Gelb claims: "... whatever Americans are saying today about domestic priorities, they will hold Mr. Clinton accountable if he abdicates world leadership, if foreign leaders complain of a weak Washington, or if world crises are not contained."²⁴ One cannot say this of the European leadership and its constituency. The European body politic, whether it consists of the European Union or the Franco-German core group or both, does not function on such *vertical* political interplay between the public and the leaders. The European asset is the *horizontal* pooling of a large variety of more or less active states.

Thus, the potential for leadership at both sides of the Atlantic is different. The US has a missionary potential, it can act quickly, forcefully and coherently, and it can convince others to either become co-actors or contribute otherwise. Western Europe does not have a periodic presidential campaign which mobilizes half a continent and leads to a central authority. Confederal foreign policy needs more time to develop consensus, to raise the means for action, and to implement coordinated policy in a consistent way, but it allows for structural relationships with neighboring countries in Europe and other confederated groups of countries in the world. These differences need not be deplored. They will not go away, just as the predominant American military power, the economic strength of an enlarged European Union, or Japan's financial and technological edge will stay with us for some time. Along with Japan, atlantic nations should profit from their comparative advantages by coordinating them in a *cooperative leadership* based on a fresh set of norms and directed at regional and world challenges which no single country can hope to meet successfully on its own.

²⁴ *The New York Times*, February 18, 1993, p. 18.