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THE RELEVANCE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION FOR THE UNITED STATES IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Dr. Joel R. Hillison

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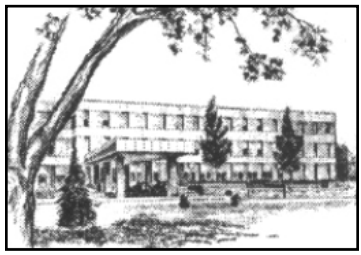

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FOREWORD

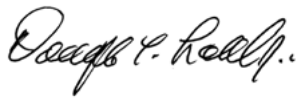
As this monograph goes to press, the United States is waging a trade war against its closest allies in North America, Asia, and Europe. In Europe, there is an emerging consensus that European states can no longer count on the United States to provide leadership and security. In the United States, there is a greater focus on reciprocity in relations with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU) and even skepticism over the continued relevance of those two organizations. In the midst of this turbulent time, Dr. Joel R. Hillison's analysis provides a necessary corrective to the pessimistic outlook on U.S. and European relations. By objectively analyzing the evolution of NATO and the EU and exploring the interdependence between them and the United States, he is able to place current relations in context and provide practical recommendations for improving that relationship.

This monograph begins by reviewing U.S. interests in Europe. Arguably, those interests have not changed since the end of World War II. What has changed, however, is the U.S. approach to furthering those interests. For the duration of the Cold War and in the immediate aftermath, NATO and the EU, in its various forms, played an essential role in pursuing U.S. interests and protecting the interests of U.S. allies. The prosperity and security of the United States and Europe were seen as interconnected even as the functions, membership, and capabilities of NATO and the EU changed over time.

The future of the transatlantic relationship rests on the grand strategy or strategic vision the United States decides to pursue going forward. Over its history,

the United States has pursued different grand strategies based on domestic factors and the challenges and opportunities presented. Competing visions of U.S. grand strategy going forward thus have a direct impact on the relevance of NATO and the EU. Ultimately, the grand strategy of the United States will determine the nature of U.S. relations with the EU and NATO and perhaps even determine their continued existence.

The U.S. Army War College's Strategic Studies Institute is pleased to offer this study as a contribution to the current debate about the relevance of the EU and NATO to the United States.



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SUMMARY

Both European and U.S. foreign policy since World War II have been built upon a strong, transatlantic relationship. The European Union (EU) and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) have provided solid institutional bases for this relationship. Yet, contemporary challenges could disrupt this structure and call into question the very viability of the EU and NATO. In addition, the "America First" foreign policy approach views relations with other countries, and by extension organizations like NATO and the EU, as a zero-sum game, where equitable burden sharing seems to be more important than political solidarity and mutual gains from cooperation. These trends portend significant challenges to U.S. relations with both NATO and the EU. Overcoming these challenges will require continued cooperation and trust between the United States and its allies and partners.

Both the EU and NATO provide the United States with a comparative advantage in promoting freedom, prosperity, and security globally, and in the European region. Not only do these organizations contribute to the U.S. interest of a Europe whole, free, and at peace, but they also provide the United States with diplomatic, economic, and military multipliers that give the United States significant influence in addressing threats and challenges from states such as Russia and China, as well as nonstate actors such as al-Qaeda.

NATO began as a conventional military alliance to balance against the threat of the Soviet Union. Over time, the Alliance has evolved into a security community that shares common values and interests and is committed not only to common defense, but also to cooperative security and crisis management. NATO

also retains significant military capabilities and geostrategic value in promoting common interests within and external to the region. The Alliance has always emphasized collective action and burden sharing among allied members. This is where the current U.S. approach to foreign policy is causing tension. Not only has the United States chosen to go against the consensus views of its allies in addressing key challenges, it has also suggested that the U.S. commitment to common defense might be contingent upon allies living up to their burden-sharing commitments.

So too has the EU evolved from its humble beginnings in the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), established in 1951, to a customs union and common market in 1957 with the European Economic Community (EEC). After the Maastricht Treaty in 1992, the EU became an imperfect, yet resilient economic and political union with the ultimate goal of an ever-closer union among member states. That ambitious goal has come under increasing pressure from the economic crisis, increased migration, and Brexit. Like NATO, the EU has strengthened the ability of European member states to resist outside aggression. It has also led members to eschew conflict in resolving their internal disputes. As a robust and prosperous union, the EU has also become an important economic partner of the United States. In addition to being the largest trading and investment partner of the United States, the EU shares the U.S. commitment to the international rule of law, free markets, and promoting democratic values.

The America First approach to U.S. foreign policy takes a zero-sum attitude to foreign policy, which seems to undermine the solidarity and cooperation that have made NATO and the EU so important to pursuing both U.S. and European interests. Instead of

focusing on the benefits of collective action, the United States has placed a greater emphasis on specific reciprocity with both NATO allies and the EU as a trading bloc.

In order to continue to promote the mutual interests of the United States and its EU and NATO allies and partners, the United States should:

- Hedge against unfavorable global trends by deepening, not reducing its cooperation with both NATO and the EU;
- Continue to pressure the allies to increase their capabilities, but take a more nuanced view of burden sharing; and,
- Promote greater trade and investment between the United States and the EU and increased NATO-EU cooperation.

While there are many directions U.S. grand strategy can ultimately take, the EU and NATO will remain relevant to the United States for the foreseeable future.

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INTRODUCTION

> Everything depends upon the alliances with other states, and upon their military resources.[1]
>
> —Antoine-Henri Jomini

The international system appears to be at a critical juncture. Dramatic changes in the external strategic environment have disrupted long accepted notions of the U.S. role in the world and its approach to pursing its national interests. U.S. power has been in a gradual, relative decline since the end of World War II. Emerging powers increasingly challenge the United States and the established international order it helped construct. At the same time, Europe is facing significant external threats from migration, terrorism, Russian aggression, and internal turmoil, as exemplified by Brexit. Brexit, perhaps more than any other event, has signaled a challenge to European aspirations for an ever-closer union among European states. Both European and U.S. foreign policy since the Truman administration have been built upon four main pillars: a rules-based international order, strong alliances, multilateral cooperation, and the spread of democracy.[2] The European Union (EU) and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) have provided a solid foundation for these four pillars. Yet, contemporary challenges could disrupt this structure and call into question the

very viability of the EU and NATO. In addition, the "America First" foreign policy approach seems to view relations with other countries, and by extension organizations like NATO and the EU, as a zero-sum game, where equitable burden sharing seems to be more important than political solidarity and mutual gains from cooperation. These trends portend significant changes to U.S. relations with both NATO and the EU.

With the U.S. administration signaling a new approach to foreign policy, it is time to reassess the importance of NATO and the EU in the context of the current and projected geostrategic environment. This monograph seeks to inform that discussion. It begins by reviewing U.S. interests in a democratic and economically prosperous Europe; this has been an enduring aim since the end of World War II. It also examines the role, function, and capabilities of both NATO and the EU and how they have adapted over time to changes in the global environment. Finally, this project assesses the implications of competing visions of grand strategy on the relevance of NATO and the EU. Ultimately, the grand strategy of the United States will determine the nature of U.S. relations with the EU and NATO and perhaps even determine their continued existence. The monograph ends with some recommendations on how NATO and the EU can be used to pursue U.S. national interests in the future. The salient conclusion is that no matter what grand strategy the United States adopts, as long as NATO remains intact and the EU holds together, both will remain relevant: NATO as a security provider and the EU either as a partner, or as a competitor.

U.S. INTERESTS IN EUROPE

The relevance of NATO and the EU are directly related to how they support or hinder the achievement of U.S. national interests. National interests drive policy and strategy formulation and exist independently from threats in the contemporary strategic environment. While this may seem obvious, a high-level panel of national security experts noted that these terms are often conflated. "Many debates fail to recognize the distinction between interests and threats, since a vivid threat is often needed to remind one of an interest that would otherwise go unnoticed or unattended."[3] At the most basic level, U.S. national interests, sometimes referred to as core interests, are espoused in the founding documents of the nation. These core interests are enduring in nature, though the policies pursued in support of them change over time.

From the dawn of the Cold War, the fates of the United States and Western Europe were bound together by the devastation of two world wars and the necessity of confronting the Soviet bloc. Europe was dependent upon the United States for security and economic reconstruction. The United States looked at Europe as the front line in the war against communism and as a partner in creating and sustaining a new world order. Thus, the United States took a broad view of its interests, a view that held until the early 21st century. In 2000, a bipartisan Commission on America's National Interests articulated some of those U.S. national interests as:

- Limited threat of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) attacks on U.S. and forces abroad.
- Survival and cooperation of U.S. allies.

- The viability and stability of major global systems.
- Productive relations with China and Russia.[4]

The same commission identified "a Europe whole, free and at peace" as a vital U.S. interest.[5] This was nothing new. The initial articulation of this interest harkens back to President Harry Truman, who realized that the United States could never again withdraw from events in Europe, nor could it pursue an isolationist course. The Truman doctrine, based on the dual concepts of deterrence and containment, was a reaction to the civil war in Greece and Turkey's dispute with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) over the Dardanelles Strait. Truman also instituted the Marshall Plan to rebuild the war torn economies of Europe. In a speech to Congress in March 1948, Truman emphasized the need for the United States to address the threats to Europe:

> Until the free nations of Europe have regained their strength, and so long as communism threatens the very existence of democracy, the United States must remain strong enough to support those countries of Europe which are threatened with communist control and police-state rule.[6]

Recognizing the importance of Europe to the United States, President Dwight Eisenhower continued the policy of deterrence and containment initiated by President Truman, as did his successor, President John Kennedy. In his famous *Ich bin ein Berliner* speech in June 1963, President Kennedy declared, "Freedom is indivisible, and when one man is enslaved, all are not free."[7] Even though a lot had changed since Truman's administration (e.g., the Cuban missile crisis and the

space race), U.S. interests in Europe remained constant. In his speech at Independence Hall in Philadelphia the year before, President Kennedy more clearly outlined the role of Europe in pursuing U.S. national interests:

> We do not regard a strong and united Europe as a rival but as a partner. To aid its progress has been the basic object of our foreign policy for 17 years. We believe that a united Europe will be capable of playing a greater role in the common defense, of responding more generously to the needs of poorer nations, of joining with the United States and others in lowering trade barriers, resolving problems of commerce, commodities, and currency, and developing coordinated policies in all economic, political, and diplomatic areas. We see in such a Europe a partner with whom we can deal on a basis of full equality in all the great and burdensome tasks of building and defending a community of free nations.[8]

Twenty years later, the United States retained its fundamental commitment to a Europe whole, free, and at peace. President Ronald Reagan famously called for Mikhail Gorbachev to tear down the Berlin Wall in his speech at the Brandenburg Gate in 1987. His earlier speech at Normandy beach, in commemoration of D-Day in 1984, emphasized continued U.S. interdependence with, and commitment to, Europe:

> We are bound today by what bound us 40 years ago, the same loyalties, traditions, and beliefs. We're bound by reality. The strength of America's allies is vital to the United States, and the American security guarantee is essential to the continued freedom of Europe's democracies. We were with you then; we are with you now. Your hopes are our hopes, and your destiny is our destiny.[9]

With the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, the strategic environment abruptly and dramatically changed.

The USSR, the focus of U.S. security strategy since the end of World War II, imploded and broke-up. Yet in spite of the loss of this existential threat, U.S. interests in Europe persisted. Shifts in the global balance of power enabled the United States to pursue a more ambitious foreign policy based on expanding democracy and enlarging NATO to promote peace and stability. Despite this dramatic change, President Bill Clinton's 1994 *National Security Strategy* (NSS) painted a very familiar picture of U.S. interests in Europe:

> European stability is vital to our own security, a lesson we have learned twice at great cost this century. Vibrant European economies mean more jobs for Americans at home and investment opportunities abroad. With the collapse of the Soviet empire and the emergence of new democracies in its wake, the United States has an unparalleled opportunity to contribute toward a free and undivided Europe. Our goal is an integrated democratic Europe cooperating with the United States to keep the peace and promote prosperity.[10]

Al-Qaeda's attack on the United States again changed the strategic environment and America's approach to foreign policy. President George W. Bush articulated U.S. willingness, if necessary, to act alone and protect Americans with preemptive force. Yet, even after the attacks of September 11, 2001 (9/11), the security of Europe remained an essential U.S. national interest. In his second and final NSS, President Bush presented twin pillars of U.S. strategy. The first articulated the desire to promote freedom, justice, and human dignity. This idealistic approach to security echoed the liberal school of international relations. The second pillar emphasized U.S. leadership of a community of democracies to confront the contemporary challenges facing the world.

> Europe is home to some of our oldest and closest allies. Our cooperative relations are built on a sure foundation of shared values and interests. This foundation is expanding and deepening with the ongoing spread of effective democracies in Europe, and must expand and deepen still further if we are to reach the goal of a Europe whole, free, and at peace.[11]

The two strategies published by President Barack Obama again signaled a shift in U.S. foreign policy. Obama clearly took a more cautious and selective approach to U.S. engagement in crisis management operations around the globe than did Bush. At the same time, Obama continued to extol the importance of Europe to the United States. In his 2015 grand strategy, Obama stated:

> The United States maintains a profound commitment to a Europe that is free, whole, and at peace. A strong Europe is our indispensable partner, including for tackling global security challenges, promoting prosperity, and upholding international norms.[12]

The NSS published by President Donald Trump in 2017 represents a different approach to grand strategy. Even though the geostrategic environment and U.S. approach to the world changed, the U.S. enduring interest in a Europe that was whole and free never wavered.[13] A strong and effective NATO has been and remains essential to promoting that interest as well as other vital U.S. interests. NATO and the EU were created in order to promote this vision of a democratic, peaceful, prosperous, and united Europe. Language in the current NSS reinforces the importance of NATO in promoting that vision: "The NATO alliance of free and sovereign states is one of our great advantages over our competitors, and the United States remains committed

to Article V of the Washington Treaty."[14] Since their creation, the EU and NATO have been essential to promoting U.S. interests in Europe and projecting U.S. instruments of power globally. NATO has been the primary multilateral mechanism for addressing security challenges and promoting democratic values in Europe; the EU has been the key to promoting economic prosperity and common values (democracy) in the region and adjacent areas. Rather than being relics of the Cold War, NATO and the EU have adapted to the changing geostrategic environment. The following sections examine the roles, functions, and capabilities of NATO and the EU. It also looks at the resources they bring to the table and how they have adapted over time to changes in the global environment.

NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION

NATO is one of the most successful alliances in history. NATO was founded as a traditional military alliance to deter aggression from the Soviet Union and to reassure countries in Europe that the United States had a security commitment to their survival as independent and democratic states. The United States was directly responsible for the creation of NATO. NATO's founding document, the North Atlantic Treaty (known as the Washington Treaty) was signed in 1949. To this day, any member wishing to join the Alliance must still deposit their diplomatic instruments in Washington, DC, before officially joining NATO.

The Alliance was formed out of self-interest. It was in the interest of the United States to contain the Soviet Union and to provide security in Europe necessary for the mutual prosperity and peace of both the United States and Europe. As such, the Alliance was a tool,

or way to achieve the survival of U.S. allies in Europe and to promote the viability and stability of the liberal international system. In the words of General Lord Ismay, NATO's first Secretary General, NATO was in Europe's interest "to keep the Russians out, the Americans in, and the Germans down."[15]

Seven decades later, NATO has evolved from a traditional alliance to a security community. There is a qualitative distinction between an alliance and a security community. Historically, an alliance is outwardly focused and rather transitory in nature. As the balance of power shifted, so too did alliances. Security communities are different in that they are inwardly focused and enduring. According to international relations scholars, security communities "develop mutual images of each other that make the thought of violent conflict (with each other) unthinkable."[16] There is an element of trust, developed in conjunction with a common identity, which is established in a security community. So long as that trust remains, the survival of the community becomes an objective unto itself.

While NATO is, first and foremost, a collective defense agreement, it is also a political alliance. "NATO strives to promote democratic values and encourages consultation and cooperation on defense and security issues to build trust and, in the long run, prevent conflict."[17] As noted in the 1967 *Harmel Report*, political solidarity is just as important as military capability in deterring aggression.[18] One must recall, at its founding, NATO did not have any infrastructure, nor did it have a common, integrated military structure. Rather, it was a commitment by the allies—mostly European democracies, the United States, and Canada—to stand together in the face of an authoritarian threat to their common security. Political solidarity, exemplified by

NATO's consensus decision-making procedures, was perhaps the greatest contribution of NATO to U.S. and European security.

That dual nature as both a political and military alliance is embodied in two key provisions of the Washington Treaty: consultations (Article 4) and collective defense (Article 5). First, with regard to Article 4, any ally can convene Article 4 consultations when it feels threatened. There have been four instances of such consultations in the post–Cold War period: three invoked by Turkey over Iraq/Syria and one by Poland over the Ukraine crisis. Turning to Article 5, an attack against any member is considered an attack against all Alliance members. In spite of several significant challenges in NATO's history, such as the Berlin Crisis from 1958 to 1962, NATO had never invoked its collective defense provisions under Article 5 until after the attacks on the United States on 9/11. The first and only time NATO used the Article 5 declaration was to demonstrate political solidarity and unity as much as to signal commitment to defend its ally.[19] America's post-World War II investment in NATO paid great dividends in 2001.

The question remains, why has NATO remained in existence after the end of the Cold War? A traditional alliance would have disbanded after the common threat had been vanquished. The answer is that NATO persists because it has been able to adapt and continue providing benefits to its member states. In his book, *How NATO Adapts*, Seth Johnston attributes NATO's survival to its ability to adapt institutionally, in terms of size, organization, and mission, to changes in the European and global security environment.[20]

At its founding, NATO consisted of 12 member states (Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland,

Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom, and the United States). Between 1949 and 1998, NATO only added four new members: Greece, Turkey, Germany, and Spain. These allies were added because they provided military value to the Alliance. The end of the Cold War provided a permissive environment for other states to join the Alliance. Since the fall of the Soviet Union, NATO expanded from 16 members in 1998 to 29 members in 2017 (the 16 members already mentioned plus the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Albania, Croatia, and Montenegro). Many of these states added little to the collective capabilities of NATO, but did contribute to advancing the political aim of a Europe whole, free, and at peace. Nations continue to find value in the security provided by the Washington Treaty.

NATO also has demonstrated its ability to change its organizational structure in response to geopolitical developments. Two examples demonstrate this organizational flexibility: the empowerment of the Defense Planning Committee (DPC), and the creation of Allied Command Transformation. The DPC was established in 1963 as a decision-making body. It did not start making a significant contribution until after France left NATO's integrated military structure (but remained in the Alliance) in 1967. The departure of a key member state, such as France, could have been devastating to the Alliance. In fact, France also insisted that NATO Headquarters leave France. The question then became how the Alliance could continue to seek consensus with one member only in the political part of NATO. The DPC provided a solution to this problem. As Seth Johnston explained:

> [T]he two-tiered political structure . . . in which leaders met to discuss defense-related issues in the DPC, from which France abstained participation while all other issues continued to be addressed in the NAC (North Atlantic Council).[21]

The DPC provided a mechanism to keep France actively involved in NATO's political discussions, while allowing the other members to cooperate in military matters without France. The DPC immediately proved its worth. The DPC provided the political approval to undertake the critical strategy review in 1967, which lead to the flexible response strategy, which lasted until the end of the Cold War.[22] The DPC was dissolved by the Alliance in 2010, and its responsibilities were absorbed into the NAC (which will be discussed later).

The other major organizational adaption concerned Strategic Command Atlantic (SACLANT). During the Cold War, SACLANT was designed to protect the vital trans-Atlantic sea link. This function was viewed as obsolete with the fall of the Soviet Union. Yet, NATO wanted to retain a major headquarters in the United States and to respond better to current and future challenges and opportunities in the global strategic environment. Thus, Allied Command Transformation (ACT) replaced SACLANT in 2003. ACT provided a formal institution to transform NATO's organization, capabilities, and doctrine. It also provided NATO with another four-start billet when France reentered the NATO integrated military structure in 2009. With mechanisms in place to help understand complexity and allow NATO to adapt quickly in rapidly changing circumstances, ACT stays abreast of developments regarding artificial intelligence, learning machines, and enhanced decision-making, and establishes

partnerships with non-military activities. Thus, ACT performs an essential role in promoting interoperability through education, training, and exercises, reducing transaction costs for the United States and providing the Alliance with focal points to guide cooperation. Current Secretary of Defense General James Mattis was ACT commander until 2009, and he has been succeeded by two French general officers. Without NATO's ACT, the United States would have to assume these functions, or find another organization to do so.

Probably the most important adaptation of the Alliance was the addition of two new core tasks: cooperative security and crisis management. Adding the mission of cooperative security was an acknowledgment that political and security developments beyond NATO borders could impact the Alliance, and its member states. It was also a recognition that NATO was uniquely positioned to affect stability in the region and globally. The seeds for cooperative security were planted as early as 1967 in the *Harmel Report* mentioned earlier.[23] In recognizing that military security and a relaxation of tensions in Europe could proceed in tandem, that report set the stage for the cooperative security role adopted over 20 years later. Since the end of the Cold War, NATO has pursued cooperative security (including the promotion of security, stability, and democratic values) through the Partnership for Peace (PfP) program and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC).

NATO's PfP program provides the United States and its allies with a valuable tool for cooperative security. By promoting interoperability and cooperation through educational opportunities, training exercises, and assistance visits, the PfP promotes U.S. and NATO

values such as maintaining civilian control over the military, promoting democracy, and protecting human rights. PfP also increases the utility of these nations to contribute to existing and future coalition operations. Today, NATO's PfP program has 22 partner nations, including Russia. NATO has various other regional partner forums that provide information and focal points for cooperation. These include the Mediterranean Dialogue and the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative.

NATO also created a body to mimic the NAC as a part of its cooperative security efforts. In 1991, the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) was established to provide a mechanism for security dialogue between NATO and non-NATO partners.[24] It was replaced by the EAPC in 1997. "NATO's 2010 Strategic Concept [which was approved at the Lisbon Summit in November 2010] identifies the EAPC and PfP as central to the Allies' vision of a Europe whole, free and at peace."[25] Those programs continue to promote stability, interoperability, and shared NATO values.

The other major adaption by NATO was the addition of crisis management as a core function. With the mixed record of the United Nations (UN) and other organizations in preventing conflict, member states realized that NATO was uniquely capable of preventing crises from becoming conflicts and resolving those conflicts once underway. The members of the Alliance also realized that crisis management could give NATO a new purpose, an idea that was especially important to the United States given its global interests beyond Europe. As U.S. Senator Richard Lugar stated in 1993, "NATO should either go out of area or out of business."[26] Crisis Management, as NATO would practice it, was grounded in the liberal school of international

relations, and sought "the indivisibility of peace" in the world, especially on NATO's borders. Not long after the fall of the Soviet Union, NATO took on its first crisis management mission: Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Bosnia peacekeeping mission was groundbreaking in that it took place outside of NATO borders. European states, operating under the UN, had proved incapable of stemming the violence in the Balkans. Thus in April 1993, NATO's first major air operation, Operation DENY FLIGHT, began to enforce a UN-imposed no fly zone in Bosnia established under UN Security Council Resolution 816.[27] A more aggressive bombing campaign followed, Operation DELIBERATE FORCE. The United States provided the majority of aircraft during these air operations. These operations led to the halting of the civil war and the agreement of the Dayton Peace Accords. To implement these accords, the UN approved the NATO Implementation Force (IFOR) in December 1995 and the follow-on Stabilization Force (SFOR) in 1996. Every NATO member contributed to SFOR, which helped to stabilize the region. The EU later assumed responsibility to oversee the Dayton Peace Accords from NATO in 2004, with the establishment of European Union Force Althea (EUFOR Althea). Althea continues to keep the peace today.

NATO's next crisis management mission was in Kosovo. In many ways, Kosovo was a riskier operation than Bosnia-Herzegovina. First, the Alliance did not have UN authorization. Second, domestic opinion was much more divided on intervention. Finally, the Kosovo operation took place in the same year NATO expanded from 16 to 19 members. This expansion was not only the largest single expansion in NATO history, but also the first one that included three former

members of the Warsaw Pact: Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland. In spite of these challenges and other frictions, NATO was able to reach consensus to act and initiated Operation ALLIED FORCE in 1999. After 78 days of aerial combat against Serbian forces, an agreement was reached, and the Kosovo Stabilization Force (KFOR) was created to enforce the peace. All three new NATO members contributed to KFOR, as did Russia. The KFOR mission was augmented by an EU rule of law mission—EULEX—in 2008; and as of this writing, KFOR and EULEX missions continue to keep the peace in Kosovo. Thus, in Bosnia and in Kosovo, NATO and the EU responded to out-of-area crises, thereby contributing to regional stability.

Probably NATO's most ambitious crisis management operation was undertaken in support of U.S. operations in Afghanistan. The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan was established by the UN Security Council in December 2001. NATO took charge of ISAF in August 2003 to support the Afghan Government in providing security and to prevent Afghanistan from becoming a terrorist safe haven.[28] ISAF was especially challenging because it was out of the European region, in a land-locked country with very difficult terrain, over 7,000 kilometers (km) from Brussels, Belgium. The mission was also approved at a time of heightened U.S. tension with France and Germany over the Iraq War. In spite of these challenges, NATO allies stood by U.S. efforts to stabilize Afghanistan. "At its height, the force was more than 130,000 strong, with troops from 51 NATO and partner nations."[29] Non-U.S. NATO nations contributed around 35,000 of those forces.[30] While ISAF ended in 2014, NATO continues to support a follow-on mission to Afghanistan, Resolute Support Mission, to

train, advise, and assist Afghan security forces. As of June 2018, almost 16,000 NATO and partner troops remain in Afghanistan (of which about half were U.S. Soldiers).[31] While there have been criticisms over caveats by NATO members and contribution shortfalls over the years, NATO was there to support the United States. Not only did NATO flags contribute to a robust coalition, tamping down perceptions of the United States as "going it alone," sizeable NATO contingents in Afghanistan enabled the United States to project power into Iraq during the critical period of the Iraqi Surge. In Bosnia, Kosovo, and Afghanistan, NATO demonstrated its value to the United States and its allies in promoting stability globally.

In addition to NATO's ability to adapt, the Alliance also provides a robust military capability to its members. NATO nations, excluding the United States, collectively spent about US$271 billion on defense in 2017.[32] The combined military budgets of NATO's top four powers alone equaled around US$170 billion in 2017. While much less than that of the United States, these expenditures exceeded both China's (US$145 billion) and Russia's (US$59 billion) defense spending in 2016. That said, NATO allies have been criticized for not contributing enough to their defense from almost the very beginning of the Alliance.[33]

Burden-sharing debates often inform the discussions of NATO's relevance. In the 1970s, the Mansfield amendments threatened to reduce U.S. troops on the continent dramatically, if Europe did not pay more for its own defense.[34] In 2016, President Obama described the NATO allies as often being complacent about their own defense.[35] President Trump has also criticized defense contributions by NATO members

and increased the pressure on allies at the May 2017 mini-summit.

> NATO members must finally contribute their fair share and meet their financial obligations, for 23 of the 28 member nations are still not paying what they should be paying and what they're supposed to be paying for their defense.[36]

However, the burden-sharing issue is more nuanced than often acknowledged.

Both U.S. and NATO spending fell as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) following 1991, with U.S. spending falling at a greater rate than Europe's until 9/11.[37] While U.S. expenditures increased after the al-Qaeda attacks, defense spending in other NATO members continued the gradual decline. As of 2016, only five NATO countries met the 2-percent goal: the United States, Greece, the United Kingdom, Estonia, and Poland. The new U.S. Secretary of Defense echoed concern over declining NATO spending in early 2017:

> America will meet its responsibilities, but if your nations do not want to see America moderate its commitment to the alliance, each of your capitals needs to show its support for our common defense.[38]

Former Secretary of State Rex Tillerson also called for NATO allies to establish a timeline for meeting this 2-percent commitment by 2024, as pledged at the Lisbon Summit.[39] Leading up to the NATO summit in July 2018, President Trump sent letters to individual NATO leaders to encourage them to meet the 2-percent target. "It will, however, become increasingly difficult to justify to American citizens why some countries continue to fail to meet our shared collective security commitments."[40] While Trump's statements about NATO

have been inconsistent, at one time critical and another supportive, he has consistently pointed to a direct relationship between European defense spending and NATO relevance and U.S. support of the Alliance.

In spite of this criticism, it appears that NATO has turned a corner on declining defense expenditures. The trend toward increased defense spending by America's NATO allies began well before President Trump's inauguration with the Russian invasion and annexation of Crimea in 2014. In 2017, non-U.S. NATO expenditures showed a 4.87-percent increase from 2016 (the third year in a row of increasing defense expenditures) and 11 members (12 including the United States) met the equally important target of 20 percent or more of defense expenditures on equipment.[41] In 2017, Romania came close to meeting the target at 1.8 percent of GDP, and Latvia and Lithuania have also greatly increased their defense spending, pledging to meet the 2-percent target by 2018.[42] In addition, Canada committed to increasing its defense expenditures by 70 percent over the next 10 years.[43] More importantly, Germany, one of Europe's largest and wealthiest states, made a commitment to increase its contributions. In its white paper published in July 2016, Germany pledged to meet the NATO target gradually.[44] However, in spite of significant planned increases in defense expenditures, from €38.9 billion in 2018 to €43.9 billion, Germany will not meet the 2-percent level even by 2022, partially due to a growing German economy.[45]

Many argue that this discussion is misguided and that the 2-percent target is rather arbitrary and does not necessarily reflect the needs of the Alliance. In a 2016 article, Alexander Mattelaer made a compelling case that NATO should focus on capabilities required to meet contemporary challenges and establish a

division of labor within the Alliance.[46] Burden-sharing arguments also overlook the fact that allies contribute a much larger part of NATO common funding than does the United States. The United States provides only 21.7 percent of the civilian budget, 22.5 percent of the military budget, and 21.7 percent of the investment budget.[47] Therefore, the issue of burden sharing is more nuanced than the discussion over the 2-percent target implies, and national security professionals should have a nuanced understanding when considering NATO relevance.

NATO forces have also been criticized for a lack of capability. According to data from the International Institute for Strategic Studies, "active personnel totals across key NATO European members France, Germany, Italy, and the United Kingdom fell from about 1.3 million in 1996 to around 716,000 in 2016."[48] While the Alliance has endured a quantitative reduction in capability, it has also suffered a qualitative degradation. A 2016 *Parameters* article captures this limitation:

> Not all NATO forces are equipped for engagements in which light armored vehicles are vulnerable to massive, intense fire strikes and in which cyber and electronic warfare plays a central role in affecting command and control.[49]

NATO also lacks many of the key enablers such as intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance, air refueling, and airlift capabilities. These shortcomings are more important concerns than levels of defense expenditures. In this area too, it appears that NATO is making progress.

Thanks to Russian aggression in Ukraine, NATO has made some strides toward increasing its capabilities since the Wales Summit in 2014. For example,

NATO increased the size of the NATO Response Force to 40,000 and established a 5,000 person Very High Readiness Joint Task Force, significantly reducing NATO's response time, and increasing capability.[50] At the Warsaw Summit in July 2016, NATO declared Initial Operational Capability of the NATO ballistic missile defense system, designed to shield Alliance countries from attacks from outside the Euro-Atlantic area. "This means that the US ships based in Spain, the radar in Turkey, and the interceptor site in Romania are now able to work together under NATO command and NATO control."[51] After the summit, the Alliance increased its ability to deter Russian aggression by increasing its forward presence.[52] These capabilities point to another benefit of NATO—its ability to coordinate and facilitate collective efforts on the part of the allies. For example, the framework nation concept provides Alliance members with a mechanism to promote multinational capability development that would be more costly, if even possible, for individual states.

In addition to member capabilities, NATO, as an organization, provides significant functional benefits to the United States. The NAC is the principal decision-making body within the Alliance. Having the imprimatur of the NAC lends legitimacy to NATO operations, especially in the absence of a UN mandate, as in the air operations in Kosovo. NATO also has a Nuclear Planning Group to coordinate nuclear policy within the Alliance. The NATO Secretary General, the International Staff, the International Military Staff, and the various NATO committees also provide significant functional benefits to its members. Like other international institutions, they provide information, enhance cooperation, provide focal points, and monitor capabilities and contributions made by member states.[53]

NATO's integrated military structure also provides benefits to the United States.

Under heavy U.S. influence, NATO's integrated military structure provides a stable and reliable command and control backbone, allowing the Alliance to implement political decisions effectively to America's advantage. In addition to the military efficiencies of this standing structure, it also yields a political benefit of projecting solidarity and commitment to potential adversaries and partners. The Military Committee is the senior military authority within the Alliance, while the uniformed forces come under the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE). SHAPE's role is to "prepare, plan, conduct and execute NATO military operations, missions and tasks in order to achieve the strategic objectives of the Alliance."[54] The Supreme Allied Commander Europe is the commander of SHAPE, and from NATO's inception, it has been an American also dual-hatted as the U.S. European Command Commander.[55] This position gives the United States additional leverage and influence in shaping actions and attitudes of Alliance members and NATO itself. In addition to these organizational benefits, NATO also brings a great deal of potential power to the table.

The Alliance is also often viewed as a resource for U.S. operations. NATO is currently an alliance of 29 members, over 936 million people, and a combined GDP of NATO members exceeds US$41.5 trillion in 2018.[56] With few permanently assigned personnel, NATO relies upon national troop contributions. NATO has about 1.8 million European troops (over 3.1 million including Canada and the United States) and an impressive array of advanced military capabilities.[57] NATO promotes interoperability and standardization

of Alliance and partner forces. Despite the aforementioned concerns about capability shortfalls, these forces are capable contributors to NATO operations and U.S.-led coalitions.

Finally, it should be noted that NATO provides operating bases for the United States to project power within Europe and outside of the region. For example, the Air Force has major bases in Germany, Italy, Turkey, and the United Kingdom, while the U.S. Navy has bases in Greece, Italy, and Spain. These bases, over 4,600 miles from the United States, give America's military tremendous reach and sustainability. Thus, NATO enhances U.S. diplomatic and military instruments of power in pursuit of both Alliance and U.S. interests worldwide. In sum, NATO enhances the ability of the United States to deter, defend, and to promote stability in Europe and beyond. Perhaps less apparent is the role that the EU plays in promoting U.S. interests.

THE EUROPEAN UNION

The EU is considered by academics as a sui generis international organization. It has been described as a supranational organization, a regional organization, and an economic community. However the EU is categorized, it is undoubtedly an economic powerhouse, representing over 22 percent of global GDP.[58] The EU is also the United States and the world's largest trading partner and the largest source and recipient of foreign direct investment.

While indirectly supported by the United States, the development of the EU was an internal effort on the part of European nations. The movement toward greater cooperation began with the Treaty of Brussels in 1948, which committed key European allies to

mutual defense of each other in the face of an attack.[59] Britain, France, Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands were signatures to this treaty. This treaty, which later formed the basis of the Western European Union (WEU), not only met European security needs in the face of an increasingly hostile Soviet Union, it also demonstrated a willingness by key allies to share the burdens of defense. While security concerns were the initial impetus for European cooperation, the seeds of the EU were planted in the economic sphere and that is where, perhaps arguably, the greatest relevance to the United States lies. Like NATO, the EU evolved over time in response to changes in the international environment, in terms of size, organization, and mission.

The first major step to promote formally both the economic and security goals of Europe was the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), established by the Treaty of Paris in 1951. The ECSC included all countries of the Brussels Treaty, with the exception of Britain. More importantly, the ECSC included former combatants West Germany and Italy. The organization's roles and functions evolved over time, leading to even greater cooperation and interdependence. The 1957 Treaty of Rome expanded the remit of the ECSC by creating a European Economic Community (EEC), eventually leading to creation of a common market. All these efforts helped promote economic development in Europe and the continued survival and vibrancy of U.S. allies facing down the Warsaw Pact.

At its founding, the ECSC, a forerunner of the EU, consisted of six member states (France, West Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg). Between 1952 and 2004, the EEC (and its predecessor) only added six new members: Denmark, Ireland, and the United Kingdom in 1973, and Greece, Portugal, and

Spain in the 1980s. Again, the fall of the Soviet Union opened the possibility of even greater expansion. Like NATO, the EU expanded from 12 members in 1995 to 28 members in 2013 (member states already mentioned plus Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Sweden). Many more nations would like to join the EU in order to share in its economic prosperity and solidarity. In addition to enlargement, the EU has undergone many organizational changes. This monograph will focus on those changes after the fall of the Soviet Union.

The post-Cold War Maastricht Treaty (1992) formally created the EU and gave it much greater authority than the EEC. The EU represented the culmination of those initial efforts to promote peace and prosperity in Europe. Under Maastricht, a three-pillar system was established covering different issue areas with varying levels of cooperation and delegation of authority: economic matters, foreign and security policy, and justice and home affairs. The highest levels of delegation took place in the economic and justice pillars. Under Maastricht, the EEC became the European Community (EC). A subset of the EC was committed to creating a common currency, the euro. Within the Eurozone, states delegated monetary policy to the European Central Bank and surrendered their national currencies. In return, the EU sought to promote economic growth and convergence, and allow member states to compete better in the international marketplace.

The Amsterdam Treaty in 1998 established the Office of the High Representative for Common Security and Foreign Policy (CSFP), a position somewhere between a Secretary of State and a Secretary of Defense.

The Treaty of Lisbon subsequently created the European External Action Service (EEAS), which is the EU's diplomatic corps. The EEAS works for the High Representative to carry out the CSFP, which deals with the external security concerns emanating from terrorism. The EU produced its first *European Security Strategy* in 2003 to guide the CSFP, and it published a more outwardly focused security strategy in June 2016. Among other changes, the new *Global Strategy for Foreign and Security Policy* calls for the EU to develop strategic autonomy.[60] These developments have enhanced the capabilities the EU can bring to addressing those collective action problems discussed earlier, problems usually affecting American interests.

With these changes mentioned earlier, the EU has developed the capability to conduct crisis management operations in Europe and around the world. The roots of this capability lay with the WEU and the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP), created to deal with low-level security issues facing post-Cold War Europe.[61] The 1998 St. Malo Declaration, between France and the United Kingdom led to the renaming of ESDP as the CSFP, and the transfer of responsibility to the EU, an arrangement codified under the Lisbon Treaty in 2007. Under today's CSFP, the EU has undertaken a very active role in crisis management operations. The CSFP allows member states to coordinate foreign policy and leverage a unique whole-of-government approach that is greater than the sum of its parts. Its diplomatic, intelligence, law enforcement, and economic instruments of power will be essential in addressing migration and extremism.

The CSFP allows EU member states to conduct missions not only in Europe, but out of area as well. These missions help to promote regional stability (a U.S.

interest) and enable the United States and NATO to focus on other security matters. Since 2003, the EU has completed some 18 missions, mostly in Africa (10) and Europe (5).[62] Eleven of these were civilian missions and six were military missions, reflecting the EU's comparative advantage in providing a whole-of-government approach. As of June 2018, the EU had 16 active missions, again concentrated near Africa (8), Europe (6), and the Middle East (3). Ten of these were civilian missions and six were military missions.[63] In 2016, European nations had over 12,000 troops deployed as part of either EU or NATO missions. Even more troops were provided to support the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and UN missions worldwide.[64] There is even a mechanism for the EU to conduct operations using NATO assets when the Alliance does not wish to get involved directly. Thus, in cooperation with NATO, the EU enhances the development of a "'comprehensive approach' to crisis management and operations."[65] These missions help to promote stability and relieve the United States and NATO of potential burdens. All of this makes the EU quite relevant to U.S. foreign policy.

Like NATO, the EU has a mutual defense clause. Unlike NATO, the United States is not a member. This clause was introduced as a part of the Treaty of Lisbon, under Article 42(7). The article stipulates, "if an EU country is the victim of armed aggression on its territory, the other EU countries have an obligation to aid and assist it by all the means in their power."[66] In November 2015, French President François Hollande invoked the EU treaty's self-defense clause in the aftermath of terrorist attacks in Paris. This was the first time that this article had been invoked, and like the activation of Article 5 after 9/11, it was activated in

response to a terrorist attack. This defense clause gives EU members an additional venue to pursue security cooperation in the face of contemporary threats. The Treaty of Lisbon also created a mechanism to facilitate cooperation and collaboration within the union called permanent structured cooperation. This includes participation in the European Defense Agency and the commitment to attain certain capabilities and readiness levels in support of the CSFP.[67] Should the United States distance itself from NATO, the self-defense clause could take on added importance, as a venue for European defense cooperation without the United States having a formal voice as a member state.

Ironically, Brexit has renewed interest in further security integration among the remaining EU members. The EU's 2016 Summit explored creating a dedicated border control force, improving EU battlegroups, and loosening EU common funding rules for Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) operations.[68] In the 2 years since the summit, the CSDP program advanced more than in the previous 2 decades. This was largely due to two initiatives: permanent structured cooperation (PESCO) and the European Defense Fund (EDF).

The Lisbon Treaty set the stage for PESCO in 2007. Under PESCO, EU member states can pursue further cooperation on the development and procurement of equipment as long as at least three member states are involved. Unlike previous efforts, PESCO establishes binding commitments upon the nations. As of 2018, 25 of 28 members had signed up for PESCO (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Spain, and Sweden). In addition to providing

the modalities for enhanced cooperation, the EU is also providing funding for research and development for PESCO projects in conjunction with the EDA. The goal is to reduce the number of individually produced military systems and increase the efficiency of scarce funds devoted to defense. In addition to PESCO, the EU has established the EDF (with up to €5.5 billion per year after 2020) to help pay for the costs of research and development.[69] These initiatives harken back to the European Defense Capability discussed earlier and terminated in 1954. In fact, some European nations have expressed support for a European Defense Union. "Germany has declared it will support the creation of a permanent civil–military operational headquarters within the Brussels-based security and defense structures."[70] It has also suggested a major harmonization of national defense industries.

There are some concerns that these efforts might divert scarce resources from operational capabilities to fund redundant headquarters and staffs.[71] On the other hand, a European Defense Union might also deepen EU military cooperation and motivate member countries to develop greater capabilities and avoid unnecessary duplication, thus fulfilling their ambition for some strategy autonomy and the U.S. desire for greater burden sharing efforts. If the Europeans come to see the United States as more of a competitor than trusted partner, EU defense efforts could lead to a security arrangement that de-emphasizes NATO, while excluding the United States. As a partner that shares many U.S. interests and values, the EU also provides the significant economic heft in pursuit of common goals. The EU had an estimated combined GDP of US$19.7 trillion in 2018 and the Euro area had a combined GDP of US$14.3 trillion.[72] While Brexit will

certainly weaken the EU's collective economic heft, the EU will still have a population of 444 million, and a US$16.7-trillion economy after Britain leaves. The EU is the world's largest trading bloc and largest source and destination for foreign direct investment.[73] The EU is also the largest trading and investment partner of the United States. In addition, the EU is the largest contributor to the UN's operating budget and funds about 40 percent of UN peacekeeping operations.[74] Finally, the EU is also the largest provider of Official Development Assistance in the world. All this means the EU exerts a great deal of leverage with regard to the economic instrument of power. The EU gives the United States a partner to address collective action problems such as the support of the global economic system, the proliferation of WMD, the promotion of international stability, the maintenance of the global international system, the mitigation of climate change, and the continuance of productive relations with both China and Russia.

The EU offers a robust diplomatic capability that can benefit the United States when employed in the pursuit of common interests. With 139 delegations worldwide, the EEAS has been a major player in negotiations over the Arctic, Syria, Iran, and North Korea, as well as other concerns, such as energy issues, climate change, human rights, and even the Middle East Peace Process. Of course, EEAS efforts do not supersede the diplomatic efforts of individual EU member states. For example, in February 2015, the leaders of France and Germany negotiated the Minsk II agreement with Russia to stop the fighting in Ukraine and establish a framework for resolving the conflict. The EU also has a mechanism, the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP), for promoting cooperative security, similar to NATO's PfP program. Under the new *European*

Security Strategy, the ENP is focused on promoting resilience and better governance with its partners, contributing to international stability. The benefits of the EU's capabilities for U.S. policymakers may be indirect, but it seems better for the EU to see the United States as a valued partner in their diplomatic endeavors than as a rival.

GRAND STRATEGIES

Having reviewed the roles, functions, and capabilities of NATO and the EU, it is now necessary to look at U.S. grand strategy. A grand strategy is "the art of reconciling ends and means."[75] In other words, it links what the United States is trying to accomplish with how it goes about getting there. A grand strategy implies a purposeful pursuit of U.S. national interests by defining objectives, ways, and means.[76] The United States has pursued various grand strategies since its founding, and past presidents have typically mixed elements of the four traditional grand strategies to fit the circumstances of their times. Since the end of the Cold War, U.S. foreign policy has tilted slightly toward one approach or another, while always maintaining elements of other grand strategies. In fact, the United States has been largely consistent in its definition of and pursuit of national interests over time.

In 2016, the RAND Corporation published a study examining the global liberal international order, and four potential approaches to U.S. grand strategy: retaking the offensive, selective engagement/retrenchment, offshore balancing, and zero sum.[77] Ideally, the grand strategy would guide U.S. foreign policy. If the administration believes that the liberal international order has benefited the United States, then they should

pursue retaking the offensive, or selective engagement. If Trump believes that this order has not benefited the Unites States or has led to exploitation by others, then offshore balancing or zero-sum strategies would be the best course. Whatever direction the administration takes, U.S. grand strategy will determine which national interests to pursue and how relevant the EU and NATO are to promoting or impeding those interests.

The RAND study modifies a typology found in a classic article by Barry Posen and Andrew Ross, "Competing Visons for U.S. Grand Strategy," published in 1997.[78] That article sought to help guide the strategy of the Clinton administration as it entered its second term. It also outlined four competing visions of U.S. grand strategy: neo-isolationism, selective engagement, cooperative security, and primacy. This monograph will use these categories of U.S. grand strategy to further analyze the relevance of the EU and NATO in the pursuit of U.S. national interests.[79] It also compares each of these grand strategies to trends in President Trump's foreign policy.

Neo-Isolationism

Perhaps the grand strategy that most closely aligns with the rhetoric of the current administration is neo-isolationism. This is what the RAND study called the zero-sum strategy. Defensive realism is the intellectual underpinning of neo-isolationism. Stephen Walt, a distinguished scholar at the Harvard Kennedy School, argues that realism "depicts international affairs as a struggle for power among self-interested states and is generally pessimistic about the prospects for eliminating conflict and war."[80] In order to survive, states have

to focus on relative gains. Thus, if others gain more than the United States by cooperation, this threatens U.S. security; in other words, the international system is a zero-sum game.

In many ways, the America First policy resembles a grand strategy of Isolationism.[81] The policy rests on the premise that the international system and U.S. allies have taken advantage of the United States, which threatens U.S. security. Early in his administration, Trump scrapped the Trans-Pacific Partnership, a major element in the rebalance strategy to Asia. The United States also announced a major renegotiation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) between the United States, Canada, and Mexico. In 2018, the United States imposed tariffs on washing machines and solar energy cells from China and South Korea, followed by tariffs on steel and aluminum imports from Canada, China, the EU, and Mexico. This zero-sum approach to trade has upset allies and non-allies alike. During his campaign, Trump had previously labeled NATO as obsolete, though he later reaffirmed the U.S. commitment to the Alliance. Since the election, the administration has pursued tighter controls on immigration, with a 2017 budget request that increases funding for immigration and border control. The President also withdrew the United States from the Paris Climate Agreement and the Joint Plan of Action (JPOA), the agreement to limit and monitor Iran's nuclear program. In his America First approach to U.S. policy, Trump has signaled a new approach to these challenges, including a hesitance to entangle the United States in global issues not directly impacting its core national interests. These moves are all consistent with neo-isolationism.

Under a grand strategy of isolationism, the focus would be on promoting a very narrow set of core U.S. interests. The United States would aim to reduce hostility and minimize balancing behavior against it by minding its own business in global affairs. The ultimate objective of this approach would be to preserve the global status quo and to avoid foreign entanglements. This grand strategy would also seek to husband scarce U.S. resources. It would also adopt a neo-mercantilist trade policy, meaning the United States would only pursue trade deals in which the United States gained more than its trading partners. This would lead to an increase in barriers to free trade; in other words, the focus would be on relative gains.[82]

The germane point for this monograph is the impact of neo-isolationism on the nature of U.S. relations with the EU and NATO. This approach to grand strategy would make the EU a competitor to the United States; the EU would therefore continue to be relevant, but not necessarily promote U.S. economic interests. In January 2017, the EU Trade Commissioner cautioned, "if rising protectionism from elsewhere [read U.S.] is a threat to the Chinese economy, we (EU and China) stand ready to engage and fight against it together."[83] This is a credible risk because, after the United States, China is the EU's second largest trading partner.

This grand strategy would also render NATO obsolete or at least seek to extract greater contributions or side payments from NATO allies.[84] There is clear evidence for the latter. The administration has consistently called for greater contributions on behalf of NATO (e.g., in combating terrorism) and its member states (e.g., meeting the 2 percent of GDP norm for military expenditures). However, there are also indications that the President questions the relevance of

NATO and that he feels that allies have taken advantage of the United States.

Since it is impossible to withdraw from a globalized world, a neo-isolationist grand strategy entails significant risks. First, the United States would probably become less secure as threats multiplied globally. As Trotsky is alleged to have said, "you may not be interested in war, but war is interested in you."[85] Second, a neo-isolationist grand strategy would undermine the nuclear non-proliferation treaty and probably lead to the proliferation of WMD. While Germany, South Korea, and Japan might be responsible nuclear powers, other countries might not be so prudent. With the withdrawal of U.S. active leadership, it is also likely that the international institutional framework the United States helped to establish (e.g., the UN, International Monetary Fund, World Bank, and the World Trade Organization) would collapse. Finally, viewing the EU only as a competitor and restricting trade with Europe would make both the United States and its allies less prosperous.

The risks to the United States in a weakened NATO are even greater. Many Europeans were alarmed at Trump's omission of an overt commitment to Article 5 in the May 2017 NATO mini-summit. As NATO allies lose faith in U.S. commitment to NATO, they may seek other institutional or bilateral security arrangements. In a speech shortly after the mini-summit, Chancellor Angela Merkel announced that Europeans could no longer rely upon others and stated that Europeans "really must take our fate into our own hands."[86] This could mean a renewed European defense commitment under the EU, or a shift to more coalitions among willing European members. In either case, it would reflect a loss of U.S. influence over European allies.

At the end of the day, NATO membership does not cost the United States that much. According to the 2016 *NATO Secretary General's Annual Report*, the NATO common funding budget equaled about US$2.3 billion, of which the United States contributed about US$513 million.[87] This is a small cost in relation to a defense budget of about US$700 billion in 2018. While pressuring allies to fulfill their commitments to defense is justified, abandoning or weakening NATO would be harmful to both the United States and its allies. Not only would the United States thus sacrifice a great deal capability and global influence, but also it would have a difficult time trying to reconstruct these institutions later on if it decided to change course.

Selective Engagement

Balance of power realism is the intellectual underpinning of selective engagement. It agrees with the assumptions of realism discussed under neo-isolationism. It also agrees that U.S. power is finite and should be preserved. Selective engagement is also concerned about foreign entanglements since they could lead to balancing behavior against the United States, or lead to great power conflict. Where it differs from isolationism is that it views the liberal international order as beneficial for the United States.[88] Former-President Obama's grand strategy matches most closely selective engagement, with its emphasis on multilateralism.[89] Obama significantly reduced the U.S. presence in Afghanistan and withdrew most U.S. forces from Iraq. While Obama intervened in Libya, under the auspices of NATO (leading from behind), he declined to intervene directly in the Syrian civil war other than to call for regime change, target the Islamic State of Iraq

and Syria (ISIS), and provide limited support to certain rebel forces.

President Trump has also shown some indications of a selective engagement approach. He has made a concerted effort to maintain peaceful, if not friendly, relations with both China and Russia, the two great powers. In the May 2017 NATO mini-summit, President Trump urged the allies to pursue a "greater focus on terrorism and immigration."[90] Trump also announced his intention to have a summit with Vladimir Putin after the 2018 NATO Summit. While he made defeating ISIS one of his top priorities, Trump has been very skeptical of getting the United States more involved in other problems in the Middle East.[91] Trump has also downplayed the promotion of liberal democratic values and sought to promote better ties with Russia, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey. The administration's policy on nuclear proliferation could also be seen as consistent with selective engagement. In 2017, Trump took a strong stand against North Korea, indicating a potential willingness to use force to prevent further nuclear proliferation. However, he followed that with a summit with the North Korean dictator in April 2018 to pursue peaceful denuclearization. Yet, Trump has pursued some initiatives that run counter to the traditional selective engagement approach. Rather than reduce military expenditures, Trump requested a significant increase in the U.S. defense budget.[92] Also, the United States is still involved in the wars in Afghanistan and Syria.

Under a grand strategy of selective engagement, the focus would be on promoting a slightly broader set of U.S. interests than under isolationism. The objectives of selective engagement would be to prevent a major war with China or Russia and to maintain the current

global balance of power. Key to this approach would be to husband scarce resources, as in neo-isolationism. Cooperation with international institutions and allies would be essential to maintain peace between the great powers, to limit the proliferation of WMD, and to address issues that could directly impact the global balance of power. Thus, the United States would support a robust collective defense capability and a strong nuclear deterrent that would extend to its NATO allies. Crisis management operations would be limited to protect scarce means. Selective engagement would signal a continuance of U.S. liberal economic trading policies, with a focus on absolute versus relative gains. Thus, the EU would be both an economic competitor and a major trading and security partner. The United States would remain committed to NATO, but would shift its focus back to Article 5 and collective defense. Under selective engagement, prudence would dictate abandoning any hopes for Georgia and Ukraine to join the Alliance in the foreseeable future.

As with isolationism, this grand strategy would entail risks. As Posen and Ross noted 20 years ago, this grand strategy lacks an ideological appeal.[93] Holding the line is not a very inspirational theme. Esteem for the United States would also probably diminish with a less active role in crisis management. Syria is a good example of the likely reaction if the United States were to allow other actors, such as China, Iran, and Russia, to dictate the outcome of local struggles. Even when the United States decided to intervene, it would likely do so with limited means. Therefore, unintended outcomes would be harder to contain, as in Libya after 2011.

The risks of selective engagement would make the EU and NATO even more important to U.S. national

interests. Those organizations would help to share the burdens of crisis management and deterrence with the United States and provide a greater veneer of legitimacy during crisis management operations. Trump's emphasis on NATO members paying "their fair share" of security costs in Europe is consistent with an overarching grand strategy of selective engagement. Certainly, the EU's diplomatic and economic weight and NATO's military power and interoperability would be an asset in sharing the burdens under this grand strategy.

Terrorism, one of Trump's priorities, is one area where both NATO and the EU can contribute under a strategy of selective engagement. The day after 9/11, NATO invoked Article 5 in response to the terrorist attacks.[94] On October 26, 2001, NATO also initiated Operation ACTIVE ENDEAVOUR to detect and deter terrorist activity and illegal trafficking. NATO has also been a major contributor to counterterrorist operations in Afghanistan since 2003, and after meeting in May 2017, NATO has also joined the coalition against ISIS.

The EU has also contributed capabilities to the counterterrorism effort. In addition to supporting operations in Afghanistan with development aid and an EU police training mission, the EU has also developed capabilities to improve cooperation in combating terrorism. In 2016, the EU established the European Counter Terrorism Center, to enhance counterterrorism intelligence collection and to provide operational support to member states.[95] That effort has born some fruit with an increase in information exchange and operational support. Clearly, NATO and the EU would be highly relevant as a rival and as a partner under a grand strategy of selective engagement.

Cooperative Security

Cooperative security is firmly grounded in the international relations tradition of liberalism. In their seminal article, "The Promise of Institutionalist Theory," scholars Robert Keohane and Lisa Martin lay out the intellectual framework that counters the realist underpinnings of the other grand strategies.[96] While they accept that states are instrumental and self-interested, they are more optimistic about the prospects for cooperation. States cooperate when they gain more than the costs involved. Institutions like NATO and the EU often provide synergistic effects where the whole is greater than its parts. Similarly, liberal theory focuses more on absolute gains than relative gains; in other words, cooperative security is a positive sum game. "The most important distinguishing feature of cooperative security is the proposition that peace is effectively indivisible."[97] Thus, conflict anywhere is a problem everywhere. This leads to a broader view of national interests and a more active role globally.

The continuation of NATO enlargement under Trump, with the recent addition of Montenegro in May 2017, is something that you might expect under cooperative security. However, there is very little indication that Trump is inclined to follow a cooperative security grand strategy more broadly. Perhaps the best example of a cooperative security approach to grand strategy was the Clinton administration.[98] Under a grand strategy of cooperative security, the key objectives would be to promote greater international interdependence, to promote democracy, and to pursue global stability. This grand strategy would emphasize cooperation among the great powers, especially

with the EU and other allies like Japan, to engage with China and Russia.

In practice, this grand strategy would treat NATO more as a partner, and because it espouses a more interconnected worldview, would call for more frequent crisis management and humanitarian operations. It would also seek to prevent the proliferation of WMD. Perhaps more than any other grand strategy, cooperative security would rely heavily upon the cooperation of both the EU and NATO. Arrangements like the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) would help strengthen U.S. ties with Europe and increase their mutual prosperity. The United States would encourage NATO to expand its crisis management and cooperative security efforts, as well as to continue NATO expansion. NATO and the EU's partnership and neighborhood programs would also be essential to spreading democracy where countries are willing to embrace the rule of law and democratic values. The PfP, Istanbul Cooperation Initiative, and Mediterranean dialogue would all be key instruments for cooperative security. The EU's European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) would complement these efforts by promoting political association and economic interdependence where conflict might arise. Cooperative security would also support greater EU strategic autonomy in order to increase European military capabilities.

Perhaps the greatest risk of this grand strategy would be resource exhaustion and declining support for U.S. involvement abroad. In fact, it could result in an isolationist backlash as costs in human lives and treasure mounted. There is also the risk that this would exacerbate burden-sharing issues within the NATO Alliance, leading to further resentment on both sides of

the Atlantic. In addition to these risks, it would be very difficult to pursue a cooperative security grand strategy without the support of both the EU and NATO. The collective diplomatic and economic weight of the United States and Europe would be necessary, as would NATO's military capabilities.

As mentioned earlier, there is little indication that Trump will pursue a grand strategy of cooperative security. He has made disparaging remarks about the EU, for example, saying the EU was "possibly just as bad as China" on trade.[99] He has vigorously sought to renegotiate traditional trade agreements like NAFTA. Trump has also indicated a disdain for an activist role for the United States in regional conflicts outside of defeating ISIS. The administration also withdrew the United States from the Paris Climate Accords, saying that it hurt U.S. economic interests and was unfair, and unilaterally pulled out of the JPOA on Iran's nuclear program. So, to some degree, it seems likely there will be continued tension between the United States and our long-standing European allies, and perhaps more competition in the future.

Primacy

Like neo-isolationism and selective engagement, primacy is based on the principles of realism. More precisely, primacy is based on the tenets of offensive realism, outlined by John Mearsheimer, distinguished scholar at the University of Chicago, in his book, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*.[100] Under offensive realism, great powers are always looking for ways to gain power at the expense of others. Therefore, they are driven by the pursuit of relative gains to become more and more powerful, which ironically could lead to

them being less secure. Unlike selective engagement, it is insufficient to maintain the international balance of power. The objective of primacy is U.S. domination along the entire spectrum of power (i.e., diplomatic, intelligence, military, and economic). Hal Brands, Peter Feaver, William Inboden, and Paul D. Miller argue in a 2017 study that the United States has pursued a:

> consistent and successful global strategy that has aimed to perpetuate American international primacy, to solidify and extend the liberal international order, and to avert the emergence of new or resurgent threats to that order.[101]

While leaning more toward selective engagement and isolationism, Trump has pursued some policies that are consistent with a grand strategy of primacy. He has been very vocal in confronting the proliferation of nuclear weapons, especially in regards to North Korea. Prior to the June 2018 summit in Singapore with North Korean Leader Kim Jong-un, Trump had indicated a willingness to act unilaterally, if necessary, in dealing with North Korea. In an interview with the *Financial Times*, the President stated, "If China is not going to solve North Korea, we will."[102] The administration's increased investment in the military is also consistent with primacy.

Under a grand strategy of primacy, the key objectives would be to preserve American hegemony, to prevent the emergence of a peer-competitor, and to protect the political, security, and economic interests of developed countries (e.g., Europe) so that they would acquiesce to U.S. primacy. This grand strategy would emphasize the containment of other great powers, such as China and Russia, but also discourage greater autonomy of allies like Japan and Germany. Primacy would mean a robust U.S. military presence in NATO and more

frequent crisis management and humanitarian operations. Like cooperative security, it would also seek to prevent the proliferation of WMD. A grand strategy of primacy would seek to expand and strengthen NATO, but would be leery of any European Defense Union. Therefore, the United States would support continued CSFP interventions, but would not support EU efforts to achieve strategic autonomy. As long as the EU focused on low-level conflict and crisis management, such as humanitarian intervention, primacy would support cooperation with the EU. The United States might seek a division of labor where NATO focused on high-end crisis management operations, and the EU focused on lower end operations. Under primacy, the United States would also pursue continued NATO and EU expansion. Like cooperative security, primacy might support TTIP, but the United States would be more focused on ensuring that U.S. gains outweighed those of Europe. Primacy would also support continuing both NATO and EU partnership programs.

Perhaps the greatest risk of this grand strategy would be the emergence of a rival power. China and Russia would be the most likely candidates for military rivals, while China, the EU, or Japan could become economic rivals and challenge U.S. leadership of the global economy. China's naval exercises with Russia off the coast of Kaliningrad in July 2017 demonstrate the need to act collectively with European allies. Another risk is that indiscriminate use of force and the unilateral approach of a grand strategy of primacy might increase balancing behavior of both rivals and allies alike. The French and German resistance to the Iraq invasion is one example of this type of balancing behavior by allies. French, German, and British support for the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank,

led by China, might be another example.[103] Even more so than in cooperative security, resource exhaustion and declining domestic and international support for U.S. involvement abroad would be another major risk of pursuing primacy. Acknowledging the possibility of friction, cooperation with both the EU and NATO would be essential to mitigating all of these risks.

RECOMMENDATIONS

> There is only one thing worse than fighting with allies, and that is fighting without them![104]
>
> —Winston S. Churchill

No matter what grand strategy (or combination thereof) the United States pursues, NATO and the EU are very likely to be vital to American efforts to deter Russia and China and manage security challenges elsewhere across Africa, the Middle East, and Central/South Asia. As demonstrated above, the relevance of NATO and the EU is directly related to how they support, or hinder the achievement of U.S. national interests via its grand strategy. NATO and the EU are also critical elements in maintaining the viability and stability of major global systems and the current international order. As a recent RAND report concluded, "[O]rder is easiest to create and has its greatest effects among states that share significant norms and values."[105] NATO and the EU represent organizations whose members share these values with the United States and possess significant capabilities to pursue mutual interests. The question then becomes how to deal with these organizations to further U.S. values and interests in the future. This monograph recommends three ways to do just that.

First, the United States must maintain flexibility and resilience in the face of numerous, complex challenges. In 2017, the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments published an insightful study of American grand strategy, *Critical Assumptions and American Grand Strategy*.[106] This study argued that the United States should "pursue offsets and hedges" that could mitigate unfavorable global trends.[107] One offset would be to strengthen partnerships with like-minded nations (e.g., Japan) and to rely upon coalitions of willing states when NATO and the EU lacked the consensus or capabilities to support U.S. initiatives. These offsets could provide greater flexibility and decisiveness when solutions needed to be adopted quickly, or in areas where allied interests diverge. Offsets could still benefit from the interoperability provided by NATO allies, or their partnership programs.

Hedging would suggest that the United States invest more, and not less, into its relationship with both NATO and the EU.[108] This means continued U.S. presence and cooperation in Europe, closer economic and political ties, and U.S. support for an orderly British exit from the EU. While the United States should certainly work to strengthen other partnerships, it should invest more energy and resources in NATO and the EU as bulwarks of the global liberal order. Those proven institutions provide the prosperity, stability, and democratic values to promote U.S. interests in Europe and the world. While NATO had shifted its focus away from collective defense after the fall of the Soviet Union, it is time that it refocus on Article 5 capabilities, while retaining the ability to conduct crisis management and cooperative security missions.

The second recommendation would be to continue to pressure NATO allies to increase their capabilities,

while taking a more nuanced view of burden sharing. The United States should negotiate with its allies and where necessary provide incentives and other side payments to overcome their rational incentives to free ride on U.S. power and security. While some consider the norm of spending 2 percent of GDP on the military as an arbitrary figure, it represents an easy to measure (and understand) benchmark. As long as it remains the norm, the U.S. public will expect NATO allies to meet their commitments; perceptions matter in sustaining public support for NATO. The Alliance needs to come to an agreement about what contributions it expects from its members and articulate that standard in an easily understood format.[109]

In addition to increasing spending, the United States must continue to prod NATO and its allies to improve their collective defense capabilities, readiness, and forward presence. It must also support NATO efforts to promote innovation and sharing. Whatever approaches the United States decides to pursue, the irreplaceable contribution of NATO to collective defense must be retained, as well as the principles of solidarity and reciprocity within the Trans-Atlantic community. As two scholars on NATO burden sharing have argued, "past successes and failures . . . show that mission accomplishment requires give and take, including the occasional acceptance of unequal costs and benefits among the members."[110] As shown earlier in this monograph, NATO and its European allies already bring a great deal of diplomatic, intelligence, foreign assistance, and military capability. What European allies lack in peer-equivalent military capabilities, they make up for in robust capabilities in other instruments of national power. In addition, the United States should support

enhanced cooperation by member states under the PESCO framework.

The final recommendation is that the United States should strengthen its ties to the EU and promote greater NATO and EU cooperation. Whether or not the TTIP is approved, the United States should push to promote a harmonization of regulations and a reduction in trade barriers that inhibit economic growth. However, pursuing trade wars with the EU is unhelpful in this regard. Brexit is another challenge facing Europe and the U.S.-EU relationship. While the United Kingdom will remain an important member in NATO, its status in the EU is being negotiated. Not only will a hard Brexit reduce the EU's (and the United Kingdom's) economic heft, but Brexit could also significantly impact the EU's capabilities under CSFP to conduct crisis management operations and to combat terrorism.[111] Not only that, Brexit could also undermine the survival of the EU itself. "Brexit foretells the potential demise of the EU, a democratic bulwark to authoritarian Russia's predatory strategy of divide and conquer."[112] The United States must support its British and European allies as they navigate this difficult process. Perhaps NATO's adaptation to accommodate France's withdrawal from the integrated military structure provides some lesson for how the EU can best manage Brexit. The survival of the EU is a vital interest to the United States.[113]

CONCLUSION

In reviewing U.S. national interests, the strengths and weaknesses of NATO and the EU, and the possible grand strategies available to the United States, it is clear that the United States is better able to pursue its national interests in concert, rather than in competition

with these two institutions. The United States is facing numerous threats and challenges to its interests in Europe and globally that both the EU and NATO are uniquely capable of addressing. Their institutional capacity, experience, and competency in these areas provide added value to U.S. efforts to address these challenges. These institutions also give European countries the ability to exert influence globally, often in support of common U.S.-European interests.[114] While there are numerous challenges facing Europe, a united Europe is still a formidable power.[115] More importantly, Europe is a region that shares U.S. values and interests across a broad spectrum of issues. Europe represents the largest and most robust partner in the community of free nations seeking to spread the ideals that John Locke characterized as life, liberty, and estate. Only if the United States pursues a more isolationist grand strategy, what Hal Brands called a zero-sum approach, do NATO and the EU become less relevant, or even harmful to U.S. interests.[116] Even then, the cost of wrongly gauging the geopolitical environment and rashly dismantling NATO or marginalizing the EU are dramatic. It would not be an easy matter to reassemble these enduring institutions if the United States later decided to change course.

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94. In addition to other support, the Alliance provided seven NATO airborne early warning and control systems to patrol U.S. airspace, flying over 360 sorties.

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a trade agreement with the People's Republic of China. As a part of this agreement, the United States also supported China's membership in the WTO, reflecting a very liberal institutional view of great power relations.

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