

This **Tribune** was written at one go just under two years ago and then, at Thomas More Institute's request, reworked by the author in the autumn of 2004. We do not think that subsequent events (persistent instability but successful elections in Iraq, death of Yasser Arafat and promising first steps of Mahmoud Abbas, the death of Rafik Hariri in Lebanon, the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Gaza and the West Bank, the re-election of George Bush to the White House, muddled and criss-crossed debate on the draft European Constitution and the entry of Turkey) make his arguments less valid. On the contrary, they corroborate them. In the great avalanche of books and articles dealing with these topics that have appeared since September 11th 2001, we have not found a single one that analyses events in this way. Only an exceptionally acute mind could so accurately detect the hidden motives at the root of the quarrel that so deeply divided France and a few other European countries on one hand, and the U.S.A on the other. This mind is Hungarian, i.e. a European, from Central Europe. If a fresh breeze can once again blow over Europe, if a little of the "clarity of mind" dear to Montesquieu is still possible there, it is undoubtedly from Central and Eastern Europe that they will come.

France – Europe – USA : Known and unknown underpinnings of "friendly misunderstanding"

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France in front of the enlargement of the EU: unease and the unsaid

When Paris looks at EU policy vis-à-vis its eastern neighbours, and as concerns European integration generally speaking, it is, finally, from a single viewpoint: how can it be integrated with France's main geostrategic objectives for the 21st century¹? First of all, in what form, and above all to what extent, can the influence and prestige that France enjoyed in the 19th and 20th centuries be preserved in the 21st century by the administrative and decision-making structures of the European Union? Next, what institutional means, what constitutional or structural reforms, what political orientation and what strategy are needed in order to achieve this front-rank ambition?

Finally, if this ambition should turn out to be possible², what further decisions – economic measures, foreign policy and defence orientations, strategic stances (diplomatic actions and alliances) – would be required to create a "multipolar" world, i.e. either to limit the hegemonic lead obtained by the U.S.A since 1989/90 or at least to encourage them to more moderation.

It can easily be inferred from the above three points that the enlargement of the European Union which took place on May 1st 2004 essentially takes account – like it or not – of the power structure in Brussels, and results from political considerations (a compromise between short and long-term interests) and not from a strong conviction stemming from France's deep intentions.

France and Central and East European Countries: an insincere dialogue

In fact, from the middle of the last decade onwards, many signs suggested that the eastward extension of 15-member Europe and, generally speaking, the ongoing phase of integration completed on May 1st 2004, were not genuinely – in contradiction with official statements and repeated assurances – among France's political priorities.³ But, in the framework of the EU's *Ostpolitik*, what are these priorities?

From a geographical, economic, political and historical viewpoint, it can be said that a majority of the countries that have entered recently belong to the German sphere of influence rather than the French one. Consequently, after 1989/90, Paris was wary regarding a much stronger economic expansion and political influence than hers in most of the states concerned (except possibly the two islands: Cyprus and Malta). The logical consequence of this German expansion was a tangible loss of French prestige in capitals where France had gained a reputation as top-rank investor (Warsaw) or where she could, at least theoretically, count on longstanding gratitude and sympathy (Prague, Bucharest and, partly, Warsaw).

France and the "minority problem"

Two of the main points that embarrassed France vis-à-vis the newly-integrated countries, and which were worrying both for her and for Europe, were what diplomats and specialists grouped under the generic terms "minority problems" and "border problems".

Indeed, it is widely known that the French concept of the nation not only does not contain that of "minorities", but denies its very existence on French territory, to the extent that many Gypsies in France – part of them from central Europe – are prudishly classified as "nomads".

As for the "frontier issue" in central and Eastern Europe, it is considered simultaneously as a reactionary legacy, a historical leftover, and a dangerous political bomb.⁴ This conveniently scotomises (even if it is with secret remorse) that all the problems to solve in the near future are ultimately the lasting result and consequence of the

¹ See Michel Foucher, *La République européenne. Entre histoires et géographies* [The European Republic, between histories and geography], Paris, Belin, 1998.

² Efficient institutional reform of the European Union, carefully thought-out extension and installation of the final structure of the Union; its working, its decision-making mechanisms, and the adoption of a constitution.

³ The European Affairs minister of Mr Jospin's government, Pierre Moscovici, never missed an opportunity to emphasize that, from a French viewpoint, the enlargement (scheduled after 1995) was linked to a prior condition. In other words, at that time, French strategists wished to delay the approaching wave of new memberships because the institutional reforms which they considered inevitable had not yet taken place. In a nutshell, "deepening" of the Union was to come before "enlargement". This had been just the question raised by President Mitterand in his declaration on June 14th 1991, when he stated that the former democratic republics were in a state of "worrying disrepair" which would "for decades and decades" prevent them from being integrated into the European Union.

⁴ Cf. Michel Foucher, *op cit.*, pp 89 et 112-113.



“work of peace” in Versailles, inspired by France in 1918-1920 and the “redistribution of nationalities” which resulted from it. In other words, the reallocation of vast areas of Central Europe, inhabited by virtually inextricable mosaics of peoples with a view to the setting up of new entities supposed to be or to become small nation-states *à la française*, while hoping – in vain – that they could become what France considered the indispensable buffer and counterweight against “Great Germany” which had remained virtually intact.⁵

At the same time, France, on her territory, France faces another dilemma in connection with this problem-cluster: after the enlargement of Europe, how should she treat the Basque, Alsatian, Breton, Provençal and above all Corsican regional issues, which she attempts to play down in spite of their undeniably growing strength? Is there not a risk that the entry of new members, added to this legal and constitutional imbroglio (let us not forget the “special status” of Corsica) could be the last straw that will make the problem unsolvable?⁶ The question of the integration of Gypsies from Eastern Europe (especially Rumania) must also be added to this set of thorny problems since, as a result of enlargement, they will, ipso facto be within the frontiers of the European Union, and their constant influx is starting to be a cause of concern in France.

Political thinking, and - even more – the day-to-day practice of power, in France, is coming up against another latent problem, more serious than the ones above, and which might degenerate anytime: the relationship between a Jewish community of around 700 000 members and a Moslem population estimated at between five and seven million (according to different sources). In other words, how is it possible to avoid the Israeli-Arab conflict from spilling over into France? We will come back to this point.

France and Germany

France obviously observed the successes obtained by Germany in Eastern Europe between 1989 and 2002 with wariness and jealousy. For some time, France had felt that the third wave of European integration was more profitable to German interests than to France: a new and hidden version of “Drang nach Osten”... and if such were the case – this, at least was the feeling in government circles – it was an infringement of one of the tacit conditions, important for France, of the historical *rapprochement* between France and Germany (in itself a *sine qua non* condition of “European Construction”). This condition was that reunified Germany should show moderation in Central and Eastern Europe⁷.

Finally, there is one more unstated component of French reservations, which is a kind of consequence and vestige of Franco-German rivalry on the continent. French circles feared (this is still a debated topic) that the attachment to Europe of most of the countries of the former “Eastern Europe”, closer to Germany, would irreversibly give an advantage to the German “federalist” concept over the French vision (inspired by Jacobinism) of a “confederation of nation-states”, wished for in their time by François Mitterrand and Jacques Delors.

Foundations and Objectives of American Policy

The delicate topic (virtually taboo in France and in Europe as a whole) of an anti-Judaism which was initially latent and then – with the tragic worsening of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict – more and more virulent, cannot be omitted here, because it is indirectly, but indissociably linked to a key item of French long-term policy already mentioned above. It is even a historical challenge of greater magnitude than the traditional Franco-British or Franco-German oppositions. It is that of the conflictual relations between France and the USA⁸.

⁵ On this subject, see Jacques Bainville, *Les conséquences politiques de la paix* [*The political consequences of the signing of peace*], Paris, 1920. Also, more recently, François Fejto, *Requiem pour un empire défunt. Histoire de la destruction de l'Autriche-Hongrie* [*Requiem for a Deceased empire : History of the destruction of the Austro-Hungarian empire*], Paris, ed. Lieu Commun, 1988.

⁶ One of the significant phases of this dilemma was the partial and selective adoption of the European charta on Regional and Minority Languages signed on May 7th 1999 in Budapest by Pierre Moscovici; For reasons obviously linked to domestic politics, France only recognised as valid 39 out of the 94 paragraphs of the Charta !

⁷ On these questions of Franco-German relations, see M. Foucher, *op.cit.*, especially pp 13 and 49-50.

⁸ On this point, see – among others – Daniel Vernet, “Le vieux dilemme de la diplomatie française” [“The old dilemma of French diplomacy”], *Le Monde*, 26/09/2003 ; and Thierry de Montbrial, “Entre Paris et Washington, une vieille histoire querelleuse” [“Between Paris and Washington, history of an old quarrel”], *Le Monde*, 23/04/2004.



The Origins of the new American doctrine

To be more precise: we are referring to the conflictual relation of France with the American geostrategic conception developed as from 1992/93. According to this view – in a nutshell – in the 21st century, the simplest way to strengthen and give a lasting nature to the world hegemony won by the U.S.A at the end of the 20th century is, temporarily, (for a few decades: brief, from a historical viewpoint) to move the centre of gravity of this “floating empire” from the now pacified and Americanised areas of Western Europe and the Pacific, towards the Near East⁹.

Why the Near East? For many reasons, both “civilisational” and pragmatic. It is one of the birthplaces of human civilisation and it is there that the three great monotheistic religions blossomed. But it is also the greatest reserve of energy on the planet as well as an ideal location and haven for many American politico-economic forces in search of new achievements and positive ideologies.

Another important point that must not be forgotten is that the Holy Land is at this very time – specifically from 1948 onwards – the “workshop” for one of the most interesting ventures in history: the (re)creation of modern Israel; seen by Islam both as an unjustifiable and frustrating intrusion, and as an ongoing provocation from the West. In the eyes of “the free world”, on the other hand, it is an exciting experiment in nation building, the success of which –for complex socio-politico-historico-moral reasons – cannot be indifferent to anybody. On the contrary: the strategic security of the Hebrew state and the *de jure* recognition of Israel by the Islamic world (i.e. a settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict) is an international issue in which there is a joint interest, and which requires efforts from all political forces and every sensible person on the planet¹⁰.

The Objectives

If it succeeds, this massive transfer – the building of this new strategic bridgehead – can theoretically solve many fundamental geopolitical problems, or at the very least ensure an effective control over the a significant part of the economic and socio-political developments awaiting the world in the 21st century.

Anyway, such are the ideas – unless they happen to be wishful thinking¹¹ – which are current in Washington:

- Control of the petroleum reserves of the Near East (representing 60% of global resources).
- Modernisation, remodelling and secularisation, according to American criteria, of the authoritarian regimes considered to be seedbeds of “international terrorism” (Iraq, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Iran);
- Radical reorganisation of the balance of power, of the state structure and the frontiers of the region; and the creation, if need be, of new entities such as a “palestinised” Jordan, and a self-governing or even independent Kurdistan¹²;
- Consolidation of the “secular Moslem” nature of Turkey and dampening of Ankara’s ambition to revive the empire of Turkish-speaking peoples in central Asia¹³. At the same time, make a strong contribution to the final “anchoring” of this “ferry-boat country” (at the meeting-point of three continents and three civilisations, and strategically of considerable importance) in the “waters” of the West. Meaning: continue to encourage the “europeanisation” of Turkish society and institutions. Hence the constant American

⁹ The first formal statement of this doctrine, dated February 1992, was made by Paul Wolfowitz and J. Lewis Libby in a document entitled *Defence Planning Guidance 1992-1994*, which – although secret – was abundantly commented.

¹⁰ A French historian specialised in this issue, summarises the question as follows: “How has this tiny territory become, over these last decades, one of the great global stakes? It is because what happens to the Holy Land is part of the long-term fate of sacredness linked to the great monotheistic religions, and also of the major contemporary dramas, such as the fate of the Jewish people and the painful turmoil of colonisation and decolonisation”. Henry Laurens, “Dans l’Orient arabe toujours plus compliqué” [“In the ever more complicated Arab East”], *Le Monde*, 13/03/2004.

¹¹ Cf. Ray McGovern, “Sliding into war: wishful thinking once again in Washington”, *International Herald Tribune*, 12/03/2003.

¹² Cf. Gérard Chaliand, “La guerre, précondition au remodelage du Moyen-Orient? Le pari de la stratégie américaine” [“War, prior condition for the reshaping of the Middle East? The wager of American strategy”], *Le Figaro* 20/02/2003. See also the book by Gérard Chaliand and Arnaud Blin, *America is back. Les nouveaux Césars du Pentagone* [America is Back: the new Caesars of the Pentagon], Paris, Bayard, 2003.

¹³ Cf. Alexandre Adler, “Les mystères d’Istanbul” [“The Mysteries of Istanbul”], *Le Figaro*, 27/03/2003 ; and Hamit Bozarslan, “La Turquie: puissance régionale et forteresse assiégée?” [“Turkey, regional power and besieged fortress”], *Politique Etrangère* 2003/1, pp 93-102.



pressure on European decision-makers, especially on Berlin and Paris¹⁴, to bring Turkey into the European Union as quickly as possible.

- Prevent Russia from regaining overmuch power. In other words, discourage as tactfully as could be, a possible “second wedding” with Ukraine, while getting the strategists in Moscow to understand that at the moment their vital interests are under a much greater threat from Moslem fundamentalists than from any movement towards Russian frontiers by NATO and EU forces, and that, in the long term, the irresistible expansion of China (which will require vast quantities of energy, and might revive the ancient Chinese dream of getting their hands on the Siberian and Central Asian petroleum fields) can only be halted with the help of the West¹⁵. The possible Chinese threat – let us say here – is one of the reasons why NATO will remain indispensable in the future. It is the reason why, in our view, those who weaken the cohesion and confidence of transatlantic relations not only commit an irretrievable strategic error, but also commit a colossal crime against the values and interests of the West¹⁶.
- Contain the growth of Chinese power – and possibly that of India, anticipated for the second half of the 21st century and considered by the U.S.A as a potential source of danger – or, if necessary, build new bridgeheads destined to parry this (doubtless inevitable) situation.

The strategy implemented by Washington over the past years seems, indeed, to confirm and even to change into a new geopolitical doctrine, both the argument developed in 1996 by Jacob Heilbrun and Michael Lind, and the vision set out by Samuel P. Huntington in the same year in his book *A Clash of Civilisations*¹⁷: eastward extension of NATO in 1997 then in 2002, bombing of Kosovo in 1999 (“dress rehearsal” for the anti-Taliban war and the intervention in the Middle East) only five days after Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic joined the alliance (on March 19th 1999) and without the go-ahead from the UN Security Council, modification of the nature, role and structure of NATO; proclamation of a merciless fight against “international terrorism”; pacification of Afghanistan (second “dress rehearsal”); elimination of Saddam Hussein’s regime in Iraq.

After a thorough and contradictory examination of their sources, it will be up to historians to determine how the “September 11th syndrome” can be integrated into this overview, and to what extent it is a cause or a consequence in the war-oriented evolution of the U.S.A, that is, in the irrepressible desire for vengeance and the war obsession that reign in Washington¹⁸.

The great taboo: the “Jewish question” in global geopolitics

The Shoah, Europe’s bad conscience and the creation of Israel

Another still more explosive and sensitive issue is: what is the link between the total failure of the “classical” evolution of European democratic civil behaviour, even of the whole European system of values, and what turned out to be an almost absolute bankruptcy of centuries-old Christian charity towards the persecuted (men like us) in a nutshell, the partial extermination of West European Jews and the virtual annihilation of those in Central and Eastern Europe?

The analysis of this question is indispensable for an understanding of present-day strategic issues.

¹⁴ The « altercation » that occurred between George W. Bush and J. Chirac during a NATO conference in Istanbul on June 28th & 29th was a clear illustration of Franco-American rivalry.... And above all of French “touchiness” !

¹⁵ Cf Zbigniew Brzinski : *The Great Chessboard. American Primacy and its geostrategic alternatives*, New York, Basic Books, 1997.

¹⁶ Cf. Among a large number of articles, analyses and top-level declarations : S. Agnelli, G. Amato, R. Barre, C. Bildt, E. Colombo, J-L Dehaene, B. Geremek, H. D. Genscher, V. Giscard d’Estaing, F. Gonzalez, D. Hurd, H. Kohl, G. Napolitano, H. Schmidt, C. Scogliamiglio, E. Serra, H. van Mierlo, “Europe-USA, l’atout majeur” [“Europe-US: the trump card”], *Le Monde*, 15-16/06/2003, [A sentence noted by us: “United, we are considered the voices of a great vision, and great wisdom; divided, we shall all be losers”].

¹⁷ New York, Simon and Schuster 1996. The argument was presented for the first time in *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1993, vol 73, N° 3, that is very shortly after the document drawn up by Paul Wolfowicz, quoted in note 12.

¹⁸ According to certain sources, in a limited cabinet meeting, Paul Wolfowicz, who enjoys the total confidence of Donald Rumsfeld and President Bush, took position in favour of a war against Iraq the day after the terrible terrorist attack of September 11th (according to other sources, he did so on September 14th) Cf. the article by J. Amalric, about the publication in French of Bob Woodward’s book (*Bush at War*): “The metamorphosis of George W. Bush”, *Libération*, 13/03/2003. See also Eric Laurent, *La guerre des Bush [The Bushes’ War]*, Paris, Plon, 2003.



Indeed, without the holocaust, without this perfectly justified European guilt feeling¹⁹ and without this dynamic international indignation, the Zionist movement – initially devoid of political impact, and considered as one option among others (total assimilation, Bund movement, communist utopia etc) of escaping from the “Jewish dilemma”- would probably never have given birth to a completely new entity: the modern state of Israel (whose roots go back, nevertheless to a very ancient period)²⁰.

This means that the existence of Israel, a sort of epilogue to the longstanding colonial rivalry in the region between France and Britain (the creation of the Palestine protectorate being an exception) is virtually equivalent to the “exporting” to the Near East of a failure in European history and of this immense shame (for Germany especially) resulting, almost immediately, in the growth of Arab nationalism²¹.

The U.S.A. and “Jewish Destiny”

Another, too rarely treated²² consequence of the persecution of European Jews is that, after the emigration of the Jewish (or of Jewish origin) intellectual elite in the 1920s and 1930s, (Einstein, Von Neumann, Strauss, Teller²³ at al), hundreds of thousands of Jews – survivors of the concentration camps - left for the U.S.A. at the end of the war, and then again between 1945 and 1948 – now fleeing from communism and always bringing at the same time fresh blood to the American intelligentsia. They perfectly integrated the “open society” that they found, with its “limitless possibilities” but without losing their natural feeling for the “Jewish destiny” whose focal point was, and still is, the extreme strategic fragility and the incontestable threat that has hung over Israel since its creation in May 1948.

It can be said (another simplification) that the change in the geostrategic orientation of the U.S.A. stems from the convergence of three fundamental tendencies:

- A feeling of superiority coming from its situation as unequalled hyperpower;
- Public opinion and American society’s heightened awareness of the great global dilemmas (even in rural areas, the Middle West and above all, the “deep south”). The profoundly conservative, religious, moralising character of the population in question, convinced of its mission, as this messianism becomes more secular becomes more materialistic, and identifies with the symbols of the American nation²⁴.
- The ability to assert one’s interests, the intellectual influence and the considerable prestige of the descendants of former refugees from Eastern Europe who have gained key positions in the economy, finance, research, political brains-trusts, and the media. We may add to this the fairly recent but highly

¹⁹ Cf. J-C Casanova, “Le terrorisme et l’Europe” [“Terrorism & Europe”], *Le Monde*, 19/10/2001 : « Because of the persecution and genocide of Jews, Europe bears its share of responsibility in the creation of the state of Israel”. And see – more recently – Dominique Moisi, “L’Europe et la légitimité d’Israël” [“Europe and the legitimacy of Israel”], *Le Monde*, 02/03/2004 : “It is not the return of the kind of anti-Semitism that Europe experienced in the 30s that is on our horizon; it is a process of “unloving” of Israel.”

²⁰ « For two centuries, the Jews have been extraordinary experimenters who have penetrated far into systems with opposing logics: that of assimilation (bourgeois or socialist) and that of nationalism. It is this emblematic path which we are interested in here: not the Jews *in themselves* but what they represent for our understanding of the emergence of a modern policy [...] This complex process is specific to all modern nations who, contrary to what one might think, are not unchangeable realities, but are the genuine product of abundant political innovations.” Cf. Alain Dieckhoff, *L’invention d’une nation. Israël et la modernité politique* [The Invention of a Nation. Israel and political modernism], Paris, Gallimard, 1993, pp 12-13. Quoted by Georges Corm in *Le Proche-Orient éclaté 1956-2003* [The Fractured Near East 1956-2003], Paris, Gallimard, 2003. See also Avineri Schlomo, *The Making of Modern Zionism*, New York, Basic Books, 1981.

²¹ On these topics, cf. Georges Corm, *ibid*, pp 834-837 in particular. See also Alain-Georges Slama, “Les quatre fautes d’Albion” [“The four faults of Albion”], *Le Figaro*, 10/03/2003 ; and, more recently, Yves Guesmond, “Des géographes à l’assaut de la Palestine?” [“Geographers attack Palestine?”], *Le Monde*, 27/05/2004.

²² See nevertheless the study entitled *Israeli-Palestinian relations seen through the prism of the current geostrategic aims of the United States* in B. Borsi-Kalman *Questions and Pseudo-questions. Thoughts on the interdependency between attempts to impose group interests, national identity and international strategies*, Budapest, Akademiai, 2004, pp 87-151.

²³ The philosopher Leo Strauss (1899-1999) is, with Alan Bloom, considered as the “father” of the thinking and political praxis of the American neo-conservatives, to the extent that they are even sometimes called “Straussians”.

²⁴ « The Goddess for whom Bush is going to war today is above all America [...] for the majority of Americans, the star-spangled banner and the way of life that it represents have replaced Jesus Christ as an eschatological figure of Millennial happiness. And it is primarily for that god that they are fighting” : Sébastien Fath, “Comme un vol de faucons hors de la cage d’acier” [“Like Hawks flying out of a steel cage”], *Le Monde* 15/03/2003. See also John Lukacs “Outgrowing Democracy. A History of the United States in the 20th Century”, *Europa*, Budapest, 2002, pp. 523-524.



significant socio-political phenomenon that is the emergence of a new American pressure group; highly educated, extraordinarily dynamic, and impressively efficient, as well as the stunning rise in power of “neo-conservative” intellectuals and civil servants (“necons”) many of whom came from the 1950 to 1970 leftist movements²⁵.

It is difficult to treat these questions without running the risk of embittering the situation, and without awaking latent anti-Semitism; so true it is that these are spontaneous processes rooted in the psychology and history of American society²⁶. In addition, every people possesses the inalienable right to create a state and ensure its security. In actual fact, all these complex historical and social events and their consequences may be seen as objective historical data, and deliberately neglecting or ignoring the concatenation of their effects is just as much a source of error as prejudice and tendentious interpretations.

Soviet Jews and the “population imbalance” in Israel

It is the same for these new consequences, rarely taken into account: namely, the loss of relative equilibrium within Israeli society, or, more precisely, the substantial links existing between the beginning of the second *intifada* and the speed-up in immigration from the states of the ex soviet Union!

According to impartial Israeli sources, the massive arrival of new Russian-speaking immigrants who integrate less easily than the Ashkenazi from Central Europe or the Sephardes from North Africa, has seriously perturbed the fragile equilibrium between Jewish and Palestinian populations. On this point, Georges Corm writes: “While, until now, Israel received annually 8000 to 10000 immigrants from every country, and as many of slightly more people emigrated, over the first eight months of 1990, she received around 100 000 immigrants from the Soviet Union [...] the failure to absorb the flow of Russian immigrants, and the persistence of a high level of unemployment among this highly skilled new population could have serious consequences.”

He adds: “The collapse of the Soviet Union, will result in the emigration to Israel of about 200 000 Jews, among whom many valuable scientific workers. This will contribute to a new extension of Israel: demographic, economic and geopolitical. Over the past decade, everything has contributed to a renaissance of Judaism throughout the world, coming from Israel and the United States, which possesses the largest Jewish community²⁷. In other words, if there has been a worsening of the difficulties in building the Israeli nation and of tension in the Middle East, it is not only due to one obvious breakdown in the development of European democracy, but also (strange post-Brejev heritage) the failure of “socialist”, soviet society.

The Security of Israel : one of the hidden reasons for the transatlantic quarrel

Paradoxically, few French people sincerely believe that the reinforcement in Israel’s security (which is, nonetheless indispensable) and consequently the “recomposing” of the Near and Middle East (also considered indispensable in Washington) might be a strategic priority for France and the European Union²⁸. Meaning,

²⁵ See on this subject the words of one of the most influential ideologists of the neo-conservative group, the founder of the review *Commentary*, Norman Podheretz: “for me, 1967 was the decisive turning-point, it was when I had had enough of the left. The Soviet Union’s rabid anti-Zionism was only one of my reasons. What also got my back up was the fact that the (American) left was not prepared to recognize the anti-Semitism of the rising radical Negro groups [...] left-wing intellectuals in general didn’t give a damn about it, and still don’t care today” .

²⁶ « The stance of American society vis-à-vis the Jewish community is a relationship of adoption and integration. The Jewish community is considered as sharing all the values of the dominant American culture; its leaders belong to the social and political elite of the United States, and the Jewish community is on a high rank on the social ladder of religious and ethnic communities. Its respectability is acknowledged and, which could not be said of the Black and Hispanic communities, for instance.” Camille Mansour, *Israël et les Etats-Unis ou les fondements d’une doctrine stratégique [Israel and the USA, the foundations of a strategic doctrine]*, Paris, Armand Colin, 1995, p 241.

²⁷ G. Corm, *op cit*, pp. 665 & 845.

²⁸ In its April 1st 2003 issue, the *International Herald Tribune* states: “French oppose war but hope America wins!” Jean-Claude Casanova, director of the review *Commentaire*, taking part, along with many French and Israel intellectuals in a colloquium organised between May 16th and 18th in Tel-Aviv and entitled “Croised views” summed up the present situation as follows: “Are we observing a new rise in anti-Semitism as a result of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict? I think so. But what is most alarming is not the scribbles on synagogues or the muggings, it is the feeling of indifference in French opinion, which considers anti-Semitic acts as a problem between Jews and Moslems.” Cf. Xavier Ternisien, “Incompréhension croisée entre Français et Israéliens” [“Mutual incomprehension between French people and Israelis”], *Le Monde*, 26/05/2004.



ultimately, that Europe does not feel it has to make up for the sociological and moral failure shown in the “Jewish Problem”²⁹.

Partly to exorcise its own inability, invoking an (unfortunately) genuine risk of unforeseeable consequences³⁰, Europe, surfing on the basis of rhetorical arguments and questions of principle criticises America, who is ready, and above all determined, to act, and desperately tries to weaken its determination by using the institutional tools still available (international congresses, vetoes in the UN Security Council).

It is precisely this difference in viewpoint, which is one of the thorny but partly overshadowed issues in the Euro-Atlantic crisis. From this point of view, the situation in Germany is far more uncomfortable than any other. As we mentioned above, without the Nazi death factories, Zionism, as a reaction, would undoubtedly not have become strong enough to produce an operational concept for a state. And in the wake of the new wave of emigration after 1945, American society, deeply religious, and impregnated with Messianism, would not have become so sensitive to events in the Middle East, driven to a paroxysm by the terrible events of September 11th 2001 which permitted the convergence between provincial grassroots America (partly zealous neoprotestant evangelists, like the incumbent President) and a major fraction of the East-coast intellectual elite currently in power³¹.

It would, however, be a making major mistake to think that the present Washington foreign policy had been “hijacked” by the “neocons”, that Israel’s security had priority over the strategic considerations of American power, or over its manoeuvres with a view to the durability and security of petrol supply for the American economy and that of its close allies. Quite the contrary: it is likely that the destiny of Israel is only in third or fourth place in the hierarchy of geopolitical priorities of the USA. At the very least, it is below the building of the Iraqi bridgehead and the petrol issue. On the other hand, it is just as obvious that everybody (political decision-makers and pressure groups) uses this argument, both as a calculated objective and as a consciously mounted pretext.

And it is in this context that we may ask questions about the prominent figures and *eminences grises* of the neoconservative current. Without their Central and East European roots, without the traumatic monstrosities of the Shoah, and without their depressing experience of the “peaceful coexistence” years (so dear to leftwing ideologists) could they have come to their present radical positions? And that is also why the revealed and unrevealed, aspects – the state and unstated reasons – of the new American strategy form a particularly explosive mixture: definitive arguments and powerful weapons.

The Iraq War :the great revealer

To make things simple, let us say that the present foreign policy of the U.S.A. (= the transformation of the Heilbrunn-Lind-Huntington theories into a doctrine, and the acceleration of this process as a result of the “September 11th syndrome”³²) essentially results from the objective facts and hidden connections that we have just explained.

²⁹ Cf. Avraham B. Yehoshua, “La question juive posée au monde” [“The Jewish Question asked of the World”], *Libération*, 29/11/2003. By the same author, “Le sionisme a été diabolisé” [“Zionism has been diabolised”], *Le Figaro*, 29/08/2001.

³⁰ « Because of the persecution and genocide of Jews, Europe bears part of the responsibility for the creation of the state of Israel, which restricts its freedom of action. It must therefore avoid hindering the Americans, by pretending to be a third party. The Americans’ influence on the protagonists is incomparably greater than Europe’s, and the latter should, on the contrary, assist them with a view to a reasonable partition of land between Israelis and Palestinians.” in J-C Casanova, “Le terrorisme et l’Europe” [“Terrorism & Europe”], *Le Monde*, 19/10/2001.

³¹ On the antecedents of this convergence, see Georges Corm, *op cit*, pp 837-850. Concerning the influential personalities working in various institutions, universities and think-tanks, Cf. Pierre Hassner & Justin Vaisse, *Washington et le monde. Les dilemmes d’une superpuissance [Washington and the World. The dilemma of a superpower]*, Paris, Autrement/CERI, 2003. As for the central core of bush advisers see the critical opinion of Patrice Higonnet, professor of French history at Harvard: “On one hand there is New Deal America [...] there is now a second America, present everywhere but above all in Texas and the South, and officially pro-Republican. It is a worrying, unclear, America, where pluralism is essentially a mask for private interests[...] To find in French history a government as dishonest, clumsy and yet sure of itself, we would have to go back to Napoleon III.” in “La résistible ascension du nouvel empire américain” [“The resistible ascension of the American empire”], *Libération*, 03/01/2003.

³² According to George Soros, “The Bush administration took power with an ideology founded on *market economy fundamentalism* and military supremacy. Before September 11th they couldn’t really implement it because they had neither a clear mandate to do so, neither a clearly defined enemy. Terrorism gave them the ideal enemy because it is invisible and never



George W. Bush and his "peculiar team"

This is a synthesis that George Bush and his "peculiar team"³³ appear able not only to energetically achieve and relentlessly defend; they have also obviously decided to implement it. This leads us to ask three questions:

1. Do the intentions of the Bush team³⁴ agree with the interests of the American political elite, the whole of American society, and, therefore, the majority of the people on the planet? Which can be reworded as follows: is what is good for America also good for the rest of the world? Or: in the same situation, would a Democrat president have acted in the same way? Or, also: if John Kerry had been elected, would he have used a hurried *exit strategy* or will he have the courage to tamper with the written and non-stated axioms of American policy³⁵ ?
2. Is it right, and wise, to bow to the will of an avant-garde of a couple of score of highly-trained but possibly doctrinaire technocrats and political specialists, giving the –false – impression that the Bush government is ultimately managed from Tel-Aviv? In other words, do "the President's men" realize that owing to their unilateral and often impatient acts, the present strategy of the Bush administration encourages the resurgence of the most abhorrent anti-Semitic clichés (judeo-capitalism, "Jewish conspiracy", world Zionist hegemony etc) and that, seen from North Africa, Iran, Pakistan or Indonesia, the U.S.A. is not only perceived as the Great Satan, but also as a vastly inflated Israel³⁶?
3. Is it rational to imagine that a nation of 290 million people, even if it has founded the most powerful state and it possesses the strongest army in history, can submit to its will the six billion people living in the rest of the world? Do the stakes justify the risk of finding oneself rapidly in opposition with a large part of Europe and, in the long term, the whole of the third World³⁷?

A quarrel that "did not bear on the points brought up"

On this particular point, a French diplomat (who wishes to remain anonymous) told us that he was convinced that the quarrel between Paris and Washington "did not bear on the points that were actually brought up"³⁸. Neither side had really taken into account its genuine long-term interests and all the Euro-Atlantic and Middle Eastern participants (U.S.A., France, Great Britain, Italy, Spain, as well as the "Vilnius ten", Iraq, Iran and even Israel!) found themselves in an uncomfortable position without anybody being able to evaluate the consequences and even less control them once the invasion of Iraq had begun.

If the armed conflict dragged on, sparking off a chain reaction, the pretext of disarming Saddam Hussein³⁹ could lead to an avalanche of irrational events that could impact the whole future of mankind and which could result in

disappears. By declaring war on terrorism, President Bush found the mandate that he lacked." in "La doctrine Bush contre les valeurs américaines" ["The Bush doctrine against American values"], *Le Figaro*, 13/03/2003.

³³ « A peculiar team » is the term used in the lecture given on 25/02/2003 at CERI in Paris, under the title "Prospects of a new political pact in Iran" by the American political specialist Daniel Brumberg, Visiting fellow at the Carnegie endowment for International Peace and Professor at George Washington University.

³⁴ Which can, we think, be reduced to two main points: first, achieve a military triumph before the start of the 2004 presidential campaign; in the case of serious difficulties in Iraq, - which is, unfortunately the case –or, still worse, if things go badly wrong, prove that the allied offensive on March 20th 2003 was unavoidable because it only forestalled a massive Islamic reaction against "western values".

³⁵ Cf. Laurent Murawiec, *Kerry-Bush: le candidat du 10 septembre face à celui du 12 septembre* [*Kerry-Bush the September 10th candidate versus the September 12th candidate*], Tribune de l'Institut Thomas More N°1/Fr, 13/05/2004 (available on the ITM website www.institut-thomas-more.org).

³⁶: "Today, the dogmatic and sentimental European left does not hesitate to go hand in hand with the reactionary and racist right in a slander campaign against America, part of which is inspired by communist or Nazi stupidities. All the worst slogans are coming back, such as *the tentacles of the Wall street monster* or *the sinister judeo-capitalist and Zionist conspiracy to control the world*. In Amos Os, "Contre la guerre" ["Against this war"], *Le Monde*, 22/02/2003.

³⁷ Joschka Fischer, present German foreign Minister, expressed the following opinion in an interview with H. de Bresson and D. Vernet, *Le Monde*, 01/04/2003 : "I cannot imagine a world of seven or eight billion inhabitants being organised other than multilaterally. The challenge represented by a possible American unilateralism ultimately a question that Europeans must solve themselves. Are we strong enough to be considered as partners? It is up to us to answer this."

³⁸ Private conversation on the afternoon of 01/04/2003

³⁹ Robert Kagan developed the same conclusions: "It is above all a problem of regional security. [...] I do not believe that Bush really wishes to bring democracy to the Middle East [...] I don't believe that France or the U.S.A. are acting for petrol", *Liberation*, 08/03/2003.



enormous losses for each side. And even the countries and politicians who imagine – wrongly in our opinion – that they could “cut their losses” (namely China, Russia, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and India) would be affected.

The Iraq war, and the forcible removal of Saddam Hussein, or rather the Franco-American disagreement on this, result, for both sides, in the following dilemmas:

The French Dilemmas

For historical reasons, France cannot morally afford to say “no” to the United States: in 1917 and 1944, French and European history would have taken a quite different direction if the Americans had not (in conformance, admittedly, with their own interests) checked the oppressive German preponderance. France, and the former European Coal and Steel Community can afford to do so even less as, without the Marshall plan and the American nuclear “umbrella”, there would have been neither the Italian nor the German “economic miracle”, nor four decades of continuous rise in the West European standard of living, nor the historical reconciliation between France and Germany, cornerstone of “united Europe”, culminating in successive enlargements and German reunification.... Without Washington’s agreement, this would have remained a mere dream.

The reluctance shown by France in the second half of 2002 and the obstinate rebelliousness that led to the January-February 2003 split can be explained by the following (often unstated) facts :

- Paris, thinking of its immigrant (or of immigrant descent) youth, mainly of north African stock, French speaking but no longer adhering to the values of contemporary French society, was afraid of a “remake” of the 1986 and 1995 waves of terrorism.
- French political leaders wanted at all costs to avoid the Israeli-Palestinian conflict being (re)imported to France,⁴⁰ knowing full well what effects such a phenomenon could have on social cohesion and on an already weakened national consciousness. Hardly anybody dared broach the question openly⁴¹; on one hand because of a guilt feeling stemming from the Vichy policy of collaboration, on the other, owing to France’s responsibility in the creation of the new Hebrew state (and therefore in the ensuing Israeli-Arab conflict).
- France’s long colonial experience has equipped her to better comprehend the Near and Middle Eastern context and the Arab mentality than does Washington, and Paris is sceptical about the possibility of installing a viable democratic regime in the region in the short term, even with the use of massive means.
- In this perspective, the American mishap in Vietnam (the risks of which had been emphasised in vain by De Gaulle in his famous Pnom Penh speech in 1966) and the lessons of the building of the Bosniac state, the pacification of Kosovo and the most recent Afghanistan war all plead for prudence.

American responsibilities

Likewise, America cannot, morally speaking, without seriously infringing international law, disregard the rules that it helped to establish. The U.S.A is entitled neither to reform NATO⁴² unilaterally, nor to show contempt for the UN, and even less to slow down or obstruct the process of European integration⁴³.

In other words, if America is petty enough to stop the process of European integration; if, choosing for shameful reasons ad hoc allies among Central and East European countries⁴⁴; it will be the object of the hostility of the

⁴⁰ Cf. Judith Waintraub : “Raffarin promet la plus grande fermeté contre l’antisémitisme” [“Raffarin promises the firmest measures against anti-Semitism”], *Le Figaro*, 22/07/2004.

⁴¹ There were exceptions however. For instance, Serge Klarsfeld “Les Juifs français et la France: une autre vision” [“The Jews and France: another view”], *Le Monde*, 07/01/2004 [sentence extracted by us: “France does not especially need Jews; no more than the Jews need France.”]. Cf also Pascal Boniface, *Est-il permis de critiquer Israël ? [Is one allowed to criticise Israel ?]*, Paris, R. Laffont, 2003.

⁴² « The Atlantic alliance is broken. It will doubtless survive as a bureaucracy, but from now on, *it’s the mission that defines the coalition* (Donald Rumsfeld’s expression) remark valid not only operationally speaking but in strategic and political terms”, in François Heisbourg “Irak: la montée des enchères” [“Iraq and Escalation”], *Le Monde*, 28/02/2003.

⁴³ On this subject, see the dialogue between George Bush and the Ex Foreign Minister of Turkey, published by the influential Turkish newspaper *Çumburyet* [The Republic], 25/02/2003 and reprinted by *Le Monde Diplomatique*, April 2003.

⁴⁴ See the analysis by John C. Hulsman: “How (can we) prevent United Europe from being harmful?” (French) *Courrier International* 6-12/3/2003 and the apocalyptic vision – under the sign of historical repetition – of Arno Mayer (emeritus



powers of Western Europe (Except maybe the United Kingdom, Spain and Italy). And if the U.S.A. “transforms” international organisations arbitrarily according to its selfish interests; then the Bush team will be responsible for a major loss of prestige, and will compromise for a long time (several decades) the global interests of America and their smooth return to an inevitable multipolar world.

By their intransigence, Paris and Washington showed that Chamfort was right when he said: “quarrels would not last long if only one side was wrong”. They risked all the above, and much more: world stability and the peace of mankind. Looking for a scapegoat, they accused each other, yet they are both responsible for this deadlock (although the responsibilities of each cannot yet be measured).⁴⁵

Last clarifications... and in conclusion

The risks run

The French should have shown more intuition in their approach, and in their irrepressible desire for rivalry with the United States since, in the last resort, it is this very thirst for revenge, after the humiliation undergone in Sedan and then in Versailles in 1870-71, which was one of the main causes of the first world war, of the overturning of the balance of power and the redrawing of the map of “classical” Europe. The French are therefore not historically justified in the reproaches they address to Washington concerning the “Great Middle-East”!⁴⁶

Furthermore, it is essential that they should speak and act with great caution concerning “divergent conceptions” of the Holocaust on either side of the Atlantic, to avoid at all costs giving the Americans distressing but apparently coherent arguments for punishing the unfaithful and disloyal ally; which could only deepen the dissensions and widen the “Atlantic gap”.⁴⁷

Inevitably, this situation can only produce losers, because not only will the Islamic world no longer distinguish between the United States, Israel, and Zionism (as well as between leftwing “judeophobia”⁴⁸ and “classical” right-wing anti-Semitism) but the feeling of guilt and frustration linked to possible European power impulses will mutate into a murky and elusive hostility against the U.S.A.⁴⁹ The risk is that this would cause a backlash, and a new “hardening” of the American position, the tragic outcome of which would be an “infernal spiral”.

If this chain of events should occur, the “free world” would run the risk of finding itself in an ideological and emotional trap: an intellectual dead-end⁵⁰ that could – without exaggerating – be called “the revenge of history”.

professor of history at Princeton University) : “Will the White House be the 21st century’s Kremlin?” (French) *Le Monde*, 15/02/2003.

⁴⁵ « The U.S.A and France are both responsible for this deplorable situation. Both of them have compromised their valid arguments by clumsiness, contradictions and pretences. If the initial responsibility is America’s, with their imperial attitude and the ambiguity of their objectives, in the latter phase, Jacques Chirac and Dominique de Villepin were largely responsible as a result of their political turnabouts and their spontaneous or intentional clangers, for a substantial deterioration in the chances of NATO, the UN, Europe, and peace” in Pierre Hassner “Guerre: qui fait le jeu de qui ?” [“War, who is playing for whom ?”], *Le Monde*, 25/02/2003.

⁴⁶ In this respect, the words of the French socialist M.P., Jean-Christophe Cambadélis may be taken as exemplary, and they clearly prove that, on one hand the French national consciousness is quite aware of the consequences of the 1919-1920 peace, and that, on the other hand, quite a few French intellectuals and politicians have quite well understood the historical dimension of the allied intervention in Iraq: “peace in Baghdad would be to the Arab-Moslem world what the treaty of Versailles was to the Franco-German conflict after the first world war.” Cf. J-C Cambadélis, “Vers la guerre nomade ?” [“Towards a nomad war ?”], *Le Monde*, 19/02/2003.

⁴⁷ Cf. Georges Corm, *op. cit.*, pp. 839-840 and 847. See also Detlef Junker “Die Amerikanisierung des Holocaust”, *Frenkfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 13/11/2000; and Henri Tincq, “La charge des rabbins américains contre la France” [“American Rabbis charge against France”], *Le Monde*, 3/03/2003 [sentence noted by us: “Rabbi Marc Schneier called the French position *treason*”].

⁴⁸ See Pierre-André Taguieff, *La nouvelle judéophobie* [The New Judeophobia], Paris, Mille et une Nuits, 2001.

⁴⁹ Jean-François Revel, *L’obsession anti-américaine* [The Anti-American Obsession], Paris, Plon, 2002 ; and Philippe Roger *L’ennemi américain. Généalogie de l’anti-américanisme français* [The American enemy. Genealogy of French anti-Americanism], Paris, Seuil, 2002.

⁵⁰ Cf. Michael Wieviorka: « Zero-level politics The great consensus against the Iraq war is destructive and is speeding up the decomposition of political life at all levels », *Libération*, 25/03/2003 [The writer starts his article with an ironic remark by Jean Baudrillard who, paraphrasing Clausewitz, stated that terrorism was *nothing more than the continuation of the failings of politics by other means*]. On this subject, the UMP M.P. Pierre Lelouche, stated during a TV debate on the French 3rd channel :



Jacques Chirac in “Little Napoleon’s” mirror

Although it is coherent in the short and medium term from a French point of view, the present dynamic and spectacular political line⁵¹ followed by Jacques Chirac and his successive foreign ministers, Dominique de Villepin and Michel Barnier, originates in the past; the value system and traditions of French politics.

A lot of historians (many of them French) consider that the European and global dimension of France has constantly declined since Louis XIV and that the double reaction to this inevitable loss of power was – on the domestic level – the French revolution, and on the foreign scene, Napoleonic imperialism (both inflated and ephemeral)⁵². According to these same historians, these two globally significant events count among the greatest military achievements of French mythology and are, to this day, an inexhaustible source for fuelling French illusions on *la Gloire*⁵³.

Bluntly stated, since the Vienna Congress in 1815, France has not been able to impose her political interests alone. The country is heavily dependent on the “European concert of nations” and the French political elite is led to believe that by means of diplomatic manoeuvres, an effective system of alliances, and large-scale international conferences, she will be able to maintain and achieve her projects.⁵⁴ An eloquent example of this state of affairs was the Polish uprising in 1863-64, when France, instead of giving the military assistance that she had promised, tried to call an international conference.⁵⁵ In the 1850s and 1860s, Napoleon III’s diplomacy, by supporting Serbia, Moldavia and Valachia’s (later Rumania) aspirations to nation-statehood, gradually weakened the two pillars of the Holy Alliance: Austria and Russia, to such an extent that she found herself alone in front of the Prussian army in 1870⁵⁶!

Even if history does not – fortunately – repeat itself, Jacques Chirac’s manoeuvres, both by their intentions and in their results, are reminiscent of the achievements of the great Napoleon’s (little) nephew.⁵⁷ France certainly won a moral victory, but this resounding diplomatic success was a Pyrrhic victory! The French illusion, the impression that she is still a great power, could easily be her swan-song since, if they end up by winning in Iraq, the U.S.A. might well confiscate this fictive greatness⁵⁸. And if ever the French prophecies come true, i.e. if American efforts end in a stinging failure, it is just as likely that U.S.A. policy, whoever is in the Oval Office at the time, would not long resist the temptation to find a possible and credible scapegoat.

Each side is wrong and each has its reasons... but some are even less right than others!

Ultimately, all the participants in this quarrel – active or not – are right, even if each of them only possesses part of the truth. And history teaches us that in this sort of situation, only the power relationship counts, and not noble considerations about the future of mankind, the installation of Kantian “eternal peace” or of a genuinely democratic international order.

Influenced by deepening misunderstandings and impatience created by mutual accusations, politicians lose their judgement, and the complex diplomatic process can easily boil down to a mere game of: “whoever isn’t for *us* is

“our problem is the loss of landmarks”. An answer from a schoolgirl to a journalist during a demonstration against the Iraq war was also very eloquent: “How can you make war against the *axis of evil* if there is nothing worse than war?” (French 5th channel, “Iraq, the risks in France”, 03/04/2003)

⁵¹ Article by Dominique de Villepin, “Le droit, la force et la justice” [“Right, Force and Justice”], *Le Monde*, 28/03/2003.

⁵² Cf. Marc Fumaroli, “La très longue mémoire française” [“The very long French memory”], *Le Figaro*, 28/02/2001.

⁵³ Glory. In French in the original.

⁵⁴ On March 20th 2003, between 8 & 10 p.m., one of the dispatches reported non-stop on LCI, a French TV news channel, announced: “Dominique de Villepin in pressing for an international conference on the Near East.”

⁵⁵ Cf. Zoltan Tefner, *The 1863 Polish revolt and European Politics* [in Hungarian], Budapest, Lénia, 1996.

⁵⁶ Cf. Borsi-Kalman, *op cit*, pp 32-33. This catastrophic perspective also haunts a French political specialist: “Make no mistake: either we have a plan (The U.S.A fails miserably, we go in as rescuers, and Europe – but which Europe ? - asserts itself) or it is we who, euphoric at having isolated America, find ourselves alone”, in François Sauzey, “L’Alliance, pour mémoire” [“The Alliance, to remember”], *Le Monde*, 13/02/2003.

⁵⁷ Cf Bertrand Le Gendre, “Chirac-le-Grand ou De Gaulle-le-petit ?” [“Chirac-the-Great or De Gaulle-the-little ?”], *Le Monde*, 23-24/02/2003. Let us not forget that it was in speaking of Napoleon III that Karl Marx coined his famous aphorism: “History repeats itself first as a tragedy the second time as a farce.”

⁵⁸ American decision-making circles have already made up their opinions and prepared a case. Only the political decision is still in the waiting: “we’re going to have to get France off the Security Council” (statement by Michael A. Ledeen, researcher at the American Enterprise Institute during an AEI round table on March 21st 2003. Cf. John C. Hulsman, “Le maillon faible d’une Europe peu vaillante” [“The weak link in a not very valiant Europe”], *Le Monde*, 30/09/2003.



against *us*'. And as *we* are the strongest and the most powerful, *we* are entitled to change the rules of the game (institutions, frontiers) unilaterally. In other words, "we assert that we have the whole truth (integral and absolute) because we can do it."⁵⁹

France would not at any price agree to share the opprobrium or the responsibility attached to the consequences of the "new American World Order" or to the possible occurrence of global chaos (a "new world disorder" in the ironical words of Dominique de Villepin⁶⁰). France therefore decided, in early March 2003 to threaten to use her veto! The attitude of France then, and its "hardening" later (though, in fact, it has become more flexible since then) are the result of unstated historical and sociological facts and events, of internal tensions, of bad communication and of a wrong assessment of the situation.⁶¹

The partial responsibility of France⁶² in the deterioration of transatlantic relations and in the possible failure of the enlargement of the EU is quite obvious here.⁶³

⁵⁹ Cf Robert Kagan *Power and Weakness*. See also Laurent Cohen-Tanugi, *Les sentinelles de la liberté. L'Europe et l'Amérique au seuil du XXIème siècle* [*The Sentries of Freedom. Europe and America on the threshold of the 21st century*], Paris, ed. Odile Jacob, 2003.

⁶⁰ Words spoken on the French 2nd TV channel in « 24 hours' news » on 18/03/2003. See also Tzvetan Todorov, *Le nouveau désordre mondial* [*The New World Disorder*], Paris, R. Laffont, 2003.

⁶¹ « Have we done everything we can to help the U.S.A to stand up to their worst temptation? Have we stood up for our principles and always given the impression of weakening our common enemies first? The most open-minded, freest most anti-Bush Americans do not think so. We have therefore failed. As they see it, we have already lost the Iraq war; whether it succeeds or drags on, the French, in any case, will be losers", in Bruno Latour, (sociologist and science historian, professor at Harvard), "Pourquoi cet abîme ?" ["Why this Chasm?"], *Le Monde*, 5/04/2003.

⁶² « By a sophisticated division of labour, Washington and Paris are extremely successfully working at undermining the European Union, NATO and the UN and, with them, both Western unity and the hope of peace in the Near East and elsewhere", in Pierre Hassner, "Guerre: qui fait le jeu de qui ?" ["War: who is playing whose game ?"], *Le Monde*, 25/02/2003. Also Justin Vaisse, "L'enfer des bonnes intentions", "The Hell of good intentions", *Le Monde*, 18-19/04/2004.

⁶³ On this point, Justin Vaisse, who was then at the *Brookings Institution*, stated: "The U.S.A. will develop their efforts to dilute the UE. More than ever before, they will reject Jacques Chirac's plan to convert Europe into a counterweight to the U.S.A. The White House wants Europeans to share the military burden within the framework of NATO, but refuses the idea that a joint diplomacy and defence might one day change cooperation into competition" Cf. Also the opinion of Helmut Sonnenfeldt: "The countries of central Europe, who were deprived of their identity for so long under the soviet yoke, are not prepared to sacrifice their newfound sovereignty for European integration. Even less so if the unique reason for this is to counterbalance America, to whom they owe their freedom", quoted and commented on by Charles Lambroschini, "Comment les Etats-Unis veulent punir la France" ["How the U.S.A wants to punish France"], *Le Figaro*, 28/3/2003. See also Burkard Schmitt (Deputy Director of the UE's Institute for Security Studies), "Common policy failure: Disunity holds the UE back from a major global role", *International Herald Tribune*, 13/02/2003 [Sentence noted by ourselves: "Europe as a power will remain for a long time a French dream rather than a European vision"].



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International Seminar, March 14th, 2006, Paris (Assemblée Nationale), In partnership with the weekly "Valeurs Actuelles" and EADS.
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