



CHATHAM HOUSE

Chatham House, 10 St James's Square, London SW1Y 4LE
T: +44 (0)20 7957 5700 E: contact@chathamhouse.org.uk
F: +44 (0)20 7957 5710 www.chathamhouse.org.uk
Charity Registration Number: 208223

International Security Programme Paper: ISP PP 2010/02

Britain and France: A Dialogue of Decline?

Anglo-French Defence Co-operation and Implications for the European and Euro-Atlantic
Security and Defence Relationships

Professor Julian Lindley-French

Associate Fellow, International Security Programme, Chatham House

September 2010

The views expressed in this document are the sole responsibility of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the view of Chatham House, its staff, associates or Council. Chatham House is independent and owes no allegiance to any government or to any political body. It does not take institutional positions on policy issues. This document is issued on the understanding that if any extract is used, the author(s)/speaker(s) and Chatham House should be credited, preferably with the date of the publication or details of the event. Where this document refers to or reports statements made by speakers at an event every effort has been made to provide a fair representation of their views and opinions, but the ultimate responsibility for accuracy lies with this document's author(s). The published text of speeches and presentations may differ from delivery.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

*“Il n’y a pas de liberté, il n’y a pas d’égalité, il n’y a pas de fraternité sans sécurité.”*¹ President Nicolas Sarkozy, 2008

Abstract

The security challenge is daily greater and more complex, the resources available daily tighter as defence expenditure becomes discretionary in an age of austerity. Britain and France are in relative and parallel decline. Thus, sound strategy built on strong partnerships is the prerequisite for influence. Anglo-French defence co-operation is vital. Indeed, joint purpose and effect is the stuff of contemporary strategy for two old powers that together and apart have shaped the modern world for over three hundred years. To paraphrase Neville Chamberlain, Britain and France are in danger of becoming small countries far away from the centre of power about which they know little, locked as they are in a parochial struggle for the leadership of the irrelevant. A true strategic partnership between the world’s fifth and sixth largest economies and the second and third biggest cash spenders on defence could finally create a European pole of security and defence power that could in turn help to reinvigorate and re-balance a tired transatlantic relationship. However, for Britain and France there can be no romantic or nostalgic attachment to past structure and relationships in the pursuit of influence. Britain’s relationship with the United States is being re-evaluated, as is France’s strategic partnership with Germany. Institutions matter but the EU, NATO, OSCE or the UN institutions must be judged by their competence and utility as levers of influence. Lord Bruce Ismay’s crisp objectives for NATO established back in the 1950s still resonate; NATO’s purpose was to keep the Americans in, the Germans down and the Russians out. Ismay re-visited would confirm the need to keep the US constructively engaged with Europeans; encourage the Germans to act and engage responsibly across the security spectrum; and ensure an apparatus is in place to deal with major rising and declining powers, such as India, China, Russia, and Brazil. Therefore, in an age of austerity defence affordability will be at the heart of the Anglo-French agenda. To that end, a practical agenda would focus co-operation on ten areas: strategic nuclear synergy, naval strike co-operation,

¹ Defense Industry Daily (2008) French President Tries to Set French Defense on a New Course, www.defenseindustrydaily.com/French-President-Tries-to-Set-France

intelligence sharing, forging a new security knowledge community, operationalising the Comprehensive Approach, affording strategic sovereignty, defence-industrial convergence, specific project co-operation, European defence-industrial consolidation, a new EUROGROUP and the encouragement of genuinely out of the box thinking based on enhanced civil-military synergies.

LIST OF CONTENTS

Food for Thought	2
Abstract	2
List of Contents	4
Glossary	6
An Eleven Point Agenda for Anglo-French Defence Co-operation	8
Strategic Nuclear Synergy:.....	8
Naval Strike Co-operation:	8
Intelligence Sharing:	9
Forging a new Security Knowledge Community:	9
Operationalising the Comprehensive Approach (L’approche Globale):.....	9
Affording Strategic Sovereignty:.....	10
Defence Industrial Convergence:.....	10
Specific Project Co-operation:.....	11
European Defence-Industrial Consolidation:.....	11
New EUROGROUP:.....	12
Out of the Box Thinking:	12
Britain and France: A Dialogue of Decline?	14
Anglo-French Defence Co-operation and Implications for the European and Euro-Atlantic Security and Defence Relationships	14
Introduction	14
Change and Continuity in British Foreign Policy.....	17
Change and Continuity in French Foreign and Security Policy	22
Protection and Projection	26
Forging a New EU-NATO Partnership	30
Leading the Way: Affordability and Future Anglo-French Defence Co- operation	36
Conclusion	43

Britain and France: Locked in a Dialogue of Decline?.....	43
Sources	45
About the Author	47

GLOSSARY

ACO	Allied Command Operations
ACT	Allied Command Transformation
BP	British Petroleum
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CNAD	Conference of National Armaments Directors
CSDP	Common Security and Defence Policy
DCI	Defence Capabilities Initiative
DPP	Defence Planning Process
DPQ	Defence Planning Questionnaire
EDA	European Defence Agency
EDC	European Defence Community
ESDP	European Security and Defence Policy
ESS	European Security Strategy
EU	European Union
FSTA	Future Strategic Tanker Aircraft
HLWG	High-Level Working Group
HRF	High Readiness Force
ISR/Imint	Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance/Image Intelligence
MRTT	Multi-Role Tanker Transport
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NRF	NATO Response Force
ODA	Overseas Development Act
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe
R2P	Responsibility to Protect
SSBN	Submarine Ballistic Nuclear

www.chathamhouse.org.uk/security/

STOVL	Short Take-Off and Landing
UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UOR	Urgent Operational Requirement
US	United States

AN ELEVEN POINT AGENDA FOR ANGLO-FRENCH DEFENCE CO-OPERATION

Strategic Nuclear Synergy: Co-operation between Britain and France over strategic nuclear matters will never be easy. Britain is heavily dependent on the US for its Trident capability and Paris rightly has concerns that London would be an uncertain partner because of its reliance on the Americans. For France its deterrent is of such national prestige that any compromise in search of co-operation would raise domestic concerns. However, any hard-headed analysis of both countries' programmes would suggest the need for co-operation. Both operate Cold War submarine ballistic missile (SSBN) systems that are extremely costly. Whilst France spends some 20% of its defence budget annually on the programme, the British are intending to spend €20bn over the fourteen years. Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne said in July 2010 the costs of the programme must be met for the first time from the core defence budget. Moreover, the embarrassing February 2009 collision between *HMS Valiant* and *Le Triomphant* demonstrated that British and French submarines are patrolling the same space, at the same time, at double the cost. This seems bizarre given the costs of keeping one submarine at sea all the time is exorbitant at a time when no existential threat exists to either country. There are therefore three areas where Britain and France might seek synergy without having to discuss so-called 'black programmes'. The first concerns possible value for money future alternatives to bespoke SSBNs for the nuclear deterrent. Second, renovation of the Anglo-French Joint Commission on Nuclear Policy and Doctrine might lead to some 'rationalisation' of patrol schedules without affecting relations with either the US or NATO. Third, industrial co-operation over the development of non black programme sub-systems in nuclear submarines might act as a confidence builder for more sensitive co-operation in future.

Naval Strike Co-operation: Both Britain and France are finding the cost of their respective future aircraft carrier programmes prohibitive. Indeed, at the time of writing (August 2010) Britain is proceeding with the construction of the two 65,000 ton Queen Elizabeth class carriers, together with the STOVL version of the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter. However, it is highly unlikely that both carriers if completed will be fitted out to the same degree of fighting power. There are technical barriers to interoperability between the French *Charles de Gaulle*, and *HMS Queen Elizabeth* and *HMS Prince of Wales* that without the fitting of catapults in the latter could prove insuperable. This is crazy. At the www.chathamhouse.org.uk/security/

very minimum steps should be taken to ensure a British or French carrier is always available for operations, possibly through the creation of a Franco-British or European carrier group that uses support ships from both fleets.

Intelligence Sharing: Both Britain and France have found it hard to generate and assess actionable intelligence on areas of the world where both share vital and essential interests (Middle East, North Africa, Central and Southern Asia, Africa et al). This is partly due to how intelligence is generated; the British rely to a great extent on the US, whereas the French have more autonomy but limited capacities. Equally, actionable intelligence is meaningless without a firm grip of the context of operations. Indeed, understanding the context of intelligence has become extremely complex, partly because of the explosion of open source information. Moreover, the less change power a country possesses the more important insight becomes. Both countries are today locked in a knowledge war which will require access to a far larger knowledge community than hitherto if policy and decision-makers are to make informed decisions (rather than overtly political choices).

Forging a new Security Knowledge Community: Whilst Britain and France will find it hard to share covert sources, far more could be done to generate a shared intelligence assessment community, partly constructed through more effective 'reach back' to a 'trans-manche' academic community able to challenge and confirm assessments, often through open-source cross-referencing. By creating such a community Britain and France would lay the foundations for a wider European strategic knowledge community. The French are correct to emphasise protection against nuclear, radiological biological and chemical threats because they are the likely consequences of the democratisation of mass destruction or affordable Armageddon. However, such threats are themselves consequences of new patterns and relationships fuelled by age-old hatred, aging but irresistible technologies and huge flows of illicit and illegal capital. Insight will be critical.

Operationalising the Comprehensive Approach (L'approche Globale): The Comprehensive Approach is the cross-governmental generation and application of security, governance and development services, expertise, structures and resources over time and distance in partnership with host nations, host regions, allied and partner governments and partner institutions, both governmental and non-governmental. If the Comprehensive Approach is to work as it should, the concepts and doctrine underpinning such a cross-Alliance effort must be matched by efficient generation and use of required resources, political will and strategic patience. Britain and France are best

placed to help develop a concept of operations that can better prepare both the Alliance and the Union for operational effectiveness in hybrid conflict.

Affording Strategic Sovereignty: Central to any future concept of Anglo-French defence co-operation will be joint efforts to afford high-end strategic capabilities and enablers and critical to that would be an expansion of the remit of inter-governmental High-Level Working Group (HLWG). Defence Secretary Fox said recently that Britain was ready to “co-operate with those that pay and those that fight” and interest was already shown in enhanced co-operation with France in the 2009 British defence white paper. This pragmatic approach to procurement co-operation will be the hallmark of an administration keen to maintain global reach British armed forces but in need of new ways to finance the more expensive assets and capabilities that strategic sovereignty will demand. Some areas, such as carrier-based air power, strategic ISR/imint collection, early warning, distant detection strategic level, CSAR, SEAD and surveillance and target acquisition units, are extremely costly and already forcing tough choices on both sides of the Atlantic.

Defence Industrial Convergence: It is fashionable for leaders in both Britain and France to talk of their respective defence industries as national champions ensuring security of equipment supply. In fact, both countries' industries have long since become complex entities with access to other markets but equally reliant on others for critical components and sub-components. BAe Systems and Thales are cases in point. BAe Systems is ever more a North American company for whom ‘Britishness’ and ‘Europeanness’ only emerge when a large British contract is at stake. Thales, in spite of the French Government golden share, is increasingly multinational, and increasingly British. Certainly, attempts to prevent such developments for narrow national reasons, such as local employment will either fail or see world leading companies falling behind competitors. Britain and France together need to squeeze more capability and affordability out of their respective defence industrial and technological clusters. Thankfully, the foundation for such co-operation already exists. British and French defence contractors have long experience of working together either as prime contractors, secondary contractors or through specially created companies, such as Matra Marconi Space, which operates through a series of firewalls within respective parent companies. The main problem with Anglo-French defence industrial co-operation is one of trust and some form of global licence may be needed to allow far easier exchange of technologies between the two countries. Defence Secretary Fox has highlighted the need for British

www.chathamhouse.org.uk/security/

companies to have better access to French military procurement programmes as a test of good faith. The French regard the British as unreliable partners, too subject to political whim and the sudden cancellation of or adjustment to programmes. However, even a cursory analysis of the defence economics of both countries, and the costs of production in Britain and France suggest only through far more synergy between the two countries' defence industries will any modicum of affordability and security of supply and re-supply be assured.

Specific Project Co-operation: Within days of coming to power the new Government in London ordered a review of the €12bn Future Strategic Tanker Aircraft (FSTA) to see if co-operation with a foreign air force (notably the French) made operational and financial sense. Future co-operation will be established on such criteria and it is clear that France is also keen to work with Britain in a range of similar projects. Options under discussion include the French and Royal Air Forces sharing Airbus A-330 tankers and Boeing C-17 airlifters, and creating a single operational pool from the future A-400M transporters. For both the British and French such synergies could help save enough money to enable both to avoid cutting back planned fast jet acquisitions. Additionally, in return for military flight hours on the British A-330s, France could offer the British military flight hours on its planned fourteen strong multi-role tanker transport (MRTT). Continued co-operation in missile technology could again be fruitful. This would require extension of the assessment phase of a light anti-ship weapon and perhaps an upgrade of the Storm Shadow cruise missile. However, given tight budgets, any such co-operation will demand tighter industrial integration to cut costs and lower costs, and an agreement of funding between London and Paris. Above all, there is an urgent need to see convergence over the provision of urgent operational requirements (UORs), particularly as it concerns French sonar radar roadside bomb protection technology. This could be offered in return for French access to the British Watchkeeper unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV).

European Defence-Industrial Consolidation: Whilst a Clintonian 'night of the long knives' is unlikely in Europe it is also evident that Europe needs far fewer platform builders (metal bashers) and more cost-effective systems providers and integrators. Indeed, such a shift will be critical if Europe's relative weaknesses are to be offset by all-important remote sensors, precision strike and sustained and sustainable strategic mobility. Britain and France (together with Germany) must lead Europe towards such a defence industrial structure that delivers value for money over reasonable timeframes. Both London and Paris appear to agree that affordability will demand greater defence

www.chathamhouse.org.uk/security/

integration and the final end of *juste retour* and fixed work quotas, which in spite of many efforts to end such practices have proven remarkably enduring, reinventing themselves in various guises. London must invest in the European Defence Agency (EDA).² In return France should support convergence between the EDA and NATO's Defence Investment Division (allied to the Conference of National Armament Directors (CNAD)).

New EUROGROUP: There are a series of practical longer-term issues upon which Britain and France could together begin work with the express goal of placing both NATO Europe and Defence Europe within a single strategic framework without denying the unique roles, characters and rights of both NATO and the EU. Indeed, both the 2010 NATO Strategic Concept and the European Security Strategy (ESS) should be seen as the primary instruments for creating such a framework. This would end the implicit competition between the two organisations that hampers convergence and co-ordination. Critically, Britain and France could move to establish a new EUROGROUP to help bring all Europeans back to strategic seriousness. To avoid being drawn into the Cyprus, Greece, Turkey imbroglio such a grouping would be voluntary and built on and around co-operation between Berlin, London and Paris and thus in essence act as an extension of the St Malo process. The Working Group could consider *inter alia* all aspects of defence co-operation such as Procurement Co-operation and Harmonise Equipment Programmes, creative financing to spread the cost of force modernisation, re-consider smart transformation from a decidedly European perspective, as well as the modernisation of security and defence education (built around the idea of a military Erasmus) which will be critical for the future effectiveness of European forces. EUROGROUP could also consider defence integration for smaller European states as a way to generate real military effect on limited force and resource bases and the appalling waste and duplication multiple small defence establishments entail. Indeed, the ratios between equipment and personnel budgets are so poor in several European powers that they are little more than armed pensions.

Out of the Box Thinking: Armed forces repeatedly say they encourage out of the box thinking. They do not. An example is the stuttering attempts to seek synergies with the civil sector. Indeed, the narrowness of thinking in most militaries is self-defeating as is their inability to adopt creative ideas

² In April 2010, the European Defence Agency argued that “pooling and sharing can provide solutions for more efficiently meeting European capability requirements in a constrained budget environment”. See Giegerich, Bastian (2010) Budget Crunch: Implications for European Defence”, *Survival*, Vol 52, No. 4 August-September 2010 (London: IISS)
www.chathamhouse.org.uk/security/

generated elsewhere. 'Not invented here' is a mantra that might easily describe the culture of what are essentially conservative European organisations. For example, the Netherlands enjoys one of the largest maritime salvage and support industries in the world. In 2008-2009 the Netherlands Defence Academy undertook a research project for the Operational Command of the Royal Netherlands Navy that explored the role of navies and marines in stabilising the Littoral. One factor was the excessive cost of using large bespoke naval vessels as off-shore bases in support of deployed marines engaged on ship to objective manoeuvre (STOM) and the establishment of a security zone in the area of operations. Ironically, this Dutch idea has now been taken up by the Pentagon. Given the centrality of Africa to much of European security and the lack of infrastructure therein to enable peace support operations such open thinking should be encouraged.

BRITAIN AND FRANCE: A DIALOGUE OF DECLINE?

Anglo-French Defence Co-operation and Implications for the European and Euro-Atlantic Security and Defence Relationships

Introduction

The security challenge is daily greater and more complex, the resources available daily tighter as defence expenditure becomes discretionary in an age of austerity. Britain and France are in relative and parallel decline. Thus, sound strategy built on strong partnerships is the prerequisite for influence. Anglo-French defence co-operation is therefore vital. The 2008 French Defence White Paper and British National Security Strategy demonstrate the extent to which London and Paris share much of the same world view. Both documents capture the extent of change in the world, its complexity and an enduring ambition to shape events and environments for the better. Equally, both documents also emphasise the complexity of such change and whilst they both stress the importance of modern, credibly-sized and armed militaries they recognise that armed forces alone will not provide the security which is the first duty of government to British and French citizens alike. To that end, the French strategy identifies five strategic functions which London by and large shares as essential for the armed forces of both countries: strategic awareness and anticipation, prevention, deterrence, protection and intervention. However, it is not simply the roles, missions and tasks implied in the two strategies that matter but the context in which such efforts must take place. Having defined Anglo-French defence co-operation for over seventy years in a Euro-centric world, today strategic credibility means the ability to act big in a big world.

Therefore, what makes this moment unusually important is the background of change against which both French and British co-operation must be set. Not only in the wider world but also in the key assumptions upon which British and French foreign, security and defence policy have traditionally been based. Consequently, the foundations of respective British and French policy and strategy are no longer as firm or as clear as they once were. Britain's relationship with the United States is being re-evaluated, as is France's inner-European strategic partnership with Germany. Since World War Two the British could maintain at least the pretence to past greatness only so long as the United States conspired to allow the British to believe London was Athens to Washington's Rome. French ambitions to maintain similar status was built primarily on the post-1963 relationship with Germany that enabled France to

www.chathamhouse.org.uk/security/

see the EU as a strategic multiplier. Today, as the centre of global power gravity moves to Asia, the euphemisms of German power are also vanishing in Europe. Berlin is emerging to eclipse both London and Paris as the European power capital (without the security policy to match), whilst the past ten years have demonstrated the limits of British utility in Washington's global stabilisation mission. The key special relationship of the future will doubtless be that between Berlin and Washington.³

Thus, the EU no longer does for France what the US has hitherto done for the British; enhance stature by magnifying modest power. Today, the palpable fact of relative British and French decline means there is little for either the British or French people to be proud of as the failures of elites in both countries become ever more apparent. Conversely, there is today a very real danger that decline will be exaggerated and accelerated as strengths of adversaries are magnified, whilst exhausted bureaucratic elites and naive political leaderships implicitly conspire to make decline a strategic credo.

Britain and France will thus have to confront a new reality based on a very different 'narrative' for politicians and publics alike. Namely, after four hundred years of systemic influence and an undisputed seat at the top table of power, London and Paris no longer have an automatic right to the strategic influence so long assumed. Indeed, Britain and France will find they are increasingly subject to the whim of events, as Harold MacMillan once so famously warned. This poses a profound political challenge for Britain and France. Political leaders on both sides of the Channel are well aware of shifts in the global balance of power but loathe to break the news to publics so long weaned on past glory and national myth and yet insecure and uncertain as they daily deal with the consequences of unwanted change. Alternatively, history would suggest that the retreat from prestige underway could be dangerous for London and Paris as decline reinforces exceptionalism. As a result, profound strategic choices need to be made by two countries on the cusp of rapid decline.

The core message of this paper is therefore clear. The second decade of the twenty-first century need not mark the final full stop of the Anglo-French strategic age that began back in the early seventeenth century. Indeed, a true strategic partnership between the world's fifth and sixth largest economies and the second and third biggest cash spenders on defence could

³ German Defence Minister Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg in a June 2010 address to IISS said that a better division of labour was the only way for Europeans to ease budget pressures. See Giegerich, Bastian (2010) Budget Crunch: Implications for European Defence", *Survival*, Vol 52, No. 4 August-September 2010 (London: IISS) www.chathamhouse.org.uk/security/

finally create a Europe pole of security and defence power that in turn would help reinvigorate and re-balance a tired transatlantic relationship. However, to achieve the object of strategy; influence over global structures, partners and events there can be no romantic or nostalgic attachment to past structure and relationships. For middling powers with global responsibilities the relationship and ratios between what needs to be done and what can be done will be critical.

For Britain and France institutions matter because they are the gear boxes of power. However, for both London and Paris institutions must be judged by their competence and utility as levers of influence. For Britain that means moving far more effectively to embrace the EU as a vital lever of strategic British influence, whilst for France that means the abandonment of efforts to build a French-led Europe at the expense of who Paris calls dismissively *les anglosaxons*. Indeed, Lord Bruce Ismay's crisp objectives for NATO established back in the 1950s still resonate; NATO's purpose was to keep the Americans in, the Germans down and the Russians out. Ismay re-visited would state the need for institutions to keep the US constructively engaged with Europeans; to encourage the Germans to act and engage responsibly across the security spectrum; and to establish an apparatus to deal with major rising and declining powers, such as India, China, Russia, and Brazil. Indeed, friction – the defining dynamic of this age - will be generated as a consequence of decline as much as rapid emergence of state power, leavened by the uncertainty engendered by the titanic struggle underway between the state and the anti-state.

Therefore, neither NATO nor the EU can offer the solution to strategic dilemma both London and Paris face. To paraphrase Neville Chamberlain, Britain and France are in danger of becoming small countries far away from the centre of power about which they know little locked as they are in a parochial struggle for the leadership of the irrelevant. Consequently, the need for pragmatic Anglo-French defence co-operation is vital as budget pressures in an age of austerity will likely place defence affordability at the heart of the agenda. However, jointly affording key assets and enablers critical to a continued world role will require consistent and sustained confidence building on both sides of the Channel. To that end, this paper considers change in both the strategic and political contexts of Anglo-French defence relations, as well as change in the specificities of the relationship itself. The paper then concludes with a series of recommendations for co-operative change. As such this food for thought paper is intended to provoke.

Change and Continuity in British Foreign Policy

The effective generation and use of state power will represent the stuff of Anglo-French defence co-operation. The need to avoid illusion and delusion will be critical in that relationship. The organising principle of a globalised British foreign and security policy and any 'commitment' to future European security architecture will reflect that political reality. Aptly given the circumstance, on 1 July 2010 Foreign Secretary William Hague made a seminal speech in the Locarno Room of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in London in which he stated, "...our new Government's vision of foreign affairs...is this: a distinctive British foreign policy that is active in Europe and across the world; that builds up British engagement in the parts of the globe where opportunities as well as threats increasingly lie; that is at ease within a networked world and harnesses the full potential of our cultural links, and that promotes our national interest while recognising that this cannot be narrowly or selfishly defined".⁴

Such a view is certainly in line with Britain's pragmatic globalism. The emphasis by new Foreign Secretary Hague on bilateralism, i.e. placing state to state relations first, and the pursuit of the British national interest (what Hague calls 'enlightened national interest') indicates five specific policy shifts from the Blair/Brown years all of which will impact on France. First, institutions should be seen as the enablers of British interest. Second, relations with the United States will remain pivotal, but Britain will become more assertive of its interests with the Americans. Third, relations with smaller powers in Europe and emerging powers beyond will be placed on firmer and more systematic footing. Fourth, relations with France, the EU's only other world class military power, will be given a high priority. Fifth, there will be a focus on 'networks' for fostering British influence beyond traditional treaty-based relationships.

For the British a balance will need to be struck between modesty and strategy that will be delicate. Indeed, faced with a massive debt burden inherited from the previous Labour administration the new Coalition Government of Conservatives and Liberal-Democrats is paradoxically something of a throwback. It is adopting a very traditional High Tory approach to extending British influence at a time of relative and systemic decline. To that end the new globalism looks very much like the old internationalism pioneered in the 1950s by such Tory grandees as Churchill, Eden and MacMillan. Thus, the

⁴ Britain's Foreign Policy in a Networked World, speech by the Rt Hon. William Hague MP, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1 July 2010
www.chathamhouse.org.uk/security/

shrill criticisms of Europe and the EU redolent of the new Toryism of the Thatcher years have gone and are unlikely to return. Indeed, it is ironic that it has taken a coalition of the Tory centre and left and the Liberal right to reinvent classical British foreign and security policy. This will doubtless be reflected in the 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review.

For the first time in thirty years the ideological, nationalist right of the Conservative Party has been squeezed out of foreign policy, although Dr Liam Fox's appointment as Secretary-of-State for Defence suggests the right have some control over the defence portfolio. This could be critical for Anglo-French defence co-operation even though Fox himself is in favour of such ties so long as they remain clearly and firmly outside EU competence. Interestingly, there are already tensions between Dr Fox and Prime Minister Cameron, particularly over the departure of Chief of the Defence Staff, Air Chief Marshall Sir Jock Stirrup. Moreover, given the pragmatic orientation towards the EU adopted by the Coalition leadership, which will be the likely hallmark of this administration, tensions with the viscerally anti-EU Tory right could mount. These are tensions that could well be mirrored with the radical and theologically pro-European left of the Liberal Party.

Furthermore, British foreign and security policy will see a marked shift away from New Labour's paradoxical foreign and security policy, reflecting as it did inner splits between left and right. The emphasis on, on the one hand, ill-defined values and vacuous foreign policy closeness to Berlin and Paris, whilst on the other hand, seeking close strategic and defence links with the radical Bush administration in Washington eventually proved self-defeating. Albeit at a special moment in world affairs the attempt to find a mid-Atlantic position was to all intents and purpose doomed by 9/11 and the 2003 Iraq War. Indeed, the tensions became so profound that Labour's foreign policy was ultimately rendered unworkable by the split in the Atlantic Alliance over Iraq. It was a tension that had already been apparent at home with the 2001 despatch of British troops to Afghanistan, which helped to radicalise small but significant elements of Britain's Muslim youth, a majority of whom hail from or have antecedents in Pakistan. Indeed, the long-term foreign and security policy consequences of the tension between Britain's traditional external orientation and its 'new society' are yet to be understood. Clearly, pursuit of the British interest declined from being one of high ideal in 1997 founded on what Foreign Secretary Robin Cook called an ethical foreign policy into an ill-conceived attempt to keep all allies, partners and sensitive domestic constituencies happy, without any clear idea of the British national interest or direction for British policy. In the absence of policy direction Prime Minister

www.chathamhouse.org.uk/security/

Blair was finally forced to make a choice between the Bush Administration and Franco-German leadership of the EU. Consequently, the failed American-led stabilisation of post-Saddam Iraq effectively ended the Blair foreign policy

Some of New Labour's original ideas were not without merit, albeit strangely immodest given Britain's very limited influence over strategic trends and events. The commitment to humanitarian interventionism, support for the Millennium Development Goals, and of course the attempt at St Malo in 1998 to find an accommodation with France over the future of European defence were ambitious but laudable policy goals. However, as the gap between ambition and spin become daily more apparent the retreat into the latter came at the expense of the former. Thereafter, British foreign 'policy' increasingly represented a series of reactions. Policy also became a plaything of the Labour left with its express focus on the needs of minorities typified by Claire Short's Overseas Development Act (ODA) which, with its stated mission to eradicate global poverty to all extents and purposes detached the UK's aid and development budget from the British national interest. Sadly, as Iraq turned sour and with it much of Europe's view of Bush and Blair, Britain gave up any pretensions to leadership in Europe be it bilaterally or multilaterally and retreated into an ill-conceived attempt to be all things to all partners (and adversaries).

The tone of Prime Minister Cameron's July 2010 visit to Washington would suggest that the return to a classical concept of the British interest is underway. Henceforth, the British will return to a pragmatic view of Britain's place in the world and see Europe and the European Union (EU) (the two are different in the Conservative mind) very much in that light, founded on a state-centric, globalist view. Equally, whilst the viscerally anti-European tones of the Conservative right have now been marginalised, France can expect no commitment whatsoever to the building of a new 'Europe'; the bureaucracy of the EU being seen by many in the new government as corrupt, inefficient and costing Britain far more than it gets back in return.

Therefore, in this age of austerity which will inform much of British foreign and security policy matters of mammon will factor greatly. In that light all institutions will be seen as a means to an end and be judged primarily as influence vehicles for a Britain short on forces and resources. To some extent that will mark a shift in policy in its own right as some of the Atlanticist theology of the past will also fade. British foreign policy will no longer reflect preferences for NATO, the EU or OSCE (or indeed the UN) but rather

cynicism about their effectiveness and cost-effectiveness. This is particularly the case for both NATO and the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) or what France has dubbed Defense Europe. This is hardly surprising some nine years into the failing NATO operation in Afghanistan and some twenty years after the Helsinki Declaration and the failed EU European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP).

The world financial crisis has further damaged Britain's place in the world and done real and lasting damage to Britain. Indeed, it is hard to imagine how a proper assessment of the British level of ambition can be undertaken until the consequences of the crisis have been worked through, not least as they affect British defence policy. After twenty years of unremitting use over time and distance the British armed forces are tired and in need of rebuilding. The re-capitalisation of the equipment budget established in 2003 foresaw the re-equipping of the entire force over a twenty-two year cycle to be completed by 2025. Given the attritional effect of unexpected and enduring operations from Mesopotamia to the Hindu Kush that cycle has been accelerated to 2014. Put simply, expense has rocketed as income has plummeted.

Critically, the foreign and security policy goals as laid out by William Hague pre-suppose that British influence will decline over time. This places a particular premium on partnership in policy. To that end, the new Government has adopted another favourite of High Toryism, albeit with far more modest ambitions than those of Churchill in the immediate years after World War Two. Churchill believed that Britain could be at the centre of three interlocking circles of strategic relationships: between free Europe and America; within Europe and between Europeans; and at the heart of Empire/Commonwealth. It was a policy doomed from the outset because it failed to appreciate the extent to which the Americans decided policy and strategy, and under-estimated American determination to accelerate the British (and French) retreat from Empire (which proved later to have been a mistake given Soviet ambitions at the time). The object for the British thus became essentially simple; protect the British interest from the Soviet threat and American leadership. It is for that reason that in 1953 Churchill dismissed the idea that Britain might join the European Defence Community (EDC) with the stern phrase "we are with them, but not of them".⁵ In a sense, like Blair many years, later Prime Minister Eden (Churchill's successor) tried

⁵ On May 11, 1953 in a speech in the House of Commons Churchill attacked France and its 'anti-British' position on the European Defence Community. He said that the UK has done more than anyone to support the treaty and was getting absolutely no thanks for its efforts. See Lindley-French J. (2008) "A Chronology of European Security and Defence 1945-2007" (Oxford: Oxford University Press) p.43.

to be both close to America and France at a time when extra-European interests were not aligned. Of course, like Blair in 2003 this policy failed catastrophically in 1956 as the Americans forced the British and French to retreat from operations to recapture the Suez Canal from Nasser. Whereas France decided that never again would Paris be humiliated by Washington, London began the long and painful slide into subservience that has marked much of Britain's relationship with the United States ever since.

Today, the 'special relationship' is being re-considered on both sides of the Atlantic with the British moving, albeit gently (and marginally) to escape from the 'poodleism' of the later Blair years but with little clear idea of why, how and in search of what alternative. Indeed, buffeted by what Prime Minister Cameron called 'blind' commitment to often poor American leadership these ten years past, London seems to be jumping before it is pushed as the Obama administration finds it hard to mask what is self-evident contempt for the British. This is reinforced by what some American military leaders regard as the relatively poor performance of the British Armed Forces in both Iraq and Afghanistan.

On the British side it is reinforced by the shifting of Britain from junior to subordinate partner as the Americans try clumsily to impose 'extra-territoriality' on the British (the irony of history) over such contentions as an extradition treaty perceived by the British public to overly favour the US; demands that British politicians account to Congress for the early release of the so-called Lockerbie Bomber; and BP's role in the Gulf of Mexico oil disaster. Today, the political relationship between America and Britain is as 'unspecial' today as at any time since Suez. Perhaps there will be a British equivalent of the Boston Tea Party at some point, but it is unlikely to come from the political and bureaucratic elite in London which remain essentially servile to the Americans. Such subservience is due to two very different factors. First, it was the loss of grand strategic self-confidence by the British elite in the aftermath of Suez, from which the British elite have never truly recovered. Second, it is because of the extensive British commitment to and benefit gained from American strategic defence and intelligence enablers which will critically continue to shape Britain's attitude towards European security architecture.

However, some new thinking is evident which will strike a chord with a Paris long used to *la francophonie*. Interestingly, given Churchill's post-war ambitions, the British are reassessing the role and utility of the Commonwealth. To be more precise the British are re-considering the utility

of the Commonwealth as a framework for relations with specific newly emergent members of the Commonwealth, such as Australia, Canada, India, Nigeria and South Africa. As Foreign Secretary Hague said: "We are a member of one of the world's longstanding networks - the Commonwealth - which spans continents and world religions, contains six of the fastest growing economies and is underpinned by an agreed framework of common values. The previous Government in my view appeared oblivious to this aspect of the value of the Commonwealth, not even mentioning it in a strategic plan published for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in 2009".⁶ Several Commonwealth members are cornerstone powers in key parts of the world with which Britain has shared a particular and often intense relationship, in some cases for centuries. As London moves away from the political correctness of the Labour years which seemed to employ British foreign (and development) policy as reparations for past Empire and perceived Imperial injustices it should become easier to establish more balanced and effective relationships with such states. That at least is the idea.⁷ That said, it remains a mystery to many Britons why the biggest recipient of British overseas aid is India at a time when New Delhi is modernising its armed forces, has a space programme, nuclear weapons, and a large aid programme of its own. In effect, the British tax payer is subsidising the Indian defence budget when the British armed forces are stretched thin and Britain itself faces the biggest debt crisis since the Second World War. It will certainly take some time to correct the more extreme inconsistencies of Labour's long apology to the world for Britain's past.

Change and Continuity in French Foreign and Security Policy

Shortly after taking office President Sarkozy stated, "...the changing world forces us to prepare certain shifts. In short, I believe the time has come to give French diplomacy a 'doctrine'. This must not prevent pragmatism in the conduct of affairs. A doctrine means a clear-cut vision of the world, and of the long-term objectives and interests we defend. It's a set of values which guide our action. It's what gives us meaning and coherence over time. It's the pre-requisite for our independence".⁸ This statement shifted a move away from

⁶ Britain's Foreign Policy in a Networked World, speech by the Rt. Hon. William Hague MP, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1 July 2010.

⁷ The need is pressing. Ten years ago Britain was India's fourth largest trading partner, today it is eighteenth. BBC TV News, 28 July, 2010.

⁸ Interview given by President Nicolas Sarkozy, "Politique Internationale", May 2007. www.ambafrance.ng.org
www.chathamhouse.org.uk/security/

the more theological elements of Gaullist foreign and security policy and most certainly struck a chord in London.

Indeed, the Sarkozy Doctrine reflects (and informs) similar statements made by the new British Government as it tries to establish a pragmatic foreign and security policy in an age of austerity. At a declaratory level the stated ambitions of French foreign and security policy are effectively those of the British. France seeks to ensure the security and independence of France and the French. Paris has world-wide interests and thus global responsibilities. Paris stresses that French security interests cannot be separated from the rest of Europe, "and our partners who share our destiny and values". Co-operation is vital in the face of new threats such as terrorism, nuclear proliferation and what President Sarkozy has called 'ecological disorder'. Finally, for Sarkozy the promotion of French economic and commercial interests in a globalised world will be central to French foreign policy.

Furthermore, on pressing issues London and Paris, together with Berlin, have demonstrated a remarkable degree of resolution and co-ordination. Iranian attempts to become a nuclear weapons state have reinforced foreign and security policy co-operation between Britain, France and Germany within the EU and helped forge a strategic consensus with the US. To some extent for Paris such consensus has at times complicated a close relationship with Moscow, a central plank of French foreign policy noteworthy by its marked difference in tone from the very uneasy relationship between London and Moscow.⁹ Indeed, on 25 July, 2010 President Sarkozy said that Iran must be compelled to negotiate. It being the only way "to prevent a catastrophic alternative: the Iranian bomb or bombing Iran".

However, French foreign policy objectives reflects as much continuity as change from its Gaullist past with plenty of room for tensions with Britain. Indeed, even a cursory examination of Sarkozy's foreign policy emphasises the differences that continue to exist between Britain and France; the strategic picture may be by and large shared but the prescriptions are not. For France the EU remains the cornerstone not just of France's European policy, but its world position. Indeed, it is precisely because Europe is central to French foreign and security policy yet only secondary to British policy that the establishment of a Franco-British security axis appears unlikely.

Equally, the French position and attitude towards NATO has indeed changed since President Sarkozy took power with the Elysée emphasising the sterility

⁹ Although in June 2010 Moscow supported extended sanctions against Iran.
www.chathamhouse.org.uk/security/

of the old Atlanticist versus Europeanist debate (although in practice proving as resistant as ever to NATO modernisation). The French position like that of the British is that both are needed but the emphasis placed by the two old powers remains essentially different. For France the European Union must and will remain the single most important vehicle for French interests and influence. Such distinctions are somewhat inevitable between a truly Continental power that since the age of the Valois has sought to shape Europe and a country that since the end of the Anglo-Norman era (Plantagenet) in the fifteenth century has seen Continental Europe as a potential source of threat, which must be balanced but beyond which has had few ambitions to shape the European polis other than to ensure nothing emerges which could threaten English/British interests.

Therefore, whilst Paris agreed with London over the urgent need to ensure the institutions of the EU could function more effectively at 27, such reform for France remains a stepping stone on the road to ever close co-operation and integration. For the British, the 2009 Lisbon Treaty marks the high water mark of EU competence, although Paris does share London's view that the Union should only act in areas where the state is less effective. Put simply, tensions over ambition and 'interpretation' over the role, shape and extent of EU action (particularly external action) are likely to remain contentious. Moreover, future tensions could well emerge over super qualified majority voting, banking regulation and proposals for tax harmonisation which Paris believes to be essential for the long-term well-being of a Euro zone rocked so profoundly by the Greek debt crisis.

The debate over future EU enlargement could also lead to considerable tensions between London and Paris, not least because of the very different views London and Paris have on Turkish membership of the EU. President Sarkozy has consistently stated that whilst a trusted friend and partner Turkey's membership of the EU should not be 'automatic'. This position contrasts markedly with a speech given in Turkey by Prime Minister Cameron on 27, July 2010 in which he accused France and Germany of "double standards" over Turkey's membership of the EU; demanding the Turks play a full role in the defence of Europe within NATO, but denying Turkey membership of the EU. At heart, the issue is one of profound disagreement between London and Paris over the future competence and function of the EU. Whilst France remains concerned that EU enlargement will dilute the effectiveness of institutions, and thus prevent further deepening, for the British the very process of enlargement is a security good in its own right which thankfully will also prevent further deepening.

www.chathamhouse.org.uk/security/

However, it is defence policy where both the interests of both Britain and France most converge, partly because both London and Paris still instinctively consider defence policy as part of a world view, rather than merely defence of the realm/republic. To that end, President Sarkozy came to power with an expressed determination to modernise French defence policy. In a speech in June 2008 the President laid out five “grandes fonctions stratégiques” for the French Armed Forces. This *demarche* reflected both the opportunities and threats to Anglo-French defence co-operation. France’s determination to preserve autonomous surveillance and intelligence assets “to inform its independent political decisions” contrasts with Britain’s effective reliance on the US. This remains a source of contention between London and Paris because it effectively prevents the extension of French ambitions for a European system of independent space-based surveillance to which the Americans strenuously object.

Furthermore, for France its nuclear deterrent is seen as the ultimate strategic guarantor and a source of profound national prestige. Seeking to align both strategic and political ambitions French nuclear doctrine is being developed to extend the deterrent to the protection of European (not just French) populations Paris believes are increasingly vulnerable in a world in which proliferation and instability seem to be two sides of the same coin, particularly as it concerns the access of non-state actors to mass destructive weapons. Any such doctrine would be something that London would find very hard to enunciate given the reliance of London on the Americans for doctrine, targeting, technology and materiel. Indeed, whilst for France the need for credible protection against such affordable Armageddon is urgent, particularly as it concerns nuclear, radiological, biological and chemical penetration of open societies, for the British it is hard to see a role for nuclear deterrence.

Paris is ambitious in this regard as according to the 2008 French Defence White Paper such a posture will also include systems for ballistic missile launch detection, as well as the need to guard against all offensive and defensive systems. To that end, the French have also re-considered the balance between protection and projection to a far greater extent than the British. Civil defence, warning and planning is being overhauled with French civil and military co-operation in the management of crises modernised. For the French societal resiliency will be vital in an era of systemic terrorism. To that end Paris is taking steps to make French society far better able to withstand so called strategic shocks than the British (who are muddling through).

However, Britain and France are in full agreement over the need to improve the deployability and sustainability of their respective armed forces, even though the British remain significantly ahead of their French counterparts in this regard. Indeed, enhanced deployability is likely to provide one focus for enhanced Anglo-French defence co-operation, not just to enhance the interoperability of British and French Armed Forces, but also as an example to other Europeans covered by the costs of advanced expeditionary forces. For Paris the need is pressing. France's arc of strategic interest extends through the Mediterranean and Middle East to the Indian Ocean. Indeed, the 2008 long-term naval basing agreement with Abu Dhabi reflects recognition that France (like Britain) will in some form have to go back 'east of Suez'. To that end, like the British, France recognises the need for its forces to generate rapidly deployable capabilities for timely crisis prevention, as well as to engage effectively in post-conflict stabilisation and reconstruction. This capability is seen as vital by Paris not only to secure French interests but also given the centrality the French place on legitimate action, to support UN Security Council Resolutions, under the UN's Responsibility to Protect (R2P) of which France was a key drafter. France, like Britain, is of course a permanent member of the UN Security Council and whilst both Paris and London accept the need for reform of the Council, both countries fully intend to maintain permanent membership and must have the forces and resources to justify such status.

Protection and Projection

The central challenge for both the British and French is that much of the European continent remains on strategic vacation. Critically, an accord is needed between the two countries over a new balance to be struck between protection of the European home base and the projection of Europe's stabilising influence, with both NATO and the EU seen as enablers but not exclusively so. Much of this effort will be focussed on Europe's 'near broad', which is seen from both capitals as a dangerous, instable neighbourhood, the very tentacles of instability reaching daily into Europe. Extending from the Maghreb, through the Middle East and into Central Asia Europe's neighbourhood alone generates a security agenda (together with a set of dilemma) that would tax even the most powerful of superpowers let alone two middling European powers. Consequently, Britain and France must together decide if their main effort is to support the US the world over or to be more parochial and thus free the Americans up elsewhere. Even if both countries

understand the scale of the challenge it is not clear that London and Paris share agreement over where best to focus.

However, Anglo-French defence co-operation will necessarily need to regenerate a European strategic culture. Europe is the 'home base' the security of which remains vital for both the British and the French. Indeed, as the hollowness and hubris of the Blair years dissipates and the shallowness of Britain's influence in Washington becomes all too apparent so the enduring need re-surfaces for a close and sustained strategic relationship between London and Paris. It is a strategic relationship that by its very nature needs European partners that can exert influence across the security spectrum from the economic, through the diplomatic to the coercive. However, whilst an opportunity undoubtedly exists for a new partnership between London and Paris it will need to be specifically strategic, decidedly pragmatic and one which pointedly avoids ideology over the future of 'Europe'. The current British Government has no interest in building a statist 'Europe' which encourages more bureaucracy at the expense of national state performance.

Thankfully, some political momentum has been generated in the relationship by France's decision to re-enter NATO's integrated military structure, which was seen as strategically important in London. Although the less gracious view is that France is also keen to ensure it is never again bypassed as it was on the eve of the 2003 Iraq War. Thus, some limited room has been created in both London and Paris for a renewed partnership. Indeed, if there is any one thing a French President and British Prime Minister long on responsibilities but short on forces and resources will need are policy options in the face of unprecedented change in the strategic landscape.

However, Anglo-French relations cannot and must not be seen in European isolation. Indeed, all the major partners will be watching closely. Germany is emerging as Europe's pivotal power. Berlin has a large economy; strategic position; cultural influence in key areas of Europe that exceeds that of both Britain and France, reinforced by well-equipped if unbalanced armed forces.¹⁰ What Berlin lacks is political bite in security matters. Given the slow but accelerating emergence of German leadership both Britain and France need to embrace a mature Germany, both as part of an implicit Directoire (for all its controversial antecedents) and to ensure that such power does not negatively impact upon Europe's inner strategic landscape. In effect, after sixty years of

¹⁰ The German Government will in 2010 cut some €8.3bn from a €31bn defence budget and at present can deploy abroad only around 7000 of its 250,000 troops. "At Ease", *The Economist*, July 17, 2010 p. 27
www.chathamhouse.org.uk/security/

trying to take power out of European politics through institutions big state power is back and here to stay and an accommodation between Britain, France and Germany will be critical. Moreover, one of the many challenges Europe faces will be to ensure leadership of the great is balanced by the representation and influence of other powers. Both London and Paris will thus need to be constantly sensitive to the needs of the 'other'. If not, smaller states, not to mention the likes of Italy, Poland and Spain, will sabotage any form of strategic leadership leaving Europe even weaker and more divided at a moment of profound strategic importance.

Furthermore, in spite of occasional bouts of Russian assertiveness in their self-styled 'zone of privileged interests' (and in spite of London being a favourite target for Moscow's bombast), the British and French perceive no existential threat to Europe, be it defined institutionally or geographically. That is not to say such a threat could not emerge and the British and French threat assessment reflects that. Moreover, Germany is focussed on playing the role of the civilian stability hub of Europe as well as the economic powerhouse, although there are some concerns in both London and Paris that what passes for a German strategic concept is increasingly self-centred and can be summed up as 'get others to pay for German security whilst Germany makes money'. Italy is of course focussed on the Mediterranean and seeks no leadership role, but like Poland and Spain rightly insists upon consultation.

Given that political backdrop, if the need for Anglo-French co-operation is clear, so are the barriers to it. Significant impediments remain to the establishment of an enduring and trusting strategic Anglo-French defence relationship. Indeed, whilst the bitterness and division engendered on both sides by the 2003 Iraq War is fading it has left its mark through an underlying mistrust that continues whatever official denials. It is mistrust reinforced by American and British concerns about the lack of any real French support in those critical areas of Afghanistan where the struggle with the Taliban will be decided. Indeed, in spite of Defence Secretary Fox's suggestion that France is a fighting ally in Afghanistan, both the US and Britain are disappointed at what is seen as a French retreat from promises made, particularly as Washington has supported French candidates for important NATO positions in the past two years (often in the face of British concerns). This sense of disappointment was reinforced during the August 2010 visit to Paris by Pakistani President Asif Zardari during which London was concerned that Paris would not fully support Prime Minister Cameron's warning that Islamabad should be careful not to allow groups inside Pakistan to export

www.chathamhouse.org.uk/security/

terrorism. This is an issue particularly keenly felt in London following the terror attacks of 7 July, 2005 by a group linked to Pakistan.

That said, only Britain and France have truly global 'world' views and seem able to do the big thinking on the driving issues of dark globalisation; energy competition, global poverty, fundamentalism and terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the arms race in east and south Asia. That is why both London and Paris rightly insist on permanent membership of the UN Security Council, precisely because the Security Council is a security council and not simply the Executive Power Committee of the UN. Indeed, whatever the immediate British penchant for bilateralism, institutions as ever will be front and centre for Anglo-French defence co-operation.

There are some relationships that are immutable for both countries. For the British the nuclear relationship with the United States will remain critical. Indeed, Washington will remain the most important strategic partner for the British and any hopes will be misplaced that somehow that will change in light of current tensions. As Foreign Secretary Hague makes clear; "Relations between individual countries matter, starting for us with our unbreakable alliance with the United States which is our most important relationship and will remain so. Our shared history, values and interests, our tightly linked economies and strong habits of working together at all levels will ensure that the US remains our biggest single partner for achieving our international goals".¹¹ Equally, London should support Paris over the Mutual Assistance Clause and the Solidarity Clause in the Lisbon Treaty. Neither provision will lead through the back door to a common defence policy in its fullest sense. Moreover, Britain was a founding member of both the 1948 Brussels Treaty and the 1955 modified Brussels Treaty. As such, Britain has long been signed up to Article V on automatic armed assistance under Brussels. London should assume that if a treaty cannot afford signatories' mutual assistance then it is not worth the paper it is written on. There are those across the EU who like to think that such treaty provisions will in time lead to the replacement of the state by a supranational structure. From London's perspective such ambitions are unlikely to create short or even medium term political turbulence because the rhetoric is unlikely to be matched by investment.

¹¹ Britain's Foreign Policy in a Networked World, speech by the Rt Hon. William Hague MP, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1 July 2010
www.chathamhouse.org.uk/security/

Forging a New EU-NATO Partnership

Foreign Secretary Hague said that: "We are working with NATO Allies to fashion a new Strategic Concept and to modernise the Alliance, understanding that in a world of intercontinental threats alliances and partnerships must be flexible and networked..."¹² It is the emphasis on flexibility which is thus critical for the British. To that end, Anglo-French defence co-operation will need to be focused on the instinctively global and the determinedly practical. If not London will continue to make an imperfect contribution to CSDP matched by France's imperfect contribution to NATO at the expense of the effective and affordable security and defence of both countries. Indeed, in spite of the cuts to come in the Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) Britain will remain at the core of European defence alongside France. Indeed, so long as Germany does not wish to play a leadership role in the area of security and defence that simple truism of Europe's defence will continue for the foreseeable future.

The facts of European defence support that contention. In 2008 the total defence expenditure of NATO European states was €204.95bn. Of that Britain, France and Germany accounted for 60% of expenditure.¹³ Moreover, of c1.7m uniforms in Europe only some 170,000 or 10% can be deployed at any time and much of that figure is made up of British and French forces. Indeed, many smaller European states can only deploy 3-4% of their forces. In the second rank came Italy (7%), the Netherlands and Spain (each 5%), Sweden (3%) and Poland (3%) which together mustered some 23% of the NATO Europe total. Therefore, only eight members contributed around 88%. Of the remaining 12%, Greece provided a significant portion with much of its expenditure devoted to potential conflict with a NATO ally, Turkey (and vice versa).¹⁴ The contribution of all other nations was in effect negligible.

For both countries NATO remains a critical influence vehicle for the Americans, but the Alliance is in need of basic structural reforms, not least because NATO has a deficit of some €7bn. At present the Alliance serves to too great an extent a lumbering bureaucracy and fails to provide either a forum for the general membership or a directorate for major players such as Britain and France. Whilst the EU remains theoretically the most effective way of generating effect in non-military aspects of security (economic

¹² Britain's Foreign Policy in a Networked World, speech by the Rt Hon. William Hague MP, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1 July 2010

¹³ Britain alone accounts for 34% of the total, although that figure was inflated by the costs of operations in Afghanistan and Iraq.

¹⁴ Research undertaken by the author, with reference to IISS The Military Balance 2010 (London: Routledge)

www.chathamhouse.org.uk/security/

security, ecological security, human security et al) it lacks responsiveness and is horribly cumbersome. OSCE is an important albeit marginal tool for the stabilisation of Europe's periphery although it helps ensure Russia is tied into an agreed pan-European concept of security which is a policy objective of both Britain and France. Thankfully, both London and Paris by and large share a common understanding of the importance of functioning, interlocking institutions to European security. After all, Britain and France together have acted as both architects and managers of an institutional-based system of security from the end of World War One.

However, critically Britain and France too often disagree over roles and priorities for both NATO and the EU much to the detriment of both institutions. Indeed, there is a persistent danger that implicit competition between the two could intensify to the point that the Alliance and the Union represent two very different views as how best to organise Europe's security and defence. Placed in a global context such rivalry is as parochially pointless as it is dangerous – the strategic equivalent of that hackneyed but illustrative phrase – rearranging deckchairs on the Titanic. Whilst NATO and the EU (together with the OSCE) to some extent mutually reinforce stability by offering all European states a focus for all aspects of intense co-operation across the security competences of the state, the nature of competition between institutions and the implicit contentions of their respective political champions makes the aggregation and projection of stabilising European power very difficult.

It is the relationship with 'other' Europeans that will much shape Anglo-French defence co-operation. As Foreign Secretary Hague has said, "...within groupings such as the EU, it is no longer sensible or indeed possible just to focus our effort on the largest countries at the expense of the smaller members. Of course, France and Germany remain our crucial partners, which is why the Prime Minister visited them in his first days in office. But for the UK to exert influence and generate creative new approaches to foreign policy we need to look further and wider. The EU is at its best as a changing network where its members can make the most of what each country brings to the table. We are already seeking to work many of the smaller member states in new and more flexible ways, recognising where individual countries or groupings with the EU add particular value". Foreign Secretary Hague lays out a very clear view of the new British Government's attitude towards post-Lisbon EU security and defence which can be summarised thus: states lead, institutions follow, a view which London believes Paris shares. However, it is notable that in utterances by new British ministers, references to the EU's www.chathamhouse.org.uk/security/

Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) are virtually non-existent. Whilst there is much British reference to the Europe 2020 strategy and the need to make Europe more competitive in the global market, and some acknowledgement of the need for the EU to lead in the more esoteric areas of security, such as reducing carbon emissions, easing global poverty and more immediately dissuading Iran from its nuclear ambitions, for London CSDP seems unwanted – even toxic.

This is unfortunate given the political risk taken by President Sarkozy to move France back to the military core of NATO. Moreover, in a complex Europe residing in a complex neighbourhood in a complex world the political identity of deployed security is almost as important as the forces and resources one deploys. Alongside NATO the EU offers security and defence policy flexibility and legitimacy both of which are critical. Indeed, illusions in London that European security and defence can be focussed solely on NATO or that Defence Europe can either be ignored or established solely on bilateral ties will be dashed as any such stance is not just wrong in principle, but unacceptable to key partners, not least France. Ironically, the consequence of any such contention could well be the further weakening of a NATO already riven by divisions and inefficiencies.

The narrowness of the British view can be explained to an extent by the current British commitment to Afghanistan, as the coalition enters a critical phase. However, part of it is endemic to the British in general and the Conservatives in particular. As Europe Minister David Lidington said in a speech in Budapest on 15 July, 2010; “We believe that giving the people of Britain a greater say in what happens in Europe and over the decisions taken by Ministers on their behalf is necessary to deal with the democratic disconnect that has developed between the people of my country and EU institutions in recent years...In the latest Euro-barometer results, collected in 2009, only 23% of the British public were prepared to say they trusted the EU and only 36%, just over one third, thought UK membership was a good thing”.¹⁵ The Conservative leadership recognise the strategic importance of Europe, much as a Castlereagh or a Churchill understood, but they do not like the EU.

Furthermore, although there are some in the Conservative Party who may harbour hopes that CSDP fades into a short and inglorious history (and with it the whole Blairite ‘folly’ of Defence Europe) the idea that NATO should or

¹⁵ “UK Policy in Europe”, speech at Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, by Europe Minister, Rt Hon. David Lidington MP, 12 July, 2010. www.chathamhouse.org.uk/security/

would become the sole security provider in Europe is as undesirable for London and Paris, as it is unlikely. First, such an outcome would demand the return of the US to Europe in strength. This is unlikely to be at all appealing to the Americans given their role as the strategic balancer in the epicentre of global power instability – east and south Asia. Second, CSDP would have been seen to have critically failed which would doubtless entail a severe political crisis in the Union. Rather, a balanced British policy would insist upon NATO's continued role as the modernised collective defence base (deterrence, missile defence, cyber-defence and critical infrastructure protection) upon which the stability of Europe is found, and the force generator *par excellence* for advanced expeditionary coalitions in support and alongside the Americans. Additionally, London would accept that CSDP remains in the British interest as part of a balanced and relevant Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) able to operate across the civil-military conflict spectrum, albeit at the lower levels of conflict intensity. London and Paris could thus do business. Ironically, it is the Blair position at St Malo back in 1998 that will likely provide the true test as to how pragmatic the new Coalition Government is actually prepared to be over Defence Europe.

Certainly for France there is a very real danger if Britain continues to under-invest in Defence Europe because it could well allow smaller EU member-states, most of which lack any strategic culture (nor indeed desire one) to retreat from any form of effective EU (or NATO) external engagement. It would also imply the retreat of and by Europe into itself with any pretence ended to an autonomous stabilisation role in or beyond its borders, be it civilian or military-led. As a consequence the EU's Neighbourhood Policy and the Barcelona Process both important to France as a Mediterranean power would also be adversely affected. Europe could retreat as a result into a weak and fragmented fortress Europe mentality. Indeed, over time it is hard to see the very internal openness that defines modern Schengen Europe surviving.

Equally, the narrow French view that NATO remains simply an Article 5 Collective Defence organisation (and attempts to block development in other areas of Alliance development such as the Comprehensive Approach (l'Approche Globale)) are rightly seen by London as unhelpful and unrealistic. Indeed, a more likely danger is that with only the Americans able to both provide the new strategic defence architecture (missile defence, cyber-defence, critical infrastructure protection) and generate and command expeditionary coalitions Europe will become increasingly disaggregated by American leadership and ever more subject to its whims. Therefore, a new

www.chathamhouse.org.uk/security/

compact is needed between London and Paris that defines the respective roles of NATO and the EU, and systematically drives convergence and coherence and de-conflicts the Alliance-Union relationship.

To that end London must re-commit to ensure the EU delivers credibly on the expanded Petersberg Tasks explicit in the 2009 Lisbon Treaty. In a global context credible counter-terrorism, humanitarian operations, peacekeeping, peacemaking and the disarmament of parties to conflicts is no mean challenge. Therefore, London must match the constructive attitude toward NATO that has been taken by post-Gaullist Paris and together both countries must develop a vision, and quickly, for the next phase of CSDP development. However, all Europeans must help end the profound cynicism on London's part that the words will finally be matched by action. It is cynicism not without cause.

Political flexibility allied to political identity will be vital. Europe and the world beyond today are too complex for NATO alone to manage credibly the critical but broad security challenges. There will be times when an EU flag atop an operation will afford a better chance of success than a NATO flag. In such circumstances NATO should be able and willing to play an enabling role. That in turn will demand the re-establishment of a credible link between political strategy and fighting and staying power, even in an age of austerity. Critically, for either the EU or NATO to play any wider military security role beyond Europe the military stability and security of Europe (both members and partners, together with the strategic reassurance of all members) remains central to NATO's mission.

Naturally, London and Washington will insist on the re-commitment to some form of success in Afghanistan. However, both London and Paris will together have to consider military perspectives and requirements after Afghanistan, in particular reform of the NATO Command Structure, the NATO Response Force (NRF) and the High-Readiness Forces (HRF), allied to the enhancement of EU command and control arrangements, including an EU Strategic Headquarters. To that end, Britain and France should together move to free Allied Command Transformation (ACT) to undertake truly transformative work. ACT is after all currently led by a French officer, General Stéphane Abrial. Indeed, affordable modernisation should be the focus for Allied Command Transformation (ACT), based on a programme of effective analysis, lessons learned, creative thinking, and operational experimentation. This will require new relationships to be forged between

Allied Command Operations (ACO), Allied Command Transformation (ACT), the EU Military Staff and the European Defence Agency (EDA).

Therefore, for the new British Government whether improvements to the European defence effort takes place under the umbrella of NATO or the EU misses the point. The majority of Europeans are in both organisations and the forces available to both are by and large the same. Certainly, the 2010 NATO Strategic Concept will doubtless lead to new capability goals and the EU's capabilities improvement process will doubtless proceed. However, too often in the past, be it NATO's defence planning questionnaire (DPQ) of the EU headline goals, the sorry result has too often been great works of European fiction with Americans pretending to believe European commitments and Europeans pretending to be serious. Indeed, critical to both the purpose and role of both NATO and the EU is the generation and organisation of cost-effective military power. That does not mean yet more critical capabilities commitments similar to DCI in 1999 and the Prague Capabilities Commitment in 2003. Rather, the focus should be on how to spend better.

Ultimately, the purpose of Anglo-French defence co-operation must be a commitment to enhance fighting power with capabilities and capacities designed to ensure a politically-balanced West remain the world's pre-eminent military grouping. However, such a goal must be realised from within existing budgets. It should be possible. Europeans spend some €200bn each year on defence with much of its spent criminally badly. Anglo-French defence co-operation must lead by example and show the way to sound investment choices that are urgently needed. For example, even the territorial defence of NATO and EU members today requires advanced deployable armed forces with force modernisation tailored to such an end. Maintaining outdated main defence forces is simply a way of avoiding responsibility and simply transfers responsibilities onto more capable partners such as Britain and France. It is not without irony that the British have been one of two European states to fulfil all its capability obligations under the Headline Goal process – the other (almost) being France. This has reinforced a strong sense across the Conservative Party that whilst many European partners talk an ambitious security and defence story there is little evidence to believe they can be relied upon to deliver.

However, for London suspicious as always of '*grands dessins*', pioneer groups will be critical, particularly for the generation of high end strategic enablers and the testing of strategic and operational command and planning

systems, whilst at the lower end of the conflict spectrum such groupings could help smaller EU member-states afford a relevant contribution to security and defence. In effect Anglo-French defence co-operation will be the pioneer group *par excellence*. Thus, permanent structured co-operation and reinforced co-operation should be seen as the contributing *modi operandi* by which the leading states re-generate a European strategic culture worthy of the name. Moreover, any such developments will need to take place from within the limits of existing security and defence expenditures. Affordability, de-confliction and pragmatic strategy will be name of the Anglo-French game with 'bilateralism' aimed at freeing up sclerotic institutional processes. Indeed, be it the European Defence Agency (EDA) or NATO's Defence Planning Process (DPP) neither has been used to effect and there is always the danger that, if unchecked, competition rather than co-operation will become the norm. This in turn could lead to the parallel re-nationalisation of European procurement efforts with negative political, military, industrial and financial implications.

The bottom-line is this; Europeans are first going to have to make better use of what they have and then better acquire together what they need to act both cost-effectively and strategically. For the British and French much of that should preferably be focussed on a new EU-NATO partnership. Politics will mean that the EU and NATO will never merge their respective efforts but efforts should be made by both London and Paris to promote convergence. Therefore, Anglo-French defence co-operation must reflect a realistic commitment to future civilian and military effectiveness that underpins the narrative for the cost-effective modernisation of European forces through both NATO and the EU.

Leading the Way: Affordability and Future Anglo-French Defence Co-operation

Britain and France account for 50% of all European defence expenditure and some 75% of all defence research and development. In 2009 Britain and France both contributed €80m into a common pool to fund technology research. Therefore, given the financial pressures faced by both the British and French armed forces, spending together and spending better must become the credo of Anglo-French defence co-operation. However, there can be no place for either romanticism or false expectations. Anglo-French defence co-operation will always be a delicate affair with the British insisting that nothing damages their 'privileged links' with the Americans, whereas

France will insist that in parallel any such developments reinforce the future development of CSDP.

Therefore, early efforts to re-energise Anglo-French defence co-operation will necessarily require confidence-building on both sides of the Channel based on a simple premise – share the maximum possible. To that end, a practical agenda would focus co-operation on ten areas: strategic nuclear synergy, naval strike co-operation, intelligence sharing, operationalising the Comprehensive Approach, affording strategic sovereignty, defence-industrial convergence, specific project co-operation, European defence-industrial consolidation, a new EUROGROUP and the encouragement of genuinely out of the box thinking based on enhanced civil-military synergies.

Strategic Nuclear Synergy: Co-operation between Britain and France over strategic nuclear matters will never be easy. Britain is heavily dependent on the US for its Trident capability and Paris rightly has concerns that London would be an uncertain partner because of its reliance on the Americans. For France its deterrent is of such national prestige that any compromise in search of co-operation would raise domestic concerns. However, any hard-headed analysis of both countries' programmes would suggest the need for co-operation. Both operate Cold War submarine ballistic missile (SSBN) systems that are extremely costly. Whilst France spends some 20% of its defence budget annually on the programme, the British are intending to spend €20bn over the fourteen years. Chancellor of the Exchequer Osborne said in July 2010 the costs of the programme must for the first time be met from the core defence budget. Moreover, the embarrassing February 2009 collision between *HMS Valiant* and *Le Triomphant* demonstrated that British and French submarines are patrolling the same space, at the same time at double the cost. This seems bizarre given the costs of keeping one submarine at sea all the time is exorbitant at a time when no existential threat exists to either country. There are thus three areas where Britain and France might seek synergy without having to discuss so-called 'black programmes'. The first concerns possible value for money future alternatives to bespoke SSBNs for the nuclear deterrent. Second, renovation of the Anglo-French Joint Commission on Nuclear Policy and Doctrine might lead to some 'rationalisation' of patrol schedules without affecting relations with either the US or NATO. Third, industrial co-operation over the development of non black programme sub-systems in nuclear submarines might act as a confidence builder for more sensitive co-operation in future.

Naval Strike Co-operation: Both Britain and France are finding the cost of their respective future aircraft carrier programmes prohibitive. Indeed, at the time of writing (August 2010) Britain is proceeding with the construction of the two 65,000 ton Queen Elizabeth class carriers, together with the STOVL version of the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter. However, it is highly unlikely that both carriers if completed will be fitted out to the same degree of fighting power. There are technical barriers to interoperability between the French *Charles de Gaulle*, and *HMS Queen Elizabeth* and *HMS Prince of Wales* that without the fitting of catapults in the latter could prove insuperable. This is crazy. At the very minimum steps should be taken to ensure a British or French carrier is always available for operations, possibly through the creation of a Franco-British or European carrier group that uses support ships from both fleets.

Intelligence Sharing: Both Britain and France have found it hard to generate and assess actionable intelligence on areas of the world where both share vital and essential interests (Middle East, North Africa, Central and Southern Asia, Africa et al). This is partly due to how intelligence is generated; the British rely to a great extent on the US, whereas the French have more autonomy but limited capacities. Equally, actionable intelligence is meaningless without a firm grip of the context of operations. Indeed, understanding the context of intelligence has become extremely complex, partly because of the explosion of open source information. Moreover, the less change power a country possesses the more important insight becomes. Both countries are today locked in a knowledge war which will require access to a far larger knowledge community than hitherto if policy and decision-makers are to make informed decisions (rather than overtly political choices).

Forging a new Security Knowledge Community: Whilst Britain and France will find it hard to share covert sources, far more could be done to generate a shared intelligence assessment community, partly constructed through more effective 'reach back' to an 'trans-manche' academic community able to challenge and confirm assessments, often through open-source cross-referencing. By creating such a community Britain and France would lay the foundations for a wider European strategic knowledge community. The French are correct to emphasise protection against nuclear, radiological biological and chemical threats because they are the likely consequences of the democratisation of mass destruction or affordable Armageddon. However, such threats are themselves consequences of new patterns and relationships fuelled by age-old hatred, aging but irresistible technologies and huge flows of illicit and illegal capital. Insight will be critical.

Operationalising the Comprehensive Approach (L'approche Globale): The Comprehensive Approach is the cross-governmental generation and application of security, governance and development services, expertise, structures and resources over time and distance in partnership with host nations, host regions, allied and partner governments and partner institutions, both governmental and non-governmental. If the Comprehensive Approach is to work as it should, the concepts and doctrine underpinning such a cross-Alliance effort must be matched by efficient generation and use of required resources, political will and strategic patience. Britain and France are best placed to help develop a concept of operations that can better prepare both the Alliance and the Union for operational effectiveness in hybrid conflict.

Affording Strategic Sovereignty: Central to any future concept of Anglo-French defence co-operation will be joint efforts to afford high-end strategic capabilities and enablers. Critical to that would be an expansion of the remit of inter-governmental High-Level Working Group (HLWG). Defence Secretary Fox said recently that Britain as was ready to “co-operate with those that pay and those that fight” and interest was already shown in enhanced co-operation with France in the 2009 British defence white paper. This pragmatic approach to procurement co-operation will be the hallmark of an administration keen to maintain global reach British armed forces but in need of new ways to finance the more expensive assets and capabilities that strategic sovereignty will demand. Some areas, such as carrier-based air power, strategic ISR/imint collection, early warning, distant detection strategic level, CSAR, SEAD and surveillance and target acquisition units, are extremely costly and already forcing tough choices on both sides of the Atlantic.

Defence Industrial Convergence: It is fashionable for leaders in both Britain and France to talk of their respective defence industries as national champions ensuring security of equipment supply. In fact, both countries' industries have long since become complex entities with access to other markets but equally reliant on others for critical components and sub-components. BAe Systems and Thales are cases in point. BAe Systems is ever more a North American company for whom 'Britishness' and 'Europeanness' only emerge when a large British contract is at stake. Thales, in spite of the French Government golden share, is increasingly multinational, and increasingly British. Certainly, attempts to prevent such developments for narrow national reasons, such as local employment, will either fail or see world leading companies falling behind competitors. Britain and France together need to squeeze more capability and affordability out of their

www.chathamhouse.org.uk/security/

respective defence industrial and technological clusters. Thankfully, the foundation for such co-operation already exists. British and French defence contractors have long experience of working together either as prime contractors, secondary contractors or through specially created companies, such as Matra Marconi Space, which operates through a series of firewalls within respective parent companies. The main problem with Anglo-French defence industrial co-operation is one of trust and some form of global licence may be needed to allow far easier exchange of technologies between the two countries. As Defence Secretary Fox has pointed out the British companies need to acquire French equivalents and better access to French military procurement programmes as a test of good faith. The French regard the British as unreliable partners too subject to political whim and the sudden cancellation of or adjustment to programmes. However, even a cursory analysis of the defence economics of both countries, and the costs of production in Britain and France suggest only through far more synergy between the two countries' defence industries will any modicum of affordability and security of supply and re-supply be assured.

Specific Project Co-operation: Within days of coming to power the new Government in London ordered a review of the €12bn Future Strategic Tanker Aircraft (FSTA) to see if co-operation with a foreign air force (notably the French) made operational and financial sense. Future co-operation will necessarily be established on such criteria and it is clear that France is also keen to work with Britain in a range of similar projects. Options under discussion include the French and Royal Air Forces sharing Airbus A-330 tankers and Boeing C-17 airlifters, and creating a single operational pool from the future A-400M transporters. For both the British and French such synergies could help save enough money to enable both to avoid cutting back planned fast jet acquisitions. Additionally, in return for military flight hours on the British A-330s, France could offer the British military flight hours on its planned fourteen strong multi-role tanker transport (MRTT). Continued co-operation in missile technology could again be fruitful. This would require extension of the assessment phase of a light anti-ship weapon and perhaps an upgrade of the Storm Shadow cruise missile. However, given the tight budgets any such co-operation will demand tighter industrial integration to cut costs and lower costs, and an agreement of funding between London and Paris. Above all, there is an urgent need to see convergence over the provision of urgent operational requirements (UORs), particularly as it concerns French sonar radar roadside bomb protection technology. This

could be offered in return for French access to the British Watchkeeper unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV).

European Defence-Industrial Consolidation: Whilst a Clintonian 'night of the long knives' is unlikely in Europe it is also evident that Europe needs far fewer platform builders (metal bashers) and more cost-effective systems providers and integrators. Indeed, such a shift will be critical if Europe's relative weaknesses are to be offset by all-important remote sensors, precision strike and sustained and sustainable strategic mobility. Britain and France (together with Germany) must lead Europe towards a defence industrial structure that delivers value for money over reasonable timeframes. Both London and Paris appear to agree that affordability will demand greater defence integration and the final end of *juste retour* and fixed work quotas, which in spite of many efforts to end such practices have proven remarkably enduring, reinventing themselves in various guises. London must invest in the European Defence Agency (EDA). In return France should support convergence between the EDA and NATO's Defence Investment Division (allied to the Conference of National Armament Directors (CNAD)).

New EUROGROUP: There are a series of practical longer-term issues upon which Britain and France could together begin work with the express goal of placing both NATO Europe and Defence Europe within a single strategic framework without denying the unique roles, characters and rights of both NATO and the EU. Indeed, both the 2010 NATO Strategic Concept and the European Security Strategy (ESS) should be seen as the primary instruments for creating such a framework. This would end the implicit competition between the two organisations that hampers convergence and co-ordination. Critically, Britain and France could move to establish a new EUROGROUP to help bring all Europeans back to strategic seriousness. To avoid being drawn into the Cyprus, Greece, Turkey imbroglio such a grouping would be voluntary and built on and around co-operation between Berlin, London and Paris and thus in essence act as an extension of the St Malo process. The Working Group could consider *inter alia* all aspects of defence co-operation such as Procurement Co-operation and Harmonise Equipment Programmes, creative financing to spread the cost of force modernisation, re-consider smart transformation from a decidedly European perspective, as well as the modernisation of security and defence education (built around the idea of a military Erasmus) which will be critical for the future effectiveness of European forces. EUROGROUP could also consider defence integration for smaller European states as a way to generate real military effect on limited force and resource bases and the appalling waste and duplication multiple

www.chathamhouse.org.uk/security/

small defence establishments entail. Indeed, the ratios between equipment and personnel budgets are so poor in several European powers that they are little more than armed pensions.

Out of the Box Thinking: Armed forces repeatedly say they encourage out of the box thinking. They do not. An example is the stuttering attempts to seek synergies with the civil sector. Indeed, the narrowness of thinking in most militaries is self-defeating as is their inability to adopt creative ideas generated elsewhere. 'Not invented here' is a mantra that might easily describe the culture of what are essentially conservative European organisations. For example, the Netherlands enjoys one of the largest maritime salvage and support industries in the world. In 2008-2009 the Netherlands Defence Academy undertook a research project for the Operational Command of the Royal Netherlands Navy that explored the role of navies and marines in stabilising the Littoral. One factor was the excessive cost of using large bespoke naval vessels as off-shore bases in support of deployed marines engaged on ship to objective manoeuvre (STOM) and the establishment of a security zone in the area of operations. Ironically, this Dutch idea has now been taken up by the Pentagon. Given the centrality of Africa to much of European security and the lack of infrastructure therein to enable peace support operations such open thinking should be encouraged.

CONCLUSION

Britain and France: Locked in a Dialogue of Decline?

Former NATO Secretary-General Lord George Robertson said recently that: "We are in a situation where both countries [Britain and France] have been brought to the point of questioning some of the fundamentals of their defence capability. So we need to build true mutual dependency and work out the fundamentals of what they want to achieve". If Britain and France are to remain global reach European powers London and Paris will need to share a vision of the big picture and stick to it. Only then can the two countries reinforce and enable each other to achieve cost-effective grand strategy – the organisation of credibly large means in pursuit of large ends. This is the essence of contemporary strategic sovereignty.

The return in London to a High Tory foreign and security policy will see a pragmatic attempt to maximise British influence and leverage in and over key fora based on a realistic assessment of British influence and power. Central to that will be a strategic relationship with France, that hopefully moves beyond the traditionally rhetorical. It will not be easy as the Anglo-French defence relationship is too often hostage to other narrow fortunes; be it mad British cows or bolshy French truck drivers. Therefore, political courage and leadership will be at a premium on both sides of the Channel.

To fulfil such a noble aim Paris has the right to see more interest and investment from London in the CSDP. London has the right to see an end to French attempts to frustrate NATO reform and the exclusion of Britain from a Franco-German core that in strategic terms is as hollow as much of the armed force that underpins it. 2010 is not 1963. Both sides must move beyond the clichés and stereotypes that continue to drive too much of thinking on both sides of the Channel.

Seventy years ago General de Gaulle made his famous call to the French people from London to fight on so that Britain, France and Europe would emerge victorious from Nazi tyranny. That call was prophetic for together Britain and France (with the help of friends) eventually succeeded and a new Europe was born. Today, the threat is not immediate but the danger generated by European weakness is real because it adds succour to adversaries and potential enemies the world over. Strategic stability, which is the business of the world's first truly global powers, is ultimately a function of the design and application of power. Anglo-French defence co-operation is and must always be about power. The alternative is that Britain and France

www.chathamhouse.org.uk/security/

decline with the rest of a Europe that accepts weakness as strength and hopes that danger simply passes by a Europe too weak to any longer matter. History would suggest that such false hope is utter folly. Like it or not the responsibility of greatness once assumed by Britain and France is today a burden that cannot be shirked. Britain and France remain the only two countries in Europe with the strategic vision and culture to lead Europe back from the appeasement of reality that is the stuff of European political elites today... but only together.

Are Britain and France locked in a dialogue of decline? Maybe, but it is only if both partners choose to be strategically inept by sacrificing the big strategic picture for the short-term and parochial. It would not be the first time.

SOURCES

Ashdown, Paddy (2010) The UK-France Defence Relationship, 28 May, 2010, Revue Defense Nationale, www.diploweb.com/spip.php?

Ashdown, Paddy (2007) Swords and Ploughshares: Bringing Peace to the Twenty-First Century, (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson)

Blitz James & Pfeifer, Sylvia (2010) Anglo-French Defence: Entente Nouvelle, Financial Times, 14 March, 2010 www.freerepublic.com/focus/f-news/2471113/pos

Chuter Andrew & Tran, Pierre (2010) Budget Pressures Push UK-French Co-operation, Eurosatory 18 June, 2010. <http://defensenews.com/blogs/eurosatory/2010/06/20/budget-pressures>

Council on Foreign Relations (2010) Remarks by Presidents Obama and Sarkozy, 30 March, 2010 www.cfr.org/publications/21771/remarks-by-presidents_obama_sarkozy

Defense Industry Daily (2008) French President Tries to Set French Defense on a New Course, www.defenseindustrydaily.com/French-President-Tries-to-Set-France

"At Ease", The Economist, July 17, 2010

Foreign and Commonwealth Office (2010) Foreign Secretary opens the European Affairs Debate, 3 June, 2010 www.fco.gov.uk/en/news/latest-news/?/view=Speech&id=2232034

Foreign and Commonwealth Office (2010) Britain's Foreign Policy in a Networked World, 1 July 2010. Speech by Rt Hon. William Hague, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. www.fco.gov.uk/en/news/latest-news/?view=Speech&id=2246259

Freedman, Lawrence (2005) Military Strategy in the Twenty First Century in British Security Policy 2010 (London 2005)

Politique Internationale, (2007) President Sarkozy and the French Foreign Policy, interview given by President Nicolas Sarkozy, May 2007. www.ambafrance-ng.org/france-nigeria/spip.php?article57

Gray, Colin J. (2005) Another Bloody Century: Future War (London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson)

See Giegerich, Bastian (2010) Budget Crunch: Implications for European Defence", Survival, Vol 52, No. 4 August-September 2010 (London: IISS) www.chathamhouse.org.uk/security/

IISS, (2010) *The Military Balance 2010* (London: Routledge)

Lindley-French J, Cornish P & Rathmell A (2010) *Operationalising the Comprehensive Approach* (London: Chatham House)

Lindley-French, Julian. (2007) *North Atlantic Treaty Organisation* (London: Routledge)

Lindley-French, Julian. (2008) *A Chronology of European Security and Defence 1945-2007* (Oxford: OUP)

Smith, Rupert J. (2005) *The Utility of Force: The Art of war in the Modern World* (London: Allen Lane)

Daily Telegraph (2008) Nicolas Sarkozy Speech to Westminster in Full, 26 March, 2008 www.telegraph.co.uk/news/1582924/Nicolas-sarkozys-speech

Wintour, Patrick and Stratton, Allegra (2010) Sarkozy to Warn Cameron over Defence Co-operation in Europe, 10 March, 2010 www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/mar/10/sarkozy-warns-america

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Julian Lindley-French is an Associate Fellow of Chatham House. He is also Eisenhower Professor of Defence Strategy at the Netherlands Defence Academy and Special Professor of Strategic Studies at the University of Leiden.

September 2010

This report has been made possible by the support of *Lockheed Martin UK*. However the contents and research remain the independent work of the author and Chatham House.