

## *Western European Union: Rhetoric and Reality\**

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This paper briefly outlines the historical evolution of the Western European Union, from its origins in the Brussels Treaty to WEU's recent linkage with the process of European integration. Particular attention is paid to the political and military development of WEU as this relates to the apparent goal of eventual Western European defense integration. It is argued that in spite of the clamour to establish a European Defense Identity under WEU, however, the Europeans do not have a practical short-term alternative to the present situation of military dependence upon the United States and NATO.

Until recently, the Western European Union (WEU) was peripheral to the military problems associated with European defense. Scarcely relevant to counterbalancing Warsaw Pact military power during the Cold War, WEU was historically employed in connection with political problems: facilitating German and Italian accession to NATO, and assisting in the management of the often antagonistic Franco-German security relationship, to cite two well-known examples. As the pace of the European project gathered steam, however, WEU moved to center stage in the debate over Europe's future security requirements. Delors' formulation of the so-called European Defense and Security Identity posits the gradual transfer of WEU competencies to the European Union, with Community institutions acquiring military capabilities proportionate to the economic weight of the EC. Whether or not this long-range vision will mature according to a federal logic remains to be seen. What can be said with certainty is that the gap between the vision of a militarily independent and united Europe and current military capabilities is broad indeed.

The purposes of the essay are three-fold: first, to offer a brief overview of WEU's historical evolution from 1948 until its deactivation in 1973; second, to outline significant developments resulting from WEU's association with the movement to European Union; third, to acquaint the reader with the practical problems confronting those European leaders seeking to reduce military dependence upon the United States and NATO. By way of a conclusion it will be suggested that, given limitations in European military

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capabilities and the costs of compensating for these in a period of defense budgetary retrenchment, WEU does not offer a viable short-term alternative to the Atlantic Alliance. As such, WEU should be viewed only as a device through which the European contribution to NATO can be rationalized. This interpretation is fully consistent with observable relations between the two organizations, in that both bodies are developing mutually transparent organizational routines and operating procedures. Indeed, each institution seems set to draw upon a common force pool, although NATO has priority in a situation of competitive claim.<sup>1</sup>

### **Origins and Early History**

The evolution of WEU in the immediate post-war period was conditioned by two interrelated factors. European and American statesmen, from 1946 to 1955, grappled with the difficulties arising from the perceived need to counterbalance Soviet conventional military power in Central Europe. In addition, and closely related to the first issue, the "German" question loomed large in this period.

Of itself, the post-war status of Germany posed two acute, and juxtaposed, problems. First, parochial European anxieties, born of pronounced fear of a remilitarized Germany, issued in the construction of the Anglo-French Treaty of Dunkirk in March of 1947. This alliance was seen by Bevin as a dual-use mechanism, one that would contain the Germans while ultimately serving as the model for a wider, anti-Soviet, forum.<sup>2</sup> For the French, however, the latter concern yielded entirely to the former. This situation was aggravated by the second problem, arising from the growing awareness in Europe and the United States of the difficulties involved in staving-off a Soviet ground attack without access to German manpower and fighting prowess.<sup>3</sup>

It was against this background that Western European statesmen committed themselves, in March of 1948, to the establishment of the Western Union under the Brussels Treaty. This pact sanctioned formal military alliance among the signatories of the Dunkirk Treaty and the Benelux powers. With support from the Truman administration, in the form of a pledge to maintain American occupation forces in Germany, the French were persuaded to commit themselves to an institution whose ultimate purpose was to deter the Soviet Union, a provocative remit from which Paris heretofore had been keen to dissociate itself. Six months later the Western Union became an institutional reality.

Yet, to sober observers, the limitations of the new Union were all too obvious. In manpower terms alone the alliance was patently inadequate to

counter determined Soviet assault. With French personnel being drawn into the Indochina theatre, the Western Union lacked an order of battle suitable to the challenge of continental defense. To make matters worse, conditions established by the United States as prerequisites to formal alliance with Europe (essentially the doctrine of "self-help" in conjunction with Europe's consideration of the modalities of German rearmament) precluded easy settlement of the manpower problem.

The Berlin blockade of 1948 served to jump-start greater American involvement in European defense. From July of 1948, representatives of the U.S., Britain, France, Canada and the Benelux countries conducted a series of negotiations leading to the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty in April of 1949. Of greatest import, Article Five committed signatories to mutual aid in the event of armed attack upon one or more members. Though not mandating automatic collective armed action (largely a concession to wary congressional opinion in America) the apparent limitation of Article Five was skirted by NATO's Strategic Concept, thrashed out in 1950. In short, the strategy envisioned integrated forces under unified command and enshrined the principles of role-specialization and burden-sharing (Acheson 1969, 352, 399).

Yet the manning problem in truth had not been addressed properly. Manpower needs far exceeded the capacity of the Europeans, particularly France upon whom a heavy force-goal burden had been placed. This untenable situation further underscored the importance of incorporating German ground troops in a continental strategy that relied upon effective forward defense. Nevertheless, the French obstinately refused to submit to U.S. requests on this score.

The Plevin Plan, advanced in October of 1950, was an imaginative response to the impasse.<sup>4</sup> In addition to those forces pledged to the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe (SACEUR) the French proposals called for a special European force, under a European Defense Minister and with its own command and staff structures. In its initial form, the plan was unworkable for the simple reason that German contributions were to be limited to battalion size, a stipulation judged by Adenauer to imply continued German subordination to France (Acheson 1969, 458). Through a series of high-level discussions, ongoing between the French, British, Americans and Germans through 1951, it eventually was agreed that a viable German contribution required division-scale establishments (Acheson 1969, 552). At this time, according to Acheson, it also generally was accepted that the least contentious avenue of approach to German rearmament lay in the broad area of European political integration, in this case

through the forging of a European Defense Community (EDC) on the modified Pleven model.

In February of 1952, Adenauer agreed in principle to remove the most serious obstacle to German rearmament, the difficulty arising from the question of German war-material production. At this point, the path to EDC seemed relatively clear. Through 1952, however, other difficulties emerged. Although the EDC Treaty was signed in May of 1952, French fears of German secession, coupled with inability to pull Britain into the Treaty, damaged the prospect. With mounting tensions between France and the U.S., particularly over the issues of allied support for French operations in Indochina and American criticism of French policy in Tunisia, the political will to execute the Pleven Plan dissipated. The collapse of the French position at Dien Bien Phu, which was blamed in large part on Eisenhower's reluctance to authorize "Operation Vulture" (a series of air-strikes against the Vietminh), sealed the fate of EDC.<sup>5</sup>

Subsequently, the German question was handled within the framework of the Brussels Treaty. In the Fall of 1954, Germany and Italy acceded to the pact, now named Western European Union. Coming into effect in May of 1955, the treaty ensured, in addition to the participation of the former Axis powers, a formal British role on the continent. This commitment, of four divisions and a tactical airforce, effectively cemented the association to the satisfaction of the French. Subsequently, German and Italian participation in NATO was ensured through a de facto transfer of WEU's competencies to the Atlantic organization. Without conspicuous fanfare, WEU soldiered on, finally to wither and be deactivated in 1973.

### **Reactivation and European Political Union**

WEU was reactivated in 1984, largely as a result of French prodding and the failure of the Genscher-Columbo initiative, which had been advanced in 1983 with the purpose of forging a defense and security mandate for European Political Cooperation (EPC). Building on suggestions from Belgian Foreign Minister Leo Tindermans, the French proposal first was circulated in February of 1984 (Laird 1991, 21).

In general, reactivation served the purpose of providing an exclusively European forum for consideration of defense problems and requirements. This long had been desired by the French, who saw in American leadership of the Atlantic Alliance an intrusive hegemony. Other European powers supported reactivation, though for different reasons. For the British, reactivation held out the possibility that France could be drawn back to NATO, a point of view that was echoed in Germany. Further, all of

Western Europe's first-tier military powers were attracted to the idea that WEU's Standing Armaments Committee could serve as a vehicle to rationalize production and development of weapons.<sup>6</sup> Finally, the Reagan administration's handling of the Euromissile crisis (1983), coupled with obdurate attachment to SDI, illustrated the limits of European influence over the Superpower relationship. Disagreement concerning technical assistance for the Soviet natural gas pipeline generated further tension within NATO.

WEU ministers issued the Rome Declaration in October of 1984. At base, the Declaration represented a commitment to forge common positions on defense and security matters. This was considered most desirable in confronting crises outside of the NATO treaty area, a task for which WEU's Article Eight gives wide berth. Further, ministers asserted that WEU could serve as a device by which to synchronize military and military-industrial cooperation. For this reason, and others, it was claimed that European defense solidarity was not prejudicial to the Atlantic character of Western defense. Unfortunately, the response of the Reagan administration was cool.<sup>7</sup>

The Single European Act (1986) furthered the cause of European defense consolidation. Albeit cautiously, SEA's Title Three, Article Thirty, envisioned closer security cooperation amongst the twelve. This included enhancing mechanisms for political coordination, as well as a commitment to maintaining the technological and economic conditions considered crucial to European security. The very limits of SEA naturally implied that additional work remained: here, WEU was the logical arena in which to develop a consensus on Western European security and defense requirements.

Accordingly, WEU members issued, in 1987, the Hague Platform on European Security Interests. This document has four salutary features. First, the Hague Platform emphasized WEU's potential value to the Atlantic Alliance. The "European Pillar" long had been a dream, but WEU offered, on paper at any rate, a means by which it could be realized. Second, the Platform document acknowledged the British and French role in providing a nuclear "guarantee" to Western Europe, this in service to a strategy based upon a mix of conventional and nuclear military assets. Third, members called for progress in the area of European Union, in this case through enactment of the SEA. Fourth, members called for closer military and diplomatic cooperation in the resolution of out-of-area crises. This last feature proved particularly attractive to Spain and Portugal, these states acceding to the Treaty in November of 1988.

As events transpired, WEU coordinated two out-of-area operations, one a naval patrol of the Persian Gulf (1987-1988), the other a deployment of European forces in the early stages of Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm. In both cases, WEU's performance was less than satisfactory (see

below). Further, the incoherence of the European Community's response to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait laid bare the need for enhancement of EC security architecture (Brittan 1991; Delors 1991, 102). Although Community institutions proved capable of orchestrating sanctions, mechanisms for military action were not available. A similar situation has affected Community attempts to resolve the ongoing conflicts within and around Yugoslav successor states.<sup>8</sup>

Not surprisingly, therefore, reevaluation of Western Europe's role in regional defense and security was in order, in this case through a strengthening of the EC's foreign policy competencies. The all-European character of WEU, coupled with its *de facto* linkage to the process of European integration, made it the logical instrument through which to express the ambition of defense integration. Further, WEU's ostensible commitments to NATO ensured that the Atlantic dimension of defense would establish the broader context for European defense integration, hopefully to the satisfaction of the Americans.<sup>9</sup>

Throughout 1990 and 1991, a host of defense-relevant proposals were tabled. Two visions of the European Security and Defense Identity (ESDI) emerged. One group, headed by the British, argued for an Atlanticist conception of European security based upon a roughly proportional distribution of military burdens between North America and Europe, with WEU serving as a bridge between NATO and the Twelve. The alternative view, which for the sake of convenience might be thought of as a "Unionist" approach, envisages formal incorporation of WEU into the machinery of the Community. The French have tended to be associated with this latter perspective. Predictably, senior Eurocrats, particularly Delors, also have been active in calling for the wholesale transfer of WEU's defense mandate (Article Five) to Political Union. Although the Unionist approach may, if institutionalized, prompt American disengagement, this is not the goal of the French. Rather, in keeping with an essentially Gaulist foreign policy, the French seek a looser Atlantic alliance which would allow for independent European military action. The British, by contrast, tend to see in the Unionist approach the potential for precipitous dislocation of the trans-Atlantic bargain, and thus have been in the forefront of efforts to set the European defense effort in the context of NATO.

In the negotiations leading to the Maastricht Summit of December 1991, this complicated debate boiled down to discussion of two key items. First, the institutional relationship between WEU and the Community; second, voting procedures governing joint action. On both of these matters, compromise resulted, although it seems fair to say that current arrangements lean more towards the British model. WEU remains separate from the

Community, in a formal sense, but steps to ensure consistency in working methods are being developed (discussed below). With respect to voting procedures, Qualified Majority Vote (in Community parlance, QMV) will apply to implementation, and this only in cases where the European Council gives its authorization on the basis of unanimity (Corbett 1992, 283). Europe's more reluctant partners thus may be able to obstruct further deepening of commitments in the security field. Almost as an afterthought, a Declaration of WEU Member States, annexed to the Maastricht Treaty, pledges, among other things, that individual members will avoid prevention of unanimity where a QMV exists in favour of a given course of action.

As is widely known, the Maastricht Treaty's commitment to defense integration is conditional, in the sense that it expresses the hope that the maturation of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) might "in time" lead to a common defense. Under present arrangements, WEU remains functionally distinct from the EC. More importantly, the organization is plagued by a number of shortcomings. With this consideration in mind, it is appropriate to review the practical evolution of WEU over the course of the last two years.

### Strengthening WEU's Operational and Political Roles

Movement toward European defense consolidation under the banner of WEU has been conditioned by far-reaching changes in the international system. Principal among these has been the collapse of the Soviet Union, the release of various ethnic tensions in East-Central Europe, the Balkans and the Former Soviet Union (FSU), and continuation of instability in North Africa and the Middle East. The dangers posed by these trends are amplified by the proliferation of advanced conventional weapons, as shown below. In addition, certain powers, for example Iran, are acquiring the means to produce relatively advanced conventional weapons.

**Table 1. Percentage of the Value\* of Global Major Conventional Weapons Imports Absorbed by the Developing World, 1983-1992**

1983	1985	1987	1989	1990	1991	1992
67.96	65.72	68.25	56.70	59.00	54.11	50.64

SOURCE: SIPRI Yearbook (1993, 476).

\*Values are based on SIPRI trend indicator values at constant 1990 prices.

Proliferation of weapons of mass destruction gives even greater cause for concern. It has been estimated that ten non-NATO powers have a biological warfare capability, twenty states are capable of conducting chemical warfare, and that there are at least twenty non-NATO powers with ballistic missile capabilities. Proliferation of nuclear weapons also is occurring (*Statement on the Defense Estimates 1992*, 3). The spread of missile and warhead technologies also has served to abet indigenous research programmes in Iraq, Libya and Syria.

**Table 2. Weapons of Mass Destruction: Capabilities by Country, the Middle East and North Africa**

	Nuclear	Chemical	Biological <sup>+</sup>	Near Nuclear	MRBM (type and range)
Egypt		•	•		Condor 2, 900 KM
Iraq		•	•	•	Al Abbas, 900 KM
Iran		•		•	M 9, 600 KM*
Israel	•	•	•		Jericho 2, 1500 KM
Libya		•	•		Scud B, ----
Syria		•	•	#	M 9, 600 KM*

<sup>+</sup>Denotes possession of or likely near term acquisition.

<sup>#</sup>Syria has a research programme ongoing, the status of which is not known by the author.

\*Reported but unconfirmed as of January 1993.

SOURCES: *Jane's Defence Weekly* 14 July 1990; Navias (1993, 129-132); Stenhouse (1992, 60).

Cumulatively, these factors have combined to create what some analysts have called an "Arc of Crisis," extending from the Maghreb states, through the Levant into the heartland of the former Soviet Union.<sup>10</sup> Notably, Western Europe rests in the virtual center of this arc. While not immediately threatened in a military sense, Western European resource dependencies imply pronounced sensitivity to the effects of political instability, inter- and intra-state conflict and terrorism. Given this, developments affecting already belligerent Islamic states are of prime concern. Here, traditional contempt for Western imperialism combines with proliferation of advanced weapons systems, economic contraction and population growth to create a potentially threatening situation.<sup>11</sup>

In consequence of these trends, WEU and NATO are in the process of reevaluating their missions. Although review of NATO's restructuring is



beyond the scope of this paper, suffice it to say that doctrinal changes and new force structures, as well as the cultivation of an avowedly political mandate (contributing to peacekeeping/making missions) suggest that NATO is intent upon playing an out-of-area role. Much the same can be said of WEU.

Between 1991 and the end of 1993, WEU ministers pursued three complementary objectives. First, they identified critical shortfalls in European conventional defense capabilities, particularly in those areas crucial to the support of military interventions beyond the boundaries of the EC. Second, political support has been given to the development of conflict-resolution mechanisms, most pointedly in the case of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). Third, consolidation of the "European Pillar" has been sought by extending full membership to all EC member states and absorbing those functions hitherto performed by European defense-industrial working groups. Implicit in this third set of objectives has been a synchronization of working methods with the institutions of the Community and with NATO.

On the first point, WEU's experiences in coordinating out-of-area operations revealed glaring inadequacies in the crucial areas of command, control, communications and intelligence (C<sup>3</sup>I) as well as in political and military coordination. The 1987 minehunting operation in the Gulf, for example, was marred by the fact that no provision was made for an integrated command and control structure. Rules of engagement were determined by each national contingent, although Dutch and Belgian ships did cooperate with British escorts. However, French and Italian ships cooperated only to the extent of exchanging tactical information. On top of this, the European ships were thoroughly dependent upon the U.S. Navy for defense against air threats, largely due to the fact that even the relatively sophisticated British escorts were hampered by inadequate fire-control and sensor integration, as the Falklands war had demonstrated (Cordesman 1989, 116).<sup>12</sup>

An equally deplorable situation obtained during the Gulf War. In this operation, WEU initially managed to facilitate a deployment of approximately thirty naval vessels, but military guidelines were imprecise. It was not until January 16th, 1991 (some four months after NATO ministers agreed on the modalities of deployment) that a WEU Naval Coordination Authority was established on a permanent basis. Once again, national control was exercised over each European naval contingent, at least until the commencement of hostilities. Spanish, Dutch and Portuguese forces initially were kept out of direct engagement with Iraqi forces, while the largest European deployment, Britain's "Operation Granby," was underway prior

to WEU's involvement (van Eekelen 1992a, 159-162). To these points it should be added that all contributing European powers experienced difficulties in deploying their limited ground and air forces. Britain, for example, drew heavily upon the British Army of the Rhine (BAOR) in order to sustain one understrength armoured division, while French reluctance to employ conscripts overseas reduced the size of her ground force. Also, the lack of European air and sea-lift assets, C<sup>3</sup>I, in-flight refuelling capabilities and en-route naval and naval-air protection, effectively meant European dependence upon NATO and American capabilities.<sup>13</sup>

In light of these deficiencies, WEU ministers identified requirements deemed crucial to enhancing the organization's operational capabilities. The Vianden ministerial (June 1991) produced an agreement to establish a satellite data interpretation center based at Torrejon, Spain (ironically, the former home of the U.S. 401st Fighter Wing). The Bonn meeting of June 1992 noted that considerable progress had been made in the sense that a feasibility study for the main system had been awarded to a German-led consortium. The satellite center was inaugurated on the 28th of April, 1993. A WEU Earth Observation Satellite also may be in the offing, and will be decided upon in the Spring of 1994. Technical work is ongoing, although WEU sources are reluctant to disclose any significant details. However, it does seem clear that a European system, perhaps the Helios satellite co-developed by France, Spain and Italy, probably will meet WEU's requirements. Even so, an operational capability will not be realized until 2005 (Henk and Richardson 1992, 11; Henares and Tummers 1993).<sup>14</sup>

Contingency planning and command and control traditionally have been problematic for the Europeans. However, WEU has established a Military Planning Group, which became operational on October 1st, 1992. This body, based in Brussels and supervised by an Italian general, has been charged with developing contingency plans, including identification of C<sup>3</sup>I requirements and maintaining lists of national and NATO-designed units available for service under WEU auspices or perhaps on peacekeeping operations for the UN and CSCE. This arrangement falls far short of a fully integrated command system however, and it appears that WEU will have to borrow corps headquarters from national force pools when these are not needed by NATO. Moreover, progress toward enhanced and autonomous C<sup>3</sup>I capabilities will depend greatly upon development of improved satellite capabilities, as discussed above. As matters stand at the time of writing, the Luxembourg Declaration, initialed in November of 1993, formally requests WEU use of NATO resources in the areas of command and control, intelligence gathering, and HQs for operations not involving the Western Alliance.

Perhaps as a reflection of WEU's shortfalls in these areas, exercise policy is to be developed in harmony with that of NATO.

A WEU Rapid Reaction Force (RRF) also has been considered, with WEU's Parliamentary Assembly having commissioned a feasibility study to this effect in late 1991. The composition of this force, and its relationship to NATO, has been a matter of some dispute. Britain and Italy, with Dutch support, have suggested that a WEU RRF could draw upon those units earmarked for NATO's *Ace* Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC). Though available information is sparse, it appears that national contributions to the ARRC would be placed under a double-hatted command. In effect, this would mean that units such as the British armoured division based in Germany would be dual-designated. For out-of-area operations, ARRC component units should come under the command of WEU, whilst collective defense on the continent would continue under NATO. WEU's Secretary General Willem van Eekelen has ruled out this command arrangement, though not necessarily the use of ARRC units under WEU command.<sup>15</sup> The second tendency emphasizes the candidacy of the Franco-German Corps, which, according to official German and French communiqués, can be made available to both NATO and WEU in accordance with Article Five of each treaty.<sup>16</sup> Often touted as the primogenitor of a future European Army, the Franco-German Corps has attracted Spanish, Belgian and Italian interest. Even so, language difficulties, problems of interoperability and, most importantly, the lack of air-lifting assets, suggest that the Franco-German corps is likely to remain a paper tiger. Additionally, the unit is not expected to be fully operational until the middle of the decade. At Luxembourg, in November of 1993, the WEU Council identified the following Forces Answerable to WEU (FAWEU): The Eurocorps, the Multinational Division (Central) and the U.K./Netherlands Amphibious Force, a less than impressive potential order of battle.

Regardless of how the unit composition issue is resolved, the ability of the WEU to effect independent deployment, particularly off-continent, is highly suspect and is likely to remain so for the foreseeable future. In essence, a completely independent ESDI attached to WEU would have to duplicate NATO's infrastructure and base network, an unlikely prospect given current budgetary realities (see below). For this reason, the British view of WEU's future role is the most viable since it recognizes the cost-effectiveness of reliance on NATO's infrastructure for purposes of power projection and defense support. Political considerations also will affect a European decision to project power: burden-sharing with the U.S. remains desirable for this reason, as well as more compelling technical ones.

Nevertheless, concrete steps will have to be taken if Western European states are to enjoy any freedom of maneuver with respect to carrying out military operations abroad. As noted above, Western European navies lack sufficient anti-air and strike capabilities, including aircraft carriers, and are generally inadequate for open ocean operations. Europe also lacks the requisite sea and air-lift assets for prompt military response out-of-area. The Vianden ministerial addressed some of these issues, charging the WEU's Defense Representatives Group with preparation of a study of Europe's strategic mobility requirements. In spite of the apparent urgency of this matter the report had not materialized at the time of writing, although it has been hinted that WEU might develop a multinational transport force modeled after NATO's Airborne Early Warning Force, possibly equipped with a military version of the A340 or, perhaps at a later date, the Future Large Aircraft.<sup>17</sup>

In addition to the costs that will be incurred in providing for the transport force, the Europeans also will have to consider means by which to bolster in-flight refueling capabilities. Two options exist. First, the Europeans could design and engineer their own system. This will be expensive, and in any case would require an immediate outlay of capital if a system is to be fielded by the early part of the next century. Alternatively, Europe could save itself the expense of Research and Development (R&D) costs and avoid a long delay from design to delivery by sourcing an American-built system. What makes the latter potentially unattractive is the fact that European dependence upon the U.S. will deepen. To this, it might be added that a critical gap will persist in European defense-industrial capabilities.

On the political front, WEU ministers at the Bonn Conference (1992) joined in the chorus calling for broadening of the competencies of the CSCE. Of greatest importance, WEU ministers have called for enhancement of CSCE's capabilities in the areas of conflict prevention and crisis management through promotion of the CSCE's Conflict Prevention Center. This preference appears to subserve a wider policy of pursuing security through confidence building measures, arms control at the bi- and multi-lateral levels, and various measures intended to promote what is fashionably called "transparency" (for example, endorsement of the Open Skies Treaty). At present, it is hard to see how "European" policy departs significantly from NATO policy, in that the latter body has committed itself to what is in essence an extension of the premises of the Harmel report of 1967. NATO is maintaining combat-ready forces as an insurance policy if political and diplomatic overtures come to nought. The same cannot be said of WEU, which may explain why East-Central European states are clamouring for inclusion in NATO, through the North Atlantic Cooperation Council

(NACC) and, more recently, the "Partnership for Peace." Perhaps as a reflection of WEU's marginalization on this count, the European member states have allowed for QMV voting in the areas of pan-European Cooperation and Security, non-proliferation measures, arms control/disarmament and confidence-building measures (van Eekelen 1992b, 13). This stands in marked contrast to voting procedures in cases where the use of force is at issue.

WEU ministers also have supported CSCE in its claim to Chapter 8 status under the UN charter. Theoretically, if not practically, the CSCE could request that peacekeeping missions be undertaken by WEU on a case by case basis. Available evidence suggests that this may be a political crowd-pleaser, rather than a viable option for WEU. A military move, say into Georgia or Ngorno-Karabakh, could be made only on the basis of unanimous vote and certainly would tax WEU beyond the limits of its current military and political capacities. Not surprisingly, therefore, WEU has refrained from offering a firm security guarantee to East-Central European states. However, WEU extended its informational contacts with Romania, Hungary and Bulgaria, elevating these powers to the status of "Consultation" partners in accordance with a Franco-German proposal of November, 1993. This step should be understood in the context of Eastern and Central European powers' interest in formal membership of the European Union, rather than in terms of a serious Western European commitment to their defense.

As to the third area of interest to the present discussion, substantive progress has been made in harmonizing procedures with the EC, while consolidation of European defense functions under one "roof" is proceeding. For one, WEU's institutional machinery now is concentrated in Brussels, including the WEU Council that is the organization's formal decision-making unit. The Planning Cell, located with the Secretary-General's office, will receive guidelines from the Council; and this body will work in harmony with the European Council of the Union. Furthermore, harmonization of the sequence and duration of the Commission's Presidency and the Presidency of WEU's Parliamentary Assembly, coupled with formalized informational exchanges and consultative procedures with the Commission, indicate that WEU is moving within the political orbit of the Community. This is underscored by the fact that working methods are being developed between the Parliamentary Assembly of WEU and the European Parliament (van Eekelen 1992b, 16). Presumably, if the transfer of WEU functions to the Union takes place, WEU's Assembly will be absorbed by an empowered EP.

As a preliminary to this eventuality, WEU's membership is becoming compatible with that of the European Community. The November 1992

ministerial attempted to facilitate this by offering full membership to those EC members heretofore beyond WEU's embrace. Denmark, Ireland and Greece previously had been confined to observer status and in the end only Greece accepted full membership.<sup>18</sup> Nevertheless, this offer is significant in the sense that those countries which expressed interest in joining WEU, but which are not yet members of the EC (Iceland, Turkey and Norway, each of which are NATO members) were offered only associate status.

In order to allay Anglo-American fears that European defense might be de-coupled from the U.S., WEU ministers have gone to great lengths to proclaim transparency and complementarity with NATO (referred to as the "Atlantic Alliance" in the Petersberg Declaration of June 1992). Official contact has occurred between the Secretary Generals of both NATO and WEU, when Manfred Wörner received Willem van Eekelen at NATO headquarters on January 27, 1993. Van Eekelen has also attended North Atlantic Council meetings and continues to coordinate WEU's activities with the senior organization.

Finally, with respect to consolidation of the European pillar, the most interesting development has been the December 1992 merger of WEU with the Independent European Programme Group (IEPG) and the related incorporation of Eurogroup.<sup>19</sup> These moves should be understood in the context of the development of the Western European Armaments Group, a goal expressed at the Bonn ministerial of 1992 and now taking shape in modified form as an Armaments Secretariat within the WEU.

Eurogroup was formed in 1969 to consider problems associated with coordination of the European contribution to NATO. This included joint operational concept development, logistics, training and collaborative weapons procurement. As Eurogroup gradually moved into the margins of European defense and security, IEPG emerged as the principal forum within which defense and defense-industrial questions were considered. Of these, the following are most important: standardization and interoperability of battlefield equipment; efficient use of R&D funds; rising unit costs, which have placed an untenable financial burden on defense ministries such that these have been increasingly keen on co-development of new systems; maintaining some balance in the "two-way street" in trans-Atlantic defense trade; and, finally, to encourage European cooperation in the development of high-technology weaponry, while avoiding complete dependence upon American domination of the Emerging Technologies sector (Baumann 1987, 25).

It must be admitted that European success in these areas had been minimal in the 1980s, with the technology gap between Europe and the U.S. remaining as broad as ever. The tendency, furthermore, of European

governments to consider questions of military procurement in a narrow national light hinted at the functional limits of European military integration at this time. Indeed, political difficulties have marred the development of recent projects, such as the European Fighter Aircraft, but it is safe to say that WEU's absorption of IEPG is unprecedented and holds out the promise of extensive restructuring of a traditionally fragmented European defense industry.<sup>20</sup>

### Assessment

It seems clear that consolidation of European defense is occurring. WEU is in the throes of a partial recovery of the defense and security mandate given away in 1955. At present, this is occurring in the context of complementarity of function and transparency of procedures with NATO. It also seems a fair bet to suggest that, barring the collapse of the European project, WEU will in time become the *de facto* defense arm of the Union. A formal merger between WEU and the EC also is possible, and even may occur as early as 1996, when the Union treaty is scheduled for review.

If we limit our focus to the short-term, however, it is readily apparent that precipitous movement toward a defense merger, under the Commission and grounded in an independent force posture, is unlikely. Even if the Union treaty and WEU charter are merged in 1996, there are grounds to believe that NATO will remain the preeminent institution. More importantly, ESDI will almost certainly remain intergovernmental in nature, with national ministers determining "Europe's" defense policy through a mixture of unanimous and qualified majority voting. In part this judgement follows from the fact that for the better part of five decades, European security rested heavily upon American military preparedness. European power-projection capabilities atrophied over this time-period, and various governments struggled to comply with NATO force-goals and appropriations targets. In addition, the U.S. established a series of bilateral relationships within the NATO framework and with each European state. In one case, that of Britain, the U.S. effectively ensured the loyalty of an apparently favoured ally through the exchange of atomic secrets and the provision of nuclear-capable delivery systems. In another case, that of France, the U.S. alienated a more quarrelsome ally through a series of acrimonious disputes of which Suez (1956) was the centerpiece. In spite of recurrent tensions, particularly with the former colonial powers, the U.S. nevertheless offered two "public goods" sufficient to weld the Alliance together: containment of both the Soviets and the Germans; and a military shield that allowed European

economic recovery without expansion of European military capacities and commitments.

In spite of the collapse of the Soviet threat, Cold War residuals continue to impact the issue-area of European defense. American leadership of the Western Alliance produced European military dependence, either by accident or design. In consequence, rectifying the imbalance will entail significant costs for WEU members. This is complicated by the fact that the existence of particular bilateral relations enables Washington to exert leverage over certain states if the Europeanization trend develops in an undesirable direction. This too finds reflection in the current politics of European defense. The British, probably most dependent upon American benevolence, are the strongest advocates of an Atlanticist conception of security. The French, by contrast, appear to be the loudest exponents of the Unionist vision of ESDI, with German policy oscillating between these poles.

The inherent asymmetry of the trans-Atlantic security system, and the resulting incapacities in European capabilities, constitutes only part of the picture. There also are observable differences in security requirements among the principal European powers themselves. Said another way, there are a number of extra- and intra-regional disincentives to European defense integration; analysis of these suggests that movement away from the status-quo of European dependence upon NATO will be glacial.

Disincentives to premature consolidation are, in the view of this writer, of two basic types. First, it is crucial to delineate the nature of European military dependence upon the United States. All rhetoric aside, Western European policy-makers must be concerned about the effects of movement towards European integration upon the Atlantic Alliance, and in particular, upon American perceptions of European intentions. Put bluntly, Europe still is not in a position to dispense with the public goods provided by the alliance leader. These include access to the fruits of the American defense-technology base, cooperation in out-of-area operations of limited scale, and defense of Western interests where a regional challenge requires the deployment of large-scale forces.

Second, an intra-European consensus on defense requirements will be difficult to foster. Three salient areas of concern exist. First, there is the problem of the economic costs associated with defense independence and the related question of distributing these costs. This issue raises myriad problems, but in general it seems fair to say that the chief difficulty lies in persuading European publics that war-related financial outlays are justified at a time when Western Europe is not under a single compelling threat and when social expenditures are in demand from recession-weary publics.



Second, movement toward the Unionist version of ESDI will require enormous political will, and will have to rest upon general agreement regarding threats, preferable force-posture and common doctrine. Finally, divergence of interests among the principal European powers will have to be overcome. This problem may be the most acute of all, since in addition to meeting a certain share of the costs of implementing defense independence for Europe, powers such as the U.K. and France run the risk of losing privileged status in the international system. For one, these are nuclear powers, and this capability has been obtained at great expense. Second, Britain and France retain the residue of empire, with a significant basing and military-advisory network around the world. Defense of these particular interests could be compromised if military action had to be authorized by a collegial body.

### The Components of European Military Dependence

During the Cold War, European dependence upon the U.S. was most marked at the level of nuclear deterrence. American ground forces were generally considered crucial to Western Europe's security only in so far as they symbolized Washington's commitment to the nuclear defense of Europe. In a nutshell, NATO never seriously pursued conventional numerical parity with the Warsaw Pact, although the American Army's Air-Land Battle doctrine did seem to imply a belief that a Soviet conventional thrust could be defeated through long-range interdiction of reinforcing echelons. This aside, U.S. conventional forces generally served as a mechanism by which to avoid the *strategic* de-coupling of North America from NATO-Europe in the event of confrontation with the Soviet bloc. The deployment of theatre nuclear forces was also useful for this purpose, serving to lower the nuclear threshold, presumably enhancing the Alliance's nuclear deterrence credibility.

As the Soviet threat receded over the 1980s, increased European assertiveness was evident. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the evaporation of the Warsaw Pact and the end of the menace posed by Soviet communism, it may be supposed that European dependence has lessened still further. In part this is true, but such a judgement is only superficially appealing, for the FSU retains enormous military capability. Agreed-upon strategic nuclear reductions have yet to come into full effect, while FSU ground, air and naval holdings are still enormous by European standards. This fact alone implies a continuing need for an American presence and guarantee to Europe. Threats from the East may be remote, but they are threats nonetheless.

Beyond these considerations, however, Europe remains heavily dependent upon access to the products of American military and military-industrial capabilities. There are two crucial features of this relationship. The first area is defense trade and technology transfer, and the second European dependence upon American power-projection capabilities, especially in the areas of C<sup>3</sup>I, sea and air-lift and, depending on the scale of a given deployment, U.S. Naval and Naval-Air protection. In both cases, access to American largesse is crucial to the viability of European defense in the long and short-terms, and off-continent as well as within the North Atlantic Treaty area.

In the case of defense trade, the availability of American technology determines in some measure the quality of weapons systems fielded by the Europeans, since so many of the components used by European arms manufacturers are sourced directly from U.S. firms, or manufactured under license. In this sense, the long-term health of the European defense-industrial base depends, in part at least, upon continued American willingness to share new military and "dual-use" technologies through various bilateral and multilateral channels existing both inside and outside of the NATO framework.<sup>21</sup>

The American bargaining position is enhanced by the fact that Europe, with the possible exceptions of Britain and France, does not have much in the way of ultra-modern defense technology to offset this imbalance, while at the same time being somewhat vulnerable to new threats which compound reliance upon American know-how. For example, the threat posed by Medium Range Ballistic Missiles in the southern and southeastern littoral of the Mediterranean has increased the value of U.S. anti-missile technology in European eyes. Nor is the imbalance a short-term problem. In the middle-eighties, it was estimated that Europe suffered from a five year lag behind the U.S. and Japan in applying new technologies (Boyer 1986, 140). Further, the EC trade balance in high and medium technology products deteriorated markedly over the course of the 1980s (Hackett 1990, 13; Boyer 1986, 140).

This unfortunate situation, which goes to the heart of the subject of Europe's industrial competitiveness, does not seem amenable to easy rectification. A U.S. Department of Defense summary of twenty critical technological capabilities, issued in 1991, indicated that the Europeans are on a par with the U.S. in only seven areas, and are behind in the remaining thirteen (Department of Defense 1991, 25). The most recent Department of Defense technology summary indicates that the gap has not been closed, and is most acute in the fields of communications networking and electronics (Department of Defense 1992). Since the latest American defense budgets place

greater emphasis upon R&D, the technology gap may in fact widen over the next few years. Certainly, the Europeans have no counterpart to U.S. Stealth technologies, for example, and the much vaunted European Fighter Aircraft looks no more advanced than comparable American designs of the 1970s. Centralization of research and development under Community auspices may redress this general technological imbalance—this appeared to be the motivation behind the Commission's primarily civilian ESPRIT programme, but parity cannot be expected in the short-term (Sandholtz 1992).<sup>22</sup>

An additional complicating factor exists in that some of the European powers enjoy relatively privileged access to the lucrative U.S. defense market. This is certainly the case with the U.K., whose firms have been able to participate in super-sensitive programmes like SDI research (Coker 1987, 76.)<sup>23</sup> Other benefits have included a waiver on R&D costs for Trident, Britain's newly operational strategic deterrent, participation in joint ventures for systems like the Harrier jet, and cooperation in electronics, sensor and acoustic technologies.

European reliance upon U.S. power-projection assets, enormous military stocks, and superior intelligence gathering resources is perhaps more marked now than at any time since 1945, if only because the changing threat environment dictates that likely arenas of conflict will extend beyond the European theatre. Review of previous American-European cooperation out-of-area therefore may be instructive.

Several Western European powers have seen fit to resort to force in the recent past. The Middle East, Central and North Africa, and the South Atlantic have been the loci of interventions, and the British, French, Italians and Belgians the intervenors. What is most noteworthy about this activity is the fact that Western European powers have had difficulties in coping with the demands of very limited conflicts (limited in terms of both scale of deployment and duration of operations). Invariably, they have drawn upon American *materiel* support and—since Suez and the process of decolonization—have refrained from adventurism without American political support or acquiescence. For operations involving units of divisional size or greater, with their attendant air, naval and logistical support, the Europeans have to rely on the alliance leader to provide the bulk of fighting units, and are thus relegated to the role of "showing the flag" or what has been called a "demonstrative" use of force in support of a wider Western presence (Cordesman 1989, 111). The Gulf War is the most obvious recent example of this.

At a lower level of conflict intensity, U.S. assistance has become something of a prerequisite to European interventions. In the case of the Falkland/Malvinas islands dispute between Britain and Argentina, American

material assistance helped define the outcome. The U.S. supplied to the British large quantities of aviation fuel, ammunition (including 100 Sidewinder AAMs and hundreds of mortar rounds) as well as night-vision equipment, airfield matting and satellite information (Sherwood 1990, 162).<sup>24</sup> The provision of night-vision equipment gave the British an insurmountable advantage over their Argentinian opponents, enabling a smaller land-force to prevail over an enemy in prepared positions. Similarly, American support for French operations in Zaire (1978 and again in 1991 with the Belgians) was considerable, in that deployments were effected through the provision of USAF transports (Yost 1985, 36-37). In the Chadian-Libyan conflicts (1983-84 and 1987) the Americans provided air-lift, intelligence and a variety of supplies (Laquer and Sloss 1990, 26).<sup>25</sup>

It is not only in the realm of military intervention that cooperation occurs. In spite of publicly-expressed Governmental criticisms of allies, for example, the French military has cooperated widely with the American and British militaries in terms of exercises, the development of compatible communications systems, and intelligence gathering. This has occurred in a variety of locales, including the Indian Ocean, Persian Gulf and Mediterranean, and East and Central Africa, where the French retain bases widely considered to be valuable to the management of Western interests out-of-area. Moreover, such cooperation evinces the extent to which contact and consultation within NATO bodies (for example, the Defense Planning Committee) contributes to Western security, since these institutions facilitate concerted contingency planning (Sherwood 1990, 149-183).<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, Western intelligence communities appear fairly close-knit, with the Anglo-American relationship again being exemplary.

There are good reasons to expect continuation of these trends, as a cursory review of extant European power-projection capabilities inclines one to the view that European military adventures are only viable in the context of role-specialization and burden-sharing (Cordesman 1989).<sup>27</sup> To this it might be added that it also is in America's interest to share burdens, since unilateral options are severely constrained by an increasingly watchful Congress and American public opinion. These considerations, coupled with a revised threat assessment, seem to have informed the development of NATO's new force-structures, particularly with respect to the emphasis now being placed upon rapid-reaction. The structure of USAF Composite Wings based in Europe, for example, seems to suggest that an intra-alliance division of labour is in the offing. Whereas Europe will provide the bulk of high-readiness ground forces for the ACE Rapid Reaction Corps (with the U.S. carrying a goodly share of reinforcement, or "augmentation," units) the Americans will provide the lion's share of combat aircraft and transport/

tanker assets in air groups which merge fighting, lifting and refuelling aircraft (*Air Force Magazine* (May 1992, 89-92). This restructuring is occurring in the context of a Southern-oriented strategic concept, developed by NATO and reflected in the ARRC's first exercise, "Operation Certain Shield."

Finally, in the respect of out-of-area operations, it is doubtful that European armed forces are sufficiently interoperable to ensure smooth battlefield performance at Corps level. For example, between them the British, French and German orders of battle feature at least six different types of Main Battle Tank (MBT). Even with the phasing-out of older types, there still will be three different vehicles in service, each with different maintenance and ammunition requirements. One result of this will be that serious logistical problems will emerge in any situation where multinational Corps-sized units are employed. This factor again serves to underscore the depth of European dependence upon NATO and/or U.S. resupply assets.

### Intra-Community Disincentives

The financial costs of European defense independence would appear, at this moment, to be entirely prohibitive. According to *The Economist* even "the essentials" of defense independence, including a nuclear component, could absorb from 4 percent to 7 percent of GNP over several years.<sup>28</sup> As is widely known, West Europeans struggled to meet NATO budgetary goals during the Cold War, and in a period of reduced threat and recession cannot be expected to compensate overnight for almost fifty years of military dependence upon the U.S. Even Britain, which by European standards came closest to meeting its NATO obligations through the 1980s, has seen fit to reduce defense expenditures from 3.9 percent of its GNP to 3.5 percent for the period 1990/91 through 1994/95 (*Statement on the Defense Estimates* 1992, 10-21). These figures may be reviewed, but probably not to the advantage of Britain's armed forces. Cuts have been heaviest for the Army, but maintenance of British power-projection assets does suggest that some strategic prioritization has occurred (Sabin 1993). The German and French budgets also are down, with constant revisions in the German case given the drain on that country's treasury caused by the costs of reunification. At present, the French Military Programme Law calls for defense outlays in the region of 3.1 percent of GNP through the 1992/1994 period.<sup>29</sup>

A political consensus is also a precondition for an independent European defense system. At present, there are few signs that this is in the offing. Europe's response to the Yugoslav crisis is a case in point. It became clear at the outset that some Europeans saw in the Yugoslavian civil war an

acid test of the EC's leadership abilities. The Bush administration was willing to allow a European attempt at peacemaking, but for political and technical reasons no solution could be obtained. In part this was a consequence of the fact that, initially, the Europeans did not view the situation in the same terms. The EC attempted several times to broker a ceasefire, but these efforts were compromised by independent action on the part of Germany, whose leaders recognized Slovenia and Croatia without Community authorization. British and French opposition to the German action also had an unintended side-effect, in that support for the Serbs was inferred by many commentators (Josef Joffe 1992, 40).<sup>30</sup> Attempts to develop a Community-wide consensus on an appropriate military response also foundered. In late 1991, the French proposed the deployment of a 30,000 man intervention force under WEU command (Zametica 1992, 66). The British, suspicious of French motives vis-à-vis the Atlantic Alliance, took the lead in blocking this proposal and in the process received broad European support. In turn, France called for a naval patrol of the Adriatic, which commenced in 1992 with Italian, Spanish and Portuguese participation. Overlapping with a similar NATO-sponsored effort, the WEU patrol did attract a British and German contribution. Initially, however, the patrol could not examine suspect shipping, nor could it turn violators back. As the conflict dragged on, it became increasingly obvious that European military action was unlikely without the participation of the alliance leader. Europe, lacking in the latest detection and surveillance technologies, was reluctant to intervene with a view to making (rather than keeping) a peace. On the other side of the Atlantic, State Department resignations and protests failed to move the Clinton team to action. In part, this was a consequence of the President's determination to keep the public eye focused on his domestic policy agenda.

As events have unfolded, NATO units, relying heavily upon carrier-based American aircraft, are enforcing the no-fly zone, while as far as has been disclosed publicly, the U.S. and the major European powers have yet to reach agreement with respect to armed intervention on the ground. One of the principal stumbling blocks has been the fact that British, French and Canadian units are participating in the UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR). The argument, made by Britain and France through 1993, was that these lightly armed formations would be vulnerable to Serbian retaliation if NATO conducted punitive air strikes. Others, particularly in the U.S., have argued that such a move inevitably would lead to a significant ground commitment that would have to be maintained for a significant period of time, perhaps several years. At the time of writing (February, 1994), however, it appears that pressure is mounting for a NATO strike in the wake of the massacre of

dozens of Sarajevans in early February. French and American agreement in principle now allows for the use of air power against Serbian heavy weapons located within twenty kilometers of Sarajevo. Unfortunately, this may not end the conflict, but instead could have the effect of simply changing the geographical location of the fighting. Nevertheless, if a strike occurs, it may prove impossible for the West to remain aloof from participation on the ground. The U.S., on account of its surveillance and other technologies, will be obliged to take the leadership of the military effort, and perhaps also the political one in the absence of a European consensus.

The fractious European response to the Yugoslav crisis seems to underscore the extent to which different national interests and identities are likely to retard the development of ESDI. The major European powers, Britain, France, Italy, and Germany, each bring to the bargaining table different material and moral concerns. Between them, these countries account for the bulk of EC defense trade, and their defense contractors have traditionally been aligned with distinctly national defence-industrial policies. Further, each state has, in the face of both American and European competition, been obliged to allow the development of state-dependent national champions in the defense-industrial sector. In consequence, intra-NATO and intra-Community defense trade has been characterized by off-set agreements and the granting of preferences to domestic suppliers. In part, this situation reflects the ongoing desire of Europe's more capable members to retain the ability to manufacture as wide a variety of finished military systems as possible. Once formed, these state-sponsored defense-industrial combines carry considerable political clout, as do their bureaucratic patrons. The British and French defense ministries are among the largest customers for domestic industry, and carry proportional political weight. While Germany has been more willing than most to engage in collaborative activity, the French tend to place disproportionate emphasis on the procurement of domestically-generated systems. In the UK case, some 75% of the equipment budget was spent domestically through the 1980s (Hartley and Cooper 1990, 142).

So long as these practices continue to be the norm, it is difficult to see how WEU can field an order of battle built upon standardized equipment, much less oversee a single European market wherein preferences are not accorded to national firms. The Western European Armaments Group (WEAG), scheduled to close its current Secretariat in Lisbon and to be formally incorporated into WEU by the Spring of 1994, is attempting to develop a European Defense Equipment Market, but it will be some time before this matures. In the interim, modular construction and increased attention to interoperability are the only available salves to the irritant of

non-standardization. Moreover, much of this activity is being orchestrated through NATO's Conference of National Armaments Directors (CNAD) and the Conventional Armaments Planning System (CAPS).

Second, as previously noted, Britain and France retain some measure of global influence, either through extensive arms sales and military-advisory activity, or through the maintenance of a basing network overseas. It remains an open question as to whether or not the discharge of security obligations will be hampered by the need to obtain the support of a collegial body. Beyond this consideration, distinct national identities are at stake, as are material interests and levels of political influence abroad. If past practise within the NATO framework is anything to go by, therefore, Britain and France might refrain from institutionalizing ad-hoc cooperation. The British, if not the French, traditionally have resisted any "Federal" solution to the off-continent dimension of European defence, and probably will prefer the current pattern of cooperation with the U.S. and other NATO partners. For similar reasons, so too will the Belgians, whose interests in Zaire have compelled interventions which take on the appearance of efforts to prevent French usurpation of their dominant position.

Italy and Germany also have divergent security requirements. Italian policy toward the Mediterranean became more independent over the 1980s, as Italian diplomats took the lead in mediating regional disputes. Italian participation in the UN operation in Lebanon seemed to indicate that Rome was willing to act in concert with the U.S. in this theatre. Nevertheless, the development of the Italian Rapid Reaction Force (FOPI) does signify a limited capacity to act alone. New developments, however, may make unilateralism dangerous. The Italians are in striking range of even primitive systems, such as the SCUD rocket (it will be recalled that two Libyan SCUDs were fired at the small island of Lampedusa following the 1986 U.S. air-strike on Tripoli). This gives the Italians a powerful incentive to maintain their NATO commitments, in that defense against MRBM threats is only viable if Italy has access to the fruits of American-led research efforts, such as GPALS (Global Protection Against Limited Strikes).<sup>31</sup>

Germany, by contrast, is not threatened immediately from the south, although its resource dependencies imply susceptibility to the effects of instability in this region. Although German forces were committed to Turkey during the Gulf War, this was politically unpopular, and suggests limits on the willingness of future governments to become embroiled in conflicts which the German left could present as neocolonial adventures conducted in pursuit of French, British or Italian interests. If Germany is to share the out-of-area burden, therefore, it will have to overcome its rather convenient constitutional reservations, and most likely will need the sanction



of a UN request. More importantly, however, the Germans have taken the lead in assisting East-Central and FSU economies, and for geographical reasons are susceptible to the effects of political instability, including westward migration of economic refugees. Perpetuation of NATO and the U.S. presence obviously is in Germany's immediate interest, particularly since alternatives are so expensive (Pond 1992). As a reflection of this the Germans have accepted the leadership of the air component of the ARRC while simultaneously continuing the process of military cooperation with France.

Finally, if WEU is to fulfill its apparent long-term vocation as the defense arm of the Union, it eventually must obtain a nuclear component. This can occur only on the basis of a common doctrine, a unitary command and control facility and a generally accepted definition of threat. Traditionally, the two nuclear powers, France and Britain, have been reluctant to disclose technical information and targeting arrangements, much less to entertain the idea of renouncing sovereign control over important symbols of national prestige, if for no other reason than this is one of few areas in which superiority over Germany is enjoyed.

In the French case, nuclear independence has been obtained at great expense, often as much as 30 percent of the defense budget, and has been purchased at great cost to France's conventional forces. Although the 1992-1994 Military Programme Law reduces the share of the defense budget devoted to nuclear systems to 20 percent, this remains an enormous commitment, reflecting the singular importance France places upon the defense of the national "sanctuary." One casualty of this downscaling was the Hades MRBM, a weapon originally designed with the European theatre in mind but now made obsolete by the pace of events. Mitterand suggested that Hades might be made available to WEU for use as an out-of-area deterrent against similar, foreign-owned systems. The proposal so far has drawn little or no response from other members, although the now nuclear-free French Army is reported to be concerned about its standing with respect to future defense budgets.

For the British, the nuclear question is intimately bound-up with the "special relationship." In military matters, the relationship has been a mixed blessing. In terms of access to the American defense market, no European power has enjoyed the position granted to the British. Moreover, the quality of British conventional weaponry is second to none among the Europeans, in part because of native ingenuity, but also due to effective cooperation with the Americans. The British also have enjoyed extremely close relationships with the American intelligence community, with trans-Atlantic black-outs being the exception rather than the rule. Yet, notwithstanding the

benefits that have accrued to the United Kingdom, the relationship has been at base profoundly lop-sided, especially in matters nuclear. The costs of Britain's domestic nuclear programme and the increased vulnerability of air-launched stand-off weapons obliged the Macmillan government to negotiate the procurement of Polaris in the early 1960s. There followed a thorough reappraisal of British nuclear policy. The RAF's V-bomber force was assigned to tactical roles, and the Navy, albeit reluctantly, took over the strategic nuclear task in 1969.

Since that time, it is fair to say that the British have been dependent upon American goodwill and technical assistance to maintain their nuclear capability (Freedman 1980).<sup>32</sup> The most recent acquisition, Trident D5, not only carries a severe (though eminently fair) financial burden, but also a heavy political one. Refit work is conducted in the U.S., while the missiles themselves are sourced from the American pool, with periodic exchanges every seven to eight years. Also, given the life-expectancy of these types of systems, British policy-makers will have to ensure access to technological upgrades (Bayliss 1989, 70-89).<sup>33</sup> Since the British are in the process of constructing a further three Vanguard-class hulls (in addition to the ship already launched) it can be expected that HMG will be attentive to Washington's interpretation of the role of WEU within the framework of North Atlantic defense. This consideration is all the more important if one bears in mind the constant pressures on Britain's defense budget. The Trident fleet will not operate at anything like full capacity, and may even be assigned some "sub-strategic" roles. In order for this reduced deterrent to remain credible in the eyes of militarizing Third World powers, it may prove to be the case that Britain will need access to U.S. targeting information. Such access cannot be guaranteed.

### **Conclusions: What of the Long Term?**

This brief review does not exhaust the list of obstacles to European defense independence under WEU. Absent from the analysis have been questions of European public opinion and support for extension of WEU capabilities, the possible impact of the questionable status of the Unionist project, and the effects of NATO's transformation on European elites' perceptions of their future defense and security requirements.

The discussion also has refrained from consideration of the degree to which divergent national perspectives on security requirements are balanced by common regional (i.e. Community) and trans-Atlantic interests, such that an effective base for cooperation already exists within the framework provided by the Atlantic Alliance. All advanced industrial societies in the

Western Alliance share interests in preventing armed assault upon an ally, ensuring free navigation of the seas, minimizing the prospect of disruptions in the flow of resources from the Third World to the First, managing ethnic conflict and terrorism, and monitoring weapons proliferation. These interests have been on the West's agenda for some time: indeed, with the exception of one or two items, they have formed the basis for cooperation since World War Two. There are, to be sure, tensions amongst nations, and more recently, between nascent trade blocs, but these should not be allowed to obscure the fundamental coincidence of European and American interests. It is this fact, rather than the rhetoric of dissensus, that should anchor analysis of Western European defense requirements, for while NATO continues to fulfill its collective defense function Western Europe enjoys a fail-safe mechanism. Even if WEU remains a paper tiger, continental defense is assured. As to the out-of-area problem, the past pattern of military to military cooperation among the U.S., U.K. and France, with financial and other support from the Allies, will in all likelihood persist. In the face of considerable disagreement over Bosnia, for example, the French, long notorious for putting national interests ahead of Alliance interests, have made it clear that they wish to continue the process of reconciliation with NATO even as they push for a looser definition of obligation under the North Atlantic Treaty (Buchan 1993).

If the above description is accurate, it follows that the construction of the European Security and Defense Identity will occur within the framework of a broader "Western" identity, one that perforce eventually must include Japan and the developed, trade-dependent, industrial Far East. What is sought, certainly by France, is the construction of a capacity to act independently only if the need arises: this is a world apart from the often overly pessimistic spin given to ESDI by the British. In short, the development of ESDI does not necessarily mean the dislocation of the Atlantic Alliance. The U.S. needs NATO as a base from which to project power into the Eurasian landmass, Africa and Middle East. And the Europeans need the U.S. for purposes of balancing Russian power, in addition to the continuing issues of burden-sharing and technological collaboration. The real question is, what will it take to move the European pillar from a concept to an institutionalized capacity?

At least four requirements have to be met. The first, though not necessarily the most important, is a clear signal from the U.S. that it regards ESDI as desirable, but at the same time not a cause for American disengagement from the defense of Europe. The spectre that has haunted the debate over ESDI, largely promulgated by the British and, earlier, by the Reagan and Bush administrations, was that Europe's defense identity presumed the

abandonment of NATO, or at least its marginalization. The Clinton administration, apparently as interested in the Pacific as the Atlantic, now has the opportunity to redefine the trans-Atlantic relationship in a more equitable manner. In other words, Washington must be prepared to view the Alliance in essentially French terms: as an expression of solidarity on one hand, but also as a framework loose enough to allow for the pursuit of legitimate national and regional interests. Robin Laird, of the Institute for Defense Analyses, presciently argued this case several years ago (Laird 1991). It now appears that the Clinton administration, in a rehash of a Kennedy theme, has sent such a signal, calling in effect for resuscitation of the "Grand Design." The European response was unprecedented, in that for the first time the "Big Three" met (in late January, 1994) explicitly for the purpose of discussing European defense. According to a *Financial Times* (27 January 1994, 17) editorial, Whitehall's "current thinking . . . is that it should be possible, when the Maastricht Treaty is revised in 1996, to endow the EU with a common defense policy explicitly linked to the Atlantic Alliance."

Although it is too early to call, the tripartite meeting indicates that progress is being made in connection with what one might view as the second major requirement. Simply put, Britain must decide whether or not it is fully committed to the Europeanization of Western defense. Certainly, other powers, such as Holland, have been reluctant to give even the appearance of contributing to this effort, but the British position is central. Without Britain and her nuclear and conventional forces, a European defense force will be incomplete in a material sense, and riven politically. This will entail, on the part of Britain, abandonment of her global pretensions and of the behavioral penchant for being Europe's "odd man out."

Third, if ESDI is to be anything other than a drain on American and NATO assets and infrastructure, the Europeans will have to make good the shortfalls in military capability described above. Since ESDI is likely to emerge in the context of the Atlantic Alliance, it may be presumed that NATO infrastructure will be available to support a European army. Access to American technologies, in particular satellites, cannot be assured, so the Europeans must find some way to equip themselves. Europe does not need every piece of high-technology paraphernalia available to the U.S., but there are some it cannot do without. These should be—indeed, have been—identified as priority areas for funding. Political will now is required to procure and maintain key capabilities in areas as diverse as fast lift, battlefield management systems and precision guided munitions (PGMs).

Fourth, in order to attain the relevant defense technological capabilities, it is crucial that Europe extend the single market to the production and trade

in arms, for only in this way will Europe enjoy economies of scale or be able to muster sufficient investment capital for major R&D ventures not involving the U.S. The latter is not always desirable, of course, for Europe and America still will find it convenient to co-develop new systems. However, if ESDI is to mean a common defense-industrial policy geared to supporting a modern common army, a single market in defense products is desirable. As this emerges, and there are signs that it is, Europe will develop a "functional" base upon which can be built the relevant institutional framework.<sup>34</sup> Incidentally, that framework need not require the immediate development of a European defense ministry: that would raise—perhaps prematurely—questions about the "democratic deficit." In the shorter term, intergovernmental organs will suffice, although in the long term we may witness the emergence of accountable legislative power at the regional level.

Thus, it is this writer's view that the development of WEU's operational role should best be understood as a rationalization of the European contribution to the wider Atlantic defense community. Indeed, European leaders consistently have made this clear. The alternative, enhanced defense capabilities and, ultimately, independence from the U.S., is so fraught with difficulties as to be impractical for the foreseeable future. The only realistic scenario under which the vision of absolute European defense independence could become reality is an American return to isolationism, a prospect much feared but, for now at any rate, improbable.

## NOTES

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<sup>1</sup>See Worner (1992). Also, see the *Declaration of the WEU Council of Ministers*, Luxembourg, 22 November, 1993. This document emphasizes the "resolve to develop WEU as the means to strengthen the European pillar of the Alliance" (1/2) and reaffirms the commitment to coordinate with NATO on the basis of transparency and complementarity. The declaration also proclaims the desire of Western European powers to introduce common positions within the framework of Alliance consultations. For reasons discussed in the paper, forging of such common positions is likely to be problematic.

<sup>2</sup>For further discussion of the Dunkirk Treaty, see Powaski (1991, 198).

<sup>3</sup>This consideration was in truth a consequence of the drive to reconstruct the European economies, to which rebuilding European confidence was deemed essential. The strategy of forward defense was conceived against this background, rather than being dictated by military logic. Inclusion of German units in NATO's order of battle was, thus, a political as well as military necessity since European economic recovery was perceived to rest on German economic rehabilitation.

<sup>4</sup>There is plenty of evidence to suggest that Acheson was not favourably disposed toward the French plan, at least initially, since he considered the Pleven proposals to be somewhat utopian and designed to postpone decision on the German question. See McLellan's (1976, 336, 403) superior study of the controversial Secretary of State. One is tempted to conclude that EDC's principal problem was that it put the cart of political integration before the horse of a European army. In seeking a common assembly and defense ministerial capacity the French proposal was considered too radical by Britain, which clung to its Commonwealth vocation at this time.

<sup>5</sup>The National Assembly rejected EDC by 319 votes to 264, with 43 abstentions. See Nugent (1989, 36). For a thorough description of the history of EDC, see Fursdon (1980).

<sup>6</sup>In 1989, for example, the IEPG listed the following problems confronting the European aerospace industry: duplication of R&D; overcapacity; non-standardization; political intervention in national markets and, in some cases, outright state control of industries; fragmentation of the European market forced by preferential treatment of national suppliers; and diversity of national defense requirements and procurement procedures. See *Aviation Week and Space Technology* (12 June 1989, 87).

<sup>7</sup>For example, in 1985 former Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs Richard Burt warned the Europeans not to take arms control positions outside of the NATO framework. See *The Financial Times* (2 April 1985).

<sup>8</sup>In reference to the EC's feeble response to the deteriorating situation in Yugoslavia, Delors stated that the "Community is like an adolescent facing the crisis of adulthood. If the Community were ten years older, there would have been an intervention force." See Zametica (1992, 66).

<sup>9</sup>For a somewhat dated, but still useful, discussion of intra-alliance tensions, see Coker (1989).

<sup>10</sup>See George Joffe (1992). Some commentators now posit the existence of two "arcs," one to the east, embracing Russia, the Caucasus and Middle East, and the other to the south, running from North Africa into South-West Asia. See Asmus, Kugler and Larrabee (1993). The militarization of the Far East also is a matter of concern (see Klare (1993)).

<sup>11</sup>As noted in the text, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is occurring in the context of the spread of Medium Range Ballistic Missiles. In consequence, it appears that European anti-ballistic missile planning envisages threats from the Middle East and North Africa. See *Aviation Week and Space Technology* (10 August 1992, 22). In addition, the FSU's most advanced conventional weaponry, perhaps including Soviet-standard systems rather than export models, is seeping into the Middle East and South-West Asia at an alarming rate. It has been reported that Iran is engaged in an extensive rearmament effort including acquisition of "Backfire" bombers. These aircraft have a useful anti-ship capability. For a broader discussion of the FSU's role in weapons proliferation, see Bicksler and Lacy (1992).

<sup>12</sup>See Cordesman's (1989, 73-146) excellent review of Western power-projection options and capabilities for Middle East contingencies. For an overlapping discussion of some of the themes considered below, see Birch and Crotts (1993, 265-281).

<sup>13</sup>For details of the NATO role in the Gulf Crisis, see Howe (1991).

<sup>14</sup>Also see the *Luxembourg Declaration*, section III/4.

<sup>15</sup>See *Armed Forces Journal International* (May 1992, 30). Also, see Worner (1992).

<sup>16</sup>See the communique issued by the North Atlantic Council with respect to the emerging agreement between the German and French Chiefs of Staff and SACEUR regarding the use of the Franco-German Corps by NATO. This document is reproduced in *NATO Review* 40/6: 28-31.

<sup>17</sup>See *Armed Forces Journal International* (July 1992, 21). Europe may prefer to source a system "in-house;" indeed, an MoU was signed, in October of 1993, on a feasibility study for the Future Large Aircraft. Initial reports suggested that American air-lifters are more capable, perhaps cheaper, and certainly more rugged.

<sup>18</sup>WEU sources, interviewed in London, December 1992.

<sup>19</sup>See the Statement by Eurogroup Ministers on Eurogroup Institutional Change, Brussels, 9 December, 1992. This is reproduced in *NATO Review* 41/1: 32. Also, see the statement made by Sir Dudley Smith (1993).

<sup>20</sup>For a brief discussion of likely industry strategies with respect to co-development and, perhaps, indicators of movement towards a pan-Community defense-industrial base, see Birch and Crotts (1993, 278-279).

<sup>21</sup>At present, U.S. R&D expenditures are roughly three times those for NATO-Europe. American defense procurement is approximately twice that of the European allies. See Beard (April 1993). It should also be pointed out that the entire NATO co-development and R&D network is being rationalized under a system of three committees all answerable to NAC. For details, see Gardner (February 1993). R&D expenditures now account for a greater percentage of the American defense budget than previously. See the *National Defense Budget Estimates for FY 1994* (1993).

<sup>22</sup>The IEPG's EUCLID project has been taken over by WEU, and may herald greater intra-European cooperation in the defense-technological arena. Ministers attending the Luxembourg meeting stated that research and technology development programmes under EUCLID had increased in number. See *The Luxembourg Declaration, IV/1*. One complicating factor on the road to a single defense market arises from the fact that powers such as Greece, which have ambitions to become arms producers, are unlikely to allow open bidding on contracts. The WEU is attempting, in consequence, to provide support to the so-called Developing Defense Industry Countries.

<sup>23</sup>In general, British firms have not enjoyed such access in European defense markets. In terms of technological collaboration between the U.S. and Britain, it appears that the "special relationship" is still alive, since Britain is one of few powers to have been granted some access to GPALS under a Memorandum of Understanding signed last year (NATO sources interviewed in Brussels, 31 January 1994).

<sup>24</sup>For an interview of British efforts to solicit Allied sanctions against the Argentinians, see Lisa L. Martin (1992).

<sup>25</sup>American generosity was exemplified by the decision, in August 1983, to deploy two AWACS aircraft to the Sudan in case the French air force required assistance. Unfortunately, Mitterand was irritated to learn of this through the French press, and refused American assistance. Subsequently, the Libyans destroyed a French Jaguar fighter, one of only eight French jets deployed. See Stuart and Tow (1990, 239-240).

<sup>26</sup>For a more detailed assessment of the effects of out-of-area crises upon Alliance cohesion, see Stuart and Tow (1990). These authors make clear that habits of cooperation were effectively institutionalized within NATO during the 1980s.

<sup>27</sup>For a listing of Western European and American airlift, tanker and naval assets, see *The Military Balance 1991-1992* (1992).

<sup>28</sup>The conventions employed in arriving at these figures were not disclosed; obviously, the estimates given should be viewed with some caution. However, by "essentials" *The Economist* did specify acquisition of 150 air-lifters, 20 fast sea-lifters, satellites and assorted high-technology paraphernalia.

<sup>29</sup>For details on French defense budgets, see *Military Technology* (September, 1992, 42-43).

<sup>30</sup>Joffe reminds us, in an acerbic manner, that the EC-12, "joined above all by the quest for economic gain," are unlikely to succeed where NATO is said to falter.

<sup>31</sup>A NATO committee on GPALS has in fact been formed, but curiously has yet to meet. It may be the case that access to this super-sensitive American technology is being withheld from some NATO members, while being made available under MoUs to trusted partners. Regardless, European interest in this technology is pronounced (NATO sources interviewed in Brussels, 31 January 1994).

<sup>32</sup>For an alternative interpretation of the success of Britain's nuclear policy and programme, see Malone (1984).

<sup>33</sup>It might be the case that the asymmetry of the Anglo-American nuclear relationship will not be felt so keenly by a Conservative government. Labour, on the other hand, has not always enjoyed a full measure of American confidence. It is known, for example, that Anglo-American technical cooperation fell off during the Attlee and Wilson administrations.

<sup>34</sup>It is in part because European defense orders have not facilitated economies of scale that unit costs have tended, in recent years, to escalate extremely rapidly. In turn, this has compelled strategic

alliances among otherwise competitive firms in the aerospace sector. These have cut across national boundaries, and generally are undertaken to share R&D costs, lower unit costs and enhance the efficient management of joint ventures. Recent work by Pierre Dussauge and Bernard Garrete (1993) has identified 70 such alliances in the aerospace sector from 1950-1990. Of these, 48 occurred after 1980, 10 evinced U.S./European cooperation, while 37 involved some combination of Britain, France and Germany separate from America. The interest in learning to cope with the problem of efficient management of collaborative ventures should not be underestimated as a cause of such alliances, particularly for European firms whose development times on systems such as Tornado are markedly longer than for comparable American aircraft. For example, the Tornado Air Defense Variant took 115 months to mature from project start to first delivery. By contrast, the McDonnell Douglas F-15 A-D took a mere 59 months, and is the better plane. See Hartley and Martin (1993). For a discussion of the functionalist approach to political integration, one of the most comprehensive works undoubtedly is A.J.R. Groom and Paul Taylor (1975). The functionalist perspective tends to assume that political integration follows on from cross-national practical and technical collaboration. Though incomplete as a theory of European integration (largely on account of its inability to explain the "stop and go" nature of the process) it does yield a valuable insight concerning the prerequisites for European military integration.

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