

THE FUTURE OF THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE

Speaking notes for classroom discussion in PSCI 1003, at Middlebury College, Vermont, on January 29, 2007.

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(Slide 1). I am deeply pleased to be back at Middlebury, in a course about transatlantic relations. This theme has been at the center of my career, and of my life.

In international affairs, policy choices come down to judgment on balancing different and often competing interests. Judgment is shaped by world outlook.

I want to begin by giving you a glimpse of my own world outlook, and do so with a personal story. Before we start, however, let me show you an outline of where I plan to take you this afternoon. (Slide 2)

A personal story (Slide 3)

European cataclysm

In my first fifteen years, I was caught up in the cataclysm of World War II.

When I was born, in Utrecht, the Netherlands, Hitler was already in power in neighboring Germany. Europe was sensing the ominous threat of approaching war. Our family discussed leaving.

War came to neutral Holland in the form of a surprise attack early in the morning of May 10, 1940. We were in a bomb shelter. Later, we were evacuated away from the eastern suburbs to the center of the city. The evening of May 14, I saw in the west a deep red sky from the fires of Rotterdam. German radio announced that Utrecht would be next. The following day, the Dutch armed forces capitulated. We came through alive.

Five years of occupation followed. Pressures mounted; arbitrary arrests, loss of liberty, fear, the dilemma of coping or resisting.

In the spring of 1944, Allied forces landed in Normandy. In September, there was a big push to free the Low Countries. I watched the planes and gliders overhead, on their way to Arnhem. But the British First Airborne failed to hold the bridge across the Rhine. Thirty-four years later, in an unexpected twist of history, I represented the United States at the opening of the museum commemorating the event at Hartestein castle, the last redoubt of General Urquhart and his troops.

What followed was a bad winter. Food was scarce. Fuel was scarcer. There was no transportation. Schools were closed. Men were gone – either into forced labor or in hiding. Then, in May 1945, we were liberated by the First Canadian Army Corps. A unit from Quebec camped around our summer home, waiting to return home. Forty-five years later, as an American official visiting Ottawa, I mentioned this episode to a group of Canadian political and military leaders at a luncheon at the US Ambassador’s residence. They were visibly moved by my late expression of gratitude.

Academic sanctuary

My next decade provided sanctuary. At Hopkins School in New Haven, Connecticut, and then at Yale, Yale Law School, and the Columbia School of International Affairs, I had time to adjust to my new American home. World events moved on: The Marshall Plan, the creation of NATO, the Suez crisis, and the Soviet invasion of Hungary. Eisenhower defeated Adlai Stevenson a second time. These events hardly touched me, though I spent one summer as an intern in the Legal Division of the UN Secretariat.

I did know my calling, though. My valedictory address at Hopkins bore the title “Diplomacy Tomorrow.” I reread it recently, and wouldn’t want to repeat what I said in all innocence then. But my direction was set.

Standards and law.

Then came a period focused on law and standards. At age twenty-five I started in Washington as an attorney in the Office of the Legal Adviser in the Department of State. My first year was devoted to preparations for the first United Nations Law of the Sea conference. I attended that three-month event in Geneva in the spring of 1958. The conference brought together the top international lawyers in the world. For someone just out of law school, this was heady company.

The next five years, I supported the activities of the International Organizations Bureau of the Department of State. Each year, I served as a staff member of the US delegation to the UN General Assembly. My areas were non-self-governing territories and human rights. I also staffed the US delegations to the UN Human Rights Commission. In those roles, I had the good fortune to work closely with two extraordinary women, successors to Eleanor Roosevelt: Mary Lord and Marietta Tree. They provided domestic political contacts and gravitas and, by virtue of their engagement and personalities, US leadership at the UN. Meanwhile, they gave me free rein with respect to our agenda, a state of affairs reinforced by the fact that, in Washington, I had a hand in drafting their instructions. I learned that human rights are the most political of issues.

Power

Next came my reintroduction to power as a factor in international relations. The following nine years I served, successively, as Legal Adviser at the US Mission in Berlin, as a political officer at the US Mission to NATO, and at the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA).

Berlin was the focal point of the Cold War. Despite the small allied garrison, it was physically defenseless, being surrounded by several Soviet Army Groups. The Soviets controlled the access routes. But the Berlin airlift had kept the city going, and President Kennedy had said "Ich bin Ein Berliner!" Germans counted on the allied and, specifically, the American guarantees of Berlin's freedom. My role as chief legal officer in the US Sector spanned the range of Allied interests in and involvement with the city. The allies were occupiers – the British and French Legal Advisers and I controlled all legislation – but also protectors of the status of Berlin in the face of Soviet and East German challenges.

At NATO, I dealt with civil emergency planning, adjusting this complex alliance effort away from the doctrine of massive retaliation to that of flexible response. I watched "Reforger" exercises, massive temporary infusions of American military power into Germany. I also became involved in the consultative process at NATO on arms control. Most importantly, how an alliance of ostensibly equal partners worked under American leadership.

My ACDA years brought intense concentration on the arcane details of arms control. I learned about nuclear weapons at Oak Ridge and weapons effects at Sandia. In Geneva, we negotiated on chemical and biological weapons and a ban on nuclear weapons testing. In Washington, my colleagues and I moved molasses to extract workable US positions from an always sluggish bureaucracy. Then and later, it was my task to stay abreast of nuclear negotiations in the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT), and the negotiations on mutual and balanced conventional force reductions (MBFR) in Vienna.

Diplomacy

Next came a period of more traditional diplomacy. It wasn't until 1972 that I got my first bilateral assignment, as desk officer for Romania and Albania. The latter job, though interesting, was not onerous; we had no diplomatic relations. But Romania was an interesting portfolio. The Romanians were clearly not in our camp, and in Bucharest they gave us a hard time. But they were a maverick in the Soviet world. Moreover, President Ceausescu had treated Nixon well when the latter was out of office. It fell to me to do much of the basic work on Ceausescu's state visit to the US in 1973. I saw him off

at Kennedy airport. Twenty-seven years later, he and his wife were executed by their own people, as Romania broke from communism.

Other bilateral assignments were in the mainstream of traditional diplomacy, as Political Counselor in The Hague, and then in Bonn, and, later, as Director of the Office of Western European Affairs at State. Throughout, my colleagues and I were swept along in the evolution of the Atlantic Alliance, from confrontation to containment, to détente, and then to cooperation. We were bit players with respect to the major issues of the day: Keeping the allies aboard on strategy, maintaining a US force presence in Europe, managing the details of arms control, and advocating the need for a robust allied military and political capability. My tasks involved cooperation with an emerging Germany, coordinating US positions with the Dutch and German governments, keeping a close eye on the tendencies of some Germans to strike a deal with Moscow that would neutralize Germany, countering critics of US policies, and getting US positions out to European governments and publics.

UN system under siege

In 1982 I returned to Geneva, this time to a permanent posting as Deputy US Permanent Representative to the United Nations and other International Organizations, the longest title I ever had. During that period I had two ambassadors, separated by a long interval, during which I was Charge.

The UN was in crisis. The downside of bureaucratization was evident, though some Specialized Agencies, like the World Intellectual Property Organization, were well run, usually by strong Directors General. The Reagan administration had started the habit of paying US dues late. The UN and many Agencies faced a budget crisis. As Co-Chairman of the Geneva Group of major contributors, I was under instructions to insure “zero growth” budgets.

The crisis was also political. The number of members of the UN had nearly doubled since my days in the Secretariat. It functioned through regional groups. Bloc voting was common. Debate, particularly on North-South issues, was often sterile. I spent much personal time keeping Israel from being thrown out from some UN bodies.

The UN also faced a management crisis. US representatives were inevitably thrust into the role of influencing decisions of appointed or elected UN officials. This role demanded skills of persuasion.

On top of this all, I came to see growing evidence of American dissatisfaction with the UN. The paradox was that the US had a dominant hand in creating UN institutions. By and large, these institutions served US

interests well. But the practice of formulating world-wide standards, in fields such as women's and labor rights, and of environmental standards, met with opposition on the part of US domestic conservative political groups. State Department career officers working on UN issues were often viewed with mistrust by some political appointees. Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick gave me the cold shoulder during a two-day chiefs of mission meeting in Geneva.

Re-emergence of Europe

In my next assignment, from 1984 to 1987, dealing with France, Spain, Italy, Portugal, Malta, and the Vatican, I witnessed the re-emergence of Europe, from the role of second fiddle in the political and security field to that of a major player. Perhaps I should say "players," because the phenomenon was predominantly a national one.

I saw vivid evidence of Spanish inferiority sentiment in the course of the renegotiation of the Spanish base agreement. Italian governments, no matter what their makeup, tended to be pliant.

But the trend was clear. Europe was regaining its self confidence. German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt took the lead in calling for a response to the Soviet SS-20s. Germans did not realize then that their country was only a few years away from re-unification, and the move of the seat of its government from Bonn to Berlin. In Europe, signs of nationalism began to reappear; for good, in the emergence of east European countries, for bad, in leading to the breakup of Yugoslavia in 1991, and serious rivalry between Italy and Germany on the issue of enlarging the UN Security Council.

Europe transformed.

Starting at the end of the 1980s, Europe underwent revolutionary change. At that time I served as National Intelligence Officer for Europe. I was responsible for the preparation of National Intelligence Estimates on Europe. By the time I left that job four years later, Germany had been re-unified, East European countries had liberated themselves from Soviet domination, and Soviet communism had disappeared, along with the Soviet Union. Europe was now whole and free.

The United States played a significant role, as broker, and as a shaker. The administration of President George Bush was clear about its objectives: No more Yaltas, no more spheres of influence for Washington and Moscow. Eastern Europe was what it was all about. In my world of assessment, it was a period of identifying the equities of the newly enabled players on the European scene, and of recalculating those of the traditional players. In a series of National Estimates, my colleagues and I got it mostly right. These Estimates were a useful element in the formulation of US policy.

Yugoslavia was the exception. The Washington policy world was wedded to the traditional position of US support for the territorial integrity and political independence of Yugoslavia. Our analysts were not, and we issued a National Intelligence Estimate predicting a violent breakup. This is what happened. Even now, more than a decade after the Dayton Accord, the issue of how the Balkans should fit into the new Europe remains unresolved.

Strategic interlude

The nineteen nineties were a strategic interlude. During that period, I was an analyst at the RAND Corporation. The interlude was known as the “post Cold War period.” No one could figure out what to call it.

This was not for lack of trying. New designations cropped up like mushrooms, as did prescriptions for US strategy: “Assertive multilateralism,” “democratic engagement,” “mutualism.” None took, underlining the strategic uncertainty of that decade. My academic and think tank colleagues and I published voluminously, on issues such as NATO enlargement, prospects for the EU, and the global role of Europe.

During this period, the Bush, Clinton, and Bush II administrations were inclined to introspection and loosen the reins in their approach to transatlantic and global issues. There were exceptions. The liberation of Kuwait in 1991, the Dayton accords in 1995, and the Kosovo war of 1998 showed a strong US hand.

New threats

9/11 changed all of this. Perhaps it shouldn't have. The US took the event as a watershed. Europeans, more used to coping with domestic terrorism, did not. In any event, it galvanized America into a novel awareness of vulnerability, and frantic – though not always effective – action to meet the new threats. It is my impression that we have not, as a country, fully understood the nature of the threat. If I am right, our response as a nation has also been inadequate.

One source of today's threat is Jihad terrorism. The other is weapons of mass destruction (WMD), especially in suspect hands. These two issues pose the huge task of building a consensus on the nature of the new threats, and the policies to respond to them. This task lies ahead.

So America is re-engaged. But to what ends?

Lessons learned (Slide 4)

Let me extract from this account some lessons learned.

There is such a thing as **evil** in the world. Former Secretary of State Dean Rusk once said that at any time of the day or night, two thirds of the people in the world are awake, and some of them are up to no good.

Fear is a potent factor that drives people and governments. Fear of Soviet expansionism was a factor in NATO's creation. Fear of more 9/11s motivated Congress and the administration to do some wholesale reorganization of the US government. But fear can lead to excessive restrictions on personal liberty. Franklin D. Roosevelt famously cautioned that the only thing we should fear is fear itself.

Hope is another strong motivator. For me it was hope for liberation from Nazi occupation. Hope for a new life in America. Hope for the institutions with which I became involved – Yale, the UN, the Berlin Kommandatura, NATO, ACDA, the US Foreign Service.

Power matters. Allied power prevailed in WWII. During the Cold War, it shielded the alliance from Soviet communism. Wielded wisely, power commands respect. But the use of power can also create antagonisms. “Ami go home” was a well-worn European mural ornament. Within the Atlantic alliance there have been strong misgivings about the American use of power.

Neutrality has limits. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) must practice strict neutrality in order to be able to administer the Geneva Conventions. But one hundred and thirty years of neutrality didn't help the Dutch on May 10, 1940. Sometimes, major powers lean on smaller states to take a stand; as when Washington, after 9/11, in effect said to the rest of the world: “You are either with us or against us.” And there is the question: “Neutrality with respect to what?” Austria and Sweden are now Partners for Peace in the NATO context. Switzerland has joined the UN.

Checks and balances are necessary to check individual authority. We are a country of laws, not men. Abroad, the balance of power was historically the preferred approach of many states seeking to safeguard their security. Since WWII there has been a lot of talk about collective security. But that approach will not work without the prospect of real sanctions. The UN Charter has teeth in the provisions of Chapter VII of the UN Charter, which provides for mandatory Security Council sanctions, including by armed force. But these teeth can be pulled by the veto power of the so-called Perm Five.

International rules and standards matter. Dean Acheson once compared the international lawyer talking up international law to a cobbler who sighs “There is nothing like leather.” Perhaps he temporarily forgot that, without agreed rules laid down in treaties and practices long accepted internationally

as binding, we would not trade abroad, send diplomats, receive foreign consuls, have regimes governing the use of the sea and outer space, engage in the practice of flags of convenience, move the mail, and conduct war.

Human rights drive agendas. Sometimes this goes awry. I was present at the Human Rights Commission session in New York in 1962, when a Ukrainian by the name of Nedbailo was put forward by the Soviet Union as a candidate for Vice Chairman of the Commission. Neither country at the time was a paragon of human rights. This was the first step in a long road that led last year to the demise of the Commission. Its successor hasn't had much better luck. But human rights drive agendas, in Poland with Solidarity, in Latin America with liberation theology, in East Germany just before unification, and in South Africa with the end of apartheid. And they do so domestically, as with our agenda for racial equality.

Leadership is essential to make policy choices and marshal international support. The US has an extraordinary record of leadership in post WWII Europe. Successive administrations handled the challenge of living in a nuclear age while guarding the freedom of European allies. In the Western world, US leadership did not go uncontested. The French saw to that. But, by and large, it functioned well and to the satisfaction of those who enjoyed its results. In today's circumstances, leadership is more problematic, but no less necessary. The US is still the country best able to provide leadership. Its challenge is do so wisely and effectively.

It seems to me there are some old-fashioned basics:

Values matter: Freedom, democracy, transparency, responsibility, are America's strength at home and its attraction abroad. These are basic to leadership, as is the sovereign ability to take the views of friends and allies around the world into account.

Effective action on a global scale **requires global cooperation.** The challenge is how to structure such an effort and how to provide convincing leadership.

The **transatlantic relationship works, provided that there is consensus** on the nature of the threats we face, and on the challenges we confront. That was true during the Cold War. It is less true today.

Trends (Slide 5)

So what is the global backdrop for our discussion?

Rapid change

The end of Cold War is not the end of change, but the beginning

Change is accelerating

We are seeing a shift in tectonic plates – Emerging powers in Asia, retrenchment in Eurasia, a roiling ME, transatlantic divisions. How we mentally map the world will change: No longer E-W, or N-S, but “arc of instability” remains

Failed states

Globalization

This is a megatrend. The world economy is projected to be 80% larger in 2020 than in 2000

Asia is set to replace Western countries as focus of economic dynamism; globalization will have a more Asian face

Changing geopolitical landscape

China (pop. 1.4 b) and India (pop 1.3 b) will be global players.

Others – Brazil; Indonesia, Russia, will too, though the latter with huge handicaps

Europe may serve as model for international governance

New challenges to governance

There will be dispersion of technologies, and migration

Countries will be more multiethnic and multi-religious

Private groups may be more effective than governments

We will see virtual communities of interest

Populist themes will crop up

Religious identity will count as factor in how people define themselves

Radical Islam will have a global impact

Pervasive insecurity is likely, and will involve

Job security

Migration

Terrorism

WMD

Possible radical takeover of Muslim country

Lagging economies, youth bulges, ethnic affiliations, and intense religious convictions could lead to “perfect storm.”

New issues

Ethical issues related to biological discoveries

Privacy

The environment

Possible future scenarios, not mutually exclusive

A Davos world
A Pax Americana
A new Caliphate
A cycle of fear

As a shaper of international order, America will be challenged to manage, at an acceptable cost to itself, relations with Europe and the other parts of the world, absent a single, overarching threat on which to build consensus.

Challenges (Slide 6)

The list is long and includes:

Revolution in the Middle East
Proliferation of weapons of mass destruction
Failed states
Troubled relationships among great powers
Islamic Jihad terrorism
The future of world economy
Energy dependency
Environmental change
Health issues

With respect to all these issues:

The transatlantic alliance presents a picture of fragile unity

What should be the US role? (Slide 7)

Since the challenges to US interests are global. The US must play a global role. Globalization excludes isolation as an option.

How should the US engage: As an interventionist, an honest broker, or a city on the hill?

I submit, some of each. The United States intervened in two world wars, and the Korean and Vietnam conflicts. It managed the Cold War successfully. It intervened in the former Yugoslavia, helped liberate Kuwait, and overthrew the Saddam Husein regime in Iraq. The US has provided stability in Europe and East Asia.

Washington sought to broker the Israel-Palestinian conflict, German unification, the Northern Ireland dispute, potential hostilities between Greece and Turkey, the future of Western Sahara, and the breakup of Yugoslavia. The non-governmental world and the private sector also provide legion examples of facilitating roles played by Americans. As to the transatlantic relationship, it has been my experience that Europe works best when there is an American in the room.

At the same time, America also remains a beacon that, despite widespread criticism of US domestic and foreign policies, attracts a steady flow of immigrants.

The challenge for American leadership is to leverage the influence generated by these American roles in the service of American objectives. The wider these objectives are shared, at home and abroad, the greater the likelihood of their success.

The other condition is that the US must be aware of the limits to what it can accomplish by itself. The rhetoric of the American republic has always been imbued with a sense that America can take on any challenge and overcome it. We are used to success. We expect it. We are capable of great accomplishments. But as the world grows more interconnected, the future does not lie in American hands alone, but in the hands of many others. Moreover, we have to live within our means. We will be better served by a healthy respect for the views of others, and for the limits of what we can achieve, at home and abroad.

Propositions (Slide 8)

Let me sum up with some propositions:

As to NATO;

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NATO will remain a uniquely useful venue for sharing perceptions and forging consensus about the new state of the world and the new security challenges that face its members. The US should use it.

The greater the transatlantic consensus, the easier will be the issue of burdensharing. The discussion about the transatlantic bargain will continue.

NATO needs to revisit the role of nuclear weapons.

NATO enlargement can be the context for a coordinated policy to draw Russia closer.

As to the EU:

In an increasingly globalized world, it cannot escape the challenge of further enlargement. This means a way must be found to bring in Turkey.

It may serve as a global model for regional governance.

Bureaucratization will be its Achilles heel.

Focus on an EU constitution is more likely to tear than to strengthen its fabric.

It needs inspirational leadership to counter deep strains of nationalism.

It must meet the challenge of bringing stability to the Balkans.

As to the transatlantic partners:

They must diligently pursue the search for common agendas to meet common challenges.

Leadership on both sides of the Atlantic will be crucial. Europe needs to find a common voice.

As the transatlantic discussion shifts to new agendas, the partners should not hesitate to modify existing venues, or scrap them altogether and create new ones. This will put a premium on political and organizational talent.

As to the United States:

America should continue to support abroad the values we espouse at home but understand there are limits beyond which we push these values at our expense..

Washington needs to understand that leadership is essentially political in nature.

The United States should keep a strong military, but

Prepare for peacekeeping and stabilization roles, and
When deployed, US forces must work with allied and local
forces.

Concluding comments

I have three concluding comments.

The overarching theme of my career – and my life – has been the
transatlantic relationship.

There are many synergies; the task is to harness them.

This is a worthwhile effort, to which each of you can make a
contribution.