



# LETTER TO EUROPE

by Philip H Gordon

*In an open letter, Washington's top Europe-watcher proposes a "new deal" to help drag transatlantic relations out of their postwar low. The future of the west is at stake*

**D**EAR FRIENDS. How did it come to this? I cannot remember a time when the gulf between Europeans and Americans was so wide. For the past couple of years, I have argued that the Iraq crisis was a sort of "perfect storm" unlikely to be repeated, and that many of the recent tensions resulted from the personalities and shortcomings of key actors on both sides. The transatlantic alliance has overcome many crises before, and given our common interests and values and the enormous challenges we face, I have been confident that we could also overcome this latest spat.

Now I just don't know any more. After a series of increasingly depressing trips to Europe, even my optimism is being tested. I do know this: if we don't find a new way to deal with each other soon, the damage to the most successful alliance in history could become permanent. We could be in the process of creating a new world order in which the very concept of the "west" will no longer exist.

I am not saying that Europe and America will end up in a military stand-off like that between east and west during the cold war. But if current trends are not reversed, you can be sure we will see growing domestic pressure on both sides for confrontation rather than co-operation. This will lead to the effective end of Nato, and political rivalry in the middle east, Africa and Asia. Europeans would face an America that no longer felt an interest in—and might actively seek to undermine—the united, prosperous Europe that Washington has supported for 60 years. And Americans would find themselves dealing with monumental global challenges not only without the support of their most capable potential partners, but perhaps in the face of their opposition. Britain would finally be forced to choose between two antagonistic camps.

Some argue that such an outcome is inevitable. But I have always thought my friend Robert Kagan's claim that "Americans are from Mars and Europeans are from Venus" was exaggerated. Obviously there are real and even growing differences between Amer-

---

*Philip H Gordon is senior fellow in foreign policy studies and director of the Centre on the United States and Europe at the Brookings Institution in Washington, DC*

---

icans and Europeans on a range of issues. The end of the cold war, the rise of US military, political and economic power during the 1990s, and Europe's preoccupation with the challenges of integration and enlargement, have combined to accentuate these differences. But we have had different strategic perspectives—and fights about strategy—for years, and that never prevented us from working together towards common goals. And despite the provocations from ideologues on both sides, this surely remains possible today. Leaders still have options, and decisions to make. They shape their environment as much as they are shaped by it. The right choices could help put the world's main liberal democracies back in the same camp, just as the wrong choices could destroy it.

**W**HAT WE need is a "new deal," and that's what I am writing to propose: Americans will have to show some humility, admit that we do not have all the answers and agree to listen, consult and even compromise. We must accept that even our immense power and new sense of vulnerability does not mean that we can do whatever we want, however we want. We must acknowledge that we need allies to achieve our goals, which means bringing others into the decision-making process, however frustrating that process might be. On a range of issues that have divided the US and Europe in recent years—from climate change and nuclear testing to international law—Americans will have to recommit to seeking practical compromises with others, rather than assuming that our power exempts us from obligations to the global community.

Europeans, in turn, must respect America's special role and responsibility for global security and join the US in dealing with the challenges such as terrorism and weapons proliferation. They must acknowledge that European integration and enlargement—while themselves enormous contributions to world peace—are no longer enough, and that Europeans need to do much more to contribute to peace and security beyond their new borders. In exchange for a real seat at the table, the EU should agree not to try to constrain American power and instead accept the goal of strategic partnership with the US.

PORTRAITS BY JOSIE JAMMET

I know you are sceptical. You think Americans have become too arrogant to uphold their side of the bargain. Perhaps, but I think many Americans—even some in the Bush administration—are starting to realise how costly and uncomfortable it is to try to run the world without allies. Iraq has been very sobering. The mood here is very different from 2001, when George Bush came to office with a large chip on his shoulder, or from 2002-03, when Americans were sure that victory in Iraq would bring allies crawling back to us. Look at the turnaround on policy towards the UN in Iraq. Some of those who last year were trashing the UN have more recently been begging it to help. If significant resources and commitment from Europe were really on offer—and that is still a big “if”—Americans of all political stripes would be willing to make compromises to win them over. Do not forget, moreover, that America is a divided country. Many of Bush’s critics have been calling for a more multilateral approach to foreign policy for three and a half years, and the balance is tipping further in our direction.

There is nothing really new about the sort of deal I am proposing. After 1945, American power within the west was even greater than it is now, but leaders like Harry Truman and Dean Acheson realised that to win the cold war we needed to win hearts and minds around the world as much as we needed to display our strength. Even as we debated cold war strategy with Europeans, we respected their core interests in the name of holding the alliance together. Europeans resented American power even then, but European leaders understood that US power and leadership in the cold war was essential to success. As they face the enormous challenges posed by Islamic extremism, terrorism, and the proliferation of WMD, Americans still need Europe’s legitimacy and resources just as Europeans still need American power and leadership; the only question is whether the two sides realise that.

I understand your anger and frustration with recent US policy. From the very start, the Bush team was determined to demonstrate a new style of leadership of the alliance. In their view, the Clinton administration had been far too deferential to allies, which resulted in delaying action in Bosnia for two years or the frustration of fighting a war in Kosovo “by committee.” Their theory of leadership was summed up by Robert Kagan a few years earlier: “the most effective multilateral response comes when the strongest power decides to act, with or without the others, and then asks its partners whether they will join.” It was an attractive antidote to the waffling of the early

Clinton years, but it ran the risk of authorising just about any unilateral action simply as the price of leadership. Max Boot, another neoconservative writer, told us not to worry, since “resentment comes with the territory.” He was right about that, and now we are the most resented country in the world. Our military power is at an all-time high and our moral authority at an all-time low. I do not like the trade-off.

The response to 9/11 took this approach to an extreme. Americans felt more vulnerable than ever before, and after a decade of economic growth and a series of low-casualty wars, they were supremely confident about their power. In this context, Bush decided he would not only change the regime in Iraq but also that he would “change the world,” as he often put it, and most Americans went along with the plan. Bush seemed to take the attacks on America as a licence to do whatever he wanted with little regard—indeed with disdain—for the views of others. Thus on Iraq, key administration officials mocked you Europeans for doubting the threat posed by WMD that don’t exist. They berated you for questioning whether Saddam was working with al Qaeda, when he was not. They took your doubts about their ability to stabilise and democratise Iraq as cover for your craven commercial self-interest, when it looks as if your scepticism was well placed. Many in the administration were not only indifferent to the alliance but actively wanted to undermine it to enhance America’s freedom of manoeuvre. Our response to your opposition on Iraq was “old Europe” and “freedom fries.”

I know a lot of you wish that the Democrats had stood up to the administration more, especially on Iraq. Many Democrats did express doubts, raise questions, and propose alternatives to war, but once the president had decided that a threat of force was necessary, most Democrats supported him. There was a range of reasons for this—and it wasn’t just political cowardice. Sure, everyone remembers the first Gulf war and all those who paid a price even a decade later for not having supported it. There was some fear of political death if one opposed the war and it turned out that Saddam was on the verge of a nuclear weapon or cooking up vats of smallpox.

But there were also substantive reasons to back at least the threat of force. For 12 years, Iraq had been flouting UN security council resolutions, a situation to which many Europeans were oddly indifferent. The country’s 25m people were living and suffering under a brutal dictatorship. To try to curtail Saddam’s weapons ambitions, the international community was



imposing crippling sanctions that led to deep resentment throughout the Arab world and served as a pretext for terrorism. Saddam's history of periodically invading his neighbours obliged us to maintain troops in Saudi Arabia, which were also cited by al Qaeda as a key motivation for its attacks.

In that context, you could make the argument that the war was risky, but it was not crazy. The status quo was awful too, and remember there were no weapons inspectors in Iraq, or even much international resolve to put them back in, until Bush threatened to overthrow the Iraqi regime. Throughout the 1990s, the US and Britain were maintaining and paying for the no-fly zones, supporting containment with troops in the region and bearing the resentment of the Arabs. Even a lot of us who preferred containment to invasion and were critics of the Bush administration felt that undermining the legitimate threat of force and letting Saddam off the hook was worse than running the risk of war. And of course we did not know that the intelligence on WMD was so flawed, or that the administration would do such a poor job of handling the postwar period. Perhaps we should have guessed.

But we are where we are, and there is plenty of blame to go around. At least in some ways, co-operation should be easier now. Last year we disagreed about the appropriate goal in Iraq: containment or regime change. This year we share a common and critical objective: to avoid chaos and civil war in Iraq, to restore sovereignty to the Iraqi people and to establish the long-term foundations for a stable and non-threatening Iraq. The question is whether we are willing to overcome the disagreements of the past year and try to work together to make things better. I know that some of you—mostly Britain but also Italy, Poland, the Netherlands, Romania and some others—are already helping, but frankly not very much. Other than the British, European forces in Iraq amount to around 9,000 troops, or some 6 per cent of the total. And European financial pledges for reconstruction—perhaps a more reasonable expectation—are minimal (little more than \$1bn including both EU and national contributions), while actual aid disbursed has been even less. The Germans have trained some Iraqi police forces and pledged debt relief, but neither they nor the French have done much else.

Now, I know that the situation in Iraq today is not of Europe's creation, and it is unfair to ask you to clean up after someone else's mess. But you also need to think about your own long-term interests in Iraq and the middle east, which are far more important than any pleasure you might derive from proving the neoconservatives wrong or seeing Bush defeated.

The consequences of US failure in Iraq would be devastating for all of us. The message sent around the world would be that enough roadside bombs, suicide attacks and beheadings of civilians can force the US—or any western government—to abandon its goals. Success in driving out the American superpower would go down in terrorist lore as a great “victory,” inspiring new campaigns all around the world, including in Europe. Failure in Iraq would also entail the very significant risk of Iraq turning into a failed state. We would be left with a new Afghanistan—a haven for terrorists—even before the old one is fixed.

**W**ITH THIS in mind, here is what Americans need to know: are there any conditions under which you will do more to help in Iraq? The Bush administration has already moved, admittedly under the pressure of events, a long way towards satisfying European demands on Iraq. It has turned over the political negotiations to the UN (as you wanted), agreed to transfer sovereignty and hold elections (as you wanted) and adopted a less aggressive approach to maintaining security (as you wanted). Bush has now agreed to a UN security council resolution that codifies all of the above, puts oil revenues under Iraqi control and gives Iraq's interim government the right to expel coalition forces if it chooses.

---

**Iraq has been very sobering.  
We now realise how difficult  
it is to try to run the world  
without allies**

---

Can America do anything else to win your support, or will new conditions emerge as old ones are satisfied?

What should the administration conclude when the French foreign minister, Michel Barnier, says after all the changes in the American position that France will never send troops to Iraq? And what if John Kerry is elected in November and, as promised, goes to the UN to “rejoin the international community”? Would that bring any more support? I want to believe that it would, but you need to prepare now to respond to a new American approach with tangible assets that will help in Iraq, principally in the form of troops and money. If it turns out that there is nothing an American president can do to win more support in Iraq, then those of us who make the case for American compromise—including Kerry—will be defenceless in the face of neoconservative arguments that the international community is useless.

The new deal would have to apply well beyond Iraq, of course. Take Afghanistan. On one hand, there is some good news on that front. When the Americans launched the war in the autumn of 2001, European support was strong across the board, and the supposedly Venetian Europeans offered more forces than the US military actually wanted. In both Germany and France, public opinion supported the war and leftist governments authorised sending combat

forces; hardly a sign of the kneejerk anti-Americanism that was said to characterise their policy. Nato, backed by some 6,000 European troops, is now running the international security force based in Kabul and expanding its network of provisional reconstruction teams throughout the country. A high-level civilian in the Pentagon, not known for his admiration of France, recently told me how impressed he was with the service of the French special forces there.

But there are also some worrying signs, especially when it comes to European military and financial contributions. Nato secretary-general Jaap de Hoop Scheffer tells visitors that getting troops and equipment for Afghanistan requires him to run around with a “begging bowl.” When the local Nato commanders recently asked member states to send seven transport helicopters, no one was willing to do so, and Scheffer had to continue his begging until Turkey finally pledged to send at least three. Nato has 2,000 helicopters in its inventory, and the member states couldn’t come up with seven of them for a critical operation on which they had all agreed. If European public opinion is really so anti-war (or anti-American) that even modest military contributions to Nato operations are too politically difficult, I may have to concede that Kagan was right.

A new deal will also have to include our approaches to the Israeli-Palestinian situation. Like

many of you, I don’t think the Bush approach to this issue has served us well. The president has allowed himself to become so closely associated with Ariel Sharon that it is difficult for us to operate effectively as an honest broker in the region. Bush has hardly upheld his promise to Tony Blair to “expend the same amount of energy in the middle east” as Blair did while working for peace in Northern Ireland, and he has done little to demonstrate to Palestinians that he cares about their fate. The administration was stunningly naive to believe that “the road to peace in Jerusalem ran through Baghdad” and that once we demonstrated our power in Iraq, the Palestinians would see the light and follow our lead. And despite the ostensible multilateralism of the US-EU-UN-Russia “quartet” we have hardly shown a willingness to consult with Europeans on these issues—most Europeans learnt about Bush’s mid-April 2004 assurances to Sharon on borders and Palestinian refugees by reading about them in the newspapers. So the US needs to do much more to promote middle east peace and to give its allies their due role in the process.

But if we do so, please will you agree to stop pretending that US engagement or pressure on Israel would be a magic bullet? President Clinton and Ehud Barak were ready to pursue peace, and yet all their efforts ended in tragedy. Eight years of the Oslo peace process gave way to the second intifada, and did



nothing, moreover, to slow the growth of al Qaeda, which blew up two US embassies in Africa and attacked the USS Cole while the peace talks were going on. So let us agree that there are no simple solutions and put common efforts into the outcome we both seek—a viable Palestinian state coexisting with a secure Israel. For this to work, the US will have to hold Israel to its responsibilities on settlements and persuade it that military superiority and possession of territory alone will not bring real peace. The Americans will have to be willing to take a different position from the Israeli government even on issues such as Jerusalem, the fence, settlements and targeted assassinations. In return, Europeans must make clear that they will not reward Palestinian violence and that they are committed to the future of Israel as a secure, democratic and Jewish state.

We must also address the deep US-Europe divisions over the status of a number of international treaties. These differences have plagued transatlantic relations since before Bush came to office but have considerably worsened since Bush reneged on some of those treaties. There are no magic solutions, and the US Senate, for example, is no more likely to ratify the Kyoto climate change protocol today than it was during Clinton's tenure. Yet the US could do much to restore its reputation in Europe if it were at least willing to engage seriously on issues of global

governance that are high on the European agenda.

Let me give you just one more example of how a new deal could work: Iran. For years, we have taken divergent approaches to Iran, with Europeans focused on conditional engagement (with more emphasis on the engagement than the conditional) and the Americans on sanctions and deterrence. Neither approach has worked well, and the Iranians have sought to exploit the differences between us. You resent our isolation of Iran, and we resent your dealings with a regime that sponsors terrorism and seeks nuclear weapons. Yet on this, as on most other issues, our interests are the same: to promote freedom, human rights, non-proliferation, and Iran's engagement with the international community. So let us both make a pledge: we will genuinely engage with Iran and offer commercial and diplomatic incentives for their co-operation on key matters, if you commit to making them pay a price for misbehaviour.

Last autumn, when the British, French and German foreign ministers told Iran that the EU would only upgrade its political and trade relationships with Iran if it stopped enriching uranium, we caught a glimpse of how such a bargain might work. Even the Bush administration hardliners were persuaded to give the Europeans a chance and at least test Iran's sincerity. I think the deal holds some promise, and that Washington should reinforce it with its own offers of diplomatic and economic engagement if Iran keeps its end of the bargain—just as we have recently done with Libya.

But I am worried, frankly, that Europe will get cold feet, and the European reaction to Iran's recent delaying tactics has not been reassuring. If Europe fails now to hold Iran to its commitments, Iran will resume progress towards the development of a nuclear capability that would further destabilise the middle east. In addition, America and Europe will be set on a diplomatic collision course that could resemble last year's crisis over Iraq: Americans alleging the existence of a WMD capability and considering the unilateral use of military force, with Europeans resisting that approach and calling for another round of diplomatic engagement.

**S**O SHALL we give this new deal a try? The ideal time to begin would be this summer. The Bush administration would have to acknowledge some of its past mistakes and follow through on its new commitments to transfer genuine sovereignty to an Iraqi government, work constructively with the UN and engage with the Palestinians. Europeans would recognise their stake in Iraq, acknowledge the changes in the US approach and make some positive gestures, if not on troops then on reconstruction funds, training Iraqi security forces, debt relief, force-protection for the UN, and possibly support for a Nato role. More broadly, the various summits in June could help to create a new atmosphere. The leading

western countries would back the G8 initiative to promote political reform in the greater middle east, recommit to launching the Doha round of international trade talks and work together to get the Israelis to implement plans for withdrawal from Gaza and help the Palestinians govern it.

That is what should happen, but I do not think it will. Since March, a series of developments—the spike in violence in Iraq, the election of a less Atlanticist government in Spain and the Spanish withdrawal from Iraq, the Bush-Sharon deal and Europe’s reaction to it, and the Abu Ghraib prisoner abuse scandal—have so undermined whatever momentum might have been building behind a restoration of transatlantic comity that I think this summer is too soon. Moreover, though most of you (at least those of you in government) will not admit it, my sense is that the last thing you want to do right now, with our election coming up, is help George W Bush refute the notion that he has isolated the US. Jacques Chirac certainly went out of his way to oppose Nato involvement in Iraq at the G8 in June. So my guess is that we will not be able to give a new deal a genuine chance until early next year.

I agree with you that a change of government in the US would help. If nothing else it would remove four years of accumulated acrimony and resentment. I

think a Kerry team would place a higher premium on allied co-operation. Even Democrats who backed the Iraq war never supported the Bush administration’s hostility toward the UN or the policy of “punishing” allies. The cultural gap between Europe and a Kerry team—on issues like the death penalty, the environment, the economy, and gun control—would also be far narrower than it has been with the deeply conservative Bush administration. I also think it likely that Kerry would re-engage with Europe on some of the treaties that the Bush administration so blithely abandoned. Such initiatives would demonstrate a real American desire for a fresh start. But whether this leads to a new deal with Europe depends in part on your response. Kerry has promised Americans that by reaching out to allies he can win over real partners of the US. Will you prove him right or wrong?

And what if Bush is re-elected? Even in this case there is at least a chance that he would pursue a more multilateral course in a second term, perhaps not out of inclination but out of necessity. Americans have learned lessons about the need for allies and I think that whoever is elected will want to explore the possibility of genuine, balanced, global partnership with the most prosperous and democratic allies we have. If Bush does so, how will Europeans respond? ■



## LETTER TO AMERICA

by Timothy Garton Ash

*A European offers a tentative welcome to Philip Gordon’s new deal but insists that the test of commitment to that deal cannot be the level of European support in Iraq*

**D**EAR PHILIP. Talk of “friendship” in international relations is always a slippery business, but informed Europeans know you really are a friend of Europe. You take Europe seriously—whereas one of the biggest problems in transatlantic relations at the moment is that most Americans do not. You know what you are talking about. And you propose a new transatlantic deal.

So do we. In my new book, *Free World: Why a Crisis of the West Reveals the Opportunity of our Time*, I argue, as the subtitle suggests, that the crisis which climaxed over Iraq exposes a tremendous opportunity—and a historic imperative—for Europeans and Americans to work together on a new agenda of world politics. I find many other Europeans thinking along similar

*Timothy Garton Ash’s new book is “Free World: Why a Crisis of the West Reveals the Opportunity of Our Time”*

lines. So this is not just a matter of Europeans “responding” to a magnanimous American offer of co-operation. It is a matter of two old partners sitting down to thrash out a new deal. Two partners drastically unequal in military power, to be sure, but if you consider economic power and what Joseph Nye has called “soft power,” the asymmetry is less acute.

I agree with much of what you say about a new deal, but agreement is boring—so let me begin with a disagreement. I do not think this new deal should be attempted this summer, nor should its litmus test be Iraq. Rather, we need first to know the complexion of the new administration in Washington and—less importantly—in Brussels.

If it is George Bush again, then we Europeans will have to work with what may perhaps—and I share your cautious hope—be a slightly more multilateralist version of the current administration, sobered by

bitter experience in Iraq and perhaps shorn of some of its more offensive members. That will still be very difficult, both because of the nationalist attitudes of many Bushies and because of the now profound and probably ineradicable anti-Bush sentiment in Europe. (Yes, there is worrying anti-Americanism too, but mainly the feeling is anti-Bush.) If your new president is John Kerry, and we have the right constellation of political leaders in Europe, including the new European commission president and EU “foreign minister,” then this will be a vastly more promising opportunity to relaunch the relationship.

So let us keep our powder dry until November. And let us not make Iraq the test case. I entirely agree with you that Europeans have as vital an interest as Americans in Iraq not descending into such violent chaos that al Qaeda can declare it a victory. However, it is unfair to say that European forces “are already helping, but frankly not very much.” Let us be clear: 90 per cent of the responsibility for the current mess in Iraq lies with the Bush administration, only 10 per cent with Europeans. For the overall crisis of the west, responsibility is much more evenly divided between Europe and America. Perhaps it is even 50:50, taking the entire 15 years since the end of the cold war. But for Iraq, it is 90:10.

This was a war of choice, not necessity. It was Bush’s war. He invaded Iraq without the UN-sanctioned legality of the Bosnian intervention or the democratic legitimacy of the Kosovan one. He was told by Colin Powell that the china shop warning applied to Iraq—“if you break it, you own it”—but his administration turned out to be woefully unprepared for owning the place. Much of the current mess in Iraq can be traced back to failures of American planning, occupation policy and soldiering. Not to mention the shame of Abu Ghraib.

None of this is for a moment to deny the failure of Europe. As Bush advanced to war with Iraq, Europe presented a ridiculous spectacle. The neo-Gaullist grandstanding of Chirac and Schröder culminated in the grotesque finale of France campaigning for votes against the US in the UN security council, on an issue that the US considered vital to its national security. Meanwhile, rather than working to forge a common European position, Tony Blair hurried out ahead as overeager cheerleader for intervention in Iraq, on what turned out to be false claims from secret intelligence.

Given that history, Iraq is not the place to launch the transatlantic new deal that we both wish to see. Yes, with the new UN resolution we should work together as best we can to ensure that Iraq does not turn from quagmire into catastrophe. But that is not where our discussion should start on 3rd November,

when we know who the new president is. Rather, we should start by agreeing on what are the strategic challenges of our time, and how best to address them.

I agree that Europe should take more seriously the threats of WMD, terrorism and rogue states. I agree that Europe should develop a more serious military force, and be prepared to use it. But to regard this as the key breakthrough is to accept the one-dimensional intellectual agenda of the Bush administration, which reduces power to military power and the complex politics of our time to a single “war on terror.”

If one steps back and asks what the global challenges to the free world really are, any shortlist must include: the tormented politics of the wider middle east; the dramatic economic rise of the far east; the imperative of development for the nearly half of humankind living on less than \$2 a day; and the climate change which last year gave Europe its hottest summer for 500 years. None of these can be solved by military force. A hammer is no use because these are not nails. And none of these challenges can be addressed effectively if Europe and America work separately—let alone against each other.

Take the wider middle east. Only pressure from Washington will bring Israel to negotiate a two-state solution based on the 1967 frontiers. Europe can help a great deal on the Palestinian side, and with the subsequent construction of a

viable, civilised and, in the end, democratic Palestine. Iraq is another part of the jigsaw. So, as you say, is Iran. Europe and America both have experience with a subtler politics, not of invasion and occupation, but of encouraging political reform from above and the emancipation of societies from below. At best, that is what we did in central and eastern Europe. Such politics—half cold war, half détente—is well suited to Iran.

Beyond that, we have the Arab world, plagued by dictatorship and backwardness even amid its oil riches. US pressure on states like Saudi Arabia and Egypt is indispensable, but it is Europe that lies just across the Mediterranean—the middle sea which once united rather than divided the countries around it. It is to Europe that tens of thousands of young Arabs come every year, despairing of prospects in their own lands. It is to Europe that Arab exports would naturally go if we opened our markets to them. And it is the EU that, by agreeing to open negotiations for Turkey’s membership, could signal to the whole wider middle east that a Muslim country with an Islamist government can be accepted as part of the liberal democratic west (or what I call the post-west). In short: you cannot do it without us; we cannot do it without you.

I could make the same case, in different ways, for each of the other challenges. On climate change, for example, the biggest growth in carbon dioxide emis-

---

**For the overall crisis of the west the responsibility is split 50:50, but for Iraq it is 90:10 on the American side**

---

sions is likely to come from the industrially developing countries, and China above all. But we cannot expect China to exercise self-restraint unless we do so ourselves. In this respect, Europe has been doing much better than America, which—especially under this oilman president—is lagging far behind. Without American commitment, China will never be persuaded and Europe's efforts will be of little use. And let us remember the observation of a leading climate scientist, John Houghton, that climate change is also a weapon of mass destruction. Only by taking the whole list of challenges do you see which tasks fall to Europe, which to America, and how the two fit together. We Europeans need to find more helicopters for Afghanistan, and you Americans need to find more filters for your chimneys and car exhausts.

The EU and the US will always be very different kinds of power in the world. That should make our co-operation easier, not more difficult. You mention two important EU achievements: integration and enlargement. Further enlargements, including those to include Turkey, the Balkans or Ukraine, would bring major benefits for the US as well. But we in Europe also need to develop something else: a neighbourhood policy. We need a set of carrots and sticks to induce our neighbours in north Africa, the middle east, the Caucasus, Russia and central Asia to respect their own citizens' and their neighbours' rights, to

solve disputes peacefully and to develop the rule of law, markets, civil society and, eventually, democracy. Our long-term goals will be similar to American ones, but the instruments we use will be different.

This autumn, we shall be looking for a new American administration to make two fundamental commitments. First, to work wherever possible with allies. We hear that loud and clear from John Kerry. Second, to support a more united Europe. These are not the same thing. It is possible to want to work with allies, but to prefer to pick and choose those allies from among the disunited states of Europe. That is what Bush has done. It will take some energetic reassurance to convince us that Washington has really decided to support European unity again.

The EU also has to make two fundamental commitments. First, that it wishes to be a serious force outside its own borders, especially in its own wider neighbourhood, stretching from Casablanca to Vladivostok. Second, that it wishes to do this as a strategic partner and not as a rival of the US. This is not simple, since the EU is composed of 25 nation states, each of which still has its own voice in foreign policy.

So at the moment, Europe is speaking with many voices, while America is speaking with one voice but saying the wrong thing. Your job is to get America to say the right thing; ours is to get Europe to say it in unison. ■