

*Across the Atlantic and the Political Aisle:
The Double Divide in U.S.-European Relations*

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This year's American Presidential election in November has heightened interest in the impact of public opinion on foreign policy. But the better, more specific question is: What would be the foreign policy consequences of a victory by either President George Bush or Senator John Kerry this fall? Nowhere is this question more crucial than on both sides of the Atlantic, especially given the differences that have roiled the U.S.-European relationship in recent years.

Over the last three years the German Marshall Fund of the United States has been exploring public attitudes in the U.S. and Europe to better understand the differences that separate Americans and Europeans on key foreign policies issues. In the run-up to this year's U.S. Presidential elections, GMF decided to also take a closer look at the gulf between Republicans and Democrats in the United States given the increased attention that national security and foreign policy issues have attracted this year. The results of this year's Transatlantic Trends survey not only document differences within Europe and across the Atlantic: an equally large gap exists across the political aisle in the United States on many of the same issues that have been a source of controversy in U.S.-European relations.

It is perhaps not surprising to find a spectrum of diverse views and differences within a European Union that now totals twenty-five countries. But the fact that the gap between Republicans and Democrats in the United States is at least as wide on many issues is noteworthy. While partisan foreign policy differences are certainly not new in the

United States, policy toward Europe has been an area that has historically enjoyed wide bipartisan consensus, at least for most of the second half of the 20th century¹. Particularly, in a post-September 11 world, that may be less and less the case. Indeed, today one can perhaps talk about the two gaps—or a double divide—in the U.S.-European relationship: the transatlantic gap between the U.S. and Europe and the partisan gap between Republicans and Democrats in the United States.

Commentators on both sides of the Atlantic have speculated about whether the outcome of the U.S. election is likely to have a major impact on the U.S.-European relationship. Some have pointed out that the next President will, irrespective of his name or party affiliation, face the same problems, constraints and differences that have bedeviled relations in recent years. Others have suggested that the outcome of the election could have a very real impact given the different stances each candidate has staked out on foreign policy issues. While the problems and issues certainly won't change in November, the evidence of a considerable gap between the potential supporters of both major political parties in the United States does suggest that a Bush or Kerry Administration would, at a minimum, approach these problems with their core political constituencies holding very different views on issues of power, alliances and use of force and legitimacy. While public opinion on foreign policy issues may not often have a direct impact on policymaking, it does determine the general directions and constraints within which decision-makers have to operate.

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This essay explores these issues in greater detail². First, it builds on a typology developed last year to explore and explain different attitudes on both sides of the Atlantic toward soft and hard power and the use thereof. We identified four different schools of thought—which we labeled *Pragmatists*, *Doves*, *Hawks* and *Isolationists*³—driven by whether economic power was seen as more important than military power and whether war is seen as sometimes necessary to obtain justice. This year, we updated and tested whether the typology developed in 2003 stands up when tested against the data collected in the 2004 Transatlantic survey which, among other innovations now included Slovakia, Spain and Turkey.

Second, this year we have supplemented our analysis by constructing a continuum of “Atlanticism”—i.e. the degree to which publics in the United States and Europe believe in and favor close cooperation across the Atlantic or prefer a more independent role. We also explore how such views are shaped by political preferences. Is support for Atlanticist policies stronger on the right or the left in Europe? We then integrate this analysis with differing views toward hard and soft power to identify different schools of thought about Europe’s own future and the transatlantic relationship based on divergent beliefs on the desired closeness to Washington and attitudes toward power.

Finally, given the importance of the upcoming U.S. Presidential elections, we then use these analytical tools to further explore differences between Republicans and Democrats in the United States. In conclusion, we step back and try to draw some broader conclusions about the dynamics of public attitudes that have emerged in recent years and how the advent of a second Bush Administration or a Kerry victory in November might affect the overall U.S.-European relationship.

1. A TYPOLOGY ON POWER, WAR AND PUBLIC OPINION

Last year we constructed a foreign policy typology that examined differing attitudes toward power and war both across the Atlantic and within the United States and European countries. That typology was based on different preferences for different kinds of power—i.e. “soft” vs. “hard” power—as well as attitudes towards the moral legitimacy of the use of force. Respondents were asked to agree or disagree with the following statements: 1) ‘Economic power is becoming more important in the world than military power’; and 2) ‘Under some conditions war is necessary to obtain justice.’ Combining these different attitudes we came up with a four-part typology detailed below and shown in *Figure 1*.

FIGURE 1: A TYPOLOGY OF POWER



- Hawks believe that military power is more important than economic power and that war is sometimes necessary to obtain justice. They tend to be wary of international institutions. They are not interested in strengthening the United Nations and are willing to bypass it.
- Pragmatists believe that economic power is more important than military power and that war is sometimes necessary to obtain justice. They also assign an important role to international institutions, including the United Nations, and favor strengthening them. They prefer to act with international legitimacy but are also prepared to act without it to defend their national interests if need be.
- Doves believe that economic power is more important than military power and reject the view that war is sometimes necessary to obtain justice. Like

Pragmatists, they want to strengthen international institutions. Unlike Pragmatists, they are very reluctant to use force absent multilateral legitimacy.

- Isolationists believe neither that war is sometimes necessary to obtain justice nor that economic power is important in world affairs.

Since last year’s survey, we have witnessed an increasingly divisive transatlantic debate unfold about the wisdom and support for the Iraq war in the wake of the insurgency that has followed the U.S. military campaign against Baghdad. In Europe, rejection of the war is now almost overwhelming. In this year’s Transatlantic Trends survey, for example, some 80% of the respondents in European countries surveyed believed that the Iraq war was not worth the costs it entailed and another 73% believed that it has actually increased the threat of terrorism⁴. Whereas a year ago, a solid majority of Americans supported the war, there has been a steady decline in such support in the United States. Transatlantic Trends found the American public now almost evenly divided over the virtue of U.S.-led military action with 50% believing the war was not worth the costs and 44% believing it was.

These shifting sentiments about the wisdom of war in Iraq have not had a major impact on the core attitudes towards power and war that underlie our typology. This confirms the sturdiness of the typology developed last year. It also suggests that we are indeed dealing with more fundamental attitudes that are not changed by specific events. In other words, people can distinguish between their attitudes toward hard and soft power as well as the justness, or lack thereof, of war in principle—as well as on this particular war in Iraq⁵.

Table 1 aggregates attitudes on both sides of the Atlantic and provides an overview of the entire sample from both 2003 and 2004. The table shows that, for the United States and Europe together, there was a slight

decrease of support for the Pragmatists and a corresponding increase for the Doves. On the whole, however, there is remarkable stability in the distributions.

TABLE 1⁶: A TYPOLOGY OF ATTITUDES ON POWER: 2003 VS. 2004

		Economic Power			
		Pragmatists	Doves		
War Necessary		2003: 46%	2003: 38%	War Unnecessary	
		2004: 42%	2004: 43%		
		Hawks	Isolationists		
		2003: 9%	2003: 8%		
		2004: 8%	2004: 6%		
		Military Power			

The story becomes more interesting; however, if we take a closer look at attitudes within the U.S. as well as the European countries in which this survey was conducted. If we start with the U.S., last year we identified the dominance of the Pragmatist and the Hawk schools with 65% and 22% respectively. What really made the American case unique was that Hawk category; more than one-fifth of Americans fit there, while there is no European country where the Hawks even reach double digits. In European countries, the Pragmatists and the Doves are the two dominant schools of thought.

In other words, in the United States, the key political dynamic will tend to run between the Pragmatists and the Hawks—especially under a conservative President like George Bush. As we saw in the American debate on Iraq, for example, a conservative President can build majority support for his policy among Pragmatists and Hawks and need not pay attention to the smallish Dove constituency. In Europe, on the other hand, the key political dynamic are the Pragmatist-Dove dynamic as majority consensus requires both of those schools. In the United States, Doves are a modest political force with some 10% of the vote. In Europe, the Hawks are the marginal political players.

TABLE 2: U.S. BREAKOUT BY PARTY AFFILIATION (IN %)

	2003			2004		
	Democrats	Independents	Republicans	Democrats	Independents	Republicans
Pragmatists	65	66	62	57	63	56
Hawks	18	19	33	19	20	38
Doves	14	9	4	16	15	5
Isolationists	2	5	1	8	2	1

Table 2 shows that over the last year we have seen a slight drop in the strength of the Pragmatists and increase for the Hawks and the Doves—a sign of the polarization that has beset the United States over the issue of the Iraq war. That polarization becomes even more evident when we look at the distributions for Republican and Democratic voters. The Hawk segment of Republican voters in 2004 has risen to 38% and is now twice as high as it is among Democratic voters. In contrast, the Dove segment among Democrats—as well as among Independents—has increased, confirming that there are real and growing differences across the political aisle. On average, Democrats and Independents are still more “hawkish” than the average European, but the gap between GOP supporters and the European mainstream has grown even further.

What has happened in Europe over the last year? *Table 3* documents a modest shift away from Pragmatists toward Doves in many but not all European countries. In the United Kingdom and Poland, for example, the distributions have remained stable. One observes a modest but noticeable shift away from Pragmatists and toward the already dominant Doves in countries like France, Germany, Italy and Portugal⁷. Support for Hawks, already low in Europe, has fallen even further. In contrast to the 38% of Hawkish American Republicans, for example, in France, Germany and Spain the number of Hawks in 2004 is only 7, 3 and 2%, respectively. In the United Kingdom, the percentage of Hawks comes closest to double digits at 9.3%. The British conservative party has the highest number of Hawks of any center-right European party at 12.3%.

In conclusion, the key dynamics and differences identified last year across the Atlantic remain intact—but with some important nuances. The American public remains dominated by the Pragmatists and the Hawks. Together, these two groups can form a solid majority without including any Doves. At the same time, one can see the polarizing affect of the current election campaign and debate over the Iraq war leading to more support for both Hawks and Doves. In a European contrast, the Hawks are almost politically irrelevant and Doves are a major political force. There is not a single country in Europe where building a public majority does not require the latter’s inclusion. An American President—especially a conservative President like George Bush—has little if any domestic need to pursue policies that Doves will support. Almost the opposite is the case in Europe as any European leader will have to take into account the concerns of that Dovish constituency.

If we look at this in terms of party affiliation in the United States, one can also see the dilemma facing the Republican Party. Republican Hawks have no real counterpart in any European country⁸. In many ways, the real gap across the Atlantic is between these Republican voters and the European mainstream. A GOP dominated by Pragmatists and Hawks has no equivalent counterpart in Europe, not even among European conservatives, who are often more comparable to Democrats and Independents when it comes to their views on power and the use of force. In the case of the Democratic Party, the story is more nuanced in two regards. First, Democratic voters are more heterogeneous than Republicans. The center of gravity among Democratic voters is also the Pragmatist school with 57% support. But the

party also has a sizeable minority of Hawks and Doves at 18% and 16% respectively. These two wings can either cancel each other out or they can make the building of a consensus among Democratic voters all that more challenging. On average, Democrats and Independents are still more “hawkish” than the average European, but the gap between GOP supporters and the European mainstream is profound. As will be discussed in greater detail below, Democratic and Independent voters in many ways line up close to European countries like the United Kingdom or the Netherlands which have dominant Pragmatist groupings but must also contend with Doves and, to a lesser degree, some Hawks.

2. MEASURING ATLANTICISM

Attitudes toward soft and hard power or the use of force have been central in trans-Atlantic relations in recent years. Yet they are not the only question determining the future of U.S.-European relations. An equally critical issue is the desire on either side of

the Atlantic to continue close cooperation and work together through institutions like NATO, the U.S.-EU relationship or the United Nations as opposed to seeking greater autonomy to go separate ways. One key outcome of this year’s Transatlantic Trends study is the contrast between an American public still strongly supportive of close U.S.-European cooperation and the growing desire for independence in many European countries surveyed⁹. Among the factors driving this trend on the European side is Iraq and the drop in confidence in U.S. global leadership. It extends across the four groups in our typology in the European countries surveyed.

This year we developed a methodological tool by which to measure which publics in Europe leaned more toward close transatlantic cooperation and which preferred a greater degree of independence. We aggregated the responses to a set of questions in the survey about the “warmth” of feelings toward the U.S. and the EU respectively; the desirability of American global leadership; NATO’s essentiality;

TABLE 3: BREAKOUT FOR U.S. AND EUROPEAN COUNTRIES: 2003 vs. 2004 (IN %)

Country		Pragmatists	Doves	Hawks	Isolationists
France	2003	34	49	6	11
	2004	30	57	4	9
Germany	2003	35	52	4	9
	2004	27	62	4	8
Italy	2003	40	45	4	10
	2004	32	58	4	6
Netherlands	2003	50	32	10	7
	2004	46	41	8	5
Poland	2003	47	41	6	9
	2004	16	44	5	4
Portugal	2003	41	43	6	6
	2004	40	47	4	10
Slovakia	2004	37	56	3	5
Spain	2004	25	63	2	11
Turkey	2004	48	32	7	13
United Kingdom	2003	63	19	14	5
	2004	62	23	9	6
U.S.	2003	65	10	22	3
	2004	58	13	26	4

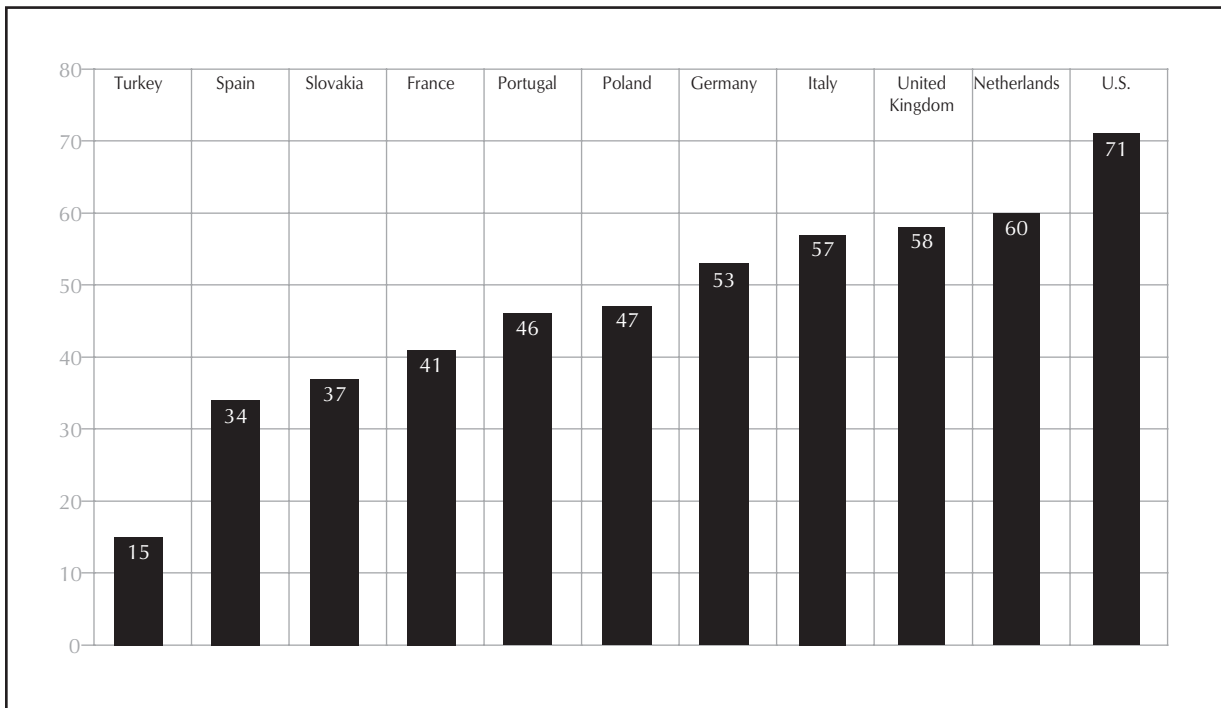
whether or not the U.S. and the EU share common values; and, finally, the importance of having allies when acting militarily. This allowed us to develop the continuum shown in *Table 4*¹⁰.

According to this index, the United States is the most Atlanticist country with 71 percent population of Atlanticists. Within the United States, Democratic voters are more Atlanticist than their Republican counterparts. Among Democrats, 81% have a high score on this index whereas the Republicans come in at 58%. In Europe, on the other hand, the drop in confidence in U.S. leadership and the desire for a more independent approach has produced much lower scores across the board. There are only four countries that score above 50% on our continuum: the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Italy and Germany. They are followed by Poland and Portugal at 47% and 46% respectively. A third group of countries is centered at the low end of the spectrum—around forty or below—and includes France, Spain and Slovakia and Turkey. Clearly, negative attitudes on U.S. leadership

and the war in Iraq are undercutting the desire for close cooperation with Washington.

We also examined whether Atlanticism was more pronounced on the left or the right in Europe and the degree to which there are partisan differences over the desired closeness of relations with Washington. We discovered that there is a clear consensus on this issue in some European countries but that relations with Washington (*Table 5*) elicit a tangible partisan divide in others. In the United Kingdom, for example, there is no difference in attitudes toward the United States across the political spectrum. There is a small gap of either seven or eight percentage points in countries like the Germany, the Netherlands and Poland. However, in other countries like Spain, Italy, Portugal and Slovakia there is a wide partisan gap of over 20 percentage points—suggesting a considerable degree of polarization in these countries on the issue of cooperation with the United States.

TABLE 4: AN INDEX OF ATLANTICISM



In Europe, Atlanticism is stronger among center-right political parties whereas in the United States it is stronger on the center left and among Democrats. If we look at this question through our typology, we find that in the United States, Pragmatists and Doves are more likely to be Atlantists than Hawks. In Europe, the picture is more mixed¹¹. In the United Kingdom, for example, Hawks are strongly Atlanticist. Yet in a number of countries—Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Turkey—Pragmatists are the leading Atlanticists. This is not the case, however, in France, Portugal, Slovakia.

The issue of how closely Europe wants to cooperate with or be independent from the United States is undoubtedly an important dimension of the U.S.-European relationship. Yet, a high score on this ‘Atlanticism’ continuum merely expresses a predilection or desire for close cooperation with Washington. It does not necessarily mean that there will always or automatically be consensus with the United States on the content of policy issues across the Atlantic. One need only recall our previous analysis highlighting different attitudes toward power or the use of force as an equally important dimension. One can, in theory, be an Atlanticist Dove or an Independent Hawk—and vice versa.

While the discussion between ‘Atlanticists’ and ‘Independents’ is one important dimension in the debate, particularly in Europe, over what Europe’s role in the world should be and how it should pursue its goals also focuses on a second dimension. This concerns the question of whether Europe should find its strength in military or ‘hard’ or rather primarily and economic and other forms of ‘soft’ power. Combining these two dimensions we arrive at four basic models of thought about Europe, its relationship to the United States and its role in the world¹²:

- Europe à la Blair: relying on alliance with the U.S. and on military power
- Europe à la Schröder: closely allied to the U.S. but emphasizing civilian or soft power

TABLE 5: ATLANTICISM BY POLITICAL ALIGNMENT (IN %)

	Center-Left	Center-Right	Difference
Germany	54	61	7
France	34	50	16
Italy	45	78	33
Netherlands	56	74	18
Portugal	43	66	23
Poland	47	55	8
Slovakia	32	53	21
Spain	23	56	33
United Kingdom	66	66	0
USA	79	60	19

- Europe à la Chirac: Independent from the U.S. and also capable to act militarily
- Europe à la Switzerland: Independent and relying on civilian or soft power alone.

Figure 2 shows how each of the European countries surveyed in Transatlantic Trends would be placed along each of these dimensions. Within Europe, the outliers are Turkey which stands out as far more military-oriented than the other European countries, and Slovakia, which occupies the extreme of the civilian power end of the spectrum. The Netherlands, Poland and the United Kingdom are closest to the American position as a whole. But we can also see—again—that there is a huge difference in that country between Democrats and Republicans.

It is not immediately evident, which position would be most desirable or conducive to mending the transatlantic gap. This would not only depend on one’s views concerning the relative importance of different forms of power but also on whether one conceives the transatlantic relationship as one of allies or as competitors, or perhaps as one relying on a division of labor.

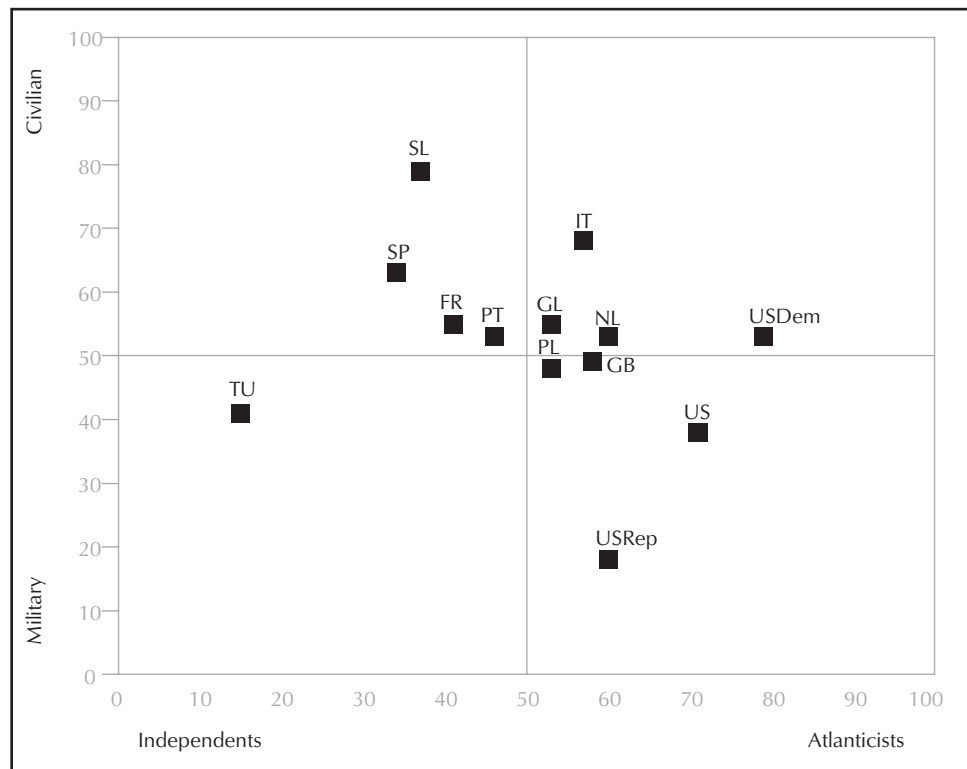
3. AMERICA DIVIDED

One of the key findings of this year's Transatlantic Trends survey was the existence of significant differences across the political aisle in the United States on many of the same issues that have divided the U.S. and Europe in recent years. To some degree, these differences may be driven by the passions of an election campaign as well as deep partisan differences over the wisdom of war in Iraq. It is striking, for example, that 88% of Republican voters favor Bush's international policies whereas 82% of Democratic voters oppose them. And when we examine the intensity of those feelings, we see that 35% of Republicans are 'very much' in favor and 28% of Democrats 'very much against' President Bush's policies¹³. One can find a similar gap when it comes to assessing Iraq. Yet, even if one discounts the partisan nature of an election year, there is a real divide across the political

aisle that is likely to further complicate the future of the transatlantic relationship. While partisan foreign policy differences are certainly not new in the United States, policy toward Europe has been an area that has historically enjoyed wide bipartisan support. Particularly, in a post-September 11 world, that may be less and less the case. Where do Republicans and Democrats disagree? How do the voters of the two major American political parties' lineup vis-à-vis European public views? The typology developed in this article as well as the Atlanticist continuum can be used to provide further insight into these questions.

One place to start is by perhaps noting where there are not differences. When it comes to both the United States and Europe, there is broad overlap between Republicans and Democrats and between Americans and Europeans with regard to perception of global threats. Majorities in the U.S. and in most European countries also agree, for

FIGURE 2: MODELS OF EUROPE



instance, that military action against terrorist organizations is the most appropriate means to fight terrorism. To be sure, there are also some differences when it comes to possible specific threats. But the real divide lies elsewhere and has to do with how Republicans and Democrats believe one should respond to these threats.

Those differences start when it comes to the use of soft versus hard power and the efficacy of using force, including going to war, as a tool of foreign policy. The typology we developed last year—and which is confirmed by this year’s data—shows that the United States stands out from the European mainstream, in large part because of the existence of a strong “hawk” minority centered in the Republican party that believes that military power is more important than economic power and that war is, at times, necessary to obtain justice. In this regard, Republicans are not only different from Democrats but from all of the European countries surveyed in the Transatlantic Trends poll. They simply do not have counterparts in Europe on these issues—in any country or in any part of the political spectrum.

In contrast, Democrats and Independents come much closer to the European mainstream, even though they, too, are more ‘hawkish’ than the European norm. In some ways, we find that the former lineup is more closely with countries like the United Kingdom and the Netherlands as opposed to more Dovish countries on the continent like France, Germany or Spain. It is therefore hardly surprising that a Democratic candidate like John Kerry attracts considerable sympathy in European countries since his positions and those of the Democratic party are much closer to the European mainstream. Indeed, many center-right parties in Europe line-up more closely with the Democrats on many of these issues than they do with their Republican counterparts. The real gap across the Atlantic is between American conservatives and the European mainstream.

Second, there is also a real gap between Republicans and Democrats in the United States when it comes to using

multilateral institutions to address these threats. Here we find that Democrats are not only more multilateral and idealistic than Republicans, but than many Europeans as well. True to the tradition of Wilson, Roosevelt and Truman, Democratic voters express high levels of support for the United Nations and reluctance to override it. 81 % of Democratic voters have a favorable opinion of the UN as opposed to 41% of Republicans. And whereas 84% of Republicans are prepared to bypass the United Nations if they feel that America’s vital interests are threatened, only 40% of Democrats are prepared to do so.

But it is not only on the United Nations that one sees differences between Republicans and Democrats. There is also a growing gap when it comes to NATO for example. In the past, both Republican and Democratic voters expressed almost equally high levels of support for the Atlantic Alliance. Today, however, that has changed. Whereas in 2004 72% of Democrats still consider NATO essential for American security, only 55% of Republicans do so. Democrats also have somewhat warmer feelings than Republicans toward the European Union and are more inclined to believe that the U.S. and the EU have enough common values to be able to cooperate on international problems. They also do not share the antipathy that marks Republican voters when it comes to France.

In *Table 6* we show, for a selected number of issues, the degree of support or agreement for each of four groups: the European countries (EU9), the United States as a whole, U.S. Democrats, U.S. Independents and U.S. Republicans. We also outline the differences between some of them. Thus, for instance, 3 % of EU9 versus 63 % of U.S. Republicans approve ‘very much’ of Bush’ international policies, producing a difference of 60.

On average, for all substantive issues in the survey, the difference between EU and U.S. is 16 percentage points, while the difference between Democrats and Republicans is 24 percentage points. If we compare the average difference between the EU and Democrats, it is 12 percentage

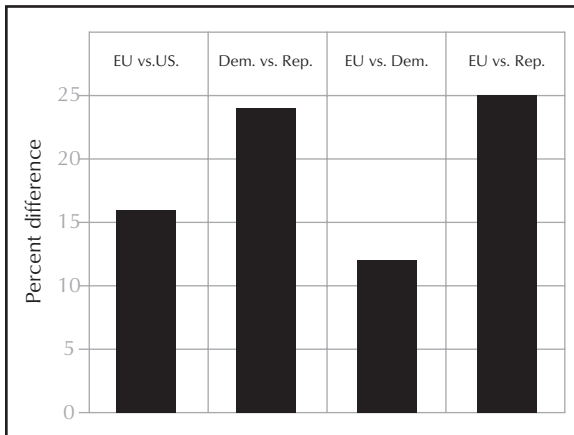
TABLE 6: POLITICAL PARTY DIFFERENCES IN THE US AND EUROPEAN VIEWS (IN %)

Issues	EU-9 (weighted)	USA all	Democr	Independ	Repub	Diff EU-9- Democr.	Diff EU-9 Repub	Diff. Dem.- Repub.
Approval of Bush' policies (% 'very much')	3	28	4	20	63	1	60	59
War in Iraq worth costs?	19	44	13	48	81	6	62	68
War in Iraq increased threat of terrorism	73	49	73	52	23	0	-50	-50
Europe and U.S. enough common values to cooperate	60	71	75	77	65	15	5	-10
EU and U.S. should take more independent approach	54	20	14	18	31	-40	-23	17
NATO still essential?	62	62	72	55	60	10	-2	-12
Europe needs more military power to act separately from U.S.	64	37	20	35	47	-44	-17	27
EU should become a superpower	71	44	54	50	32	-17	-39	-22
Defense spending (% 'too much')	29	40	63	39	15	34	6	-48
Essential to secure UN approval in future case like Iraq	82	58	81	64	30	-1	-52	-51
Still favor using armed forces if UN does not approve it	26	49	32	47	70	6	44	38

A minus sign means that the second actor is less concerned than the first actor, a plus sign the opposite.

points. Between the EU and the Republicans, on the other hand it is 25 percentage points (see *Figure 3* below).

FIGURE 3: DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GROUPS ON FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES (IN % DIFFERENCE)



4. THE U.S. PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS: HOW MUCH DOES IT MATTER WHO WINS?

Will it make a difference who wins the upcoming American Presidential election? Are either President George W. Bush or Senator John Kerry better positioned to repair the transatlantic relationship? One can draw several broad conclusions from the data and analysis presented here.

The first and perhaps most obvious conclusion is that the breach across the Atlantic has not narrowed over the last year in the wake of the Iraq war as many had hoped. Indeed, it has continued to grow in many ways. This year, for the first time, a majority of Europeans (55%) find American leadership in the world undesirable. That disaffection is not, as

some have suggested, limited to a few countries in Europe but is increasingly felt across the continent. Over the last two years the drop in confidence in a country like Poland which supported the Iraq war is almost as great as in a country like Germany which opposed the war. From the United Kingdom in the west to Turkey in the east, there is a broad wave of growing disaffection with American leadership and policy under this Administration.

In part, this is linked to the very different impact that the Iraq experience appears to be having on both sides of the Atlantic. In the United States, the war in Iraq appears to have led Americans to reaffirm the importance of alliance and partnership with allies in general, and Europe and the EU in particular. Many Americans want allies and partners again as they face the world and the challenges which are presenting themselves today. They increasingly do not want to 'go it alone.' In 2004, for example, we witnessed a sharp drop in the number of Americans who want the United States to remain the only superpower from 52% in 2003 to 40 this year.

In Europe, in contrast, Iraq is having a very different effect. It has made Europeans more critical of U.S. policies, wary of American leadership and desirous of more autonomy and independence from Washington. While Europeans see many of the same threats as Americans do, they believe Washington's response has been ineffective and risks dragging them into conflicts beyond their control. Consequently, they increasingly embrace the notion that the European Union should rely on its own and become 'another superpower'—although they themselves are often unclear as to what that means in practice¹⁴. By and large, Europeans still prefer that this EU superpower be one that cooperates rather than competes with the United States. Nonetheless, the shift in European preferences from cooperation to competition is remarkable (2003: cooperate: 85%, compete: 10 %; 2004: cooperate: 63 %, compete: 30%).

Second, the gap across the Atlantic is linked to the gap within the United States itself. Simply put, American Democrats are much closer to mainstream European public opinion than Republicans. As a result, the real divide in the transatlantic relationship is between a conservative segment of the American political spectrum and Europe. That gap shows up both in the typology we developed on attitudes toward power and the use of force and in the growing gap between Democrats and Republicans on an array of European security issues, multilateral institutions, and even the degree of "warmth" felt toward a country like France. What really sets the U.S. apart from Europe is the existence of a significant segment of the American public—the hawks in the typology—that hold very different views on power and the use of force and which have no real European counterpart in terms of political weight. This group also has a more critical view of Europe and the utilities of alliances.

Coupled with the strong Pragmatist school in the United States, this creates a very different set of dynamics on the Republican side of the American political aisle. While Hawks are not exclusively Republican, their center of gravity is certainly on the right end of the political spectrum. In contrast, the Democratic segment of the political spectrum is quite similar to the European mainstream in many ways. Within this group there is also a notable shift in ideas about the most appropriate structure of the international system to deal adequately with world problems. This includes the notion that the United States should not try to remain the only superpower and, consequently, that it would be a good thing if the European Union should play a larger role in the world, even if that would sometimes mean that the U.S. and Europe would disagree and lead to the need for compromises. In particular, this is true for many Democrats as well as Independents.

Third, this suggests that a reelected President Bush or a first-term President Kerry would come to power with

political constituencies holding very different views and preferences on many of the core issues that have been at the heart of U.S.-European differences in recent years. To be sure, the threats and problems facing Washington are going to be the same irrespective of who sits in the Oval Office. Yet, if there is one thing that has been documented in the Transatlantic Trends surveys, it is that the major differences between American and Europeans are not over the nature of the threats or problems we face but rather over the most appropriate and effective means for addressing them.

If one sets aside for a moment the question of the pros and cons of different policy choices as well as the diplomatic skill of different leaders and instead asks the narrower question of which American candidate or party would be better positioned to find common ground with Europe, then the evidence seems pretty clear. A new Bush Administration would have problems finding political counterparts in Europe which share its preferences on many of these issues. To find common ground, it would have to modify those positions in order to bring them more closely in line with those of America's allies. In contrast, a Kerry Administration would start off in a better position to heal the rift across the Atlantic. While public opinion certainly does not predetermine policy, the data presented here suggest part of the answer why it has been so difficult for the Bush Administration to put together a European coalition behind its policies. This will probably remain the case if he is re-elected.

Yet, a future Kerry Administration would face challenges as well. If expectations are low if President Bush is re-elected, the danger may be that they could be too high for a Kerry Administration. While Democrats are more closely aligned with European views on many issues, there are differences here as well. Our typology suggests that Democrats, too, are more hawkish than

the European norm on questions surrounding the use of force, albeit even more idealist when it comes to international institutions like the United Nations. Our Atlanticism continuum also underscores the diversity of opinion within Europe and suggests that a Kerry Administration would find it much easier to reach common ground with some countries than others. While public opinion across Europe could be more congenial to a new Democrat President, a Kerry Administration would find the public more open to close cooperation in the Netherlands, Italy and the United Kingdom. It would be somewhat more difficult in Germany, Poland and Portugal and hardest in France, Slovakia, Spain and Turkey, where proponents of 'independence' outweigh 'allies' by three to two.

Finally, the existence of this double divide across the Atlantic and across the political aisle in the United States clearly means that future U.S.-European relations are not only likely to be more challenging but also unpredictable. Irrespective of who wins the U.S. election, Washington may be a less predictable actor in its policy toward Europe given the deep divisions in the American body politic on core issues in the U.S.-European relationship. While one can discern a convergence of European views on many foreign policy issues, it may be based more on a negative view of current American policy than on a positive view of what Europeans want to achieve. One can question whether such a basis is either healthy or sustainable. Equally troublesome, there are indications that the crisis of recent years has not only nourished a desire for a greater role of the European Union on the world scene but is also eroding European faith in some in the effectiveness of international institutions like NATO and the UN. Whoever the next President of the United States is, he will face a critical challenge in reestablishing close cooperation across the Atlantic. A lot will depend not only on what happens in Washington but also what European governments are willing to do to mend this rift.

End notes

- 1 That partisan differences and particularly the 'euro-style' attitudes of Democrats pre-dates 9/11 and Iraq can be concluded from Wittkopf, E., 'What Americans Really Think About Foreign Policy,' *The Washington Quarterly*, 19, 3, Summer 1996, 91-106.
- 2 This essay represents the first version of work that is still in progress. Reasons of space prohibit us from presenting data and additional evidence underlying some of our arguments and conclusions. Further information on these can be obtained from the authors (everts@fsw.leidenuniv.nl or isernia@unisi.it).
- 3 See R. Asmus, Ph. P. Everts and P. Isernia, *Power, War and Public Opinion: Thoughts on the Nature and Structure of the Trans-Atlantic Divide* [http://www.transatlantictrends.org/apps/gmf/tweb.nsf/0/04D176E1042099DA85256D960077DCA7/\\$file/Asmus+Everts+and+Isernia+Interpretative+Essay.pdf](http://www.transatlantictrends.org/apps/gmf/tweb.nsf/0/04D176E1042099DA85256D960077DCA7/$file/Asmus+Everts+and+Isernia+Interpretative+Essay.pdf) and idem, *Power, War and Public Opinion. Looking behind the Transatlantic Divide*, Policy Review, February-March 2004, 73-88.
- 4 See the report *Transatlantic Trends 2004* and related data at www.transatlantictrends.org
- 5 In order to test how it would affect the typology, we added one item to the 'hard power' dimension and also measured agreement/disagreement with another statement in the 2004 poll: 'The best way to ensure peace is through military strength'. The skewedness of the distribution on this item has some impact. It inflates the number of *Pragmatists* (by 9%) and deflates that of *Doves* (by 8%). It has no impact on the number of *Hawks* and *Isolationists*. While adding this item leads to a richer indicator, and shows that the typology stands out even with a more robust set of questions, it was decided to retain the original operationalisation, mainly for reasons of maximizing comparability. A factor analysis also brought to light the independence of the two dimensions.
- 6 For reasons of comparability, figures for 2004 do not include figures for Slovakia, Spain and Turkey, countries that were included in this survey.
- 7 See note 2.
- 8 See note 2.
- 9 See note 4.
- 10 With an index ranging from low to high 'Atlanticism' with a range from 5 to 25, we recoded the scores in two groups, low and high or Independents and Atlanticists, with the cut point at the mean level, with a score of 17. Those coded as Low have a score less or equal to 17 and those recoded as high have a score higher than 17. The distribution of the two groups for each country constitute the scores for the index given in Table 8.
- 11 This suggests a possible source of misunderstanding between U.S. and EU if Kerry would win the Presidential elections in November 2004. Democrats will tend to speak the language of Atlanticism—i.e. NATO—to people in Europe—the Center-Left—who are likely to be less impressed by it and favor organizing defense along European lines.
- 12 Scores for the dimension of military (hard) civilian (soft) power were calculated on the basis of three questions in the survey: 1) preferences for military expenditure, 2) 'Economic power is more important in world affairs than military power' and 3) 'The best way to ensure peace is through military strength'.
- 13 See note 4.
- 14 The shift towards what some would call 'Eurochauvinism' is most striking in Germany with 73 % of Germans now favoring an EU super-power compared to 43 % in 2002.

