

The European Way Of War 2005-2020

INTRODUCTION

It is customary to see Europe as a spent force. The European economy is often seen as sclerotic and under-performing. European society is seen as ageing and losing its vitality and vigour. Strangely enough, these conceptions do not stand up to the facts. The EU is the largest trading bloc in the world¹. It has the largest GDP². It also has the largest population of the developed world³. In many ways, Europe is becoming a power that is gradually increasing in stature during the opening years of the twenty-first century.

Europe also represents something new politically. The case for the European Union starts with the dissolution of the nation state in the face of globalisation. The basic premise of the EU is that, if individual nations surrender and pool some of their sovereignty, then, collectively, they will achieve more than the sum of their individual efforts. This premise quite naturally applies to the 'public goods' in the international arena such as peace and security⁴. The EU, in its various forms, has helped to deliver peace and security in Western Europe for over half a century. 'Peace and security' are enjoyed by all western Europeans irrespective of whether or not they are citizens of the EU. For example, Switzerland is not a member of the EU, but has enjoyed the benefits of a peaceful Western Europe since 1945.

Peace and security have not been enjoyed completely throughout Europe. The realignment of post-war Europe in the 1990s revived some of the darker parts of European history. Many see the massacre at Srebrenica in 1995 as the turning point for the EU. Prior to 1995, the EU was content to accept the security guarantee provided by NATO and underwritten by the US. After 1995, the EU member states have come to realise that in order to have a voice in the international security arena, the EU needs to develop a Common Defence Policy.

It is the purpose of this piece to consider how that Common Defence Policy might develop in the years to 2020. In doing so, we need to consider how the EU itself might develop over that period. Of course, the EU is not acting in isolation. This means that we also ought to consider how the international security arena might develop as well during that period. With the bigger picture in view, we can then focus on the detail of the types of mission that the Common Defence Policy might be applied to, and the types of issue that the Common Defence Policy might face. Finally, we will consider the force levels that would be appropriate to a Common Defence Policy.

WHICH EUROPE?

The EU is currently at an important crossroads in terms of its development. It has grown to include most of the western European nations as members, and has started to assimilate a good portion of the eastern European nations. The borders of the EU are now broadly contiguous with the European landmass, and, with the projected accession of Turkey in 2015, would extend into the Asian landmass. The EU has grown beyond the confines of a geographical entity and is starting to represent an ideal. When we talk of ‘Europe’ nowadays, we mean ‘the European way of doing things’⁵.

And yet, despite this growth in size, the EU as a political entity is relatively under-developed. In considering how Europe might develop in the years to 2020, we need to be aware of the various models of European development. At the basic level, there are two key models – the Atlanticist and the Federalist. We shall consider these models in turn.

Perhaps it is easier to start with the Atlanticist model, as it represents an updated version of the world order that has prevailed since 1945. The Atlanticist model recognises the importance and significance of the US as the policy leader of ‘the West’. Politically, the nations with the greatest sympathy towards the Atlanticist position tend to be the nations who see the EU as primarily a trading bloc, and who are resistant to closer political and institutional integration of the EU. Great Britain, Poland, and Denmark are

seen as naturally ‘Euro sceptic’ and provide examples of how the EU might behave if it were to adopt the Atlanticist model.

In the Atlanticist model, the EU would follow the US closely in foreign policy and military doctrine. The US, in turn, would consult closely with its European allies on matters of foreign policy and military doctrine. This arrangement has naturally expressed itself through NATO during the post-war period. The Atlanticist tendencies of the individual member states can be used to explain the support that Great Britain has given the US in Iraq in 2003. The absence of Atlanticist tendencies in other individual member states can be used to explain the lack of support that they have given the US in Iraq.

Opposing the Atlanticist model for the EU is the Federalist model. The Federalist model is easy to understand at the most basic level. In this model, the EU will develop into a single entity, which some have called ‘the United States of Europe’. In this model, the EU will have unitary political institutions and will exercise a single administration across the member states. As a consequence of this, there would be a Common Foreign Policy that is conducted and orchestrated from Brussels. There would also be a Common Defence Policy that is delivered by the member states, but at the direction and behest of the EU in Brussels.

There are a few precedents for this type of arrangement. One is the Grand Armee of 1812, when, under the direction of Napoleon, Western Europe undertook the invasion of Russia. An alternative example is the Legions of Rome, which, under the direction of the Roman Senate, provided relative peace and security for the Roman provinces of Western Europe. Interestingly enough, the Francophone Europhiles point to the experience of Napoleon as a model of how the EU could develop, whilst Anglophone Europhiles point to the Roman experience as a way forward. Although in its infancy, the deployment of EUFOR in Bosnia in 2005 points to the way in which a modern Federalist Common Defence Policy could develop.

The Atlanticist and the Federalist models are not definitive. They represent relatively extreme points upon a spectrum. Within this spectrum there are other positions that one could adopt. There are two important positions within the Federalist model that we need to consider – the Consensual and the Populist.

The Consensual Federalist model is something of a hybrid between the Federalist and Atlanticist models. In this model, the Common Foreign Policy and the Common Defence Policy are opted into by the member states. More importantly, it is also possible for the member states to opt out of the Common Foreign Policy and the Common Defence Policy.

This is quite significant at present, as a number of member states who have accepted the draft European Constitution⁶ have quite rightly pointed out that the rejection of the draft Constitution by some member states does not preclude their voluntary co-operation to act as if it had been adopted by the EU. In any scenario developed from this position, for example, it would be perfectly acceptable and consistent with the Common Defence Policy if some member states were engaged in Iraq (as Great Britain, Poland, and Italy are), whilst other member states were not so engaged (as France, Germany, and Spain are not).

One of the accepted rules of democratic engagement is that, in a vote, the loser accepts the will of the majority, even though they are in the minority themselves. This forms the basis for the Populist Federalist model. In this model, the Common Foreign and Defence Policies are determined by majority rule within the EU, and it is then mandatory for all member states to follow such policies. The Foreign and Defence Departments of each member state effectively become merged and integrated.

In this situation, the EU would be able to represent the interests of the member states in a unified way. The EU would be able to present a common platform for diplomacy and would represent a common threat of force in the

international policy arena. Such a position would imply the development of EUFOR beyond its present capabilities and structures. To some, this would be a natural development of a current trend.

However, because a trend is developing naturally does not make it inevitable. There is something to be said for and against each of the three models for EU development. It is also the case that each model is not mutually exclusive. It is possible to adopt simultaneously an Atlanticist policy on one issue (e.g. the ‘War on Terror’), a Consensual Federalist policy on another (e.g. Iraq), and a Populist Federalist policy on a further issue (e.g. the sale of military technology to China). This does not represent the duplicity of the EU. It merely represents part of the complexity of which Europe is comprised.

IN WHICH WORLD?

Europe does not operate in isolation from the rest of the world. The three models of development identified in the previous section will have to interact with how the rest of the world develops in the years to 2020. In gauging how the global arena might develop in the next fifteen years, it is useful to have a model of development through which we can interpret current events and extrapolate future trends.

There are three models of global developments that are particularly commendable. These are the ‘Clash of Civilisations’ model developed by Samuel Huntington, the ‘Core-Gap’ model developed by Thomas Barnett, and the ‘Three Stages’ model proposed by Robert Cooper⁷. Despite having their shortcomings, each of these models is quite useful in helping us to understand the international arena and how it might develop out to 2020.

The Clash of Civilisations model starts by analysing the world according to the civilisations present within the world. For example, the model identifies a ‘Western Civilisation’ that includes Europe, much of North America, and Australasia. Alternatively it identifies a civilisation of Islam that wraps around the globe from northern and western Africa, running eastwards around the

globe, to Indonesia. The basic premise of the model is that the most fundamental conflict occurs when two or more civilisations collide.

The model is very good at explaining a number of general conflicts in the present world such as the apparent conflict between Islam and the West. It can also be useful in explaining a number of more specific conflicts such as the division of the Ukraine between the west (part of the Western culture) and the east (part of the Orthodox culture). However, the model is not very good at explaining rifts within a civilisation such as the apparent dissonance between the US and Europe in the Western civilisation. This limits the usefulness of the model somewhat as an explanatory tool.

The 'Core-Gap' model categorises the world into two areas. On the one hand, there is the 'Functioning Core'. These are a group of nations who trade and interact with each other and whose interests, broadly speaking, are relatively similar. Within the model, there is room for nations to jockey for position within the Functioning Core, but there is not room for significant conflict within the Core. Juxtaposed against the Functioning Core is the 'Non-Integrated Gap'. These are a group of nations who are not integrated into the Functioning Core, either by design in the case of Iran, or by accident in the case of most African nations.

The model is very useful in explaining a number of supranational trends that impinge upon nations, such as the rise of global terror, the spread of globalisation, the development of a monotone culture, and so on. It is also useful in interpreting the actions of non-national actors (e.g. most terror groups) and those nations which appear to behave irrationally (e.g. the Palestinian Authority). However, the model suffers from the bluntness of its analysis. By positing only two categories, it does not explain well conflicts within those two categories. For example, China and Taiwan are both included in the Functioning Core, despite the simmering possibility of military action between the two.

The Three Stages model, on the other hand, sees the world as one in which conflict will occur. It divides the world into three categories – Modern Nations, Pre-Modern Nations, and Post-Modern Nations.

We are generally comfortable with the idea of the Modern Nations. These are the nation-states that emerged after the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 and which still dominate the international arena today. They are the vehicle through which national and cultural identities are expressed. They trade with each other and they war with each other. They are also in decline.

The Modern Nation is, in some areas, being replaced by the Pre-Modern Nation. This is an entity that has the apparatus of the Modern Nation – the legal system, the tax system, the security system – but uses it almost on tribal or kleptocratic lines. This model is very useful in explaining the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the operation of many African, South American, and Asian nations.

In other areas, most notably in Europe, the Modern Nation is being replaced by the Post-Modern Nation. This is a nation which is prepared to pool its sovereignty in return for much larger benefits from acting collectively with other nations. This is the core theory of the EU. It is interesting to note that other regional associations across the globe are starting to emulate the EU.

The Three States model is useful as an explanatory device and helps us to interpret events as they unfold. It is not as useful as a predictive device in helping us to see how nations might develop in the future. It also has limitations in helping us to understand the interactions between the various stages. For example, how ought a Post-Modern Nation to deal with a humanitarian crisis caused by a Pre-Modern Nation? In specific terms, we could say how ought the EU to have reacted to the tragedy of the former Yugoslavia? Or the tragedy of Rwanda? It is precisely at the point of policy that a model needs to be useful.

Despite their drawbacks, each of the three models is useful in helping us look into the future to 2020. Within this time frame, it is quite likely that the civilisational clash will continue between ‘the West’, the Islamic world, the Orthodox world (as championed by Russia), the Sinic world (as championed by China), and the Hindu world (as championed by India).

Despite these civilisational clashes, these groups will continue to operate interactively as part of the Functioning Core as the process of globalisation advances and deepens. The Non-Integrated Gap will, on occasion, disrupt the Functioning Core through events such as 9-11 or the Madrid Bombings. Equally, it is likely that the Functioning Core will have a continued military involvement in the Non-Integrated Gap out to 2020. For example, it is highly unlikely that the US Army Central Command (which includes the Middle East) will have a force strength of less than 100,000 during this time frame.

Although it is not certain, it is very likely that the Functioning Core will grow and strengthen. As it does, the benefits to the Modern Nations of moving to a Post-Modern state are likely to increase. The costs of reverting back to a Pre-Modern state are also likely to increase, thus accelerating Post-Modernisation. If so, then out to 2020 we are likely to see the further extension of the EU into Asia and, possibly, Africa; we are likely to see the development of Asean – in whichever form – into a group similar to the EU; and we may even see the development of a South American grouping along the lines of the EU. These likely developments at the grand strategic level will determine the mission that a military force is likely to encounter.

WITH WHAT MISSION?

There are those who accuse Europe of being light on defence⁸. The Economist reports that whilst the US spent just under \$300 bn on defence in 2000, the European NATO nations combined only spent a total of just over \$150 bn⁹. On the face of it, there might be a case for the suggestion that Europe has had the luxury of the American security blanket during the Cold War era, and that has allowed Europe to neglect its defences.

However, once we start to review the issue of mission assessment (the task for which a military force is prepared), then a different picture starts to emerge. In this, some have argued, the US military planners have been misguided. For example, Thomas Barnett reports that, for US military planners, “China provided them everything they needed: an emerging great power that was building up its military for an invasion of Taiwan – a key ally of the United States”¹⁰. Much of US capability development since the end of the Cold War has been in preparation for the next peer conflict, with China being identified as the next peer rival. This is preparation for ‘Big War’.

In fact, if we examine the actual deployment of US forces between 1990 and 2005, we find that most of the engagements have been far from Big War. They have mainly been in what we could call ‘Small War’ – peacekeeping, humanitarian intervention, and nation-building. There is a case to argue that the current deployment in Iraq involved a few weeks of Big War, which are likely to be followed by a few years of Small War. It is in the light of this that we need to re-examine the suggestion that Europe has neglected its defences.

Big War involves big spending. Small war doesn’t. This fits in well with how the EU sees itself in the world. The Europhiles would argue that the strength of the EU in terms of diplomacy is its ‘transformative power’¹¹. This is the ability of the EU to make those opposing the EU transform themselves into something more acceptable to the EU. For example, few would deny that Turkey has transformed its democratic credentials in recent decades in order to obtain EU membership. Equally, Croatia has transformed itself into accepting the rule of International Law on the issue of war crimes in order to support its application for membership to the EU. Interestingly enough, it is the hesitancy of Serbia to transform itself on the issue of war crimes that is acting as a brake on the Serbian application for membership to the EU. This transformative power is the exercise of what others might call ‘soft power’. The exercise of soft power can be exhortive, but it also needs to be backed by an implicit threat of force. It is here that the EU was found lacking in the 1990s.

In responding to this apparent lack of capability, the Consensual Federalists appear currently to have the upper hand within the EU. When the US called for support in Iraq, the Atlanticist nations responded favourably (Great Britain, Poland, Italy, and, initially, Spain). Equally, the Federalist nations (France, Germany, and, eventually, Spain) did not respond favourably to the call. It is also believed that, whilst the US forces performed well in the ‘big war’ in Iraq, they have performed less than well in the ensuing ‘small war’. Equally, the European contingent in Iraq made only a minor contribution to the ‘big war’, but has made a disproportionately larger contribution in the ensuing ‘small war’. It is this capability that was lacking in the 1990s, but which has started to be addressed by 2005.

It is likely that ‘small war’ will continue to be the mission assessment over the time frame with which we are involved. In many ways it is unthinkable that, out to 2020, the EU nations could become involved in big war as a means of policy, either with each other, or, as a bloc, with anyone else. This would be far too ‘Modern’ for the ‘Post-Modern’ status that the EU has acquired. However, as the case of Yugoslavia showed, the EU does need to develop the capacity and capability to underwrite the exercise of soft power with force, if needs be. Whether this will be at the level of the EU or at the level of the member states remains to be seen, depending upon how the EU develops as an institution to 2020.

OVER WHICH ISSUES?

If the EU were to exercise the use of force to underwrite its soft power, over what issues, we might ask, would that power be used? There are three main areas in which conflict might arise in the years to 2020 – the movement of energy, mineral and human resources, the movement of capital, and the provision of security. It is worth considering each of these issues in turn.

Europe has a deficit in energy, mineral and human resources. In the years to 2020, energy, along with a number of other basic mineral resources, is likely to become scarcer and command more of a premium price. Competition for

scarce resources could be a source of conflict to 2020, along with ensuring the security of supply of those resources. We can quite readily envisage the deployment of European troops to secure the source of supply of vital mineral resources (e.g. oil, gas, copper, aluminium, steel, wood, water, etc.). Indeed, some could argue that the current European deployments in Iraq are to do exactly this.

In the modern world, capital is generally very liquid and can move from one location to another very quickly. Much of the movement of capital is determined by the expectations of future events, and is propelled by a combination fear (that things may go wrong) and greed (the desire to earn a return on an investment). It is quite possible to envisage future scenarios where Europe deploys military force with the intention of reassuring European investors (i.e. reducing their fears) by securing the environment in which their investments are made. In this capacity, European troops might be used to supervise elections or assist the civil powers in non-European states.

There is more to Europe, though, than just self-interest. The EU represents a community of beliefs. It is true that self-interest does have a part in this, but it is also true that the EU sees the improvement of the world as part of its core mission. One of the key precepts of the EU is the rule of law. It is fundamental to the European belief that the rule of law is the key to a secure future. Sometimes, that law has to be enforced. In this case, it is quite easy to envisage a range of possibilities where the EU intervenes in order to support the provision of order. For example, the EU currently has a small force, provided by Italy, which is policing the crossing points in the Gaza Strip.

All of these areas of potential deployment are characterised by one common point. They are likely to involve the conduct of small war in the furtherance of soft power. Soft power tends to be exercised in furthering the process of peacekeeping, in humanitarian interventions, and in furthering the process of nation building. The military is likely to take on more features of a heavily armed police force as the distinction between the military and the non-

military becomes more blurred in the years to 2020. This then informs us of the type of force levels that are likely to be required.

TO WHAT FORCE LEVEL?

If the military future for Europe is the preparation for small war, then it is quite clear that the preparation for big war would be a wasteful use of resources. To this extent, the criticisms of those who allege that Europe is soft on defence are misplaced. Europe is quite correctly preparing a capability for the missions in which it feels that it is likely to become engaged. For example, it could be argued that further preparation for a nuclear exchange would be a wasteful use of resources, but that preparation for a terrorist attack with a ‘dirty-bomb’ using nuclear material would be a good use of resources. The capability is tailored to meet the anticipated threat.

If we are correct that the future of European defence capabilities will be in the preparation for small war, then it has to follow that the prudent use of funds would be to develop a force that could operate in a small war environment. This would entail the development of smaller units with a greater balance of arms that could rapidly deploy around the world at short notice. It would entail the development of operational facilities at those points of the world that could support the logistics of such deployments. Using Barnett’s model, it would entail base facilities to be sited at the edge of, and inside, the Non-Integrated Gap.

There remains, however, the difficult question of command structures. These are likely to reflect the political development of the EU. If the EU were to adopt more of a Populist Federalist political structure, then it would be more appropriate to adopt more of an integrated and unified command structure. If the EU were to retain something of a Consensual Federalist political structure, then it would be more appropriate to retain national command structures, but to place them at the disposal of the EU as a political entity – either to a greater or lesser extent. Finally, if the EU were to revert to its Atlanticist past, then it would be more appropriate to modernise the command structure of NATO. Of

course, as the challenges of the next fifteen years arise, it may well be that all three of these possible structures come into being simultaneously.

Whichever command structure comes to the fore, if the various national military establishments are to work together more closely in the coming years, then it becomes more imperative for them to use common and interchangeable equipment. Perhaps a Common Defence Policy can only truly be underwritten by a Common Procurement Policy. This is likely to be heavily influenced by the political process, as the member states argue their national interests. Given the lead times in weapons development, the use of common equipment by the European nations by 2020 is unlikely. However, it is likely that further progress will have been made towards this goal.

CONCLUSIONS

It is our belief that those who write off Europe as a spent force are likely to be proven wrong as events unfold in the years to come. Europe, through the institutions of the EU, is at an important point in its development as a political entity. How Europe develops in the next fifteen years will determine its future for much of the coming century.

The development of the EU is being propelled by the forces of globalisation into the Post-Modern world. However, the EU still has to deal with the Modern nations, with whom it may clash in civilisational terms, and the Pre-Modern nations, who mainly inhabit the Non-Integrated Gap. In these dealings, some use, or threat of use, of force may be necessary. This force is unlikely to be used directly through 'big war' operations, and is more likely to be used in the advancement of soft power options through 'small war' operations.

The engagement in peacekeeping, humanitarian intervention and nation building will determine the composition, training, and equipping of the forces being deployed by the European nations. It will also determine the tactical doctrines adopted by the European military forces. So far, these doctrines

have expressed themselves as a preference for peace rather than war, for talk rather than fighting, and for the promotion of human rights. It is likely that these will develop further in the years to 2020. After all, they are the European way of war.

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¹ In 2000, EU trade accounted for €591 bn (24% of total world trade), the US accounted for €551 bn (22% of total world trade). Japan came third, accounting for €201 bn (8% of total world trade). The EU was also in trade surplus with the rest of the world.

² According to the IMF, in 2003, the GDP of the EU was \$10.5 trillion, which surpassed that of the US (\$10.4 trillion). This figure does not include the 10 accession states that joined the EU in 2004.

³ With the inclusion of the 10 accession states, the population of the EU is 450 mn, dwarfed by China and India (each with a population exceeding 1 bn), but larger than the population of the US (about 300 mn) and Japan (about 120mn).

⁴ 'Public goods' are those which, if enjoyed by one person, are enjoyed by all people equally. For example, clean air is currently a public good. If I enjoy the benefits of clean air, then so will you if we are breathing the same air. Traditionally, in liberal economics, taking a cue from Adam Smith, it is suggested that the provision of public goods is the only legitimate role of the government in a capitalist economy.

⁵ See '*The European Dream*' by Jeremy Rifkin (Polity 2004)

⁶ The draft European Constitution provided the institutional framework to develop a Common Foreign Policy and a Common Defence Policy. Under present arrangements, it is unclear whether or not the EU, as currently constituted, has the *vires* to develop such policies. The draft Constitution was ratified by 14 of the 25 member states, including Germany and Spain before being rejected by France and the Netherlands. A further 9 member states, including Great Britain, have yet to decide on ratification.

⁷ See '*The Clash Of Civilisations*' by Samuel Huntington (Simon & Schuster 1996), '*The Pentagon's New Map*' by Thomas P M Barnett (Putnams 2004), and '*The Breaking Of Nations*' by Robert Cooper (Atlantic Books 2003).

⁸ For example, see *'The West's Last Chance'* by Tom Blankley (Regnery 2005) and *'Paradise & Power – America And Europe In The New World Order'* by Robert Kagan (Atlantic Books 2003).

⁹ *'The Acceptability Of American Power'* The Economist June 27th 2002.

¹⁰ *'The Pentagon's New Map'* by Thomas P M Barnett (Putnams 2004) page 101.

¹¹ See *'Why Europe Will Run The 21st Century'* by Mark Leonard (Fourth Estate 2005).