BRITISH POLITICAL LEADERSHIP FROM CHURCHILL TO BLAIR:

A Focus on Foreign Policy

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When Tony Blair led New Labour to victory in 1997, he expected to make his mark in domestic policy, marshalling free market economics and a strong economy in support of an equitable and just society and bringing a new efficiency to the traditional causes of the British Labour party. Instead, he will leave office having made his reputation in foreign policy. This article concentrates on British foreign—not domestic—policy in an effort to put Tony Blair's leadership in perspective.

Leadership in foreign policy is more complicated and entails more risk than leadership in domestic affairs. It involves not only creating and maintaining a domestic consensus behind policy—of enormous difficulty in itself—but the added task of working internationally with other leaders and countries. For good or bad, foreign policy-making gives a leader more freedom of action, personal responsibility, and chance for error. Hence, there is more opportunity for credit—and for blame.

Historically, British leaders have been remarkably adept at playing two complex and interacting games of domestic and foreign chess. They have leveraged their country's unusual geographic position as an island state adjacent to the European continent—the center of world events from the sixteenth through the first half of the twentieth century—and across the Atlantic from its former colony, which became the leading power in the second part of that century. Starting with Elizabeth I, the great leaders in British foreign policy have not only maintained their country's independence, but have also given Britain influence far beyond the capacities of most similar-sized states. They have been equally successful in bringing British public opinion along with them. Since the end of World War II, the key challenge for British foreign policy has been to retain influence in a world in which its position has been dramatically eclipsed, while maintaining domestic consensus in favor of those policies.

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Although Tony Blair is the most recent British leader to struggle with the problem of adjusting to the relative decline of British power, the challenge extends back to Winston Churchill, and, in fact, even earlier to Lord Salisbury in the late nineteenth century. Some have been more successful in dealing with the change than others. To understand the difficulties of the task, one need only think of the unfortunate case of Anthony Eden, that most experienced of foreign policy professionals, who, miscalculating U.S. reaction to his Suez adventure, was forced to withdraw British forces in 1956, thereby ending his career in ignominy. Others—including Churchill, Clement Atlee, and Margaret Thatcher—fared better in this regard. Blair's job has been made immeasurably more difficult by his having to face the most dramatic change in the world distribution of power since Churchill and Atlee faced the advent of the duopoly of power that set off the Cold War. Like Churchill and Thatcher, in foreign policy, Tony Blair has chosen to lead—not follow—popular opinion, even within his own party. Although he followed Bush into war in Afghanistan and Iraq, he has also attempted to lead Britain to an international position larger than simply its alliance with the United States.

It is a curious fact that national leaders often come to office expecting to make their mark in domestic policy, as did Tony Blair on his New Labour Platform, but find themselves unexpectedly caught up in, and their legacies defined by, international crises. Woodrow Wilson was a reluctant foreign policy leader. Greatly experienced and knowledgeable in domestic issues, he remarked that it would be ironic if foreign affairs came to dominate his presidency.[1] No matter how successful or unsuccessful Blair will be in domestic affairs, he, like Wilson, will be remembered for his foreign policy. Unlike Wilson, however, Blair has eagerly embraced the international challenges that have confronted him. Blair's spirituality and moralism, as well as his preference for personal diplomacy over the more humdrum nature of domestic politics, have made foreign policy formation a natural pursuit for him. Like Churchill, he enjoys it, is energized by it, and has made it—perhaps unwittingly at first—the focus of his premiership.[2]

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Both Churchill and Blair assumed the greatest responsibility and risk in leadership: staking the lives of the young on their decisions.[3] Yet even though Blair, like Churchill, is comfortable with his decisions, believing that on balance more lives will be saved than lost as a result of his policies, there is no guarantee their legacies will be equal.[4] Churchill built consensus prior to assuming power, and, although he still faced cabinet opposition to his policies in May 1940, public

opinion was behind him. In contrast, Blair acted without a strong consensus within his cabinet or the public, yet he retains a strong and unshakable confidence in and enthusiasm for his goals and decisions. So strongly does Blair believe in the rightness of his actions in Iraq that he has been willing to risk his office and the future of his party.

Dramatic changes in the distribution of world power confront countries and their leaders with hard choices in foreign policy orientation. These dramatic changes create opportunities for leadership. Churchill faced two such changes: the rise of German power in Europe and the emergence of a bipolar world toward the end of the Second World War. Churchill's legendary fight against appeasement at home and abroad is well known. After World War II, Churchill led the Western Alliance in recognizing and responding to the rise of Soviet power. This was an easier task than the one he faced in the 1930s and early 1940s, however, because he had both public and party support. At the end of the Cold War, Margaret Thatcher exercised leadership by convincing Ronald Reagan of Mikhail Gorbachev's sincerity, thereby helping to bring about a cooperative end to the Cold War. Similarly, the lack of substantial opposition to her policies at home made her exercise of leadership easier.

It is, then, Churchill and Blair who have faced the most difficult tasks of foreign policy leadership because both were at cross-purposes with their political base. For Churchill, the challenge was the shift of power away from Britain and its allies—France, Belgium, and the Netherlands—in favor of Germany and in conjunction with the popularity of appeasement at home. Blair has had similar dual challenges. He has had to navigate, both at home and abroad, the dramatic shift of world power to the United States, as well as the vigorous U.S. response to terrorists' attempts to counteract that power. The change in the world distribution of power may actually have taken place with the fall of the Berlin wall, but the events of 9/11 that gave it reality and brought into question British foreign policy towards Europe and the United States.

It should surprise no one that, in response to this challenge, Blair has refashioned two traditional British policies—balancing in Europe and closeness to the United States—with the aim of reaffirming the transatlantic alliance. Such policy serves to reclaim for Britain a central and stabilizing role in world politics. British foreign policy has always been pinned to the country's geography. As H.J. Mackinder explained in his classic book, *Britain and the British Seas,* Britain is a well-located island and "for the generations that followed Columbus, history centered increasingly round its shores." [5] More importantly, Britain's island position, surrounded by water rather than other countries with competing interests, has allowed it to be at once insular and isolationist, universal and international.[6] The two continents most easily accessible to and from Britain—and hence most important to it—are, of course, Europe and North America. Britain's relations with the two continents gave rise to the two

central principles of its foreign policy, and Europe and the U.S. continue to be the central concerns of Britain's foreign policy today.

The first traditional pillar of policy relatesd to Europe. "Of Europe yet not in Europe,"[7] Britain's closeness to that continent has made for intimate and complicated relations. Almost every British monarch and prime minister has had to worry primarily about Europe. It was always the closest threat and the closest opportunity. For the past four hundred years, the British have pursued what has come to be known as a "balance of power" policy. While Britain generally refrained from taking sides in Europe's quarrels, it chose to intervene when one state sought dominance over the continent. If any single country were to dominate Europe, British leadership feared that Britain's independence and security, traditionally based on the channel separating it from that continent, would be at risk. Hence, the British opted to intervene sparingly—against Spain under Elizabeth, against Louis XIV and Napoleon, and twice against Germany in the twentieth century—and only after great debate and hesitation.

The second pillar of British foreign policy focuseds on the United States and was developed at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries in response to the growth of both U.S. and German power. After its Civil War, the United States emerged as the world's leading industrial power and began to expand its navy, and it became clear that Britain's former colony and enemy in two wars would come to occupy an important and powerful place in the world. Furthermore, as Germany gained militarily might, posing a challenge to the British Empire, successive British prime ministers viewed it as in their interest to accommodate—even appease—the United States, rather than oppose the rise of its power.[8] The political and economic values they had in common also made this the logical choice for both.

In theis dogged pursuit of Anglo-American understanding, in some sense as much instinctive as deliberate, the British learned only too well the difficulties of an alliance with the United States.[9] It took years of patience and persistence to amicably solve disputes over the Panama Canal, the Venezuela Crisis, and the Alaskan boundary dispute. A friendly relationship slowly developed through these negotiations and through British political support of the United States against most of Europe during the Spanish-American War. By 1904, Anglo-American understanding was codified in policy: the British defense paper of that year stated that there was no need to consider the eventuality of war with the United States. Although the British were to wait three years for the United States to enter World War I and two years for it to enter World War II, the policy paid off. There would be no war between the two countries, and they would likely stand together in the face of external threats.

With the defeat and subsequent reconstruction of Germany and the advent of the Cold War, the zone of peace, stability, and shared political and economic

values that underscored the Anglo-American relationship was extended to Western
Europe, where states had engaged one another in internecine warfare for centuries
and in which totalitarianism had recently held sway. The establishment of the
transatlantic alliance, unprecedented in its size and comprised of a group of states
that agreed not to go to war against one another, was an unusual achievement, and
the British under Churchill and Atlee embraced it while retaining their special rela-
tionship with the United States. The alliance was, of course, created in part because
of the Soviet threat and the need to reintegrate West Germany into Europe. It was
also created because of a shared horror of the past and a shared vision of what could
take its place. Most importantly, a basic affinity of political and economic values—
the rule of law, democratic liberties, free market economies—united the regions
and made them a distinct grouping. Where continental Europe and the United
States did differ, the British often stood in the
middle, such as on the desirability of the
social welfare state.

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With the states of Western Europe
now integrated into an alliance with Britain
and the U.S., the first pillar of British foreign
policy—separateness from the continent—
was partially eroded. Yet in response to the
creation of the European Economic Community in 1956, Britain chose to con-
tinue to keep its distance and remain outside. When Britain finally did seek mem-
bership in 1963, France turned it away, doubting the leadership's commitment to
Europe and perhaps seeing Britain as a threat to its desire for hegemony. In 1973,
under the conservative government of Edward Heath, Britain reapplied and the
French accepted. This was a major step away from Britain's traditional European
policy, but the British remained conflicted. Upon joining, the British continued to
display their "of Europe but not in Europe" position, favoring weaker central insti-
tutions and expanded membership. Yet even under Conservative governments,
they gradually became more enmeshed in the union. The issue, however, remained
far from settled. Indeed, disagreement over policy toward the European Union
helped bring down the governments of Margaret Thatcher and John Major.

The transatlantic alliance, although replete with difficulties, misunder-
standings, and disagreements, held itself together on basic goals and principles.
The states of the alliance did not allow disputes amongst themselves on issues
that threatened to destroy the relationship. The alliance was adequately flexible
and permeable, allowing shared values and concerns to survive. Britain played a
key role in developing and maintaining the transatlantic community, and its
prime ministers continued to nurture the Anglo-American relationship as the
cornerstone of foreign policy, even in the face of disagreements over issues such
as the Suez Crisis of 1956 and the Vietnam War.

New Labour, with Blair as its leader, followed John Major in office, eight years after the fall of the Berlin Wall (11/9) and four years before the momentous events of 9/11. It is difficult now to recall the euphoria in the West in the period after the Wall fell. A new world seemed to be opening up, one in which the traditional rules of realpolitik would be superseded by an era of cooperation among states. Scholars strove to name it—"the new world order," "the end of history"— and debated whether the world had become multipolar or unipolar, or perhaps even something in between.[10] It was clear that the United States had the most powerful economy and military in the world, but it was not clear what that meant. The emerging paradigm suggested that all this did not truly matter. The old Westphalian model of international relations—one that centered on the inviolability of the sovereign state and the primacy of military power—had given way to a new organizing principle: a globalized world in which international economic activity, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, and cross-border transactions of all kinds were of profound importance. All in all, it was a new and safer world.

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What was Britain's policy, then, in this new world? The end of the Cold War brought great success to the transatlantic alliance, as NATO and the EU came to include a unified Germany; the states of Eastern Europe joined NATO and began to prepare for membership in the EU; and Russia partnered with the alliance it had once considered its enemy. As a group, these states formed the largest trade grouping in the world, representing more than half of the global economy.[11] Thus, Britain was part of the most important and powerful economic and political grouping in the world.

Yet Britain worried that its role in the transatlantic relationship would be diminished and that the EU would centralize its political and economic systems and move forward without it. Its key position now seemed to have been weakened, as a powerful Germany assumed a central role in the EU and talked with the United States about a "partnership in leadership."[12] For over four hundred years Britain had been able—through instinct and tough-minded, intellectual understanding—to leverage its unique island position to punch above its weight. As John Major left office and Blair became prime minister in 1997, however, it was not clear that the British would continue to do so.

Although Blair followed his predecessors in supporting the Anglo-American relationship, he spoke of Britain as a bridge—not a bridgehead— between Europe and the United States, suggesting a more balanced approach between them. Blair was a staunch Europeanist—he lived and worked in Paris as a young man and spoke French—and he hoped to bring Britain closer to Europe.

It seemed, too, that personalities and events would make Europe the focus of his foreign policy. The US appeared to be turning away from Britain and Europe. When George Bush became president in January 2001, he announced that his focus would be Latin America. At the same time, Europe presented opportunities. The EU was widening and deepening, and the southern European states were flourishing in its embrace. The Schengen Agreement allowed unfettered movement across most European borders. Preparations for the admission of the states of Eastern Europe went apace. In addition, work began on a closer political, economic, and military union. The euro was introduced in January 2001, and planning began on a new constitution and a new military capability.[13]

Another aspect of Blair's foreign policy began to emerge, one that fit tightly with his most basic and deeply held values. Britain, he believed, should be a force for good in the world. As horrendous events occurred in Kosovo and Sierra Leone, he and his foreign secretary, Robin Cook, came to believe that military intervention in support of human rights was not only justified, but morally necessary—a view he stated clearly in his speech in Chicago in 1999. It was a new world, one in which the Westphalian rules of state sovereignty were giving way to duties of the powerful to come to the support of the weak. Blair's liberal interventionism was manifested most strongly by the intervention in Kosovo and Sierra Leone. Yet the action in Kosovo and Britain's joint action with the United States in enforcing UN resolutions against Iraq (also an example of this doctrine) involved Britain in a deepening web of military and intelligence relationships with the United States.

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The attacks of 9/11 altered the basis and direction of world politics. Just as it took several years for the contours of the Cold War to become clear, it took 12 years for the shape of the post-Cold War era to become discernible. The response of the United States— entering a long, drawn-out war to defend itself against the dangers of weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, and failed and rogue states— forced the states of the transatlantic alliance to reassess their foreign policy orientations. In the 12 years between 11/9 and 9/11, leaders of states had operated on assumptions that were no longer valid. It appeared that the world had indeed entered a unipolar era in which military power was once again paramount. Within a month of the attacks, the United States went to war in Afghanistan and soon thereafter announced a new policy of preemption. The categorization of Iraq, Iran, and North Korea as an Axis of Evil presaged the pressure on Iraq and the eventual

invasion of that country. Bush's unyielding determination to do what he thought best, even if the United States had to act alone, set off an intense international debate and threatened to permanently divide the transatlantic alliance.

European leaders of the transatlantic alliance were suddenly on new terrain, having to adjust to U.S. willingness to exert its military predominance unilaterally and preemptively. Like Bush, with no precedents for action and no way to anticipate the likely reactions of other world leaders, they acted quickly and on instinct. At critical moments in world politics such as these, the performance of leadership groups is very uneven. The international leaders who created the Concert system after the Napoleonic Wars far outshone the group of leaders at Versailles. Likewise, the group of transatlantic leaders who fashioned the post-World War II international order and the group that managed the collapse of the Cold War era far outperformed the leaders who confronted the changes associated with 9/11. Of the most recent group, Blair uniquely has been concerned with keeping the transatlantic community together.

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There were three strands to Blair's thinking after 9/11 that led him to support the United States in its wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, thereby reinforcing the special Anglo-American relationship. For him, several things quickly came together: his growing concern about weapons of mass destruction, his fears about terrorism, and his belief in liberal interventionism. Foreign policy shot to the top of his agenda. In his own words:

> September 11th was for me a revelation. What has seemed inchoate came together...what galvanized me was that it was a declaration of war by religious fanatics who were prepared to wage that war without limit... [and] the global threat to our security was clear. So was our duty: to act to eliminate it.[14]

He also saw action against Iraq as a logical continuation of British and U.S. enforcement of sanctions against that state and of the policy of liberal interventionism that Britain articulated and acted upon in Kosovo and Sierra Leone.

Nevertheless, while Blair shared Bush's priorities of weapons of mass destruction and terrorism, in one respect he saw the world very differently from the U.S. president, a difference that had important implications for the orientation of British foreign policy. Whereas Europe and the transatlantic relationship were not at the center of Bush's thinking, they were Blair's focus. He was determined that the alliance would hold together. Blair was in the best position to do this because of Britain's century-long relationship with the United States and

because of his own movement toward Europe. He took enormous risks—the results of which still remain largely unknown—in deciding to follow the Bush administration's policy on Iraq. At the same time, he tried to keep the alliance together by pushing for UN-sanctioned multilateral action and by making active use of Britain's permanent seat on the Security Council to find a compromise solution, which he was able to do in Resolution 1441.

For French President Chirac and German Chancellor Schroeder, the leaders of the two dominant continental states, an initial response of sympathy and support immediately after 9/11 gave way to a strong and at times virulent opposition to U.S. action in Iraq that seriously threatened their relations with their long-time ally across the Atlantic. Believing that diplomacy and UN inspectors were adequate for dealing with Saddam Hussein and resenting U.S. power and unilateralism, the French—with Germany and Russia at their side—viewed the Security Council as a potential restraint on the United States. For a time, it looked as though the transatlantic world would split: tempers flared on both sides of the Atlantic and intransigence set in. Through debates within the Security Council, which caused both permanent and non-permanent members to take sides, the divisions within the Atlantic community quickly spread to other regions of the world. Talk began of actively creating a sustained opposition to the United States, led by France and including Germany, Russia, and possibly China, presaging the possible end of the alliance that had held for more than 50 years.

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A second split in the alliance soon developed, this time within Europe, aswith Britain emerging as a balancer. Key states within the existing EU separated from the French-German camp. They were then joined by a number of Central and East European states—the so-called "New Europe"—which did not want to be a part of an EU that was anti-U.S. The Letter of Eight, published as an editorial in the *Wall Street Journal* on January 30, 2003, by the leaders of Britain, Spain, Italy, Portugal, Denmark, Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, and the declaration by The Vilnius Ten that followed, angered the French and Germans.[15] Chirac even suggested that the candidate members of the EU had "missed a good opportunity to keep their mouths shut," leading to accusations that the French were yet again attempting to dominate the EU.[16]

With the transatlantic alliance in serious disarray as the fog of war cleared over Iraq, Blair's strong leadership was critical in moving the alliance back together. His was no easy task—Condoleezza Rice's statement that the United

States would "forgive Russia, ignore Germany, and punish France" illustrated that anger in Washington ran as deep as it did in Paris and Berlin.[17] Blair immediately began work on convincing the United States to involve the UN in the post-war reconstruction of Iraq. Although standing by his decision to go to war alongside the United States, he started to mend fences with those who had opposed him.

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In September 2003, he invited Chirac and Schroeder—who had pointedly excluded him from their summit in April—to a meeting in London to discuss a wide range of issues, including reconstruction in Iraq. He went ahead with plans with France and Germany for a European Rapid Reaction Force, which was highly controversial in Washington. He also worked with France, Germany, and the International Atomic Energy Agency to pressure Iran to divest itself of nuclear weapons. Yet he also worked with the United States to achieve the same result in Libya. Finally, by meeting with Schroeder and Chirac prior to the European Summit, he let it be known that he was not the leader of the permanent opposition in the EU. He also held back in the debate over the voting rights negotiated at Nice, fully aware that a Europe of 25 would share more of Britain's view of what the EU should be.

Throughout this challenging and conflictive time, Blair retained Britain's flexibility and kept it from being locked into permanent arrangements that would hinder its independence of action in the future. More importantly, he helped to maintain cohesiveness in the Atlantic community by keeping hard, ideological divides from developing. Britain's support of the United States helped the latter avoid complete separation from Europe. Had the same world events taken place under a Conservative prime minister without Blair's credentials on and in Europe, there very likely would have been a permanent split with France and perhaps Germany. Blair satisfied German and French desires for a military component to the EU by agreeing to the Rapid Reaction Force—a concession agreeable to the United States only because of Blair's support for the war in Iraq. Furthermore, by providing support and leadership to the accession states of the union, he helped to foster an organization open enough to allow differences to coexist.

By keeping Britain separate from, but deeply engaged in, Europe in its widest sense, and by maintaining the special relationship with the United States, Blair has left Britain's options open and its potential influence deep, reclaiming a pivotal role for the country in world affairs. Through a double balancing act—one within Europe and the other between Europe and the United States—worthy of Elizabeth I, he has given Britain a key role in moderating the excesses of his allies on both sides of the Atlantic and in retaining their ability to act together on critical global issue.

Churchill's response to the rise of Hitler and the defeat of France in the end earned him primacy in the annals of leadership. It is very likely that Blair's decision to go to war in Iraq will also make or break him in history. At present his policies are strongly opposed both within his party and the public. If the war in Iraq goes badly, Blair's legacy will be severely damaged. On the other hand, if George Bush and Tony Blair are able to stabilize Iraq—a challenging task indeed—and if future events substantiate their view that weapons of mass destruction in the hands of terrorists must be met by overwhelming military force, Blair will be vindicated. On this, of course, the jury is still out and may remain so for some time. Like the deterrence and containment policies pursued against the Soviet Union after World War II, its success may be difficult to measure. After all, what some would call success—no further attacks, particularly nuclear ones—others would doubt was ever a likely eventuality.

But equally important as Iraq for judging Blair's leadership was his ability, at a pivotal period in history, to fashion policies that hold Europe and the United States together in the alliance that has served the world well and no doubt has important tasks ahead of it in this new century.[18] His remit now must be to keep the alliance together throughout the many vicissitudes that are certain to come. If he holds this in clear focus, and if he can achieve a domestic understanding and consensus around it, a part of his legacy will be secure. This will not be easy. It will involve a most sophisticated series of decisions on those

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two interacting chessboards of domestic and foreign policy. Blair has been willing to take risks and persist on a course he believes is correct. He must now use his considerable political and personal skills to continue to evolve Britain's role as facilitator and moderator for an alliance encompassing states on both sides of the Atlantic, states with which Britain shares a unique geopolitical topology, a long history, and an affinity of values. ■

NOTES

1 Ray Standard Baker, *Woodrow Wilson: President, 1913-1914* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, Doran, & Company, 1931), 55, as cited in August Heckscher, *Woodrow Wilson: A Biography* (Newtown, CT: American Political Biography Press, 1991), 293.

2 Philip Stevens, *Tony Blair: The Making of A World Leader* (New York: Viking Press, 2004), 103. Stephens quotes a high-ranking official: "The world is what really excites and energizes him."

3 Thatcher, Eden, and Major also took their country to war, but those wars were of limited impact and involved less loss of life.

4 Not everyone agrees, of course, that Churchill's legacy is a positive one. See, for example, A.J.P. Taylor et al., *Churchill Revised: A Critical Assessment* (New York: The Dial Press, Inc., 1969).

5 H.J. Mackinder, *Britain and the British Seas* (New York: Haskell House Publishers Ltd, 1969), 4.

6 Ibid., 12.

7 Ibid., 7-8.

8 The story of British-American rapprochement is well told in H.C. Allen, *Great Britain and the United States: A History of Anglo-American Relations* (1783-1952) (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1955) and in Lionel Gelber, *The Rise of the Anglo-American Friendship: A Study in World Politics, 1898-1906* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1938).

9 Gelber, 7-8.

10 One scholar settled on the unipolar moment—that while the United States was most powerful, the world would soon give way to multipolarity. Charles Krauthammer, "The Unipolar Moment," *Foreign Affairs: America 1990/1* 70 (1) (1991): 23-33; also see William Pfaff, "Redefining World Power," *Foreign Affairs: America 1990/1* 70 (1) (1991), 34-38.

11 C. Fred Bergsten, "Foreign Economic Policy for the Next President," *Foreign Affairs*, 83 (2) (March/April 2004): 99. Bergsten argues for the creation of a "G-2"—an informal steering committee to mange the world economy and their bilateral relationship.

12 Louise Richardson spells out British fears about its international position at the end of the Cold War in Louise Richardson, "British State Strategies after the Cold War," in Robert O. Keohane, Joseph S. Nye, and Stanley Hoffman, eds. *After the Cold War* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1993), 148-153.

13 Although Blair wanted to bring Britain into the euro zone, he knew that this was the issue that had most seriously split the Conservative Party and led to its electoral defeat; Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown, a divided Labour Party, and British public opinion also held him back).

14 Tony Blair Speech, "PM Warns of Continuing Terror Threat," March 5, 2004 <www.number-10.gov.uk> (accessed March 22, 2004).

15 The statement of the Vilnius Group countries (Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia) was issued on February 5, 2003, in response to the presentation by the United States Secretary of State to the United Nations Security Council concerning Iraq.

16 Chirac, quoted at an emergency EU summit on Iraq, on February 17, 2003. He was speaking about Eastern European countries' decision to support the US's position on Iraq instead of France's.

17 As reported by William Horsley in "France Defiant over Tough U.S. Stance," *BBCNews.com*, April 23, 2003 <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/2969975.stm> (accessed May 13, 2004).

18 For an outline of the comprehensive set of challenges for the Atlantic Alliance see Ronald Asmus, "Rebuilding the Atlantic Alliance," *Foreign Affairs*, 82 (5) (September/October 2003): 20-31.